

## JOHN THOROLD

John Thorold was born in 1898 in Dalby, the son of John Thomas and Lucy Thorold. His father was a waggoner. John was baptised on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1898 in St Nicholas Church.

The family were living in Partney at the 1911 Census. John was at school whilst his father was now working as a gardener. The Thorolds had been married for 32 years and had 9 children, one of whom had died.

John served as a Private in the 16<sup>th</sup> Sherwood Foresters during the First World War. His Regimental Number was 52928. The 16th Sherwood Foresters, nicknamed the 'Chatsworth Rifles' after their founder's ancestral home, were formed at Derby by the Duke of Devonshire and the Derbyshire Territorial Force Association on 16 Apr 1915.

The battalion was part of 117<sup>th</sup> brigade, 39<sup>th</sup> Division. In 1917 the Division moved north to Belgium and the Ypres Salient, around which they participated in numerous battles during the Third Battle of Ypres, namely: The Battle of Pilckem , The Battle of Langemarck, The Battle of the Menin Road, The Battle of the Polygon Wood, The Second Battle of Passchendaele. John was killed in action on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1918. There is a memorial to him in Partney Cemetery:

*"Though we know not where he lies, may he rest in peace."*

John is remembered on the Tyne Cot Memorial. The Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is located 9 kilometres north east of Ieper town centre. The names of those from United Kingdom units are inscribed on Panels arranged by Regiment under their respective Ranks.

The Tyne Cot Memorial is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. The Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge.

The Second Battle of Ypres began in April 1915 when the Germans released poison gas into the Allied lines north of Ypres. This was the first time gas had been used by either side and the violence of the attack forced an Allied withdrawal and a shortening of the line of defence. There was little more significant activity on this front until 1917, when in the Third Battle of Ypres an offensive was mounted by Commonwealth

forces to divert German attention from a weakened French front further south.

The initial attempt in June to dislodge the Germans from the Messines Ridge was a complete success, but the main assault north-eastward, which began at the end of July, quickly became a dogged struggle against determined opposition and the rapidly deteriorating weather. The campaign finally came to a close in November with the capture of Passchendaele. The German offensive of March 1918 met with some initial success, but was eventually checked and repulsed in a combined effort by the Allies in September.

The Tyne Cot Memorial now bears the names of almost 35,000 officers and men whose graves are not known. The memorial, designed by Sir Herbert Baker with sculpture by Joseph Armitage and F V Blundstone, was unveiled by Sir Gilbert Dyett in July 1927.

John's brothers Frederick and George also served in the First World War.

Their father John Thomas Thorold, who was Parish Clerk from 1899, had died on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1915 aged 61 after a very short illness. His mother Lucy Ann died on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1921 aged 64.