

Private Robert Lakin©
Regimental number: 203098
1/5th Battalion, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

born: 1892–died: 3 August 1917

Private Robert Lakin was born in 1892 in Basford, a suburb of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire.¹ He was the first child of Robert and Edith (née Ellis) Lakin, who had married at the beginning of 1892 in Basford.² They would have a further eight children, all born in Nottingham:

- Winifred Edith (born on 2 January 1894 and baptized as an adult on 8 September 1910).³
- Percy (born in 1897)⁴
- Horace (born on 14 July 1898)⁵
- Leslie (born in about 1900 but sadly died within a year. He was buried on 6 December 1901)⁶
- John (born in about 1902 but, like his brother, he died soon after birth and was buried on 21 August 1903)⁷
- Hilda (born on 28 August 1904)⁸
- Leslie (born on 3 March 1907)⁹
- Arthur (born in 1909)¹⁰

In 1901, the family was living at 15 Speechley Street in Nottingham, where Robert Sr. was a journeyman pork butcher.¹¹ Ten years later, Robert Jr. was also a journeyman butcher.¹² The whole family was living at 23 Selhurst Street in Hyson Green, Nottingham.¹³

Robert Jr. probably enlisted to serve in the Great War in May 1916.¹⁴ He first served with the Northumberland Fusiliers (regimental number 5158) and then joined the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI) (regimental numbers 6661, 203098).¹⁵ When he died, he was serving with the 1/5th Battalion, which had joined the Western Front in April 1915.¹⁶

At the end of July and beginning of August 1917, the battalion was stationed in Nieupoort, Belgium. On 2 August, it carried out a raid on enemy trenches near Lombardsyde, just outside Nieupoort. The “[r]aiding party was successful in entering German trenches and inflicting loss on the enemy.”¹⁷ One officer and six other ranks (ORs) were killed; seven ORs were wounded and three reported missing. Robert was probably one of the wounded; he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station¹⁸ on 2 August with a gunshot wound to his leg. He died at 8:10 a.m. the following day and was buried later in the day in Adinkerke Military Cemetery (Grave A2).¹⁹

Adinkerke Military Cemetery is 20 kilometres east of Dunkirk, just across the border into Belgium. From June to November 1917 the Commonwealth troops held the Front, from the Belgian coast down to St. Georges in France. There are 168 Commonwealth soldiers from the Great War buried in the cemetery.²⁰

The chaplain informed his mother, who was living at 50 Reigate Road in New Basford, of his death.²¹ A few years later, she requested this inscription on his gravestone:

WHERE SLEEP
THOSE BRAVE HEARTS
WHO FOR OTHERS DIED²²

Robert was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²³ He is also remembered on the war memorial at St Leodegarius Church in Basford²⁴ and on the Scottish National War Memorial as a Scot serving in “brigades of guards and English regiments.”²⁵ No evidence was found to substantiate Robert’s Scottish ancestry.

Robert’s brother **Percy** also served in the Great War. He enlisted as a private on 11 May 1914 and served most of his time in the 7th Reserve Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment) (regimental number 265318).²⁶ After a few months in England, he went to France and was serving there until October 1918. However, his service was marked by a number of illnesses and injuries.

In August 1915, he was hospitalized in Étaples as a result of gunshot wounds to his right arm, rejoining his battalion in October. A year later, he was promoted to corporal. In May 1917, he was hospitalized again, this time with scabies. The following month he suffered gas poisoning and was treated at the 7th Canadian General Hospital in Étaples. In June 1918, he received gunshot wounds to his finger, leg and back and was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, where his brother had died 10 months earlier, before going to hospital. He was injured a last time on 2 October 1918 and was invalided to England and admitted to the Red Cross Hospital in Christchurch with shrapnel wounds to his left forearm and both legs. He was granted ten days leave in November 1918 and was at home in Basford when the Armistice was declared on 11 November 1918. He was demobilized in February 1919.

Just after the war, Robert Sr., Edith and five children were still living at 50 Reigate Road and Robert was still working as a pork butcher. Percy was a printer; Horace was out of work; Hilda was an office clerk; Leslie was a brewer’s bottler and Arthur was still in school.²⁷ In the coming decades, the family continued to live in Nottingham.

