

4: George William Ashworth

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: George Ashworth
 Rank: Serjeant
 Battalion / Regiment: Asst. Director of Medical Service H.Q. 3rd Div., Army Service Corps
 Service Number: M/38609 Date of Death: 25 September 1917 Age at Death: ?
 Buried / Commemorated at: Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Poperinge, West Flanders, Belgium
 Additional information given by CWGC: None

George Ashworth is recorded also on the plaque in Burton Parish Church where he is shown as serving with the Gordon Highlanders, a regiment with whom he had served previously.

George William Ashworth was born in the St Olave (Southwark) registration district of south London in late 1882, probably the last child of Thomas and Emma Ashworth. Thomas Garbut Ashworth married Emma Ann Bushell in Lambeth in April / June 1867 and their first child, Emma Rebecca Ashworth, was born a year later in April / June 1868 in the Bermondsey area of London. In the 1871 census, now with two children, Thomas and Emma were living in the south London district of Southwark:

Thomas G. Ashworth	Head	Male	27	back & vat maker	Newington, Surrey
Emma A.	Wife	Female	22		Newington, Surrey
Emma R. Ashworth	Daughter	Female	3		Bermondsey, Surrey
E. C.	Daughter	Female	1		Bermondsey, Surrey

1871 census – 131 Lynton Road, Southwark

Thomas G. Ashworth	27	back & vat maker	born Newington, Surrey
Emma A.	22		born Newington, Surrey
Emma R.	3		born Bermondsey
E. C.	1		born St George's, Surrey

'E. C.' was Elizabeth Catharine Ashworth, born in the St Saviour area of Southwark in early 1870.

Thomas Ashworth was described as a 'back and vat maker', a specialist occupation explained by George Dodd in 1843 in his book *'Days at the Factories: Or, The Manufacturing Industry of Great Britain Described'*:

If we were to speak of 'cisterns and tubs' we should convey a much more definite idea to the minds of general readers, than by using the technical names 'backs and vats' but the truth is that each large branch of manufacture has almost a language of its own, the workmen seeming to delight in having a phraseology unintelligible to others.

Thus, the brewer's 'liquor-back' is to all intents and purposes a 'water-cistern' yet not only are the two words 'water' and 'cistern' not used in a brewery, but in some breweries a fine is imposed, and insisted on by the men, on those who may happen to use the plain English words. We make this remark here as the best mode of explaining that a 'back' is the technical name

for large wooden cisterns or vessels employed in distilling and similar operations; and that a 'vat' is a tall wooden tub or open cask. The manufacture, which to a small extent is carried on in this range of shops, is a superior kind of cooperage.

In the 1881 census, just before the birth of George, the family had increased in size and had moved further along Lyndon Road to N^o 70, a terraced house, now demolished. Thomas, however, was not in the household but he was recorded, aged 35 - his occupation was given as vat maker - lodging with others at 10 Newark Place, Brighton.

Emma Ashworth	Head	Mar	32		" Walworth
Emma	Serv		13	School	" Bermondsey
Elizabeth	"		11		" "
Amelia	"		8		" "
Thomas	Son		5		" Walworth
Alice	Serv		2		" "

1881 census (extract) – 70 Lynton Road, Southwark

Emma Ashworth	32	born Walworth, Surrey
Emma	13	born Bermondsey
Elizabeth	11	born Bermondsey
Amelia	8	born Bermondsey
Thomas	5	born Walworth
Alice	2	born Walworth

By the time of the 1891 census the family – George had been born in late 1882 – had moved to Beatrice Road in Bermondsey:

T. G. Ashworth	Head	M	46	Cooper	X	" Southwark
Emma A. do	Wife	M	41			" "
Emma	Daughter	S	23	Confectioner	X	" "
Eliza	"	S	21	"	X	" "
Amelia	"	S	18	"	X	" "
John T.	Son	S	15	Schooler		" "
Alice	Daughter	S	12	"		" "
George	Son		7	"		" "

1891 census (extract) – 5 Beatrice Road, Bermondsey

T. G. Ashworth	46	cooper	born Southwark
Emma A.	41		born Southwark
Emma	23	confectioner	born Southwark
Eliza	21	confectioner	born Southwark
Amelia	18	confectioner	born Southwark
John T.	15		born Southwark
Alice	12		born Southwark
George	7		born Southwark

Recorded as John T. in this census return, Thomas John Garbut Ashworth was born in the St Saviour district of Southwark in late 1875. Alice Maud Ashworth was born in the St Saviour district of Southwark in late 1878.

