

MEMORIAL TO THE PAST

SILEBY MEN WHO NEVER MADE IT HOME 1914 – 1920

SURNAMES Q - V

Wilfred Raven
(Private)
Durham Light Infantry 4717
Durham Light Infantry 42470

Born: 8th January 1897 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 16th September 1916

Commemorated at:

- Thiepval Memorial, Thiepval, Somme, France (Pier and Face 14 A and 15 C)
 - Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby

Wilfred Robert Raven was born at Sileby on the 8th January 1897 and baptised at Sileby Parish Church on the 27th June later that year. His parents were Isaac Raven, a shoe hand and Rosa his wife, and the family lived at 69 Barrow Road (now renumbered as 75 Barrow Road). His father was a shoe hand but had died by the time of the 1901 census. Rosa was left to raise Wilfred along with his sisters May and Elsie, and his younger brother Thomas. By 1911 Rosa was working as a cleaner in a hosiery factory and Wilfred had gained employment in a shoe factory as an 'Inker' in the finishing section. When he enlisted in 1915 he may have been a lodger at 13 Barrow Road.

Wilfred enlisted for service at Leicester for the duration of the war on the 10th December 1915 and was posted to the army reserve. He was mobilised on the 23rd March 1916 and transferred to the 7th Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) a day later. He was on Home Service with the DLI until the 19th July and disembarked in France the following day. Another posting to the 11th Battalion of the DLI followed and then again to the 15th Battalion on the 6th September 1916. September was the most serious month for losses in the DLI (984 killed in action or died of wounds). On the 16th September 1916 412 officers and men from ten DLI battalions were killed in action or died of wounds at the Battle of Flers-Courcelette, part of the Somme campaign. Another 105 DLI men had already died in this battle on the previous day. Wilfred was one of those reported missing on the 16th September. He was later presumed dead, killed in action. He was 19 and unmarried.



75 Barrow Road, Sileby
(formerly 69)

Bertie Reeve
(Stoker 1st Class)
Royal Navy K/15812

Born: 31st October 1893 at Wretton, Norfolk

Died: 31st May 1916

Commemorated at:

- Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Southsea Common, Portsmouth (Plaque 19)
 - Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby

Bertie Reeve was born at Wretton near Downham Market in Norfolk on the 31st October 1893. He was the youngest of at least 7 children born to his parents William, an agricultural labourer and Eliza his wife. Eliza was buried at Wretton on the 29th October 1897 leaving his father William to bring up the family. By 1911 a 19 year old Bertie was a lodger living in the house of William Ward at 26-28 The Banks in Sileby. How and why Bertie came to the village is not known but he was listed as a Shoe Hand.

On the 24th August 1912 Bertie enlisted at Portsmouth in the Royal Navy for 12 years. At enlistment he was 5 foot 6¼ with dark brown hair, brown eyes and a fresh complexion. He was engaged as a Stoker (2nd class) on a number of training ships including Renown and Victory II between 24th August 1912 and 8th March 1913. For six months after this he served on the depot ship HMS Adamant before being transferred to HMS Queen Mary on the 4th September 1913. HMS Queen Mary was a Battlecruiser and was at the forefront of Britain's naval capability. Bertie was promoted to Stoker (1st class) on the 6th November 1913. He was to see action at the Battle of Heligoland Bight in 1914 under the command of Rear Admiral Beatty. In September 1915 he was confined to cells for 7 days but for what reason is not given. Bertie was one of 1266 men lost when the Queen Mary was sunk at the Battle of Jutland on the 31st May 1916. He was 22 years of age and unmarried.



HMS Queen Mary © IWM (Q 21661A)



26-28 The Banks, Sileby (in 2005)

Alphonso Reffin
(Lance Corporal)
Leicestershire Regiment 2213



Born: 1892 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 25th September 1915

Buried at Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
(Plot VI, Row D, Grave 36)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby

Alphonso Reffin (or Alph/Alf) was born at Sileby in 1892, the son of Thomas Reffin, a glove maker and Jane his wife. His father died aged 37 in 1899 leaving his wife Jane to raise the remaining 4 Reffin children. Initially the family had lived in a cottage on Mountsorrel Lane but later moved to 86 Seagrave Road. In 1911 Alph was still living at home with his housekeeper mother and 3 other siblings, and was listed as a Tacker in the shoe trade. At the time of his enlistment he was engaged to Kate Lenton.

