

Sergeant Robert Walker Leggat[©]
Regimental number: 8442
9th Battalion, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

born: 1886–died: 29 or 30 March 1916

Sergeant Robert Leggat¹ was born in 1889² in Barony, Glasgow, Lanarkshire.³ When he died in France in 1916, Robert left a wife and four children.

Robert's parents came from Ireland. His father, Thomas, married Jane Walker in the parish church of Dromore, County Down, on 12 January 1875. At the time, Thomas, like his own father, was a weaver.⁴ Their first children were born in Ireland—a daughter, Hargate, was born on 25 September 1876⁵ and a son, Joseph, on 4 December 1878.⁶ At some point between 1878 and 1884, the family moved to Scotland. A third child, Robert Samuel, was probably born in about 1881 and he died in Scotland in 1886.⁷ They then had at least four more children born in Scotland:

- John Gibson (born in 1884, but died the following year)⁸
- Robert (born in 1886)⁹
- Mary Jane (born in 1889)¹⁰
- Isabelle (born in 1893)¹¹

Robert was born at 41 Burnside Street, off Garscadden Street, in Glasgow. His father was now a labourer at an iron foundry.¹² As a young child, Robert lived at 10 Roslin Place in Glasgow.¹³ In 1901, the family was still on Roslin Place. Robert was now a messenger and his older brother Joseph had joined his father at the iron foundry.¹⁴ Two years later, Thomas died of broncho-pneumonia, cardiac debility and diarrhea. He died at home on Roslin Place on 20 August 1903.¹⁵ Shortly after, Robert's mother was living at 5 Swan Lane in Glasgow.¹⁶

Robert married Sarah Fawkes on 26 February 1906—when he was just 20—at the Milton Parish Church in Glasgow.¹⁷ His wife was just 17. He was in the militia when he married: a private in the 2nd Battalion of the Scottish Rifles, living in the barracks at Maryhill, Glasgow. Robert had enlisted in 1904, joining the 26th Foot (Scottish Rifles) (regimental number 5201) in Glasgow. At the age of 18, Robert was 5' 6¼" tall and had a fresh complexion, blue eyes and light brown hair.

A few years after his marriage, Robert was a city cleaning labourer and may have remained there¹⁸ until he enlisted in the 9th Battalion of the Scottish Rifles. In 1911, he and his family were living at 251 Nuneaton Street in Glasgow. By the time the war began, Robert and Sarah had four children:

- Robert (born on 29 November 1906)
- Jane Walker (born on 14 October 1908)
- William (born on 11 July 1912)
- Alexander (born on 25 August 1914)¹⁹

They may have had a fifth child, Sarah Fields, who was born in 1911 but died shortly after.²⁰ Their last child was born just one week before Robert went to France as a private with the 9th Battalion, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).²¹ He rose through the ranks to become a sergeant.²²

In late March 1916, his battalion was stationed near Le Bizet, near Armentières, in northern France. The battalion had been relieved by the 10th Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry on 24 March

and went into billets. The soldiers still engaged in working parties at night. Nothing particular happened on 29 March but, the following day, Le Bizet was bombed in the afternoon, just before Robert's battalion relieved the Highland Light Infantry on the night of 30 March. At the time, No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station was stationed in Bailleul. It is not known when Robert was injured, but he died of a head wound at the station on 29 or 30 March.²³

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 clearing station were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital.²⁴

Robert was buried on 30 March in Bailleuil Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Plot II, Row B, Grave 46).

The chaplain wrote to both Robert's wife and father to notify them of his death. His wife was living at 188 Preston Street in, Bridgton, Glasgow. Since his father had died many years before the war, the letter likely went to his mother Jane at 99 Ayr Street in Springburn, Glasgow.²⁵

After Robert's death, Sarah was living at 3 Stophill Place in Glasgow.²⁶ His mother Jane was a dependent and living at 158 Morrin Street in Glasgow.

Robert was awarded posthumously 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).²⁷

No information was found on the lives of Robert's siblings after 1901 or his children after his death.

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¹ Leggat's military records show his last name spelled this way, but other records for him and his family have a variety of other spellings. This includes his birth record in which his name is spelled Liggett. To be consistent with his military records, the spelling Leggat is used in this biography.

