



[John] Thomas Boon

John Thomas Boon was born in Gretton in 1885. He was baptised on 15th March 1885. His father was John Henry Boon, his mother Martha Boon (nee Wyman). John and Martha were married on 21st December 1881. John was a widower; Martha was his second wife. John Henry Boon had married Sarah Ann Smith in 1876, sadly Sarah died in 1881 aged 26 years old.

Family History

In 1891 John Henry and Martha were living in Old Chapel Yard, Craxford Lane, Gretton together with their daughter Rose and son Thomas. John Henry was a railway labourer.

In 1901 John Henry was a bricklayer's labourer. Rose was a machinist in a clothing factory whilst Thomas was a shoe finisher. Also resident was John Henry's nephew John Boon a railway porter.

By 1911 John Henry was again working as a railway labourer whilst Thomas was a boot trade finisher.

Thomas Boon married Elizabeth Bradshaw Templer on 17th June 1913.

Military History

Thomas Boon attested in Kettering on 4th December 1915. He was a Gunner (102125) in the Royal Garrison Artillery.

Gunner Thomas Boon was mobilised in July 1916. Thomas and Elizabeth were living in "West Wells", Gretton. From 7th July 1916 to 24th October 1916 he was based in the United Kingdom. Gunner Boon was in France from 25th October 1916 to 24th October 1917.

On 13th October 1917 he was wounded when an enemy gas shell exploded and invalided to the United Kingdom.

The Northampton Mercury reported on 2nd November 1917 –

Boon, Gunner T., R.G.A., of Gretton; wounded and in hospital in England.

Gunner Boon remained in the United Kingdom from 25th October 1917 to 29th March 1918. For the period 25th October – 6th November 1917 he was in hospital in Devon.



He was back on the Western Front from 30th March 1918 serving with the 301st Siege Battery in Belgium.

His service record details that he was injured on 7th September 1918 suffering with gun shot wounds to both legs. Gunner Thomas died of his wounds on 7th September 1918 in 106 Field Ambulance.

Gunner Thomas Boon is buried in the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery and commemorated on the Gretton War Memorial.

During the First World War, the village of Lijssenthoek was situated on the main communication line between the Allied military bases in the rear and the Ypres battlefields. Close to the Front, but out of the extreme range of most German field artillery, it became a natural place to establish casualty clearing stations. The cemetery was first used by the French 15th Hopital D'Evacuation and in June 1915, it began to be used by casualty clearing stations of the Commonwealth forces.

From April to August 1918, the casualty clearing stations fell back before the German advance and field ambulances (including a French ambulance) took their places.

The cemetery contains 9,901 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 24 being unidentified. There are 883 war graves of other nationalities, mostly French and German, 11 of these are unidentified. There is 1 Non World War burial here.

The only concentration burials were 24 added to Plot XXXI in 1920 from isolated positions near Poperinghe and 17 added to Plot XXXII from St. Denijs Churchyard in 1981.

Eight of the headstones are Special Memorials to men known to be buried in this cemetery, these are located together alongside Plot 32 near the Stone of Remembrance.

The cemetery, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, is the second largest Commonwealth cemetery in Belgium.

Reference

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Gretton Local History Society
Northampton Mercury



Lest We Forget

Thomas Boon
of the Royal Garrison Artillery

d. 7th September 1918

There was reference in a military record of 1919 that Thomas Boon had a half-sister, an Annie Reeves resident in Uppingham. Possibly a daughter of John Henry's first marriage to Sarah Ann Smith. Also mentioned was Thomas Boon's sister Rose Lattimer (nee Boon) then resident near Stamford.

There is reference to John Henry Boon and his first wife Sarah Ann having a son John Henry Boon junior (a half-brother to Thomas), baptised on 4th March 1878. In the 1881 Census, John Henry Snr., Sarah and son John Henry jnr. were living in Gretton. Also resident was Sarah's sister Mary Smith.

May 2016 Copy (subject to further verification)