

ROLL OF HONOUR

William Ash

Private: 1st Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment: Regimental number 23725: 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal.

William was born in 1886, he was the son of Henry Ash and Hannah Ash and brother of Fred, Charles, George, Harriet and Alfred. Also living with the family in 1911 was a niece called Ada May. They lived in a cottage, now demolished, on East End which would have been where the shop is now.

Willie was killed in action on 3rd November 1916 at the Battle of Ancre Heights during the Battles of the Somme. He had been on active service in France for nine weeks when he was caught by a snipers bullet, death followed immediately. Prior to joining up he had been a gardener for Mr. W. A. Plimpton of Park House. (Father of Captain Robert Plimpton) Letters from his comrades stated that Private Ash was a good soldier, cheerful and keen in the discharge of his duty; his death was mourned by the whole platoon.

His commemorative gravestone in Walkington churchyard is inscribed:

Pte Willie Ash
1st East Yorkshire Reg.
Killed in action in France
Nov. 3rd 1916 aged 30 years

His mother, brothers and sister also commemorated his loss in the Roll Of Honour in the Beverley Guardian with the following verses;

In a far and distant graveyard
The trees their branches wave
Lies a loving son and brother
In a British soldiers grave.

Sleep dear son in a soldier's grave
Your life for your country you nobly gave
No one stood near you to say goodbye
But safe in God's keeping now you lie.

The Battle of the Somme and the Battle of Ancre Heights is described in detail in the war diaries of the East Yorkshire Regiment. During the Battle of Ancre, 13-18th November, 1916 Private John Cunningham 13th (s) Battalion East Yorkshires from Hull gained the Victoria Cross.

William Ash is buried in Cambrin Churchyard Extension, near Bethune, France.

Harold George Ashton

Trooper: South African Mounted Rifles. (S.A.L.H.)

The Ashton family worked at Walkington Hall during the time of the Ferguson-Fawsitts and following retirement from their service on the death of John Daniel Fawsitt, Harold's father and mother, Thomas and Beatrice lived at the White House, East End (opposite the village hall); until they both died in 1917. A daughter, Dora Scholefield lived with them and a son Louis was landlord of the Ferguson-Fawsitt Arms helped by his sisters Martha and Beatrice. Harold George Ashton who was born in 1881 had by this time left home, the 1901 census shows him boarding in Beverley with James Thomas as an apprentice wheelwright.

The Beverley Guardian of 29th August 1915 had an announcement about the death of Beatrice Ashton aged forty five. She had been licensee of the Ferguson Fawsitt Arms over the past seven years and was a life-long resident and respected member of the village. It details her poor health and says she succumbed to pneumonia. The newspaper also gives us news of her brother Harold who is listed on the war memorial as serving under the initials. (S.A.L.H.)

To find the report of Beatrice Ashton's funeral was a great clue for it reported that she had two brothers serving in the **South African Field Force**, (S.A.L.H.). My research now took me down a different track.

In August, 1914 Louis Botha and Jan Smuts took the Union of South Africa into war in support of Great Britain. Over 146,000 men served in South African units during the war fighting on three principal fronts. The first engagement was to capture German South-West Africa. They then took part in the major engagements during the Battle of the Somme. The entire Brigade attacked at Delville Wood; of 3,153 officers and men who mustered on 14th July, only 750 were left alive by 20th July.

There is a plaque at the Delville Wood memorial depicting the remnants of the South African Brigade coming out of the wood after being relieved. The Division was rebuilt with new drafts in the summer of 1916 in the Arras and Vimy area and took part in attacks in appalling weather and conditions during 1916. In 1917 the brigade took part in the Battle of Arras and in the third Battle of Ypres. Their most impressive feat took place in March, 1918 when the Germans attacked during Operation Michael, the South Africans fought on until only 100 men were left.

Harold George Ashton joined the South African Mounted Rifles in August 1915, and died in Johannesburg whilst awaiting discharge on 6 July 1918. He is buried in the Johannesburg (Brixton) cemetery.

Graves in Walkington churchyard show Ashtons coming from Long Riston in Holderness and chairs in Walkington church commemorate various members of the family including Harold.

George Edward Boynton

Able Seaman Royal Navy: Service number J/53120: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

George Boynton was born in 1898, he was the son of John and Eliza Boynton and brother of Eva. The 1911 census shows George as living with his parents and sister on West End and assisting on the farm. This is now the 'Old Barn' on West End. Eliza his mother was the cousin of Tom Bailey the village blacksmith and a photograph of them can be seen in 'Old Walkington' A Country Matters publication which was published in the 1970's, many 'old villagers' will have a copy.

His sister Eva took over from her father as organist at the chapel, many people will remember Eva in this role which she fulfilled well into the 1980's.

George joined the Royal Navy as soon as he was eighteen and served as an able seaman on H.M.S. Narbrough; he was just 20 years old when the vessel was sunk off the coast of the Orkneys on 12th January, 1918.

H.M.S. Boadicea, H.M.S. Opel and H.M.S. Narbrough were on dark night patrol off the Orkneys in bad weather with snow blizzards and a heavy swell. Because of the worsening weather the ships were ordered to make for port; at this stage the Opel and Narbrough became separated from the Boadicea and the Opel ran aground on rocks, breaking up almost immediately. The Narbrough came along side the Opel, but in turning she heeled right over and seemed to crack like a piece of firewood. She went down almost immediately. The Opel was lying in two pieces on her starboard side and the order was given to abandon ship. Walter Sissons, the only survivor, jumped into the sea and was washed up after swimming about 100 yards. He was found the following day and gave evidence to the board of enquiry into the loss of the vessels.