At Mountsorrel on the 31st August 1914 Alphonso enlisted into the Territorial Force for the duration of the war. He was posted to the 5th Leicestershire Regiment and was on Home service until the 27th February 1915. He had disembarked for action on the 28th February 1915 and had been promoted to Lance Corporal on the 27th August. However, he died a month later on the 25th September as a result of wounds received on the first day of the Battle of Loos.

In the Sileby Parish Church Magazine of November 1915 the following was said of Alphonso,

“Lance-Corporal Reffin of the 5th Leicesters, who enlisted in September 1914, and went to France last February, died of wounds on September 26th, 1915, received during the fighting on September 25th. Our sincere sympathy goes out to his widowed mother, his brothers and sisters and Miss Lenton. Alph was a churchman, and worshipped regularly at the Parish Church. We shall miss him.”



86 Seagrave Road, Sileby

John Edward Riddle

(Private)

Kings Hussars 44



(Photograph courtesy of the Riddle family and Mountsorrel Heritage Group)

Born: 1888 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 22nd November 1914

Buried at Wimereux Communal Cemetery, Wimereux, Pas de Calais, France
(Plot I, Row B, Grave 17a)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
- Methodist Church, King Street, Sileby

John Edward Riddle was born at Sileby in 1888. He was one of 20 children born to George and Elizabeth Riddle, although only 10 survived. In the 1890s the family had lived in a cottage in what is now Manor Drive, but subsequently moved to 48 Swan Street near to the White Swan pub.

John had enlisted with the 15th Kings Hussars on the 15th January 1907 and at the 1911 census he was shown to be stationed with his battalion at Potchefstroom in Transvaal, South Africa. As a regular soldier John was one of the first into battle in 1914. He was in France on the 16th August but had suffered a mortal head wound at the First Battle of Ypres in late November. He died at the 14th General Hospital in Boulogne on the 22nd November 1914. He is listed as Edward Riddle on the Methodist Church memorial plaque.

In a report regarding the contribution and wartime losses of Midland Railway employees the 14th December 1914 edition of the Melton Mowbray Mercury reports, "Sileby. J. E. Riddle, goods drayman. 15th Hussars. died of wounds November 21."



48 Swan Street, Sileby

Thomas Riley
(Private)
Leicestershire Regiment 4220



Born: 1894 at Sileby, Leicestershire
Died: 26th March 1916

Buried at Ecoivres Military Cemetery, Mont-St Eloi, Pas de Calais, France (Plot I, Row D, Grave 20)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Thomas Sellers Riley was born at Sileby in 1894. His parents were Henry Riley, a railway platelayer and his mother Elizabeth. He was one of at least 12 children, and the family all lived together at 180 Barrow Road. By 1911 the 17 year old Thomas was working as a labourer at one of Wright's local brickyards.

Thomas had enlisted into the Territorial Force for the duration of the war on the 11th May 1915 at Loughborough. At enlistment he was measured at 5 foot 5½ inches in height. He had joined the 3rd/5th Leicestershire Regiment and was on Home Service from 11th May until he was transferred to the 1st/5th Battalion on the 7th December 1915. His new battalion embarked for France three days later on the 10th December and were in the field by the 22nd December. Thomas was killed in action on the 26th March 1916. Details of his death are sketchy as the government had imposed restrictions upon the reporting of exact details and locations. For instance when reporting on Thomas's death, the Sileby Parish Magazine said it had occurred "somewhere in France." Thomas was 22 years old and unmarried.

However, the 7th April 1916 edition of the Melton Mowbray Times was more explicit, “News has been received of the death of Pte. Thomas Riley, of the Leicesters, by a shell bursting at his feet, on Sunday, March 26th. Deceased was a son of Mr. Henry Riley, of Barrow-road, Sileby... He had worked at the brickworks of Messrs. W. Wright and Co., Ltd., continuously since leaving school until he enlisted a year ago”.



