

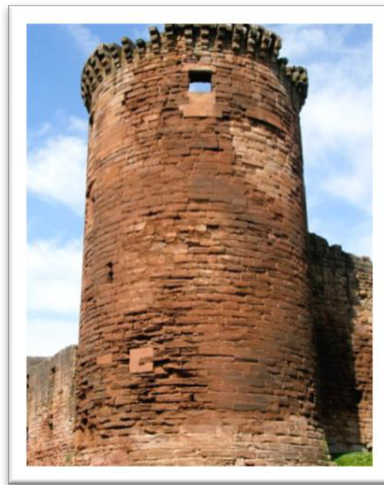
# Lest we Forget



*The story of the men from Bothwell  
who died in the First World War*

# Lest we Forget

The Story of the men from Bothwell  
who died in the First World War.



Researched and published by the  
Bothwell Historical Society.

## **Disclaimer**

While the information in this book has been given in good faith and every effort has been made by Bothwell Historical Society to ensure its accuracy, the Society assumes no liability or responsibility for any errors or omissions herein.

Throughout the book the assumption has been made that if a man is known to have died on a specific date and his battalion was in battle or incursion on that date then he died in that same battle or incursion.

In cases where records show a man's regiment and battalion at the time of his death, and where background information is given herein about that battalion, there is no certainty that the man served all his time with that battalion or that, in the period prior to his death, he fought in the battalion battles described.

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## **Points of Explanation**

1. Where 'Land' is used in an address as in 'Rait's Land, Main Street, Bothwell' or 'Scott's Land, Green Street, Bothwell' it means a tenemental building owned by that named person.
2. Where 'c' is used before a date, as in c1895, it means circa or about 1895.
3. The number below the Soldier's name is his regimental number. Officers do not have numbers.
4. Servicemen who died in WW1 are recorded on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission web site and this gives their date of death, regiment and battalion. If a man's battalion was involved in a battle, raid or other action on the day the man died, then for the purposes of this book, it is assumed he died in that action. The death in action of an officer was normally recorded in the battalion's war diary. Other ranks that died were not normally individually named in the war diary.
5. Where available, service records maintained by the National Archives have been used to help write the stories of the men. Unfortunately about 60% of the service records of the men who fought in WW1 were destroyed in September 1940, when a German bombing raid struck the War Office repository in London. This has limited the information available to build up a picture of some of the men.
6. The village of Bothwellhaugh in present day common usage is spelled 'Bothwellhaugh' and this spelling has been used in this book. However on the WW1 Memorial plaque from the church it is spelled Bothwell Haugh. This spelling has been used in reference to the plaque.

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## Foreword

The members of the Historical Society deserve many thanks and warm congratulations from all citizens of Bothwell for their meticulous compilation of the Roll of Honour of those who served and died in the Great War.

It is indeed a wonderful achievement that in the centenary year of that terrible conflict the town now has a definitive record of all the young men who made the ultimate sacrifice in defence of their homeland both in the killing fields of Belgium and France and in the service of the Royal Navy and merchant marine across the seas of the world.

I was especially touched to read the names of the dead from Bothwellhaugh, the mining village that I remember from my youth, but whose buildings were levelled and quite literally disappeared from the face of the earth below Strathclyde Park after work at the pit there stopped some years ago. The names of the fallen from Bothwellhaugh are now recorded for posterity even if the place they lived has gone.

Scotland made a powerful contribution to the British effort during the First World War. The shipyards and engineering shops of Clydeside and its hinterland became an enormous arsenal for the mass production of destroyers, battleships, merchantmen, artillery pieces, shells and all the other paraphernalia of global conflict. But by far the greatest contribution was the human sacrifice made at the battle front, part of which is now recorded in detail for one small town in Lanarkshire in the pages that follow.

It is estimated that Scotland lost around 100,000 dead between 1914 and 1918 from a population of little more than four million, a higher casualty rate, so some scholars suggest, than any other combatant nation except the Serbs and the Turks who mainly lost through disease.

The Scottish regiments had won a formidable reputation for their courage and élan under fire. As a result they were used unrelentingly as crack shock troops in the epic battles of the Great War at the Somme, Ypres, Passchendaele and elsewhere. Great losses among both rank and file and the officer cadres were inevitable.

It is for this reason that even the smallest hamlet in Scotland today has its war memorial to the dead of 1914 to 1918. Bothwell's own Roll of Honour is now complete.

We will remember them.

**Sir Tom Devine O.B.E.**

**Honorary President of Bothwell Historical Society**

## Introduction

The hundredth anniversary in 2014 of the beginning of the Great War has generated a great deal of interest worldwide. It was felt that Bothwell Historical Society should recognise this significant local and national anniversary. Bill Gow suggested that it would be appropriate to find out as much as we could about the men who died in that war and whose names are recorded on the village's war memorial. The remit was later extended to include information recorded on memorials in Bothwell Parish Church and on men from Bothwellhaugh who were killed in the war. A committee was formed under the able and enthusiastic leadership of Bill Gow comprising Ken Chisholm, Eric Denton, George Maxwell, Ian Beckett, John Hart, Ian Crawford, Jack Gallacher, Andy Nisbet, Keith Brown, Ian McKellar, Brian Sharpe and Jean Hardman.

The committee would like to acknowledge the support of the following organisations and individuals for their contribution to the project:-

Mrs Liz Denton for her advice on the publication and for assisting with the design of the book covers.

Mrs Sheila Beckett for proof reading.

The Regimental Museums of the Highland Light Infantry, Black Watch, Loyal North Lancashire and the Gordon Highlanders.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission for photographs of the war cemeteries.

Barrie Duncan and Aileen Anderson of the Museum Service and Jane Pollok of Bothwell Library, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture.

Archive Services of Glasgow University for information on Thomas Rutherford.

Charlie Howie, Strathclyde Country Park for photographs of Bothwellhaugh.

Joe O'Raw and Lindsay Freeland, WW1 researchers from Wishaw and Hamilton.

Research Sources: Commonwealth War Graves Commission; Registrar General for Scotland for genealogy and census information; Ancestry.com for military records.

Hamilton Advertiser and Glasgow Evening Times for obituaries.

Finally I would like to thank the following descendants of Bothwell men who died in the Great War for their help and information: Jean Sneddon, niece of Corporal Peter and Private Thomas Sneddon; Mary McWhinney, niece of Lieutenant John Mitchell; Bill Todd, nephew of Private Robert Todd; Thomas Meek and Helen McLelland, grandson and granddaughter of Private Thomas Meek; Noreen, Ronald and Euan Livingston great niece and great nephews of Lance Corporal Duncan McGregor; David Kelly great grandson of Corporal Peter Stewart; Margaret Shanks, great niece of Private William McCart; and lastly Alex Gray and Willie Mair, great great nephews of Lance Corporal John Mair.

**Jack Gallacher**

**Chairman, Bothwell Historical Society**



*War Memorial*

*Main Street*

*Bothwell*

IN SACRED AND GRATEFUL MEMORY  
OF THE MEN OF BOTHWELL VILLAGE  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE  
1914 GREAT WAR 1918

LT	JOHN BOYD	CAMERONIANS	PTE	JOSHUA REID	GORDON HRS.
SGT	FRANK CARSON	"	"	WILLIAM STEEL	" "
PTE	JAMES COATS	"	"	EDWARD DOYLE	A. & S. H.
"	ROBERT GRAHAM	"	"	ALASTAIR DUNCAN	"
"	JOHN HAMILTON	"	"	ROBERT HOTSON	"
"	JOHN HENDERSON	"	"	WILLIAM BAIRD	ROYAL SCOTS
"	JAS H. HERBERTSON	"	"	COLIN CAMPBELL	" "
SGT	SAM KNOX	"	L/C	ROBERT MAXWELL	" "
CPT	ALLAN A. LAURIE	"	PTE	DAVID NEWTON	" "
PTE	GEORGE MASTERTON	"	"	HUGH O'NEIL	" "
CPL	BEN MCKINNON	"	"	JAMES G. SIMPSON	" "
SGT	ALEXANDER RUSSELL	"	SGT	WILLIAM WILSON	" "
PTE	ALEXANDER RUSSELL	"	"	DAVID ROBERTSON	R. S. F.
"	DAVID SIM	"	PTE	JAMES McCONNACHIE	K. O. S. B.
"	ROBERT TODD	"	"	THOMAS SNEDDON	"
SGT	JAMES BUCHANAN DCM	H.L.I.	"	GEORGE GORDON	R. IN. FUS.
PTE	WILLIAM DAY	"	LT	J. HAMILTON ROBERTSON	HANTS.
"	ALEXANDER DOBBIN	"	CPT	RAMSAY STUART DSO	L. N. LANC.
LT	ALEXANDER GRANT	"	"	T. PATERSON PURDIE	WELSH REGT.
"	W. GORDON GRANT	"	LT	WILLIAM BOYD MC	R. F. A.
PTE	SAMUEL JOHNSTON	"	PTE	HUGH McGHEE	"
L/C	JOHN MAIR	"	"	CHARLES H. BROWN	R. G. A.
PTE	THOMAS McCUBBIN	"	"	ROBERT B. HEWITT	"
L/C	DUNCAN McGREGOR	"	"	THOMAS HAND	R. E.
PTE	GEORGE McNAB	"	"	JOHN HOUSTON	"
"	HUGH SNEDDON	"	LT	JOHN B. McNAB	"
"	JAMES SNEDDON	"	PTE	JAMES CRAWFORD	M. G. C.
CPL	PETER STEWART	"	"	ALEXANDER DOBSON	"
PTE	JAMES WHITESIDE	"	"	JAMES ROSS	"
"	SIMON GRAHAM	SEAFORTH HRS.	CPL	PETER SNEDDON	"
"	ROBERT McLEAN	"	A.B.	THOMAS REILLY	ROYAL NAVY
"	JOHN McLENNAN	"	PTE	D. B. ROBERTSON	ROYAL MARINES
"	DAVID SUTHERLAND	"	CWO	JAS. GIBSON	MERCHANT SERVICE
"	THOS. McCONNELL	GORDON HRS.	LT	JOHN MITCHELL	R. A. F.
"	ROBERT MORRISON	"	PTE	THOS. BURNS	CAN. EXP. FORCE
				SGT S.NORMAN SPENCE	AUS. EXP. FORCE

"AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN  
AND IN THE MORNING  
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"



*Bothwell Kirk War Memorial*

*The Memorial was prepared by Messrs Wylie and Lochhead at a cost of £80 and was unveiled on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 1920*

PRO ARIS ET FOCIS  
BOTHWELL, KIRK ROLL OF HONOUR 1914-1918

Major	D Nelson White	RFA	Cpl	R. McAllister	RE	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>W. Keir</b>	<b>RAMC</b>
Capt	J.B. Cassells	RA	Cpl	A. McKinnon	HLI	Pte	J. King MM	RS
<b>*Capt</b>	<b>A.J. Laurie</b>	<b>SR</b>	Cpl	J.P. McEwan	Tank Corps	Pte	J.E. Langlands	HLI
Capt	A. Randell DFC	RAF	Cpl	T. Pate	SR	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>A. Marshall</b>	<b>GH</b>
Capt	R. Renwick MC	RLR	Cpl	H.D. Patterson	RE	Gunner	J. Marshall	RGA
Capt	K.M. Rodger	RAF	Cpl	A.M. Rodger	SA Horse	Pte	W. Meikle	SR
Capt	M.M. Rodger	Ramc	Cpl	H. Seel	A & SH	Pte	W. Miller	RAMC
Capt	J.J. Spence	Middlesex	L/cpl	J. Argo	SR	Pte	T. Morrison	S Horse
<b>*Capt</b>	<b>H.E.J Stewart</b>	<b>HLI</b>	L/cpl	J.Coats	SR	Pte	W. Morrow	RSF
Capt	J. Walker MC	RAMC	L/cpl	A.B. Gardner	RE	Pte	A. Morton	Black Watch
Capt	D. Wilson	MerMarine	L/cpl	W. Maxwell	SR	Pte	J. Morton	RFA
<b>*Lieut</b>	<b>W.C. Grant</b>	<b>HLI</b>	Gdsman	WF Rolland MM	SG	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>J. McConnachie</b>	<b>KOSB</b>
<b>*Lieut</b>	<b>A. Grant</b>	<b>HLI</b>	<b>*AB</b>	<b>T. Reilly</b>	<b>RND</b>	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>T. McCubbin</b>	<b>HL</b>
Lieut	W.W. Kerr	RGA	Seaman	J. Rait	RN	Pte	J. McFarlane	ASC
Lieut	V. Laurie	SR	Sapper	G. Currie	RE	Pte	S. McGarrity	HLI
Lieut	R. Mathie	HLI	1 <sup>st</sup> AC	H. Watson	RAF	Pte	C. McGregor	R. Marines
Lieut	J.A.C. Randell	RAF	Gunner	P. Aitken	RFA	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>D. McGregor</b>	<b>HLI</b>
<b>*Lieut</b>	<b>R.H. Robertson</b>	<b>Hamp Reg</b>	Pte	J.C. Aitken	HLI	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>R. McLean</b>	<b>Seaforth HI</b>
Lieut	W.T. Rodger	SR	Pte	A. Addison	RAOC	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>J. McLennan</b>	<b>SH</b>
Lieut	R.M. Steel	A & SH	Pte	J. Appleby	RE	Pte	A. McMillan	SR
Lieut	J.B. Walker	SR	Engr	R.D. Beaton	MerMarine	Pte	D. McNaughton	GH
Lieut	R.S.L. White	RFA	Pte	A. Bell	RE	Pte	D. Nelson	HLI
Pay Lieut	C.L. Robertson	RNR	Pte	J. Bell	ASC	Pte	H. Ormiston	SR
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	R.G. Kerr	RS	Pte	R. Bullar	SR	Pte	C. Paterson	RND
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	W.S. Kerr	HLI	Pte	J. Cameron	RIF	Pte	W. Paterson	HLI
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	J. Kirkpatrick	RE	Pte	D. Campbell	SR	Pte	J. Patterson	D of W
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	T. McPhee	RE	Pte	R. Clow	Canadians	Pte	J.J. Pedely	RE
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	J. Rankin	RNVR	Pte	J. Connell	SR	Pte	A. Pratt	RASC
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	J.B. Tennant	RGA	Pte	J. Crawford	MGC	Pte	A. Rait	RFA
Cadet	D. McPhee	OTC	Pte	G. Day	HLI	Pte	T. Rodger	CSH
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	W. Thomson	RAF	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>W. Day</b>	<b>HLI</b>	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>A. Russell</b>	<b>SR</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut	W.R. Mackie	Naval Trprt	Pte	J.K. Dickie	RASC	Pte	G.L. Russell	SR
Sgt Major	D. Stewart	HLI	Pte	G. Dickson	HLI	Pte	J.B. Russell	SR
RQM Sgt	R.J. Dalrymple	SR	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>A. Dobbin</b>	<b>HLI</b>	Pte	J. Ryce	HLI
RQM Sgt	R.D. Findlay	RFA	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>A. Dobson</b>	<b>MGC</b>	Pte	J. Scott	RS
CQM Sgt	J.B. Gardner	A & SH	Pte	R. Dobson	SR	Pte	H.A. Smith	Black Watch
CS Major	A. Mackie	SR	Pte	J.A. Duncan	HLI	Pte	H.K. Sneddon	HLI
Sgt	G.M. Brown	Liverpool S	Pte	G. Edwards	HLI	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>H. Sneddon</b>	<b>HLI</b>
<b>*Sgt</b>	<b>F. Carson</b>	<b>SR</b>	Pte	J. Fleming	SR	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>J. Sneddon</b>	<b>HLI</b>
Sgt	R. Coats	SR	Pte	A. Gibson	SG	Pte	A. Sneddon	KOSB
Sgt	A. Currie	SA Scottish	Pte	J. Gibson	SR	Pte	F.G. Spence	A & SH
<b>*Sgt</b>	<b>S. Knox</b>	<b>SR</b>	Pte	S. Graham	Seaforth HI	Pte	C. Stanley	SR
Sgt	J. Lindsay	RFA	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>J. Hamilton</b>	<b>SR</b>	Pte	D. M. Steel	SR
Sgt	R. Lindsay	HLI	Pte	J. Hardwick	S Horse	Pte	Wm Stevenson	RSF
Sgt	J. McGhie	SG	Pte	R.J. Heeps	APO. USA	<b>*Cpl</b>	<b>P. Stewart</b>	<b>HLI</b>
Sgt	J. McHutcheson	SR	Pte	G.L. Hewitt	HLI	Pte	J.G.W. Strothers	RFC
<b>*Sgt</b>	<b>M. Pringle</b>	<b>QORGY</b>	<b>*Gunner</b>	<b>R.B. Hewitt</b>	<b>RGA</b>	Pte	T. Strothers	Canadians
<b>*Sgt</b>	<b>S.N. Spence</b>	<b>AusExpFce</b>	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>J. Herberson</b>	<b>SR</b>	Gunner	J. Sutherland	RGA
Sgt	P. Watson	RASC	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>J. Houston</b>	<b>SR</b>	Pte	W. Tipping	HLI
Cpl	A. Brown	RNAS	Pte	J. Hunter	RS	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>R. Todd</b>	<b>SR</b>
Cpl	D. Gibson	NZFA	Pte	W. Irvine	HLI	Pte	W. Todd	A & SH
Cpl	J. Gibson	MGC	<b>*Pte</b>	<b>J. Watt</b>	<b>A &amp; SH</b>	Cpl	N. Waugh	A & SH
Cpl	W.J. Griffiths	RSF				Pte	T. Weir	HLI
L/cpl	R.F. Reilly	Irish Gds				Pte	W. Newton	Canadians
L/Cpl	J. Newton	SR				<b>*Pte</b>	<b>D. Newton</b>	<b>RS</b>
Sgt	G. Newton	TM Bty				Pte	D. Scott	GH
<b>*CWO</b>	<b>J. Gibson</b>	<b>SSWarEmu</b>				Pte	W. Watson	RASC MT

