



## Thomas Addy

Thomas Addy was born in Newark-on-Trent on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1892. His father was William Henry Addy from Newark, his mother was Lydia Addy (nee Warner) from Gretton. William and Lydia married in Newark in 1888.

### Family History

In 1891, William and Lydia and their two young sons, Harold & George, were living in Newark. William was employed as a fishmonger salesman.

Thomas was born in 1888 and baptised in Newark in March 1893. The family were resident in Beacon Terrace, Newark.

By 1901, Lydia was resident back in Gretton with her three sons, Harold, George and Thomas. Also residing with the Addy family were Lydia's niece, Emma Warner and a boarder May Shaw. Lydia, Emma and May were all employed as tailor's machinists.

By 1911, Harold the eldest son was employed as a labourer with the Midland Railway Company. Brothers George & Thomas were employed as farm labourers.

According to Gretton History Society, Thomas Addy was a member of the Gretton Jazz Band.

### Military History

According to records, Thomas Addy enlisted in Kettering. He served as a Private (15853) in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment. A number of Gretton men were to serve with the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

The Northampton Mercury of 21<sup>st</sup> April 1916 records that "Addy, 15853, Pte. T. Northamptonshire Regiment was listed as wounded". The circumstances surrounding his injuries are currently unknown.

It is recorded that Private Thomas Addy was killed in action on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1916, near Trones Wood during what is known as the Battle of the Somme. His body was never recovered.



His family had to wait for a year for confirmation of his death:-

*Grantham Journal 11<sup>th</sup> August 1917*

*Mrs Addy, of Gretton, is notified that it must be presumed her son, Pte T Addy is dead. Pte Addy, who, twelve months ago, was reported missing, was before the war employed by Mr J W Spendlove, farmer, and enlisted with first batch of volunteers from Gretton.*

Private Addy is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial and on the Gretton War Memorial.

On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter.

In the spring of 1917, the German forces fell back to their newly prepared defences, the Hindenburg Line, and there were no further significant engagements in the Somme sector until the Germans mounted their major offensive in March 1918.

The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing equal numbers of Commonwealth and French graves lies at the foot of the memorial.

The memorial, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, was built between 1928 and 1932 and unveiled by the Prince of Wales, in the presence of the President of France, on



1 August 1932 (originally scheduled for 16 May but due to the death of French President Doumer the ceremony was postponed until August).

The dead of other Commonwealth countries, who died on the Somme and have no known graves, are commemorated on national memorials elsewhere.

### Reference

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Gretton History Society

Grantham Journal

Northampton Mercury

***Lest We Forget***

**Thomas Addy**  
of the Northamptonshire Regiment

d. 17<sup>th</sup> August 1916

Thomas Addy's brother, Harold Percy Addy also served in the War, initially with the Northamptonshire Regiment then the Suffolk Regiment. The Grantham Journal of 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1918 records that Harold Addy was taken as a prisoner of war (Limburg camp) but was in good health.

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