George Edward Boynton is named in the Naval Memorial Registers and listed on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial in Hampshire.

A plaque in Walkington Church is inscribed;

George Edward

Only son of John and Eliza Boynton

Of Walkington lost on HMS Narbrough

12/1/1918 aged 20

'O Hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea'.

Throughout her life his sister Eva placed a cross on the war memorial each Armistice Sunday.

John William Blades

Gunner: East Riding Battalion Royal Field Artillery: Service number 1813: 1914/15 Star. British War Medal, Victory Medal.

John was born in Walkington in 1881, he was the son of Thomas Storey Blades of Walkington and Sarah Elizabeth of Nafferton, he had an elder sister Mary Elizabeth who earned her living as a dressmaker, also living with the family in 1911 was Harold Legard, a tailor who had been born in Burton Agnes.

At the time of the census in 1911 John Blades was 27 years old and working as a farm labourer.

The Beverley Guardian of 29 May 1915 reports:

Local Man killed at the Front

John William Blades 1915

Royal Field Artillery: youngest son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Blades of Walkington.

The first intimation the parents received was a field postcard from the deceased that he was being sent down to the base, but this bore the bare announcement that he was wounded. In the meantime Mr. T. Brown received a letter from his son Gunner Frank Brown of the same battery (who had been riding on the next gun) stating that he saw his chum John Blades fall from his gun and believed broke his leg. A letter was next received from The District Territorial Force Record Office in York, stating Gunner Blades was suffering from a severe gunshot wound in the thigh and was in the general hospital at Rouen. This was dated May 16 and on Sunday last the sad intelligence that he had died on May 12 of wounds received in action was received by his parents to whom the utmost sympathy is extended by a wide range of friends. The deceased who was well known and highly esteemed prior to enlisting at Wenlock barracks Hull, had for some time acted as a special constable at Cherry Burton and had been at the front for about 5 weeks. He attained his 31st year in January last (1915).

The Royal Artillery was involved in the 2nd Battle of Ypres, trying to secure the Flemish town of Ypres in Western Belgium. Ypres was in British hands and the area was known as the Ypres Salient, it was infamous as the most vicious killing ground of the war. It marked the first time the Germans used poison gas.

The Battle of Frezenberg took place between 8-13th of May 1915 and it is probable that John Blades was killed in this attack as the Germans made repeated mass attacks to take the salient.

He is buried in St. Severs Cemetery, Rouen, France.

Mrs Blades death was announced in the Beverley Guardian just eight months after her son was killed, she lived at 'Holly Lodge' on East End, the chief mourners at the funeral were Mrs Barmby and Mrs Legard her daughters, the latter who also lived at Holly Lodge

Writing in her diary at the time, '**A Nurse at the Front**' **Sister Edith Appleton** says:

Sunday:

'Our men made an attack last night, and we heard the heavy firing that covered their advance – in fact it shook the houses. In three minutes they had taken a trench with 13 prisoners and two officers. The whole work of the night achieved a hill of importance blown up – arms and legs of men flung high and into our own trenches – and six lines of trenches taken, along with 2,000 prisoners. The Germans made a counterattack, and killed and wounded nearly 1,000 of our men, and we have had 600 through our hospital today, all badly wounded and fearfully collapsed. Some who have been out since August say it is quite the worst time they have had. We went on duty at 5.30am and stayed on 'til 9pm. It is a sad day in the theatre and a terribly tiring one, with many amputations of arms and legs, insides cut and packed in.'

By April 22nd, 2,508 men passed through the hospital in six days.

Albert William Collinson

Stoker 2nd class Royal Navy: Service number k/37221: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

The 1911 census shows Albert working as a Waggoner at Bishop Burton; the family had been brought up at Halfpenny gate cottage on the Risby estate and had lived in Walkington for most of the nineteenth century. He attended school in Little Weighton and received a prize at school which is still in the possession of his niece, Brenda Wilson. Albert was the son of Henry (Harry) Collinson and Charlotte Collinson, brother of Annie and Amos and he was married to Audrey who lived in Soham Fen Cambridgeshire. He had lived in Soham Fen for some time before he enlisted in the Navy. In 1916 he underwent training at Chatham until the New Year when he undertook duties on H.M.S. Vanguard. The full truth about the loss of H.M.S. Vanguard was not made public until long after the war, but it is regarded as Britain's worst sea disaster in home waters.

Report into the loss of H.M.S. Vanguard 9th July, 1917.

Just before midnight on Monday 9th July, 1917 the battleship H.M.S. Vanguard blew up, taking 800 of her crew with her.

It was an explosion in one of the two magazines which served the amid ship turrets. The cause of the explosion was not identified but cordite had over heated to such a level as to ignite.

A report at the time said:-

'H.M.S. Vanguard, Scapa Flow, North Scotland at 11.20pm on 9th July a great explosion occurred in the midst of the Grand Fleet, a terrible detonation took place, lighting the whole fleet as if it were daylight. There was a crack and one of the big boats went sky high with a crew of 900 men. All searchlights were switched on immediately but not a thing was seen.'

Albert Collinson had previously taken part in the battle of Jutland in May 1916. He left a widow and young daughter and is commemorated on the Soham Fen Memorial, Cambridgeshire and on the Chatham Memorial, Kent.

The WWI Naval Memorials are at Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth and are inscribed:-

'In honour of the Navy and the abiding memory of these ranks and ratings of this port who laid down their lives in defence of the Empire and have no known grave'.

John (Jack) Cross

Private: 2nd Battalion York and Lancashire Regiment: Service number 46146: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

John who was born in 1899 was the son of Robert Edward Cross who had been born in Middleton, and Emily Cross born in Lund, brother of Walter, Thomas Edward, Ada, Hilda and Harold. In 1911 they were living on East End next door to Mr. T. Oliver. And Jack was still at school.