\* The Fallen



*Kirkfield and Wooddean Church Roll of Honour  
(now in Bothwell Parish Church)*

1914 - 1919

TO THE GLORY OF GOD  
AND IN MEMORY OF THE MEN WHO  
WENT FORTH FROM THIS CONGREGATION  
AND FELL IN THE GREAT WAR

Baird William	Pte. 16th Royal Scots
Boyd John	2nd Lieut. 3/6th Cameronians
Boyd William MC	Lieut RFA
Henderson John	Pte. Cameronians
Mair John L.	L/Cpl. 11th HLI
Mitchell John	2nd Lieut RAF
Purdie T. Paterson	2nd Lieut. The Welsh Rgt.
Russell Alex.	Sgt. 3/6th Cameronians

*Roll of Honour on upper plaque of  
Kirkfield and Wooddean Church*



*Roll of Honour on lower plaque of Kirkfield and Wooddean Church*

**TO THE GLORY  
 OF GOD  
 AND IN EVER LOVING REMEMBRANCE OF**

Charles Herbert Brown	David Buller
Alastair Aitken Duncan	George Gordon
Robert Hotson	George Masterton
John B. McNab	James Muir
Stuart H. Nimmo	James Renshaw
David Robertson	
<b>1914-1919</b>	

## The men who fell in the first world and who are commemorated on gravestones in Bothwell Kirkyard



Ordinary Seaman William Breakenridge, RN

Captain Gavin Pagan, Royal Scots

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Thomas Rutherford, Yorkshire Regiment

Major David Shaw, Cameronians

Private James Steel, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

Private John Watt, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

## The men of Bothwellhaugh



*In Memory of the Men of Bothwell Haugh who fell in the  
Great War 1914-1918  
This memorial was originally in Bothwellhaugh Church and  
is now in Orbiston Bowling Club, Bellshill.*

Lance Corporal James Taylor Brown, Cameronians.  
Lance Corporal James Brownlie, Cameronians.  
Private John Smith Cameron, Royal Scots.  
Private William Casey, Scots Guards.  
Private Thomas Clark, Gordon Highlanders.  
Private James Collins, A&SH  
Private David Buller, H.L.I.  
Lance Corporal John Flynn, H.L.I.  
Private Charles Hannah, Cameronians.  
Private Robert Harvey, N.Z.E.F.  
Sergeant Archibald Jarvie, Cameron Highlanders.  
Private James Jarvie, Cameron Highlanders.  
Private James MacKie, Cameronians.  
Private Thomas Manual, Highland Light Infantry.  
Private William McCart, H.L.I.  
Private Robert McIntyre, Gordon Highlanders.  
Private John Meek, H.L.I.  
Private Thomas Meek, H.L.I.  
Private James Murray, Royal Munster Fusiliers.  
Private James Renshaw, H.L.I.  
Lance Sergeant David Semple, Border Regiment.  
Private James Simpson, H.L.I.  
Private Thomas Simpson, Black Watch.  
Private Hugh Sweeney, Cameron Highlanders of Canada.  
Private John T. Sweeney, Cameronians.  
Private John A. Sweeney, H.L.I.  
Private Thomas Vance, H.L.I.  
Guardsmen John Young, Scots Guards.

## Letters of Gold

In letters of gold, so clear, bright and plain,  
On a shrine of pure oak gleams each honoured name.  
Of the heroes who rose at their country's call,  
From lowly cottage and stately Hall.

In the trenches deep, on the bloody red sod,  
They fought for liberty, truth and God.  
Ah! Surely our hearts should love them well,  
They brought glory and fame to our fair Bothwell.

And oh, when our bodies lie in the mould,  
These names that are written in letters of gold,  
Will teach and inspire other lives to be true,  
To God and their country their vows they'll renew.

And thus they'll live on, those men, gallant and brave,  
Who offered their lives our dear homeland to save.  
Oh! A fragrance most sweet around each name will cling,  
While those yet unborn to them tribute will bring.

And though some are sleeping so still, still and cold,  
Those heroes whose names are thus written in gold.  
We feel their dear presence pervades o'er the scene,  
With nought but the thin veil of God's love between.

Ah, surely their swords had been bathed in heaven,  
And God to our country such victory has given.  
Outnumbered, defeated again and again,  
Yet dauntless and fearless our rights they maintain.

May we prove worthy the sacrifice made,  
And feel as we linger by woodland and glade.  
How dearly they brought back our liberty then,  
That still we may glory in mountain and glen.

None daring to fear us, we wander at will,  
Enjoying sweet freedom from tyranny still.  
Ah, base, base is the heart that's ungrateful and cold,  
Whose eyes ever gaze on these letters of gold.

This poem was written by Mrs Jeannie Milligan, 5 Waverly Court, Bothwell in June 1920 following the dedication of the Roll of Honour in Bothwell Kirk.

## Remembering the Fallen

By the end of the First World War the scale of the losses were such that there was scarcely a street, road or hamlet where a family had not lost someone. The desire to commemorate the fallen was intense during the years following the War, especially when repatriation of bodies was not allowed or possible. On a national level the Government decided in principle on a national memorial in London that it would pay for and it was also decided to create a Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh. The Government made it clear, however, that it would not pay for local war memorials and that these should be the responsibility of local communities. It was therefore down to local committees to raise funds, find suitable sites and select the designs for their local war memorial. An advisory committee was set up in 1919 to offer advice on memorial designs provided by the Royal Sculpture Association and an exhibition of designs was organised by the Royal Academy, accompanied by a pamphlet suggesting suitable inscriptions. However the independent nature of local committees led to the enormous variety of war memorials, not just in terms of design but in terms of the rationale itself. As a result memorials have, in addition to the traditional designs, included chapels, bell or clock towers, hospital wings or wards, gardens and sports fields, village halls, reading rooms, fountains, murals and mosaics. In churches alone, memorials take the form of stained glass windows, plaques, lecterns, organs and screens. At the same time as the civic and national memorials were being erected factories, banks, golf clubs, schools, universities, churches, railways, police, post offices and even a prison erected war memorials to those men and women who had gone to war. Also since there were no Government rules to decide which names should appear on which memorials, each local community did the best that it could to gather together the names for inclusion on *their* memorial. No doubt word of mouth, newspaper articles, church announcements and door-to-door enquiries all played their part. The lack of rules has led to many inconsistencies and inaccuracies but this should not diminish the value of war memorials.

At Bothwell, a public meeting was called by newspaper advertisement, handbill and pulpit intimation to consider erecting a Memorial in honour of those in the District who gave their lives in the Great War. Subsequently the meeting was held in the Public Halls on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1920 with Ex-County Councillor J C Pollock in the chair. He eulogised those who sprang to their country's need in 1914 and proposed that the members of the Naval, Military and Air Forces who gave their lives in the Great War should be permanently commemorated. The Revd James Hughes seconded in a warmly sympathetic speech. The original intension was to include Bothwellhaugh but on the suggestion of County Councillor Crawford it was omitted since the people of Bothwellhaugh had not yet decided whether to have their own memorial. It was proposed that the monument be sited at a suitable location in the village of Bothwell and Lieut-Col Vandeleur suggested that a sum of not less than £1,200 be raised. A committee was formed including Mr James Findlay JP, convenor, Councillor Pollok, vice convenor, Mr B A Moody, general secretary and Mr W P McNab as treasurer.

On 18 September 1920 a notice appeared in the Hamilton Advertiser seeking subscriptions to the Bothwell War Memorial, to be paid as early as possible to the treasurer of the Fund, Mr McNab, Clydesdale Bank.

Unfortunately the coal strike of 1921 disrupted the work of the Committee and the canvass for subscriptions was delayed until after the strike.

The Caledonian Railway Company granted a site for the Memorial in front of their railway station and the County Council did all the work that was required in widening the road.

The memorial was dedicated on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 1923 by the Rev Douglas Ferrier and was unveiled by Major-General Reid VC commanding the 52<sup>nd</sup> Lowland Division. Close on 5,000 people attended the ceremony amongst who were the Earl of Home, Sir Robert King Stewart of Murdoston and Sir Henry Keith (former Provost of Hamilton and Unionist MP).

The Memorial takes the form of a Mercat Cross standing 8 metres high, designed in a free treatment of Scottish architecture. Grey granite steps give support to the pedestal that is panelled on four sides and finished with moulded cornice and corner finials. Above rises an octagonal column with moulded enriched base and cap decorated with thistle ornament and surmounted by a lion and shield. On the front looking to the street is a bronze tablet and memorial wreath with carved ornament. The 71 names on the tablet have a suitable dedicatory superscription and at the foot there is inscribed

AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN  
AND IN THE MORNING  
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

The architect for the Memorial was Messrs Galt and Barr of Glasgow; the mason work was undertaken by Messrs William Brown and Son, Hamilton; the bronze work and carving Messrs Holmes and Jackson, Glasgow and for the wrought Iron railings Messrs Neil McKechnie and Sons, Bothwell.

The Committee minute book, list of names of comrades and local papers were interred within the Monument.

In addition to the War Memorial on the Main Street, Bothwell Parish Church and Kirkfield and Wooddean Church had their own war memorials in the form of wall plaques. In Bothwell Kirk the Memorial is formed of oak with gold lettering and commemorates not only the men who died but also those who fought in the Great War. The Kirkfield and Wooddean Memorial is of wood with the names engraved on a brass insert and is now located on the wall of Bothwell Kirk.

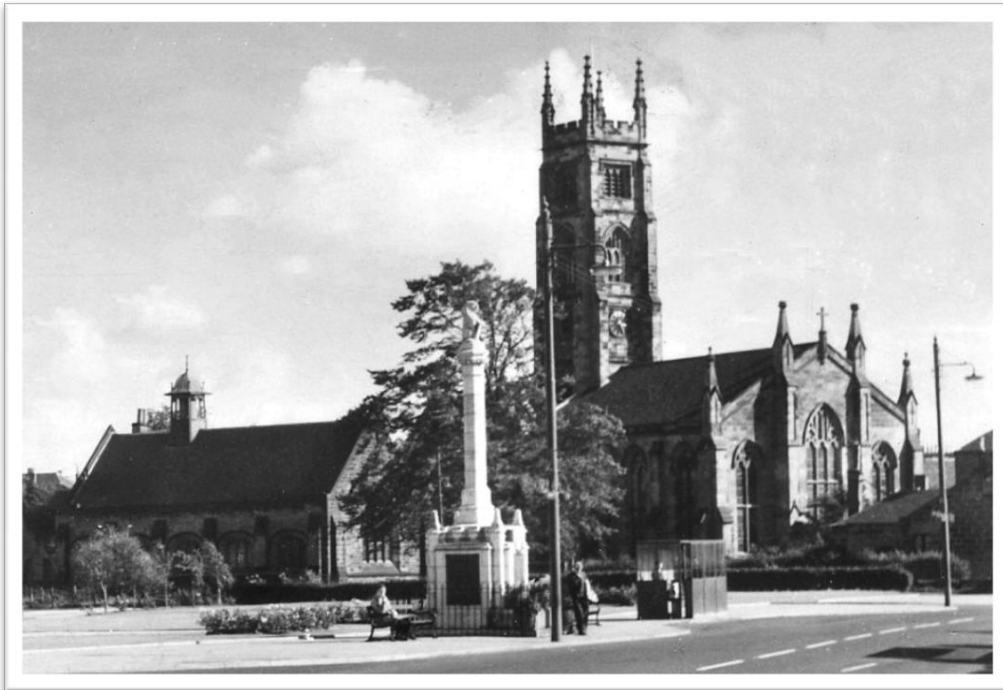
Because the Bothwell Committee minute book is interred within the Memorial, it is not known how the names on the Memorial plaque were gleaned. Inevitably, due to the ad hoc nature of the Committee, inconsistencies and discrepancies have arisen. Unfortunately, some names, recorded on the Parish Church plaque, seem to have been omitted from the War Memorial. One notable omission from both the War Memorial and Church plaque is Ordinary Seaman William Breakenridge RN, whose Commonwealth War Graves Commission gravestone is located in the Parish Church graveyard. Bothwell Kirkyard has another five gravestones commemorating men who died in the War, four of whom are not listed on the War Memorial.

Unfortunately Bothwellhaugh never did get a memorial naming the men who died in WW1. There was a brass plaque in Bothwell Haugh Church (now in Orbiston Bowling Club, Bellshill) and on it is inscribed *'In Memory of the men of Bothwell Haugh who gave their lives in the Great War of 1914-1918.'* There is also a cairn on the banks of

Strathclyde Loch dedicated to the men of Bothwellhaugh who fell in both World Wars. To redress the omission of names, this book, in its Roll of Honour, includes the men from Bothwellhaugh who gave their lives in the Great War.

The Bothwell War Memorial itself is not free from inaccuracies. Names are spelled wrongly e.g. David Sime, Allan Lawrie, William Steele and Stuart Ramsay are inscribed respectively as David Sim, Allan Laurie, William Steel and Ramsay Stuart.

In total 110 men of Bothwell and Bothwellhaugh went to war and did not return and to these men we owe an everlasting debt of gratitude.



*Bothwell War Memorial and Church in the 1970's*

## **Bothwell at War**

### **The start of the War**

A well-attended public meeting was held in Bothwell Public Halls in August 1914 to discuss the War. Mr J T Forgie was in the chair and on the platform were the Reverends Hamilton, Ferrier and McMillan, Councillor Pollok, Dr Goff and Mr Spence.

The chairman touched on the circumstances of the war, a war against our will, but forced upon us by the claims of duty and honour. He stated that everyone must support King and Country; the wives and families of those who were responding to the call and those who must keep the wheels of industry turning. There was also laid upon the community the duty of looking after the sick and wounded. The meeting had been called to enable the community to respond to the appeals made for these purposes by the Prince of Wales and Queen Alexandra.

The Revd Hamilton moved a resolution that a Fund should be raised locally and handed to the Lanarkshire County Central Fund being raised in connection with the war, and that a Committee should be appointed to get contributions to the Fund. The war, he said had not been desired by us or our statesmen, they did all they could to prevent it. What or when the end would be, no one could tell, but he was convinced that good would come out of the evil.

Mr Spence, in seconding, expressed the pleasure he had had in passing through his hands, as Justice of the Peace, a number of fine looking young fellows as recruits. Their friends at the front would be consoled, perhaps while engaged on lonely sentry duty, that their people at home were being looked after.

Mr Pollok, in supporting the resolution, pointed out that subscriptions could be paid by instalments. He thought that they might well adopt the words of old National League and Covenant, in which our forefathers swore that to do their utmost in their power, with their means and their lives, they would stand to the defence of their country and their homes and to the mutual assistance of each other against the country's enemies.

The resolution was unanimously adopted and thereafter the Revd Ferrier moved a resolution naming a large and representative fund raising committee.