It is known that George's sisters married:

Amelia Jane Ashworth married James Winn at St Olave in London in early 1893.

Elizabeth Catherine Ashworth married George Robert Ferris at St Olave in London in July / September 1893.

Emma Rebecca Ashworth married coachman James Overton in Camberwell in late 1896. At the time of the 1911 census they were living with their daughter, also Emma Rebedda, at 'Cottage', c/o The Hall, Dulwich (and this same address is recorded in George's Service Record of 1915).

Alice Maud Ashworth married printer William Samuel Norman at St Olave in London in early 1901.

George's father, Thomas Garbut Ashworth, died in late 1898 aged 54 and Emma, George's mother, married a George Baylis in early 1900 in Camberwell. In the 1901 census Emma (50, born Camberwell) and George (49, general gardener, born Bermondsey) were living on their own at 218 Lynton Road, Bermondsey. By the time of the 1911 census, and now married for 11 years, they were living at 18 Cowper Road, Edmonton, and George Baylis was recorded as a 'pensioned Corporal R.M.L.I.' - presumably the Royal Marines Light Infantry. However, a Service Record of George, dated 5 July 1915, indicates that Emma was then in New York.

Emma appears to have died in the Lewisham area of London in early 1933 aged 83.

George appears to have been a career soldier having first attested on 11 October 1901 and formally enlisted, in Aberdeen, on 15 February 1902 with the Gordon Highlanders. He was then aged 19 and his Service Number was 7951. However, for reasons unknown, George purchased his discharge (for £18) from the army on 15 December 1902 by which date he had served for 1 year 66 days.

On 12 October 1903, aged just 21 years and 1 month, George re-enlisted in the Gordon Highlanders (in London) and it was noted that he was '*a smart and respectable-looking recruit and is anxious to join his old regiment*'.

REGIMENTAL SERVICES of No. 4951		Name George Ashworth		
Enlistment, Reductions, Casualties, &c.	Army Rank	Dates	Service Not allowed to reckon for fixing the rate of Pension	Service in Reserve not allowed to reckon towards G. C. Pay
			years	days
Enlistment 19 years 4 months.				
For 3 years Army Service.				
9 years Reserve Service.				
Discharge towards limited engagement reckons from 11-10-01				
At Aberdeen on 15-10-01				
1st attested	Pte	11-10-01		
2nd joined	...	15-2-02		
3rd joined	...	23-10-02		
Discharged on payment of £18				
Authy Sec: D. G. H. 18	Pte	15-12-02		
At 11-12-02				

He was described as being 5ft 5¼inches tall, weighed 125lb (just under 9 stone / 56.8kg), had a 34-inch chest, a fresh complexion, blue eyes and light brown hair. His occupation at this time was given both as a chauffeur-mechanic and as groom and, from his previous army service, his character was said to be exemplary. It was recorded that he had, as distinguishing marks, a scar on the back of his right hand and a mole on the back of his neck.

Now given the Service Number 9158 he was attached to the 'A' Company 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders.

Just six weeks after his re-enlistment, on 30 November 1903, George married Annie Campbell Duff at St Marchar church in Aberdeen; both would have been about 21. At the beginning of December 1903 George was at the Depot HQ and on 1 December was formally attached to the 1st Battalion. Over the next several years George and Annie moved around the British Isles as their first child, also George, was born on 19 January 1905 in Cork, Alice was born 27 December 1906 in Aberdeen and Enid Emma was born 8 April 1910 in Settle, Yorkshire.

On 11 October 1906 George's period of active service expired and he was transferred (in Aberdeen) from Section A of the 1st Class Army Reserve to Section B suggesting that he would be less likely to be called upon in the case of military conflict.

