

Sapper Robert Schofield©
Regimental number: 147707
257th Tunnelling Company, Royal Engineers

born: about 1881 - died: 8 August 1917

Sapper Robert Schofield was born in about 1881 in Halifax, Yorkshire,¹ the son of William Schofield, a bricklayer.² Before he enlisted to serve in the Great War, Robert lived in St. Helens, Lancashire, with his wife and two children.³ His wife, the former Florence Ashurst (née Handforth) was born in about 1878 in Pargate, Cheshire.⁴ Florence was a widow when she married Robert.⁵ She had previously married Samuel Ashurst in Wigan, Lancashire, in February 1901,⁶ but sadly Samuel died in 1903.⁷ Robert and Florence married on 22 December 1906 at St Peter's, the parish church in Parr, St Helens. They had two children: William Edward (born on 8 August 1908 and baptized on 19 August)⁸ and Mary Hannah (born on 15 June 1910 and baptized on 6 July).⁹

In 1911, Robert and his family were living at 9 Mersey Street in Parr, St. Helens, where Robert was a coal miner/hewer. They were living with Robert's brother-in-law, Joseph Ashurst, the husband of Florence's sister, Martha, and their children. Joseph's brother, James, was also living with them. There were ten people, with four children under eight, living in four rooms.¹⁰

Robert enlisted in St Helens as a sapper in the Royal Engineers. In August 1917 he was on the Western Front in northern France where, on 8 August, he was injured and admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station. He died the same day.¹¹ He was buried the following day in Adinkerke Military Cemetery¹² (Grave Reference: C. 1).¹³ He was a Wesleyan.

Adinkerke Military Cemetery is 20 kilometres east of Dunkirk, in the community of De Panne, just across the border into Belgium. There are 168 Commonwealth soldiers from the Great War buried in the cemetery.¹⁴

Robert's wife, who was living then at Nessmoor, Sutton, St. Helens, was notified of his death. She also received the monies owing to him from the army upon his death.

Robert was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹⁵ He is honoured on the St Helens Rolls of Honour website.¹⁶

His wife remarried in 1919,¹⁷ marrying Samuel Bate, and was later living at 4 Off Berry Lane, Sutton Oak, in St. Helens.¹⁸



(Source: *St Helen's Newspaper and Advertiser*
St Helen's Roll of Honour
<http://www.sthelensrollsofhonour.co.uk/>)
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- ¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 August 2016), entry for Robert Schofield, Registration district: Prescott, Registration district number: 456, Sub-registration district: St Helens, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 53, Piece: 22807
- ² "Certified copy of an entry of a marriage," General Register Office, entry for Robert Schofield: accessed 4 August 2016
- ³ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 August 2016), entry for Robert Schofield
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ "Certified copy of an entry of a marriage," General Register Office, entry for Robert Schofield
- ⁶ "Wigan, England, Church of England Marriages, 1754–1926," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 10 August 2016), entry for Florence Handforth
- ⁷ "England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 8 August 2016), entry for Samuel Ashurst, District: Prescott, County: Lancashire, Volume: 8B, Page: 491
- ⁸ "Lancashire, England, Births and Baptisms, 1813–1911," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 May 2016), entry for William Edward Schofield, Reference number: Pr 3400/1/2
- ⁹ "Lancashire, England, Births and Baptisms, 1813–1911," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 May 2016), entry for Mary Hannah Schofield, Reference number: Pr 3400/1/3
- ¹⁰ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 August 2016), entry for Robert Schofield
- ¹¹ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 27 April 2016), entry for Schofield, P. [*sic*]
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, (www.cwgc.org: accessed 3 December 2016), entry for Schofield, R., Service No: 147707
- ¹⁴ "Adinkerke Military Cemetery," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/>: accessed 30 April 2016)
- ¹⁵ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 April 2016), entry for Robert Schofield
- ¹⁶ "St Helens Rolls of Honour," (<http://www.sthelensrollsofhonour.co.uk>: accessed 3 May 2016)
- ¹⁷ "England & Wales, Marriage Index, 1916–2005," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 April 2016), entry for Florence Schofield, Registration district: Prescott, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8b, Page: 1485
- ¹⁸ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, (www.cwgc.org: accessed 3 December 2016), entry for Schofield, R.