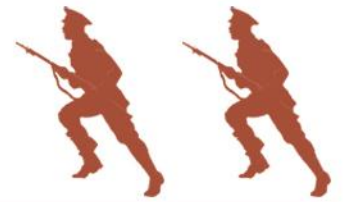


OVER THE TOP



News from the Front

September – October – November 1917

THE STOCKTON V.C.



Stockton is proud of its V.C. It is claimed that in no part of the country has any particular locality responded more loyally to the call of the King than has the district of Portrack, Stockton, where there are whole streets of households represented in either the Army or Navy – more particularly the Navy – and it is therefore most fitting that this high distinction should come to that part of the town.

Sergt. Cooper V.C., is a son of Mr and Mrs W. E. Cooper of 12 Barrett Street. Mr Cooper is a labourer, employed at the Malleable Ironworks, and has two other sons and five daughters.

A representative of the 'N-E.D.G.' was the first to convey the glad tidings to the home of Sergt. Cooper. He found Mrs. Cooper busy with her household duties, and a sister of the distinguished officer deeply engaged in dressmaking.

Work was at once set aside, and the mother's eyes filled with tears of joy at the news of her brave boy's recognition.

"No", she said in answer to a question, "we had no idea that he had done anything to gain such a high honour as that, but we did hope that he might be getting a medal of some kind, because we received a card the other day congratulating him upon his bravery in a certain action".

"Has he never told you himself in his letters about what he has done?"

"Oh, no, he would never do that. He is not that kind of boy; he would be too much afraid that anyone would make a fuss about it. He writes regularly, but all we get to know from him is that he has been very busy".

Mother and sister spoke very highly of the sergeant as a son and a brother – a conscientious, good-living lad, who loves his home, and is extremely popular amongst a large circle of youthful friends.

Sergt. E. Cooper, V.C. is a single young fellow, who celebrated his 21st birthday last May. At the age of 18 when the war commenced, he was anxious to be off to "do his bit", and he enlisted on September 7th 1914.

In July of the following year he was drafted to France, where he had

been in the thick of fighting ever since. During the whole of that time he had only one leave, and on that occasion, his homecoming was a mission of sadness, as he was crossing the Channel to attend his sister's funeral. Unfortunately he arrived too late.

Before enlisting Sergt. Cooper V.C. followed the humble occupation of an assistant on a distributing fruit car of the local Co-operative Society. He has a younger brother, also in the army, training at Ipswich.

The card which Mrs Cooper mentioned was from Major-General W. Douglas Smith and read as follows:-

"The Major-General 20th (Light) Division has received a report of the gallant conduct of R2794 Sgt. E. Cooper, 12 Batt. King's Royal Rifle Corps, on August 16th 1917, in silencing the enemy machine guns and

helping to capture 7 machine guns and 40 prisoners near Langemarck, and he wishes to congratulate him on his fine behaviour".

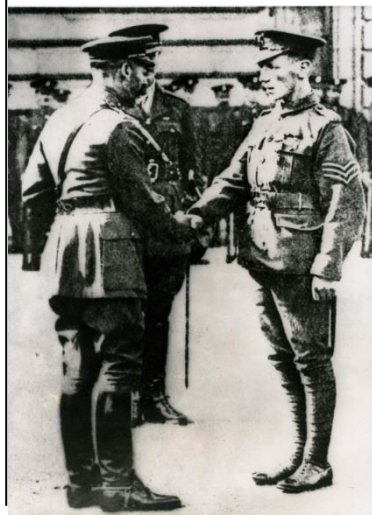
Sergt. Cooper was educated at Bailey Street School, the scholars of which have been pleased to regularly send him parcels of comfort.

