

127: Thomas Devine

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Thomas Devine
 Rank: Lance Corporal
 Battalion / Regiment: 5th Bn. Royal Berkshire Regiment
 Service Number: 37190 Date of Death: 27 April 1917 Age at Death: 21
 Buried / Commemorated at: Arras Memorial, Arras, Departement du Pas-de-Calais, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France
 Additional information given by CWGC: Son of William and Mary Jane Devine, of 47, Cooper St., St. Helens. Lancs.

Thomas Antwis Devine was the third surviving child of grocer William and Mary Jane Devine of St Helens. William Devine married Mary Antwis at Prescot Register Office, Lancashire, in 1890 and Thomas was born, in the St Helens area, in April/June 1896.

William, Thomas's older brother, also served in WW1 (Cheshire Regiment) and is known to have died of pneumonia on 1 March 1919. Brief details of him are included at the end of this account, although he had no known connection to Neston.

In 1901 the family was living on Cooper Street in St Helens, a road which has since been redeveloped:

William Devine	Head	M.	35	Grocery Manager	Worths	W. do	St Helens
Mary Jane do	Wife	M.	35			Widow	Grappenhall
Lucy do	Daughter	S.	9			Lancs	St Helens
William do	Son	S.	7			do	do
Thomas Antwis do	Son	S.	4			do	do

1901 census (extract) – 47, Cooper Street, St Helens

William Devine	35	grocery manager	born St Helens
Mary Jane	35		born Grappenhall, Cheshire
Lucy	9		born St Helens
William	7		born St Helens
Thomas Antwis	4		born St Helens

By the time of the 1911 census the family had moved the short distance to nearby Chapel Street and Thomas was recorded as a grocer's errand boy.

However, it is understood that Thomas became a collier and came to Neston as a coal miner hewer. It is certainly recorded that he enlisted in Neston, initially in the Cheshire Regiment (Service Number 4564) before transferring to the 8th Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment and then to the 5th Battalion (Princess Charlotte of Wales's Regiment).



35 Chapel Street, St Helens [Google StreetView]

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedule 124
(To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection.)

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.				PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards.				BIRTHPLACE of every person.	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country.	INFIRMITY.		
of every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder, or Servant, who (1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling and was alive at midnight, or (2) arrived in this dwelling on the morning of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere. No one else must be included. (For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedule.)	State whether "Head," or "Wife," "Son," "Daughter," or "other relative," "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant."	For Infants under one year state the age in months as "under one month," "one month," etc. Ages of Males. Ages of Females.	Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow" opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.		Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)		Personal Occupation. The reply should show the precise branch of Profession, Trade, Manufacture, &c. If engaged in any Trade or Manufacture, the particular kind of work done, and the Article made or Material worked or dealt in should be clearly indicated. (See Instructions 1 to 8 and Examples on back of Schedule.)				(1) If born in the United Kingdom, write the name of the County, and Town or Parish. (2) If born in any other part of the British Empire, write the name of the Dependency, Colony, etc., and of the Province or State. (3) If born in a Foreign Country, write the name of the Country. (4) If born at sea, write "At Sea."	State whether— (1) "British subject by parentage." (2) "Naturalized British subject," giving year of naturalization. Or (3) If of foreign nationality, state whether— "French," "German," "Russian," etc. (4) "Lunatic." (5) "Feeble-minded," state the infirmity opposite that person's name, and the age at which he or she became afflicted.	If any person included in this Schedule is— (1) "Totally Deaf," or "Deaf and Dumb," (2) "Totally Blind," (3) "Lunatic," (4) "Feeble-minded," state the infirmity opposite that person's name, and the age at which he or she became afflicted.		
			1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.				9.	10.
1. William Devine	Head	45	Married	20	6	4	1	Grocer Assistant	320	31.0	320	Widow	St Helens Lane		
2. Mary Devine	wife	45	Married									Widow			
3. Lucy Devine	daughter	19	Single					Tailoress	270			Widow			
4. William Devine	son	17	Single					Butcher's boy	090	31.0		Widow			
5. Thomas Devine	son	14	Single					Grocer's errand boy	090	320		Widow			
6. John Devine	son	9	Single					School				Widow			

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

I certify that—
 (1) All the spaces on this Schedule are entered in the proper set columns.
 (2) I have entered the names and dates in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have compared these with the last register of persons.
 (3) After making the necessary corrections I have compared the entries on this Schedule with those on the last register, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.

