

# Sydney Charles Riordan: 1884 to 1964



Sydney Charles Riordan and Catherine (Cassie) nee Lewis

[Click here for brother Daniel Riordan  
Royal Navy WWI](#)

## Sydney Charles Riordan married Catherine (Cassie) nee Lewis

Sydney Charles Riordan was born on 11th January 1884 at 6 Lloyd Street, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil. He was baptised on 6th February 1884 in St John's Church, Dowlais. One of 9 surviving children of Daniel Riordan (an Irish immigrant) and Mary Ann Enon

Sydney married Catherine (Cassie) Elizabeth Lewis on 22nd April 1909.

Their only son Edgar Percy was born on 9th November 1909. The family lived initially at Williams Court (Lloyd Street), Dowlais and then 129 High St, Pen y Darren.

His brother Daniel later married Cassie's sister Rachel and their families always lived in the same area for their whole lives in peacetime. Strangely perhaps they were not close socially despite always moving to be near.

## Military Service.

He never talked about the Military and it only came to light when the attic of his son's house was emptied in the 1990's and discharge papers were discovered.

Sydney joined the 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade 1904. Honourable discharge 1906.  
Service number 75.

Recalled at the start of the War and landed in France at Le Havre 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1914. Served at the battles of: See detailed Regimental actions in later pages.

Le Cateau

The Marne

Aisne

Messines

Ypres

2nd Somme

Following these adventures he was transferred to the 1st Reserve Suffolk Regiment in 1916 . Garrison Battalion. Rank Private, Military Police. Service number 25313.

As far as we can tell he remained in the Garrison Battalion in Suffolk until he transferred

(As an aside knowing my Grandfather in the 50's and 60's I am amazed he was a

Military Policeman at this time very much a case of Poacher turned Gamekeeper!)

He transferred again to the Royal Irish Fusiliers, Service Number 31253

Discharged - Honourable disabled 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1918. He returned to Dowlais.

Sydney's mother Mary Ann died on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1916 aged 68.

In 1919 he was a member of RAOB (Buffaloes) Wimbome Lodge, Dowlais. Sydney, Cassie and Edgar moved with younger brother Daniel and his family to Askern, Yorkshire in about 1925, where the coalfields were expanding. They lived initially in Victoria Road, then Avenue Road, and in 1928 they were living at 56 Green Lane, Askern.

Sydney's father Daniel died on 31st January 1928 at the home of daughter Gertrude and her husband Archie Cadle in Gellyfaelog Terrace. Pen y Darren.

In 1939 the family were still in Green Lane, Askern, Sydney and son Edgar worked at the Askern Colliery as Chargers and Carbonisers in the Low Temperature Coke Ovens which made early types of smokeless fuels.

At some time after 1939 the family moved a few miles away to Woodland where the Brodsworth Colliery was much larger and was developing new seams. Sydney was a bull of a man and was reputed to be the highest earner (hewing coal with a pick axe) , in those days of piece work at the coal face especially when teamed with his son Edgar (who died in **1960** after collapsing "down the pit" where he was an "Overman". They were known to have lived at 41 Fifth Avenue, Woodlands, from at least 1945.

Height 5 ft. 8 1/2". Hair brown. Eyes brown. Needed glasses.

A bull of a man physically who did not suffer fools at all and was well known in the village.

Sydney died in on 17'October **1964** in Woodlands near Doncaster Yorks.

Cassie died in **1963**, after spending at least 10 years effectively housebound with what we would now call brittle bone disease.

# 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade

1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade were at Colchester with 11th Brigade, 4th Division when war broke out in August 1914. 4th Division was held back from the original British Expeditionary Force by a last minute decision to defend England against a possible German landing. The fate of the BEF in France and the lack of any move by the Enemy to cross the channel, reversed this decision and they proceeded to France, landing at Le Havre on the 23rd of August 1914 in time to provide infantry reinforcements at the Battle of Le Cateau. They were in action at the The Battle of the Marne, The Battle of the Aisne and at The Battle of Messines in 1914. In 1915 they fought in The Second Battle of Ypres and in 1916 moved south and were in action during the Battles of the Somme. In 1917 they were at Arras, in action during the The First and Third Battles of the Scarpe, before heading north for the Third Battle of Ypres, where they fought in The Battle of Polygon Wood, The Battle of Broodseinde, The Battle of Poelcapelle and The First Battle of Passchendaele. In 1918 they were in action on The Somme, then returned to Flanders fighting in the Defence of Hinges Ridge during The Battle of Hazebrouck and in The Battle of Bethune, The Advance in Flanders The Second Battles of Arras, the Battles of the Hindenburg Line and the Final Advance in Picardy. The 4th Division was demobilised in Belgium in early 1919.

