

## ***Archer Claydon, died 31 May 1918, aged 29***

Archer William Ridge Claydon was the youngest child of William and Louisa Claydon, who lived in and near Hackney for most of their married life. William was a telegraphist with the Foreign Branch of the GPO, while Louisa was a trained midwife. Their daughter Lily was born in 1878 and their elder son Leonard was born a year later and eventually became a bank clerk. Archer arrived in 1889 when the family was living at 31 Paragon Road Hackney.

The family later moved to Homerton and then to Lower Clapton. Louisa Claydon died in 1904 aged just 50, and her husband died three years later at 63. In 1901 their daughter Lily had married Johnson Jefferee, by whom she would have two daughters before her early death in 1922. Meanwhile Leonard, who was a bank clerk, married Ethel in 1905 and they moved to East Finchley.

When their daughter Agnes was born in 1907 they were living in Fortis Green Road, but by their elder son Geoffrey's birth in 1911 they had moved to 1 Park Hall Road. Their third child Leonard was born there in 1915, and all three children were baptised at All Saints' Church.

In 1908 Archer Claydon went out to East Africa, and he enlisted in the army there when war broke out. He was attached to 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> King's African Rifles, based in Somaliland on the Gulf of Aden.

There the Dervishes, led by Mohammed Abdullah Hassan (nicknamed the 'Mad Mullah') and supported by the Ottomans and the Germans, were campaigning against the British who were supported by the Ethiopians and the Italians.

By 1918 Archer was a Lieutenant at the British East African Garrison, involved in the campaign to resist the German forces led by Major-General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck.

In May 1918 Archer became ill with Blackwater Fever, a virulent form of malaria. He died at the Base Hospital in Mombasa (now in Kenya) on 31 May 1918, and was buried in Mbaraki Cemetery the following day.

Archer Claydon does not appear to have had any direct contact with All Saints' Church himself, but his brother Leonard certainly did – he was People's Warden for a while until he resigned in March 1921 after a dispute with Father Armitstead, and when Father East came to the parish he remained very involved. No doubt he wanted his younger brother's death in the service of the Crown to be valued and commemorated, and where better than in his own church where he would see it regularly. Leonard Claydon continued to live at 1 Park Hall Road until his own death in 1935.