180 Barrow Road, Sileby in 2011

Harry Rouse

(Private)

Leicestershire Regiment 38021

Royal Defence Corps 60690

Born: 27th October 1898 at Morton Bagot, Warwickshire

Died: 24th March 1918

Buried at Peronne Communal Cemetery Extension, Peronne, Somme, France
(Plot III, Row N, Grave 17)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
- St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby

Harry Rouse was born at Moreton Bagot, Warwickshire on the 27th October 1898 and baptised at Moreton Bagot Parish Church on the 27th November 1898. He was one of 8 children born to Joe, a farm labourer and Emma his wife. The family had moved to Newton Pacey in Warwickshire around 1905 and then to Barkby Grange Cottages in Barkby, Leicestershire before 1911. Shortly afterwards the family moved again, this time to 49 Albion Road, Sileby. Before joining up Harry had found employment as a brickyard labourer.

Harry enlisted on the 9th September 1916 at Loughborough and went straight into the reserve. His medical report shows he was 5 foot 4 inches in height and 108 pounds in weight (49 kg), with hammer toes! He was mobilised on the 26th February 1917 and posted to the Leicestershire Regiment Depot. He was transferred to the 1st (Garrison) Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment shortly afterwards on the 3rd March. He was transferred again on the 18th August that year when he joined the 9th Battalion Royal Defence Corps. Another move occurred on the 25th September 1917 when he joined the 3rd/4th Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment at Easington Camp. By the end of 20th November he was in France and had been assigned to the 6th Battalion on the 23rd of that month. Harry was killed in action on the 24th March 1918 at the Battle of Epehy. He was 19 years of age and unmarried. Initially his body was buried in a temporary grave but his body was exhumed and reburied at the Peronne Communal Cemetery.

1898	1898 Nov 27 Born 27 Oct 1898 No. 403	Harry	Joe & Emma	Rouse	Morton Bagott	Labourer	James Cooper Farmhouse Rector
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Harry Rouse : Moreton Bagot, Warwickshire, Parish Register, baptism 1898

Charles William Sarson
(Private)
South Staffordshire Regiment 24390

Born: 16th December 1894 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 30th November 1917

Buried at Hermies Hill British Cemetery, Hermies, Pas de Calais, France
(Plot I, Row B, Grave 8)

Commemorated at:

- Syston War Memorial, Syston, Leicestershire
- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Charles William Sarson was the youngest child and one of four children (with Mabel, Ann and Lucy) born to Charles William and Sarah Ann Sarson of Sileby. He was born at Sileby on the 16th December 1894 and was baptised in the Parish Church on the 27th January 1895. Charles W. senior was a brickyard labourer. His mother Sarah Ann died prematurely aged 37 in 1900 and she was buried at Sileby cemetery on 1st August of that year. Charles's family initially lived on Barrow Road but after Sarah Ann's death his father Charles W. senior moved the family in with his elderly mother Ann who occupied a house on King Street. It seemed all too much for his father who committed suicide later in 1900 and was buried at Sileby cemetery on the 4th December, aged 37. Charles's grandmother Ann herself died in 1904, and he and his siblings were then sent to live with their uncle Robert Newton, also on King Street. In 1911 both Charles and his sister Lucy were shown living here along with his uncle Robert, aunt Emma and cousin Albert Victor. At this time Charles worked in a shoe factory as a scourer in the finishing department. Charles William moved village and set up home at 55 Peter Street, Syston before 1915. On the 22nd May 1915 he married May Foster at Syston Parish Church.

Charles's war service record has not survived. It is not known when he enlisted but it was at Leicester. At some point he had joined the 1st Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment with whom he was injured in early November 1916. He later returned to the front and was transferred to the 2nd Battalion but was killed in action near Moeuvres in northern France on the 30th November 1917.

