

Private Irvin Tennyson Randolph Kinch[©]

Regimental number: 644479

116th Battalion, Canadian Infantry

born: 14 December 1893 – died: 2 March 1918

Private Irvin Tennyson Randolph Kinch was born on 14 December 1893 in Simcoe, Ontario.¹ Both his parents, William Henry Kinch and Emma Sophia Goose, were born in England—William in about 1854 and Emma in about 1859.² William and Emma married in Morpeth, Northumberland, on 16 November 1883³ and immigrated to Canada five months later. They sailed from Liverpool on the *Peruvian*, arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 3 April 1883.⁴ Quite a few years after their arrival, they had two children: Edwin Henry Kinch (born 28 April 1890)⁵ and Irvin.

In 1891, William, Emma and their first son were living in Simcoe, where William was a labourer in a sawmill.⁶ Ten years later, the family, which now included Irvin, was living in Midland, Ontario, and William was now a clerk in a general store.⁷

Irvin and his mother returned to England, perhaps for a holiday and to see family, when Irvin was 16 years old. They sailed on the *Victorian*, of the Allan Line, from Montreal and arrived in Liverpool on 22 October 1909.⁸ They returned to Canada at some point and, in 1911, were still living in Midland, on 6th Street, but now Irvin, his father and his brother were all working as salesmen.⁹

On 1 February 1916 Irvin enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.¹⁰ He had previously signed attestation papers on 22 August 1914, immediately after the outbreak of the war, and joined the 4th Battalion. This probably led to him spending six weeks at the army base in Valcartier, Quebec. (Why he had to re-enlist in February 1916 is not clear.) He then joined the 157th Battalion. When he enlisted, Irvin was working as a mail clerk, was 5' 8½" tall and had a ruddy complexion and brown eyes and hair. While still in Canada he forfeited two days' pay for being absent without leave.

Irvin left Canada on 17 October 1916, arriving in England on 28 October; he was sent to Bramshott, where he joined the 116th Battalion on 8 December. He joined the Western Front in Boulogne, France, on 11 February 1917. While in Bramshott he had been promoted to Acting Lance Corporal but reverted to Private before leaving England.

In March 1917, he again lost pay (£1 12s 0d) for "mutilating govt property" while on duty: he cut his greatcoat. Four months later he was wounded, but remained on duty.

At Christmas 1917, he had two weeks leave in England. He returned to duty on 6 January 1917 and, on 23 January, was awarded a Good Conduct Badge. Just over a year later he was fatally wounded.

In early March 1918, the 116th Battalion was on the Front.¹¹ The first day of March was generally quiet, but there was slightly more enemy trench mortar activity on the front line. The battalion frontage was severed during the night by three offensive patrols; an officer was killed and three other ranks (non-officers) were wounded. Irvin may have been one of these. He was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 1 March 1918 with wounds to his right and left hips.¹² Gunshot had fractured his left hip.¹³ He died the following day and was buried in Barlin Military Cemetery (Plot 3, Row E, Grave No. 45) the same day.¹⁴ He was a Presbyterian. The chaplain R.K. Lambert presided over his burial.

Barlin is about 11 kilometres south-west of Bethune in northern France. The extension of the military cemetery was begun by French troops in October 1914 and, when the French moved south in March 1916, Commonwealth forces took over the cemetery. Under enemy shelling, the nearby hospital was moved back, but in the spring of 1918, the extension was used again during the German advance on this front. The extension contains 1,095 Commonwealth Great War burials.¹⁵

His mother was his next of kin and was notified of his death by letter.

Like his father, Irvin's brother Edwin was a merchant. He married Kathleen Myrtle Cochrane in November 1915 in Simcoe.¹⁶ Sadly he died three years later, just over seven months after the death of his brother. He died of influenza on 21 October 1918, after six-day illness.¹⁷ Edwin's wife remarried, marrying Oliver John Green in September 1921. Oliver, like the men in the Kinch family, was a storekeeper.¹⁸

Two years after the death of her two sons, Irvin's mother returned to England. She sailed on the *Megantic*, leaving Montreal and arriving in Liverpool on 24 October 1920.¹⁹ She probably died in Northumberland in 1938.²⁰

However, Irvin's father was still living in Midland in 1921. He died on 30 June 1928 at 82 Spruce Street, Toronto, at the home of his daughter-in-law, Kathleen Green.²¹ He had moved there ten weeks before, suffering from pneumonia. He was buried in Midland.

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¹ "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869–1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Irvin Lennyson Randol Kinch

² "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Irvin S R Kinch [*sic*], Province: Ontario, District: Simcoe (east/est), District number: 113, Sub-district: Midland (Town/Ville), Sub-district number: E-1

³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for William Henry Kinch, Registration district: Morpeth, Inferred county: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 454

⁴ "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Emma S Kinch

⁵ "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869–1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Edwin Thentry Aug?? Kin?? [*sic*]

⁶ "1891 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for William Kinch, Province: Ontario, District number: 116, District: Simcoe East, Sub-district: Tay

⁷ "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Irvin S R Kinch [*sic*]

⁸ "UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Irwin [*sic*] Kinch, Official number: 121216

⁹ "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Marie T H Kinch [*sic*], Province: Ontario, District: Simcoe East, District number: 119, Sub-district: 33–Midland, Sub-district number: 33

¹⁰ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 20 August 2016) entry for Kinch, Irvin T. R., Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 5155 – 12, Item number: 499222, Digitized service file - PDF format: B5155-S012. Unless otherwise stated, all information about Irvin's military service comes from this record.

¹¹ "MIKAN 1883282: War Diaries - 116th Battalion, Canadian Infantry," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca>: accessed 16 August 2016)

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- ¹² "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 5 July 2016), entry for Kinch, J.
- ¹³ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 20 August 2016) entry for Kinch, Irvin T. R.
- ¹⁴ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 5 July 2016), entry for Kinch, J.
- ¹⁵ "Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/>: accessed 16 August 2016)
- ¹⁶ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Edwin Henry Kinch, Marriage place: Simcoe, Ontario, Canada
- ¹⁷ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869–1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Edwin Henry Kinch
- ¹⁸ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Kathleen M Kinch, Marriage place: Ontario, Ontario, Canada
- ¹⁹ "UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Emma Kinch, Official number: 127981
- ²⁰ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for Emma Kinch, Registration district: Northumberland Central, Inferred county: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 488
- ²¹ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869–1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 20 August 2016), entry for William Henry Kinch