He enlisted on 21st May 1917 at Beverley, and the photograph of his platoon shows a very youthful lad at the Rugeley Training Camp, on Cannock Chase.

The York and Lancs. Regiment raised 22 battalions during the Great War (57,000 men). Jack, as he was known, was killed during the German offensive and is buried in the Huts Cemetery in Belgium.

He is also commemorated on a memorial tablet in the Primitive Methodist Chapel together with Frank Hayton and Harry Ezard. This plaque was re-sited in the Jubilee chapel in 1962.

**The memorial reads:
Sacred to the memory of
The following men of this church
Who gave their lives for their Country
1914 – 1919**

**Frank Hayton
John W Cross
Harry Ezard**

1939 – 45

Bernard Richmond

Lest We Forget

Jack's brother, Walter also served in the Great War but survived.

Fred Dinsdale

Private: The Yorkshire Regiment (Green Howards): Service number 240604: British War Medal, Victory medal.

Fred was born in Walkington in 1896, the son of William Jackson Dinsdale and Mary Dinsdale who were both born in Walkington and lived in a cottage on East End, almost next door to other men who had lost their lives. (Cross, Oliver, Dinsdale).

Fred enlisted in Beverley and by the 25th March 1918, the day before Fred died, the 5th Battalion suffered furious attacks from the German advance and had to retreat under a hail of machine gun and artillery fire, it was in this mayhem that Fred and many others lost their lives.

Fred had been reported missing in March 1918, but his death was not recorded in the Beverley Guardian until 12 July, 1919, as the brother of Mrs. Appleton of Norton Street Beverley.

He is also commemorated on the Beverley War Memorial in Hengate, and on the East Riding Memorial in Beverley Minster.

Fred has no known grave and is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial to the missing in France.

Harry Newmarch Duggleby

Private: 8th Battalion East Yorkshire regiment: Service number 21691: 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Harry was born in Driffield and in 1911 he was living with his grandmother Emma Duggleby in Walkington; he was working at that time as a general labourer at the Whiting works.

He enlisted on 11th December, 1915 and died just 7 months later after being shot in the head during the Battle of Delville Wood on the Somme on 18th August, 1916.

He is buried in the Corbie Communal Cemetery near Amiens, France.

A grave in Walkington churchyard hints at other tragedies in the family, as it commemorates Emma's husband, John, dying in 1874 aged 37, four children who died in infancy and another son Walter who was 2nd engineer on S.S. Westbourne died at sea in 1890 aged 27. Emma was to outlive them all dying in 1933. We can speculate that Harry had come to live with his grandmother to keep her company.

The Battle of Delville Wood was one of the twelve battles that made up the Battles of the Somme; it began on 15th July 1916 and did not end until 3rd September 1916. It began as part of the Battle of Bazentine Ridge. Delville Wood was on the extreme flank of the attack on Bazentine Ridge and by July 14th the British had reached the southern end of the wood which for the next six weeks would be at the north end of the British line. Delville Wood was a 156 acre forest of oak and birch and dense hazel thickets. It was broken up by grassy gaps, but artillery bombardments filled these craters with fragments of trees. The northern end of the wood dipped down towards the German lines, making it easy for them to reinforce the woods. Attacks continued throughout July and by August the Germans had been slowly pushed back until August 30th when they made a counter attack, and it was not until 8th September that Delville Wood would be cleared.

The wood remained on the front line until the Battle of Flers-Courcette which saw the Germans pushed back by 2,000 yards.

Charles Percy Dunn

Private: 7th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment: Service number 21769: British War medal, Victory Medal.

Charles was born in Rowley and lived at Keepers Cottage, Risby Lane, opposite Halfpenny Gate Cottages, his family would have been neighbours with Albert Collinson.

His father, George Dunn was the gamekeeper to Stanley Wilson on the Risby Estate and he grew up there together with his mother, Margaret Elizabeth and brothers and sister. His grandparents were Mr. and Mrs. Wood from Skidby.

The 1911 census shows him living with his aunt, Emily Ann Thackeray at 99 Walkergate, Beverley, at that stage he was employed as a jobbing gardener.

Charles was killed in action in France on 4th May 1918 aged 28, dying of wounds, south east of Ypres during the German offensive.

Charles had been wounded earlier in the year and had just returned to the front after a spell of leave at home.

The 7th battalion of the East Yorkshire Regiment was formed at Beverley on 16th September, 1914 as part of (Kitchener's 2nd Army) K2 and came under orders of the 50th Brigade, 17th (Northern) Division. They landed in Boulogne in July 1915.

In 1918 when Charles died they were engaged in the 3rd Battles of the Somme.

He is buried in Engelebelmer Communal Cemetery extension, near Albert, France.

Harry Ezard

Private: 9th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers: Reg. number 59964: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Harry (William Henry) Ezard was the son of George and Jane (nee Gilbank). His mother was born in Walkington and father in Newbald: on the 1911 census he is aged 12 and living on Northgate. He was married to Mabel who was to be left a widow at a very young age for Harry died of wounds aged 19 on 22nd March 1918. He had been in France only a few months and before enlisting he had worked for M. T. S. Stephenson of Walkington House.

A memorial notice in the Beverley Guardian highlights the grief felt by his family:

In memory of a dear nephew Harry Ezard 22nd March 1918

Had he asked us, well we know

He would have cried, O spare the blow

Yes with streaming eyes, would have prayed

Lord we love him let him stay.