Walter Sharp(e)
(Private)
Leicestershire Regiment 16405



Born: 1885 at Leicester, Leicestershire
Died: 11th May 1916

Commemorated at:

- Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium (Panel 33)
- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Walter Sharpe was born in 1885 and was baptised at St Marks Church, Leicester on the 18th November 1885. His parents Alfred and Sarah lived at 29 Dorset Street just off the Belgrave Road in Leicester. Alfred was a shoe pressman and probably moved to Sileby around 1890 to take up a similar position at factory in the village. For over a decade Alfred and Sarah raised their family in a house on Cossington Road. In 1901 Walter, now 16 years old, had followed his father into the shoe trade, working in a factory as a clicker. In 1903 he married Kate Lowe and initially set up home at Syston before moving to The Banks, Sileby about 1907. By 1911 the couple had 4 children; Alfred Lowe, Florence, Nellie and Walter Frederick, with another child Frank born in 1913. In 1915 Kate died suddenly aged 30 and was buried at Sileby cemetery on the 7th July 1915.

Walter had enlisted into the Leicestershire Regiment at Loughborough on or before 1915, but the exact date of this event is unknown, as are the details of his service record. He fought with the 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and was killed in action on the 11th May 1916, probably due to shelling near the Forward Cottage Line adjacent to Ypres.

The 2nd June 1916 edition of the Loughborough Echo catches the mood of his loss amongst the villagers,
"Much sympathy is felt at Sileby for the parents and brothers and sisters of Private Walter Sharpe, another of our brave Sileby lads, who was killed in action in France on

May 11th. He belonged to the 1st Batt. Leicestershire Regiment... The death of Private Walter Sharpe makes one (of) the hardest cases Sileby has had, for while the poor fellow was defending his country, his wife died last July, leaving five children to the care of his mother. He was greatly respected by all who knew him being very kind-hearted and ever ready to help where needed. He was well known in athletic circles, for, at the age of seventeen he was one of the best runners in Leicestershire, and his mother and other friends have many valuable prizes he won at sports. He was also a good football player, and played for years for the Sileby Victoria team. He was also their trainer.”

The Melton Mowbray Times on the same day added more detail, “Official news has reached the parents of Private Walter Sharp, Leicester Regiment, that he was killed in action on May 11th. The deceased who was a widower, and leaves five children, was one of five brothers, three of whom are still in H.M.’s service. His brother Alfred Sharp, of the King’s Royal Rifles, was wounded in October last, and is still a prisoner of war in Germany. The parents are Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Sharp, Cossington-road, Sileby. Deceased was greatly respected by all who knew him, being very kind hearted, and ever ready to help where needed. He was well known in athletic circles... Deceased was also a very good football player, and played for years for the Sileby Victoria team; he was also a trainer for them. The following letter to his parents from his late employer, Messrs. Swan and Preston, boot manufacturers, will show how greatly he was respected:- “Dear Mr. and Mrs. Sharp, - Please allow me to convey my deepest and sincere sympathy with you in your sad and deplorable loss of your son Walter. I may say he was a good and faithful workman both steady and honest, in fact all the years he worked for our firm I never remember him giving me a cross word. You must try and look on the bright side, and think, as he told me, he was defending his brother who is a prisoner. His death, although too awful for words, was in defence of his country. Try and bear that in mind. I trust it will soon be all over, and the old flag victorious, that your other sons will return to you in good health, and that his children, as they grow up, will be a blessing to you and feel that he did not give his life in vain. Again expressing my sorrow to you and your family, I beg to remain, sincerely yours. J. E. Swain.” Many other expressions of sympathy have been conveyed to the parents and family of the unfortunate lad.

George James Shaw
(Private)
Leicestershire Regiment?

Born: 25th September 1888 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: unknown

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby (G Shaw)
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

George James Shaw was born at Sileby on the 25th September 1888 and was baptised at the Parish Church there on 30th June 1889. He was the son of James Shaw, a labourer and Harriet his wife. In 1891 they lived with George's grandfather Henry James in a cottage at the Angel Yard off Little Church Lane. By 1901 the family had moved to Brook Street. In all, George was one of at least 8 children born to the couple.

After this time, George's movements are a mystery. Between 1901 and 1917 no record has been found of him. A passing reference comes in letter sent by Sileby man Private Wilfred Walker of the 6th Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment to his father. It was written at Houtkerque, Northern France (near the Belgian border) and dated Monday the 12th February 1917. Amongst other things Wilfred says

"We have not had so much snow as you have in England. I saw John Wild the other night he is quite alright and also Jim Shaw's son he is in our batt[alion]. They have been giving us extra rations of bread and rum while the very cold weather was on."