² "Statutory Registers–Births," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Leggitt [sic], Robert, Reference: 644 / 8 / 637, Registration district: Milton

³ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 December 2022), entry for Robert Legatt

⁴ "Civil Records–Marriages," *Irish Genealogy* (<https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Thomas Ligget [sic], Group Registration ID: 2872624, SR District/Reg Area: Banbridge

⁵ "Civil Records–Births," *Irish Genealogy* (<https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Hargate Leggate [sic], Group Registration ID: 9197721, SR District/Reg Area: Banbridge

⁶ "Civil Records–Births," *Irish Genealogy* (<https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Joseph Ligget[sic], Group Registration ID: 10603988, SR District/Reg Area: Banbridge

⁷ "Index of Statutory Registers–Deaths," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Liggett [sic], Robert Samuel, Reference: 644 / 8 / 194, Registration District: Milton. Robert was 3 years and 11 months old when he died on 12 March 1885, so presumably he was born in about April 1881. No birth record was found.

⁸ "Index of Statutory Registers–Births," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Liggett [sic], John Gibson, Reference: 644 / 8 / 112, Registration District: Milton; "Index of Statutory Registers–Deaths," *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Liggett [sic], John Gibson, Reference: 644 / 8 / 180, Registration District: Milton

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- ⁹ “Index of Statutory Registers–Births,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Liggett [*sic*], Robert, Reference: 644 / 8 / 637, Registration District: Milton
- ¹⁰ “Index of Statutory Registers–Births,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Liggett [*sic*], Mary Jane, Reference: 644 / 8 / 1282, Registration District: Milton
- ¹¹ “Statutory Registers–Births,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Liggett [*sic*], Isabelle, Reference: 644 / 8 / 574, Registration District: Milton
- ¹² “Statutory Registers–Births,” *ScotlandsPeople*, entry for Leggitt [*sic*], Robert
- ¹³ “1891 Scotland Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 January 2023), entry for Robert Liggett [*sic*], Enumeration district: 18, Household schedule number: 117, Line: 18, Roll: CSSCT1891_271
- ¹⁴ “1901 Scotland Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 March 2023), entry for Robt Liggett [*sic*], Enumeration district: 13, Household schedule number: 64, Line: 9, Roll: CSSCT1901_294
- ¹⁵ “Statutory Registers–Deaths,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 29 January 2023), entry for Liggett [*sic*], Robert Samuel, Reference: 644 / 8 / 493, Registration District: Milton
- ¹⁶ “Scotland, Ireland and Wales, Militia Attestation Papers, 1800–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 February 2023), entry for Robert Leggat [*sic*]
- ¹⁷ “Statutory Registers–Marriages,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 12 December 2022), entry for Leggat, Robert, Reference: 644 / 8 56, Registration District: Milton
- ¹⁸ “1911 Scotland Census,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 4 December 2022), entry for Leggat, Sarah, Reference: 644 / 1 47 / 10, Registration District: Milton
- ¹⁹ “UK, World War I Pension Ledgers and Index Cards, 1914–1923,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 January 2023), entry for Robert Leggat, Reference number: 1/WL/247
- ²⁰ “Index of Statutory Registers–Births,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 12 February 2023), entry for Leggat, Sarah Fields, Reference: 644 / 1 /1687, Registration District: Bridgeton; “Index of Statutory Registers–Deaths,” *ScotlandsPeople* (<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>: accessed 12 February 2023), entry for Leggat, Sarah Fields, Reference: 644 / 1 / 529, Registration District: Bridgeton
- ²¹ “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 10 February 2023), entry for Robert Leggat
- ²² “UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919,” *Ancestry*, entry for Robert Leggat
- ²³ Two dates are recorded for Robert’s death—29 March 1916 (“UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 December 2022), entry for Robert Leggat, and “Web: Scotland, National War Memorial Index, 1914–1945,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 December 2022), entry for Robert Leggat, and 30 March 1916 (“UK, Commonwealth War Graves, 1914–1921 and 1939–1947,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 June 2022), entry for R Leggat; “Search Name Index,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 6 January 2022), entry for Leggat, R.)
- ²⁴ “Casualty Clearing Station,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station: accessed 4 July 2022). A very comprehensive description of the casualty clearing stations is presented in the blog post “Casualty Clearing Stations During WW1” *Chiddicks Family Tree* (<https://chiddicksfamilytree.com/2021/05/09/casualty-clearing-stations-during-ww1/>: accessed 4 July 2022)
- ²⁵ “Search Name Index,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa*), entry for Leggat, R.
- ²⁶ “UK, World War I Pension Ledgers and Index Cards, 1914–1923,” *Ancestry*, entry for Robert Leggat
- ²⁷ “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920,” *Ancestry*, entry for Robert Leggat