

# Thomas Elmer

## Royal Fusiliers

1884 - 1917



Thomas Elmer was born in Hoggaston in 1884 (registered as Thomas Elmore July – Sept 1884). His father was Daniel (born Whitchurch c 1862), a farm labourer. His mother was Mary Ann Pitkin, born in Swanbourne, the daughter of Thomas Pitkin (who had given evidence to the Royal Commission on Old Age Pensions). Daniel and Mary had married in 1883, and had another six children: Charles (1886), William (1887), Albert (1890, died young), Francis (1892, died young), Arthur (1893) and Elizabeth (1896).

In 1891, the family were living in Nearton West (location uncertain), but in 1901 and 1911, they were in what is now called The Old White House, at the back of Timbers, Nearton End. In 1901 and 1911, his occupation was given as farm labourer.

On 1<sup>st</sup> Jan, 1912, Thomas married Eleanor Balaclava Roads (known as Bella), in Swanbourne, daughter of Jonathan Roads. They had a son, Frederick, who was born on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1913, and baptised at the Methodist Chapel on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1914. (In 1923, the widowed Eleanor married James Marriot Colgrove in Swanbourne). According to Bucks Remembers, Thomas's last known address was Leighton Buzzard and he enlisted in Luton.



He joined the Royal Fusiliers, and was in the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion which mobilised for war on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1914 and landed at Le Havre. It was one of the first to arrive and remained on the Western Front for the duration of the war engaged in various actions.

Picture: 22 August 1914: "A" Company of the 4th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, resting in the town square at Mons.

Thomas was killed in action on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1917, during the Battle of Arras.



*Thomas's memorial is at Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France*



*He is also remembered on the gravestone of his brother-in-law, James Frederick Roads, in Swanbourne cemetery.*