

Private John Nixon

Regimental number: 535375

15th London Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own Civil Service Rifles)

born: about 1897 - died: 11 September 1918

Private John Nixon, born in about 1897¹ in Gawsworth, Cheshire,² was the son of William and Mary Jane Nixon. Both his parents were also born in Cheshire. His father, William, was born in about 1877 in Marton, near Congleton, the son of William and Harriet.³ His mother, Mary Jane, was born in Henbury, in about 1874.⁴ William and Mary Jane (née Bottomley) were married on 8 October 1895 in the parish of Siddington.⁵ They had two children – a daughter, Mary Jane, born in about 1896⁶ and then, a year later, their son, John.

Sadly, John's father died the following year, at the age of 21,⁷ leaving Mary Jane with two children under the age of three. John's father's family had been farmers. Although John's mother had been a pupil teacher before she married, after her husband's death, Mary Jane was farming. In 1901, she was living at Morton House in Gawsworth and employed Edward Prince, an agricultural labourer.⁸ In 1911, the family was at the same address and Edward Prince was still living in the house and working for Mary Jane.⁹

In Macclesfield, Cheshire, John enlisted as a Private in the 15th London Regiment.¹⁰ The 15th (County of London) Battalion of the London Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own Civil Service Rifles) was a territorial battalion formed in August 1914 to attract civil servants to serve in the Great War.¹¹

On 9 September 1918, John was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shell wounds and gas poisoning.¹² He survived two days, but died on 11 September. He was buried the following day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row H, Grave 58). It is probable that the chaplain, W. F. O'Neill presided at his burial.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.¹³ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.¹⁴ A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September 1918.

His mother, who was then living in Big Bailey Riding in Gawsworth, was notified of his death¹⁵. She also received the monies owing to him from the army after his death. John was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹⁶

His mother, Mary Jane, remarried in 1921.¹⁷ She married Edward Prince, who had been living with the family and working on the family farm for at least two decades. Edward was born in about 1876 in Siddington,¹⁸ the son of Edward and Olive Prince.¹⁹ Edward's mother, Olive, died at the age of 34, when Edward was just two years old.²⁰ In 1881, Edward's family was living near the family of John's father, William.

Mary Jane Prince died on 17 July 1928, at the age of 54.²¹ John's sister, also Mary Jane, probably married John A. Rowbotham in 1918.²²

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- ¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for John Nixon, Registration district: Congleton, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 324
- ² 1901 census "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for John Nixon, Registration district: Macclesfield, Sub-registration district: Gawsworth, ED, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 3316, Folio: 12, Page Number: 2, Household schedule number: 11
- ³ Wm bap "England, Select Cheshire Bishop's Transcripts, 1598-1900," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for William Nixon, FHL Film Number: 1701377
- ⁴ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for John Nixon, Registration district: Macclesfield, Registration District Number: 444, Sub-registration district: Gawsworth, ED, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 21489
- ⁵ "Cheshire Marriage licence bonds and allegations 1606-1905," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for William Nixon
- ⁶ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for Mary Jane Nixon, Registration district: Congleton, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 160
- ⁷ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for William Nixon, Registration district: Macclesfield, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 113
- ⁸ "1901 England Census," entry for John Nixon
- ⁹ "1911 England Census," entry for John Nixon
- ¹⁰ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for John Nixon. There are some discrepancies in the records as to the Battalion in which he served. The 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station journal indicates that he served with the 11th Battalion. However, other army records (including his medal index card) indicate the 15th.
- ¹¹ "Prince of Wales's Own Civil Service Rifles, Somerset House, London. 27 January 1924," *The Western Front Association* (<http://www.westernfrontassociation.com>; accessed 31 October 2015)
- ¹² "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 650
- ¹³ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)
- ¹⁴ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ¹⁵ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 650
- ¹⁶ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for John Nixon
- ¹⁷ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for Mary J. Nixon, Registration district: Macclesfield, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 249
- ¹⁸ Ed GRO "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 31 October 2015), entry for Edward Prince, Registration district: Macclesfield, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 163
- ¹⁹ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for Edward Prince, Registration district: Macclesfield, Sub-registration district: Hythe, ED, institution, or vessel: 12, Piece: 3498, Folio: 89, Page Number: 4; "Cheshire Marriage licence bonds and allegations 1606-1905," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 31 October 2015), entry for Edward Prince
- ²⁰ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 31 October 2015), entry for Olive Prince, Registration district: Macclesfield, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 117

²¹ "England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966." *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 31 October 2015), entry for Mary Jane Prince

²² "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 October 2015), entry for Mary Nixon, Registration district: Macclesfield, Inferred County: Cheshire, Volume: 8a, Page: 217