At this time, the Northumberland Fusiliers were involved in the German Offensive during the second battles of the Somme, the first day of which took place in thick fog with a ferocious bombardment from the Germans, thousands were killed and more captured. Harry Ezard was one of the unfortunate ones killed on the second day of the Battle of St Quentin. His body was lost and he is listed on the Arras Memorial to the Missing, France.

The Northumberland Fusiliers were known as the 'Fighting Fifth'; they were formed in Newcastle in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's 2nd Army.

Harry's death from wounds was reported in the Beverley Guardian, together with a photograph.

He is commemorated on the memorial plaque which now hangs in the Methodist Chapel on West End.

Ernest Arthur Farrow

Sapper: 224th Field Coy Royal Engineers: Service number 99314: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Ernest Farrow was born in 1893, he lived with his parents Edwin (born in Brantingham), mother Sarah and elder sister Rose as near neighbours of the Binningtons. In 1911, Ernest was an apprentice joiner working for Mr. George Blanchard at Lund. He enlisted into the Royal Engineers at Doncaster in 1914. His parents had already lost a son aged 16 in 1898 and were to lose their second son at the Battle of Cambrai. Just 5 weeks before he had been home on leave. He is commemorated in Walkington Churchyard together with his brother with the following inscription:

John Wilson Farrow son of Edwin and Sarah Farrow

25 January 1898 aged 16

Also Ernest Arthur Farrow RE

4th son of Edwin and Sarah died at Cambrai 4th December 1917 aged 24

'Who died the noblest death a man can die for

Fighting for God and right and liberty'

The Royal Engineers(R.E.'s) are called 'the Moles' and their motto 'Ubique' means everywhere, a very suitable motto when we learn that from October 1916 the RE's had been working underground constructing tunnels for the troops in preparation for the Battle of Arras, 1917. Beneath Arras it-self there is a vast network of caverns called coves, consisting of underground quarries and sewage tunnels. The engineers came up with a plan to add new tunnels to this network so the troops could arrive at the battlefield in secrecy and safety. The size of the excavations was immense. In one section alone 4 tunnels, companies of 500 men each worked round the clock in 18 hour shifts for 2 months.

Ernest Farrow would not have been employed in this tunnelling as this was done by the Royal Engineers with particular skills in this area (miners). However, his skills as a joiner could have been used in bridge building and in numerous jobs of the R. E. Companies.

The opening of the Battle of Cambrai on 20th November, 1917 used over one thousand guns and howitzers and over 400 tanks. Initial advances could not be sustained, Ernest Farrow as part of the 40th division was called up to the front on 22nd November, the roads were breaking up under the strain of thousands of men, wagons and lorries and it took them fifteen hours to travel nine miles. The ferocious battle continued as it began to snow. By 27th November orders were given to consolidate the position and three days later the German army struck back. Ernest Farrow died on 4th December, 1917.

He has no known grave and is recorded on the Cambrai Memorial to the Missing, Louveral, France. His parents were to live into old age, Edwin dying in 1937, aged 86 and Sarah in 1941, aged 92 and his sister Rose Farrow was to follow in her father's footsteps and keep the village shop until well into the 1950's.

John Williamson Gilbank

Private: 10th Battalion Sherwood Foresters: (Notts. & Derby Regiment), Service number 15036: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

John Gilbank was born in 1893, the son of Mathew Gilbank of Bielby, Howden and Mary Gilbank of Walkington; Mathew Gilbank worked for Timothy Oliver, father of Tim Oliver, Coldstream Guards, and on the 1911 census John Gilbank is aged 17 years and working as a Waggoner's help on a farm in Bawtry, Nottinghamshire.

He no doubt joined the Notts and Derbys from that farm and he was to die on 6th August 1916 in the Battle of the Somme.

The 10th battalion was formed in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Army (K2). The Notts and Derbys suffered 80% casualties and later were to play a magnificent part in breaking the Hindenburg line

He is buried in the Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval, Picardie, France.

Frank Hayton

Private: 12th Battalion Machine Gun Corp: Service Number 1899: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Frank Hayton was born in 1899, his father was Thomas Hayton, a farm labourer and mother Sarah Ann Hayton; he had two brothers Thomas and Harold and a sister Mirium. In 1911 he was still a scholar at school and would have well remembered his headmaster Mr Truscott's departure from the school in 1911. On leaving school he worked for Mr. Cook at Broadgate Farm as third lad. He enlisted when only sixteen, and had been in France five months before being claimed by his parents as underage, immediately on attaining his 18th birthday he re-enlisted.

The news of his death was conveyed in a letter to his parents from his lieutenant who paid tribute to his gallantry and devotion to duty and to the esteem in which he was held. He was killed instantly by a shot through the heart as the Germans attacked Arras on 27th March 1918.

The Hayton's were Chapel people and several members of the family are commemorated in the Jubilee Chapel in Walkington.

Frank is also commemorated in the chapel along with John Cross and Harry Ezard.

The Machine Gun Corp (M.G.C.) was formed during the war and disbanded in 1922 and it is probable that Frank Hayton trained at the Machine Gun Training Centre at Grantham. A total of 170,500 officers and men served in the M.G.C. of which 62,049 were killed, wounded or reported missing.

He is buried at the Pozieres Memorial, Picardie, France. The Memorial to the Machine Gun Corp is in Hyde Park in London.

John Robert Haith

Private: 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards: Service number 18499: Queen's South Africa Medal, British War medal, Victory Medal.

John Haith was born in Warter, in 1892 and was the son of William and Mary Haith (nee Oxtoby).

Before the war John was a regular soldier in the Coldstream Guards. He lied about his age and said he was 18 years old in 1901 when in fact he was only 16 years old. That year he was stationed in barracks at the guard's depot, Pirbright, Surrey. He served in the South African Campaign of 1901/2.

