112: James Cliffe Arrowsmith

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

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: James Cliffe Arrowsmith

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: 9th Bn. Cheshire Regiment

Service Number: 50232 Date of Death: 4 August 1917 Age at Death: 36

Buried / Commemorated at: Outtersteene Communal Cemetery Extension, Bailleul, Outtersteene, Nord-Pas-

de-Calais, France

Additional information given by CWGC: The son of the late Samuel and Rachael Arrowsmith, of Eaton,

Congleton, Cheshire; husband of Muriel Arrowsmith, of 1, May Terrace, St. Asaph, Flintshire.

James Cliffe Arrowsmith lived for a time, following his marriage in early 1909, at Windle Hill in Neston before moving the short distance to live in Willaston. Because of his association with Willaston - and he is listed on the Willaston War Memorial - James is considered briefly in the booklet 'Lest We Forget: Willaston Remembers Its First World War Fallen'.

James Cliffe Arrowsmith was the eldest son of farm labourer Samuel and Rachel Arrowsmith of Eaton, a small village north of Congleton (and close to Gawsworth), Cheshire.

Samuel had been born in Eaton and, in July/September 1881, he married Rachel Cliffe of the nearby village of Swettenham at St Peter's, the Parish Church of Congleton.

Clearly, Samuel and Rachel lived firstly in Swettenham (about 4 miles west-north-west of Eaton) as James was born there; John William, their second son, was born in Buglawton, a small village (now integrated into Congleton) just a mile south of Eaton. At the time of the 1891 census the family was living in the centre of Eaton village:

Samuel arrowsmitte Head	m 55	Farm Laboures (1)	X Do Do
Meachel Do Mife	m 49		Suetenham Do
James Do Son	4	Scholar	So so
John you do Son	8	do-	Buglanton Do
1891 census (extract) – New	Road, Eaton (nea	ar the Plough Inn)	
Samuel Arrowsmith	55	farm labourer	born Eaton, Congleton
Rachel	49		born Swettenham
James	9		born Swettenham
John William	8		Born Buglawton

Samuel Arrowsmith died in late 1893, aged 57, and by the time of the 1901 census James had left home and was working as a gardener in Shropshire:

Administrating County	Shrapshire	The underme	entioned Houses	are situate wit	hin the boundaries	s of the			Page 10
Civil Parisht of	Ecclesiastical Parish	County Borough Municipal Remorgh, or Unban District		nicipal Lumu gh Lan District	Rural Distr	rict	1, 4	e Division	Revertek
Cols 2 3	Documention. Rot in Designer Universities. Saiding Ulies than 6-s	nd Surname of to Head of Family	of Males Penales		OR OCCUPATION	Employer, Worker, or Own account	If Working at Home	WHERE DORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Lunatic (4) Imbecile, feoble- minded
52 Villingham Gardens 1.	2. James.	Arrews mith Servant	2, 20	Gardena	. Domestic	Worker.		St. Javellenman I	nusture)
1901 census (extract) – Attingham Garden & House, Shropshire									
James A	Arrowsmith	20	serva	nt, garde	ener, dome	estic	bor	n Swettenhan	n, Cheshire

James' widowed mother, Rachel, and brother were still living in Eaton. Although James' brother, John, is recorded as a coalman he is also shown by the enumerator as being a groom - it is probable, therefore, that he was responsible for the horses that drew the coal wagons around the area as the sacks of coal were delivered to the houses:

Edri Mage 1 Gardel	avorenik Jones &	lon of 18 & boulman Groom de vardy fact gardener he	We lee at long to be shire butter of the Caroline Brighouter on les Lepasonire manchester					
1901 census (extract) – Eaton village, Cheshire								
Rachel Arrowsmith John W.	59 18	laundress, own account coalman (groom)	born Cheshire, Swettenham born Cheshire, Buglawton					
Lewis Jones	24	boarder, gardener	born Manchester					



James Arrowsmith was a gardener at Attingham Park, now a National Trust property near the village of Atcham in Shropshire. Attingham Hall, a classical style 18th

century country house, was built by George Steuart in 1785 for Lord Berwick (the parkland was landscaped by Humphrey Repton) and the property remained in the Berwick family for eight generations.

