

Thomas Henry Richens



Thomas Henry Richens (1896-1914) and born in Isleworth was the son of James Richens (1871-1923) and Gertrude Davis, originally from Essex (1870-1945). His father's family were local market gardeners. In 1901, the family lived in Toynes Cottages, London Road, Isleworth and by 1911, they had moved to 7 Mill Platt Avenue- **see below left**. His mother Gertrude was still living in this property in the 1939 Register. Thomas Henry was baptised at St Mary's Osterley on February 21st 1897 and he had five brothers and sisters: Ellen, May, Frederick, Ada and Olive. His father was a carter for the District Council and in 1911, Thomas was working at the Nursery gardens. By 1914, he was employed at Twickenham Brewery.



Thomas attended a Recruiting meeting at the local Recreation Ground in September 1914 and enlisted soon afterwards, joining the 7th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (Service no. 6926) travelling to Falmouth for his training. He became ill with appendicitis and died shortly after his operation in St Clare's Military Hospital in Falmouth on 7th December 1914. He is remembered in the Falmouth Cemetery, and also at St John's Church, St John's Road Isleworth- **below right**. His funeral in Falmouth with military honours was reported in the Middlesex Chronicle, on 19th December 1914- **see below left**.

DEATH OF A YOUNG SOLDIER.

Mr. James Richens, of No. 8, Mill Plat- avenue, has to mourn the loss of his son Thomas Henry, at the early age of 19 years, which took place at the Clare-street Military Hospital, Falmouth, on the 7th inst., after an operation for appendicitis. The young man, who had been an employee at the Twickenham Brewery, was present at the great recruiting meeting held on the Recreation Ground under the chairmanship of Mr. H. Heldmann on September 7th, and he was one of those who at once came forward in response to the appeal made for recruits, and enlisted in the Army. He was enrolled in the 7th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, and was sent to Falmouth, where he was successfully undergoing his training when he was taken with the fatal malady to which he succumbed.

The funeral took place on Friday at Falmouth Cemetery with full military honours; the Rev. P. G. Bacon (Chaplain to the Troops at Pendennis) officiated; and the chief mourners were Mr. James Richens (father), and Mr. T. G. Richens, of No. 1, Newry-road, St. Margaret's (uncle). The funeral party of the Royal Fusiliers was in charge of Lieut. Mountain and Company-Sergt.-Major B. Donnelly; the firing party was under Sergt. Tierney; and upwards of 300 members of F Company, to which deceased belonged, marched in the funeral procession. The band attended, and played Beethoven's Funeral March and the Dead March in Saul on the way to the cemetery, and after the interment three volleys were fired over the grave and the buglers of the regiment sounded the Last Post. A handsome wreath was placed on the grave by the father of the deceased, and besides other tokens there were three beautiful floral tributes from his company.

