

The war at Tansor Court

Six men living at Tansor Court went to war. The owner of the property was John Layton Mills, who was born in Hertfordshire in 1863. In 1891 he lived with his family in Husbands Bosworth, and was a practising barrister, having been called to the bar the year before. After he married, he moved to Alwalton Hall, and then to Castor before coming to Tansor Court. The 1911 census outlines a household of seventeen, including a governess and twelve servants. It seems that there were also two grooms who may have been living in accommodation near the stables, since they were not recorded as living in the main house.

John Layton Mills was made a Captain of the Peterborough Squadron of the Northamptonshire Yeomanry in 1903, and was promoted to the rank of Major in 1908. The Northamptonshire Mercury reported that at the outbreak of war, he went into training at Towcester but 'to his keen regret, ill health compelled him to relinquish his duties' and he was placed on the Territorial Register of Officers. His health genuinely seems to have been poor, and he died at home following a bout of pneumonia in October 1917. He is buried in Tansor churchyard.



Perhaps persuaded by John Layton Mills, at least two of the male servants at Tansor Court signed up to serve in the Northants Yeomanry as Troopers – both William Gubbins, one of the grooms, and Sidney Calver, a footman, enlisted at Towcester. They were both listed in the newspapers as pall bearers at Mills' funeral. A newspaper report shows that Mills left a year's wages to each employee of at least five years standing.



Mills' butler, George Crisp, enlisted with the Labour Corps of the Northamptonshire Regiment at the age of 41 in March 1917. He had been with the family since he was fifteen, when he was a page serving Mills' father at Husbands Bosworth. George was

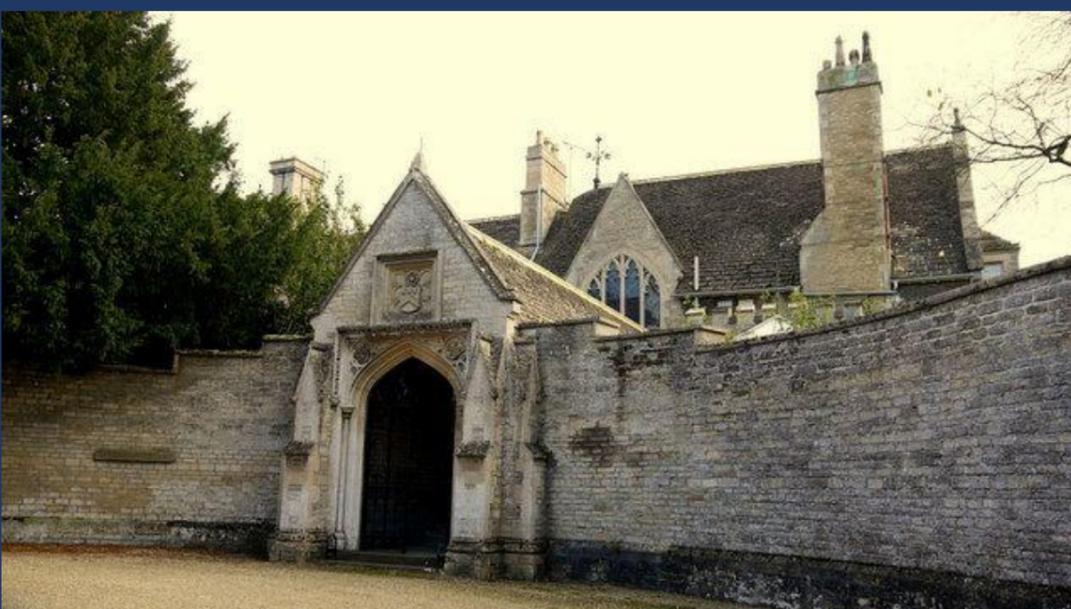
quickly despatched to France, where he served until the end of the war, returning to England in March 1919.

Thomas Yeomans was living in Ashton and working as a gardener

in 1911, but his army enlistment form in 1915 records his address as Tansor Court. He was 36, and married with two

young children when he joined up. His records also show that he was assigned to the Labour Corps. His demobilization papers show that he was part of Eastern Command, in 596th Home Service Eastern Company, which, as the name suggests, did not serve overseas.

George Gough was listed in the Muster Roll as serving as a Private in the Army Service Corps, and although he is not recorded amongst the residents of Tansor Court in 1911, the electoral register shows him living there in 1918.



Army Form L 22
STATEMENT AS TO DISABILITY.
(This form is not applicable to Officers and Soldiers in Hospital or on leave therefrom discharged from the Army, Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force, he will state:—)

On Demobilization every Officer and Soldier, whether remaining with the Colours or not, will be given an opportunity of filling in this Form. Should he not wish to put forward any claim in respect of a Disability due to Military Service he must sign the Statement hereunder to this effect, in the presence of an Officer of the Unit with which he is serving, who will witness the Signature. Whether a claim is made or not, this Form will be forwarded by the Unit Commander, in the case of every Officer, direct to the Secretary, War Office; and in the case of every Soldier, to the Record Office of his Unit.

Unit 402 LABOUR COY
 Regiment or Corps LABOUR CORPS
 Regt. No. 51691 Rank PTE
 Surname CRISP
 Christian Names in full GEORGE SPENCER
 Permanent address 43 SLOANE GARDENS, LONDON SW1
 Age last birthday 41

If the Officer or Soldier has previously been discharged from the Army, Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force, he will state:—
 (a) Former Regiments or Corps with Regimental Numbers:—
 (b) Dates of discharge:—
 (c) Causes of discharge:—
 (d) Particulars of Pension or Gratuity received (if any):—

First joined (Date) _____ at (Place) _____
 Medical Category or Grade in which joined _____

I do not claim to be suffering from a disability due to my military service.
 Place of Examination Towcester G. P. Crisp
 Date 1-2-19 P. Crisp
 Signature of Officer or Soldier.
 Signature of Officer witnessing.