Their eldest child, **Winifred**, married Frederick Taylor, a miner, on 18 October 1919 at St. Leodegarius Church in Basford.²⁸ Two years later, they were living on the same street as her parents—at 36 Reigate Road.²⁹ In 1939, they had moved further down the road and were living at 44 Reigate Road.³⁰ She died in Nottingham on 5 April 1971.³¹

After he was demobilized, **Percy** was living with his parents. Of all the injuries he sustained during the war, it was the gas poisoning that left him with a disability. Perhaps this contributed to his early death. He died in hospital on 9 March 1936, aged 39.³² He was survived by his family and his fiancée, Mabel.³³

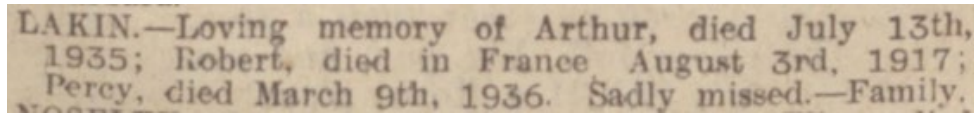
Horace married Dorothy Tandyn in 1925³⁴ and, in 1939, they were living at 18 Staples Street in Nottingham, where Horace was a boiler fireman, working above ground for a coal mine.³⁵ He died in Nottingham on 7 January 1974.³⁶

Hilda married Joseph Cooling, a miner, on 3 September 1933 at St. Leodegarius Church.³⁷ In 1939, they were living at 23 Cinderhill Road, Nottingham, where Joseph was an electric motor driver in a colliery.³⁸ Joseph died in 1978;³⁹ Hilda survived him for over ten years, dying on 10 July 1989.⁴⁰

Leslie married Grace Turner in 1929.⁴¹ Ten years later they were living at 221 Vernon Road, Nottingham, where Leslie was the manager of a cotton tape department.⁴² He died on 25 May 1972, aged 65.⁴³

The last child in the family, **Arthur**, a joiner, married Eliza Gribby at St Augustine's Church in New Basford.⁴⁴ He died very young, passing away at the age of 26 on 13 July 1935.⁴⁵ After his death, Eliza put a memorial notice in the *Nottingham Evening Post*.⁴⁶

The same day that the memorial notice for Arthur was posted, the family posted a notice remembering three sons lost at a young age.⁴⁷



Nottingham Evening Post
13 July 1936

The parents of these boys were still alive in 1939, still living at 50 Reigate Road, and Robert Sr. was still a butcher.⁴⁸ They both died in Nottingham—Robert in 1947⁴⁹ and Edith five years later, on 18 January 1952.⁵⁰

© 2026 BIFHSGO

¹ "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, Robert, Registration district: Basford, Volume: 07B, Page: 205

² "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Robert Lakin, Registration district: Basford, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 267

³ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Winifred E Taylor, Schedule number: 60, Sub-schedule number: 2, Enumeration district: Rmar, Registration district: 430-1 7; "Nottinghamshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813–1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Winifred Lakin

⁴ GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, Percy, Registration district: Nottingham, Volume: 07B, Page: 344

⁵ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Horace Lakin, Schedule number: 209, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: Rmcn, Registration district: 430 2 12a

⁶ "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, Leslie, Registration district: Nottingham, Volume: 07B, Page: 346; "Web: UK, Burial and Cremation Index, 1576–2014," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Leslie Lakin

⁷ "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, John, Registration district: Nottingham, Volume: 07B, Page: 404; "Web: UK, Burial and Cremation Index, 1576–2014," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for John Lakin

⁸ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Hilda Cooling, Schedule number: 61, Sub-schedule number: 2, Enumeration district: Rmjk, Registration district: 430-4

⁹ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Leslie Lakin, Schedule number: 74, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: Rmay, Registration district: 1

¹⁰ "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, Arthur, Registration district: Nottingham, Volume: 07B, Page: 424