As a testament to George's character Major C.J. Simpson of the Gordon Highlanders recorded that '*I believe No. 9158 Pte. George Ashworth, Gordon Highlanders, is thoroughly trustworthy and to the best of my belief he has never been under the influence of liquor within the last three years*'. George's record at this time suggests that he had been employed as an officer's groom for two years and as an officer's servant for nine months. It was noted, at this time, that George's trade was as a motorcar driver and that his '*...other qualifications for employment in civil life... [were as]... a groom, valet, or waiter*'. The family was still in Aberdeen at the close of 1906 when daughter Alice was born but by the time of the 1911 census the family was living at 'Chauffeur's Cottage', Denhall, Ness:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.
George Ashworth	Head	28	Married	7	3	3			Chauffeur (Domestic)	George Ashworth			London	000	
Annie Ashworth	Wife	28	Married	7	3	3							Aberdeen	500	
George Ashworth	Son	6											Cork	621	
Alice Ashworth	Daughter	4											Aberdeen	500	
Enid Ashworth	Daughter	11 months											Settle, Yorks	030	

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)				(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)	
I certify that — (1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex column. (2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have compared their sum with the total number of persons. (3) After making the necessary enquiries I have compared all entries in the Schedule with those in the Defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous. Initials of Enumerator: <i>J. M.</i>				Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (Kitchens, Tenement, or Apartment). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom, nor warehouse, office, shop. 6 Rooms	
Total: Males 2 Females 3 Persons 5				I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief. Signature: <i>George Ashworth</i> Postal Address: <i>Chauffeur's Cottage, Denhall, Ness, Aberdeen</i>	

1911 census (condensed) – Chauffeur's Cottage, Denhall

George Ashworth	27	chauffeur (domestic)	born London
Annie	28		born Aberdeen
George	6		born Cork
Alice	4		born Aberdeen
Enid	11 months		born Settle, Yorks.

George and Annie had been married for 7 years and all three children were still living.

Between 1906 and the 1911 census, nothing is recorded of George's life other than that his daughter Enid Emma was born in Settle on 8 April 1910.

Although it is not stated in the 1911 census for whom he was working it is possible that George drove for Arthur Bulley and family, founders of Ness Botanic Gardens.

Through 1912 and 1913 nothing further is known but the outbreak of war on 4 August 1914 saw George Ashworth back in the ranks of the 1st Gordon Highlands, part of the 8th Brigade of the 3rd Division. The following day the troops, who may have been at Plymouth, mobilised and the 3rd Division began their move to France where George disembarked, at Boulogne, on 13 August.

In 1914 the troops were engaged in various actions on the Western Front including the Battle of Mons, and the subsequent retreat of the British and French forces, and the Battle of Le Cateau on 26 August:

On the morning of 26 August, the Germans arrived and heavily attacked II Corps (General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien). Unlike the Battle of Mons, where the majority of casualties inflicted by the British were from rifle fire, Le Cateau was an artilleryman's battle, demonstrating the devastating results which modern quick-firing artillery using shrapnel shells could have on infantry advancing in the open. The British deployed their artillery in the open, about 50–200 metres behind their infantry, while the German artillery used indirect fire from concealed positions. With the guns so close to their infantry, the British had unintentionally increased the effectiveness of the German artillery-fire, because shells aimed at the British infantry could just as easily hit the British artillery.

The British 5th Division was positioned on the British right flank, on the southern side of the Le Cateau–Cambrai road between Inchy and Le Cateau. The 3rd Division was to its left, holding the ground between Caudry and Inchy. The 4th Division was on the left, on the northern bank of the Warnelle. This was a poor choice of terrain on the part of the British. The road was sunken in places, providing inadequate long-range firing positions. In fact, in most cases, the Germans could march close up to the British positions, which is what they often did. This was especially true at the weakest point in the British line, the right flank west of Le Cateau, where the Germans simply marched straight down the road from the north all the way to Le Cateau. The British position was on the forward slope, and consequently, casualties were heavy during the withdrawal. Holding their ground despite many casualties, the British right and then the left flank began to break around midday, under unrelenting pressure from the Germans. The arrival of Sordet's French cavalry acted as a shield for the British left flank, and supported a highly co-ordinated tactical withdrawal, despite German attempts to infiltrate and outflank the retreating British forces.

That night, the Allies withdrew to Saint-Quentin. Of the 40,000 British troops fighting at Le Cateau, 7,812 British casualties were incurred, including 2,600 taken prisoner. Thirty-eight guns were abandoned, most having their breech blocks removed and sights disabled by the gunners first. [Adapted from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Le_Cateau]

Due to heavy losses after the Battle of Le Cateau the Battalion had to be disbanded and re-organised and George Ashworth was, on 24 September 1914, promoted to Corporal. On 30 September the refitted 1st Battalion returned to the 8th Brigade of the 3rd Division and the Battalion's War Diary records their involvement up to July 1915:

1914: After the very heavy losses at Mons; Le Cateau; 1st Marne; Aisne; La Bassée and 1st Ypres, suffered during the first months of the Great War. By late November 1914, the old British Army had virtually disappeared.

