



# Arthur Bertie Thompson

## 3 Park Grove

It is only Arthur’s insistent use of his full given name “Arthur Bertie” that has allowed us to track his life amid countless others named “Arthur Albert Thompson”.

He was born in December 1881 in Sheffield. His father had a varied career working in Sheffield as an engine fitter and turner, later moving the family to Manchester, where by the 1891 census he was a ‘Wagonette Proprietor’ – what we would call today “Logistics”!

By 1901 Arthur Bertie, aged 19, was working as a Draper’s Salesman and five years later in 1906 he married Amy Fletcher who lived in Chorlton, Manchester. They continued to live in Manchester and both their children – Margery and Arthur Maurice were born there – by 1911 Arthur worked as a Commercial Traveller in Drapery and Clothing - a career he seems to have continued for the rest of his life.

It is unclear when and why they moved to Derby – Amy and Arthur Bertie first appear in the local Register of Electors for 1918 when Arthur was away on military service. By late 1919 he was back in Derby and the family had left the area by 1922. Arthur and Amy appear again in the 1939 Register (taken at the outbreak of war) living in Kirby

Muxloe in Leicestershire and here Arthur died in May 1950.

As far as Arthur’s military career is concerned we cannot be 100% certain but there was an “Arthur Bertie Thompson” who served as a Gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery – and this could be “our” man. Arthur was aged 34 when conscription was introduced in May 1916 so would have been eligible for service if fit – he may have volunteered at an earlier date.

He served with the 504 Siege Battalion RGA – an artillery unit who were equipped with heavy guns. The aim of the units was to destroy or neutralise the enemy’s artillery as well as putting destructive fire down on strong points, dumps, store, roads and railways behind enemy lines. Huge guns - 6 inch, 8 inch and 9.2 inch howitzers – were used along with railway- or road-mounted 12 inch guns. 504 Siege Battalion served in France from 1917 to 1919 and, as it was not attached to any particular army division, it could be moved around to where it was required . Late in the war it was involved in the 100 day offensive in France – the final campaign from August to November 1918 on the Western Front to push German troops out of France.

176811	Gnr.	THOMPSON Arthur	176811	Gnr.
		Bertie	504 Sge. Bty. R.G.A.	
			176811	Gnr.

Is this “our” Arthur Bertie Thompson? An extract from the Medal Rolls  
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