So, all that is known for sure was that George was in the 6th Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment. No other record mentions his time there and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission have no record of his death or commemoration.

Abraham Smith
(Corporal)
Canadian Infantry 139436

Born: 28th September 1880 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 1st March 1917

Commemorated at:

- Canadian National Vimy Memorial, Givenchy-en-Gohelle, France
(On the 'S' Panel)
 - Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Abraham Smith was the eldest son of William and Elizabeth Smith of 86 Barrow Road. His father is listed variously as a cement finisher and labourer. Abraham was born at Sileby on the 28th September 1880 and baptised at Sileby Parish Church on the 30th January 1881. His parents had 11 children, one of which did not survive. A quick turn of events happened a few years later. Abraham married Emma Jackson at Sileby Parish Church on the 23rd May 1904. He emigrated to Canada in April 1907 where he established himself in Toronto.

Abraham enlisted for the Canadian Infantry at Toronto on the 20th August 1915. He was 33 years old, 5 foot 5¼ inches high with brown hair, blue eyes and a fair complexion. Further records have been hard to come by, but he fought with the 75th Battalion (1st Central Ontario Regiment) of the Canadian infantry, as part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. His unit sailed for Europe on the 29th March 1916 and he was in Liverpool on the 9th April. He was promoted to Corporal on the 6th August shortly before departing for France on the 11th of that month. In January 1917 he spent a short time away from the front recuperating from a bout of myalgia in his legs. He was returned to duty in February but he was reported missing in action on the 1st March 1917, later changed to killed in action. He was 36 years of age.

18904. Marriage solemnized at <u>the Parish Church</u> in the Parish of <u>Sileby</u> in the County of <u>Leicester</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
282	May 23 rd 18904	Abraham Smith	23	Bachelor	Labourer	Sileby	William Smith	Labourer
		Emma Maus Jackson	20	Spinster	—	Sileby	Stephenus Jackson	Blacksmith
Married in the <u>Parish Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <u>James</u> or after <u>James</u> by me, <u>A. S. Farnhead</u>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, { <u>Abraham Smith</u> } in the Presence of us, { <u>William Elizabeth Jackson</u> <u>Emma Maus Jackson</u> } { <u>Percy Smith</u> <u>George Jackson</u> }								

Register entry for Abraham and Emma – Sileby Parish Marriage Register 1904

Frederick Smith

(Private)

Leicestershire Regiment 4223
Leicestershire Regiment 241491

Born: 1894 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 7th January 1918

Buried at Chocques Military Cemetery, Chocques, Pas de Calais, France
(Plot I, Row N, Grave 33)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby
- Methodist Church, King Street, Sileby

Frederick (or Fred) Smith was the son of George Henry and Hannah (nee Dakin) Smith and was born at Sileby in 1894. The family lived next door to the White Swan public house on Swan Street. His father George, a shoe finisher, died in 1898, leaving Hannah to provide for Fred and his siblings. At this point the family split: Hannah remarried to a George Henry Thompson in 1900 taking Fred's 4 siblings with her to Woodville, Derbyshire; whilst Fred was living with his grandfather Thomas in Swan Street, and later at 20 Cemetery Road. In 1911 Fred was still living there and was working as a shoe pressman.

No records have survived of Frederick's war service. He was said to have enlisted at Loughborough, and had joined the 1st/5th Leicestershire Regiment. All is known is that he died of his wounds on the 7th January 1918. He was 23 years of age and unmarried.



Gateway House, 20 Cemetery Road, Sileby

Percy Smith

(Private)

Leicestershire Regiment 4760

Leicestershire Regiment 40283

Born: 22nd September 1894 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 27th May 1918

Commemorated at:

- Soissons Memorial, Soissons, Aisne, France (On the 'S' section)
 - Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Percival or Percy Smith was born at Sileby on the on the 22nd September 1894 and baptised at the Parish Church with his brother (Thomas) Arthur on the 28th October 1894. He was the son and one of 7 children born to Eli Whittington Smith, a bricklayer, and Sarah Ann his wife. The family lived at a house on High Street and then moved to 44 Back Lane (8 Manor Terrace) before 1911. At the 1911 census Percy was working as a shoehand.