He left the army and began work at the East Riding Asylum, Walkington as a male attendant and at the outbreak of war he re-enlisted in the Coldstream Guards in Burnley. His wife Gertrude Mary (nee Brown) continued to live at Butt Lane in Beverley.

John was killed in action on 13th November, 1916 aged 31 years, during the battles of the Somme. He has no known grave and is remembered on The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing in France, on the East Riding Memorial in Beverley Minster and on the Beverley War Memorial in Hengate, Beverley.

The 13th November was the first day of the Battle of Ancre, here many men of the East Yorkshire Regiment also perished: The Hull Daily Mail each year after on the anniversary had a special in memoriam page for the hundreds of names who had given their all.

The Beverley Guardian published a photograph of John Robert on 2nd December 1916 when his death was reported. His name is recorded 'in Memoriam' in the Hull Daily Mail of 13th November, 1919, from his widow Gertie and his daughter and also in the Beverley Guardian with the inscription 'until the day breaks'.

The Coldstream Guards are the oldest regiment in the regular army; they were formed in 1650 and should have taken precedence over other guards regiments but the Grenadiers were placed first and the Coldstreamers second hence their regimental motto 'nulli secundus' (second to none).

At the outbreak of the First World War, Coldstreamers were amongst the first British regiments to arrive in France. In the following Battles they suffered heavy losses, in two cases losing all their officers. At the first battle of Ypres the 1st battalion was virtually annihilated. They fought in Mons, Loos, The Somme, Ginchy and in the 3rd Battle of Ypres.

Harry Lawson

Private: 12/13 Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers : Regimental number 66871: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Harry was born in Walkington; the 1911 census shows him living on East End with his father Roger, mother Ada, sister Kathleen and brother Francis. His father was the village joiner and wheelwright and in 1911 he was still at school and most probably sat next to Frank Hayton.

The Northumberland Fusiliers were often known as the 'fighting fifth', as the regiment was until 1881 the Fifth Foot, the Northumberland Fusiliers raised no fewer than fifty one battalions for service in the Great War. This makes them the second largest after the London Regiment.

A sequence of allied offensives began with attacks by American and French armies on 26th September 1918 from Rhiems to Meuse: two British army's at Cambrai on 27th September and British, Belgium and French armies in Flanders on 28th and 29th September. These attacks eventually succeeded and the allies crossed the Canal du Nord at Masnieres, breaking through the Hindenburg Line, forcing the Germans back until they requested an armistice on 4th October 1918.

Harry died in the Battle du Nord, as part of the battle of the Hindenburg Line on 27th September 1918, at the age of eighteen years, his body was buried or destroyed in the battle and he is listed on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial to the Missing, Arras, France.

Frank Tindall Marson

Lance Corporal: 8th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment: Service number 21115: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

His father Fred, mother Sarah Ann and seven brothers and sisters lived in Beverley. Following this he worked as a chauffeur for Mr. A. Plimpton (father of Captain Robert Plimpton), at Walkington Park.

Frank enlisted into the 8th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment, formed at Beverley as part of the 3rd new Army (K3). He celebrated his 21st birthday and a few days leave in Walkington before embarking for France; he was killed in action just two months later on 14th July 1916. The 8th battalion was holding the Line with Longueval to their front at this time and took part in heavy fighting that cost them casualties of 19 officers and 440 men.

He has no known grave and is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing on the Somme.

His brother William Tindall Marson, 5th Battalion King's Own Light Infantry was also killed in action on 27th March 1918 aged 19 years and is buried in Gommecourt British Cemetery No2, Hebuterne France.

Alan Mathison

Private: 1st Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment: Service number 22741: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Alan was born in Walkington in 1895 and the 1911 census shows him living with his family at Towers farm (this is now Northlands farm).

His father Frank, is listed as the farmer with his mother Hannah and five Mathison children; also on the farm were his grandmother, Margaret and a nurse, Jane Carter. By the time Alan signed up he was residing in Hessle: he was to die on 16 September, 1916 during the Battle of the Somme: probably at the Battle of Flers- Courcellette.

The 1st battalion of the East Yorkshire regiment was part of the regular army and a war diary from July, 1916 which has been transcribed from the original war diary of the battalion is held at the National Archives (document WO95/2161). It describes the battalion moving up to the assembly trenches during the Battle of Fleurs-Courlette.

‘The battalion getting into position at 3.30, a heavy and continuous shelling was maintained throughout the night, which by 6.30 became less intense and continued until 7.30am when the artillery barrage lifted off the German front line and the infantry moved forward to the assault’.

The 1st East Yorkshire battalion in supporting the 15th Durham Light Infantry and the 9th Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry advanced some 3,000 yards. They suffered considerably from machine gun fire and shrapnel, passing the 41 Division forward positions. A few troops got within 100 yards but the attack could not be pushed home.’

Alan is buried in the Guards Cemetery, Les Boeufs, Albert, France.

Tom Noddle

Private 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards: Service number 17867: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Tom was born in Burton Agnes and lived for a time in Harpham where his father was a shepherd. On the 1911 census he is working on John Hodgson’s farm at Burton Agnes as a fifth lad.

There was a strict hierarchy on farms with the Waggoner being the top man. On large farms he would be helped with the horses, and farm work, by other men. These were known as lads: 2nd lad, 3rd lad etc. with someone who was a jack of all trades called a ‘Tommy owt’. Farm workers were hired out at hiring fairs at Martinmas (November) once a year, they signed on for one year and were paid for one year. Unmarried lads lived in on the farm and were looked after by the farm foreman’s wife (the Hind’s wife). Some looked after staff well, others did not and these were known as ‘narra chined’ places!

