Private Herbert Rilett©
Regimental number: 27653
7th Battalion, South Staffordshire Regiment

born: 1885 – died: 25 February 1918

Private Herbert Rilett was born in 1885[1] in Clarbeston, Lincolnshire, the son of John G. and Elizabeth Rilett.[2] His father was born in about 1846 in Carlton Scroop, Lincolnshire, and his mother (the former Elizabeth Kennewell) in the same year in Barkston, Lincolnshire.[3] They married in Grantham, Lincolnshire, in 1867 and probably had at least nine children before Elizabeth died, probably in 1888.[4] The children included William (born in 1868),[5] John George (born in 1869),[6] Henry (born in about 1871),[7] Enoch (born in 1874),[8] Elizabeth (born in 1876),[9] Caleb (born in 1878),[10] Joseph (born in 1880, but died the following year)[11] and Herbert, and Ernest (born in 1887).[12]

Herbert's father was a garden labourer. In 1881, the family was living at No. 1 Nixon's Row in Barkston.[13] As a widower in 1891, John and three of his children were living on West Street, Barkston.[14] Herbert's father remained a widower, living in Barkston[15] for several decades but, in 1901, he married Emma Kennewell.[16] Emma was born in about 1861 in Barkston.[17] She was possibly a cousin of his first wife.

By 1901, Herbert had left home and was a boarder on Gipple Farm in Syston, Lincolnshire, where he was a carter.[18] In 1911, he was living with his brother John George and his wife, Sarah Ann, at 8 St Austins Drive, Gedling Road in Carlton, Nottinghamshire. Herbert was then working as a railway labourer.

He enlisted in the South Staffordshire Regiment and first served with the 12th Battalion. He then transferred to the 8th and ultimately to the 7th.[19] At the end of February 1918, the 7th Battalion was in the trenches near Mazingarbe, in northern France. On 25 February, Herbert was injured by an enemy sniper.[20] He had already died when he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with a head wound.[21] He was buried the following day in Barlin Military Cemetery (Plot 3, Row E, Grave No. 42). He was a member of the Wesleyan church.

Herbert Rylett [*sic*] on Syston War Memorial
Source: *Roll of Honour: Lest We Forget*, (http://www.roll-of-honour.com/Lincolnshire/Syston.ht

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.[22]

Without knowing the relationship, the chaplain sent a letter to J. G. Rilett in Syston, near Grantham, to notify the family of Herbert's death. This was probably his brother John George, with whom he

was living in 1911. The monies owing to Herbert from the army upon his death were sent to his eldest brother William and probate of his estate was awarded to William. His effects amounted to £275 0s 4d.[23]

Herbert was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).[24] He is commemorated on the Syston war memorial.

At least one of Herbert's brothers served in and survived the Great War. Caleb Rilett was a platelayer with the Great Northern Railway when he enlisted in June 1916.[25] He served as a sapper in the Royal Engineers (regimental number: 2675083) and joined the Western Front in February 1917. He came back to England in January 1919 and was discharged in April that year at the age of nearly 41. He had no disability, although he had spent nearly a month in hospital with eczema on his leg, caused by a fall. He died in October 1940 in Aslockton, Nottinghamshire.[26] It is not known if other brothers served.

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[1] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 15 October 2016), entry for Herbert Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 435

[2] "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2016), entry for Herbert Rilett, Registration district: Basford, Registration district number: 429, Sub-registration district: Carlton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 1, Piece: 20459

[3] "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 August 2016), entry for John George Rylott [*sic*], Registration district: Newark, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 1, Piece: 3379, Folio: 8, Page: 8

[4] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 August 2016), entry for Elizabeth Rillet, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 239

[5] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for William Rilett, Registration district: Grantham, Inferred county: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 475

[66] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for John George Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 325

[7] "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 August 2016), entry for John George Rylott [*sic*]

[8] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Enoch Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 385

[9] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Elizabeth Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 412

[10] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Caleb Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 428

[11] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Joseph Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 409; "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry*

(www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Joseph Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 234

[12] "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), entry for Ernest Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 4384

[13] "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 August 2016), entry for John George Rylott [*sic*]

[14] "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 January 2016), entry for Herbert Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 1, Piece: 2716, Folio: 7, Page: 7

[15] "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 1 September 2016), entry for John E Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Sub-registration district: Claypole, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 11, Piece: 3201, Folio: 7, Page: 5, Household schedule number: 46

[16] "England & Wales Marriages 1837–2008," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 1 September 2016), entry for John George Rilett, District: Newark, County: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7B, Page: 938

[17] "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 1 September 2016), entry for John George Rilett, Registration district: Newark, Registration district number: 432, Sub-registration district: Claypole, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 14, Piece: 20767

[18] "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 October 2016), entry for Herbert Rylett [*sic*], Registration district: Newark, Sub-registration district: Claypole, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 11, Piece: 3201, Folio: 101, Page: 2, Household schedule number: 6

[19] "UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 August 2016), entry for Herbert Rilett

[20] "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 September 2016), Regiment or unit: South Staffordshire Regiment, Sub-unit: 7th Service Battalion, Division: 11th Division, Diary dates: 1916 July - 1917 June, Piece description: Piece 1816/1-4: 7 Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment (1916 Jul - 1919 May), Piece number: 1816

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