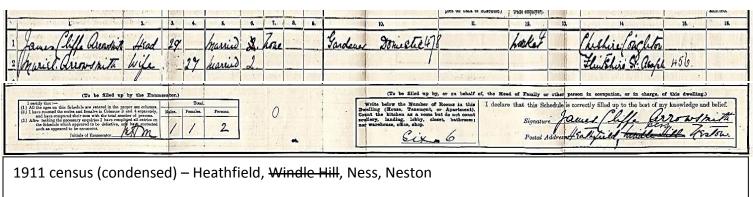
In 1911 Rachel Arrowsmith and John were still living in Eaton but, on 15 February 1909, James married Muriel Williams at St Cyndeyrn Church, Llanasa, St Asaph. At the time of the 1911 census they had moved from North Wales to Neston:

	G.	4	J. J.	, C.	ı,	0,	0.	10.	1 December 1	10.	13.		16.	16.
1 Rachael arowsnith Read		68	Widow	\$	4,	3	1	- Launday book 030		ora Account	at Holy	Skeshire Swetenham		BLA
2 John William arrowsnith Son	28	A UNI	Suigle	Service of the servic		in the		Labourer. 881	Bleach Works	Markeny		Checkeri Buglanto		
) (To be filled up by the Enu	nerator.)	71,1		Secretary	1 92/20	1.00		(To be filled up b	y, or on behalf of, the l	lead of Pamily	or other pers	on in occupation, or in charge, of	this dwelling.)
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1911 census (condensed) - Eaton, Cheshire

Rachel Arrowsmith 69 widow, laundry work born Cheshire, Swettenham John William 28 labourer, bleach works born Cheshire, Buglawton

Rachel was married for 13 years and, of her four children, three had survived. It is known that James had a brother, Samuel Arrowsmith, who was aged 42 in October 1919 and a Samuel's birth was registered in Macclesfield in April/June 1876 - this was before the marriage of Samuel and Rachel.

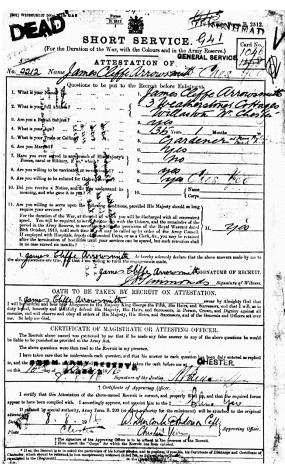


James Cliffe Arrowsmith 29 gardener, domestic born Cheshire, Congleton Muriel 27 born Flintshire, St Asaph

James and Muriel had been married for two years and they had no children.

According to the Electoral Register for 1914 James and Muriel were still living at Heathfield (a son, also named James Cliffe Arrowsmith, had been born in Neston on 10 May 1912) but by August 1916, when he attested in Chester for the Cheshire Yeomanry, they had moved to 3 Weatherstones Cottages in Willaston.

James' attestation documents records that, on 8 August 1916, he was aged 35 years and 1 month, that he was a gardener (working, apparently, for a Miss Mylor at Rood Park, Hooton), was 5ft 5inches tall and had a 35-inch expanded chest. James was given the Service Number 2212 although this later changed. A further record notes that James had first attested on 16 May 1916 in Birkenhead - he had a medical examination to join the army on that date (his physical development was stated to be *fair* and his weight was recorded as 118lb) and he was said to be *Fit for Class 1*. It appears that, on this earlier date, he was placed in the Army Reserve and that his *mobilisation* was dated as 8 August, his army service being reckoned from this later date.