Tom’s sister and two other brothers were working at the East Riding Asylum (later Broadgate Hospital) and that is why he is commemorated on the Walkington War Memorial. His brothers Lance corporal Noddle: Royal Army Medical Corp and Private Walter Noddle: Gordon

Highlanders, were both named in the Beverley Guardian as previously working at the asylum as attendants. There is also a letter published in the Guardian from Private Noddle, in it he thanked his friends at the E. R. Asylum for the gift of cigarettes, which had arrived just as he returned from the trenches in January 1917.

His brother in the Royal Army Medical Corp was the son in law of Mrs Sample of Sloe Lane, Beverley, who had eight members of her family serving the colours several of whom worked at Broadgate Hospital.

Tom died during the 2nd Battle of the Somme on 27th August, 1918. He is commemorated on the East Riding Memorial, Beverley Minster.

He is buried in Croisilles British Cemetery, Arras, France.

Timothy Oliver

Private 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards: Service Number 1882: 1914/15 Star: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Timothy Oliver, born in 1882 was the son of John Oliver and Fanny Oliver, he had two brother's Thomas and Samuel and three sisters, Emily, Lavinia and Annie. He was married to Jane Ann Claxton of Hull in 1904; Jane had been a packer on the 'starch - blue line' at Reckitt's before she was married to Timothy.

In 1901 he was listed at St. George's Barracks in London serving with the Coldstream Guards but by 1911 he was in the Durham Constabulary as a police constable. He would have been recalled at the beginning of the Great War and was part of the British Expeditionary Force sent to France at the outbreak of war in August 1914. He took part in the winter operations of 1914 and died of wounds received in the trenches on Christmas day, at the Battle of Givenchy. With him at this time was his cousin Sgt. T. Grant, (this was probably the son of Mr. T. Grant who is listed as gardener at Walkington Hall in the 1911 census.)

Timothy Oliver was the second man with Walkington connections to die in the War.

He is mentioned in De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour and on the East Riding Memorial in the Beverley Minster. His body was destroyed in the battle and he is recorded on the Le Touret Memorial to the Missing, Bethune, France.

He left a wife Jane and three children John Timothy aged 7 years, Gertrude aged 5 years and Annie aged 3 years.

There are numerous Oliver's buried in Walkington churchyard, Timothy's photograph appeared in the Beverley Guardian for January 1915, he is listed under the roll of honour where it states he is from one of the oldest families in the East Riding.

The Beverley Guardian confirmed the prevalence of the Oliver family in an article headed:

'Seventeen lads with the Colours'

'Mr Oliver Murphy of 'Cromwell Abbey' Walkington now holds the proud distinction (as well as the Walkington record) of having 17 near descendents in HM forces. The old gentleman himself served with distinction in the American War and his 5 sons have followed in their fathers military footsteps. One son, Private J. Oliver who belongs to and came with a Canadian regiment, recently made a flying visit to his father and mother. Another son Cromwell after nine years in America came over last week on a visit and was prevailed upon by his father to enrol under Lord Derby's scheme which he did and is presently at York. His son Richard Oliver, father of gunner Edwin Oliver R.F.A .who was born at Loos has also joined the Walkington Volunteers. In addition to the above Mr Oliver de Murphy has at present four sons in laws and eight grandsons serving their King and Country for which one Oliver (Timothy) has laid down his life.'

Note: the additional aristocratic name - ending de Murphy was added for postal purposes owing to there being so many branches of Oliver in Walkington.

Robert A Plimpton

Captain: Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders: Regimental number 3693: Military Cross and Bar, 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Robert Plimpton was born in Cottingham, he was the son of Alexander Plimpton and Margaret who came from Scotland and that was probably the reason Robert enlisted in a Scottish regiment. He farmed at Rectory Farm, Walkington and one of his brothers, Kelburn Archibald was a Major in the East Yorkshire Regiment, his other brother Alexander Ashley was employed in the family oil seed business in Cottingham but he also served in the war. There were also two Plimpton sisters, Eleanora and Winifred. The Plimpton family initially lived at Walkington Park (the big house behind the wall at the top of Kirk Lane) but later moved to East End.

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders raised 16 battalions and lost 16,900 men; Robert lost his life, when he was shot by a sniper, at Tower Hamlets during the Battle of Passchendaele, which was part of the Third Ypres offensive.

His body was never found and he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing, Passchendaele Ridge, Belgium, which contains the names of 35,000 men whose graves are unknown. He is also commemorated on the East Riding Memorial in Beverley Minster, and on the Beverley War Memorial, Hengate: there is also a memorial window in St. Mathew's Church Rugby.

He is commemorated on a plaque in Walkington Church:

**In loving memory of
Robert Albert Plimpton
Captain Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders
Attached to Royal Highlanders
M. C. and Bar
Of Rectory Farm Walkington
Killed in action at Tower Hamlets Flanders aged 30
27 Sept. 1917**

Also on the Belfry door is an inscription 'the church clock was purchased by friends of Robert A. Plimpton in his memory'.

The Beverley Guardian for December 2nd 1916 reports;

Capt 'Bob' Plimpton awarded the Military Cross

'Bob' Plimpton, Captain of the Beverley Cricket and Bowling Club has been awarded the Military Cross and promoted captain. This information was given at the annual meeting of the club, although no details were available on the exploit by which Captain Plimpton won the distinction, but those who knew him were not surprised, he was known as a good sport and a thorough sportsman always at his best when he had his back against the wall. A better captain could not be found in Yorkshire.

Later details of his gallantry were posted in the London and Edinburgh Gazettes.

