

# Thomas Hodson

**49119, 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers KIA 30<sup>th</sup> November 1917 aged 19**

Thomas was born in 1898 as John Thomas Hodson. The family lived in Warboys Fen where his father was the Innkeeper of the Golden Drop Inn. He was the son of William and Jane (nee Rose) Hodson the fifth of their nine children. Both of his parents' families had lived and worked on the Fen for generations. It could truly be said of this family



**“Our fathers father worked this land and his fathers father too.**

**We're farmers drainers countrymen and Fenmen through and through;”**

by Rex Sly

**Ernest Rose** (who is also on the War Memorial) was his cousin and lived nearby. As they both lived down the Fen they probably attended the school there and may be in this photograph of the school taken in 1906.



By 1911 the family had moved to Masons Cottage, Turf Fen Drive and Thomas's father was working as a labourer for his father who was a farmer and Beer House keeper on the Fen.

Thomas was 17 when war was declared and when he enlisted in Huntingdon he joined the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, a City of London Regiment. Before he left for France he made a soldiers will leaving everything to his mother Jane. He signed this as John Thomas Hodson.

He sailed in May 1917 as part of the 12<sup>th</sup> Eastern Division.

In November 1917 this division fought in the battle of Cambrai where Thomas was killed during the final phase. Enemy shellfire began at 6.45 a.m. followed by a hard and confused battle as the German Infantry advanced. The 12<sup>th</sup> Eastern Division were forced to retreat. Initially posted as missing in Jan 1918 Thomas was eventually recognised as having died on 30 November 1917.

He is commemorated on the Cambrai Memorial for the missing for this battle; one of 7048 soldiers who died then and have no known grave. The inscription reads

**To the Glory of God and to the enduring memory of 7048 Officers and Men of the forces of the British Empire who fell at the Battle of Cambrai 20 Nov-3 Dec 1917 but who have no known grave. Their names are here recorded.**

**George Manchett** died from wounds received at the same battle.

Thomas's elder brother Charles also fought in the war and returned with his lungs damaged by gas.

His parents remained in Warboys, William dying in 1947 and Jane in 1951.

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