On 7 December 1916 James was transferred from the Cheshire Yeomanry to the 4th Reserve Battalion Cheshire Regiment sailed that day from Southampton, disembarking at Rouen the following day.

Now in France, on 21 December James was again transferred, now to the 9th Battalion Cheshire Regiment and with the Service Number 50232.

The 9th (Service) Battalion Cheshire Regiment, under the orders of the 58th Brigade, 19th (Western) Division, had landed at Boulogne on 19 July 1915 and it is apparent that James was sent to reinforce their ranks.

In 1916 the 9th Battalion were in action during The Battle of the Somme, capturing La Boisselle and being involved in the attacks on High Wood, The Battles of Pozieres Ridge, The Ancre Heights and the Ancre. In 1917 they were in action in The Battle of Messines (7 - 14 June) and The Third Battles of Ypres (also known as The Battle of Passchendaele) which lasted from 31 July to 10

lines.

November. It was at this conflict, in its early stages, that James Arrowsmith was wounded and died shortly afterwards.

At The Battle of Messines, south of Ypres, the Allied forces had made significant advances eastwards after the initial detonation of huge underground mines below the German front

Dickebusch Vierstraat a Clytte Kortewilde Houthem I 4 Mont Kemmel UNDERGROUND MINES exploded 3:10 am, 7 June BELGIUM Wulvergem Warneton XXX FRANCE II ANZAC Neuve Source: http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/battle-messines-map

Overall, the Messines
Offensive, to capture the
ridge of higher ground, was
successful; the primary
objectives were secured
within three hours of the
battle commencing, giving
the British forces strategic
high ground and a significant
morale boost. British losses
were 17,000 men killed or
wounded, whilst German
losses were 25,000 men,
including 7,500 prisoners.

Page | 1250

Following the Allied successes at Messines, and consolidation of the positions,

the British finally got what they had wanted since 1914: the opportunity to attack at Ypres and breakout of the confines of the salient of trenches around it. Often known as the Third Battle of Ypres or Passchendaele, the offensive began with encouraging gains but terrible summer weather soon bogged it down. By August the offensive was clearly failing in its objectives and had descended into attritional fighting. New techniques by both sides led to agonisingly slow forward movement for the British, at enormous cost in casualties to both sides. Bad weather in October led to the battlefield becoming an impossible quagmire. [http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/].

The capture of the [Messines] ridge inflated Haig's confidence and preparations began [for the attack on Ypres and the region to the east]. Yet the flatness of the plain made stealth impossible: as with the Somme, the Germans knew an attack was imminent and the initial bombardment served as final warning. It lasted two weeks, with 4.5 million shells fired from 3,000 guns, but again failed to destroy the heavily fortified German positions.

The infantry attack began on 31 July. Constant shelling had churned the clay soil and smashed the drainage systems. The left wing of the attack achieved its objectives but the right wing failed completely. Within a few days, the heaviest rain for 30 years had turned the soil into a quagmire, producing thick mud that clogged up rifles and immobilised tanks. It eventually became so deep that men and horses drowned in it. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/battle_passchendaele.shtml]

On 31 July 1917 the 9th Battalion Cheshire Regiment were at Onraet Wood, midway between St. Eloi (Sint-Elooi) and Messines (Mesen). Having just moved to this 'newly-occupied territory', on the right flank of the Division, their position was described as being '....very obscure and uncertain' and necessitated two junior officers being sent out to reconnoitre and report back. Although this was successful, it was recorded that '... a very great deal of hostile artillery and rifle fire was encountered' and, on this day, three of the Battalion's men were wounded.

The War Diary documents the activity of the early days of August, the period surrounding the date when James Cliffe Arrowsmith was wounded and subsequently died:

	1917 Ang	
	1	Trench conditions became worse. Surplus personnel rejoined
		Companies from the Transport Lines.
	124	. The Divisional front was reorganised into two Brigade
		Sectors, 58" Brigade on right. 9" Cheshire Support Battalion, moving
		forward from ONRART and GRAND BOIS to trenches east and west
V^{2} , which		of OOSTTAVERNE WOOD
Battaken in support		Themore was complete at 3.25 am. Ausposition as in Ja
WOOD WOOD		4. O. H reinforcements arrived.