### **Belgian refuges**

In October 1914 William Baird and Co Ltd handed over Castlebank house for the use of Belgian refugees. A committee of Bothwell ladies furnished it and put it in a fit state for the refugees. Initially there were 18 refugees living at Castlebank but more were to follow during the course of the war. That same month Bothwell Castle and Huntly Lodge were also prepared for Belgian refugees.

### **Bothwell Work Party**

The Bothwell War Work Party was set up in 1914 by the Bothwell War Relief Committee. The Work Party of local ladies prepared parcels of food, warm clothing and other comforts that were sent either directly to the troops or via the Red Cross. In 1914 1,459 comforts were sent from Bothwell; in 1915 1,586; in 1916 2,304; in 1917 1,562; in 1918 2,053 and finally in 1919 132. Many letters were received from the troops in the front line trenches grateful for these comforts from home. Children from the local schools in Bothwell and Bothwellhaugh were also involved in gathering items for the parcels. On the cessation of hostilities the Work Party was wound up in April 1919.

### **Hillpark House Auxiliary Hospital**

Hillpark House was a mansion standing in extensive grounds to the west of Hamilton Road, between Forelaw House and Ferry Road. The house and gardens occupied almost half of what is now Dunlop Crescent. During the First World War the mansion was lent to the Red Cross Society by Colonel Robertson Aitkin of The Ross, Ferniegair for use as an auxiliary hospital. The hospital was under the direction of Dr John Goff who was appointed Commandant and was fully equipped with all medical necessities. In November 1914 the first batch of British and Belgian soldiers arrived from Stobhill Hospital, Glasgow to convalesce from their wounds and thereafter for the duration of the war the hospital's 33 beds were almost constantly occupied. At the time it was noted that "the VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) staff of sisters discharged their duties with marked sympathy and conspicuous fidelity." The hospital closed after the war in March 1919.



*The entrance to Hillpark House is on the immediate right of this postcard of Hamilton Road, Bothwell.*

## **British Red Cross**

The British Red Cross Society set up a War Hospital Supply Depot at Silverwells House, Bothwell that eventually closed in February 1919. In 1917 and again in 1918 they arranged with the three local churches a united service, held in the Parish Church, with the collection taken on behalf of the Red Cross funds. The accounts were finalised in August 1919 and, for the period 1917 to 1919, showed an income of £1505-7-7d, with an expenditure of £1210-5-7½d. The balance of £295-1-11½d was handed to Mrs Boyd of Dalclutha for the Bothwell District Nursing Association.

## **Decorations and Awards**

**Acting Regimental Sergeant-Major Donald Stewart**, 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion HLI from Bothwell was awarded the Ordre de Leopold II avec Croix du Guerre.

**Lance Corporal J Hynds** Royal Scots of Bothwell was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. "At Vendin le Viele on 12 October 1918 his platoon officer was killed. He at once took command of the platoon and led it with great skill and gallantry. He led an attack on a pill box that was showing considerable resistance and personally killed the NCO gunner at close quarters. This splendid act of courage allowed the whole advance to proceed and undoubtedly saved many casualties."

**Jean M. Miller**. The London Gazette of January 1920 reported "To Jean M Miller No 77 Queen Mary Auxiliary Army Corps, hostel forewoman, Medal of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in recognition of the valuable services rendered in France and Flanders during the War." Miss Miller was the daughter of Mr William Miller, Craignish, Bothwell.

## **Drill Hall**

The HQ of 'E' Company of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians was in the Drill Hall in Langside Road, Bothwell. It was used, not only for training but also for social events.

## **Victory Fund**

By July 1919 Bothwell's contribution to the Victory Fund was £5394.

## **Peace**

The National Peace Day celebrations were held on 19 July 1919. There was a large parade of military and naval forces in Glasgow but little to indicate Peace Day in Bothwell apart from a few flags in shops and houses. Perhaps after the tribulations of war, the residents of Bothwell, especially those who had lost their love ones, found little to celebrate.

The Woodlands estate in Bothwell was built in 1919 as part of the nationwide 'homes for heroes' scheme and was the first county council housing estate in the area.

# The British Army in the Great War

## The Army

At the outbreak of the war in August 1914, the British regular army was a small professional force. It consisted of 247,432 regular troops organised in four Guards and 68 line infantry regiments, 31 cavalry regiments, artillery and other supporting units. Each infantry regiment had two regular battalions, one of which served at home and provided drafts and reinforcements to the other that was stationed overseas. The army included reservists in the Territorial Force and together they formed the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), that was formed for service in France in 1914 and became known as the Old Contemptibles. By the end of 1918, the army had reached its maximum strength of 4,000,000 men and could field over 70 divisions.

In 1914, each British infantry division consisted of three infantry brigades each of four battalions, with two machine guns per battalion. They also had three field artillery brigades, two engineer field companies, one signals company, one cavalry squadron, one cyclist company, three field ambulances, four Army Service Corps horse-drawn transport companies and divisional headquarters support detachments.

## Recruitment

By September 1914 as a result of Lord Kitchener's famous recruiting campaign and poster 750,000 men had signed up to fight. Conscription for single men was introduced in January 1916. The Military Service Act March 1916 specified that men from the ages of 18 to 41 were liable to be called up for service in the army, unless they were married (or widowed with children), or served in one of a number of the reserved occupations, which were usually industrial but which also included clergymen and teachers.



## Life in the Trenches

By the end of 1914, the war on the Western Front had reached stalemate and the trench lines extended from the Belgian coast to the Swiss frontier. By September 1915, the length of the British front line stretched some 70 miles. Soldiers were in the front or reserve line trenches for about eight days at a time, before being relieved.

There were three trenches in a typical front line sector; the fire trench, the support trench and the reserve trench, all joined by communication trenches. The trenches varied in depth, but they were usually about four or five feet deep, or in areas with a high water table a wall of sandbags would be built to allow the defenders to stand upright. Ideally, the bottom of the trench was lined with duckboards to prevent men from sinking into the mud and dugouts were cut into the walls, to give shelter from the

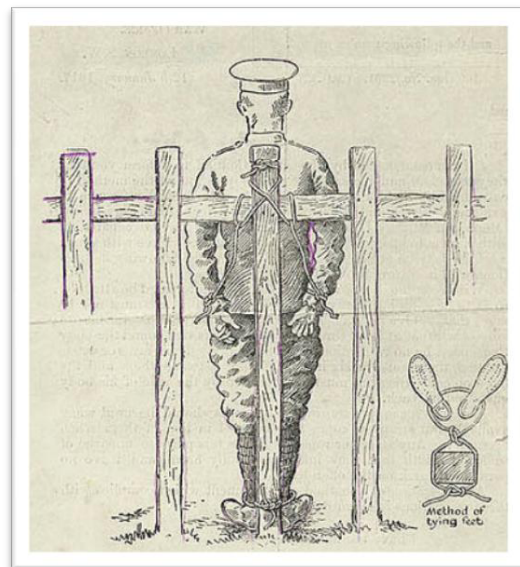
elements and shrapnel. The men were expected to sleep wherever they could and in wet weather they lived under groundsheet or in tents at the bottom of the trench.

At the front, soldiers were in constant danger from artillery shells, mortar bombs and bullets and as the war progressed they also faced aerial attack. Some sectors were in a perpetual state of violent activity while other sectors of the front saw little activity throughout the war, making life comparatively easy. The conditions were harsh, trenches were often wet and muddy and the constant company of lice and rats carried disease. Many troops suffered from trench foot and trench fever. They could also suffer from frostbite in the winter months and heat exhaustion in the summer. Food would not usually be cooked in the front line trenches since any smoke would draw enemy fire and hot food had to be carried along communication trenches in 'hayboxes'. Daily routine of life in the trenches began with the morning 'stand-to'. An hour before dawn everyone was roused and ordered to man their positions in order to guard against a dawn raid by the Germans. With stand-to over, it was time for the men to have breakfast and perform ablutions. Once completed, the NCOs would assign daily chores such as sentry duty, cleaning rifles and equipment, filling sandbags, repairing trenches or digging latrines. Once the daily tasks had been completed the men who were off-duty would find a place to sleep. Each side's front line was constantly under observation by snipers and lookouts during daylight; movement was therefore restricted until after dusk. Under the cover of darkness, troops attended to vital maintenance and re-supply. Trench raiding was also carried out and construction parties formed to repair trenches and fortifications, while wiring parties were sent out to repair or renew the barbed wire in no man's land. An hour before dawn, everyone would stand-to once more.

## Discipline

Field Punishment No 1 was used by the Army for military indiscipline, drunkenness and other misdemeanours. It consisted of the convicted man being placed in leg irons and handcuffs or similar restraints and attached to a fixed object, such as a gun wheel, for up to two hours per day. During the early part of World War I, the punishment was often applied with the arms stretched out and the legs tied together, giving rise to the nickname "crucifixion". This was applied for up to three days out of four, up to 21 days total. It has been alleged that this punishment was sometimes applied within range of enemy fire.

The horrors of war, the constant shelling, sleep deprivation and the dread of 'going over the top' caused many men to desert their units. We now know that many were suffering from shellshock or what is now recognised as post traumatic stress syndrome. Unfortunately the military hierarchy of the time did not recognise their medical condition and felt they had to make



*Field Punishment No 1*

an example of these soldiers. 306 British and Commonwealth men were tried by courts martial for cowardice and desertion and were shot at dawn by a squad of their comrades. In 2007 an Act pardoning these men was passed by the British Government.



*The Shot at Dawn Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire, unveiled in 2001*

# THE BATTLE OF LOOS

**25 September – 18 October 1915**

For the following seven Bothwell men, the battlefield of Loos was to be their final resting place.

Private Thomas Clark of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gordon Highlanders.

Private William Day of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry.

Private William McCart of the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry.

Private John Sweeney of the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry.

Private Hugh O'Neill of the 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers.

Sergeant William Wilson of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers.

The above men were all killed in action on the first day of the Battle, the 25 September 1915.

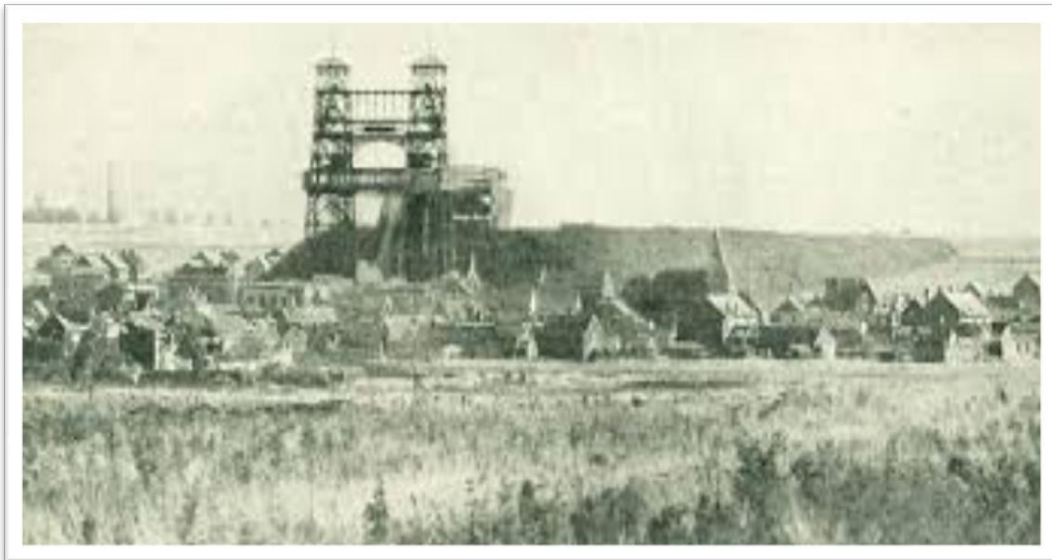
Private Thomas McConnell of the 9<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders was killed on the second day of the Battle.

The 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. were part of the 28<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers were part of the 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division.

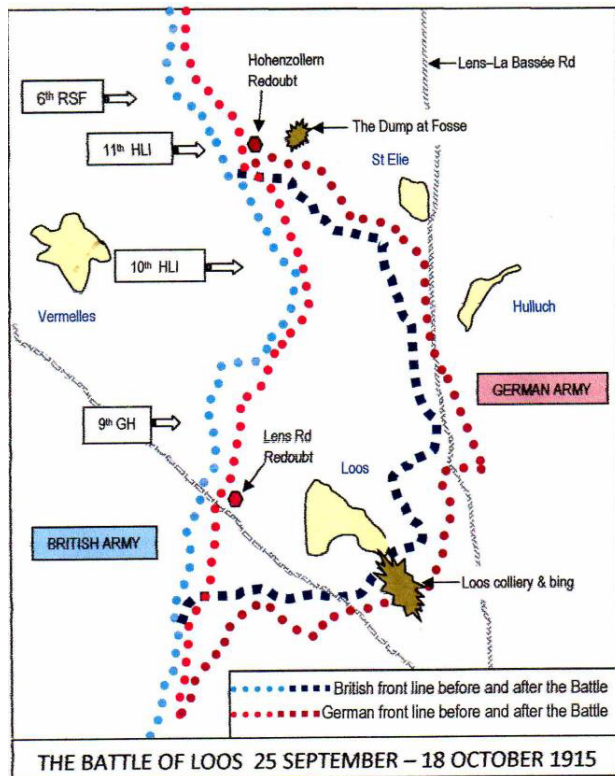
The 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers were part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division.

The 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders were part of the 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division.



*The mining town of Loos dominated by the pit winding gear known to the British as*

*'Tower Bridge. Behind it is the Loos Crassier (slag heap).*

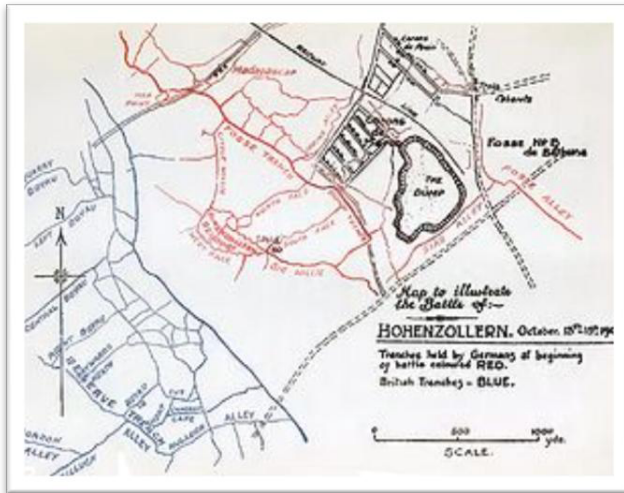


The Battle of Loos in September 1915 was a major British offensive - so much so that it was referred to at the time as 'The Big Push'. It took place around the town of Loos with its flat landscape dominated by coal bings connected to the coal mining of the area. The opening of the battle was noteworthy for the first use of poison gas by the British Army. Throughout Britain rumours abounded of this 'Big Push' some weeks before the attack. There was little by way of strategic deception and preparations near the battle front were all too obvious. Only the date and time of attack were unknown to the enemy and once the opening bombardment began, it could not

be too far away. The German defences had been massively strengthened in the area to be attacked. Not only had the front line been deepened, reinforced and equipped with many machine-gun redoubts and wide barbed wire belts, but an equally strong second and third line of defence had also been prepared behind it. The 15-yard deep wire in front of the second line was stronger than that in no man's land, and was made of a new design of wire that could not be cut by the equipment carried by the British infantry. This wire was also beyond the range of the British field artillery, so unless the first line fell and the artillery could be advanced, it would remain intact.

On the 21 September 1915 the British bombardment of German positions opened and continued without break for the next three days until the morning of the assault. Various localised feint attacks were conducted, to persuade the enemy to man the forward trenches during the shelling. These ruses included the use of dummy troops, bayonets showing above the British parapets, bagpipes playing and men shouting. The following day there was a violent thunderstorm with torrential rain that flooded communication trenches and made artillery observation difficult. On the 24 September the leading Brigades moved forward through the flooded trenches to their assault positions at the front line.

