

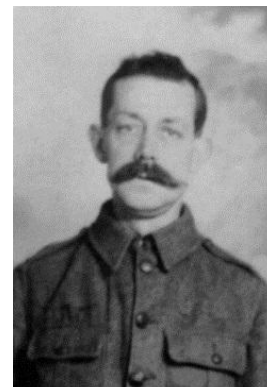
Private Tom Drury

Regimental Number: 474167

240th Area Employment Company, Labour Corps

born: 29 June 1869 - died: 6 July 1918

Tom Drury was born on 29 June 1869¹ and baptised on 1 August in Eagle, Lincolnshire.² He was the son of William and Ann Drury, who had married in late 1854.³ His father was born in about 1829 in Haddington, Lincolnshire and his mother, the former Ann Wood, was born in about 1833, also in Haddington.⁴ He was one of eight children born to William and Ann: Betsey (born in 1853),⁵ Marianna (born in 1858),⁶ John (born in 1860),⁷ Charles (born in 1863),⁸ William (born in 1865),⁹ Tom, Sarah Rosina (born in 1873)¹⁰ and Minnie Louisa (born in 1875).¹¹ Sadly Tom's mother, Ann, died in 1878¹² but his father remarried, marrying Elizabeth Collins in 1885.¹³ William and Elizabeth had a son of their own, Norris, born in 1883, two years before they married.¹⁴



Private Tom Drury (Source: "Tom Drury, 1869 - 1918")



Lucy Drury, with son, William, 1897 (Source: "Tom Drury, 1869 - 1918")

Tom's father was a farmer who progressed from a small landholder to a much larger farm. In 1861, he was a cottager, occupying 17 acres and employing one boy.¹⁵ In 1871, he had 96 acres and employed one man.¹⁶ Then, in 1881, he had 291 acres and employed three men.¹⁷ He continued as a farmer, with his son, John, working with him, in 1891 and 1901.¹⁸ He died in 1908.¹⁹

Tom was a printer. He began an apprenticeship with Samuel White in Newark, Nottinghamshire on 20 November 1884 and remained an apprentice until 1890.²⁰ He then moved to Loughborough and, in 1891, he was boarding in the home of Mary Ann Hunt.²¹ He worked as a printer's compositor for Alfred Clarke's of 32 Swan Street and then moved to Henry Wills Printers in Angel Yard, Loughborough, printers of the Ladybird book series.²² He worked as printer until the outbreak

of the war.²³

In August 1897, Tom married Lucy Warren (born in about 1871 in Leicester)²⁴ at Holy Trinity Church, Loughborough.²⁵ Tom and Lucy subsequently had three children: William Edward (born on 11 November 1897),²⁶ Eva Victoria (born on 25 December 1900)²⁷ and Lyn (born on 29 December 1917, but sadly died in 1921).²⁸

Tom and his brother-in-law, Thomas Warren, were volunteering at Loughborough Drill Hall a few weeks after the outbreak of war²⁹ and, on the evening of 24 September 1914, he enlisted as a Private in the Leicestershire Regiment (Regular Army).³⁰ He enlisted for "three years or duration of the war." He indicated that he was 34 years old, but he was, in fact, 45 years old. He was 5' 6½" tall, had a fresh complexion, hazel eyes and black hair and was declared fit for general service.



Tom in 6th Staff uniform with brother-in-law Thomas Warren. (Source: "Tom Drury, 1869 - 1918")

He had previously served in the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment and was a member of the Church of England.

By the end of September, he had transferred to the 9th Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment (Pioneers) (Regimental number: 15996) and was posted to depot.³¹ "The battalion was attached to the 23rd Division (Kitcheners Third New Army) at Bourley Bottom, Aldershot. Equipment of all kinds was in short supply and so were cooks. Trained cooks were non-existent in the Division and contract catering was bought in until the Division trained its own chefs early in December. It was probably at this time that Tom trained for his new trade."