The first winter 1914/1915 was relatively quiet, and saw a period of training, with the 1st Gordons joining its brigade at Locres on 2nd December 1914. Drafts were arriving to bring the battalion up to strength, with Territorial battalions sent out from the UK, towards the end of 1914.

1st Gordons on 14th December 1914 were engaged in an operation at Messines Ridge with 8th Brigade, and again lost heavily.

1915: Into the New Year the 1st Gordons were in billets at Westoutre and Locres, later in trenches at Vierstraat with shelling and some casualties. Later at La Clytte, Westoutre, in billets, drafts arrived to augment strength, some 200 NCOs and men, including 3rd Battalion, and reservists amounting to a further 160 men. La Clytte - Quiet spell in trenches, alternating in billets, further draft of 166 men joined 27th January 1915, with very little training. Intermittent shelling.

February 1915, Blue Balmoral bonnets issued replacing the Glengarry, but not to be worn in trenches until Khaki covers arrived; too conspicuous. Relieved by the 2nd Suffolks, and alternating trenches and billets during month with casualties, with this battalion.

March saw further alternating relief at billets, with trenches near Vierstraat, with casualties from shelling. Later relieved by 1st Royal Scots and Suffolks, with Bn relieving Camerons. 18th March at Vierstraat. Losses of two and three men from snipers and shelling.

April continued with occupation of trenches north of Vierstraat; relieved by Worcestershire Regt. Back in billets at La Clytte.

mid-April, quiet virtually no casualties. Half Bn in billets and half in trenches, quiet continued until

22nd April, first reports of gas being used. Month ended as before, few casualties.

May began quietly, heavy shelling on 6th, killed 3 and wounded 5. By the 11th May, Brigade was ordered to relieve 13th Brigade in front of Hill 60. Bn relieved South Lancs; many rifles and equipment found, left by West Riding Regt due to gassing, many corpses; cleaning up carried out. By mid-May patrols carried out at Hill 60, with bombing continuing and parapets blown in. Relieved by Dorsets on 20th, marched back to billets at La Clytte. Preparations leading up to 2nd Ypres begin, with Bn engaged in trench work at Hooge, and quiet conditions at night. Some shelling in mornings.

June began with very heavy shelling, with 22 men killed and 46 wounded. Later conditions quieter and relieved by 2nd Suffolks on 7th/8th. Bivouac at Poperinghe/Vlanmertinghe. Ypres heavily damaged. 15th June attack began after bombardment at 3 am by 5 am German trenches captured.

June 15th, respirators were used, proved quite effective, 16th saw many wounded in trenches, sent back under cover. Bn HQ and C and D companies heavily shelled, about 80 casualties suffered. 17th, relieved by KRR (New Army) more gas shells used by Germans. June 18th, returned to Bivouac at Brandhook, losses by the 20th June totalled 126. Remainder of month at Brandlock with games, route marches, concert in evening of 26th June; 27th Church parade. Last day at Poperinghe, Baths!

July. First days at Brandlock; relieved the 2nd Royal Irish Rifles on 12/13th July at Hooge, Ypres salient. In trenches at Hooge, mortars fired with some casualties suffered.

[Source: (unamended) <http://www.thegordonhighlanders.co.uk/Pages/Diary.htm#1918Jul>]

Following a request made on 5 July 1915 George Ashworth was transferred from the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders to the Motor Transport section of the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) on 17 August 1915 and then, at some time after, he became the Assistant to the Director of Medical

The Officer i/c Records,
Army Service Corps
Woolwich Dockyard
 "1914 STAR".
 Gordon Rec. No. 9158 Name. Private G Ashworth
 The above-named man was transferred to Motor Transport Army Service Corps
 on the 17.8.15 and allotted new regimental No. M. 38609 ✓
 Will you please have the record inserted in his documents "1914 Star" in accordance with G.O. Publishing No. 8 Circular 1918, Ref. No. 35/ Gen. No. 1250 (A.S.I.C.), as his name has been submitted on the Medal Rolla from this Office.
 If, however, he has been transferred from the above-mentioned regiment, will you kindly cause this form to be forwarded to the Officer i/c Records, concerned, stating :-
 Regiment. Date of transfer. New No. allotted.
 P E R T H. 24/1/1916. For Office Captain
 No. 1. District

Service. It seems that the ASC posting was to the field HQ - very probably as a chauffeur/mechanic - and it was noted also at the time that George was a marksman, that he had gained one good conduct badge and he was described as 'exemplary'. George's Service Number was now M38609 and it was noted that, aged 36, he had served in the military for 11 years 10 months, 9 years being in the Reserve and 3 years in the Colours.

