

EDWARD GEORGE HORTON

Private 2722



Edward George Horton was born on 20 September 1896, the eighth child of Edwin and Keziah Horton. The 1901 Census records a household of five boys and four girls ranging in age from 17 down to 2, and a further daughter was born in July 1901. His father was a labourer. He attended the local school (No 384 in the School Roll) from 25 September 1899 to 7 September 1906.

Edward Horton enlisted into the 5th (Prince of Wales) Battalion (Territorials) of The Devonshire Regiment at Plymouth. The battalion moved to India and in January 1915 relieved 1/6th Battalion The Devonshire Regiment on garrison duty in Lahore. The 1/6th Battalion had been mobilised for action in Mesopotamia earlier in the month, but on medical inspection of the troops many were found to be unfit for "The Front". The 5th Battalion was therefore ordered to send 25 soldiers to help reinforce 6 Devon's.

It is believed that Edward Horton may have been one of these 25, because when he died in Mesopotamia on 16 July 1916, aged 19, his parent battalion was still at Lahore and did not move to Mesopotamia until April 1917.

The British Army was initially deployed to Mesopotamia to protect important oil interests. It was a long drawn-out campaign, conducted in appalling conditions for the troops. There is no record in 1/6th Battalion's War Diary of any soldier dying in action during July 1916 whilst the battalion was stationed at Dujailah. It can therefore be assumed that Edward Horton died of illness or disease which often accounted for more casualties than the enemy amongst British soldiers serving in that region.



Private Horton is remembered with honour at Basra War Cemetery (Plot VI.X.2).