

ARTHUR GEORGE VALENTINE PINFOLD



29th April 1918

1891-1918 Aged 26



Private 57924 9th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

The Pinfolds moved to Cleckheaton from Buckinghamshire during the 1880s. George Valentine Pinfold was a watchmaker and jeweller who was in business with his two sons. By the time the business went into receivership in 1894 there were three branches. The elder of the two sons was Arthur Gough Pinfold. He was something of an inventor and manufactured a patented Silent Metronome at his works in Eccleshill. He later invented and produced a Trousers Press. In 1887 he had married Arabella Evelina Caudwell in Nottinghamshire, and they went on to have four children. Arthur George Valentine was their third child born on 10th June 1891. All the children were baptized at St. Luke's, Cleckheaton, in one ceremony in 1899.

Arthur and his older brother Ernest both studied at Bradford Grammar School. Ernest went on to university, qualified as an geologist and worked in India. Arthur was at B.G.S. for three years, in the Modern forms. The school records show that he was an average pupil who left after three years when he was fourteen. What the records do not reveal is that Arthur was a talented musician who for several seasons played the oboe in both Italian and English opera companies. In 1911 he was working for his father as a 'leather goods maker' at A. Pinfold & Co. Metronome Works on Idle Road, where the trouser press was also manufactured. He also served a term of service with the Territorial Force, presumably four years with the 6th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment. He did not renew his enlistment, perhaps owing to his touring commitments.

When the war began Arthur was twenty-three and although he had military training he did not volunteer. It was not until late in 1915 that he attested under Lord Derby's scheme and he was called up in March 1916. He was at first posted to the Welsh

Regiment (illustrated here). After his basic training it was said that 'he studied explosives closely'—Chemistry had been one of his better subjects at school—and he gained a first-class certificate as a bombing instructor. It is not known when Arthur crossed the Channel, for how long he was a bombing instructor and when he went to the front. He was transferred to 9th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers, also at an unknown date. Arthur had applied for a commission in the Royal Flying Corps, for which he passed the examination, but before he received orders to report for officer training the German Spring Offensive commenced.

In March 1918 the 9th Royal Welsh lost 460 men killed, wounded and missing during the first German attack ('Michael') and was reduced to 90 men organized into three platoons. The battalion was relieved and sent north to recover, only to find itself in the path of the second German attack in April ('Georgette'). For 28th April the War Diary records that the battalion, still very under strength, dug and occupied the 'GHQ Line' south of Dikkebus. For 29th April it records simply 'In same line.' This was the last day of the German offensive south of Ypres and the day Pinfold was killed with twelve other men of the 9th Royal Welsh. An unknown number were wounded. In most cases these dead men had no known graves and their names were recorded on the Tyne Cot Memorial.



Acknowledgements:

Pinfold's photo is from the School memorial book courtesy of the O.B.A. and B.G.S. The family was researched using Ancestry.com. His record at B.G.S. is taken from the Annual Reports for 1903 to 1905. The Bradford Roll of Honour (<<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bradfordww1/albums/72157637592179513>>) supplies his date of enlistment (although it records that he was a sergeant, for which there is no other record). The biography in the *Bradford Weekly Telegraph* 31-5-1918 is the main source for his life and military service (followed by <<http://www.shipleyww1.org.uk/mws%20pinfold,%20arthur.htm>>, accessed 23-4-2018, researched and written by Jean Britteon; she states that he enlisted straight into 9th Royal Welsh Fusiliers as Private 241990, whereas *Soldiers Died in the Great War* and *UK, WW1 Service Medal and Award Rolls* record he was 'formerly 40329, Welsh Regiment', 64404 Welsh Regiment, Infantry Base Depot, and 57924 Royal Welsh Fusiliers). The 9th Royal Welsh Fusiliers War Diary is WO95/2092/1, consulted through Ancestry.com. It is not a detailed source for the crucial dates. I have not been able to consult Richard Llewellyn Davies (author) and Haydn Llewellyn Davies (editor), *Never So Innocent Again* (2014). The former served with the 9th Battalion until the end of the war and may provide further detail.

For Arthur Gough Pinfold's inventions, <<http://www.billinterim.co.uk/?p=79>> accessed 23-4-2018. Kelly's 1912 Directory of Bradford records A. Pinfold & Co. as Bradford's sole manufacturer of trouser presses. A search of the British Newspaper Archive (findmypast.co.uk) revealed several stories relating to George Valentine Pinfold father and son, and Arthur Gough Pinfold. The latter's brother George V. Pinfold was arrested for the theft of gold jewellery in Margate in January 1900.

Arthur Pinfold was remembered on the war memorial of St Luke's Parish Church, Undercliffe, and BGS. He does not appear to be on any Eccleshill memorials.

This biography was researched and composed by Nick Hooper in April 2018. For further information, contact Nhooper1956@googlemail.com, or see <<http://www.bradfordgrammar.com/former-pupils/bradford-grammar-school-in-ww1/>>.