Total.	
Males	Females
45	45
19	17
14	9
6	6

Initials of Enumerator: *W.D.*

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (Kitchens, Tommets, or Apartments). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count outhouse, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop.

5

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: *Thomas Devine*

Postal Address: *35 Chapel St., St Helens*

1911 census (condensed) – 35, Chapel Street, St Helens

William Devine	45	grocer's assistant	born St Helens
Mary	45		born St Helens
Lucy	19	tailoress	born St Helens
William	17	butcher's boy	born St Helens
Thomas	14	grocer's errand boy	born St Helens
John	9		born St Helens

William and Mary had been married for 20 years and four of their five children had survived.

The 5th (Service) Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment was formed at Reading on 25 August 1914 as part of Kitchener's First New Army and was placed under the command of the 35th Brigade in the 12th (Eastern) Division. The troops moved initially to Shorncliffe Army Camp (near Cheriton in Kent) and then to Folkestone in January 1915. On 1 March 1915 they moved again, this time to Malplaquet Barracks at Aldershot before, in late May 1915, embarking for France.

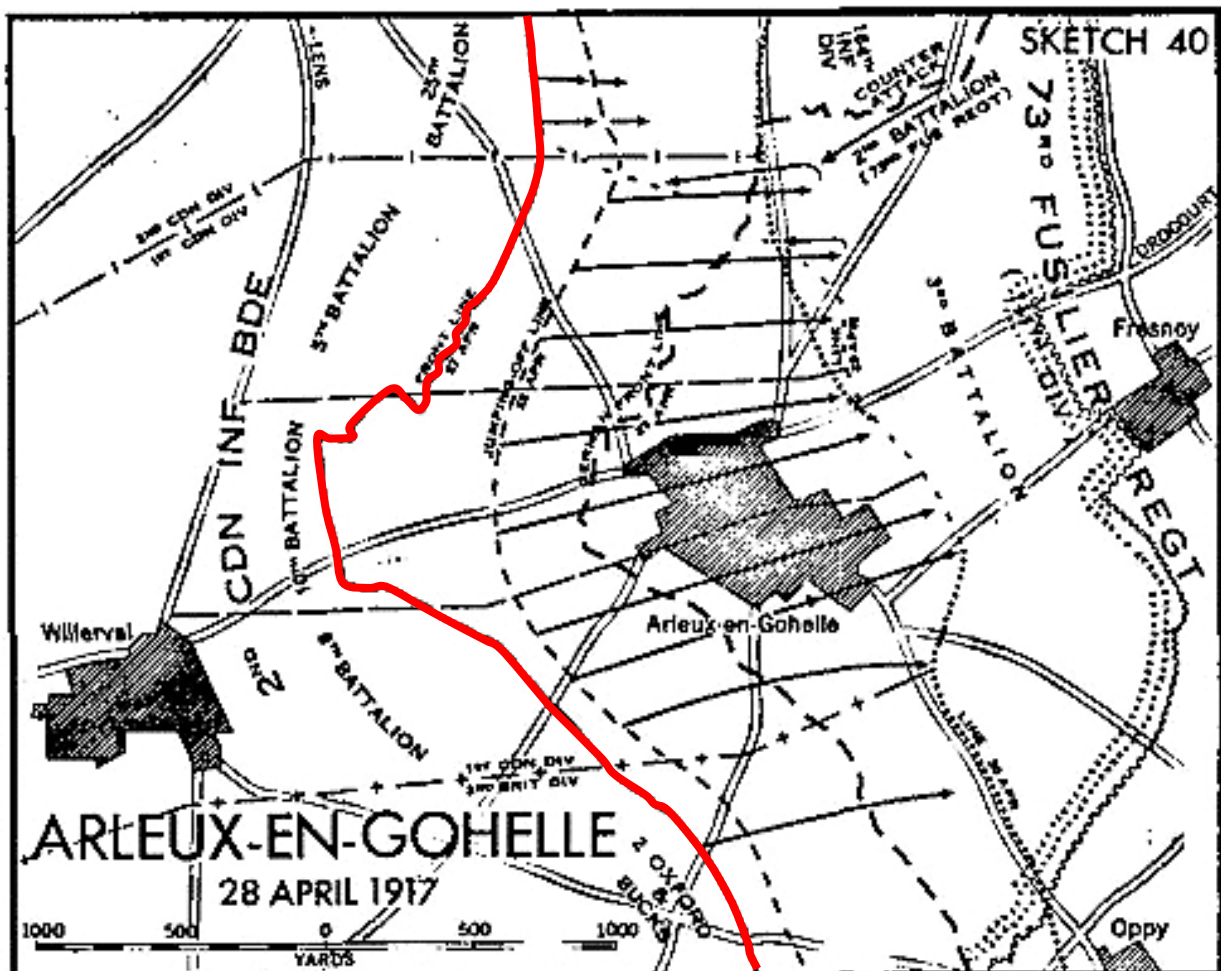
In France the 5th Battalion underwent instruction with the more experienced 48th (South Midland) Division and then took over a section of the front line at Ploegsteert Wood on 23 June 1915. They were in action in The Battle of Loos from 30 September, taking over the sector from Gun Trench to Hulluch Quarries consolidating the position, under heavy artillery fire. On 8 September they repelled a heavy German infantry attack and on 13 September took part in The Action of the Hohenzollern Redoubt, capturing Gun Trench and the south western face of the Hulluch Quarries. During this period at Loos, 117 officers and 3237 men of the Division were killed or wounded.