Like many others, Percy has no surviving record of his war service. At some point he had joined the Leicestershire Regiment, and was with the 7th Battalion when he was killed in the German Spring Offensive on the 27th May 1918. He was 23 years old and unmarried.



Manor Terrace, 44 Manor Drive (formerly 44 Back Lane)

James Staniforth
(Private)
North Staffordshire Regiment 5150
North Staffordshire Regiment 241858

Born: 1895 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 24th May 1917

Buried at Carvin Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France (Plot I, Grave 5)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

James Staniforth was the son of Elijah and Henrietta Staniforth and was born at Sileby in 1895. The family lived at Cossington Road and moved to 66 Cemetery Road (now demolished) sometime around 1900. Elijah was a fireman/brick burner at the brickworks. The Staniforth's had at least 8 children, and by 1911 were also looking after 10 month old Clarence Humphreys, a nephew. At that date James was also working at the brickworks with his elder brother Colin. They were both Tile makers.

Almost nothing is known about James's war record. He had enlisted at Leicester, and later joined the North Staffordshire (Prince of Wales) Regiment. Whilst serving with the 1st/6th Battalion he was killed in action on the 24th May 1917. He was 21 and unmarried.



James Staniforth's gravestone at Carvin Communal Cemetery, France

John Staples
(Private)
Leicestershire Regiment 12029



Born: 1893 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 3rd February 1916

Buried at Berles-au-Bois Churchyard Extension, Pas de Calais, France
(Row B, Grave 10)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
- St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
- Working Men's Club, Sileby

John Staples was born at Sileby in 1893 and was baptised at the Parish Church there on the 30th April 1893. He was the son and one of at least 8 children born to Herbert Staples, a brickyard carter, and Eliza his wife. The family lived at a house on Barrow Road until they moved to 67 Swan Street in 1913. John had followed his father's occupation into the brickyard and was listed as a brick cutter by trade.

John had enlisted at Leicester on the 2nd September 1914, signing up to a short service attestation of three years with the Colours. At that time he was 5 foot 4¼ inches in height with light hair, grey eyes and a fair complexion. He had joined the 8th (Service) Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment and was on Home Service with his battalion until disembarking in France on the 28th July 1915. Whilst in France he became an orderly to the battalion commander Colonel Wigram. He was killed instantaneously by a shell burst and shrapnel whilst off duty on the 3rd February 1916. He was aged 22 years and unmarried.

The Loughborough Echo of the 11th February 1916 gives more detail, "Information has been received that Pte. J. Staples has been killed in France. A letter has been received from the commanding officer of the 8th Leicesters, in which the writer

states that a number of men who were off duty behind the firing lines were listening to the regimental band playing, when a shell came over from the German lines and exploded amongst them killing a number and severely injuring others.”



67 Swan Street, Sileby

Bristol Taylor
(Private)
Leicestershire Regiment 11940

Born: 1887 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 22nd March 2018

Buried at Saulcourt Churchyard Extension, Guyencourt-Saulcourt, Somme, France
(Row C, Grave 6)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Bristol Albert Taylor was born at Sileby in 1887 the son of Vincent and Mary Jane Taylor. The family of eight lived in a small 4 roomed cottage at Angel Yard, Sileby (19 Little Church Lane). Mary Jane had been married to a Thomas Kimber previously and three of her children from that relationship made up the Taylor household in 1891. By 1911 Vincent Taylor had fathered 9 children in all, although one had subsequently died. The family continued to live at the Angel Yard up until the Second World War. 'Vin', as he was called, was employed as a bricklayer's labourer, but Bristol, or 'Bris', took a different direction and became a shoehand in a boot factory after he left school. The 1911 census shows Vincent and Mary Jane living with their adult children viz. Bristol, Leonard and Florrie.

