

# JOHN KITTLE

**Born:** 5<sup>th</sup> January 1884, Rockland St Peter<sup>1</sup>

**Enlisted:** 17<sup>th</sup> November 1915, Norwich<sup>2</sup> - Army Service Corps (Driver T/438761)



**Medals:** Not known<sup>3</sup>

**Demobilised:** 18<sup>th</sup> June 1919<sup>4</sup>

John Kittle was born on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 1884 and baptised on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 1884 in Rockland St Peter parish church, the son of John and Elizabeth Kittle (see Figure 1). His surname is recorded as *Kiddle*, an error which caused the family some issues over the next couple of generations, especially as the names on memorial headstones had to be corrected later.<sup>5</sup>

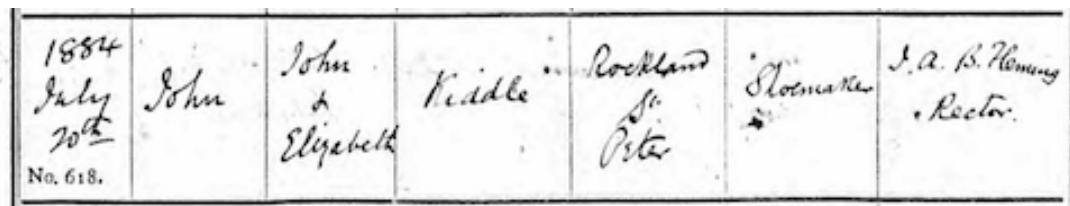


Figure 1: From the Baptisms Register, Rockland St Peter, 1884

John's father, John Kittle was born on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 1840, and baptised on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1840 in Rockland St Peter parish church, the son of Robert (a farmer) and Charlotte Kittle; the baptism register records the surname as *Kiddle*.<sup>6</sup> John Kittle married Elizabeth Middleage on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 1863 in Rockland St Peter parish church.<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth was born in 1843 and baptised on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1847, in Brisley parish church. The baptism register notes that her mother, Sarah Middleage, was a widow.<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth sadly died on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 1884 (probably as a complication of childbirth), aged 42, and is buried in Rockland St Peter with her husband John who died on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 1912, aged 72. Their headstone originally bore the surname

<sup>1</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St. Peter, 1884 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)); FreeBMD, *Quarter to March 1884, Wayland, Vol.4b, p.278* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)), the record gives his surname as *Kiddle*; FreeBMD Death record gives his date of birth.

<sup>2</sup> British Army WW1 Service Records 1914-1920 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>3</sup> There does not appear to be an extant Medal Roll Index Card for John, and it is therefore unlikely that he was awarded any medals. His service appears to have been at Home, and unfortunately, this did not always qualify for the award of a medal.

<sup>4</sup> British Army WW1 Service Records 1914-1920 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>5</sup> Information kindly supplied by John's family.

<sup>6</sup> Norfolk, England, Transcripts of Church of England Baptism, Marriage and Burial Registers, 1600-1935 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)); FreeBMD, *Quarter to June 1840, Wayland, Vol.13, p.347* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)).

<sup>7</sup> Marriage Register, Rockland St Peter, 1863 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>8</sup> FreeBMD, *Quarter to March 1843, Mitford&c, Vol.13, p.231* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)); Norfolk, England, Transcripts of Church of England Baptism, Marriage and Burial Registers, 1600-1935 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

*Kiddle*, later corrected to *Kittle*.<sup>9</sup> The 1911 census for Rockland All Saints records John Kittle (then aged 70, a former farm labourer, living on an old age pension), as a widower and notes that he had ten children, one of whom (a boy) had died. Apart from John (their last child, born in 1884), the 1881 and 1891 censuses for Rockland St Peter and Rockland All Saints record eight of these children, all boys:<sup>10</sup>

Robert John	Born 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 1864, baptised 25 <sup>th</sup> December 1864, Rockland St. Peter <sup>11</sup>
William	Born 11 <sup>th</sup> June 1866, baptised 5 <sup>th</sup> August 1866, Rockland St Peter <sup>12</sup>
Herbert George	Born 8 <sup>th</sup> August 1868, baptised 15 <sup>th</sup> August 1869, Rockland St Peter <sup>13</sup>
Arthur	Born 25 <sup>th</sup> April 1870, baptised 12 <sup>th</sup> June 1870, Rockland St Peter <sup>14</sup>
George	Born 5 <sup>th</sup> November 1871, baptised 28 <sup>th</sup> April 1872, Rockland St Peter <sup>15</sup>
Charles	Born 31 <sup>st</sup> October 1873, baptised 8 <sup>th</sup> February 1874, Rockland St Peter <sup>16</sup>
Albert Edward	Baptised 9 <sup>th</sup> May 1880, Rockland St Peter <sup>17</sup>
Henry Walter	Baptised 28 <sup>th</sup> November 1882, Rockland St Peter <sup>18</sup>

By 1901 John, aged 17, was boarding and working as a stockman on the farm of Arthur Sayer (a Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, and a farmer), in Rockland St Peter. He was still working for Arthur Sayer in the 1911 census, aged 27, and a yardman.<sup>19</sup>

On the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1913, John married Sarah Eliza Pitcher in Cranworth parish church.<sup>20</sup> Sarah was born 14<sup>th</sup> September 1887 in Letton, the daughter of William (a labourer) and Susannah Elizabeth Pitcher, and baptised on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 1887 in Shipdham parish church.<sup>21</sup>

The British Army WW1 Service Records 1914-1920 have survived for John, and they show that by 1915 John and Sarah had moved to Wood Norton, as the address given on his enlistment papers (17<sup>th</sup> November 1915) was *Woodnorton, E. Dereham*. The records note that he was married, and that his occupation was 'groom'. His age at enlistment was given as 31 years, 10 months, and he was 5' 6½" tall. The details of his marriage and two children are given on the form (very faint, so possibly added in pencil at a later date).