6.30am on the 15 September 1915 was zero hour for the start of the Battle of Loos. At 5.50am there was to be a heavy artillery bombardment to coincide with the release of poison gas from 5,100 cylinders sunk into the parapet walls of the trenches. However the wind was not favourable and the gas did not move as quickly as expected. In fact in



*The Hohenzollern sector of the Battle of Loos showing the network of trenches on each side.*

lines, captured the village of Loos and took Hill 70. The inevitable supply and communications problems, combined with the late arrival of reserves, meant that the breakthrough could not be exploited. The 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division's objectives were the buildings and the Dump at Fosse and the Hohenzollern Redoubt. The Dump was a flat-topped slagheap 20 feet high with a commanding view and had been made the principal German observation post in the area. The 9th Division was to attack on a front 1,500 yards wide and to capture the German front and support trenches. The Division was then to capture the redoubt and Fosse before advancing to the Lens–La Bassée road. When the whistles blew at zero hour the men of the 11<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. went over the top in the face of deadly fire. Before they reached the enemy barbed wire 10 officers and 300 men had fallen. Their colleagues in the 10<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. were equally suffering. The poison gas had hung thickly about their trenches and Colonel Graham of the regiment was found later incoherent and half unconscious from poisoning, while Major Graham and four lieutenants were incapacitated in the same way. The chief cause of the slaughter, however, was the uncut wire, which held up the brigade while the German rifle and machine-gun fire shot them down in heaps.

By mid-day the British advance had spent its momentum, and had been brought to a standstill at all points. The German lines had been almost but not quite shattered.

The 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers with the other battalions of the 27th Brigade was held in reserve until ordered to advance through Douvrin to the Haute Deule canal. A vivid account of the part the 6th Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers played at the start of the Battle of Loos was given Lt Col H.H. Northey CMG, Commanding Officer of the 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers in his diary.

“On the morning of the 26 September the 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Brigades occupied our front line trenches immediately west of Hohenzollern Redoubt. The 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade were in reserve trenches east of Annequin about two miles from the Hohenzollern Redoubt

places the gas did not move from the British assault positions and as a result there were 2,632 British gas casualties with 7 deaths as the attackers moved forward.

In many places British artillery failed to cut the German wire in advance of the attack. Advancing over open fields within range of German machine guns and artillery, British losses were devastating. The Gordon Highlanders in the 15th (Scottish) Division, however, stormed two German defensive

The 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers left Bethune at 8pm on the 24 September for the reserve trenches at Annequin - these trenches were very wet and uncomfortable and none of us got much sleep. Our bombardment of the German trenches, which had gone on for the last four days was continued intermittently during the night. Orders to attack arrived at about 2am. Towards dawn the bombardment became intense and we could see the launching of the British gas attack from the front line trenches. We feared the wind was rather light to make the attack effectual. At 4am our leading company moved to the tail of the 11<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, who were advancing up to the front line trenches vacated by the assaulting columns. We had to advance for four hours, through communication trenches and under heavy fire, before we arrived at the front line trenches – a distance, as the crow flies, of about one and a half miles. These trenches we found absolutely choked with dead and wounded, so I immediately took over the portion of the front line I was in and held the same giving what assistance I could to clear away the dead and wounded. About 1pm I received an urgent message from General Bruce, commanding the 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade to come and see him immediately. It had now been pouring with rain for some time, and it was a case of wading through the trenches. When I reached the General he told me that part of the Brigade had nearly got into Haisnes, and he had orders to organise an attack on that place. I thereupon sent my adjutant back to bring along the Battalion. I myself went along with the General in the direction of Haisnes. Half way there we saw to our disgust that a battalion had broken and were streaming back. We did our best to stop them, and I was ordered to go back myself to bring up my own Battalion at the double to save the situation. This I succeeded in doing and the regiment eventually carried on and occupied the trench called Fosse Alley, where I found Colonel Mackenzie, commanding the 10<sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and Colonel Locke, commanding the 12<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, with portions of their battalions.



*Lt Col Northey  
Commanding Officer  
6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots*

In front of Fosse alley some 500 yards in the direction of Haisnes, Colonel Wright, Gordon Highlanders and Colonel Dundas, 11<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, with small portions of their battalions were holding what is known as the Pekin trench. By this time the different battalions were very much mixed up. This Pekin trench was in a very far advanced position, but the General determined to hold on to it, and he ordered me to send up two companies in support. The two companies I sent up were "A" Coy under Captain Roxburgh and "D" Coy under Captain Robertson. During the earlier part of the evening, about a couple of hours after my arrival there, this trench was found to be untenable and was evacuated by order of the C.O. of the Gordons. The trench was untenable mainly on account of the German bombers who worked down the communication trenches from the direction of Haisnes. Captain Roxburgh, on rejoining the Battalion in Fosse Alley, after evacuating Pekin trench, reported, I regret to say, that Captain Robertson and Lord Stuart had been killed but he could not recover their bodies on account of the pressure of the German bombing parties. [Capt Robertson was later found to have been taken prisoner, having been stunned by a bomb explosion.]

All this time our right flank was absolutely in the air and under machine gun fire from the direction of St Elie. I did not at all like the situation so I went off with Colonel Locke and Captain Purves to find the Brigadier, who had made his headquarters in the quarry. Before we got there we heard fighting and bombing going on to our right rear. This appears to have been a German counter attack on part of the line held by the 7<sup>th</sup> Division. Some steps now had to be taken immediately as we seemed to have the Germans on three sides of us, so, as the Brigadier could not be found, after consulting with the other C.O's of the Brigade, it was determined to fall back, as we were losing heavily and not supported on either side or behind. The brigade then retired to our original front lines. Major Turnbull and two companies of the 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers were still holding German trenches south of Hohenzollern. This party was relieved about 6.30am on the 26 September. Headquarters of the 6<sup>th</sup> RSF then went into the quarry just behind the front line to reorganise. Our lines were shelled unceasingly during this period.

About 10am I was sent for by Brigadier General Richie, 26<sup>th</sup> Brigade, who told me my Battalion had been lent to the 7<sup>th</sup> Division to co-operate in an attack on the quarries west of St Elie. These were the quarries in which General Bruce had made his Headquarters the day before and since when he had not been heard of. I was to co-operate in the above attack by sending bombing parties up Fosse Alley and also by covering fire from any available position. The time this attack was to be delivered was not given to me at the time, but was eventually settled at 3.30pm but I was not informed of it till too late to be much good, and never actually heard the result of the attack. About 5pm – not having had any orders from higher authority, I took my battalion to a position in reserve in the Hohenzollern Redoubt. At 10pm, after having just settled down, I got a message to re-occupy Fosse Alley, taking particular care to keep well in touch with the brigades on my right and left. However we went out cautiously and eventually got into position with the 10<sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders on the left, my right still in the air. We spent the night improving the trench as far as possible, in spite of a terrific bombardment on our left rear with high explosive shells.

Just after dawn the Germans attempted to attack us from the direction of Haisnes, but were repulsed without difficulty. Immediately after this I received a report that the enemy was trying to bomb down the right of Fosse Alley – they must have worked up from the direction of St Elie. I had two machine guns and also parties of bombers on that flank and the enemy was held until our bombs were exhausted and both machine guns put out of action by being hit by German bombs. As the German bombing parties were now making headway down the trench, I ordered the company on the right to get out of the trench into the open so they could charge round the bombers. This was done, but not without severe loss from machine gun fire from the direction of St Elie and also artillery fire from the direction of Haisnes. With this party I eventually retired to the old German trenches south-east of the Hohenzollern Redoubt, where I left Lieut. Scott to reorganise and returned myself to Fosse Alley. The situation when I arrived there was as follows: the 73<sup>rd</sup> Brigade on the left holding Fosse No 8 and with machine guns on the slag heap, then the 10<sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland highlanders, then Captain Brodie with the remainder of the 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots Fusiliers. The situation was somewhat desperate, as the 73<sup>rd</sup> Brigade on our left commenced a retirement immediately, leaving ourselves and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders with both flanks exposed and with overwhelming forces of the enemy working round them. All this time we received no reinforcements and no support from our own guns.

In consultation with Colonel Mackenzie of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders we agreed that the only thing to do was to get back to the old German trenches with as little loss as possible. However as this meant returning over the open for some 300 to 400 yards, severe losses were inevitable. I was hit myself in the leg about 200 yards from the trench we were making for, and I believe Colonel Mackenzie was also hit about the same time, but I never saw him again. Captain Brodie was also hit here, I believe in the knee, and I regret to say has been missing ever since. This must have been about 3pm and from now onward I took no part in the fighting.

After I was hit I stumbled on through communication trenches, hopping as best I could for what seemed an interminable distance - the trenches being deep with mud and choked with dead and wounded men – and was eventually helped into a German dugout by a stretcher-bearer who tied up my leg. I then imagine I must have fainted, probably because I had lost a lot of blood, and came to finding myself being pulled out of the dugout by the two stretcher bearers, with a terrific din going on all round. This was the Germans counter-attacking, and I found I was between British and German lines. I slowly and very painfully made my way along the German trenches towards our own lines – fighting going on all round and very much afraid of being collared by the enemy. At one point a stretcher was obtained and the two stretcher-bearers tried to carry me over the open, but just as I was being lifted a shell came, a splinter of which blew the unfortunate stretcher-bearer's brains all over me. The other stretcher-bearer then carried me away over the open on his back under heavy fire some 150 yards – until we reached a trench in our original front line. Very soon after this I got another stretcher and after many and varied vicissitudes I arrived at Barts where there was a dressing station. When I arrived there I found that the stretcher-bearer who had carried me had disappeared and I have never been able to find out anything about him since.”

The fighting raged on until the middle of October 1915. The Battle of Loos saw the British make minor gains in exchange for around 50,000 casualties of which 7,766 died. German losses were estimated at around 25,000. Casualties were particularly high among Scots units. From the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division there were 6058 casualties of which 190 were officers and the 7<sup>th</sup> Division suffered 5224 casualties. Many New Army units, rushed into a battle area for the first time only a matter of days after landing in France, were devastated. The 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. were in the first wave to go ‘over the top’ and were decimated with 648 casualties. Though some ground had been gained, the fighting at Loos proved a failure as the British were unable to break through the German lines.



*Loos Memorial at Dud Corner Cemetery.*

*Dud Corner Cemetery stands almost on the site of the German strong point, The Lens Road Redoubt, captured by the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division on the first day of the Battle of Loos.*

# **THE ATTACK AT FESTUBERT**

## **6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians**

**15 June 1915**

Eight local men of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians, all died on the 15 June 1915 during an attack on the German lines at Festubert in the Artois region of France. A seventh man, James Brownlie died of his wounds four days later. An account of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion and of that fateful attack is given below.

Private James Brown

Private James Brownlie

Sergeant Sam Knox

Private James Mackie

Private George Masterton

Private Benjamin McKinnon

Major David Shaw

Private David Sim

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) was created in 1881 following the amalgamation of the 26<sup>th</sup> (Cameronian) Regiment and the 90<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Light Infantry. After the Crimean War the British Army reorganized, and counties and shires were asked to form Volunteer Units to support the Regular Army in times of national peril. The County of Lanarkshire set up the Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteer Corps in the mid nineteenth century with the 56<sup>th</sup> Company of the Corps based in Bothwell. Several units of the Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers were affiliated to The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). As a result of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act of 1908, Volunteer Force units linked with The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) became battalions of the Regiment. These units were renamed, and adopted the uniforms and traditions of The Cameronians. The Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteer Corps became the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians. Its 'E' company's HQ was in the Drill Hall in Langside Road, Bothwell, that was used not only for training but also for social events.

Britain entered the Great War on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914 and the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion mobilised on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1914. The men then underwent intensive training for several months. On 19 March 1915 the Battalion crossed the channel to Le Havre, a force of 30 officers, 940 other ranks, 72 horses 23 vehicles and 9 bicycles. Next day they travelled by train for 24 hours to the southwest border of Belgium to the front line.

Between 22 April and 25 May 1915 the Germans attacked the French lines just south of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalions position. It was the first time that poison gas was used and the French were taken by surprise. (The commander of the British Army, Sir John French considered the use of gas as unworthy of a chivalrous soldier!) The line broke and the road was open to Ypres. The Allies counter attacked from 9 May to 18 June when fierce battles took place at Aubers Ridge and Festubert.

On 8 May 1915 the Battalion was ordered to take their position in readiness for battle as Divisional reserve in the trenches at Aubers Ridge. Due to communication difficulties in the heat of the battle, the Battalion never received orders to engage the enemy but nevertheless their trenches were heavily shelled by the German artillery causing a number of casualties. After the battle, while the Battalion was still in the front line trenches, Captain A. J. Lawrie from Hillside, Bothwell was killed by a sniper on 16 May 1915. It was not until the 21 May that the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion was moved to rest billets.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Cameronians was also involved in the fighting at Aubers Ridge and Captain R. D. Hunter had a lucky escape from a fate worse than death. He was hit by a bullet that grazed his spine at the back of his neck and was paralysed. He lay conscious but unable to move or speak and had the unpleasant experience of being passed as dead. Two fellow officers looking down on him expressed sorrow at his death. Fortunately a sharp-witted stretcher bearer saved him from being buried alive. He recovered.

The War Diary of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion records how it was chosen to lead an attack on 15 June 1915 at Festubert. *“The Battalion was in the highest spirits at the prospect of engaging the enemy.”* During the morning of that fateful day the kits of all officers and men were collected and stacked in dugouts. All ranks were to wear ‘skeleton marching orders’ for the assault – that is equipment without packs or other superfluous articles. The morning broke bright and sunny and as the men waited in readiness the shelling by the enemy increased considerably. The Germans were aware of the impending attack and registered their impatience as the morning advanced shouting from their trenches *“Come on Jocks, we are waiting for you.”*

At ‘zero’ hour, 5.57am precisely, the bombers and leading platoon of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians went over the parapet and crossed No Man’s Land. A thick row of rifles immediately went up over the German parapet and machine guns opened up left and right. An observer later stated that “he had seen many infantry charges but never one carried out with such vim and expedition.” They charged through very heavy artillery fire and stout resistance in the German trenches. The distance to the enemy trenches was only some two hundred yards but the difficulty lay in a deep ditch that had to be crossed. Portable bridges were provided for that purpose.

The men of the 6<sup>th</sup> pushed on across No Man’s Land in the face of murderous fire. Major D.P. Shaw from Uddingston, who was second in command, was wounded on the chin but went on cheering his men until he was shot dead. The barbed wire had been partially cut by the supporting artillery but in other places it was intact and many men fell in their efforts to tear their way through.

The War Diary goes on to record the action.

*“The front enemy trench was found to be occupied in some strength, but its garrison was driven out by bombs and the bayonet – As we pushed forward up the German trench a number of the enemy took refuge in their shelters and offered money and presents to the advancing bombers to spare them, but the bombers remembered Fromelles on 9<sup>th</sup> May, and the work of our 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion at Neuve Chappelle, and gave no quarter- before dark the enemy were completely driven out of the salient, and we had captured the second line. At this point their resistance became more determined and*

*strong reinforcements were seen coming over the rise in the ground to their support. We had lost very heavily and only 3 officers were left;”*

The German cross fire in No Man’s Land, even after dark, made it almost impossible to send reinforcements or supplies to the companies which had entered the German trenches and they were therefore left stranded. The men were able to cling precariously to their newly won position until after midnight. To their right the men of the Loyal North Lancs Regiment were seen to be driven back in retreat. The 6<sup>th</sup> Cameronians along with a company of Seaforth Highlanders were then the only British troops left in possession of the ground originally won albeit under increasing pressure from the enemy. Orders to withdraw finally reached the men at 4am on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>. The withdrawal was immediate but unfortunately many more casualties were sustained before the British line was reached.

After the battle, out of a strength of 705 only 367 answered the roll call. Nearly half the Battalion was killed or wounded.



“The Cameronians”  
LANARKSHIRE LADS SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE

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# 1/6<sup>TH</sup> CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES) AT FESTUBERT

June 1915

Respectfully dedicated to COLONEL KAY, OFFICERS AND MEN of the  
1/6<sup>th</sup> SCOTTISH RIFLES (Cameronians).

Out on the far-flung battle front  
Our gallant lads have borne the brunt,  
Right nobly have they fought and fell  
‘midst clash of arms and bursting shell.

Led by the gallant Colonel Kay  
They swept like heroes to the fray;  
Into the German trench they dash,  
Whilst bayonets meet with deadly clash.

The foemen fall to left and right  
Before the Cameronians’ might;  
They reel, they stagger from the blow,  
Till locked in death are friend and foe.

Undaunted still across the plain  
They onward press, though bullets rain;  
Into the second trench they swarm,  
And for the Hun they make it warm.

The noble Shaw then led the way  
Across the stricken field of fray;  
Right nobly did his men reply –  
“We’ll fight and conquer, or we die.”