Transcript of War Diary entry (previous page)

1 Aug. 1917 Trench conditions became worse. Surplus personnel rejoined Companies from the Transport Lines. The Divisional front was reorganized into two Brigade Sectors, 58th Brigade on the right. (the Cheshire Support Battalion moving forward from ONRAET WOOD and GRAND BOIS to trenches east and west of OOSTTAVERNE WOOD.

Battalion Support 2 Aug. 1917 The move was complete at 3.25am. Dispositions as in J.9.

OOSTTAVERNE WOOD 4 O.R. reinforcements arrived.

	Security and	
Right Front	3	Conditions in the trenches became very bad.
		Hostile shelling was very heavy
		9th Cheshire relieved the 6th Wilts unthe right Subsector. The
		-relief was slow, but went of without hitch, inspite of the
		darkness and bad state of the ground. The front taken over
		was held by aline of isolated posts with supporting plations
13,000		150 yards in rear.
023. a. 8.4		Relief was completed by 1.10 am
017.dca30		· Hostile shelling of the communications was continuous and heavy.
POLKALST		Buttation Hadquarters was shelled continuously throughout the
		night
		Despositions as in J. 13. Casualtees O. R. wounded b.
	(6.71	Nestersition: as an one of the control of the contr
0.23. 9. 8. 4	AUG	
POLKAEST.		The situation of the advanced posts of the Division on the right
		had been in some doubt, during the night 3/4 & patrols were
		Sent out to locate them. Reports are in J. 13.
		These posts were considered tobe too far behind ours and
A		an operation was projected for straightening the line, in
1 3 3 1 1 1 1 1 1	100	Co operation with the 37th Division on the right.
	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Information was received. What the 37th Division would not
		co-operate and our plan was amended accordingly.
		a report on the operations is attached.
		as PONKAEST. had now been consistently shelled for over 24 hours.
		Battalion Steadquarters was moved to the dugouts near the
Allein, visioner		" T Kilo stone" on the Road INE. of OOSTTAVERNE WOOD.
4.00 m	1.1	Casualties: Andhient. CANNON. 2nd hint PANTER -wounded. 3. OR. Killed
		10 OR. wounded.
		The state of the s

Right front subsector 3 Aug. 1917 Conditions in the trenches became very bad. Hostile shelling was very heavy. 9th Cheshire relieved the 6th Wilts. on the right subsector. The relief was slow but went off without hitch in spite of the darkness and bad state of the ground. The front taken over was held by a line of isolated posts with supporting platoons 150 yards in rear.

O.23.a.8.4 4 Aug. 1917 Hostile shelling of the communications was continuous and heavy. Battalion O.17.d.00.30 Headquarters was shelled continuously throughout the night. Disposition as in J.13. POLKA EST Casualties O.R. wounded 6.

O.23.a.8.4 4 Aug. 1917 The situation of the advanced posts of the Division on the right had been in some 0.17.d.00.30 doubt, during the night $3/4^{th}$ patrols were sent out to locate them. Reports are in J.13.

