



Leonard Stapleton

Leonard Pridmore Stapleton was born in Harringworth in 1896. His father was Fred Stapleton of Harringworth, his mother was Rebecca Stapleton (nee Pridmore).

The Family

Fred Stapleton married Rebecca Readfyhoof Pridmore in 1893.

In 1901, the Stapleton family were resident in Gretton. Fred Stapleton was employed as a railway labourer. With Fred & Rebecca were their children Elsie, Gladys, Leonard, Florence and Phyllis.

Fred Stapleton died in 1905.

In the 1911 Census, Rebecca Stapleton (widow) was recorded as working as a seamstress in a clothing factory. Elsie was employed as a domestic servant, Leonard as a gardener's help whilst Florence and Phyllis were still at school.

Military Service

Leonard Stapleton enlisted in the Northamptonshire Regiment (22489) on 8th November 1915 in Kettering. His occupation was given as gardener.

On the 9th January 1916 he was transferred to The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) (G/10342). He embarked for Europe on 5th May 1916.

Private Leonard Stapleton died of wounds received in action on 23rd September 1916. He was 20 years old. The exact circumstances of his death are currently unknown. It is likely that his wounds were sustained during the Battle of the Somme; his battalion entered the battle on 13th September 1916.

Private Stapleton is buried in St. Sever Military Cemetery Extension and commemorated on the Gretton War Memorial.

Although his full service record has not survived fragments have. One of these shows a declaration made by his mother Rebecca signed in April 1919, which detailed Leonard's surviving relatives as Elsie Abbot of Tithe Farm Gretton, Gladys Stapleton of Rushton Rectory, Florence Stapleton of Green Lane, Kettering and Phyllis Stapleton of London Road, Kettering. The document is witnessed by H. Washington Davy of Gretton Vicarage.



During the First World War, Commonwealth camps and hospitals were stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen. A base supply depot and the 3rd Echelon of General Headquarters were also established in the city.

Almost all of the hospitals at Rouen remained there for practically the whole of the war. They included eight general, five stationary, one British Red Cross, one labour hospital, and No. 2 Convalescent Depot. A number of the dead from these hospitals were buried in other cemeteries, but the great majority were taken to the city cemetery of St. Sever. In September 1916, it was found necessary to begin an extension.

St. Sever Cemetery contains 3,082 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. There is also 1 French burial and 1 non-war service burial here.

The Commonwealth plots were designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

Reference

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Gretton History Society

Lest We Forget

Leonard Stapleton
of The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment).

d.23rd September 1916

March 2016 copy