

# CAPTAIN RICHARD LLOYD WILLIAMS

## 7<sup>TH</sup> BATTALION RWF



Captain Richard Lloyd Williams was fatally injured on 31 July 1917 at the battle of Pilckem Ridge, the opening battle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> battle of Ypres. He died in the 12<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1917 aged 29.

He is buried in the Mendingham military cemetery, Proven, but is also commemorated on the family gravestone in Trefriw cemetery. His parents are also buried there – Richard Williams who died 20 February 1919 and Anne who died 15 April 1917 - and his brother,

Jesse Williams, survived the war and received a Distinguished Service Medal. Jesse was a year younger than Richard. He qualified as a barrister in Huby near Leeds and died in 1959. The grandparents' names are on the memorial too. They are Richard and Catherine of Blaen y Nant who are buried in Llanberis. They died in 1872 and 1886.

The Census returns reveal that Richard came from a large, well-to-do farming family who originally lived at Blaen y Nant, near Llyn Crafnant. There were seven children in the family, five boys and two girls.

Richard attended the village school in Trefriw and then the grammar school in Llanrwst. (*Eryl Prys Jones: Conwy Wleddeg a'r Rhyfil Mawr*) See also *De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour*. He went on to work for the London City and Midland Bank and in the 1911 Census; he was living in Denbigh and working as a bank clerk. His parents had retired from farming at Blaen y Nant and had moved to Welby House, where, at the time of the 1911 Census, Jesse's future brother-in-law, Pensam Thornton, a medical student, was listed as a visitor.

Richard & Jesse were some of the first young men to respond to the Government's appeal for volunteers to fight against Germany, enlisting in the 13<sup>th</sup> Service Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers on 7th November 1914. In February 1915, he was made 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the 17<sup>th</sup> Battalion and in June the same year, promoted to Lieutenant. On 27<sup>th</sup> November 1915, he was promoted again, this time to Captain. See *De*

*Ruvigny's Roll of Honour* In December 1915 He was sent to France as part of the Expeditionary Force. His brother Jesse was a Major. Both were rapidly promoted because, although they came from an ordinary Welsh farming family, they were well-educated and seen as suitable officer material.

According to a family story, Richard received a 'Dear John' letter at the end of July 1917 – the identity of the girlfriend is unknown. Maybe this was on his mind but sadly he was fatally injured a few days later. Richard left £50 in his will to Peniel Chapel in Trefriw and his father donated a set of altar vessels in memory of both Richard and his wife, Anne.

*Note: Jesse married in 1915, but was later wounded at Mametz (North Wales Weekly News 20 July 1916). He survived his wounds and had several children, dying in Harrogate in 1959.*

Sources: Eryl Prys Jones: *Conwy Wledig a'r Rhyfel Mawr*

*Wales Census: 1891, 1901, 1911*

*UK, De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, 1914-1919*

*Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919*

*View Record*

*England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966, 1973-1995*

**WILLIAMS, RICHARD LLOYD**, Capt., 17th (Service) Battn. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers, s. of Richard Williams, of Welby Cottage, Trefriw S.O., North Wales, by his late wife, Anne; b. Blaen-y-Nant, Trefriw, co. Carnarvon, 13 Oct. 1887; educ. Llanrwst County School; was a Clerk on the staff of the London City & Midland Bank, Denbigh; enlisted in the 13th (Service) Battn. Royal Welsh Fusiliers 7 Nov. 1914; obtained a commission, and was gazetted 2nd Lieut. 17th Battn. of the same regiment 25 Feb. 1915; promoted Lieut. 30 June, and Capt. 27 Nov. 1915; served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from 1 Dec. following, and died at No. 12 Casualty Clearing Station, Proven, 2 Aug. 1917, of wounds received in action at Iron Cross, Pilkem, during the Third Battle of Ypres 31 July previously. Buried in the British Military Cemetery, Proven. A Private wrote: "Capt. R. Lloyd Williams had won the confidence of his men, and we would have followed him anywhere." *Unm.*

**Richard Lloyd Williams' entry in De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, Vol. 4**



**Blaen Nant, Llyn Crafnant, birthplace of Richard Lloyd Williams**



**Welby House, former home of Richard Lloyd Williams**





**Jesse Williams' Wedding Group 1915**

**Lieut. Pensam Thornton MC R.A.M.C, on left, Mr & Mrs Thornton centre, Eva Thornton & Maj. Jesse Williams seated & Capt. R. Lloyd Williams standing on extreme right,**