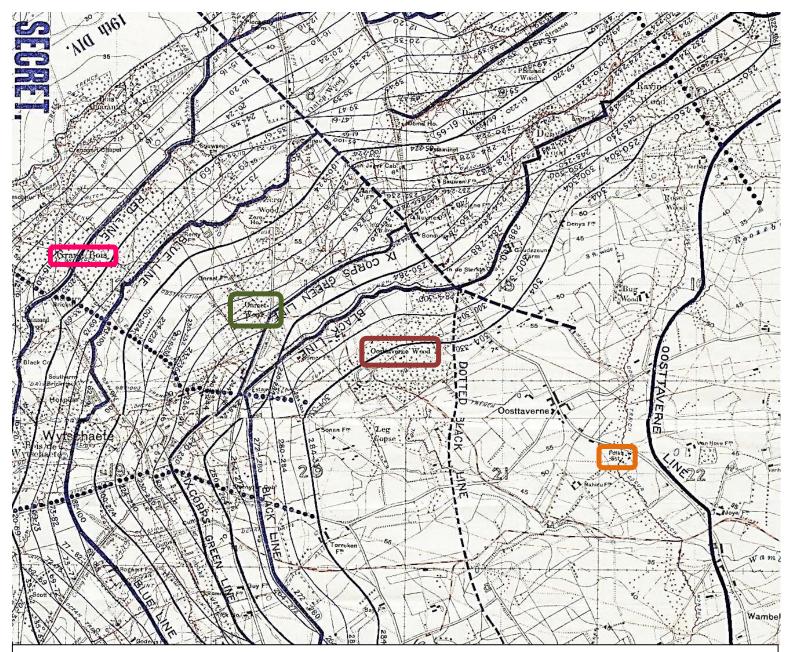
POLKA EST These posts were considered to be too far behind ours and an operation was projected for straightening the line, in co-operation with the 37th Division on the right.

Information was received that the 37th Division would not co-operate and our plan was amended accordingly. A report on the operations is attached.

As POLKA EST had now been consistently shelled for over 24 hours Battalion Headquarters was moved to the dugouts near the '7 kilo stone' on the road NE of OOSTTAVERNE WOOD.

Casualties: 2nd Lieut. CANNON, 2nd Lieut. PANTER wounded. 3 O.R. killed. 10 O.R. wounded.

The locations mentioned in the War Diary are shown as inserts on the map which was enclosed with the Diary:

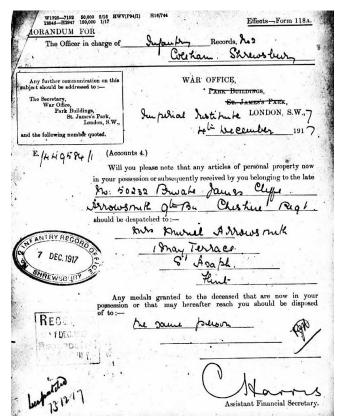


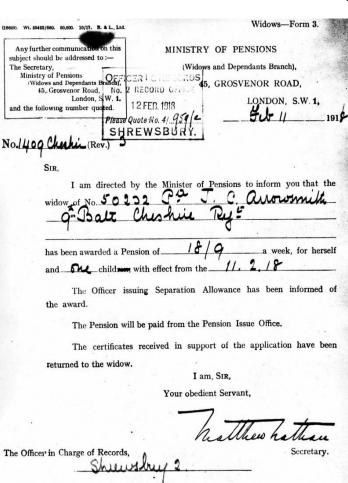
The Second Army Barrage Map of June 1917 (extract) showing the objectives (Black Line, Blue Line etc) at the Battle of Messines as the Allied forces moved eastwards. The final objective, the Oosttaverne (or *Sehnen*) Line (to the east of the map) was finally consolidated by 10 June although the areas gained were, subsequently, under constant shell fire and attack by the German forces.

This map formed part of the War Diary of the 9th Battalion Cheshire Regiment and, to identify the locations recorded in the Diary for the opening days of August, names have been enclosed in coloured rectangles (from west to east): Grand Bois (pink) – Onraet Wood (green) – Oosttaverne Wood (brown) – Polka Est (orange)

Key On this map the side of a grid square represents 1000 yards (914 metres). North is to the top of the map.







James Arrowsmith was probably wounded on one of the first three days of August and he appears to have been taken to the 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station which had moved in May 1917 from Estaires to Bailleul, where it had a busy time during the battle for the Messines ridge. In July 1917 it moved again to Outtersteene, a small settlement in France (on the Bailleul road) some 22km to the south-west of Oosttaverne Wood. It was here that James died on Saturday 4 August 1917 but official notification of his death does not appear to have been sent to his wife until 19 October.