Now Murray, Keith and Wilson fall,  
Macdonald, too, beloved by all,  
Then Kennedy and Wishart bright  
Are killed and wounded in the fight.

“Stick it, my lads,” the brave Brown cries,  
Though wounded on the ground he lies;  
“On, Blantyre, on!” – his latest breath –  
Till hero-like he falls in death.

And what of all the rank and file?  
Who can their gallant deeds compile?  
They fought like heroes every one  
Until the setting of the sun.

Upon the ground the wounded lay,  
Poor remnants of that awful fray;  
Till rescued by the daring Lusk –  
A hero whom the soldiers trust.

Supported by his gallant band  
He rendered all a helping hand;  
Whilst bullets whistled through the air  
Lusk showed them how to do and dare.

No voice can sing such heroes’ praise,  
Nor pen indite poetic lays;  
Yet in our heart of hearts shall dwell  
A love for all who fought and fell.

And what of those who mourn and weep  
For loved ones who in death now sleep?  
Remember still that “God is Love,”  
We’ll meet again in heaven above.

JOHN N. THOMSON

This poem by John N. Thomson was sold after the action at Festubert for one penny with proceeds devoted to the funds of the 1/6<sup>th</sup> Scottish Rifles.

It is reproduced here courtesy of South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture.

# PRIVATE WILLIAM ARCHIBALD BAIRD

(25182)

## Royal Scots 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 1 July 1916**

William Archibald Baird was born in 1888 in Charleville, Glasgow Road, Uddingston. His father, Matthew Barr Baird, was born c1845 at Tollcross, Glasgow where his father Archibald was manager of the Clyde Iron Works. Matthew Baird followed in his father's footsteps and later became the manager of an iron and steel works. He held several patents including one for lubricating the axles of coal hutches. William's mother Margaret Archibald was born c1845 at Leslie, Fife and she and Matthew married there in 1874. By 1901 the family had moved from Uddingston to West House, Silverwells Crescent, Bothwell. It was there that Margaret died in 1907 aged 62. Matthew Baird died nine years later in 1916 at Bellhaven Terrace, Glasgow.

William was educated at Hamilton Academy where his name is on their Roll of Honour and at the High School, Glasgow. He was then found employment with Messrs Gray, Mackenzie and Co, merchants, and for six years worked for them at Basra on the Persian Gulf. After the start of the war he returned to Britain and enlisted at Warminster on 1 June 1915. Before conscription in January 1916 volunteers could choose which regiment they wished to join and William opted for the Royal Scots. He was posted to the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion which had been formed by an Edinburgh man, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir George McCrae. McCrae was a former MP for Edinburgh and chairman of the Local Government Board for Scotland. In November 1914 he had secured permission to raise a new battalion for active service in the field and five days later he had his first recruits - eleven professional footballers from Heart of Midlothian Football Club. Hearts supporters then rushed to enlist in what became known as McCrae's Battalion. The Battalion moved to Ripon for training in June 1915 and was attached to the 101<sup>st</sup>



Brigade of the 34<sup>th</sup> Division. Crossing to France in January 1916, the men were to take part in a major action for the first time on the 1 July 1916. It was the opening day of the Battle of the Somme.

The 34<sup>th</sup> Division had the task of taking the village of La Boisselle on the right of the Albert Bapaume Road. They were going to accomplish this by using all twelve battalions of the Division in the initial assault. Four columns of infantry would be employed with the 15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots leading the right hand column and the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion immediately behind them. Their orders were to capture the first German system of four trenches which required an advance of 2 kilometres in 48 minutes. This achieved, they would then continue to the Kaisergraben system in front of Contalmaison. Here they would consolidate and allow back up troops to pass through them and capture Contalmaison.

At 0728 hours on the 1 July 1916 the huge mine at Lochnagar was detonated and two minutes later whistles blew galvanising the attacking troops to rise as a man and begin their assault.

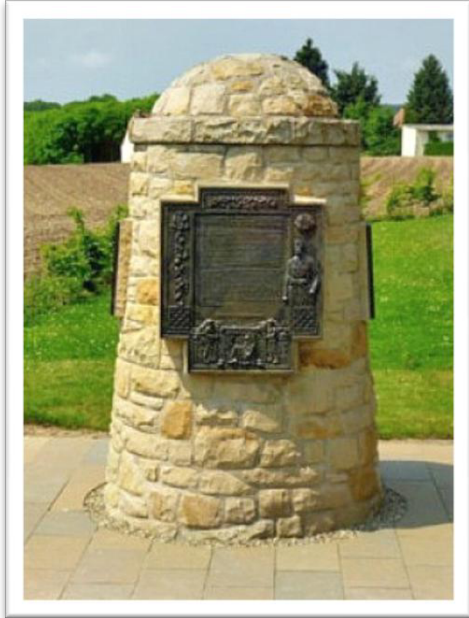
As soon as the British artillery barrage lifted from the German front line trenches the garrisons dashed out of their deep bunkers and opened fire with their machine guns on the cascade of British troops flowing towards them. As the leading troops were held up by the unexpected tenacity of the Germans the follow-on units became intermingled with them.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots had crept out under the cover of the final minutes of the bombardment and were fortunate in being able to rush successfully the first German lines with little difficulty, pipe-sergeant David Anderson playing them forward (for which he won the French Croix de Guerre). Here though they came unstuck because being so far out in front of the second column to their left they were badly exposed to flanking fire from La Boisselle which cut through their left hand platoons and seriously mauled the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion coming up behind them.

By now Captain Lionel Coles of C Company 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots had only half of his men left, but they could see Contalmaison immediately in front of them. With him were three of the Hearts players; CSM Annan Ness and Privates Pat Crossan and Harry Wattie. Moving forward they were attacked by enemy bombing parties causing further numerous casualties amongst Captain Coles's company. On the right Lieutenant George Russell had managed to get the remnants of his company through the German wire and up into the village. Russell sent back a runner stating that he was badly in need of reinforcements. Moments later he was killed and the remainder of the company, now down to ten men, withdrew. Captain Coles, on hearing of Russell's plight made one last attempt to advance. As he rushed forward he was hit by machine gun fire and killed instantly.

It would be another week before Contalmaison would be taken by the British. The casualties suffered by the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion were 256 killed and 320 wounded. Private William Baird was one of the men killed that day and he is buried in the London

Cemetery and Extension, Longueval, Somme. A memorial to the Royal Scots stands next to the church in Contalmaison close to the site of their action.



*McCrae's Battalion Great War Memorial  
at Contalmaison, France  
honouring the fallen of the  
16<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Scots*

*The Cairn was erected in 2004 and  
constructed of Scottish stone*

William Baird had 4 siblings

1. **Agnes Baird** was born c1877 at Uddingston. In 1898 she married John Tennent, a 31 year old Ironfounder who lived in Northbank, Bothwell.
2. **Henry Baird** was born in 1881 at Uddingston. He was a metallurgist and married Jocelyn Middleton in 1916 in Keighley, Yorkshire. Henry Baird died in Ayr in 1964.
3. **Matthew Baird** was born in 1882 at Uddingston. He was an electrical and mechanical engineer and married Helen Brown in 1911 at Lochwinnoch. Matthew Baird died in Westquarter, Strathaven in 1961.
4. **John Baird** was born in 1884 at Uddingston. He was an accountant but later worked as an iron and steel manufacturer with his father and brother. In 1912 while living at West House, Bothwell, he married Mary Menzies a 26 year old from Glasgow. John Baird died in 1981 in Edinburgh.
5. **William Baird**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> LIEUTENANT JOHN BOYD

### Cameronians 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 29 October 1916**

**J**ohn Boyd was born in 1885 at Shettleston, Glasgow. His father John Boyd was born c1840 in Paisley and was a successful ironfounder and mechanical engineer designing and manufacturing machinery for the textile industry. William's mother, Margaret Boyd nee Boyd was born c1847 in Campbeltown and married John in 1876 at Campbeltown. In 1881 the Boyds were living in Warwick Villa, Shettleston, Glasgow and by 1891 had moved to Hillfoot, Mount Vernon. Ten years later the family were living at Dunclutha, Silverwells Crescent, Bothwell. John and Margaret died at Dunclutha in 1918 and 1932 respectively.

John Boyd was one of a family of seven. He grew up in Bothwell and was educated at Glasgow Academy. John qualified as a chartered accountant and at one time he was President of the Bothwell Literary Society. In 1916 he was gazetted as a second Lieutenant in the 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians. The Battalion had been mobilized in 1914 and crossed to France in March 1915. It fought in the Battle of Aubers Ridge in May. It was chosen to lead the attack of the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division on the German lines at Festubert on 15 June and suffered heavy casualties. It was reorganized and early in 1916 was moved to positions along the River Somme.

The 4<sup>th</sup> British Army under Generals Haig and Rawlinson mounted the first major offensive of the war on the German trenches, with the French on their southern flank. Battle commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> July and lasted on and off until November. It is sadly



remembered because of the terrible casualties. Britain lost 57,470 on the first day and a total of 420,000 by the end. France lost 200,000 and Germany an estimated 465,000. In October 1916 phases of the Battle took place at the Transloy Ridges and the Ancre Heights. Lieutenant John Boyd was killed on the 29 October 1916. His name is on the Thiepval Memorial, Picardy, France, honouring the 71,191 missing of the Somme. He is also commemorated on the family gravestone in Sandymount Cemetery, Springboig and on the Glasgow Academy War Memorial.

*Thiepval Memorial, Picardy, France,  
honouring the men who fell on the Somme.*

John Boyd had 6 siblings.

1. **Jane Boyd** was born c1877 at Shettleston, Glasgow. In 1908 she married the Revd John Baird at Bothwell. They had twins, a boy and a girl born in 1909 in Partick.
2. **James Boyd** was born c1877 at Shettleston, Glasgow. Like his father he trained as a mechanical engineer.
3. **Robert Boyd** was born c1879 at Shettleston, Glasgow. He was also a mechanical engineer and died in 1911.
4. **Elizabeth Boyd** was born in 1880 at Shettleston, Glasgow and lived in Biggar until her death in 1965.
5. **Margaret Boyd** was born in 1881 at Shettleston, Glasgow. No further information is available about Margaret but a Miss Boyd, Dunclutha, was a kenspeckle figure in Bothwell in the 1960's.
6. **John Boyd**
7. **William Boyd** was born 1887 at Shettleston, Glasgow. He was a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery and was killed in action in 1918 in France.



*Dunclutha House  
Silverwells Crescent, Bothwell*

# LIEUTENANT WILLIAM BOYD MC

## Royal Field Artillery Attached 252<sup>nd</sup> Coy Royal Engineers

**Died 25 March 1918**

William Boyd was born in 1887 at Shettleston, Glasgow. His father John Boyd was born c1840 in Paisley and was a successful ironfounder and mechanical engineer designing and manufacturing machinery for the textile industry. William's mother, Margaret Boyd nee Boyd was born c1847 in Campbeltown and married John in 1876 at Campbeltown. In 1881 the Boyd's were living in Warwick Villa, Shettleston, Glasgow and by 1891 had moved to Hillfoot, Mount Vernon. Ten years later the family was living at Dunclutha, Silverwells Crescent, Bothwell. John and Margaret died at Dunclutha in 1918 and 1932 respectively.

William Boyd was one of a family of seven. He grew up in Bothwell and was educated at Glasgow Academy. William trained as a civil and mining engineer and was President of the Bothwell Young Men's Religious Improvement Association and the Secretary of the Bothwell Literary Society.

He joined the army and became a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery and was attached to the 252<sup>nd</sup> Company of the Royal Engineers. There was close liaison between the Gunners and the Engineers who constructed the gun emplacements and surveyed the fields of fire. However, if enemy forces came close, all would act as infantry.

There is nothing on record of William Boyd's military service but it is known that he died during the 1918 Spring Offensive or Kaiserschlacht (Kaiser's Battle).

On 21 March 1918 the German army launched a major offensive codenamed "Operation Michael" to drive the allied forces westward and gain victory or a negotiated peace before the strength of the United States of America built up. On March 21st, 1918, General Ludendorff launched the offensive. In just five hours, the Germans fired one million artillery shells at the British lines held by the Fifth Army – over 3000 shells fired every minute. The artillery bombardment was followed by an attack by elite storm troopers. These soldiers travelled lightly and were skilled in fast, hard-hitting attacks before moving on to their next target.



*The Royal Artillery*

By the end of the first day of the attack, the British had lost nearly 20,000 dead, 35,000 wounded and 21,000 had been taken prisoner. Using to great effect their numerical superiority (fifty-eight divisions against sixteen), the Germans created a wide breach in the British front in the space of a few hours. Those units which were not dislocated made a fighting retreat through the increasing chaos amid the congested roads. Amiens soon came under threat and this forced the British to field large numbers of reserves to fill the breach. The German attack was the biggest breakthrough in three years of warfare on the Western Front. Ironically, the British gave up to the Germans the Somme region – where so many British and German soldiers had been killed in the battle of 1916.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> the German's pushed the British and New Zealanders out of Bapaume and Peronne and on the 25 March they fought their way into Noyon, 60 miles north of Paris. It was on this day that Lieutenant William Boyd was killed.

Fresh British and Australian units were moved to the vital rail centre of Amiens and the defence began to stiffen. Slowly but surely the German's initial and spectacular success was beginning to flounder and after fruitless attempts to capture Amiens, Ludendorff called off Operation Michael on April 5.

Lieutenant Boyd was awarded the Military Cross as reported in the London Gazette of 18 January 1918. His citation stated:

*Lt. William Boyd, R.F.A.*

*For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. On entering the enemy trenches, during an advance, he attacked some hostile dug-outs, and brought out from them twenty-two prisoners. He then searched the dug-outs for hidden mines, and made them safe for the infantry. He showed great courage and resource.*



*The Military Cross*

Lieutenant William Boyd MC was killed in action on the 25 March 1918 and is buried in Brevillers British Cemetery, France. He is also remembered on the family gravestone in Sandymount Cemetery, Springboig and on the Glasgow Academy War Memorial.

William Boyd had 6 siblings.

1. **Jane Boyd** was born c1877 at Shettleston, Glasgow. In 1908 she married the Rev John Baird at Bothwell. They had twins, a boy and a girl born in 1909 in Partick.
2. **James Boyd** was born c1877 at Shettleston, Glasgow. Like his father, he also trained as a mechanical engineer.
3. **Robert Boyd** was born c1879 at Shettleston, Glasgow. He also was a mechanical engineer and died in 1911.
4. **Elizabeth Boyd** was born in 1880 at Shettleston, Glasgow and lived in Biggar until her death in 1965.
5. **Margaret Boyd** was born in 1881 at Shettleston, Glasgow. No further information is available about Margaret but a Miss Boyd, Dunclutha, was a kenspeckle figure in Bothwell in the 1960's.
6. **John Boyd** was born c1885 at Glasgow. He was a Lieutenant with the Cameronians and was killed in action in 1916 in France.
7. **William Boyd**



*The Boyd family gravestone in Sandymount Cemetery, Springboig, where William Boyd and his brother John are commemorated.*

# SEAMAN WILLIAM MACBETH BREAKENRIDGE

(J/47167)

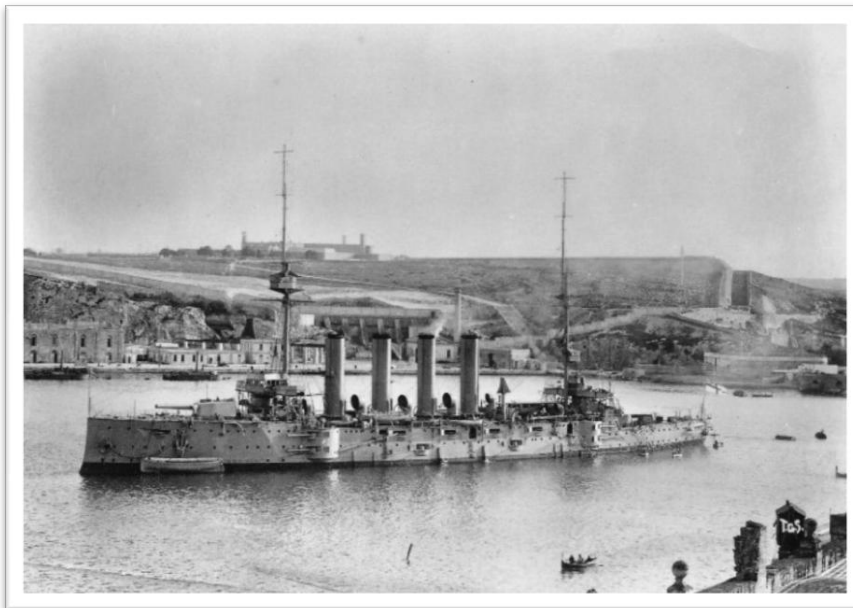
## HMS Valkyrie

**Died 22 December 1917**

**W**illiam Macbeth Breakenridge was born on 8 March 1894 at Hamilton. His father, John Breakenridge was born c1855 at Hamilton and was a colliery winding engine keeper. In 1886 at the Eddlewood Buildings, Low Waters, Hamilton, John Breakenridge had married 21 year old widow Helen Wilson (nee Macbeth) and the couple set up home at Wylie Terrace, Hamilton. Helen was to die there at Wylie Terrace in 1922 followed by her husband John in 1936 at Quarry Street, Hamilton.