Bristol was one of the first villagers to enlist for war service. When he signed his Short Service attestment papers at Loughborough on the 1st September 1914 he was described as 5 foot 9 inches in height. He joined the 7th (Service) Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment and was on Home Service until the 27th July 1915 after which his battalion made its way to France. No details are known of his service from this point onwards until his death nearly three years later. He was killed in action near Epehy on the 22nd March 1918. He was aged 31 and unmarried.



The site of the Angel Yard off
Little Church Lane, Sileby 2018

Leonard Taylor
(Private)
Leicestershire Regiment 12110

Born: 1892 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 3rd May 1917

Commemorated at:

- Arras Memorial, Arras Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France (Bay 20)
 - Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Leonard Albert Taylor was the younger brother of Bristol Taylor. He was born at Sileby in 1892 and lived in the family home at Angel Yard, Sileby, with his parents Vincent and Mary Jane. After he had left school he followed Bristol into the shoe trade and is listed as a shoe hand in 1911. However, he was later said to be working at Ellis's concrete works at Barrow upon Soar.

Leonard enlisted at Leicester on the 3rd September 1914, two days after his brother Bristol had done so at Loughborough. He was recorded as 5 foot 7 inches in height, with brown hair, grey eyes and a fresh complexion; similar to his brother. He joined the 8th Battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment and was on Home Service until disembarking in France on the 29th July 1915. He sustained a gunshot wound to the foot during operations on the 25th September 1916. After a short spell at the Canadian Hospital at Etaples he returned to England for rest and recuperation. Leonard arrived back in France on the 1st March 1917 having embarked from Folkestone the day before. Once on French soil he was posted to the 3rd (entrenching) Battalion. However, he was transferred again, this time to the 9th Battalion on the 6th April, and joined them in the field on the 17th. He was killed in action a few weeks later on the 3rd May 1917 during the Second Battle of Arras. He was 25 years old and unmarried.

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1	Vin. Taylor	Head	49	
2	Mary Taylor	Wife		55
3	Bris Taylor	Son	23	
4	Leonard Taylor	Son	19	
5	Florrie Taylor	Daughter		15

1911 Census – Taylor household at the Angel Yard, Little Church Lane, Sileby
(National Archives RG14 Piece 19141 RD406 SD1 ED6 SN7)

Thomas Toone
(Driver)
Royal Field Artillery 186525

Born: 15th May 1898 at Sileby, Leicestershire

Died: 5th May 1917

Buried at Sileby Cemetery, Sileby, Leicestershire
(Consecrated section, Plot B, Grave 74)

Commemorated at:

- Sileby War Memorial, Memorial Park, Sileby
 - St Mary's Parish Church, Sileby
 - Working Men's Club, Sileby

Thomas Toone was born at Sileby on the 15th May 1898 and was baptised at Sileby Parish Church on the 26th June 1898. He was the youngest son of Thomas Toone, a framework knitter and Mary Elizabeth his wife. The family lived at 19 Swan Street, Sileby until his father's death aged 63 in 1906. On the 29th August 1908 his widowed mother married their next door neighbour Thomas Wills, who was also a widow. The 1911 census shows the new family all together and living at 21 Swan Street. Thomas was still at school but was also working as a grocer's errand boy.

Almost nothing is known about Thomas and his war record. He would have been too young to enlist at the outbreak of the war but managed to do so in December 1916. He joined the Royal Field Artillery as a driver, but was mortally wounded probably at the end of April/beginning of May 1917. He died of his wounds on the 5th of May and his body was brought back to Sileby for burial. He was aged 19 and unmarried. His burial took place at Sileby Cemetery on the 9th June 1917.

The 15th June 1917 edition of the Loughborough Echo reported upon his funeral, "On Saturday the funeral took place of Driver Thomas Toone, of the Royal Artillery, who was killed whilst on duty recently... He was formerly employed at the Maiden Boot Company, Syston, and for some time was a member of the Sileby Imperial Band. The service was conducted by the Vicar, the Rev. F. W. Burrows and was attended by a large number of friends and sympathisers. Amongst the large number of tributes was one from the officers of his regiment, and also from the directors of the Maiden Boot Company, who were represented at the funeral, and also the Imperial band. The work people of a number of factories in the village also sent wreaths. The bearers were four Sileby soldiers home on leave, and two of the deceased's comrades who had accompanied the body to the village."



