

David James Wellington Clarke[©]

Regimental number: 44507

2nd Garrison Battalion, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

born: July-September 1889¹ — died: 5 September 1917



KOYLI Regimental Badge

Source: Wikicommons

David James Wellington Clarke was 28 years of age and a married man when he was killed on 5 September 1917 near De Panne, Flanders, Belgium.²

David's mother, Isabella Bertram Hume (b. 1867), grew up in Edinburgh, Scotland,³ while his father, Albert Edward Clarke (b. 1867),⁴ was born in Ealing and the family lived in Putney, London for most of the time David was growing up. David lived with his parents, five siblings and his uncle Reginald.⁵ This Clarke family has been traced back to the early 1800s living in the Middlesex/London area.⁶

The family was hard working and well established in the community. Prior to her marriage Isabella had worked as an "Envelope Stamper"⁷ and David's father was employed as a tobacconist, a milkman and an insurance agent while David was growing up. David also went into the insurance business when he was old enough to work.⁸

David's had one younger brother, Albert (b. 1897),⁹ and four sisters: Margaret Harriett (b.1893-d. 1958), Henrietta Amelia (b. 1895), Evelyn Leona (b. 1898) and Dorothy Ethel (b. 1900). In the 1911 Census Henrietta and Leona were listed while Dorothy Ethel and Margaret Harriett are not. That census indicates that one child of the family had died. Further research showed records of a Margaret Harriett Clarke marrying and having two children and dying in Harrow in 1958.¹⁰ Dorothy Ethel was the only missing daughter. It was confirmed that she died in 1910, age 6 in Wandsworth.¹¹

On 21 March 1912 David James Wellington Clarke and Nellie Louisa Cattell married in St. Mary's Parish Church, Putney, by banns. Both the bride and groom were residing in Putney at the time of the marriage and the ceremony was witnessed by George Martin Cattell, the bride's father, and Maggie Clarke, the groom's sister along with a groomsman named W. [S]tanley.¹²

The couple settled into life in London until the First World War, when David signed up with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI). At the time of his death, his wife Nellie was living at 8 Bond Street, Cromer.¹³ One of the military records found for David indicates that he was survived by his wife and children.¹⁴ The General Registry Office (GRO) only lists one child born to a Clarke/Cattell union in Middlesex for the period from 1912 to 1917. That child was Winifred D. Clarke and she was born between January and March of 1914.¹⁵

David was wounded on 4 September 1917 and admitted that day to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station. He died on 5 September 1917 and was buried in the Adinkerke Military

Cemetery.¹⁶ David's wife Nellie and Winifred could not be traced further, but David's mother Isabella died in Hammersmith in 1922, while his father Albert survived until 22 September 1946.¹⁷

Adinkerke Military Cemetery is located 6 km west of Veurne, 3 km inland from the coast and 20 km east of Dunkirk.

From June to November 1917 the Commonwealth XV Corps held the front from the Belgian coast to St. Georges. The 24th and 39th Casualty Clearing Stations were posted at Oosthoek (between Adinkerke and Furnes) from July to November, and the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station was at Adinkerke for a short time in June. The cemetery contains 168 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, and 55 from the Second World War. There are also 142 Czech and German war graves.¹⁸

David fought with the 2nd Garrison Battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. This garrison formed at South Dalton in June 1916, moved to France in July and joined the Fourth Army as troops through July 1918.¹⁹

The Fourth Army, in turn, was engaged in the Third Battle of Ypres at the time David was killed. The battle plan called for the Fourth Army to mount Operation Hush, an amphibious invasion of the Belgian coast. This operation was to begin once the German forces were pushed back from the Passchendaele—Westroosebeke ridge, but as the Ypres fighting became bogged down, the Fourth Army divisions were drawn off as reinforcements. It was during this time that David perished.²⁰

The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry was formed in 1881 but had its roots 125 years earlier in the 51st and 105th Regiments of Foot. These regiments formed the foundation for the KOYLI They served in the Seven Years War, the Napoleonic wars, the Second Burma War, and with the East India Company in the 1st Anglo-Afghan War. The KOYLI served in the 3rd Burmese War, the Boer War and the two World Wars.²¹

© 2017 BIFHSGO

¹ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Births Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entry for David James Clarke, Registration district: Fulham, Inferred county: London, Volume: 1a, Page: 251

² "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 6 July 2016), entry for D.J.W. Clarke

³ "1871 England, Wales & Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 8 March 2017), entry for Isabella Hume, Civil parish: Edinburgh St. Andrew, Registration district: St. Andrew, County: Midlothian, ED: 90, Household schedule number: 78, Line: 25, Roll: CSSCT1871_160 and

"1881 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entry for Isabella Bertram Hume, Registration District: St. Andrew, Registration Number: 685/2, Civil parish: Edinburgh St. George, County: Midlothian, ED: 109, Household schedule number: 71, Line: 17, Roll: CSSCT1881_286

⁴ "London, England, Births and Baptisms, 1813–1906," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 February 2017), entry for Albert Edward Clarke, Parish: Ealing Christ Church, Borough: Ealing, Register type: Parish registers, London Metropolitan Archives, Ealing Christ Church, Register of Baptism, DRO/143, Item 001 and "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 24 February 2017), entry for Albert Edward Clarke, Registration district: Wandsworth, Registration district number: 26, Sub-registration district: Putney, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 3, Piece: 2434

⁵ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entry for David Clark (*sic*), Registration district: Wandsworth, Sub-registration district: Putney, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 07, Household schedule number: 319, Piece: 490, Folio: 30, Page number: 52, Household schedule number: 319 and

"1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 24 February 2017), entry for David James Clarke

⁶ "Lowe/Edwards Family Tree," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entries for Albert Edward Clarke and family

⁷ "1881 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entry for Isabella Bertram Hume

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 24 February 2017), entry for David James Clarke

¹⁰ "Lowe/Edwards Family Tree," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entries for Albert Edward Clarke and family

¹¹ "GRO Online index," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 20 Nov 2017), entry for Dorothy Ethel Clarke, Year:1910, M Quarter in Wandsworth, Volume 01D, Page 357

¹² "London, England, Marriages and Banns, 1754–1921," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 24 February 2017), entry for David James Willington (*sic*) Clarke & Nellie Louisa Cattell, Parish: St Mary, Putney, Borough: Wandsworth

¹³ "Global, Find a Grave Index for Non-Burials, Burials at Sea, and other Select Burial Locations, 1300s–Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 21 November 2014), entry for Private D.J.W. Clarke, Cemetery: Adinkerke Military Cemetery

¹⁴ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 7 July 2016), entry for David James Clark, Regimental Number: 44507, Battalion: 2nd Garrison Battalion, Regiment: King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

¹⁵ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entry for Winifred D. Clarke, Registration district: Brentford, Inferred county: Middlesex, Volume: 3a, Page: 218 & "General Registry Office, United Kingdom," GRO online https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/indexes_search.asp: accessed 25 February 2017)

¹⁶ "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 21 November 2014), entry for Adinkerke Military Cemetery

¹⁷ "Lowe/Edwards Family Tree," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 February 2017), entries for Albert Edward Clarke and Isabella Bertram Hume

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry," *The Long, Long Trail* (<http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk>: accessed 26 February 2017)

²⁰ "Fourth Army (United Kingdom)," *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_Amy_\(United_Kingdom\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_Amy_(United_Kingdom))): accessed 26 February 2017,

²¹ "King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King's_Own_Yorkshire_Light_Infantry): accessed 26 February 2017) and *Forces War Records* (<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk>: accessed 26 February 2017)