It was nearly a year after he enlisted that he embarked, on 24 August 1915, at Southampton to join the Front, arriving the following day: "... 25th August - 2.45 am - arrived after smooth crossing, disembarked 7am. Marched to No.5 Rest Camp. Collected 32 horses, 12 two-wheeled carts and 6 four wheeled carts. Left 2 officers and 120 men at no 5 Rest Camp and entrained at Gare de Marchadise. Journey via St Omer to Tilques, with danger from hostile aeroplanes on the way."³²



Tom, back row -third from left, with his Company including his brother-in-law Thomas Warren, corporal on back row. Dressed in the 'blue serge' uniform issued between Oct 1914 - Feb 1915 (Source: "Tom Drury, 1869 - 1918")



Tom Drury in Pernes British Military Cemetery (Source: Author, July 2015)

In October 1917, he was posted to 1/6th South Staffordshire Regiment.³³ He was subsequently transferred to the 1/5th South Staffordshire Regiment, 46th Division, VII Corps, Third Army and then was attached to the 240th Area Employment Company of the Labour Corps (Regimental number: 474167).³⁴ The Company included specialists such as tailors, shoemakers, butchers and telephone operators."³⁵ Tom was an officers' mess cook.³⁶ "His transfer to the 240th Employment Company, Labour Corp, may have some connection with the two weeks that Tom had spent at the 23rd Divisional Reinforcement Camp in the previous August. Although there is no mention of wounding on his record he was now 49 and may have been suffering ill health."

Tom was serving as an officers' cook at the Divisional Headquarters of the 46th Division at La Chartreuse, Gosnay near Bethune when, on the evening of Saturday, 6 July, the officers' mess took a direct hit.³⁷ He was immediately admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with gun shot wounds to his right thigh, inside left testicle and penis, but died the same day.³⁸ He was buried the following day in Pernes British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row D, Grave 49) with the

chaplain J. K. Tibbits presiding.

The day that Tom was admitted to the 1st CCCS, the unit received 174 patients – the most in any one day so far that month.³⁹ He was one of 39 to die at the 1st CCCS in July 1918.

His wife was his next-of-kin and was notified of his death at Newlands, Leicester Road, Shepshed in Loughborough. The possessions returned to his wife were two discs and a ring.⁴⁰

Articles appeared in two Loughborough newspapers about Tom's death:

Loughborough Echo - Friday 12th July 1918

DRURY - killed in France on July 6th, 1918, Tom Drury, aged 49 years.

Private Drury Killed

The news the Pte T Drury, of the Leicesters, was killed on Saturday last has been officially received by his wife. He was well known in Loughborough as a compositor and at one time his wife was caretaker of Emmanuel Schools. He joined the army in September 1914, the month after the outbreak of war. Writing to Mrs Drury, the Camp Commandant states that a shell destroyed the billet in which he was working. He was well thought of by officers and men by unfailing willingness to help, many times under trying conditions.⁴¹

Loughborough Herald - Thursday 18 July 1918

"AN INSPIRATION TO ALL"

Mrs Drury of Leicester Road, Shepshed has received news of the death of her husband, Pte Tom Drury, of the Labour Corp. He was a cook at headquarters division and a shell fell on the roof of the house and burst in the mess as he was preparing tea. He received injuries from which he died a few hours later. The lieutenant of his company writes that he was "well thought of by both officers and men with whom he came in touch for his unfailing willingness to help, many times under trying conditions." His Sergeant-Major also says: "His first thoughts were always of his duty and the welfare of the mess, and he was an inspiration to all." Pte Drury formerly lived in Loughborough and was employed by Messrs Clarke, printers. He enlisted in September 1914, in the South Staffs, in which he was for some time officers cook, and was transferred to the Labour Corp in the same capacity. He was 49 years of age and has a son serving in the Leicesters.⁴²

Tom 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).⁴³ He is recognized in the Loughborough Roll of Honour.⁴⁴

Tom's wife, Lucy, remarried in 1920, marrying James W. Dean in Loughborough. But sadly, Tom and Lucy's third child, Lyn, died the following year.

It is not known whether any of his brothers also served in the Great War, but his son, William, served with the Leicesters.

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Special thanks are extended to Kevin Noble, Tom's great-grandson, for his assistance with the development of this biography. He is the author of "Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918."