The ASC is described in 'The Long, Long Trail':

The officers and men of the ASC - sometimes referred to in a joking, disparaging way as Ally Sloper's Cavalry - were the unsung heroes of the British Army in the Great War. Soldiers cannot fight without food, equipment and ammunition. They cannot move without horses or vehicles. It was the ASC's job to provide them. In the Great War, the vast majority of the supply, maintaining a vast army on many fronts, was supplied from Britain. Using horsed and motor vehicles, railways and waterways, the ASC performed prodigious feats of logistics and were one of the great strengths of organisation by which the war was won. At peak, the ASC numbered an incredible 10,547 officers and 315,334 men.

[<http://www.1914-1918.net/asc.htm>]

'The Long, Long Trail' goes on to describe the structure of the ASC:

The ASC was organised into units known as Companies, each fulfilling a specific role. In most cases the Company also had a sub-title name describing its role. Some of the Companies were under orders of the Divisions of the army; the rest were under direct orders of the higher formations of the Corps, Army or General Headquarters of the army in each theatre of war. They were known as part of the Lines of Communication. Many men of the ASC were not, however, with ASC Companies, for many were attached to other types of unit in the army - for example, as vehicle drivers.

The ASC was organised into 'Divisional Trains' each 'Train' providing transport (usually horse-drawn) for the Division. It was usually made up of a small Train Headquarters, one Headquarters Company, three other Horse Transport Companies and a contingent of other troops of the Army Service Corps. The 3rd Divisional Train consisted of 15, 21, 22, 29 Companies ASC.

George was appointed as Acting Sergeant on 1 December 1915 and on 31 December he was mentioned, in the *London Gazette*, in Despatches. In March 1916 the troops took part in the Actions of the Bluff and St Eloi Craters (27 March - 16 April 1916) - the battle began with the detonation of six large mines beneath German lines; British soldiers then rose from their positions in the cold mud and attacked, quickly capturing three craters and the third German line. By 16 April, the battle ended with the Germans in control of the battlefield, as they had been at its start. The troops then moved to The Somme for The Battle of Albert, The Battle of Bazentin (helping to capture Longueval), The Battle of Delville Wood and The Battle of the Ancre.

Nothing is recorded of George's role in any of the actions of 1916 although it is noted that he had two periods of leave, 18 August - 26 August and 28 September - 29 October.

Although George's military service had, technically, been completed in late 1916 his involvement was continued as a consequence of the Military Service Act 1916 (Session 2). In Britain the Military Service Act of 27 January 1916 brought conscription into play

for the first time in the war and this was extended and new conditions were implemented in the legislation of 25 May 1916 (Session 2). The definition of who was in the range for conscription was changed to include all men who had been at any time resident in

IV. Army Form W. 2458.

To the Officer of Records,

Asst. Woolwich

Please note the following on the original attestation of the man named and return counterfoil to me:—

No 1438609 Rank 1/Sgt Name Ashworth

Unit Asst. H.T.

Bounty allowed under Army Order 209 of 1916 (*excluding £15 if already allowed under Army Order 86 of 1916)... 2-20

Credited for present issue (Nil if above £15 already allowed) ... £6-13-4

Balance to be issued subsequently, as laid down in the Army Order ... £13-6-8

Station Woolwich H. C. B. S.

Date 8-12-16 Sept.

Regimental Paymaster.

* To be struck out if inapplicable.

Great Britain since 4 August 1914 and who had attained the age of 18 but was not yet 41 unless he was in the exceptions defined in the Schedule attached to the first Act; in other words, it added married men to the scope of conscription and reduced the minimum age to 18.

Those, like George, whose military career was involuntarily extended by the implementation of the Military Service Act 1916 (Session 2) received a payment - a 'bounty' - and George's entitlement was £20 although he had already received £6 13s 4d of this. On 8 December 1916 George received the outstanding £13 6s 8d.

