

Thomas Maull.

Private, No.19392, 10th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

The history of the Maull family in the village of Wellesbourne can be traced back beyond the commencement of the 19th century.

Thomas Maull's parents, William, a farm labourer and Mary Ann Hortin, who worked as a servant and originated from the Warwickshire village of Tysoe were married, after banns, in the Parish Church of St. Peter's in Wellesbourne on the 14th December 1873. In the early years of their marriage they lived in Rosey Row in Wellesbourne Mountford and in later years in Peacock Row. William lived into his 90s and for a time worked for Colonel Bernard Granville of Chadley House.



Thomas Maull

The marriage produced eight children. Thomas, known as Tom, was their fifth child. He was born on the 23rd April 1884 and baptised on the 7th of May. He attended the local school and upon leaving, worked as a labourer for a local farmer.

He was 14 years of age, when in June 1898, he appeared before the local magistrate. The Leamington Spa Courier reported the caseⁱ: *‘Thomas Maull, labourer of Wellesbourne was summonsed under the County bylaws for wilfully and unlawfully loitering near to the entrance to the church during the time of Divine service in such a manner as to cause annoyance to people attending the church. William Rose, sexton, said he was instructed by the Churchwardens to bring the case before the magistrates with a view of putting a stop to the annoyance caused to worshippers by young men who loitered in the portals of the church. Defendant admitted being there but denied causing any annoyance. Major Mason said that as it was the first case the Bench would dismiss the defendant with a caution. They hoped it would be a warning to others’*

In the years following Thomas became heavily involved in the sporting activities of the village. He represented Wellesbourne Air Gun Club in local competitionsⁱⁱ and played cricket for the village teamⁱⁱⁱ. Football was the sport in which he excelled the most, captaining, in the 1909/10 season, Wellesbourne F.C. in winning the Garland Cup and finishing Runners-up in the Alderminster & District League. A trial for Birmingham F.C Reserves^{iv} did not however lead to greater things.

Beatrice Gertrude Kinton was born in Moreton Morrell and in her teens worked as a General servant for an Officer of the Warwick, St.Nicholas District Union Workhouse. The third reading of the banns, announcing her forthcoming marriage

To Thomas Holden of Lighthorne, was made in his local church on the 12th December 1909, but the wedding did not take place. Instead, in St.Peter's church Wellesbourne, on the 27th September 1913, she married Thomas Maull and the couple produced 3 children Gilbert, Beatrice and Lillian, all born in the early months of 1914, 1916 and 1917 respectively.

He and his family lived in Church Lane with Thomas employed as a builder's handyman by Mr. J. T Thorpe.^v His name appears on the School Roll of Honour^{vi} which suggests that he volunteered for military service at sometime before the end of 1915. Volunteering prior to the introduction of conscription in 1916 would ensure that under the scheme devised by Lord Derby, a married man would not be called up until the supply of single men was exhausted. The scheme was abandoned in Dec 1915.

The baptismal record of the 16th April 1916 for his daughter Rebecca suggests that he was then still in the village. The same record for his daughter Lillian, twelve months later (15th April 1917), states that he is now a member of the Army Service Corps. When his transfer to the 10th Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, part of the 57th Brigade, 19th (Western) Division came into effect, we may never know. It is certain however that he had transferred by the early months of 1918.

On the 21st March the German Army in a last 'win at all costs' bid to win the war, launched a major offensive against Allied forces. The 10th Battalion were positioned in what the War Diary calls 'The Left Messines Sector' some miles south of Ypres. The fighting was intense and Field Marshall Haig issued the order: *With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause each one must fight on to the end.*"

By early May the Battalion was situated near Dickebusch, four miles south west of Ypres. The War Diary for the 8th May 1918 reads: *'At 3.15am a heavy area shoot commenced on battery positions....and developed into a heavy gas bombardment. Eight inch gas shells were chiefly employed. One of the first shells landed in a barn occupied by Battalion. H.Q.....and caused a large number of casualties.....only 2 men were killed all the other casualties were wounded or gassed.....Total Casualties till noon... killed 2- Other ranks.*



Perth (China Wall) Cemetery, Ypres.

Two miles to the East of Ypres, Belgium in the Perth (China Wall) Cemetery lies the graves of two members of the 10th Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment who died on the same day, Wednesday the 8th May 1918, Privates A.J.Wheal and Thomas Maull.(Grave VI.D.3)

Thomas was awarded the Victory and British War medals and is commemorated on the Wellesbourne School Roll of Honour, The Memorial for the Dead in St. Peter's Church and on the village War Memorial.

Researched by Grev Hudson (Oct 2014)(grev.hudson@tinyworld.co.uk)

ⁱ *Leamington Spa Courier* 25/6/1898.

ⁱⁱ *Leamington Spa courier* 11/2/1910.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Leamington Spa Courier* 16/6/1913).

^{iv} *Leamington Spa courier* 8/6/1918

^v *Stratford upon Avon Herald* 7/6/1918. *Church Lane* is a name not recognised and could probably be *Church Walk* or alternatively *Church St.*

^{vi} *The Wellesbourne school roll of honour* can be dated to around November 1915.

Other sources:

Wellesbourne School Records CR371/1, CR371/2, CR371/3, CR371/4. (Warwick RO).

The Long, Long Trail (www.1914-1918.net)

The war Diaries of the 10Bn. Royal Warwickshire Regiment(NA. WO/95/2085

The Story of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment by C.L. Kingsford.