¹ "Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918," Ancestry

(<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~noblefamilia/drury/tom/tom.htm>; accessed 1 May 2015)

² "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 1 May 2015), entry for Tom Drury, FHL Film Number: 1542193, Reference ID: item 5 p 14

³ "England & Wales, Marriage Index, 1916-2005," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for William Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, Inferred County: Lincolnshire, Volume Number: 7a, Page Number: 919

⁴ "1871 England Census," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Tom Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, Sub-registration district: Lincoln South, ED, institution, or vessel: 8, Household schedule number: 72, Piece: 3365, Folio: 70, Page Number: 13

⁵ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 3 May 2015), entry for Betsey Drury Wood, FHL Film Number: 1542199, Reference ID: item 4 p 56. Note that Betsey was born before William and Ann married and, as such, her birth is recorded as Betsey Drury Wood.

⁶ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Marianna Drury, FHL Film Number: 1542193 IT 1

⁷ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for John Drury, FHL Film Number: 1542193, Reference ID: item 5 p 1

⁸ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Charles Drury, FHL Film Number: 1542193, Reference ID: item 5 p 4

⁹ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for William Drury, FHL Film Number: 1542193, Reference ID: item 5 p 7

¹⁰ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Sarah Rosina Drury, FHL Film Number: 1542193 IT 1

¹¹ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Minnie Louisa Drury, FHL Film Number: 1542193 IT 1

¹² "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Ann Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, Inferred County: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 321

¹³ "England & Wales, Marriage Index, 1916-2005," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for William Drury, Registration district: Holbeach, Inferred County: Lincolnshire, Volume Number: 7a, Page Number: 720

¹⁴ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Norris Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, Inferred County: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 523

¹⁵ "1861 England Census," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for William Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, Sub-registration district: Lincoln South West, ED, institution, or vessel: 8, Household schedule number: 8, Piece: 2355, Folio: 5, Page Number: 4

¹⁶ "1871 England Census," entry for Tom Drury

¹⁷ "1881 England Census," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 27 January 2015), entry for Tom Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, Sub-registration district: Lincoln South-West, ED, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 3235, Folio: 111, Page Number: 9

¹⁸ "1891 England Census," Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 30 April 2015), entry for William Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, ED, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 2587, Folio: 88, Page Number: 6;

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- “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 April 2015), entry for William Drury, Registration district: Lincoln, Sub-registration district: Lincoln South West, ED, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 3057, Folio: 91, Page Number: 6, Household schedule number: 37
- ¹⁹ “England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 May 2015), entry for William Drury, Registration district: Gainsborough, Inferred County: Lincolnshire, Volume: 7a, Page: 491
- ²⁰ “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918”
- ²¹ “1891 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Thomas Dency, Registration district: Loughborough, ED, institution, or vessel: 16, Piece: 2516, Folio: 81, Page Number: 15
- ²² Information from Kevin Noble, May 2015
- ²³ “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918”
- ²⁴ “England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 May 2015), entry for Lucy Warren, Registration district: Leicester, Inferred County: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 215
- ²⁵ “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Tom Drury
- ²⁶ “England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 1 May 2015), entry for William Edward Drury, Registration district: Loughborough, Inferred County: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 141
- ²⁷ “England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 1 May 2015), entry for William Edward Drury, Registration district: Loughborough, Inferred County: Leicestershire, Volume: 7a, Page: 126
- ²⁸ “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920,” entry for Tom Drury; “England & Wales births 1837-2006,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 1 May 2015), entry for Lyn Drury, District: Loughborough, County: Leicestershire, Volume: 7A, Page: 192; “England & Wales deaths 1837-2007,” *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 1 May 2015), entry for Lyn Drury, District: Nottingham, County: Nottinghamshire, Volume: 7B, Page: 233
- ²⁹ “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918”
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920,” entry for Tom Drury
- ³² “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918.” Extracts from the 9th South Staffordshires’ War Diary, transcribed by Mike Cooper. Details of his engagements throughout the war can be found in “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918.”
- ³³ “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920,” entry for Tom Drury
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ³⁵ “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918”
- ³⁶ “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920,” entry for Tom Drury
- ³⁷ “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918”
- ³⁸ “Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS,” Library and Archives Canada, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 621
- ³⁹ “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)
- ⁴⁰ “British Army WWI Service Records, 1914-1920,” entry for Tom Drury
- ⁴¹ Reproduced in “Tom Drury, 1869 – 1918”
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ “British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 30 April 2015), entry for Tom Drury
- ⁴⁴ “Loughborough Roll of Honour,” <http://www.loughborough-rollofhonour.com/page37.htm>; accessed 3 May 2015, entry for Private 15996 Tom Drury