In the first half of 1917 nothing is known of George's military history although it is probable that he would have been involved in the conflicts at Arras (9 April - 16 May), Scarpe (9 April and 4 May) and Arleux (28 - 29 April). It is recorded that he was on leave from 15 July to 24 July and it is known that his unit moved north to Flanders and were in action during The Battle of the Menin Road and The Battle of Polygon Wood during The Third Battle of Ypres (The Battle of Passchendaele).

The Battle of Polygon Wood took place during the second phase of The Third Battle of Ypres in World War I and was fought near Ypres in Belgium (26 September - 3 October 1917), in the area from the Menin Road to Polygon Wood and then northwards to the area beyond St. Julien.

George Ashworth, however, took no part in this battle as it is reported that he had died the day before the



commencement of this engagement as a result of cerebrospinal meningitis and associated toxæmia. No mention was made in George's medical records as to where or how he developed meningitis although it is recorded that he was taken to N^o. 61 Casualty Clearing Station (date unknown), where he was admitted in a semi-comatose state and with symptoms such as rigidity to the neck and Kernig's Sign - one of the physically demonstrable symptoms of meningitis is severe stiffness of the hamstrings causing an inability to straighten the leg when the hip is flexed to 90 degrees.

In July 1917, in readiness for the forthcoming offensive, groups of casualty clearing stations were placed at three positions called by the troops Mendinghem, Dozinghem and Bandaghem. The 4th, 47th and 61st Casualty Clearing Stations were posted at Dozinghem.

Meningitis, a very serious bacterial illness, is an inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord and is often associated with septicaemia (blood poisoning) also a serious condition. Cerebrospinal meningitis, a form of acute bacterial meningitis, usually occurs when bacteria enter the bloodstream and migrate to the brain and spinal cord but it can also occur when bacteria directly invade the membranes lining the skull and spinal cord as a result of an ear or sinus infection, a skull fracture, or after some forms of surgery. One of the biggest problems with meningitis is that it can develop very quickly; a person can seem perfectly well and then, just a few hours later, be extremely ill with the disease.

People with long-term health problems, such as a weakened immune system - and this would apply to many serving in WW1 - are also prone to contracting the disease.

12 OCT 1917

FIELD SERVICE. Army Form B. 2090a.

Death of a Soldier to be forwarded to the War Office with the least possible delay after receipt of death on Army Form B. 213 or Army Form A. 36, or from other official documentary sources.

Regiment A. S. C. Squadron, Troop, Battery or Company A.D.N.S., H.Q. 3rd Division

No. M/18609 Rank Private (A/Sgt)

Surname ASHWORTH Christian Names G.

Died Date 25th September 1917 Place No. 61 Casualty Clearing Station.

Cause of Death Cerebral spinal meningitis, contracted on active service.

Nature and Date of Report H.S. dated 26th September 1917.

By made O.C. No. 61 Casualty Clearing Station.

State if killed in action, or died from wounds received in action, or from illness due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure while on military duty, or from injury while on military duty.

Place Not known Date -

Whether he leaves a Will or not (a) in Pay Book (Army Book 64) Not to hand (b) in Small Book (if at Base) Not known (c) as a separate document -do-

Documents and effects received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if any should be at once forwarded to the War Office.

Information received as to verbal expressions by a deceased soldier of his wishes as to the disposal of his estate should be forwarded to the War Office as soon as possible.

State of this Report is to be sent to the Fixed Centre Paymaster at Home, or to the D.F.A.G., Indian Expeditionary Force, as the case may require, together with the Deceased's Pay Book (after withdrawal of any will from the deceased's Small Book is at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office with this Report.

BASE, 9/10/1917 Signature of Officer in charge of Section }
Adjutant-General's Office at the Base }

1. 5710/M745 400,000 8/16 JFW [E328] Forms/B2090a/2

A lumbar puncture was, and remains, the principal diagnosis of meningitis with a needle being inserted into the spinal canal to extract a sample of the cerebrospinal fluid that envelops the brain and spinal cord. The fluid is then examined in a medical laboratory and, nowadays, the first treatment in acute meningitis consists of promptly administered antibiotics and sometimes antiviral drugs. Several lumbar punctures were administered to George to confirm meningitis (the tests were done by N°8 Mobile Laboratory) and he was given a number of 'serum' injections - penicillin, the first true antibiotic, was not discovered until 1928 by Alexander Fleming - but with little effect and his condition deteriorated rapidly. He died, officially of toxæmia (blood poisoning by toxins from a local bacterial infection), at 1.25pm on 25 September 1917.