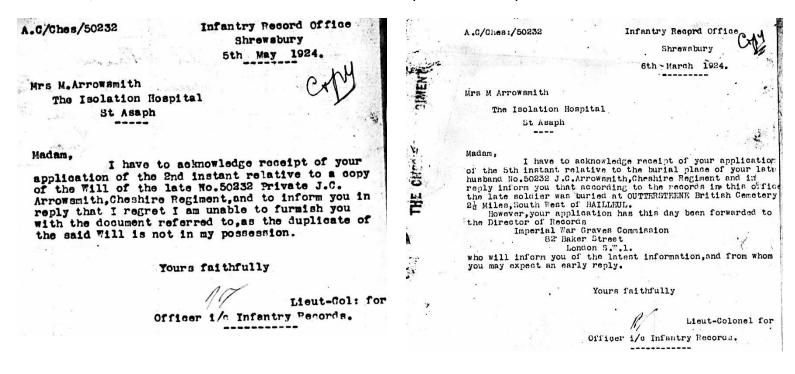
It seems that, almost immediately following the notification of James' death, Muriel, his widow, and son James moved from Willaston to St Asaph, Muriel's birthplace. Certainly, a letter from the War Office in early December 1917 was sent to Muriel at

1 May Terrace, St Asaph (a row of cottages on Gemig Street), the address she seems to have occupied for several years after her return to North Wales.



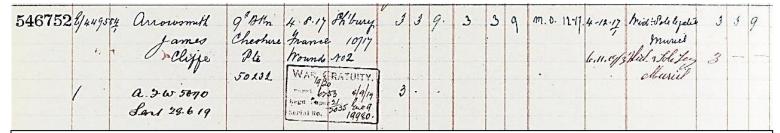
In February 1918, six months after James Arrowsmith died, the Ministry of Pensions granted Muriel a pension of 18s 9d per week for herself and son James. This is approximately equivalent to a *labour rate* (ie wages) of £180 in 2016.

Further correspondence in March and May 1924 reveal that not only was Muriel seeking information on James' Will, and that she required clarification on where he had been buried, but that she was now in the Isolation Hospital in St Asaph.



The St. Asaph Infectious Diseases Hospital was built in 1910 on the site of the St Asaph Union Workhouse, this having been built in 1839 to relieve poor people in the area, covering Prestatyn, Rhyl, St Asaph, Denbigh and the surrounding villages. In 1906 a 2-storey infirmary was built at the rear of the Workhouse to house the sick and the site became the H. M. Stanley Hospital. There is no indication of why Muriel Arrowsmith was in the Isolation Hospital at that time although she appears to have made a complete recovery - her death was recorded, in St Asaph, aged 80, in the April/June quarter of 1963.

No. 2.Infantry Record Office, SHRAWSHURY. Date(8. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3. 3.	B CHES 15/142. I hereby actinovoledge the receipt of the BRITISH WAN MEDAL granted in respect of the service of Nº 50252. C. Anowsmith Cheshire Regiment. Ms H, mowsmith Signature Munifolion-smith 1 May Jenne. Signature Munifolion-smith
Officer 1/c Ko.2. Infantry Records.	Mrs Manwemith Signature Municillus mith 1 May Jenne. Signature Municillus mith 1th assaph. With Thanks



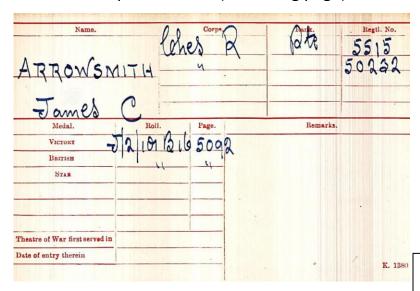
Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

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. In June 1919 James's widow, Muriel, as sole legatee, received a payment of outstanding wages of £3 3s 9d from the army an in September 1919 a War Gratuity of £3 was paid to Muriel.

