

Follow Newark's trauma in The Great War as it happened 100 years ago this week

Edited by Trevor Frecknall, author of *Newark in The Great War*

Great War Bulletin

No. 83...Newark...Monday 28 February 1916

Look up! Danger rises



The danger of air attack is so high that Newark Council placed a klaxon signal on the Town Hall, ready to give warnings of imminent raids.

DEATH of Mayor's nephew

THE Mayor of Newark, Alderman William Knight, discovered on Tuesday that one of his nephews has been killed at Ypres – and another nephew witnessed the tragedy 10 days ago.

Private James Walter Hammond, eldest son of the late Mr Edmund Irving Hammond and Mrs Louisa Hammond of Trent Bridge House, Newark, joined the King's Shropshire Light Infantry with his brother Frederick when War broke out.

The two boys were together as they moved up the trenches to reinforce the Front Line during a 36-hour bombardment.

As they crept along, a shell burst in the communication trench, killing James before Frederick's eyes.

The Battalion chaplain compassionately found the time to write a detailed explanation to Mrs Hammond:

"We had a great attack upon us on Saturday and Sunday last. It was successfully repelled and the Shropshire lads acted magnificently..."

"Many gave their lives to prevent a German advance, many were wounded.

"All Sunday we were at work carrying them out and attending to them. Among those who had given everything, even life itself, was your lad.

"His brother Fred was also with him and remained amid the dropping shells for hours, and then the dear body was quietly laid to rest in the trenches he had helped to save. Be brave and comforted about him..."

Private 12794 J W Hammond is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) memorial.

HORSEMAN JOHN MacRAE IS NOW FLYING HIGH

LIEUTENANT JOHN NIGEL MacRAE, second son of maltster Stuart MacRae of Handley House, 7 Northgate, Newark, has earned his pilot's certificate in the Royal Flying Corps. He held a commission with the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry on the outbreak of War, but transferred to the 11th Black Watch and then to the Royal Flying Corps.

GLORY of RE and pianist

TWO local heroes have been honoured in the past week for their bravery in Great War action.

The President of the French Republic has bestowed the decoration Médaille Militaire on Lance Corporal 45763 James Richard Coupe of the Royal Engineers' Newark Training Centre "in recognition of his distinguished service". Censorship ensures that we cannot discover what young Coupe did – but it must have been something special.



For the Médaille Militaire is roughly the French counterpart of the Distinguished Conduct Medal, which is surpassed only by the Victoria Cross in British bravery honours.

It is awarded only to general officers in charge of armies, admirals in charge of fleets, or non-commissioned officers who distinguished themselves in war.

The medal was instituted on 22 January 1852 during the reign of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, President of the 2nd Republic.

The announcement about the local recipient appeared on page 2072 of the *London Gazette* dated 24 February 1916:

*45763 Lance-Corporal
James Richard Coupe,*

*Newark Training Centre, Royal Engineers
(formerly 86th Field Company).*

In addition, Lieutenant Norman Wilks, a distinguished pianist, has been awarded the Military Cross for special service at the Front, working as an interpreter with the East Kent Regiment.

He is the son of Mrs G W Hume and the stepson of Mr Hume of the Old Rectory, Southwell.

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TRIBUNAL GETTING TOUGHER

When the Newark Tribunal met tonight, military representative Hubert Downes Cherry-Downes asked them to desist from granting absolute exemptions, but to make them conditional.

This would enable men who were excused from military service to be brought back before Tribunals if their circumstances changed.

Despite this virtual order, the Newark Board of Guardians clerk A J Franks appealed successfully to keep his assistant, Harry Garfield Pearson, 27, who happened to be the son of the town's marriage registrar...

Alfred Ernest Stroud, 27, a railway wagon loader, was exempted after pleading that he has to wait on his mum Elizabeth, 53, hand and foot at home at 13 Farndon Row off Lombard Street...

And baker and confectioner John Thomas Cook of 53 Baldertongate made a successful appeal for his bread-maker, J C Chippenham, but failed with an appeal on behalf of his 18-year-old van driver, Thomas Henry Doncaster of 9 Wood Street, after Cherry-Downes observed: "So long as the bread is made, the people must fetch it."

Conditional exemptions went to J R Rick and S F Whaley of James Hole and Company's brewery; Larken and Company's cashier for the last 20 years, Jesse Jackson, 40, of Ivy House, Kelham Road, because two partners and three clerks from the law firm are already serving; C H Ward, cashier and confidential clerk at Gilstrap and Company's maltsters; dentist H W Mace and his mechanic, W E Brook, who are looking after large numbers of the military being trained in and around the town.

Applications failed by boot shop manager Frank Gustave Elliott, 36, though his employers S Hilton and Son swore that he is indispensable and already has a bullet wound in the chest (presumably from a prior stint in the Army); and drayman William H Eastgate, 30, who is the sole supporter of his widowed mum Margaret, 74, at 85 Hatton Gardens. Nobody knows who will look after her now.

