

HISTORIC RED HOOK

Robert T. Bishop

Born May 14, 1866 Died Feb 6, 1930

St. John the Evangelist Cemetery, Barrytown

Small marble stone with shield motif near the center-north edge of the cemetery

This military-issued gravestone and its accompanying bronze marker lets us know that Robert Thomas Bishop served in Company K of the 9th New York Infantry Regiment in the Spanish American War (a brief conflict that erupted and concluded in 1898) and nothing else. Records of those who served indicate that he enlisted in New York City near the start of the war in May, and was honorably discharged after its official conclusion in November. He was hospitalized in August at Leiter Hospital in Chickamauga, Georgia, a former hotel that had been purchased by Mary T. Leiter and given to the government due to deplorable conditions at nearby military Camp Thomas. Perhaps Robert had been a resident of the camp and had suffered as did the 750 soldiers who died from illness such as typhoid fever while stationed there. Given that grim statistic, it's unsurprising that half the American casualties of the Spanish American war were from disease. By October Robert was furloughed by order of the head surgeon at Leiter, so it's possible he never saw combat and the illness he contracted in camp may have caused him problems for the rest of his life.

Robert Bishop was 5'6" tall with light brown hair and was born May 14, 1866 in Wolverhampton, England. He arrived in the US on November 1, 1884 and probably lived in Boston until he met his future wife.



Regimental hospital hmdb.org "Sickness at Camp Thomas"

Alys M. Booth (born January 22, 1880 in Southport, England) was the daughter of Joseph Booth and a Miss Martin. Robert and Alys were married on April 15, 1917 in Durham, England. There is a gap in age between them of 14 years, but as it was 15 months later, it would not appear that the marriage was due to the pending arrival of their only child, son Kenneth Bromley Bishop, who was born in Bridgeport, CT on July



Alys' passport application and photo, 1917

9, 1918. According to Alys's December 1917 "emergency" passport application, she needed the document to return to the US with Robert who had moved to Glasgow "for the purpose of getting married". Alys was then residing in Paisley, Scotland, but her permanent address was in Providence, RI. The same document also stated that Robert had been naturalized in Milwaukee, WI and resided in Boston.

In the 1920 census, it was recorded that Robert, Alys, and their 18-month-old son were living on Broad Street in Stratford, Fairfield Co., CT where Robert was an inspector in a factory. How or why they made their way to Red Hook is unclear, but Robert had been at a veteran's hospital for an unknown length of time, when it was reported he suffered a stroke and died in Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck in 1930. Alys applied for his military tombstone to be delivered to the rectory of St. John in Barrytown

where she also happened to be employed, doing housework for Rev. Herbert Smith. By the time the census came around that year, Alys and son Kenneth were recorded at home in Bridgeport, CT.

At age 49, Kenneth Bishop married Edith Lengyel of Hungary (1921-1998, the former Mrs. Thayer Waldo and daughter of Franz Lengyel and Tereza Takats) November 28, 1967 in San Francisco. Kenneth was a sergeant in the Army and died in 1995. He and Edith are buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno, CA. His mother Alys Bishop died in 1959 in California, presumably having removed there to be close to her son.

Military tombstone application, 1930

Research and writing by Sarah K. Hermans, 2024

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