

## **Private Thomas Teasdale**

**Regimental number: 3882**

**6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Durham Light Infantry**

**born: about 1884 - died: 13 April 1916**

Private Thomas Teasdale was born in about 1884 in Newfield, Durham.<sup>1</sup> He was the son of John Teasdale, who was born in about 1859 in Thornley Bank, Durham. His mother was Jane Nixon, born in about 1865 in Sunny Brow, Durham. John and Jane married near Auckland, Durham in 1883.<sup>2</sup> Sadly his mother died in 1899<sup>3</sup> but John remarried in 1908.<sup>4</sup> He married Hannah Collins who was herself a widow.<sup>5</sup> Her husband, Samson Collins, had probably died in 1899,<sup>6</sup> leaving Hannah with at least three young children.<sup>7</sup>

Thomas' father indicated in the 1911 census that he had had twelve children, of whom only five had survived.<sup>8</sup> The census shows four children that he had with his first wife, Jane – Thomas,<sup>9</sup> John (born in about 1885), George (born in about 1893) and Annie (born in about 1896) – and one child that he probably had with his second wife, Hannah – Jane (born in about 1909). However, the 1901 census shows another daughter of John and Jane – Hannah (born in about 1882).<sup>10</sup>

In 1911, Thomas' father was a shifter/repairer, working underground in a coal mine, and the family was living at Colliery View in New Brancepeth, Durham.<sup>11</sup> Thomas was a farm labourer, but his younger brothers, John and George, were also working underground in the coal mine. Thomas had been working as a coal miner ten years earlier.<sup>12</sup>

Thomas tried enlisting in Durham as a Private in the Durham Light Infantry on 8 September 1914<sup>13</sup> – just weeks after the beginning of the Great War. He was 32 years and 9 months old,<sup>14</sup> 5' 5½" tall and had a dark complexion, dark blue eyes and dark brown hair. He was a member of the Church of England. He had a good character and was considered fit for service in the army. However, just one month later, he was discharged because he was medically unfit and "not likely to become an efficient soldier." He was "suffering from absence of teeth in upper jaw." He enlisted again before the end of 1915,<sup>15</sup> in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry.<sup>16</sup> He later transferred to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

On 13 April 1916, he died of wounds at the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Casualty Clearing Station<sup>17</sup> and was buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery (Plot II, Row D, Grave 196).<sup>18</sup> Bailleul is located close to the Belgian border. It was occupied on 14 October 1914 and became an important railhead, air depot and hospital centre. Several Casualty Clearing Stations, including the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian, were quartered there for considerable periods. The earliest Commonwealth burials at Bailleul were made in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued until April 1918, and occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when graves were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.<sup>19</sup>

His father, who was still living at 4 Colliery View, was notified of his death<sup>20</sup> and received the monies owing to him from the army following his death.<sup>21</sup> Thomas was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914-15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).<sup>22</sup>

Thomas' two brothers, John and George, also served in the Great War. Both were wounded, but survived. Both enlisted as Privates in the Durham Light Infantry. John (Regimental number

201051) enlisted in June 1915 at the age of 30 and was considered fit for service.<sup>23</sup> He joined the British Expeditionary Force in France in October 1915. He was wounded with a gunshot wound to his arm in March 1918. He was discharged from the army in April 1919, having served in the Army Reserve after October 1918. John was awarded the British War Medal, the Victory Medal and the 1914-15 Star.<sup>24</sup>

His younger brother, George, also tried to enlist, at the age of 22, as a Private in the Durham Light Infantry in Chester-le-Street.<sup>25</sup> He signed his attestation in August 1914, but was discharged just six months later, as being medically unfit. Just three months later, in April 1915, he succeeded in joining the same regiment (Regimental number 301044). He went to France with the British Expeditionary Force in January 1916 and served until he was wounded on 31 March 1918. He came back to England in April disabled by a gunshot wound to his left arm. He was discharged from the Army in August 1918 and served in the Army Reserve until April 1919. George was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.<sup>26</sup>

After the war, the two surviving brothers lived very close to each other – John, with his wife, the former Margaret Scott,<sup>27</sup> at 42 Lymington Street in Esh Winning and George, at 39 Lymington Street. John died in 1922.

