



Casualty Biographies of WWI

North Bradley

Walter Foyle

Walter was born in North Bradley in the September Quarter of 1892. The son of Elizabeth Foyle who is believed to have married Herbert Gibbons in 1902 although there seems to be no record in the indexes to confirm this. Although the 1911 Census and the Commonwealth War Graves Records name Elizabeth as Mrs. Gibbons. Elizabeth was born in 1869 and raised in Yarnbrook, North Bradley as one of seven children. Walter's birth father is not known at this stage.

In the 1891 Census Elizabeth is recorded as being a domestic service in the employ of Henry Sarr a tailor of Victoria Grove, Kensington, London. Her age was given as 22. Walter was born around 18 months later, so it can be assumed that Elizabeth returned to her parents home for her confinement.

The 1901 Census of The Rank, North Bradley records Walter as resident with his widowed grandmother. The full record reads:- Sarah Foyle, Head, Widow, 59, Charwoman, born in Heywood, Westbury; James Foyle, Son, 20, Single, General Labourer, born in North Bradley; Albert J. Foyle, Son, 16, Single, Traction Engine Stoker, born in North Bradley; Walter Foyle, Grandson, Age 8, born in North Bradley.

Elizabeth Foyle is recorded as being a visitor to the household of Harry E. Dore of 3 Alfred Street, St. Mary's, Southampton, Hampshire. Once again she is listed as a domestic servant and her age is 33 and she is listed as single. Interestingly she is recorded as visiting one Herbert G. Gibbs (thus causing more confusion since there is no marriage recorded between a Herbert Gibbs or Gibbons to an Elizabeth Foyle). The fact that there seems to be no marriage details found in the records available may suggest that Elizabeth and Herbert co-habitated and Elizabeth assumed the name of Gibbons (Gibbs being an enumerator error perhaps). Herbert Gibbs is recorded as being a general labourer, aged 42, a general labourer born in Somerset.

The 1911 Census finds Walter living alone as head of household in Berwick St. James, his age is given as 18 and he is working as an Engine Drivers Assistant.

Walter's mother is now living with her mother and the census for The Rank, North Bradley reads as follows:- Sarah Foyle, head, widow, 69, born in the parish of Westbury; James Foyle, son, single, age 30, steam wagon driver; born in Yarnbrook; Herbert Gibbons, son-in-law, married, age 51, skin dresser, born in Frome, Somerset; Elizabeth Gibbons, daughter, married, age 42, born in Yarnbrook; Herbert John Gibbons, grandson, age 6, born in North Bradley; Archibald George Gibbons, Grandson, age 5, born in Southampton, Hampshire; Lenard Edgar Gibbons, grandson, age 3, born in Southampton, Hampshire. Herbert and Elizabeth are also recorded as having been married for 9 years.

Walter Foyle enlisted to the army in London and is registered as having been killed in action on the 9th December 1915, aged 23, whilst serving as Rifleman S/10461 with the 8th Battalion Rifle Brigade. He is buried at La Brique Military Cemetery No. 2., West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Grave Reference I. B. 6. Walter's next of kin was listed as his mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Gibbons of Church Lane, North Bradley.

Walter is commemorated in the North Bradley Section of the Diocese of Salisbury Memorial Book, he is also named on the North Bradley War Memorial Plaque found in the parish church.

Herbert Gibbons died in April 1915 and Elizabeth in 1929, both buried in North Bradley.