John was posted to the Army Reserve on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 1915 following his medical on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 1915. His *Medical History* form notes that he had a '*v. poor physique*,

<sup>9</sup> Information kindly supplied by John's family.

<sup>10</sup> 1881 census, Rockland St Peter (Page 11) ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)); 1891 census, Rockland All Saints (Page 8) ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>11</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1864 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>12</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1866 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>13</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1869 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>14</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1870 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>15</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1872 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>16</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1874 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>17</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1880 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>18</sup> Baptism Register, Rockland St Peter, 1882 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>19</sup> 1901 census, Rockland St Peter (Page 1) ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)); 1911 census, Rockland St Peter, Schedule 119 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>20</sup> FreeBMD, Quarter to December 1913, Mitford, Vol.4b, p.735 ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)); Information kindly supplied by John's family; Information also given in his British Army WW1 Service Records 1914-1920 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>21</sup> Baptism Register, Shipdham, 1887 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

*deformed chest*' and a further note '*?DAH*', which refers to a medical notation "*Disordered Action of the Heart*", caused by stress or fatigue, and did not imply any underlying heart issues. John was categorised as CIII (Class 3), only suitable for sedentary work.<sup>22</sup>

During the period of John's military service, John and Sarah had two sons (recorded on his service record):

- Thomas William: born in 1915 and baptised in Wood Norton on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1915<sup>23</sup>
- Walter Ladell: born in 1917 and baptised in Wood Norton on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 1917.<sup>24</sup>

On the 15<sup>th</sup> February 1918 John went before another medical board (NS Medical Board Norfolk), and under the section of the form entitled *Slight defects but not sufficient to cause rejection* it was noted that he had an '*enlarged heart, no murmur*'. He was again classified as Class 3. His *Casualty Form – Active Service* (15<sup>th</sup> February 1918) further notes that '*this recruit is not considered suitable for posting to a Distribution Battn ... for at least 6 months*'. Accordingly, John was mobilised on the 19<sup>th</sup> August 1918, and on the 21<sup>st</sup> August 1918 he joined 668 Coy, Army Service Corps as a Driver. This company was a Horse Transport company, a Reserve Depot formed in April 1916 and based at Blackheath. On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1918, John was posted to 580 Coy, Army Service Corps, at Aldershot (the 7<sup>th</sup> Auxiliary Horse Transport Company, formed in December 1915). John was demobilised from the service on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 1919.

John's service record notes that he was serving at Home for the period 17<sup>th</sup> November 1915 to 19<sup>th</sup> August 1918, and in the 1918 electoral roll for Wood Norton John is returned as living in the Foulsham Road, but not as an absent voter due to military or naval service.<sup>25</sup>

In the 1921 census, John is still living in Wood Norton with his wife and two sons and is working as a groom for Mr E.L. Price at Wood Norton Hall.<sup>26</sup>

Following the war, John and Sarah went on to have one more child, a daughter, Madge Elizabeth, born in Carbrooke in 1925.<sup>27</sup> In the 1939 Register, John is living in Church Farm Cottages, [Horsham] St. Faith's and Aylsham rural district, with his wife and three children.

His occupation is given as 'cowman'.<sup>28</sup> Sarah died in Aylsham in 1963, aged 75.<sup>29</sup> John died in Briston in 1970, aged 86.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See <http://www.epsomandewellhistoryexplorer.org.uk/MedicalCategories.html> for a list of medical abbreviations used in WW1 documents.

<sup>23</sup> *Transcript and Index to Wood Norton, Norfolk, Parish Registers*, compiled by Keith and Shirley Howell (February 2000), Baptisms, 1915 (p.42); FreeBMD, *Quarter to September 1915, Aylsham, Vol.4b, p.133* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)).

<sup>24</sup> *Transcript and Index to Wood Norton, Norfolk, Parish Registers*, compiled by Keith and Shirley Howell (February 2000), Baptisms, 1917 (p.42); FreeBMD, *Quarter to September 1917, Aylsham, Vol.4b, p.190* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)).

<sup>25</sup> First Register of Parliamentary and Local Government Electors, 1918; Polling District: Foulsham, Parish: Wood Norton (*Norfolk Heritage Centre, microfilm MF1038*).

<sup>26</sup> 1921 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 163) ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)).

<sup>27</sup> FreeBMD, *Quarter to September 1925, Wayland, Vol.4b, p.342* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)).

<sup>28</sup> 1939 England and Wales Register, St. Faith's & Aylsham RD, Enumeration District TRUO, Schedule 10 ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)).

<sup>29</sup> FreeBMD, *Quarter to September 1963, Norwich Outer, Vol.4b, p.595* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)); Information kindly provided by John's family.

<sup>30</sup> FreeBMD, *Quarter to December 1970, Fakenham, Vol.4b, p.1395* ([www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk)), interestingly, there appear to be two records associated with this entry, one for *Kiddle* and one for *Kittle*; Information kindly supplied by John's family.