By 21 September the battalion had moved to Fouquieres-les-Bethune for a short rest then returned to the front line at the Hohenzollern Redoubt until 15 November, when they went into reserve at Lillers. On 10 December 1915 the Division took over the front line north of La Basse Canal at Givenchy. On 19 January 1916 they began a period of training in Open Warfare at Busnes, then moved back into the front line at Loos on 12 February 1916. In June they moved to Flesselles and carried out a training exercise

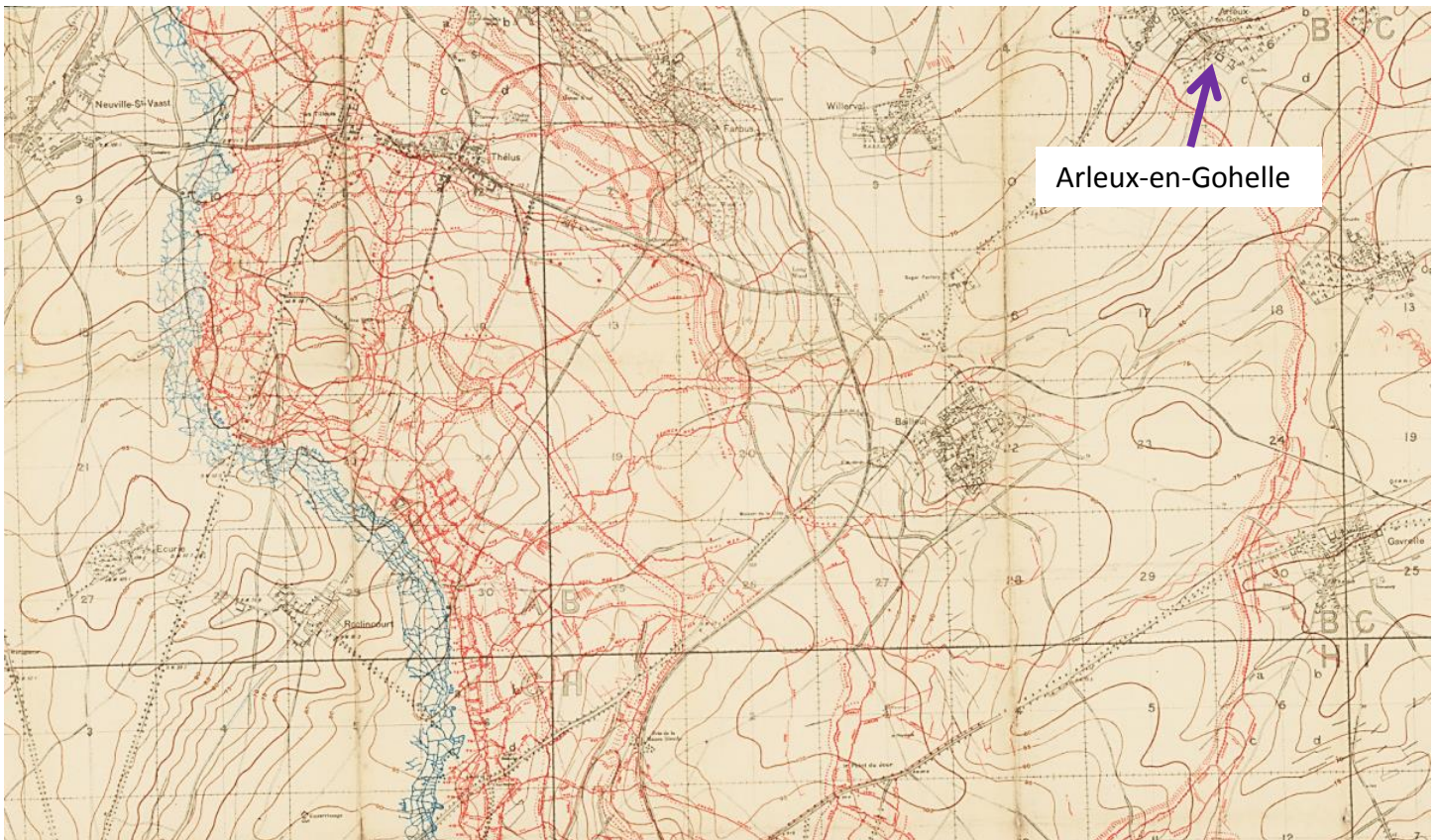
before moving to Baizieux on 30 June and going into the reserve at Hencourt and Millencourt by mid-morning on the 1 July 1916. They relieved the 8th Division at Owillers-la-Boisselle that night and attacked at 3.15am the following morning with mixed success.

On 7 July they attacked again and despite suffering heavy casualties in the area of Mash Valley, they succeeded in capturing and holding the first and second lines close to Owillers. They were withdrawn to Contay on 9 July but were in action again in The Battle of Pozieres on 3 August 1916 with a successful attack capturing 4th Avenue Trench and were engaged in heavy fighting until they were withdrawn on 9 August. They moved north and in 1917 were in action at Arras in The First Battle of the Scarpe (9 - 14 April 1917) and The Battle of Arleux (28 -29 April 1917), part of The Battle of Arras.

As Thomas's Service Record has not been found there are no details of his death but, as he died on 27 April - just before The Battle of Arleux (in which many Canadian troops were involved) - and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, it is clear that he died in action and that his body was never recovered. Presumably Thomas died in a local conflict leading to the onset of the main battle the following day.



The area of Arleux, showing the positions of the Canadian battalions, on 28 April 1917, the day after Thomas Devine died. The position of the front line on 27 April is shown in red. [Map from Nicholson, *Official History of the Canadian Army, Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919*]



Arleux-en-Gohelle

On 4 March 1917, nearly eight weeks before Thomas Devine died, the front line lay well to the west of Arleux-en-Gohelle. On this map the German trenches and positions are shown in red and the Allied front line positions are in blue. The map also displays the contours showing the strong relief of this region.