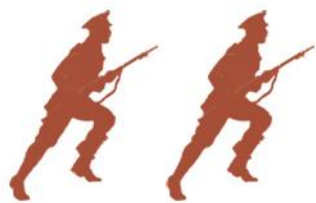
S&T.H. 22 Sept 1917

A TOWN'S EFFORT

It is interesting to learn that an opportunity is to be afforded the public of Stockton to make a fuss over their V.C. hero. The Mayor and his Advisory Committee have decided that an appeal should be made for funds with which to celebrate the event, and very wisely, they have asked the local Combined Cyclists' Committee to make the appeal, receive the funds, and make recommendations to the Mayor as to what form the celebrations should take. An important scheme of this kind could not have been placed in better hands. Since the war started the cyclists have promoted and carried through in a most successful manner a number of functions in connection with war charities etc. and the organised effort that will be required to reach the whole of the town on the V.C.'s behalf will be easily performed by them.

S&T.H. 22 Sept 1917





OVER THE TOP



News from the Front

September – October – November 1917

A THORNABY HERO

The officers and members of the 1st Thornaby (Victoria) Troop Boy Scouts gave a social evening and fruit banquet in honour of Private Walter Whitfield, D.L.I., assistant scoutmaster of the troop. He has been a prisoner of war in Germany since Whit Monday 1915, until he went to Switzerland. Private Whitfield was wounded the same day he was taken a prisoner and has lost an eye. Two of his brothers have been killed in action, and another brother is still a prisoner of war in Germany.

The 'Troops Own' Piper's Band met Private Whitfield at his home and played to him along to the Scout Institute, which was prettily decorated for the occasion. A capital musical programme was gone through, and the following artists took part; Mrs. Fleet, Mr. Will Fleet, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Sam Wallatt, Madame Francie Childs, Assist. S.M. Sowerby, Thornaby's "Joe" Scouts Leeson and Brierley. Mr Wilkinson presided at the piano.

Mr. Bruce presided, and was supported by Mrs. Campion, Scoutmaster Eales, and the Chaplain, Mr Walter Ineson. Games were also indulged in. Farrier Sergeant Robert Linton, another old

member of the troop, was also present, and at the close of the proceedings was given a good send-off at the station on his return to the front.

S&T.H. 6 October 1917

PTE. ERNEST TAYLOR

31 July 2017 marked the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the Battle of Passchendaele, one of the bloodiest chapters of the First World War.

Officially known as the Third Battle of Ypres, the battle took place in an area of thick clay soil.

A combination of constant shelling, which churned the soil and smashed the drainage systems, along with the heaviest rain seen for 30 years, turned Passchendaele into a quagmire of thick mud.

This thick mud immobilised tanks, clogged rifles and drowned many men and horses. By the time the Battle ended on 6 November the casualties numbered 495,000; 90,000 bodies were never identified and 42,000 were never



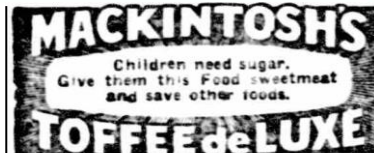
recovered.

One casualty was Private Ernest Taylor from Stockton, who was serving with the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards. Having enlisted in September 1914, Ernest saw three years active service before his death on 12 October, tragically one day before his battalion was withdrawn from the front line; he was 34. As his body was never recovered, Ernest is commemorated at the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium.

STOCKTON LADY NAVAL RECRUIT

A young Stockton lady claims the honour of being the first applicant for naval service in America. A Washington newspaper contains the following under the heading "Woman Typist First Atlantian to Apply" – Miss Frances Britton, of 208 West Peachtree Street, Thursday, applied to the local naval recruiting station for admittance in the Naval Reserve Service in the capacity of a stenographer. Her application was placed on file".

While no instructions have been received by Lieut. Keller, in charge of the recruiting station, with regard to the enlistment of women in the naval reserves, all applications from women for positions in certain



branches of the services will be recorded. No disposition of the applications however will be made until instructions are received from the Navy Bureau at Washington.

Miss Britton is the daughter of Mr J.H. Britton of 4 Tower Street, Stockton.

S&T.H. 20 October 1917

A SOLDIER HONOURED

Prior to the meeting of Stockton Town Council a pleasing ceremony took place, when the Mayor (Alderman J. Harrison) formerly presented Sergt. Jones of the 2nd Yorkshires, residing at Elliott Street, Portrack, with the Military Medal he won for conspicuous bravery in the field.