In total £6 3s 9d was paid to Margaret; this is equivalent to a labour value (wages) of around £950 in 2016.

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.

James Cliffe Arrowsmith is commemorated on the Willaston War Memorial, the St Asaph War Memorial and on the ornate memorial plaque in St Asaph Cathedral (see facing page).





British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920

ARROWSMITH, James Cliffe of Cartref 5 Pen-y-Haes Ruthin Clwyd died 20 January 1988 Probate Liverpool 26 April £92036 8880501071A

England & Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills & Administration), 1858 - 1966



CLIFFE ARROWSMITH HANK ASHTON T.PRICE JONES WILFRED JONES HENRY LEIGH BIBBY EDWARD KENNY LOUIS CAVANNA REGINALD H.CLARKE RICHARD KENNY IAMES WINDSOR LEWIS JOSEPH DAVIES
ROBERT DAVIES EDWARD LLOYD PERCY LUCAS W. CHARLES LUCAS WALTER L. DEED EDMUND L. DURCAN E.O.WYNNE MORRIS H.LGARLAND EDWARDS WILLIAM GEORGE FREDERICK E.PIERCE R.CHARLES PRITCHARD GEORGE HILL PERCY STANDISH HORE ARTHUR MEURIG PRYCE JOHN TUDOR PUGH ALBERT HOULSTON PERCIVAL C.RHODES **IOHNARTHURHUGHES** ALBERT JONES DAVID ROBERTS DAVID JONES DAVID JONES D.PENNANT ROBERTS F.E.HOWES ROBERTS EVAN THOMAS JONES RICHARD ROBERTS WILLIAM H. ROBERTS HUGH JONES HUGH WILLIAM JONES HENRY ROWLANDS JOHN HERBERT JONES F. NORMAN WATKINS JOSEPH JONES EVAN C.WILLIAMS THOMAS ALLEN JONES RICHARD WILLIAMS THOMASHUGH JONES AMUEL WILLIAMS KEAT - WAR - FOR - KING - AND - COUNTR' A - D - 1914 - 1918

St Asaph Cathedral WW1 Memorial http://www.martin-nicholson.info/cemetery/cemeteryasaph.htm

In the 1939 Register (29 September) it is recorded that Muriel Arrowsmith, the widow of James, was living with her widowed mother and two unmarried siblings at 'Terfyn', Lothian Park, St Asaph:

born 26 February 1852 incapacitated Margaret Williams widow born 29 May 1888 Elsie Williams single born 1 March 1884 Muriel Arrowsmith widow nurse (retired) born 26 October 1882 chief clerk of district probate George O Williams single registrar

As noted previously, Muriel's death was recorded, in St Asaph, aged 80, in the April/June quarter of 1963.

Also in the 1939 Register, James Cliffe Arrowsmith jnr, the only child of james snr and Muriel, was living, with others, at 'Heulwen', Fford Mela, Pwllheli:

Thomas Jones	born 12 August 1888	married	County Council Clerk of Works
Margaret Jones	born 26 July 1894	single	
Thomas Elwyn Jones	born 28 May 1923	single	
Annie M Morgan	born 11 June 1910	single	
Meinwen A Pettigrew	born 8 August 1916	single	domestic servant
One line of th	ne record has been redact	ed	
Evelyn V Parry	born 7 July 1906	single	bank cashier
James C Arrowsmith	born 10 May 1912	single	banker's clerk
Aubrey D Richard	born 21 April 1913	single	banker's clerk

James Arrowsmith married Annie M Morgan (see above) at a Civil Marriage in Pwllheli in mid-1944.

Evelyn VictorParry married Meinwen Agnes Pettigrew (see above) at St Paul's Church, Tranmere, in mid-1943.

James Cliffe Arrowsmith died in Ruthin on 20 January 1988 aged 76. It is not known when Annie died.