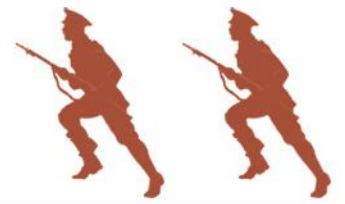


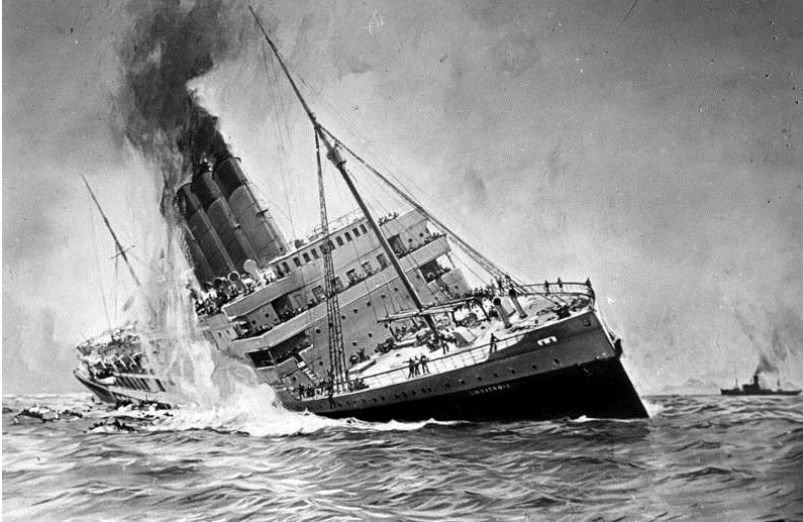
OVER THE TOP



News from the Front

May 1915

THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA, 7TH MAY 1915



A SPLENDIDLY SUCCESSFUL CARNIVAL
 ‘The fun of the fair’ was in full swing at Stockton last Thursday afternoon and evening when a carnival was held in the High Street in aid of the Stockton and Thornaby Hospital, the funds of which have been adversely affected to a serious extent by the war.

The proprietors of roundabouts, shows and ‘try-your-luck’ stalls very kindly consented to extend their annual hirings visit, and place their equipment at the disposal of the promoters. It was the Markets Committees’, together with the Tradesmen’s Association, who instituted the scheme. The children were given a half holiday for the occasion, and joy-wheels, scenic railways, flip-flaps, horses and gondolas were well patronised all evening. In addition the stall holders and the principal tradesmen of the town each presented articles for sale, and these were collected, put upon special stalls and sold to the public in the form of bargains.

22nd May 1915

Stockton & Thornaby Herald



ROPNER PARK IN BLOOM

‘The spring blooms at Ropner Park are at their best just now, and many are the pleasing walks that the residents of Stockton may enjoy there. The flower beds around the lake are particularly pretty.’

6th May 1915, EG

STOCKTON SOLDIER’S LETTER

Private Leslie Lewis of the 5th Durhams, writing to Mr W. Clennit, of Gray’s Road, Stockton, says:-

A week yesterday (Friday) we moved from where we were billeted at the barn, and were taken by motor ‘buses (old London omnibuses, I think) to within sight of the “scene of operations,” so to speak. Early on Saturdays morning (1 a.m.) we started out for the reserve trenches, and during that day I had my first experience of what it is like being under heavy shell fire.

During Sunday and Monday we gradually advanced from the reserve trenches under awful shell and shrapnel fire, practically the whole of the time, until we reached the front line of fire, late on Monday night, when we relieved another regiment. We occupied the trenches for another two days, during which time the Germans gave us “grand

receptions” and “introductions” to their “stinkers”, “Jack Johnsons” and “Black Marias” and also plenty of bullets. On Wednesday midnight we were relieved after having been in action five days, which is a good long time for our first action.

I will never forget the experiences we have gone through – it was a proper “Hell”. We lost a good number of wounded and killed although it could have been much worse.

I think Ernest Crate has been wounded, but I’m not absolutely sure. Your George is quite all right I am pleased to say, so is “your humble” else I wouldn’t be writing this now.

Well we went six days without a wash. What a relief it was when we got back and got a good wash. The water for drinking is putrid, and I would give a good bit for a drink of good Stockton water. The Colonel has told us that the General says we did well in holding the line, and that had it been broken it would have made a considerable difference in this war, so we are swanking now, eh! In

one way I am glad we have been through it, as we can now feel we have done our bit; at any rate, we have been in the worst part of the whole front.

15th May 1915, EG

* A “Jack Johnson” was the largest shell used by the Germans which burst with black smoke. Named after the boxer, Jack Johnson, the first black American world heavyweight champion.