**29th Jul 1914** [Troops deployed](#)

**18th Aug 1914** [Concentration](#)

**19th Aug 1914** [Concentration](#)

**23rd Aug 1914** **1st Rifle Brigade leave Colchester** 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade depart from Colchester bound for Le Harve with the BEF.

**26th August 1914** [In Action](#)

**26th Aug 1914** [Shellfire](#)

**27th August 1914** [Retreat from Action](#)

**27th Aug 1914** [Enemy Advance](#)

**27th August 1914** [On the Move](#)

**28th Aug 1914** [Enemy Advance](#)

**28th Aug 1914** [On the March](#)

**29th Aug 1914** [In Action](#)

**29th Aug 1914** [On the March](#)

30th Aug 1914 Rear Guard

30th of August 1914 A Hot March

30th Aug 1914 On the March

31st Aug 1914 Rear Guard

31st August 1914 Continued withdrawals

31st Aug 1914 On the March

1st Sep 1914 Caught with their Coats Off

1st Sep 1914 Rear Guard

1st Sep 1914 Withdrawal

1st Sep 1914 On the March

1st Sep 1914 On the March

2nd September 1914 Further retreat

2nd Sep 1914 Rear Guard

2nd Sep 1914 Withdrawal

2nd Sep 1914 On the March

3rd Sep 1914 Rear Guard

3rd of September 1914 Across the Marne

3rd Sep 1914 On the March

4th September 1914 Relocation

4th Sep 1914 Rear Guard

4th Sep 1914 On the March

4th Sep 1914 At Rest

5th September 1914 Rear guard retires

5th Sep 1914 Rear Guard

6th Sep 1914 [Advance Guard](#)

6th Sep 1914 [On the March](#)

7th Sep 1914 [Advance Guard](#)

8th Sep 1914 [Advance Guard](#)

9th Sep 1914 [Bridging](#)

10th of September 1914 [Marching](#)

12th September 1914 [On the March](#)

12th Sep 1914 [On the March](#)

13th September 1914 [Continued Advance](#)

13th Sep 1914 [On the March](#)

14th September 1914 [Ongoing actions](#)

16th Sep 1914 [Reorganisation](#)

17th Sep 1914 [Shelling](#)

18th Sep 1914 [Reorganisation](#)

21st Sep 1914 [Aircraft Active](#)

22nd Sep 1914 [Relief](#)

26th Sep 1914 [Holding the Line](#)

27th Oct 1914 [Defensive improvements](#)

30th Oct 1914 [Under Shellfire](#)

5th December 1914 [Quiet](#)

9th December 1914 [Uniforms](#)

19th Dec 1914 [British attack](#)

19th Dec 1914 [Attack Made](#)

19th Dec 1914 [Attack Made](#)

23rd December 1914 [Christmas Parcels](#)

31st Jan 1915 [Quiet](#)

25th Apr 1915 [Confusion](#)

26th Apr 1915 [Confusion](#)

27th Apr 1915 [Reinforcements](#)

29th Apr 1915 [Line Extended](#)

5th May 1915 [Orders](#)

16th May 1915 [Reliefs](#)

23rd May 1915 [Working Parties](#) 📍

23rd May 1915 [Working Parties](#) 📍

24th May 1915 [7th Northumberlands in Trenches](#)

21st November 1915 [Final Party on Fatigues](#)

22nd Mar 1916 [Instruction](#) 📍

26th Apr 1916 [Trench Work](#) 📍

1st Jul 1916 [Attack Made](#)

1st July 1916 [Bombardment](#) 📍