-
- ¹¹ “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 May 2025), entry for Robert Lakin, Registration district: Nottingham, Sub-registration district: Nottingham North West, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 26, Piece: 3184, Folio: 41, Page: 20, Household schedule number: 136
- ¹² The transcription of his occupation, as well as that of his father, indicates that he was a builder. Robert’s father was a butcher in all the other records found, so it is assumed that this was a mistranscription.
- ¹³ “1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 May 2025), entry for Robert Lakin, Registration district: Nottingham, Registration district number: 430, Sub-district: Nottingham North West, Sub-district number: 4, Enumeration district: 17, Household schedule number: 403, Piece: 20609
- ¹⁴ Based on “War Gratuity Calculator” (<https://wargratiuity.wordpress.com/2015/08/16/gratuity-calculator/>: accessed 18 May 2017); “UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Robert Lakin
- ¹⁵ “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 December 2025), entry for Robert Lakin
- ¹⁶ “King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Own_Yorkshire_Light_Infantry: accessed 28 November 2025)
- ¹⁷ “1/5 Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry War Diaries,” *The National Archives* (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/: accessed 27 November 2025), Date: 1915 Apr. - 1918 Jan., Reference: WO 95/2806/2. Unless otherwise cited, all information about Robert’s unit comes from this source.
- ¹⁸ A casualty clearing station was a military medical unit behind the front lines, usually located near transportation. Casualties who did not soon die or could not be adequately treated in the CCS were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital. (Casualty Clearing Station,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station: accessed 2 May 2020)
- ¹⁹ “Name Index,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, R., Research source: No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station; *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, Robert., Service No: 203098
- ²⁰ “Adinkerke Military Cemetery,” *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/>: accessed 30 April 2016)
- ²¹ Name Index,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa*, entry for Lakin, R. The location of Reigate Road is shown as New Basford, but other records show it as Old Basford, or simply Nottingham.
- ²² *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, entry for Lakin, Robert
- ²³ “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry*, entry for Robert Lakin
- ²⁴ *Imperial War Museum* (<https://www.iwm.org.uk/>: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Lakin, Robert
- ²⁵ “Web: Scotland, National War Memorial Index, 1914-1945,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 May 2025), entry for Robert Lakin. No evidence was found to substantiate Robert’s Scottish ancestry.
- ²⁶ “British Army Service Records,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Percy Lakin, Service number: 265318, Series: WO 364, Series description: Wo 364 - First World War Pension Claims. Unless otherwise cited, all information about Percy’s military service comes from this source.
- ²⁷ “1921 Census Of England & Wales,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Robert Lahim [sic], Registration district: Nottingham, Registration district number: 430, Sub-district: Bulwell, Sub-district number: 5, Enumeration district number: 20, Archive series: RG 15, Piece number: 16103, Schedule number: 197, District reference: RD 430 RS 5 ED 20
- ²⁸ “Nottinghamshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754–1937,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Winifred Lakin
- ²⁹ “1921 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Winifred Taylor, Registration district name: Nottingham, Registration district number: 430, Sub-registration district: Bulwell, Sub-registration district number: 5
- ³⁰ 1939 England and Wales Register,” *Ancestry*, entry for Winifred E Taylor

-
- ³¹ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Winifred Edith Taylor
- ³² “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Percy Lakin
- ³³ “British Newspaper Death & In Memoriam Notices,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Percy Lakin, *Nottingham Evening Post*, 10 March 1936, Page: 3
- ³⁴ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Robert Lakin, Registration district: Nottingham, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 986
- ³⁵ “1939 England and Wales Register,” *Ancestry*, entry for Horace Lakin
- ³⁶ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Horace Lakin
- ³⁷ “Nottinghamshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754–1937,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Hilda Lakin
- ³⁸ “1939 England and Wales Register,” *Ancestry*, entry for Hilda Cooling
- ³⁹ “England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 29 January 2025), entry for Joseph Cooling, District: Nottinghamshire, County: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 8, Page: 1415
- ⁴⁰ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Hilda Cooling
- ⁴¹ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Leslie Lakin, Registration district: Nottingham, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 699
- ⁴² “1939 England and Wales Register,” entry for Leslie Lakin
- ⁴³ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Leslie Lakin
- ⁴⁴ “Nottinghamshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754–1937,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Arthur Lakin
- ⁴⁵ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Arthur Lakin, Registration district: Nottingham, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7b, Page: 224
- ⁴⁶ “Search newspapers,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 28 November 2025), entry for Arthur Lakin, *Nottingham Evening Post*, 13 July 1936
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ “1939 England and Wales Register,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 May 2025), entry for Robert Lakin, Schedule number: 63, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: Rmar, Registration district: 430-17
- ⁴⁹ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 May 2025), entry for Robert Lakin, Registration district: Nottingham, Inferred county: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 3c, Page: 257
- ⁵⁰ “England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 December 2025), entry for Edith Larkin