William Breakenridge was a painter and on the 23 November 1915 enlisted with the Royal Navy. He was sent to HMS Vivid 1, a shore training establishment at Devonport, England.

On 6 February 1916 Ordinary Seaman Breakenridge was sent to Plymouth to join the 700 crew of HMS Sutlej, an armoured cruiser. After loading provisions and ammunition, on the 10 February the Sutlej slipped anchor and left Plymouth harbour with orders to patrol the west coast of Africa. The ship arrived at Funchal, Madeira six days later before moving on to Tenerife and the Cape Verde Islands. During the next six months, on almost a daily basis, the Sutlej intercepted merchant vessels to establish their legitimacy. At the end of September the Sutlej docked at Gibraltar where she remained for ten weeks, receiving fresh provisions. On the 10 December 1916 the ship was back on patrol, this time off Dakar, Sierra Leone and Ascension Island before returning to Davenport on the 18 April 1917.



*HMS Sutlej*

After helping to off-load stores and ammunition Seaman Breakenridge returned to HMS Vivid 1 on 5 May 1917. A month later on 15 June 1917 he was ordered to join the crew of HMS Valkyrie.

*HMS Valkyrie*



HMS Valkyrie's keel was laid on the 25 of May 1916 at the William Denny & Bros. Ltd shipyard in Dumbarton, Scotland and was launched on the 12 March 1917. She was a V class flotilla leader and was commissioned into the Royal Navy on the 16 June 1917.

In December 1917 eight Harwich Force destroyers were despatched to escort a small convoy from the coast of Holland. The rendezvous was off the Maas Light buoy. This was a regular arrangement and the procedure would have been known to the Flanders Flotilla of the German navy. On about the 10 December they laid a new minefield in the area. At about 2200 hours on 23 December, in thick weather, the destroyer Valkyrie hit a mine about five miles west of the Light. There seems to have been some confusion after this, with the other destroyers in doubt as to what was happening, but some time later HMS Torrent was mined and HMS Surprise, whilst attempting to pick up survivors, also struck two mines and sank quickly. HMS Tornado, manoeuvring in the poor visibility to assist the survivors of her companion ships, then struck a mine which broke her in two and she sank quickly.

HMS Valkyrie survived and was towed home by the destroyer Sylph. About 240 men died in this incident of which 11 were of the crew of the Valkyrie. Amongst those 11 men fatally injured that night was Ordinary Seaman William Breakenridge. He is buried at Bothwell Kirkyard with a gravestone erected by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

William Breakenridge had 7 siblings

1. **John Breakenridge** was born c1888 at Hamilton. He was a miner and in 1913 at Hamilton he married Margaret McGuckie. Seven years later in 1920 the couple emigrated to New Brunswick, Canada with their family of three. John Breakenridge died in Los Angeles in 1946.

2. **Helen Breakenridge** was born c1890 at Hamilton. She married John Allan in 1912 at Londonderry but he died in 1915. She then married Andrew Mitchell in 1919 at Hamilton.
3. **Robert Breakenridge** was born c1892 at Hamilton. He married Mary Martin in 1921 at Hamilton.
4. **William Breakenridge.**
5. **James Breakenridge** was born c1896 at Hamilton. He married Janet Ballantyne in 1927 at Hamilton and he died there in 1953.
6. **Janet Breakenridge** was born c1899 at Hamilton and died there aged 6.
7. **Mary Breakenridge** was born c1900 at Hamilton and died there aged 3.
8. **Archibald Breakenridge** was born c1903 at Hamilton and died there aged 1.



*Ordinary Seaman William Breakenridge's  
gravestone in Bothwell Kirkyard*

# **GUNNER CHARLES HERBERT BROWN**

(117178)

## **Royal Garrison Artillery 285<sup>th</sup> Siege Battery**

**Died 24 July 1917**

**C**harles Herbert Brown was born c1883 at Shifnal, Shropshire. His father John Brown was born c1851 at Loughborough and was a caretaker and coachman. His mother Emma Cook was born c1850 at Abberley, Worcestershire and died in 1935 at Medbourne near Market Harborough. Charles's parents had eight of a family.

In the 1901 census Charles Brown was listed as an apprentice dentist living with his parents at Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. On 8 January 1911 he married Minnie Grace Cook at Hanley and then moved to Westport Cottage, Main Street, Bothwell where he worked as a dentist. There they had a daughter Minnie Grace Brown who was born in February 1912.

Charles Brown enlisted at Hamilton on 12 December 1915 at the age of 32 and was posted to the Royal Garrison Artillery on 18 September 1916 at The Citadel, Plymouth. Gunner Brown, was promoted to Lance Bombardier in November 1916 and was sent to France to join the British Expeditionary Force on 27 March 1917. He reverted to Gunner in April 1917 for leaving camp without permission. Charles was killed in action on 24 July 1917 in France.

After the death of her husband, Minnie and her daughter left Bothwell and went to live at Hanley.

Charles Brown had 7 siblings.

1. **George Brown** was born c1874 at Wakefield, Yorkshire and in 1917 was a painter living in Nottingham.
2. **William Brown** was born c1876 at Darley Dale, Derbyshire and in 1917 was living in Hull.
3. **Arthur Brown** was born c1878 at Darley Dale, Derbyshire and in 1917 was living in Harrogate.
4. **Alma Brown** was born c1882 at Gt Malvern, Worcestershire and in 1917 was living in Karachi, India.
5. **Charles Herbert Brown**
6. **Frank Brown** was born c1884 at Shifnel, Shropshire.
7. **Harold Brown** was born c1886 at Shifnel, Shropshire.
8. **Evelyn Brown** was born c1893 at Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent.

# LANCE CORPORAL JAMES TAYLOR BROWN

(1419)

## Cameronians 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 15 June 1915**

**J**ames Taylor Brown was born on the 10 March 1891 at Hamilton. His father, Gavin Brown, was born c1850 at Lesmahagow and worked as a gardener. His mother was Janet Taylor, born c1848 at Craigie, Ayrshire. She married Gavin Brown in 1878 at Lesmahagow and they started their married life living at the Mansion Gatehouse, Lesmahagow. Around 1889 Gavin obtained a job as a gardener at Woodburn Lodge, Union Street, Hamilton. By 1911 the family had moved to Cadzow Street, Hamilton with Gavin working as a school janitor. It was at Hamilton that Janet Brown died in 1920 followed four years later in 1924 by her husband Gavin.

At the age of 20 James Brown was an apprentice blacksmith and worked at the Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh. At the start of the Great War he enlisted at Hamilton with 'E' Company, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians.

Lance Corporal James Brown was killed in action on the 15 June 1915 in an attack on the German lines near Festubert, France. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31. His body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, France.

James Brown had 10 brothers and sisters.

1. **Margaret (Maggie) Brown** was born c1881 at Lesmahagow. By 1911 she was an assistant school teacher.
2. **Adam Brown** was born c1883 at Lesmahagow. He worked as a gardener.
3. **Helen Brown** was born c1885 at Lesmahagow. She worked as a shop assistant.
4. **Elizabeth Brown** was born c1887 at Lesmahagow. She worked as a shop assistant.
5. **Mary Brown** was born c1889 at Hamilton.
6. **James Taylor Brown**
7. **Gavin Brown** was born c1894 at Hamilton. He started his working life as an assistant fishmonger
8. **John Brown** was born c1895 at Hamilton. He started his working life as an apprentice moulder.
9. **George Brown** was born c1895 at Hamilton. He started his working life as an apprentice moulder.
10. **Albert Brown** was born c1899 at Hamilton.
11. **Wilhelmina Brown** was born in 1901 at Hamilton.

## LANCE CORPORAL JAMES BROWNLIE

(1310)

### Cameronians 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 19 June 1915**

James Brownlie was born on the 8 August 1892 at Windmillhill Street, Motherwell. His father, George Brownlie was born c1856 at Cambusnethan and worked as an engine fitter and crane driver. James's mother was Helen Prentice, born c1860 in Holytown and she married George Brownlie in 1880 at Bothwell. After their marriage the couple lived at Windmillhill Street, Motherwell where they raised their family. Sometime after 1891 they moved to Orbiston Street, Motherwell and there George Brownlie died in 1897. The 1901 census shows Helen Brownlee working as a confectionary shopkeeper. She and her family then moved to Brandon Place, Bothwellhaugh. In 1910 at Bothwellhaugh, widow Helen Brownlie married 56 year old Walter Weir. Helen Brownlie died at Brandon Place in 1929.



*James Brownlie*

James Brownlie was employed in the lamp cabin at the Hamilton Palace Colliery before he enlisted with the 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians. He died of wounds on the 19 June 1915 following an attack on the German lines near Festubert, France. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31. James Brownlie was aged 22 and is commemorated at the Le Touret Memorial, France.

James Brownlie had 7 siblings.

1. **Helen W. Brownlie** was born in 1879 at Holytown. In 1897 at Motherwell she married Walter Weir, a carter. Walter died in 1908 and Helen died in 1915 while living at Brandon Place, Bothwellhaugh.
2. **George Brownlie** was born in 1881 and died in infancy.
3. **Violet Brownlie** was born in 1883 at Motherwell. Violet was living at Orbiston Street, Motherwell when, in 1906 at Camlachie, Glasgow, she married 27 year old William Irvine.

4. **Jane P. Brownlie** was born in 1886 at Jerviston, Motherwell. In 1918 she was living at Brandon Place, Bothwellhaugh and that year, at the Manse, Bothwell, she married John McMeekin, a coal miner from Bothwellhaugh.
5. **Robert Brownlie** was born in 1888 at Motherwell.
6. **Marion P. Brownlie** was born in 1890 at Motherwell.
7. **James Brownlie**
8. **George Brownlie** was born in 1898 at Motherwell and died in 1966 at Hamilton.



*Cameronian's recruiting poster*

# **SERGEANT JAMES BUCHANAN D.C.M.**

(9117)

## **Highland Light Infantry 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion**

**Died 7 November 1914**

James Buchanan was born in Green Street, Bothwell on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1885. His father, Robert Buchanan was born c1845 at Cadder, near Bisopbriggs. James's mother, Margaret Graham, was born c1851 at the Barony, Glasgow. She and Robert Buchanan were married in 1872 at Stepps Farm, Cadder. By 1881 the couple were living with five of a family in New Kilpatrick where Robert was working as an agricultural labourer. In the 1891 census, James was living with his parents and nine of his brothers and sisters in Silverhill House in Bothwell, where his father Robert was a gardener. By 1901 the family had moved to 6 Bothwell Brig, Millside, with Robert now described as a water inspector. There were still seven of the children at home in a house with only 2 rooms with windows. James and two of his brothers John and Robert, were working respectively as a mason's labourer, a stone carter and a mason's hewer. Parents Robert and Margaret and family later moved to Dunside, Lesmahagow where Robert was a sluice keeper at the Dunside Reservoir.

James Buchanan enlisted with the Highland Light Infantry in 1904 and it is likely that he served with the regiment either in India or on garrison duty in the south. He was transferred to the reserve in 1911 and went to live with his sister in Hamilton. In 1913 at Glasgow, James Buchanan married Elizabeth Atkinson, a 26 year old tailoress who was living at Almada Street, Hamilton. At that time he was a craneman living in Dumbarton but later worked for a railway company.

In 1914 at the outbreak of war, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the HLI was mobilised as part of the British Expeditionary Force and James was called up to that Battalion. They arrived in France in August that year and almost immediately were involved in the first battle of Ypres in Flanders. There was little respite for James Buchanan and his comrades, from the enemy shells and rifle fire. On the 21 October the Battalion came under heavy fire and 14 men were killed and over 80 wounded. The daily fighting continued and in the first six days of November, 17 men died and 39 were wounded. The following morning, the 7 November 1914, was very misty and at 4.30am 300 German soldiers attacked 'B' Company's position. Owing to the proximity of the German trenches (varying from 50-15 yards) there was little time to fire and it immediately became a hand-to-hand fight with the Germans occupying part of the trench. Lieut W. Brodie seized a rifle and killed nine of them, five with the bullet and four with the bayonet. For his valour that day he was awarded the Victoria Cross. The 2<sup>nd</sup> HLI retook the trench using bayonets, butts, boots and fists. By the end of it there were eighty Germans dead or wounded on the

field, and fifty-four prisoners. The 2<sup>nd</sup> HLI lost fifteen men killed and twenty-six wounded. Sergeant James Buchanan was killed that day and was posthumously awarded the D.C.M. “For gallant conduct and ability when he promptly took command, after his officer had been wounded, and handled his men in a skilful manner.” James Buchanan is commemorated at the Oosttaverne Wood Cemetery, Belgium.

*The Distinguished Conduct Medal  
Obverse shown right. Reverse inscribed  
“For Distinguished Conduct In The Field”*



James Buchanan had 10 siblings.

1. **John Buchanan** was born c1872 at New Kilpatrick. In 1901 he married 29 year old Francis (Fanny) McKinnon. Fanny’s father had a newsagent shop in Bothwell and her brother Benjamin was killed in action on 15 June 1915 in France. John worked above ground in one of the local pits and he died in 1958 at Bellshill.
2. **Margaret Buchanan** was born c1873 at New Kilpatrick. In 1901 she married Matthew Semple, a railwayman and lived in Hamilton. Margaret died in 1933.
3. **William Buchanan** was born c1875 in New Kilpatrick.
4. **Robert Buchanan** was born c1877 in New Kilpatrick.
5. **David Buchanan** was born c1880 in New Kilpatrick. At the time of his first marriage to Jeanie Johnston in 1902 he was an engine keeper at the local colliery. In 1911 he was a widower, boarding with his daughter at Griqua Terrace, Bothwell. He remarried later that year to Gracie Semple and when he died in 1950 he was working as a coal miner (shaftsman).
6. **Janet Buchanan** was born c1882 in New Kilpatrick.
7. **Agnes Buchanan** was born c1883 in Bothwell.
8. **James Buchanan**
9. **Archibald Buchanan** was born c1887 in Bothwell.
10. **Thomas Buchanan** was born c1889 in Bothwell. Thomas followed his brother into the HLI in 1906 and a year later joined the Royal Artillery.
11. **Andrew Buchanan** was born in 1891 in Bothwell and died in infancy.

26  
64349  
1

WILL. 12<sup>th</sup> August 1914

In the event of my Death  
I give the whole of my  
property <sup>and effects</sup> to my wife  
Elizabeth Buchanan  
3 Guthrie Street  
Hamilton  
Scotland

Signed  
James Buchanan  
Corpl. No. 9114

Highland Light  
Infantry

Witness  
A. Macdonald  
12<sup>th</sup> August 1914  
Plt "B" Coy L.H.I.

# PRIVATE DAVID BULLER

(19353)

## Highland Light Infantry 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 21 October 1915**

David Buller was born on 28 May 1879 at Ballymacrandal, Armagh, Ireland. His father was James Bulla and his mother was Mary Ann Wilson. In 1900, in Ireland, David Buller married Elizabeth Conn a 19 year old from Portadown. Three years later the young couple were living at The Square, Bothwellhaugh, with David working as a coal miner. Ten years later in 1911 they had moved to Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh and had four of a family, Samuel, Victor, David and George. All four were born in Portadown, Ireland. Three years later a fifth son, Albert, was born at Bothwellhaugh. The family later moved to Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh.

David Buller enlisted at Hamilton with the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry. The 11<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion, Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regiment) was raised at Hamilton in August 1914 as part of Kitchener's First New Army. After initial training close to home they joined 28th Brigade in 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division at Aldershot for further training. On the 12 May 1915, they embarked for Boulogne, France and from there moved to Bailleul to acclimatise themselves.

