REGINALD BEST

1887 – 8/12/1919

Reginald was born in Corfe Mullen in 1887 and baptised with the full name of Reginald Elton Richard Best. He was the son of Thomas Best, a Carpenter, and his wife Emily (nee Welch).

By 1891 Reginald's father was working as a Wheelwright and the family had moved to Wareham Road, Lytchett Matravers. Reginald had two elder sisters and one sister a year younger than himself. 1891 was a sad year for the family as a son,Elton Lancelot, died at the age of only 6 weeks. This left Reginald as the only son in the family. We cannot find a photograph of Reginald. Although we have one of his father.



Thomas Best is 3rd from the left in this photo (c.1910) of men in the employment of Thomas Abbot, Carpenter, in The High Street, Lytchett Matravers.

By 1911, Thomas and Emily Best were living in a cottage next door to Abbot's Carpentry Shop near the Chequers and their children had left home. At that time Reginald (aged 23) was working and lodging with a Straw Hat Manufacturer in Luton.

By 1914 Reginald had changed career and joined the Merchant Navy. His ship was the luxury passenger liner, SS Minnetonka.



With the onset of WW1, The Minnetonka was converted to a troop carrier in 1915. This ship had the misfortune to be torpedoed off the coast of Malta on 3th January, 1918. The ship was carrying mail from Port Said at the time and was sunk. The next mention of Reginald was that he was admitted to the Seaman's Hospital in Greenwich from SS.Kursk. The SS.Kursk had been requisitioned by the British Government in February 1918 to take wounded from the Mediterranean to the U.K.

On 28th July, 1919 Reginald was admitted to The Dreadnought Seaman's Hospital in Greenwich from SS. Kursk, (sailing under The Cunard Steamship Co. Ltd). His employment in the navy was described as Chief Baker. He died aged 32 on 8th December, 1919. His cause of death was Enteritis Tuberculosis and Cardiac Failure. His father Tom received a Pension on behalf of Reginald.