'He was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry in action during a most valuable reconnaissance under heavy fire. Later he consolidated his position for over thirty hours and set a splendid example to his men. In 1917 he was awarded a Bar to the Military Cross for gallantry in action, leading his men in attack with great courage and determination. He captured his objective, an enemy machine gun and eighty prisoners. Later in conjunction with another officer he captured another one hundred and twenty prisoners'.

Walter Edward Purdon

Gunner: 166th Siege Artillery: Royal Garrison Artillery: Regimental number 290802: 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Walter was born in Howden in 1894, he was the son of Walter Purdon of Howden who was a Waggoner, and Ellen Davy of Walkington. Others in the family were Edith, Mirium, Maud, Herbert, Gladys and Charles.

In 1911 Walter was working as a Waggoner for William Danby at Duncan Wold Farm Cherry Burton.

He enlisted aged 24 on 19th December 1914 into the Hull Heavy Battery.

The Beverley Guardian reports in the autumn of 1915 that 'Driver Purdon, Hull Heavy Battery stationed at Hedon sustained a nasty accident through being kicked by a horse. After three weeks in hospital he had been allowed seven days sick leave which he is spending with his parents. Driver Purdon is we are glad to learn, going on well'.

He died on 9th April, 1918 in Flanders during the German Offensive.

The Royal Garrison Artillery (R.G.A.) developed from the fortress based artillery located on British coasts from 1914 when the army possessed very little heavy artillery; it grew into a very large component of the British Forces. It was armed with heavy calibre guns and howitzers that

were positioned some way behind the front line and had immense destructive power. From 1914 the R.G.A. were involved in many battles. Men like Walter Purdon, with the experience of managing horses would have been much sort after in regiments using these big beasts to haul heavy guns into place.

He is buried in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery Arras, France.

George Robert Ridsdale

Gunner: Royal Field Artillery: Regimental number 92371: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Robert was born in 1897, in Walkington, the son of Robert R. and Mary Ridsdale, Market Gardeners of Northgate Walkington; he had a younger brother John Ridsdale and two older sisters, Doris who married George Davy, and Mary.

In 1911 Robert was listed aged 14 years as a farmhand.

He died just after the finish of the war after being severely affected by gas. George died at home which was Westfield House, this house was just behind where Fern Cottage is now, at the far western edge of the village and he is buried in Walkington Churchyard in a grave with the insignia of the Royal Field Artillery which is inscribed:

92371 Gunner G. R. R. Ridsdale

R F Artillery

5th December 1919 aged 23

Worthy of remembrance

The Royal Field Artillery was the most numerous arm of the artillery; the horse drawn Royal Field Artillery was responsible for the medium calibre guns and howitzers, deployed close to the front line and was reasonably mobile. Farm lads would be very useful in this capacity as they understood how to use horses.

There are many Ridsdales' buried in the churchyard and relatives living in the East Riding.

The use of air borne poisonous chemicals was responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths and injury, victims lived truncated disabled lives in the post war era and this contributed to the banning of chemical weapons in 1925.

Daniel Reynolds

Rifleman: 2nd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps: Service number 6916 and 6716: 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Daniel Reynolds was a regular soldier enlisting in 1905 at the age of 19; before that time he had been working with his brothers Harry and Vic at the Whiting works at the top of the Westwood. The family lived in Flemingate Beverley. In 1911, Daniel and his brother Harry were stationed in Hull, another brother Vic served in the Royal Army Medical Corp.

The book published following the closure of Broadgate Hospital, 'Across the Westwood, the life and times of Broadgate Hospital', compiled by Robert Curry in 1991, lists a Mr. D. Reynolds, attendant, missing presumed killed. It is probable that this is the Daniel Reynolds listed on the Walkington War Memorial and the reason why he is commemorated at Walkington.

The King's Royal Rifle Corp would have landed at Le Harve on 13th August, 1914 as part of the British Expeditionary Force. The allies sought to halt the German advancement resulting in the lengthy, and costly siege warfare as the entrenched lines proved impossible to crack. The first phase of the war on the western front was just beginning.

Daniel Reynolds died on 2nd November, 1914 aged 27years, in the first battle of Ypres, making him the first soldier on the Walkington Memorial to die. His two brothers, Vic and Harry also died they are commemorated on the War Memorial on Hengate, in Beverley.

Pte Victor Reynolds no 6 Field Ambulance B. E. F. was awarded the Military Medal for conspicuous bravery under heavy shell fire.

Daniel Reynolds is buried in the Larch Wood (Railway Cutting) Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

Thomas William Taylor

Private: 1st battalion East Yorkshire Regiment: Regimental number 21876: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Thomas was born in Walkington in 1888, he was the only son of Robert and Rachel Taylor; Robert was an agricultural labourer whose family had lived in the village for most of the nineteenth century. He was a keen member of the Walkington reading room together with James Blades and Harry Duggleby.

On 15th September 1916 at the village of Flers, Haig renewed the Somme offensive, using tanks for the first time. However, lightly armed, small in number and often subject to mechanical failure they made little impact. The Allies had advanced 5 miles in 5 months, the British suffering 420,000 casualties, the French 195,000 and the Germans 450,000.

Thomas was to die on 25th September, 1916 during the Battle of Morval, as part of the Somme offensive. The accounts given by the East Yorkshire Regiments website gives a vivid description of what life was like for Thomas Taylor. 'Having broken through the prepared lines of German defence, the British now faced a new set of challenges as it approached the slopes of the Transloy Ridges. Fighting was, as before, severe but gradually the British chipped away and pushed forward.

The weather began to turn autumnal, bringing rain, making the battle field increasingly difficult and stretching men to limits beyond physical endurance.' Roll call revealed the appalling losses suffered throughout the day, only 5 officers and 118 other ranks were present.