His Worship detailed the heroic deed for which he won his distinction, and said he was sure the sergeant would not value his decoration for its intrinsic value, but for the value it represented. He wished the brave soldier the best of good health and long life to enjoy his honour.

Sergt. Jones said what he did in the field he did not for any honour, but because he felt at the time that it was his duty.

S&T.H. 6 October 1917
Arts, Culture and Leisure



SOLDIERS FALLEN

September 1917

Second Lieutenant Frank Clementine Nasby – 1/9/1917
4th Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Private Thomas Henry O'Neil – 2/9/1917
2nd Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Stoker Samuel Hadley – 3/9/1917
H.M.S. Pembroke (Royal Navy Barracks), Chatham

Private Arthur Eldon Hill – 3/9/1917 or 4/9/1917
5th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Stoker George William Simpson – 3/9/1917
H.M.S. Pembroke (Royal Navy Barracks), Chatham

Private Mark Kirby – 4/9/1917
10th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private David Brown
8th Bn., Lancashire Fusiliers

Sapper Joseph Whitfield Orr – 6/9/1917
227th Field Co., Royal Engineers

Private Arthur Green – 8/9/1917
22nd Co., Labour Corps

Private Albert Edward Hauxwell – 17/9/1917
'C' Bn., 8th Bn., Yorkshire and Lancaster Regiment

Rifleman Harry Broadbent – 18/9/1917
11th Bn., Prince of Wales' Own (West Yorkshire Regiment)

Private Frederick Burns – 20/9/1917
12th Bn., Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own)

Lance Sergeant Alexander Collins – 20/9/1917
8th Field Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Sapper Herbert Cook – 20/9/1917
175th Tunnelling Co., Royal Engineers

Private Henry Hart – 20/9/1917
'D' Co., 9th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Sergeant Arnold Thomas Vincent Jonathan Kidd – 20/9/1917
9th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Lance Corporal Albert Laidler – 20/9/1917
11th Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Sapper William Nicholas Scott – buried 20/9/1917
Royal Engineers

Private Robert Armstrong – 21/9/1917
Durham Light Infantry

Lance Corporal Joseph Baker – 21/9/1917
9th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Lance Corporal Herbert Evans – 21/9/1917
'B' Co., 11th Bn., Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own)

Private Robert Lackenby – 22/9/1917
12th Bn., King's Royal Rifle Corps

Private Frederick Bell – 24/9/1917
9th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private John L. Armstrong – 25/9/1917
9th (Glasgow Highland) Bn. (Territorial), Highland Light Infantry

Private Henry Turpin – 25/9/1917
1st Bn., Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment)

Private Frederick Johnson – 26/9/1917
2nd/5th Lincolnshire Regiment

Private Leslie Clegg McMurdo – 26/9/1917
31st Bn., Australian Infantry

Corporal Charles Edward Owles – 28/9/1917
1st/5th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Private George Edward Thornborow – 29/9/1917
22nd Co., Labour Corps

October 2017

Private Charles Patterson – 1/10/1917
5th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Stoker Walter William Buttle – 2/10/1917
Royal Naval Reserve, H.M.S. Drake

Gunner Robert Lee – 2/10/1917
North Riding (Northumbrian) Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

Stoker (First Class) Thomas Wheatley – 2/10/1917
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Drake

Private Thomas Bell – 4/10/1917
10th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private Harold Close – 4/10/1917
10th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Rifleman Vincent Dunn – 4/10/1917
13th Bn., King's Royal Rifle Corps

Private Hugh Pattison Savage – 4/10/1917
15th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Private Herbert Webster – 4/10/1917
237th Co., Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Acting Sergeant George Thomas Jackson – 5/10/1917
12th/13th Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Lance Corporal William Phillip Edwards – 6/10/1917
145th Army Troop Co., Royal Engineers

Private George McHale – buried 7/10/1917
5th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Corporal Albert Brough – 8/10/1917
13th Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps

