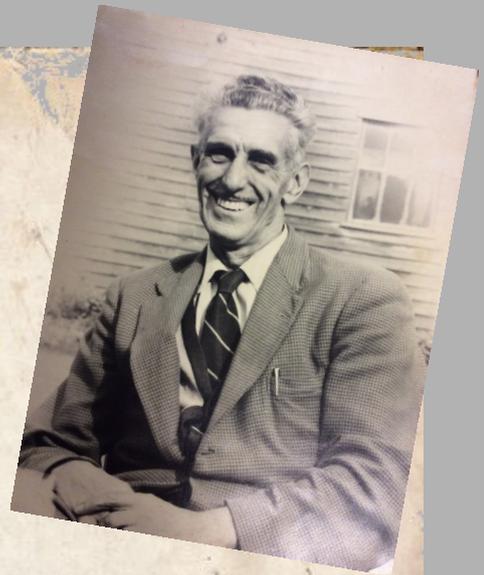


Tom Boatman

Tom was born 19th January 1899 at Northfleet, Kent. He was one of six children born to Thomas Boatman (1866-1924) and Edith Lilly Harvey (1874-1951).



The only girl Beatrice was the oldest born in 1892, followed by Sidney 1895, then Tom, Henry 1906, William 1907 and Ernest 1911.

By 1906 the family were living in Grays. On the 1911 census the whole family lived at 10 Foxton Road. Edith was pregnant with Ernest at this time.

Tom joined up on 9th March 1917, his age was recorded as 18 years, 1 month. His Short Service Attestation is signed by Arthur Wilson Boatman (Justice) who was a distant relation.

Tom was a private in the Kings Royal Rifle Corps. Service No. A/ 205277. His army records survived but are very difficult to read.

Tom was a bit of a rebel and ended up in trouble on a few occasions overstaying his pass and absent from roll call and parade. He was punished by several episodes of deprivation of pay.

Tom was posted abroad in September 1917 and on 21st March 1918 reported missing. It was later discovered that he had been captured and was a prisoner of war. It is not known how long he was incarcerated, but in 1919 he was at Rugeley awaiting demobilisation.

Once again his naughty side came out and he was fined for absence from roll calls and church. He also was stopped pay for throwing stones causing danger. What we need to remember that at this time Tom was still only 20 years old and had seen a lot of death and misery, and had also endured a prisoner of war camp.

He married Florence Emma Whiten in 1921, she was born on 19th July 1900. They had a son Sidney and a daughter June.

They spent most of their married life living in Hathaway Road Grays, moving to a pensioner's bungalow in Stifford Clays later in life.



Tom and Florence in 1978



The picture shows Tom with his brothers Henry, William and Ernest.

Florence died on 29th September 1981 and Tom lived on until 4th February 1986.

Story provided by Tom's great-granddaughter Danielle Peck (nee Boatman).