

Private John Robinson Parker©
Regimental number: 3939
7th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry

born: 9 April 1896 – died: 23 June 1916

Private John Robinson Parker was born on 9 April 1896 in Houghton le Spring, Durham, the son of John and Elizabeth Parker. He was baptized on 19 May 1896.¹ Both his parents were born in about 1867—John in Fenham Newcastle, Northumberland, the son of John and Isabella Parker,² and Elizabeth (nee Nicholson) in Newbottle, Durham,³ the daughter of Robinson and Sarah Nicholson.⁴ John and Elizabeth married in 1890⁵ and had eight children, three of whom died before the Great War: Norah (born in 1891),⁶ William (born in 1892, but probably died in 1893),⁷ William (born in 1893, but died at the age of 10 in 1904),⁸ John, Elsie (born in 1898, but died at the age of 17 in 1915),⁹ Gladys (born in 1900),¹⁰ Jane Ann (born in 1903)¹¹ and James Nicholson (born in 1906).¹²

In 1891, John senior and Elizabeth were living on Newbottle Street in Houghton-le-Spring with their infant daughter, Norah. John senior was a draper's assistant.¹³ In 1901, the family was still in Houghton-le-Spring, living on Front Row and John senior was now a travelling draper.¹⁴ By 1911, John senior and his family were living on Fallowfield Terrace in South Hetton, near Sunderland, Haswell, Durham.¹⁵ John had left home and was a servant and milk boy on the nearby Low Fallowfield Farm.¹⁶

John enlisted in the 7th Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry early in the war and went to the Western Front on 24 October 1915.¹⁷ Eight months later he was injured and was admitted to the No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, where he died on 23 June 1916.¹⁸ He was one of 1,986 admitted to No. 1 CCCS in June and one of 86 to die there.¹⁹

He was buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Grave reference: II, E, 169). Bailleul is in France, 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 No. 1 Canadian CCS, 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; they occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when soldiers' remains were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.²⁰

His mother, who was living at 20 Lilly Terrace in Hetton le Hole, Durham, was notified of his death²¹ and received the monies owing to him from the army upon his death.²²

John 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).²³

John's sister Gladys died at the age of 36 in 1937 in Houghton le Spring.²⁴

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¹ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 November 2016), entry for John Robinson Parker, FHL film number: 1885559, Reference ID item 4 p 96

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- ² “1871 England, Wales & Scotland Census,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 5 November 2016), entry for John Parker, Registration district: Houghton-Le-Spring, Archive reference: RG10, Piece number: 4980, Folio: 20, Page: 33
- ³ “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for John R. Parker, Registration district: Houghton Le Spring, Sub-registration district: Hetton le Hole, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 12, Piece: 4697, Folio: 50, Page: 5, Household schedule number: 24
- ⁴ “1871 England, Wales & Scotland Census,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 5 November 2016), entry for Elizabeth Nicholson, Registration district: Houghton Le Spring, Archive reference: RG10, Piece number: 4979, Folio: 94, Page: 42
- ⁵ “England & Wales Marriages 1837–2008,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for John Parker, District: Houghton le Spring, County: Durham, Volume: 10A, Page: 599
- ⁶ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 5 November 2016), entry for Norah Parker, Registration district: Houghton le Spring, Inferred county: Durham, Volume: 10a, Page: 491
- ⁷ “England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for William Parker, FHL film number: 893832; “England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for William Parker, District: Houghton le Spring, County: Durham, Volume: 10A, Page: 259. There are some discrepancies in the records for the births and deaths of two sons, both named William, but this seems to be the best explanation.
- ⁸ “England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for William Parker, FHL Film Number: 1885559, Reference ID: item 4 p 45; “England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for William Parker, District: Houghton le Spring, County: Durham, Volume: 10A, Page: 288.
- ⁹ “England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for Elsie Parker, FHL Film Number: 893833, Reference ID: p 29 ln 232; “England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for Elsie Parker, District: Houghton le Spring, County: Durham, Volume: 10A, Page: 686
- ¹⁰ “England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for Gladys Parker, FHL Film Number: 893833, Reference ID: p 93 ln 740
- ¹¹ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for Jane Ann Parker, Registration district: Houghton le Spring, Inferred county: Durham, Volume:10a, Page: 555
- ¹² “England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for James Nicholson Parker, Registration district: Houghton le Spring, Inferred county: Durham, Volume:10a, Page: 552
- ¹³ “1891 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for John Parker, Registration district: Houghton Le Spring, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 4, Piece: 4113, Folio: 62, Page: 5
- ¹⁴ “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for John R. Parker
- ¹⁵ “1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for John Parker, Registration district: Easington, Registration district number: 552, Enumeration district: 22, Sub-district: Dawdon, Sub-district number: 2, Census reference: RG14PN30041 RG78PN1735 RD552 SD2 ED22 SN280, Piece: 30041
- ¹⁶ “1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk; accessed 4 November 2016), entry for John Robinson Parker, Registration district: Easington, Registration district number: 552, Enumeration district: 22, Sub-district: Dawdon, Sub-district number: 2, Census reference: RG14PN30041 RG78PN1735 RD552 SD2 ED22 SN312, Piece: 30041
- ¹⁷ “UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 8 May 2016), entry for John Robinson Parker

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- ¹⁸ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 3 November 2016), entry for Parker J R
- ¹⁹ "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 7 September 2014)
- ²⁰ "Bailleul Communal Cemetery, Nord," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000047/Bailleul%20Communal%20Cemetery.%20Nord>: accessed 5 August 2015)
- ²¹ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 3 November 2016), entry for Parker J R
- ²² "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 November 2016), entry for John Robinson Parker
- ²³ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 November 2016), entry for John R Parker
- ²⁴ "England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 4 November 2016), entry for Gladys Parker, District: Houghton le Spring, County: Durham, Volume: 10A, Page: 604