Private William Harris – 9/10/1917
2nd/8th Bn., Manchester Regiment

Lance Corporal Tom Ingledeu – 9/10/1917
2nd Bn., Coldstream Guards

Lance Corporal Gilbert Steele Lax – 9/10/1917
11th Bn., Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Sergeant Arthur Warren (M.M.) – 9/10/1917
21st Bn., Australian Infantry

Sergeant David Wiley – 9/10/1917
7th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private Tom Edgar Shipley – 10/10/1917
6th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private Ivan Evelyn Grant – 12/10/1917
5th Bn., Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

Private Stanley Oswald Mackintosh – 12/10/1917
5th Bn., Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

Private Ernest Taylor – 12/10/1917
1st Bn., Grenadier Guards

Second Lieutenant Heber/Hebert Thomas – 12/10/1917
4th Bn., The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

Private Robert Beaumont – 13/10/1917
2nd Bn., Bedfordshire Regiment

Private Frank Leslie Lambard – 14/10/1917
21st (Tyneside Scottish) Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Private William Webster – 14/10/1917
1/6th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Private Charles Edward Appleby – 15/10/1917
9th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Second Corporal William George Larmouth – 15/10/1917
225th Field Co., Royal Engineers

Private Joseph Bailey – 16/10/1917
20th (Tyneside Scottish) Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Lance Corporal John Robert Danby – 19/10/1917
5th Field Survey Co., Royal Engineers

Lance Corporal Thomas Swenson – 19 or 20/10/1917
9th Bn., King's Royal Rifle Corps

Sapper Noah Hillerby – 20/10/1917
95th Field Co., Royal Engineers

Driver Thomas Hunter – 20/10/1917
227th Field Co., Royal Engineers

Stoker (First Class) John Thomas Middleton – 21/10/1917
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Marmion

Corporal Thomas Dunn For(e)man – 22/10/1917
'A' Bty., 103rd Bde., Royal Field Artillery

Gunner George William Wilkinson – 24/10/1917
'D' Bty., 94th Bde., Royal Field Artillery

Private Arthur Lonsdale – 25/10/1917
6th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Private Richard Atkinson – 26/10/1917
'A' Co., 1st/7th Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Private Herbert Gotts – 26/10/1917
4th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private John Thomas Halford – 26/10/1917
47th Bn., Canadian Infantry

Private Benjamin Edward Walker – 26/10/1917
1st/6th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Private Herbert Noble Warren – 26/10/1917
1st/5th (Territorial) Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Gunner Thomas Coates – 28/10/1917
135th Siege Bty., Royal Garrison Artillery

Private Arthur Herrington – 28/10/1917
12th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private James Francis Higgitt – 28/10/1917
5th/6th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private Henry John Jeal – 30/10/1917
5th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private Albert Pearson – 21/10/1917
'B' Co., 1st/9th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