Postponements until 1 May were granted to William Edward Doubleday, 35, a draper living at 8 Winchelsea Avenue with a middle-aged brother and sister who was given a private hearing; Magnus School science teacher G B Nickel after the headmaster, the Reverend Gorse, said four teachers have already enlisted and intimated that the school could not lose any more; sweet manufacturer Charles Kirk, 23, of 15

Appletongate, who has already had a brother killed in action – he was told to train another brother to run his business and to look after their widowed mother, Sophie, 46, and three remaining siblings.

Postponements until 1 June were granted to several small businessmen including a son of grocer Thomas Seymour, a father-of-eight, of 50 Baldertongate on the grounds that two other sons plus an assistant have already joined-up.

The case of miller Harry Henderson, 25, of 20 Albion Street, was adjourned while the Tribunal checked whether his is a reserved occupation. After all, even hard-line Cherry-Downes had conceded that bread had to be made.

Most men accepted their fates with silent dignity. But on hearing that he would not be exempted in order to look after his widowed mother, 31-year-old labourer Ernest Catley of 46 Northgate complained bitterly:

"You release conscientious objectors, but sons of widows you don't. If you think you are gentlemen, I don't."

The harshest interrogation of the evening was given to Post Office sorter and telegraphist Edward Walker, a Christadelphian since 1911 who said that his conscientious objection to fighting was based on his Christianity.

The Mayor, a devout Methodist, suggested the Bible teaches men are "to be subject to the powers that be, kings and rulers in authority."

Walker agreed, but "only so far as that does not come against the law of Christ ... if the law of man is against the law of Christ, I could not obey it."

Military representative Cherry-Downes suggested the Christadelphians "have always been the shirker's refuge" and asked: "Suppose your mother or sister were being treated in the same way as the Huns treated the women of Belgium; would you do nothing?"

Walker: "I should obey my principles. I should rely on the help my Father has promised to all who obey Him. I should have stronger power than I could get in any other way."

His appeal was disallowed, he was given only three days in which to appeal but was refused a written statement of reasons why he had lost this case.

Prisoners of War from Newark are set to benefit from a generous decision by Mansfield's Member of Parliament Sir Arthur Markham to donate £3,000 as relief for Sherwood Foresters captive in Germany. He invited relatives of prisoners to send his secretary details of where their men are incarcerated.

Blaze at Northgate House

NORTHGATE HOUSE, the large property owned by the Mayor of Newark and occupied by the Royal Engineers, suffered a fire scare on Thursday morning. Its saddle room was wrecked by a blaze that began when an officer's servant was pouring out petrol. Less than 10 minutes after the alarm is raised, Captain Harrison and two of his firemen arrived with a hose and the conflagration was contained.

ON HOME FRONT

Clipstone show

MOTOR dealer John Mather of Newark organised artists for a concert for the new soldiers' training centre at Clipstone Camp.

The evening proves so popular that he agrees to arrange weekly shows for the thousands of men training in Sherwood Forest.

RE's dance

DESPITE dreadfully inclement weather, the Royal Engineers organised another highly successful dance on Friday night in Newark Town Hall.

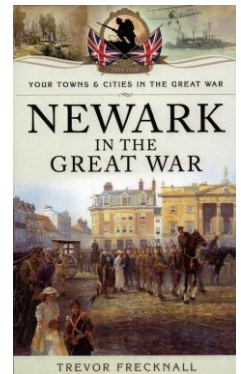
'Deserters' in court

PRIVATEs Herbert Bowskill and Bert Hopewell of the 3rd line of the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters were remanded to await a military escort after appearing at Newark Borough Police Court on Thursday charged with being absent without leave.

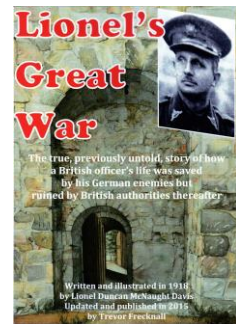
The magistrates were told that Police Constable Marshall apprehended them in Mount Lane on Wednesday.

The fact that they are in the *third* line of the local Territorials demonstrates the Army's ever-increasing need for more man-power.

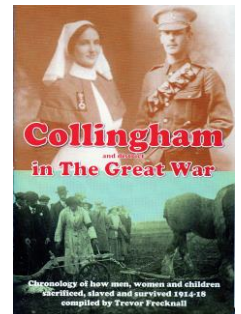
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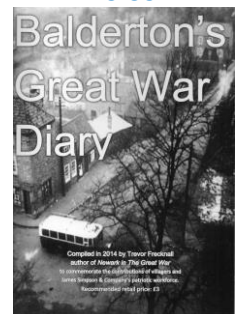
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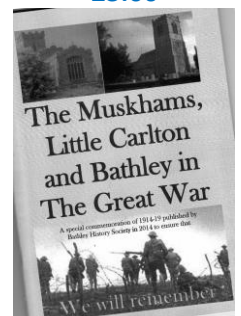
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