21 Swan Street, Sileby

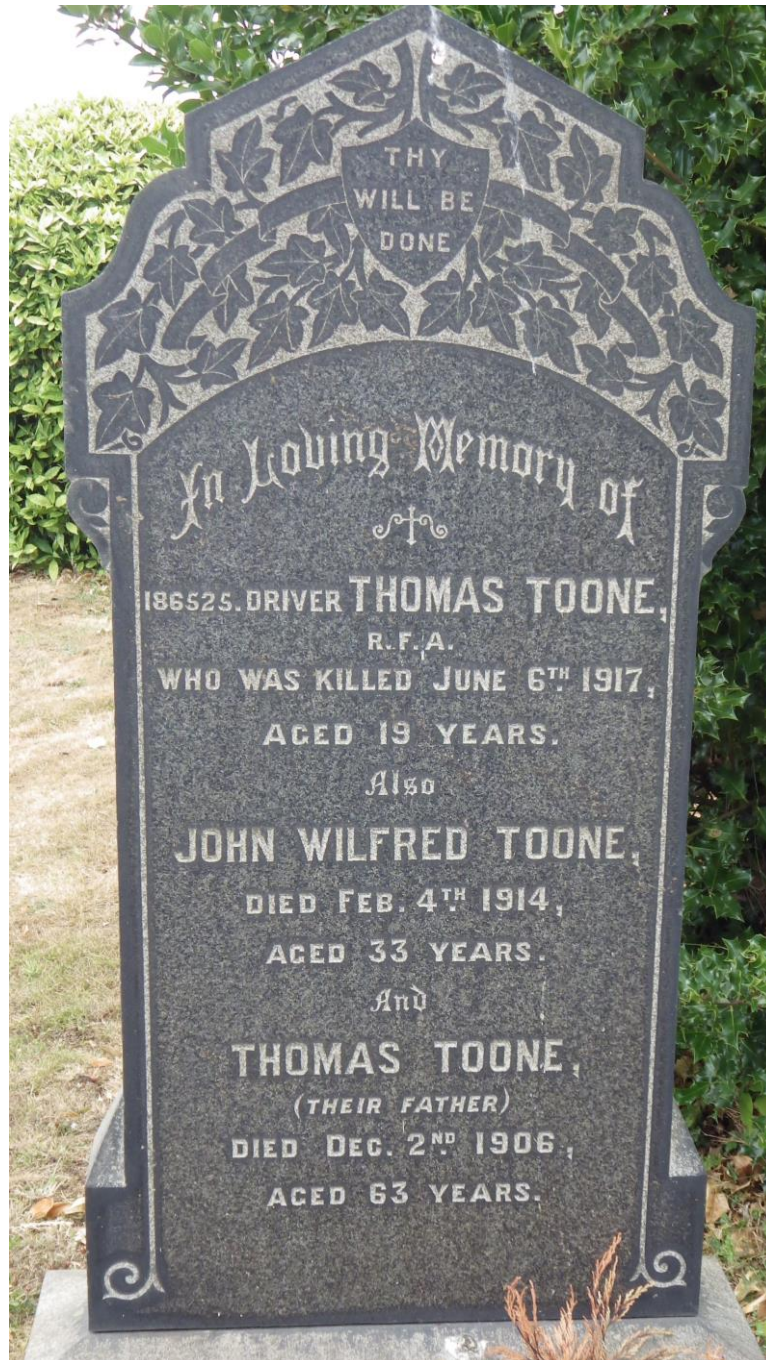
1898 June 26 noon May 15. No. 623	Thomas	Thomas & Mary	Toone	Swan Street	F.W.H	Herbert Knott
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Thomas Toone : Sileby Parish Register, baptism in 1898

Name.	Abode.	When buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
Thomas Toon	Sileby	9 th June 1917	19 w	F.H. Burrow

No. 1017

Thomas Toone : Sileby Parish Register, burial 1917



Toone family gravestone, Sibley Cemetery