

Ashville Cenotaph: **MORRIS A**

Ashville Memorial Hall: Andrew Morris, Liverpool Scottish

1921 Roll of Honour: Morris A, which means he should be on the Clock Memorial.

The order of service for the unveiling of the Clock Memorial at Elmfield College in November 1921 states "Unveiling of the War Memorial to the memory of the Masters and Old Boys who made the supreme sacrifice for country, home and humanity in the Great War." The inclusion of masters has not been recognised on the Ashville Cenotaph which is headed "In memory of Old Boys of Elmfield College who fell in the Great War". Two masters are included on the Cenotaph – A Morris & J D Vaughan – the evidence for this is the 1911 Census Return for Elmfield College.

The inscriptions on the Cenotaph and in the Memorial Hall are correct. The Liverpool Scottish was the name given to the 10th (Scottish) Battalion of the King's (Liverpool) Regiment. It was a territorial battalion.

Date & place of birth: Q3 1885, Bolton (but not Bolton as we now know it - see Family Life below).

War: Andrew enlisted, date unknown, in the King's (Liverpool) Regiment, an Infantry Regiment, and was assigned as a Private to the 2nd/10th Battalion. The 1st/10th Battalion was one of the first territorial battalions to go to the Western Front in November 1914. The 2nd/10th Battalion was originally a reserve battalion retained in the UK for training and home defence purposes. This changed on 20th February 1917 when the Battalion was sent to the Western Front. From available records we know Andrew went with them.

Seven months later Andrew, using the parlance of the time, was "discharged" to a Commission in the 4th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment. Normally before being recommended for a Commission Privates would have been promoted to an NCO rank but there is no record of this happening in Andrew's case. It was custom, on being commissioned for soldiers to change battalion but less common for them to change Regiment.

The 4th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment was an "extra reserve" battalion for training and home defence purposes and never left the UK. At the time Andrew joined them in late September 1917 they were based at Grimsby and part of the Humber Garrison. Presumably while here Andrew would have received officer training. We don't know how long Andrew remained there but it would appear long enough to form a romantic relationship with a local lady and get married (see Family life below).

At an unspecified date he was, again using the parlance of the time, "attached" to the 12th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment. The 12th had been in the thick of it on the Western Front since July 1915 and there they were to remain until the end of the War. So being assigned to them meant a return to the Western Front for Andrew.

The War Diary of the 12th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment records Andrew's death on the 26th August 1918. I have included the previous day for completeness:-

"25th August: Battalion attacked 4.0 am. "A" and "C" Coys in front, "B" and "D" in support. Advanced very well, took and cleared MARTINPUICH, after which we were held up by heavy machine gun fire for rest of day after advancing 4,000 yds. 21st Divⁿ on left, 38th Divⁿ on right. Latter let us down badly during day by retiring from HIGH WOOD. Only casualties were caused during their absence. Casualties:- Killed – Capt. T H DIXON, MC, 2nd Lieut's H CODE, S COULTER. Wounded – Capt F A PICKLES, MC, Lieut L L BORDMAN, 2nd Lieut's S SURKITT, J H HOLDRIDGE, W KNIGHT, W MARSH, MM. OR killed 28, OR wounded 112, OR missing 1.

26th August: Bttnd advance resumed 5.0 am. Started badly but owing to most excellent work by our remaining officers, especially 2nd Lieut C J L M^cDOWALL, machine gun opposition was overcome and during day a further 2,500 yds advance was credited to Bttnd. (38th Divⁿ let us down again) CSM LAMB was badly wounded and died same day. He had been in charge of B Coy for 30 hours and did excellent

work. 2nd Lieut R DEWAR took charge of B Coy . 51st Brigade passed through us at night and we became support Bttn. Casualties:- Killed – 2nd Lieut's R KEMP, A MORRIS. Wounded – 2nd Lieut C J R M^cDOWALL. OR killed 19, wounded 82.

Total casualties for the 2 days:- Officers – killed 5, wounded 7. OR killed 44, wounded 194, missing 1.
WAR BOOTY: 43 Hostile Machine Guns, 5 hostile Trench Mortars, 150 Prisoners.”

Normally a Company (Coy) would be commanded by a Captain, so Company Sergeant Major Lamb stepped into the shoes of either Capt Dixon or Pickles. The next day the Battalion went into support for the rest of the month but continued to suffer light casualties, if any casualty can be considered light! Reinforcements, including a Captain, arrived but not enough to make up the shortfalls and one Company was put under the command of a Lieutenant. The Battalion never suffered such high casualties again but to put the above into context they pale by comparison with 6th July 1916 when the Battalion lost 555 men killed, wounded or missing! A full strength Great War infantry battalion numbered about 1,000.

Family Life: The 1891 Census Return shows 5 year old Andrew living at 154 St George's Road, Little Bolton with his parents. Little Bolton is now part of Salford but up until 1947 was part of the Bolton Registration District. Thus although Andrew's birth was registered in the Bolton District he was not born in what we would call Bolton today.

His parents were Andrew Morris and Henrietta Morris (maiden name not known). At the time of the 1891 Census Andrew had two elder sisters Henrietta (12) and Jessie (7). The family were still living at the same address at the time of the 1901 Census but the family had grown by two – Joseph (6 years younger than Andrew) & Sarah (8 years younger).

At the time of the 1911 Census Andrew was teaching at Elmfield College. Meanwhile the family appear to have moved down the road to 124, St Georges Road although it could have been due to a renumbering exercise. They were living in a large 9 room dwelling which is perhaps not surprising as in all three censuses Andrew's father's occupation was given as Professor of Music, presumably at Manchester University. He passed his musical talents on to at least one of his children, Henrietta – in 1901 her occupation is given as “Violinist”. By 1911 she was working as an “Assistant Mistress, Council School” run by Bolton Educational Council. Jessie appears to have left home along with Andrew but Joseph was still living at home and working as an apprentice draughtsman. For 17 year old Sarah “No occupation” was entered.

The death, in the Registration District of Bolton, of a Henrietta Morris is recorded in the last quarter of 1922. Similarly a year later the death is recorded of an Andrew Morris. This is at odds with Andrew's Medal Roll Index Card which has written on it “Mrs A Morris (widow), 124 St Georges Road, Bolton, Lancs”. The CWGC website and the Forces War Records website also state he was “the husband of Maud E Morris, 6 Park Street, Grimsby, Lincolnshire”. So presumably whilst he was with the 4th Battalion in Grimsby he got married but I can find no record of their marriage.

Did the family have a connection with Methodism? None that I can find except that there was a Primitive Methodist Church in St Georges Road, Little Bolton.

David Redhead, April 2018