George Ashworth was buried at Dozinghem Military Cemetery close to the hospital in which he died. He had then served for a total of 13 years 349 days.

Annie Ashworth, George's widow, continued to live at Denhall for a while - but by 21 November 1919 she was living at 10 Gladstone Road, Neston. On 24 September 1921 she received George's 1914 Star (unofficially, the 'Mons Star'), the campaign medal awarded to those officers and men of the British and Indian Expeditionary Forces who served in France or Belgium between 5 August and midnight of 22 - 23 November 1914 (the date marking the end of The First Battle of Ypres).

On 10 October 1921 Annie received George's 'Oak-leaf Emblem', the bronze decoration sanctioned for those who were Mentioned in Despatches and which would have accompanied the Victory Medal.

14/29

I hereby acknowledge the receipt
 1914 Star
 granted in respect of the service of T/ 38609
 Pte G. Ashworth R.A.S.C.
 Date 24.9.21
 Signature Annie G. Ashworth

It is not believed that Annie Ashworth remarried and it is thought that she died, on Wirral, in 1969 aged 82. No definite records have been found for the marriages of their children although Enid might have married Sydney Shippey in the Middlesbrough district in July / September 1929.

As noted previously, George is recorded also on the plaque in Burton Parish Church where he is shown as serving with the Gordon Highlanders.

ROLL OF HONOUR.—On Sunday morning, at the parish church, the Vicar, the Rev. C. Brooke-Gwynne, at the close of his sermon made some sympathetic remarks to the mourners and congregation on the death in action just recently of several Nestonians, who had made the supreme sacrifice in France for their King and country, and in a righteous and just cause. Special hymns were rendered, and the National Anthem was sung at close of service. The death toll is rising. The names of those specially mentioned last Sunday were W. Williams (Parkgate), Harold Wilde (Ness) Alf. Jellicoe, Geo. Ashworth and A. Colebath (Neston).

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 20 October 1917 Note: there is no record, either locally or in the CWGC database, of any serviceman with the name 'Colebath'.

Neston Soldier's Death in France.

The death is announced of Pte. George Ashworth, which occurred in France last week from meningitis.. He had been on active service since the outbreak of war, and leaves a widow and two young children, with whom much sympathy is felt. .

Birkenhead News – Saturday 6 October 1917

George Ashworth's war grave at Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Poperinge, Belgium

Source: <http://www.findagrave.com/> [by 'Astrid']



WEEK END 17-19 JUN 1919 - W & S 2000, L 2000																	
Record No.	Registry No.	Soldier's Name	Regiment, Rank, No.	Date and Place of Death	CREDITS			CHARGES			Date of Authority	To whom Authorised	Amount Authorised			No. of List in which advertised	
					Account and Date	£	s.	d.	£	s.			d.	Account and Date	£		s.
586371	14/1524	Ashworth George	1st Bn. M.I. (Pte) A/Sgt m/35609	25-9-17 Woolwich	11/11	24	12	2	24	12	2	m. 2. 18	9.2.18	Wid. Annie Q.	24	12	2
													11-11-19	Wid. Annie Q.	17	-	-
														Annie B.			

A.F.W. 5070 Heat
20 JUN 1919

Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

In Summer 1919 the army paid outstanding credits – mainly remaining wages – to soldiers or, in the case of those who had died, their family or nominated representatives. At the same time a War Gratuity was often paid.

George Ashworth had accrued a credit of £24 12s 2d and this was received by his widow, Annie, as the sole legatee. Annie also received George's War Gratuity of £17. The total payment, £41 12s 2d, is approximately equivalent to a *labour value* (ie wages) of about £6300 in 2016.

On this record George's rank is shown as (Pte) A/Sgt.

The War Gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those men who had served in WW1 for a period of 6 months or more home service or for any length of service if a man had served overseas. The rules governing the gratuity were implemented under Army Order 17 of 1919 but the amount paid was related to the length of war service.

Name.	Corps.	Regtl. No.
ASHWORTH George	1st Gordon Highlanders Pte R.A.S.C.	9158 m/35609
Medal.	Roll.	Page.
VICTORY	R.A.S.C. 153	15599
BRITISH		
14 STAR	G/117	4
Theatre of War first served in		
Date of entry therein	13. 8. 14	22/1/23
EM/2/2031.1.V.4244/cd/27.9.21 (Large Emblem only).		

British Army WWI Medal
Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920