Their first major engagement was the Battle of Loos which started on the 24 September 1915. The 26<sup>th</sup> Brigade was ordered to take three German defensive positions; Strong Point, Madagascar Point and Railway Redoubt. The 6<sup>th</sup> King's Own Scottish Borderers and the 10<sup>th</sup> Highland Light Infantry were to lead the charge. At zero hour, 6.30am,



*Plaque in  
Glasgow Cathedral*

*In Memory of  
The Officers  
The Warrant Officers  
The Non Commissioned Officers  
and Men  
of the  
Twenty Three Battalions  
of  
The Highland Light Infantry  
who fell in the  
Great War  
1914-1918*

*Their Names Liveth  
For Evermore*

the KOSBs went over the top and suffered few casualties until they reached the German wire which was intact having been repaired during the night by wiring parties. As they tried to edge forward with wire cutters the supporting companies moved forward to join them. Suddenly the machine guns in the concrete bunkers of Strong Point opened fire on them destroying the battalion within minutes. All twenty of the officers that had gone forward and 630 men were killed or injured and that evening only forty six survivors responded to the roll call. The 10<sup>th</sup> HLI was cut down from Railway Redoubt before they had managed to advance fifty yards.

The two supporting battalions, 11<sup>th</sup> HLI and the 9<sup>th</sup> Cameronians were ordered forward at 0930 hours but it became evident that the men they were trying to support were all dead or wounded. At 1115 hours a further bombardment was ordered along the Brigade's front and a second infantry attack at 1215 hours. A suggestion by the 11<sup>th</sup> HLI that they should try a flanking manoeuvre from the Hohenzollern Redoubt (now held by the 26th Brigade) was cast aside. The frontal assault would go ahead. The 9<sup>th</sup> Cameronians and half of the 11<sup>th</sup> HLI advanced as ordered, and were shot down with considerable loss. Most men did not even reach the German wire. At 1.30pm Brigade command halted further attack, and its survivors were reorganised for defence of their original lines.

The Battle of Loos raged on for a further 3 weeks, with attack and counter attack. There was little further fighting after the 14 October although military operations did not officially cease until 4 November 1915.

Private David Buller died on the 21 October 1915 and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

After David's death, his widow Elizabeth married Robert Selfridge, a miner from Glasgow in 1926.

David and Elizabeth Buller had 5 sons

1. **Samuel Buller** was born c1902 at Portadown, Ireland. He was a blacksmith and in 1924 at Kirkfield Church, Bothwell, he married Margaret McNally, a 20 year old shop assistant from Motherwell. Samuel died in 1958 at Motherwell.
2. **Victor Buller** was born c1905 at Portadown, Ireland. In 1925 at Bellshill he married Elizabeth Irvine, an 18 year old waitress from Orbiston. Victor died in 1978 at Bothwell.
3. **David Buller** was born c1905 at Portadown, Ireland and died at the age of four.
4. **George Buller** was born c1908 at Portadown, Ireland. He died of the Spanish Flu pandemic in 1918, aged 10 years.
5. **Albert Buller** was born in 1914 at Bothwellhaugh and died in 1924 aged 9 years.

# SAPPER THOMAS CURRAN BURNS

(18018)

## Canadian Engineers 1<sup>st</sup> Tunnelling Company

**Died 20 July 1916**

Thomas Burns was born on 29 June 1881 at Ferniegair Rows, Hamilton. His father James Burns born in Hamilton in 1857, died in 1913, was a coal miner latterly at the Hamilton Palace Colliery. His mother, Sarah Ann Curran was born in 1856 in Donegal, Ireland and died in 1945 in Hamilton. She and James Burns married in 1878 in Hamilton. After their marriage they lived at Feniegair Rows, then Haughhead Rows and finally Bothwellhaugh. After James's death Sarah moved to Glasgow Road Hamilton. They had eight of a family.

Thomas Burns was a miner like his father. Around 1900 he emigrated to Canada and by 1910 had made his way to the mining town of Nanaimo, Vancouver Island. There in 1905 he married Georgina Loudon a 21 year old from Indiana, USA. He enlisted on the 19 September 1914 with the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force and was drafted into the 1<sup>st</sup> Tunnelling Company of the Canadian Engineers.

During the First World War on the western front tunnelling companies were engaged chiefly in mining and counter-mining but they were also used in the construction of subways and deep dugouts. The mines were driven under enemy lines and packed with explosives. Just before an attack on the German trenches the explosives would be detonated causing devastation and disruption to the enemy.

The No. 1 Tunnelling Company, Canadian Engineers was organized in September 1915 under the command of Major R. P. Rogers. It was mobilized at Pembroke, Ontario and recruited in mining centres in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Company of 14 officers and 270 men left Saint John on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1916 aboard SS Metagama and arrived in England on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1916. They arrived in France 16<sup>th</sup> February 1916 and moved into the Ypres sector for instruction. Shortly afterwards, in March 1916, they were stationed near Armentieres. In May 1916 they moved to work



*The Lochnagar Crater as it is today. The Lochnagar mine at the Somme was packed with 24 tons of explosives under the German lines and detonated at 7.28am on the 1 July 1916. At the time it was the largest ever detonated.*

on tunnels at the Bluff, a spoil bank on the Ypres-Comines canal and then took over the tunnelling operation at Hill 60 in preparation for the Battle of Messines.

At the Ypres Salient the Allies had begun a mining offensive against the German trenches in 1916. Sub-surface conditions were especially complex and separate ground water tables made mining difficult. Sappers dug the tunnels into a layer of blue clay 80–120 feet (24–37 m) below the surface, then drifted galleries for up to 6000 yards (5,500 m) to points deep underneath the German front lines. Occasionally the miners would encounter German counterparts engaged in the same task and underground hand to hand fighting would ensue. Tunnelling companies of Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and British miners laid 22 mines with 447 tons of explosive.

Extracts from the War Diary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Tunnelling Company records the events leading up to the death of Sapper Burns on the 20 July 1916;

- 5 June 1916 Shaft completed at Bluff. Started gallery at depth of 85 feet.*
- 7 June Winch house at Bluff completed.*
- 8 June Men ordered out of 'E' account artillery. Water rose in consequence. Night shift on. Not getting ahead at 'E' on account of water.*
- 9 June Water up to 2 feet in drift.*
- 12 June L/corp Clemmett killed by sniper at 'E' shaft*
- 15 June Work on engine room at Gordon Post started. J R Cooper wounded by machine gun fire.*
- 16 June 6 men wounded at engine room excavation at Gordon Post. Bombardment 2pm to 5pm.*
- 18 June Work on larger entrance to Bluff and officers dug-out started. Men ordered out of 'E' account bombardment.*
- 19 June Heavy bombardment front line 2pm to 5pm. Engine room chamber completed.*
- 20 June Pte McKinnon killed by trench mortar. Spr Burns killed while trying to get to McKinnon. Engine generator set arrived at Bedford House.*
- 21 June Buried McKinnon and Burns at Ridgewood Cemetery. Bombardment stopped work.*

Sapper Thomas Burns is buried at Ridgewood Military Cemetery, Belgium.



*Ridgewood Military Cemetery,  
Belgium*

Thomas Burns had 7 siblings.

1. **Margaret Burns** was born in 1877 at Ferniegair Rows, Hamilton.
2. **Thomas Burns**
3. **Annie Burns** was born in c1882 at Ferniegair Rows, Hamilton.
4. **Patrick Burns** was born c1883 at Ferniegair Rows, Hamilton. By 1901 he was a pony driver in the Haughhead Colliery. In 1908, at Bellshill he married Anne Wright and by 1911 they were living at Bothwellhaugh. Following Anne's death he married Mary McGinley in 1958. Latterly he lived in Cambuslang and prior to his death in 1955 was a Regimental Club Master.
5. **Michael Burns** was born in c1885 at Ferniegair Rows, Hamilton. By the age of 16, he was a coal miner.
6. **James Burns** was born c1887 at Ferniegair Rows, Hamilton.
7. **Dennis Burns** was in 1889 at Ferniegair Rows, Hamilton. He was a coal miner and in 1913 married Margaret King a restaurant waitress living at Bothwellhaugh. Dennis was a fish hawker and died in 1925 at his home at 12 Castle Square, Bothwell.
8. **John Burns** was born in 1891 at Hamilton.

**BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION ACT.**

SCHEDULE C.—Marriages. 05-09-096667

Registration District of **NANAIMO.**

Bridegroom.	No.	1578
	His name.	Thomas Burns
	Age.	25 years
	Residence when married.	Nanaimo, B.C.
	Place of birth.	Ferniegair, Lanarkshire, Scotland
	Condition (Bachelor or Widower.)	Bachelor
	Rank or profession.	Miner
Bride.	Names of parents.	James Burns & Sarah Ann Lussan
	Her name.	Georgiana Loudon
	Age.	21 years
	Residence when married.	Nanaimo, B.C.
	Place of birth.	Asherville, Indiana, U.S.A.
	Spinster or widow.	Spinster
	Names of parents.	Joseph Loudon & Sarah Ann Lewis
Names of witnesses.	Joseph Loudon, Jr. Mary Walker	
Residence of witnesses.	Nanaimo, B.C. Cumberland, B.C.	
Date of marriage.	Home of Joseph Loudon, Sr., Nanaimo	
Religious denomination of bridegroom.	Presbyterian	
Religious denomination of bride.	Methodist	
By whom married.	Rev. A. M. Sanford	
By licence or by banns.	Licence No. 17473	
Place of marriage, church, residence, &c.	Friday, July 21st, 1905	

I hereby certify the foregoing to be the correct Record of the marriage of **Thomas Burns** and **Georgiana Loudon** made in pursuance of the above mentioned Act.

Dated the **fourth** day of **August**, A.D. 1905

Signature of Clergyman, Minister or Registrar, **A. M. Sanford**

Marriage certificate of  
Thomas Burns and  
Georgina Loudon.  
  
Nanaimo, British Columbia  
July 21<sup>st</sup> 1905

# PRIVATE COLIN CAMPBELL

(32472)

## Royal Scots

### Died 27 June 1915

Colin Campbell was born c1878 in Ireland. His father, Donald Campbell, was born c1840 in Argyll and worked as a gardener. Colin's mother, Elizabeth Benzie, was born c1844 at Foveran, Aberdeen-shire and it was there that she married Donald Campbell in 1872. At that time Donald Campbell was working in the gardens of the historic Plessey House, Co. Limerick, Ireland. After their marriage the couple returned to Ireland and it was there that their three children were born. By 1891 the family had moved back to Scotland. Donald had obtained a position as a gardener at Hamilton Palace and the family were living in Almada Lodge, one of the gateways to the Palace.

Colin Campbell, as a 13 year old, was employed as a butcher's boy but 10 years later had followed in his father's footsteps to be a gardener. In 1904 Colin's father died and the family had to vacate Almada Lodge. By 1911 Colin had found work as the gardener at Sweethope House and he and his mother and sister moved into Sweethope Lodge, Green Street, Bothwell.

On the 9 January 1915, 37 year old Colin Campbell enlisted at Hamilton with the Royal Scots. He was sent for training to the south of England but developed bronchitis and was admitted to Frensham Hill Military Hospital, Surrey, on the 20 February 1915. After 46 days in hospital, he was discharged on the 6 April 1915 and discharged from the Army on medical grounds on the 22 March 1915.

Colin returned home to Sweethope Lodge and died there of T.B. on the 27 June 1915. He is commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial.

Colin's mother and sister continued to live at Sweethope Lodge until the time of his mother's death in 1922.

Colin had 2 siblings.

1. **Archibald Campbell** was born c1874 in Ireland. He was a draper and in 1900 at Hamilton he married Marion Stewart, a 20 year old dressmaker.
2. **Colin Campbell**
3. **Elizabeth Campbell** was born c1889 in Ireland.

# PRIVATE JOHN SMITH CAMERON

(27812)

## Royal Scots 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Lothian Regiment)

### Died 15 September 1916

John Smith Cameron was born on 11 July 1896 at Hamilton Palace Colliery Rows, Bothwellhaugh. His father, Archibald Cameron, was born c1852 at Hazelbank, Lanarkshire. His mother, Agnes Smith, was born c1854 in Peebles-shire and his parents married in 1886 at Cambusnethan. At the time of his marriage Archibald Cameron was a coal miner and the couple set up home at Bothwellhaugh where their five children were born. By 1901 the family had moved to Burnbank and Archibald was now employed as a life assurance agent.

John Cameron left school and at the age of 14 was a message boy. He then obtained a position as a lampman engaged at the pithead. At the outbreak of war he enlisted in the army and joined the Royal Scots 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Lothian Regiment).

The 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed at Edinburgh in September 1914. The Battalion then moved to Aldershot to join the 45th Brigade, 15th (Scottish) Division. After training they embarked for France in July 1915. That year the Division fought at the Battle of Loos and the following year saw action at the Battle of Flers-Courcelette which was a battle within the Somme Offensive and took place in the summer and autumn of 1916. Launched on 15 September 1916 the battle went on for one week. The objective was to cut a hole in the German line using massed artillery and infantry attacks. This hole would then be exploited with the use of cavalry. An intense preliminary bombardment began on 12 September and at 6.20am on Friday 15 September the advance began in mist and smoke. In the centre of the attack, the village of Martinpuich, was captured by the 15th (Scottish) Division.

However by its conclusion on 22 September, the strategic objective of a breakthrough had not been achieved although in some places, the front lines were advanced by over 2,500 yards by the Allied attacks. On the first day of the battle, the 15 September 1916, Private John Cameron was killed in action and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France.

John Cameron had 4 siblings.

1. **James Cameron** was born c1887 at Bothwellhaugh.
2. **Thomas Cameron** was born c1889 at Bothwellhaugh.
3. **Robert Cameron** was born c1892 at Bothwellhaugh.
4. **Agnes Cameron** was born c1894 at Bothwellhaugh.
5. **John Smith Cameron**

# SERGEANT FRANK CARSON

(12294)

## Cameronians 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion

### Died 4 December 1915

Frank Carson was born on the 18 December 1891 at Beckford Street, Hamilton. His father, William Buck Carson, was born in 1857 at the Gorbals, Glasgow and he worked as an iron moulder. Frank Carson's mother was Helen MacMenemy and she was born c1864 at Glasgow. She married William Carson in 1885 at the Gorbals and they set up home at Beckford Street, Hamilton. By 1891 the family was living at Waverly Place, Bothwell with William Carson employed as an iron turner. William Carson died in 1929 at Clyde Avenue, Bothwell.

Frank Carson was employed as an iron moulder. After war was declared he enlisted at Bothwell with the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians. The 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed at Hamilton in August 1914 and came under orders of 28th Brigade in 9th (Scottish) Division. After a period of training in England the Battalion landed at Boulogne 12 May 1915. After a spell in billets the Battalion were ordered on 7 July 1915 to the support trenches near Festubert. For the next two months the men of the 9<sup>th</sup> alternated between front line duty and relief in the billets to the rear. They first saw action on the 25 September at Cambrin. The War Diary describes the action

*“At 3am orders were received for the attack to begin at 6.30am. At 6am the Battalion which had spent the night in assembly trenches commenced to move up in support of the 10<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. Subsequent events proved that the preliminary bombardment had failed to neutralise to any extent the enemy's defences. The initial attack by the 10<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. failed with very heavy casualties. Two Companies of the 9<sup>th</sup> Cameronians moving up in support according to order, suffered a good deal before the advance was stopped when it was realized that the order must have been based on erroneous information. At this point efforts were made to reorganise the Battalion. This was made very difficult as many of the 10<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. had lost their way in the trenches. An attack to be preceded by intensive bombardment of the German Front was ordered for 12 noon The assault was very quickly held up by machine gun and rifle fire from the front and flank. The casualties of the Battalion in this action were very heavy. 6 Officers were killed, 6 wounded and 1 missing, and 394 other ranks were killed or wounded. “*

For the next three months the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion manned the front line trenches enduring shelling and sniper fire. On the 4 December 1915 Sergeant Frank Carson died of wounds received while fighting on the Western Front at Flanders near Leper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. He was aged 24 and is buried at Maple Copse Cemetery.

Frank Carson had 2 siblings.