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<sup>1</sup> "1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census," *findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk): accessed 24 June 2015), entry for John Teesdale, County: Durham, Registration district: Auckland, Archive reference: RG12, Piece number: 4071, Folio: 124, Page: 15

<sup>2</sup> "England & Wales, Marriage Index, 1916-2005," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 June 2015), entry for Jane Nixon, Registration district: Auckland, Inferred County: Durham, Volume Number: 10a, Page Number: 302

<sup>3</sup> "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 June 2015), entry for Jane Teasdale, Registration district: Auckland, Inferred County: Durham, Volume: 10a, Page: 126

<sup>4</sup> "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk): accessed 23 June 2015), entry for John Teasdale, District: Durham, County: Durham, Volume: 10A, Page: 690

<sup>5</sup> "England Marriages, 1538–1973," *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NNV5-8FC>: accessed 25 June 2015), entry for Samson Collins and Hannah Parker; citing Chester-Le-Street, Durham, England, Reference Page 216, Line 432; FHL microfilm 1,894,225

<sup>6</sup> "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 June 2015), entry for Samuel Collins, Registration district: Chester le Street, Inferred County: Durham, Volume: 10a, Page: 293

<sup>7</sup> Hannah J. (born in about 1895), Emily R. (born in about 1897) and William J. Collins (born in about 1899). "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 23 June 2015), entry for Hannah Collins, Registration district: Durham, Sub-registration district: St Oswald, ED, institution, or vessel: 36, Piece: 4676, Folio: 87, Page Number: 32, Household schedule number: 181

<sup>8</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 23 June 2015), entry for John Teasdale, Registration district: Durham, Registration District Number: 551, Sub-registration district: Brandon, ED, institution, or vessel: 5, Piece: 29927

<sup>9</sup> Thomas is shown as a "visitor," but presumably this was his son, Thomas. He may have normally lived elsewhere in 1911.

<sup>10</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 23 June 2015), entry for John Teasdale, Registration district: Auckland, Sub-registration district: Bishop Auckland, ED, institution, or vessel: 35, Piece: 4648, Folio: 66, Page Number: 27, Household schedule number: 155

<sup>11</sup> "1911 England Census," entry for John Teasdale

<sup>12</sup> "1901 England Census," entry for John Teasdale

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<sup>13</sup>“British Army WWI Pension Records, 1914-1920,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 21 June 2015), entry for Thomas Teasdale, Form Title: Short Service Attestation. Unless otherwise noted all details of his military service are taken from this record.

<sup>14</sup> This would suggest that he was born in December 1881/January 1882. The 1901 and 1911 census records suggest he was born in 1883/4.

<sup>15</sup> He received the 1914-15 Star, which was awarded for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915. “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 21 June 2015), entry for Thomas Teasdale

<sup>16</sup> “UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 21 June 2015), entry for Thomas Teasdale

<sup>17</sup> “Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS,” *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 55

<sup>18</sup> “Commonwealth War Graves Commission,” ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org); accessed 21 June 2015), entry for Teasdale, T., Service No: 3882

<sup>19</sup> “Bailleul Communal Cemetery, Nord,” Commonwealth War Graves Commission (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000047/Bailleul%20Communal%20Cemetery.%20Nord>; accessed 17 June 2015)

<sup>20</sup> “Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS,” Record number 55

<sup>21</sup> “UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 21 June 2015), entry for Thomas Teasdale

<sup>22</sup> “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920,” entry for Thomas Teasdale

<sup>23</sup> “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 23 June 2015), entry for John Teasdale, Form Title: Territorial Force Attestation. Unless otherwise noted all details of his military service are taken from this record.

<sup>24</sup> “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920,” entry for John Teasdale

<sup>25</sup> “British Army Service Records 1914-1920,” *Findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk); accessed 23 June 2015), entry for George Teasdale, Series: WO 363

Unless otherwise noted all details of his military service are taken from this record.

<sup>26</sup> “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920,” entry for George Teasdale

<sup>27</sup> “England & Wales, Marriage Index, 1916-2005,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk); accessed 25 June 2015), entry for John Teasdale, Registration district: Durham, Inferred County: Durham, Volume Number: 10a, Page Number: 655