“Black Marias” were 300lb German howitzer shells which emitted a large cloud of stinging black smoke

A KIND THOUGHT

Miss Jinny, the youngest daughter of Mr R. Jewitts, accountant, Stockton, who attends the Middlesbrough High School, expressed a desire, with other pupils to help prisoners in Germany, and she was given a name to whom she could send a parcel. This was sent away some time ago, and now a postcard has come to hand from the prisoner acknowledging with thanks the receipt of the parcel. Miss Jewitts was not aware that the prisoner belonged to Stockton until this postcard arrived. His name is R. Hill and his number 2835 with No. 4 and No. 7 Co at Hamelin-Weser, Hanover, Germany.

13th May 1915, EG

Arts, Culture and Leisure

Big plans for great experiences



OVER THE TOP



News from the Front

May 1915

TWO THORNABY HEROES

A Thornaby man has received recognition for gallant conduct in the fighting line, a Distinguished Conduct Medal having been awarded to Sergeant J. Combe, of the Machine Gun Section of the 5th D.L.I.

Writing to his wife at 57 Roseberry View, Thornaby, Sergeant Combe describes a retreat in which he took part. The machine gun section, of which he was sergeant, had had a hard day's marching, and were worried by shrapnel and shell fire the whole time. His men grew so weary that at last they had to give in. They dropped their guns and ammunition, utterly tired. Sergeant Combe went out to collect the missing material, and succeeded in doing so amidst a terrific storm of shell and rifle fire. For this Sir John French gave him his D.C.M.

He adds: "The men stuck well together, and I know how they were fixed, but they did what every Englishman does and that is his duty. The Durhams have made a name for themselves that will last for years".

Private Steve Conway, son of Mr J. Conway, station superintendent of the Imperial Tramway Co. at Stockton in a letter home, describes an exciting escape which he has just had while serving at the front with the R.G.A.

He writes: "I was one of a number of chaps in charge of a series of carts loaded with ammunition. We had brought them up to the line and were unloading the stuff. I was on the cart handing the cases to the boys as they came up. There were only a box or two of cartridges and shrapnel to get out when suddenly we heard a 'whiz' through the air, and the order was 'Bob down lads'.

The shell fell right amongst our leading

horses, killing them outright. The driver escaped, although I don't know how, but one poor chap was hit in the side, and we buried him the next morning at daybreak. Five of us were wounded. The worst of us was a Thornaby chap called Bert Grace. He had his right arm fractured. What a difference it makes to a chap when anything like that happens. Grace just walked off up the road to the dressing station. Raine, our Red Cross man, ran after him to help him, but Grace replied - with his arm hanging off, mind you - 'Go back, there is somebody there wants you more than me'.

28th May 1915, EG

YARM LADS AT THE FRONT

Lieutenant H.T. Fawcett, writing to Miss Annie Page, George & Dragon Hotel, Yarm says:-

I thank you and all the Yarm people who so kindly sent the "cigs", tobacco etc. I received the parcels last night, and we distributed it just before entering the trenches, where we are at present.

I am glad to say that the Yarm lads here with me are very fit indeed, having just had four days' rest. With again many thanks on behalf of the men for all your kindness.

14th May 1915, EG

Can't beat 'TIZ' when Feet Hurt

"Ah! Nothing like TIZ for sore tired, puffed-up, perspiring feet and corns."



STOCKTON'S FALLEN

Private Albert V. Bailey, DLI - 24/05/1915

Able Seaman Albert Bedford - 06/05/1915

Private Bernard J. Behan, DLI - 24/05/1915

Pte. Frederick A. Branson, DLI - 24/05/1915

Pte. Frederick W. Broddle, DLI - 20/05/1915

Private Harrison T. Crosby, DLI - 27/05/1915

Private Henry C. Dickinson, DLI - 19/05/1915

Corp. Harry L. Douthwaite, RHA - 15/05/1915

Private Frederick Fenny, DLI - 24/05/1915.

Pte. Maurice Goodwill, Yorks Reg. - 04/05/1915

ERA 2nd Class Henry G. Ingram, H.M.S. Goliath - 13/05/1915

Private George E. Jones, DLI - 02/05/1915

Private Joseph H. Kirk, DLI - 21/05/1915

L-C George C. Laidler, DLI - 22/05/1915.

Private John Nimmo, Yorks. Reg. - 14/05/1915.

Pte. Thomas O'Grady, Yorks. Reg. - 24/05/1915

Driver Bertie H. Phillips, RFA - 28/05/1915

Private William H. Ransom, DLI - 01/05/1915

Sergeant George H. Redhead, DLI - 21/05/1915

Private Charles Sewell, N. Fusiliers - 26/05/1915

Private Robert Teasdale, DLI - 24/05/1915

Stoker James W. Thomson, R.N.R. - 31/05/1915

Rifleman William B. Walker, R.B. - 08/05/1915

Private Robert P. Waller, DLI - 16/05/1915

Bugler Albert E. Whitmore, DLI - 24/05/1915

Gnr. Charles Wilson, Can. Fld Inf. - 03/05/1915

Sgt. George Wilson, N. Fusiliers - 24/05/1915

Private John Wilson, N. Fusiliers - 27/05/1915