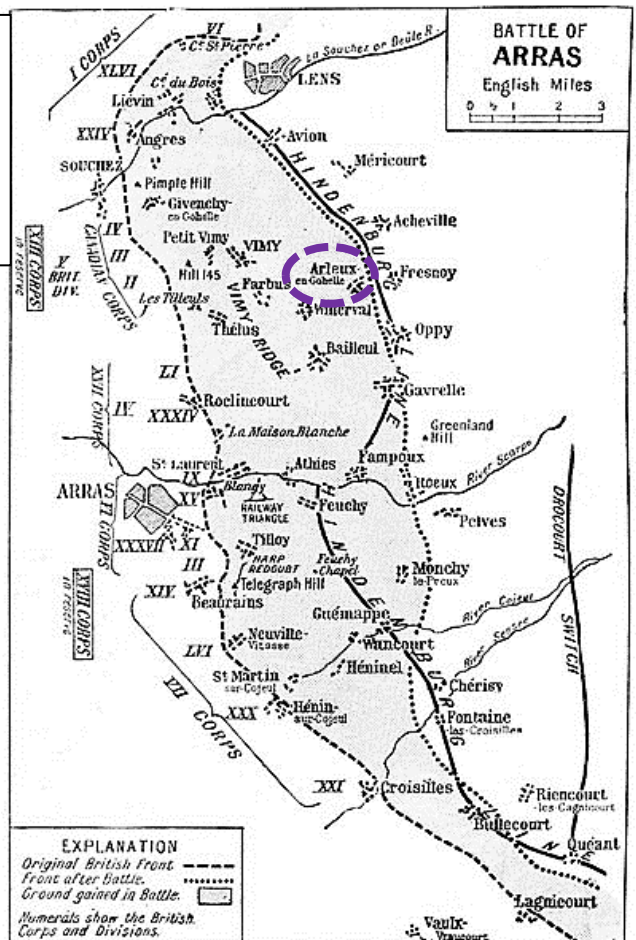
1 mile 

[Source:

<http://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/print.cfm#zoom=14&lat=50.3397&lon=2.8250&layers=101465068&b=1>]

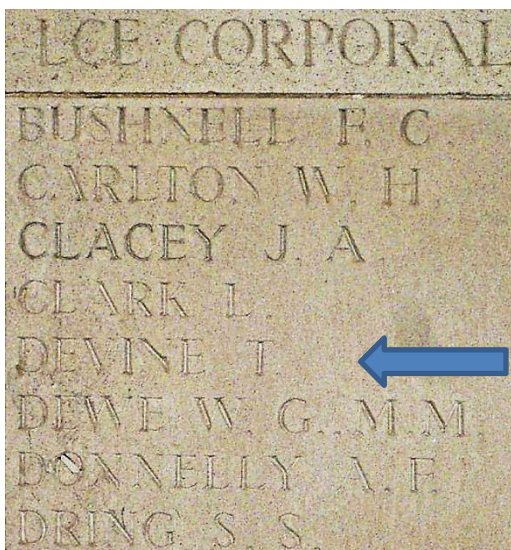
Sketch map shown the ground gained by the Allied forces during the Battle of Arras. The position of Arleux - en - Gohelle is outlined in purple.

[Source: <http://www.remembrancetrails-northernfrance.com/history/battles/the-battle-of-arras-april-1917.html>]



BATTLE OF ARRAS
English Miles

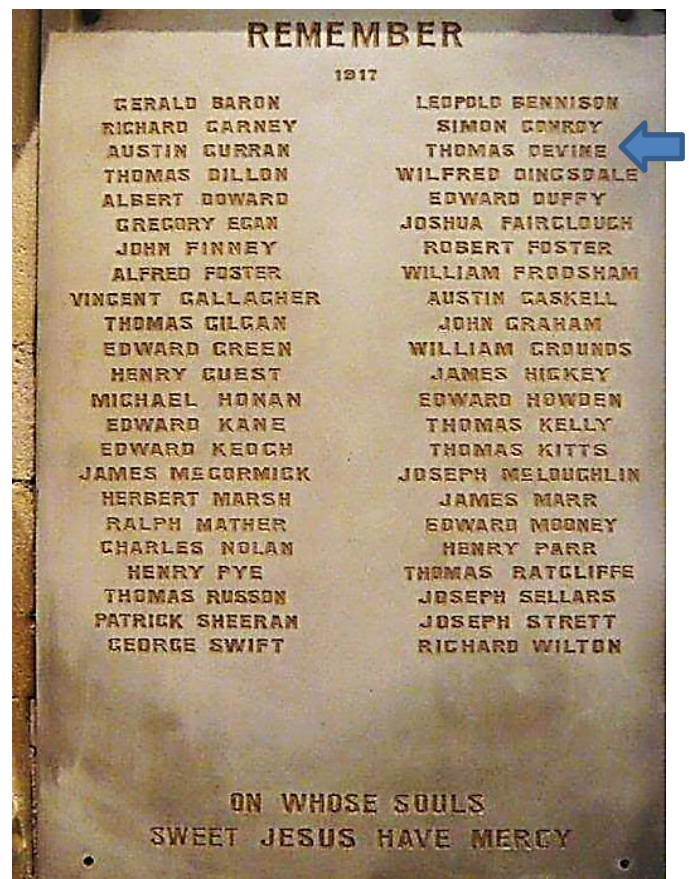
EXPLANATION
Original British front
Front after battle
Ground gained in battle
Numerals show the British Corps and Divisions.



