

## *Ernest Egbert Oswald Slade*

Driver, Royal Army Service Corps. Enlisted at Bath, January 1915. Died of cerebrospinal meningitis at the Isolation Hospital, Aldershot, April 15th, 1915. Buried at Corsham.



KNOWN BY HIS SECOND name and commemorated thus on the Corsham War Memorial, Egbert was born in Yatton Keynell in 1896 – his parents Andrew George and Fanny Slade (née Pearse) were farmers; at that time they were working Bromhalls Farm in Kington St Michael. It was a large family – nine children in total – but Egbert's mother died in 1905 when he was only nine. By 1911 the family lived on Pandown Farm in Corsham and Egbert was attending Chippenham Secondary School (he is remembered on the memorial plaque). His brothers George and Allan were working on the farm and his sisters Florrie and Clara were living at home.

Egbert died in 1915 from meningitis within months of enlisting for the Army – he was a Driver in the Army Service Corps and was in military barracks in Aldershot. His body was returned to Corsham and buried in Corsham Cemetery – the first military funeral in the town. This is how it was reported in the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*:

Military Funeral. The sad death at the early age of 19 of Driver Egbert Slade so soon after his arrival at Aldershot was a great blow to his family, his comrades in the Army, and numerous friends. That he was highly esteemed among the 5th Army troops will be seen by the following letter received

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by the father on the 18th inst., from Major T.C.R. Moore, commanding 5th Army Troops Train: "I much regret to have to inform you of the death of your son Egbert, which took place at 10.15 last night (April 16), in the Isolation Hospital, Aldershot. This information was conveyed to you by telegram today. Your son came under my command on March 8 suffering from cerebrospinal meningitis. I desire to express my deep sympathy with you in your sad bereavement. I would like to add that your son will be sadly missed in this train by both officers and men – he was a good comrade and gave every promise of being a good soldier."

The funeral took place at the Corsham new Burial Ground on Wednesday afternoon. The body arrived by train at the Chippenham Station and was conveyed to Corsham by hearse, accompanied by a squad of Chippenham Yeomanry under Sergeant Ellis and six trumpeters under Sergeant Trumpeter Buckland. Arriving at the gates of the cemetery, the Yeomanry formed a guard through which the cortege and mourners passed to the burial ground where the Rev. R. F. Donne (curate) was in waiting. The service in the chapel completed, the remainder was read at the grave, round which the Yeomanry and trumpeters were stationed. At the completion of the service three rounds were fired, with unanimous precision, whereupon the trumpeters sounded "The Last Post," thus ending the first and very impressive military funeral at the new burial ground.

The following mourners were present:- Mr. A. G. Slade (father), Mrs. Hughes, Mr. George Slade (brother), Mrs. Shergold (sister), Mr. Radcliffe Slade (brother), Miss Slade, Miss Amy Slade, Miss Clara Slade (sisters), Mr. Burton, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Slade, Mr. and Mrs. William Slade and Mr. R. Gale. The following wreaths were sent: "Dear Egbert, from his loving sister and brother, Floss and Allen";

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“With deepest sympathy” from Miss Fowler; Mr. and Mrs. Hull, Gladys and Len; “With sympathy”; “In ever loving memory of dear Egbert.” From sorrowing father, brothers and sisters, “The Lord gave and he has taken away”; “In deepest sympathy.” Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Walter: “With sympathy.” From Mr. and Mrs. Rumming and family; “In affectionate remembrance,” from Mr. and Mrs. Whitfield and family; from Julia Hughes; “In loving memory of dear Egbert,” from his grieving aunt and uncle and cousins (Mr. W. Slade and family, Yatton Keynell); “In loving memory of dear Uncle Egbert,” from little Bertie (nephew). The coffin bore the following inscription: “Egbert Slade died April 1915 aged 19 years.” Messrs. H. Spackman and sons made all the arrangements.



*Egbert Slade's gravestone  
in Ladbrook Lane Cemetery, Corsham.*