

**Private Eli Burns (27177) 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Welsh (Pioneers) Regiment d 26 July 1917**



IN  
LOVING MEMORY OF  
**JOHN BURNS**  
BORN FEB 7<sup>TH</sup> 1839  
DIED OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup> 1911  
AND OF **MARY** HIS WIFE  
BORN JULY 2<sup>ND</sup> 1840  
DIED APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup> 1914  
ALSO OF THEIR SONS  
**ELI**  
DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE  
JULY 27<sup>TH</sup> 1917  
AGED 37 YEARS  
**JOSEPH**  
BORN JULY 29<sup>TH</sup> 1877  
DIED MAY 13<sup>TH</sup> 1925  
**JAMES**  
BORN APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup> 1870  
DIED DEC. 16<sup>TH</sup> 1930

Ely (sic) Burns was baptised in the Bible Christian Church, Barrow, 23 December 1880. The Bible Christian Church in Barrow was on the corner of Risedale Road and Roose Road, opposite the Washington Hotel.

On his death Eli's back pay was sent to his "brother and sole executor, James."

Commemorated at Basra War Cemetery. Eli died of heat stroke in Mesopotamia. His date of death is variously given as 20; 24; 26 & 27 July 1917. His regiment moved to the Mediterranean from the 13<sup>th</sup> June 1915 landing at Alexandria then moving to Mudros; by the 4th July they were preparing to land at Gallipoli. They moved to Mesopotamia in February 1917. <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-infantry-regiments-of-1914-1918/welsh-regiment/>

Pioneer battalions often did the physical work. As a miner, Eli is likely to have been strong and fit. Often pioneers helped build bridges, or dig tunnels in which mines were to be laid.

The *Askam & Ireleth History Society* provided the following further information about Eli Burns:

Eli enlisted in the army in September 1914 in Ulverston and joined the 6th Battalion King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment as a Private with Service No 14777. The 6th Battalion embarked for Egypt on 13 June 1915 and arrived in Gallipoli on 6 July. The 8th Welsh (Pioneer) Battalion were also serving in Gallipoli. The 8th Welsh had suffered heavy losses due to casualties and illness and were evacuated from Helles following the final Turkish attacks on 8th/9th January 1916 to Egypt. At some point, Eli seems to have been transferred to the Welsh regiment and in the war diaries of the 6th December 1915 it was stated that 'a draft of 75 men arrived tonight mostly from the old 8th battalion'. This is not unusual, as Peter Donnelly of the King's Own Regimental Museum tells us, there was possibly up to 20,000 soldiers who transferred from the King's Own to other regiments if they needed extra troops during WW1. Both the 6th K.O.R.L. and the 8th Welsh were then relocated to Mesopotamia on 12th February 1916, joining the Tigris Corps on the 27th March and were amongst the first troops to enter Baghdad when it fell on the 11th March 1917. The 8th Welsh Regiment Diary of July 1917 written by Major R Peel Yates Commanding 8th Battalion Welsh Regiment of Pioneers was from Sindiye and states: "Work went on as last month. A & C companies finishing pulling up the rails needed and D company linked up with the branch line from Sumaichchan at the end of the month. The month has been very hot and practically no work has been done between 8am and 6pm. 6 men died of heat stroke and 1 man drowned whilst bathing". Eli Burns was one of the men who died of heat stroke.

*Cumbria BMD*: Eli's mother's maiden name was Fox

William 1868 d 27 November 1869 aged 17 months; James 1870; Elizabeth Agnes 1872 (married James Addison in Barrow 1893); Jane 1874 (married Anthony Atkinson, St Peter's Ireleth 1899); Tyres 1876 d 21 September 1878 aged

2 yrs 8 months (Tyras or Tyrus); Joseph 1877; Eli 1880. At the time of her death Mary was living at 102 Market Street, Dalton. *(Thanks to Askam & Ireleth History Group & St Peter's Church Burial Records for details).*

*Ancestry* (Can also be found on **1881 & 1891 Censuses**)

**1901 Census** 22 Ireleth lived John Burns (62), Iron-ore Miner, born Coulton, *(probably Colton)* Lancs; Mary Burns (60), wife, born Kirkby Ireleth; James Burns (30), Iron-ore Miner, born Dalton (Kirkby crossed out); Joseph Burns (23), iron ore miner, born Dalton; Eli Burns (20), iron ore miner, born Dalton.

**1911 Census** 22 Ireleth lived John Burns (72), Old age pensioner formerly Iron ore miner Kennedy Bros; Mary Burns (70); Eli Burns (33), Iron ore miner, Harrison Ainslie; Joseph Burns (30), Iron ore miner, Kennedy Bros. *Somehow the ages (at least) of Eli & Joseph have been transposed.*

22 Ireleth was the traditional number for a house on what is now Saves Lane: some can still be seen on houses from when this was the main road from Kirkby Ireleth down to Marsh Grange Farm and the road over the sands.