

# OVER THE TOP



News from the front

March – April – May 1917

## “SONS OF REST”

Ex Private George Grosvenor (late of the Yorkshire Regt.) 4, Lyndhurst St. Thornaby, writes *“I have noticed from time to time in your paper references to the Thornaby ‘Sons of Rest’ and I would like to show in your paper how the soldiers and sailors, appreciate what the ‘Sons of Rest’ have done for their comfort and welfare. I have been through the Battle of the Somme but now I have got my discharge from the Army. While at the front, in hospital, and at home, pals I met frequently told me of the parcels, comforts, and letters they had from the ‘Sons of Rest’ and I know nurses and matrons from various hospitals speak very highly of the society. To all who have helped in any way I, as an ex-soldier, offer my thanks “*

*Evening Gazette 17 April 1917*

## LIEUTENANT PERCIVAL WILLIAM MURRAY DIED IN FRANCE



On the 1<sup>st</sup> February 1917 Percy took off from Bruay for an aerial photographic operation of Thelus in Northern France with Lieutenant Duncan John McRae. Forty minutes later they were attacked by German pilot Manfred von Richthofen, “The Red Baron”. They were forced to descend in an uncontrolled spin until their aircraft crashed into the German Front line wire. They were pulled from the wreckage of their aircraft alive, but both died from wounds shortly afterwards. Percy died on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1917.

Percy was the son of William and Mary Murray, 10 Claremont Terrace Norton.

## STOCKTON & THE DURHAMS

Since their last meeting Stockton’s 5<sup>th</sup> D.L.I. Comfort fund Committee has sent to the wounded men of the 5<sup>th</sup> DLI who were in the hospital or convalescent home, a parcel of smoking matter and chocolates to the value of 3s 9d each. One hundred and sixty four parcels were sent to hospitals all over the country, 13 to Ripon, and 33 to Alnwick at a total cost of £40 3s 9d. This of course includes postage for some. In addition to this they have given the most needy cases amongst the widows and wounded men’s families in small amounts the sum of £10 11s, and have received a number of very nice letters from the men thanking the committee for their kindness and consideration, The balance at the bank to date is £365 3s 3d.

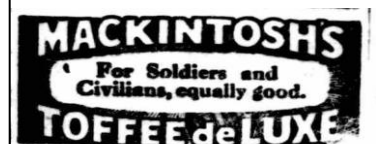
*S & T Herald 3. March 1917*

## DOGS IN JEOPARDY THE FOOD CONTROLLER’S ORDER REGARDING BISCUITS

Mr Johns the Secretary of the National Canine Defence League expressed his concern regarding the food order forbidding the making of dog biscuits.

*“Unless the order is modified owners must destroy their dogs or starve them, or feed them on food fit for human beings.” He also stated that “We trust that the Food Controller will speedily recognise the serious predicament in which he placed owners, and help them to solve the problem. Wholesale destruction of the family dog is a prospect which the country views with grave misgivings, but it is imminent unless a definitive decision is at once arrived at”*

*Evening Gazette 1 May 1917*





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## THOUSANDS OF DEAD

ENEMY'S VERY HEAVY LOSSES SOUTH OF  
THE SCARPE RIVER

55 AEROPLANES BROUGHT DOWN BY THE  
BRITISH



Official Report received from the front. - Our line advanced south of the Scarpe River. Two German field guns were captured during the course of the fighting. Many thousands of German dead are lying on the battlefield which we now occupy. Fine weather enabled our aeroplanes to carry out many raids yesterday and bombs were dropped with good effort on the enemy's railway junctions, aerodromes, billets and ammunition dump.

During the air fighting seven German machines were brought down and eight were driven down out of control. In two days the British airmen have brought down 55 enemy planes as against a loss of eight on our side.

After fierce fighting at the Battle of the Scarpe, the town of Monchy-Le-Preux was taken by the King's Own Royal Rifle Corps and the Rifle Brigade 37<sup>th</sup> Division.

Troops are celebrating and embussing after the battle. Buses being used are London 'B' type buses, some 1,300 of which were requisitioned by the army in October 1914 as troop carriers on the western front.

*Evening Gazette* 26  
April 1917

## MILITARY CROSS

Captain Cyril C, Beatty. R.A.M.C. was decorated with the Military Cross by the King at Buckingham Palace on Saturday, for his conspicuous courage and coolness when in charge of an advanced dressing station. By his fine work he has ensured quick and successful evacuation of wounded from the aid posts. In times of difficulty he set an invaluable example. Captain Beatty is a son of Dr Beatty J.P. of Stockton-on-Tees.

*Stockton & Thornaby  
Herald* 10<sup>th</sup> March 1917.

## MUNITION GIRL'S PLUCK

The spirit that is going  
to win the war

In a shipyard on the North East Coast, a girl of 23 years had been engaged for some time in electrical wiring of a large battleship. She had previously completed a course of instruction and had shown herself to be most intelligent and adaptable. One day when doing overhead work a drill came through from the deck, piercing her cotton cap, hair and entered her head. The girl immediately jumped from the trestle from which she was working, but the effect of the drill was to draw off a small amount of scalp and a good deal of hair. She was attended to by the firm's first aid room and sent home. To the surprise of everyone concerned she attended for work at 8 o'clock the next morning. She laughed at the incident and said "It was better to lose her hair than her head."

*S & T Herald* 31<sup>st</sup> March  
1917