



John Thomas Chapman

John Thomas Chapman was born in Gretton in 1883. He was baptised on 1st July 1883. His mother was Betsy Chapman of Gretton (b.1858).

Family History

In 1891 John Thomas Chapman was living with his grandparents in Gretton. His grandfather was John Chapman an agricultural labourer, his grandmother was Eliza Chapman (nee Cox) originally from Wakerley. John and Eliza had married in 1856. Also resident was Lucy Chapman (age 17) a machinist in a clothing factory and William Chapman (age 5). Lucy was listed as daughter to John and Eliza, whilst William listed as a grandson of John and Eliza.

In the 1901 Census John is listed as a retired shepherd. With John and Eliza were daughter Lucy (machinist), daughter Elizabeth (machinist), grandson John Thomas (employed as a stockman on a farm) and grandson William (agricultural labourer).

In the 1911 Census John was 82; Eliza was 77. Lucy was still employed at a clothing factory. John Thomas Chapman was employed as an ironstone labourer.

Military History

John Thomas Chapman enlisted in the Army in 1913 in Northampton. He served as a Private (16778) in the 1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment.

The 1st Battalion was stationed at Blackdown on 4th August 1914 attached to the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Division. The Battalion was mobilized and landed in Le Havre on 13th August 1914. The Battalion was to serve on the Western Front for the duration of the War.

According to newspaper reports Private Chapman was wounded several times and lost an eye whilst fighting on the Somme.

Private Chapman was briefly transferred to one of the Kent regiments before being transferred to the Labour Corps (435530). He was to serve in the 536th Agricultural Company, Labour Corps. He was sent to Cumberland to undertake farm work. It was here that he contracted pleurisy and pneumonia that was to lead to his eventual death.

Reports state Private Chapman died in Carlisle on 14th July 1918. Interestingly he is commemorated on Market Harborough's War Memorial and the Cottage Hospital War Memorial, Market Harborough.



Private Chapman is buried in St. James Curchyard, Gretton and commemorated on the Gretton War Memorial.

The following extract from the Grantham Journal of 3rd August 1918 details the circumstances of Private Chapman's death and funeral.

A Northants Soldier's Death

Pte. J. T. Chapman, Northants Regiment, of Gretton, has died in hospital at Carlisle. He was aged 34, and joined the army in 1913, previous to which he had been employed 15 years at the Corby ironstone workings. He went through all the early fighting in France, being three times wounded. On Sept. 3rd, 1916, he, at the Somme, lost one eye, and underwent two operations. Then he was transferred to the Kent Regiment, but was sent to farm work in Cumberland, and here he contracted pleurisy and pneumonia, which proved fatal. He was home at Gretton last Whitsuntide. The funeral took place in Gretton Churchyard, on Thursday week. A firing party attended from Northampton, and numerous villagers assembled. The mourners included Mr. Chapman (father), Miss Chapman (sister), Mr Chapman (brother), and the Rev. M. Winnard (Baptist Minister). There was a laurel wreath from the Church among the dozen floral tributes.

Reference

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Gretton Local History Society
Grantham Journal

Lest We Forget

John Thomas Chapman
of the Northamptonshire Regiment & Labour Corps

d. 14th July 1918

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