November 2017

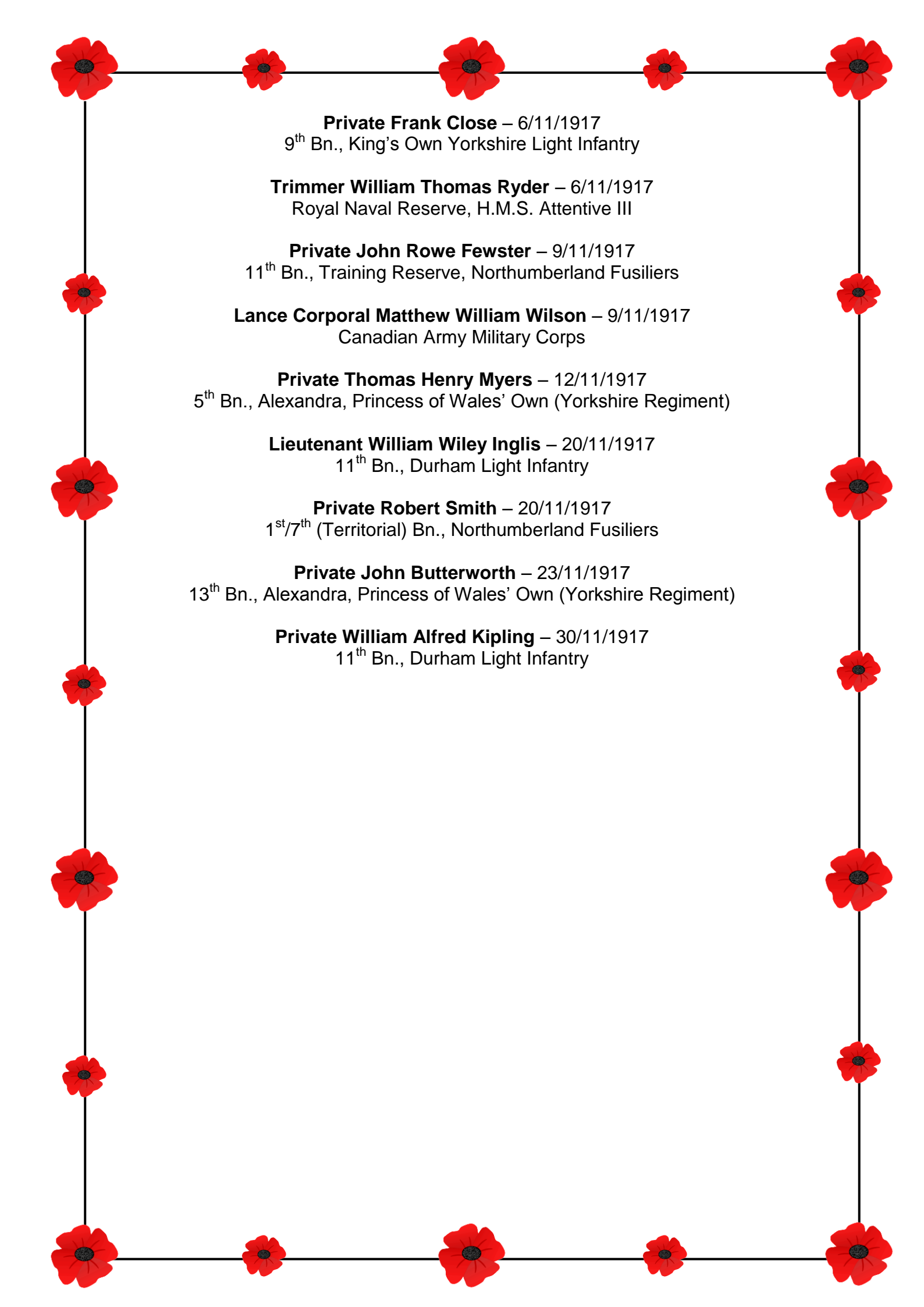
Company Sergeant Major James Combe – 1/11/1917
150th Bn., Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Private Thomas Kent – 1/11/1917
1st/5th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Second Lieutenant Robert James Bell – 2/11/1917
3rd Bn., attd. 1st/4th Bn., Northamptonshire Regiment

Bombardier William E. Harrison – 2/11/1917
5th Reserve Bde., Royal Field Artillery

Private William Stockton – 2/11/1917
1st/5th Bn., Essex Regiment



Private Frank Close – 6/11/1917
9th Bn., King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

Trimmer William Thomas Ryder – 6/11/1917
Royal Naval Reserve, H.M.S. Attentive III

Private John Rowe Fewster – 9/11/1917
11th Bn., Training Reserve, Northumberland Fusiliers

Lance Corporal Matthew William Wilson – 9/11/1917
Canadian Army Military Corps

Private Thomas Henry Myers – 12/11/1917
5th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Lieutenant William Wiley Inglis – 20/11/1917
11th Bn., Durham Light Infantry

Private Robert Smith – 20/11/1917
1st/7th (Territorial) Bn., Northumberland Fusiliers

Private John Butterworth – 23/11/1917
13th Bn., Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment)

Private William Alfred Kipling – 30/11/1917
11th Bn., Durham Light Infantry