A plaque in Walkington Church says:

Thomas Taylor

Only child of Robert and Rachel Taylor

Of Walkington.

Killed in the Battle of the Somme September 25 1916 aged 28

'Christ took the light from our eyes'

The grave of his parents Robert and Rachel Taylor in Walkington churchyard shows that they died within 24 hours of each other in 1933. No doubt after sustaining each other in their grief for 16 years. Also commemorated on the gravestone is Thomas their only child.

He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Picardie, France.

Walter Thorley

Private: 4th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment; Regimental no 2082 and 14th Leicestershire Regiment: Regimental No 208475: 1915 Star: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

Walter's photograph is in the Green's Almanac and listed in the Roll of Honour as being wounded on 22th January, 1916. He was the nephew of Mrs. H. Finch of Beaver Road Beverley.

On his return after being wounded he would have been allocated another regiment: the Leicestershire. Walter received the Silver Badge: known as the 'wound badge' as it was given to service men who had been wounded and alerted civilians to the fact that a man was an ex service man, many men not in uniform suffered verbal abuse at the hands of women, wearing a wound badge indicated that they had 'done their bit.'

Unfortunately, I have not been able to trace Walter Thorley from the time of him being wounded. Maybe someone will be able to give us more details once this booklet has been distributed.

(Green's Almanac is available in the Treasure House, Beverley).

Harold (Henry) Wadsworth

Royal Army Medical Corp: (R. A. M. C.).

Harry was born in 1887 at Holme on the Wolds; on the 1891 census he is aged 5 years and living at Holme on the Wolds with his father Titus and mother Emma Wadsworth, also at home are his brothers and sisters Jane aged 22, Fred aged 12, Charles aged 10, Annie aged 9, Robert aged 7, Henry aged 5 and Thomas aged 2 years.

Interestingly, in 1891 the Wadsworths' lived almost next door to my Grandfather Teal's family who were the blacksmiths at Holme on the Wolds (the Teal family lost two sons Harry and Ernest in the war and my grandfather, George Fredrick their cousin was severely wounded.)

In 1901 Henry Wadsworth is the 2nd cattleman, on the Grange Farm, Lockington, but by 1911 he has changed jobs to be a male attendant at the East Riding Asylum, Walkington. The minutes of the visiting committee of the East Riding Asylum for 27th July, 1917 record that H. Wadsworth attendant had joined the army and left the service, later we see that he has joined the R.A.M.C.

Harry's health was not good and it is probable that he was not sent abroad for he died in 1918, aged 33 years from pulmonary tuberculosis. He had married Florence Garner in October, 1917; Florence who was born in Driffild had also been employed at The East Riding asylum, as a dining hall maid.

He is commemorated in the East Riding Memorial Chapel in the Beverley Minster and his death was announced in the Beverley Guardian in Memoriam column. 'In loving memory of our dear brother Harry Wadsworth late of Dalton Holme who died on 15th March 1918. Christ will link the broken chain, closer when we meet again, from his loving brothers Fred and Tom.'

(The Royal Army Medical Corp operated the army's medical units and provided medical detachments for the units of infantry artillery and other arms. A letter in the Beverley Guardian in July, 1915 from Private G. Preston of Beverley who was stationed at No 6 General Base at Rouen writing to a friend says, 'All the Beverley lads here, about a dozen are fit. We think longingly of Beverley especially when chatting together at night'.)

Pte: George Preston, was killed on 21/9/1917 and is recorded on the Beverley War Memorial, Hengate.

Three more members of staff of the East Riding Asylum also perished and are commemorated on the Beverley Memorial in Hengate.

James Wilfred Robson: 11th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment.

James lived in Wednesday Market Place Beverley and enlisted aged 21 in 1915. At the time he was employed as an assistant clerk at the East Riding Asylum, he was killed in France on 21st July, 1916.

Frank Brewer: 1st Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment.

Frank Brewer was born in Beverley and was employed at the hospital as a bricklayer's assistant. He was killed in action in France on 9th April, 1917.

Other members of his family also worked at the asylum including Mary Megson his sister-in-law and Mirium his sister.

Henry Freebury : Henry was a cabinet maker at the hospital.

(Further information on these men can be found in 'Known unto God' Beverley and the Great War, B. S. Barnes. To be published 2014.)

The people of Walkington assembled round the new War memorial to honour the dead in 1919 and the following poem written by Mrs. M. Dawe wife of the Rector reflected the village grief.

Le Jour Des Morts

(The Day of the Dead)

November and the autumn winds are blowing

All souls day comes once more,

The day – of that great host forever blowing,

In the door.

Some we have lost went through with smiles of gladness

Triumphant on the way

And others clung to this poor life of sadness

and only asked to stay.

And many passed from hence to life immortal

Unconscious of the call, falling in noble fight, faced the portal

That opens wide for all.

But glad – reluctant – conscious or unknowing

We could not stay their feet

No more we meet, when autumn winds are blowing,

In home, or field or street.

Gone from our midst, are they

Thru grey November
But yet forever dear,
Surely they know today that we remember,
They seem so strangely near

Reflections.

Malcolm Brown in his 'Book of the Somme' published in 1996 gives voice to the reminiscences of a soldier writing in 1920. In the postscript to his account of the war the soldier writes of 'Now knowing what hunger, thirst, dirt, death, and fear really mean ' He records that, 'Those who have never experienced it will find it difficult to realize anything more fearful. Those at home would never realize the work a soldier was asked to do and those who talk of 'The Next War' are the people who have never suffered'.

(Hence, my grand-father's tears when my father went off to war in 1939).

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