Thomas Devine's name on the Arras Memorial, Arras, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France

The Arras Memorial commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7 August 1918, the eve of The Advance to Victory, and have no known grave.

In Britain Thomas Devine is commemorated on the St Helens Rolls of Honour and on the St Mary's, Lowe House Church, Memorial. The Church of St Mary, Lowe House is a Roman Catholic Parish church situated on the North Road in St Helens. Founded in 1924 it was staffed by the Society of Jesus until 1981. [<http://www.sthelensrollsofhonour.co.uk/casualty>]



St Mary's, Lowe House Church, Memorial.

WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920

37190	Pte.	DEVINE, Thomas	2/5 Chesnire R.
			4564 Pte.
			8 R. Berks R. 37190
			5 R. Berks R. 37190

478543362807	Devine Thomas	5 th B. R. Berks. L. Cpl. 37190	27.4.17 France	Warwick 1/16 - 5-17	1 16 = m.o. 8.8.17	Mo: Mary J. 1 16 =
				4	29/10/19	Mo: Mary J. 4

WAR GRATUITY. 1920. 25/11/19. Transfer boat Ed. Regd. Paper 15924. Social No. 15924.

A. F. W. 5070 SENT DATE 23.6.19

Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

In Summer 1919 the army paid outstanding credits – mainly remaining wages – to soldiers or, in the case of those who had died, their family or nominated representatives. At the same time a War Gratuity was often paid. In June 1919 Thomas's mother, Mary J., received a payment of outstanding wages of £1 16s from the army and a War Gratuity of £4. This, a total value of £5 16s, is equivalent to a labour value (wages) of around £900 in 2016.

The War Gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those men who had served in WW1 for a period of 6 months or more home service or for any length of service if a man had served overseas. The rules governing the gratuity were implemented under Army Order 17 of 1919 but the amount paid was related to the length of war service.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
DEVINE	ches. R.	Se.	564
	R. Berks. R.		37190
Thomas			

Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	4105B6	936	
BRITISH	do	do	
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K. 1380

British Army WWI Medal Rolls
Index Cards, 1914-1920

As noted previously William Devine, Thomas's older brother (but with no known connection to Neston), also died as an indirect consequence of WW1 after serving with the 23rd Battalion Cheshire Regiment (Service Number 242590). Unlike his brother, William was married (Elizabeth Kenwright, Prescot Register Office, 1 July 1912) and the couple had two young children (Wilfred [born 7 April 1913] and Thomas [born 17 August 1917], both born St Helens). William continued to live (at 188 Gladstone Street) and work, as a butcher, in St Helens and it was there that he died of pneumonia, aged 27, on 1 March 1919, just 3½ months after the end of the war. He is buried at Windleshaw Abbey Roman Catholic Cemetery.

No newspaper articles or announcements have been found relating to the deaths of either Thomas or William Devine.

There does not appear to be any direct connection between Thomas Devine and **24: John Devine** who is named on the Neston Parish Church War Memorial boards.



William Devine's war grave at Windleshaw Abbey Roman Catholic Cemetery, St Helens
Photo: CWGC