

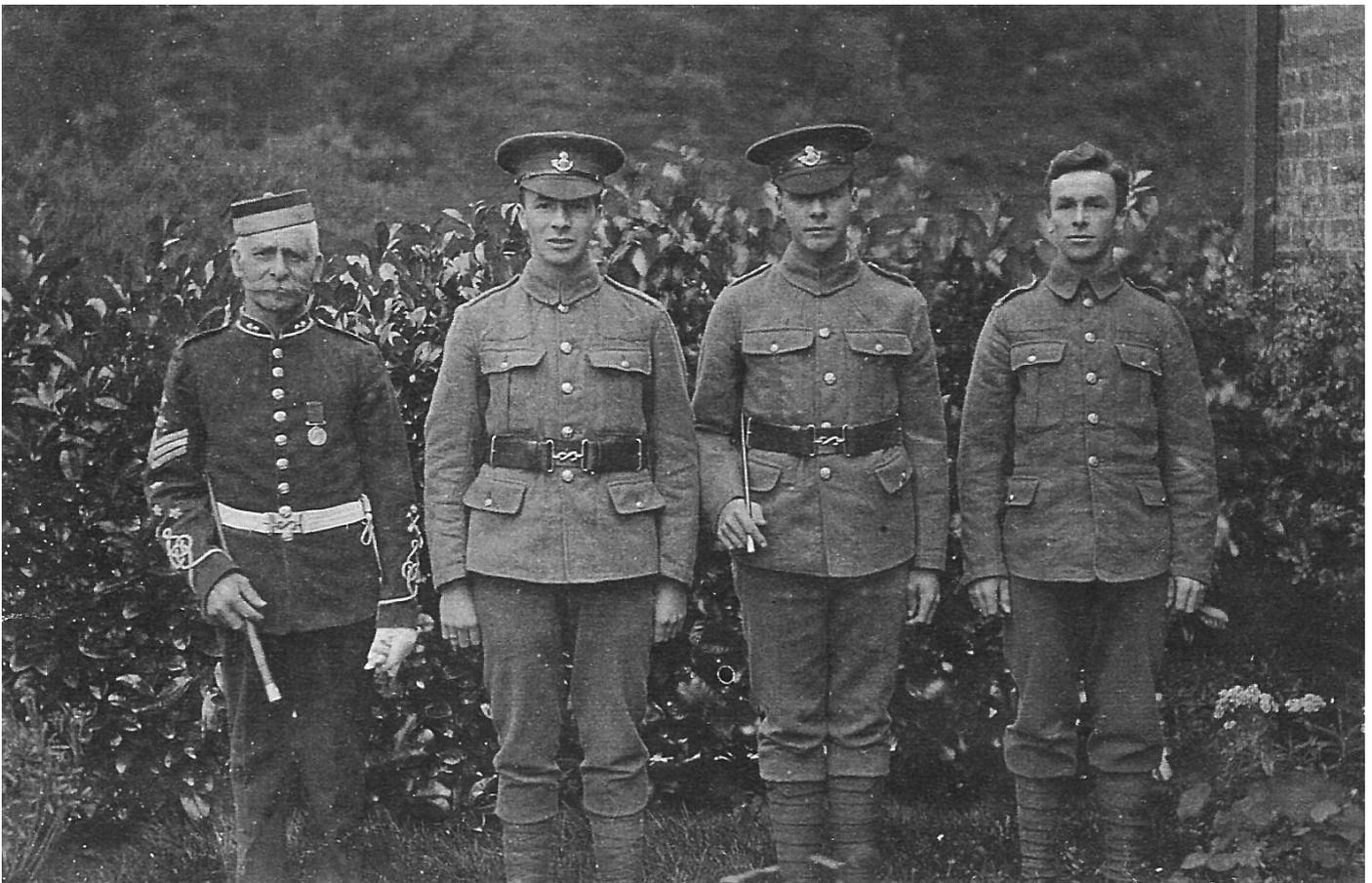
Private Percy George Edwards of All Stretton

died 14 July 1916 in France, aged 22.

Edward Lewis was born on 24 January 1894, the son of Thomas Henry, farmer and carpenter, and Mary Ann Edwards, the sixth in a family of 7 children, 5 boys and 2 girls, born between 1881 and 1898. Thomas and Mary nee George were married in 1879, in 1881 and 1891 the family were living in Inwood but on the 1901 census they are recorded as living at Castle Villa House, Castle Hill, now called Rosemount. Percy was attending school.

By the time the 1911 census was recorded, Percy was working as an Assistant in a Dairy in Chorlton on the outskirts of Manchester. Of the 5 sons, all but the eldest Thomas who was 32 when the war broke out, served in the First World War.

Unfortunately, Percy's service records have not survived. He enlisted into the Kings Shropshire Light Infantry and joined the 7th Battalion. His service number was 19304.



Thomas Henry Edwards with his sons, William, Stanley and Percy

Photo: Source Morris Public Family Tree, Ancestry.Co.Uk

Riou, born 1884, who was named after the Rev Riou George Benson, Rector of Hope Bowdler where Mary Ann came from, lost an arm in the fighting. He returned to live in All Stretton until his death in 1940.

William Henry, born 1893, enlisted in Nov 1914 into the Kings Shropshire Light Infantry. He was trained as a machine gunner. He served in Salonica in 1918 and was finally discharged from the army in June 1919.

Herbert Stanley, known as Stanley, born 1898, was a private in the Army Service Corps Mechanical Transport Reserve.

Percy served in C Company of the 7th battalion of the KSLI which was formed in 1914 and landed in Boulogne in September 1915. It remained on the western front fighting in Ypres.

Percy was killed on the 14 July 1916 at High Wood. This was the first day of the Battle of Bazentin Ridge, part of the overall Somme offensive which had begun on 1 July. The 14th was the first day that the KSLI had been involved in the battle and was the day they lost most casualties.

During the First World War the 7th battalion suffered more casualties than any other KSLI battalion. Extract from 7th battalion KSLI war diary for July 1916 courtesy of the National Archives.

13 July strength of 7th KSLI Officers 34 OR [other ranks] 993.

14 July 3.30am.

Battalion advanced towards German trenches and were held by barbed wire. Remainder leaped into shell holes and consolidated along road 200 yds from German trench. 11am we were informed the 2nd Royal Scots were bombing along German trench on our left which had been taken at 12pm Battalion again charged and captured both 1st and 2nd trenches also 250 prisoners. When all battalion were collected and consolidating German 2nd trench we found 5 officers were untouched the remainder were wounded or killed, the losses in the ranks were found to be heavy. OR 147 killed 278 wounded (16 of which subsequently died) 16 missing.

Percy was buried at the Quarry cemetery, Montauban which contains 740 burials.



Quarry cemetery, Montauban courtesy of Commonwealth War Graves Commission