1. **Helen Carson** was born c1887 at Glasgow. She was a fancy goods saleswoman and in 1920 at Govanhill, Glasgow, married William Thomson, a 30 year old grocer's assistant from Uddingston.
2. **James Carson** was born c1889 at Hamilton.
3. **Frank Carson**

**“The Valiant never taste of death but once.”**

*Epitaph placed in the Hamilton Advertiser by his parents.*



*Maple Copse Cemetery  
Leper, Belgium.*

## GUARDSMAN WILLIAM CASEY

(14132)

### Scots Guards 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 11 June 1917**

William Casey was born c1897 at Larkhall. His father, Andrew Casey, was born c1867 at Larkhall and was a coal miner. In 1891 at Holytown, Lanarkshire, he married Agnes Stark a 24 year old domestic servant from Newarthill. The couple settled in Larkhall and started a family; Agnes c1893, Bella c1895, William c1897, Margaret c1899, Jemima c1901, Andrewina c1905 and John c1908. Daughter Jemima married John Aitchison, a bus driver from Hamilton, in 1924. In August 1924, at the age of 57, Andrew Casey emigrated to the USA, sailing from Liverpool to New York with their address given as The Square, Bothwell. The US census of 1930 records Andrew Casey as an apartment janitor living in Queens, New York. Andrew Casey died in New York in 1948, followed by his wife Agnes in 1956.

William Casey enlisted in Glasgow with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Scots Guards. In October 1917 the Battalion mobilised for war and in November, the 2nd Battalion landed in France as part of the 20th Brigade of the 7th Division. The Battalion took part in the First Battle of Ypres which took place between September and November 1914 and saw further involvement in the bitter cold month of December. In that month, on 19 December, Private James Mackenzie of the 2nd Battalion won the regiment its first Victoria Cross (VC) of the war. That Christmas Day of 1914 is remembered for the remarkable unofficial truce between the frontline troops of the two warring armies. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Scots Guards (including in all probability Guardsman Casey) was one unit to lay down their arms and enjoy some Christmas cheer with the Germans.

Captain Sir Edward Hulse, Bart, 2nd Battalion Scots Guards wrote:

*"At 8.30 a.m. I was looking out and saw four Germans leave their trenches and come towards us. I told two of my men to go and meet them, unarmed, as the Germans were unarmed, and to see that they did not pass the halfway line. We were 350 - 400 yards apart at this point. My fellows were not very keen, not knowing what was up, so I went out alone and met Barry, one of our ensigns, also coming out from another part of the line. By the time we got to them, they were three-quarters of the way over, and much too near our barbed wire, so I moved them back. They were three private soldiers and a stretcher-bearer, and their spokesman started off by saying that he thought it only right to come over and wish us a Happy Christmas, and trusted us implicitly to keep the truce.*

*He came from Suffolk, where he had left his best girl and a three-and-a-half horsepower motorbike. He told me that he could not get a letter to the girl, and wanted to send one*

*through me. I made him write out a post card, in English, in front of me, and I sent it off that night. I told him that she probably would not be a bit keen to see him again.*

*We then entered on a long discussion on every sort of thing. I was dressed in an old stocking-cap and a man's overcoat, and they took me for a corporal, a thing which I did not discourage, as I had an eye to going as near their lines as possible. I asked them what orders they had from their officers as to coming over to us, and they said none; they had just come over out of goodwill.*

*I kept it up for half-an-hour and then escorted them back as far as their barbed wire, having a jolly good look round all the time, and picking up various little bits of information which I had not had an opportunity of doing under fire.*

*I left instructions with them that if any of them came out later they must not come over the half-way line, and appointed a ditch as the meeting-place. We parted after an exchange of Albany cigarettes and German cigars, and I went straight to HQ to report.*

*On my return at 10a.m. I was surprised to hear a hell of a din going on, and not a single man in my trenches; they were completely denuded (against my orders) and nothing lived. I heard strains of "Tipperary" floating down the breeze, swiftly followed by a tremendous burst of "Deutschland Uber Alles," and, as I got to my own Company HQ dugout, I saw, to my amazement, not only a crowd of about 150 British and Germans, at the halfway house which I had appointed opposite my lines, but six or seven such crowds, all the way down our lines, extending towards the 8th Division on our right.*

*I hustled out and asked if there were any German officers in my crowd, and the noise died down. (At this time I was myself in my own cap and badges of rank.)*

*I found two, but had to speak to them through an interpreter, as they could talk neither English nor French. I explained to them that strict orders must be maintained as to meeting half-way and everyone unarmed; and we both agreed not to fire until the other did, thereby creating a complete deadlock and armistice (if strictly observed.)*

*Meanwhile, Scots and Huns were fraternizing in the most genuine possible manner. Every sort of souvenir was exchanged, addresses given and received, photos of families shown etc. One of our fellows offered a German a cigarette; the German said, "Virginian?" Our fellow said, "Aye, straight-cut." The German said, "No thanks, I only smoke Turkish!" (Sort of 10 shillings a hundred man, me. It gave us all a good laugh.) The Border Regiment was occupying this section on Christmas Day and Giles Loder, our Adjutant, went down there with a party that morning on hearing of the friendly demonstrations in front of my Company, to see if he could come to an agreement about our dead, who were still lying out between the trenches. The trenches are so close at this point that of course each side had to be far stricter. Well, he found an extremely pleasant and superior stamp of German officer who arranged to bring all our dead to the half-way line. We took them over there and buried 29 exactly half-way between the two lines. Giles collected all personal effects, pay-books and identity discs, but was stopped by the Germans when he told some men to bring in the rifles; all rifles lying on their side they had kept carefully.*

*They apparently treated our prisoners well, and did all they could for our wounded. This officer kept on pointing to our dead and saying, 'Les braves, c'est bien dommage.'"*

Leutnant Johannes Niemann, Royal Saxon Regiment also wrote about the truce albeit with the Seaforth Highlanders in an adjacent sector and the famous football match between the Scots and the Germans.

*"Later a Scottish soldier appeared with a football which seemed to come from nowhere and a few minutes later a real football match got underway. The Scots marked their goalmouth with their strange caps and we did the same with ours. It was far from easy to play on the frozen ground, but we continued, keeping rigorously to the rules, despite the fact that it only lasted an hour and that we had no referee. Us Germans really roared when a gust of wind revealed that the Scots wore no drawers under their kilts - and hooted and whistled every time they caught an impudent glimpse of one posterior belonging to one of "yesterday's enemies." But after an hour's play, when our Commanding Officer heard about it, he sent an order that we must put a stop to it. A little later we drifted back to our trenches and the fraternisation ended. The game finished with a score of three goals to two in favour of Fritz against Tommy."*

The unofficial truce only lasted for Christmas Day and then it was back to the business of war.

In September 1915, the battalion took part in the Battle of Loos. On 27 September, when they were moving in preparation to attack a German-held position known as Hill 70, an artillery barrage caught them, causing many casualties among the Guards. In September 1916, the Scots Guards were involved in the Somme Offensive taking part in the subsidiary Battle of Flers-Courcelette, which saw the first introduction of the tank, and at another subsidiary battle, at Morval, where the Guards captured Lesboeuifs.

Guardisman William Casey died on 11 July 1917 and was buried at Ste Marie Cemetery, Le Harve. Le Harve contained three general and two stationary hospitals, and four convalescent depots. One can only assume that Guardsman Casey was injured during his time at the front line and was transferred to a hospital at Le Harve where he died aged 20.

William Casey had six siblings.

1. **Agnes Casey** was born c1893 at Larkhall.
2. **Bella Casey** was born c1895 at Larkhall.
3. **William Casey**
4. **Margaret Casey** was born c1899 at Larkhall.
5. **Jemina Casey** was born 1901 at Larkhall. In 1924 at Glasgow she married John Aitchison and emigrated to America in 1926.
6. **Andrewina Casey** was born c1905 at Larkhall. She was a laundry maid and emigrated to America in 1926.
7. **John Casey** was born c1908. He was a miner but when he emigrated to America in 1926 became a motor mechanic.

# PRIVATE THOMAS CLARK

(S/5233)

## Gordon Highlanders 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion

### Died 25 September 1915

**T**homas Clark was born on the 18 June 1893 at Pitt Street, Newton, Cambuslang. His father, George Clark, was born in 1871 at Shotts. Thomas's mother, Annie Ramsay, was born in 1873 at Whitburn, Linlithgowshire and she married George Clark, a miner, in 1891 at Fauldhouse. The couple moved to Pitt Street, Newton to live with Annie's mother and grandmother. Around 1902 the couple, now with four of a family, moved to Hill Place and then Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh where five more children were born. George Clark died at Fairhill, Meikle Earnock, Hamilton in 1936, followed by his widow Annie in 1962 at Larkhall.

In 1911 Thomas Clark, a 17 year old miner at the Hamilton Palace Colliery was living with his parents at Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh. He enlisted with the Gordon Highlanders, 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, K Company, the same Company as Private Robert McIntyre, who was also from Bothwellhaugh. The 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed in September 1914 as part of the Second New Army and came under the orders of the 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. After ten months of training at various locations in England they were ordered to France in July 1915 and given a period of acclimatisation in the Béthune area. The 10<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders first saw action at the Battle of Loos on 25 September 1915. It was on the first day of that battle that Private Thomas Clark was killed in action. Seven men from Bothwell also died at Loos and details of the Battle are given on page 25.

Private Clark is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, France.

Thomas Clark had 8 siblings.

1. **Thomas Clark.**
2. **William R. Clark** was born in 1895 at Newton, Cambuslang.
3. **James R. Clark** was born in 1897 at Newton, Cambuslang.
4. **Jessie M. Clark** was born in 1901 at Newton, Cambuslang. In 1929 at Bothwell she married James Chassels. Jessie died in 1946 at Lanarkshire.
5. **George Clark** was born in 1905 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh.
6. **Anne R. Clark** was born in 1905 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh.
7. **John Clark** was born in 1906 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh. He was a blacksmith and in 1932 at Lanchester, Durham he married Isabella Buchan. John Clark died in 1971 at Newcastle upon Tyne.
8. **Elizabeth R. Clark** was born in 1909 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh.
9. **Charles Clark** was born 1912 at Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh.

# **PRIVATE JAMES BUCHANAN COATS**

(401)

## **Cameronians 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Formerly 2<sup>nd</sup> Scottish Rifles Volunteer Corps**

**Died 26 June 1917**

**J**ames Buchanan Coats was born in 1882 at Stirling. His father, Robert Coats, was born c1852 at Grantown-on-Spey, Inverness-shire and was employed as a stone miner. James's mother, Margaret Buchanan, was born c1852 at Bannockburn, Stirling and she married Robert Coats in 1880 at Stirling. After their marriage they lived in Stirling for some three years before moving to Slamannan. By 1887 they were living with their family at Blantyre. From there they moved to Main Street, Bothwell and by 1911 were living at Green Street, Bothwell. Robert Coats died in 1928 predeceasing his wife, Margaret by four years.

At the age of 16 in September 1898, James Coats enlisted with the Scottish Rifles Volunteer Corps, a territorial force. His civilian employment was as a miner working for William Baird & Co Ltd at the Castle Colliery while living with his parents at Green Street, Bothwell. From 1901 to 1902 he fought in the Boer War in South Africa. By 1908, at the age of 27, he had reached the rank of Lance Sergeant. That year he joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians as a private. In August 1914 he was promoted to Lance Corporal. The 6th Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) was based at Muirhall in Hamilton with the Scottish Rifle Brigade, Lowland Division when war was declared in August 1914. James Coats and his battalion set off from Falkirk to join the British Expeditionary Force in France, disembarking at Le Harve on the 21 March 1915.

On the 31 March they relieved the Middlesex Regiment at the La Boutillierie trenches. The following month James Coats was reduced to private at his own request. For the next month the battalion was either on a 6 day tour of duty at the front line trenches or in billets behind the lines. While at the front line, duties included night patrols and repair and maintenance of the trenches while all the time under intermittent shell and sniper fire. After their front line tour of duty, there was no relaxation in the rear billets with rifle drill, training exercises and 5 mile route marches. During this period the weather was variable ranging from very hot and humid to incessant rain and thunderstorms the latter making the trenches very muddy.

In May 1915 a British Army offensive was planned at Aubers Ridge, north of the town of Arras in France. The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion was in billets south of Fleurbaix and was moved on the 8 May to its assembly position as a divisional reserve. By the small hours of the following morning all the troops waited in readiness. At 5.40am on the 10 May the artillery barrage lifted and the assault troops went "over the top." At 6.30am the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Cameronians received orders to advance but they were caught in enemy

machine gun fire and many were killed or wounded including their commanding officer Lieut. Colonel Vandeleur (later to spend his retirement at Orchard Avenue, Bothwell.) The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been instructed to move forward to occupy the forward trenches previously occupied by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion and await communication from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion to follow them into battle. However in the heat of battle communication was lost and the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion was ordered to stand fast until ordered forward. No signal came and the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion remained where it was in readiness.

At 8.30 am the attack came to a standstill. The British front line and communication trenches were blocked with the dead and wounded and by units such as the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion awaiting orders. The congestion was continually increased by the stream of wounded moving to the rear and by the pressure of rear-ward troops endeavouring to reach the front. The Germans now proceeded to bombard the congested British trenches and continued to shell all day and night. The Battle of Aubers Ridge was an unmitigated disaster for the British army. No ground was won and no tactical advantage gained.

During the action on the 10 May 1915, Private James Coats was wounded by shrapnel in the shoulder and chest. Four days later he was back in Britain to recuperate from his wounds before returning to France and his Battalion in December 1916. It would appear that he was still suffering from his wounds for he was discharged from the army on 29 April 1916 after 8 years and 10 months exemplary service. His commanding officer wrote that James Coats was “a thoroughly reliable man, sober, capable and willing and highly commended.” He returned to live with his parents at Green Street, Bothwell and worked as an engineer’s labourer.

James Coats died of tuberculosis on 26 June 1917 at Shotts Sanatorium and is commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial.

James Coats had six siblings.

1. **John Coats** was born c1876 at Stirling.
2. **James Coats**
3. **Annie Coats** was born c1883 at Stirling
4. **Clementina Coats** was born c1885 at Slamannan. She was a domestic servant living at Green Street, Bothwell and there she married James Smith, a 24 year old gardener living at Thorntree Place, Bothwell.
5. **Margaret Coats** was born c1887 at Blantyre.
6. **Robert Coats** was born c1889 at Blantyre. Like his brother James, Robert enlisted with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Scottish Rifles Volunteer Corps and at the outbreak of war was posted to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians. He achieved the rank of sergeant and was discharged from the army in 1916. He was recorded in 1926 as a patient at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.
7. **Thomas Coats** was born in 1894 at Waterloo Row, Blantyre.

## PRIVATE JAMES COLLINS

(S/52692)

### Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 26 October 1918**

James Collins was born 3 January 1898 at Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh. His father William Collins was born in 1859 at Bellshill and worked as a coal miner. He married Helen (Ellen) Jane McCaffery in 1889, an 18 year old from Dalziel, Motherwell. The couple lived most of their married life in Bothwellhaugh, firstly at the



*Roman Place,  
Bothwellhaugh.  
The Co-operative  
shop is the building  
at the end of the row  
of houses.*

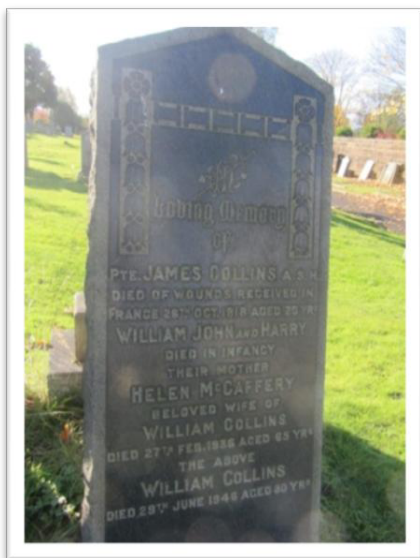
Palace Rows before moving to Roman Place and then to Raith Place. Ellen Jane Collins died at Bothwellhaugh in 1936 followed by her husband ten years later in 1946.

Private James Collins enlisted at Hamilton and joined the 2nd Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The Battalion was at Fort George when war broke out in August 1914 and were mobilised to join the British Expeditionary Force as Lines of Communication troops, landing at Boulogne on the 14th of August. They spent the entire First World War fighting in France, notably Le Cateau, Loos and the Somme. They defended Polygon Wood in the Battle of Passchendaele between June and September 1917. The Armistice found them close by Le Cateau where they had started the war.

Private James Collins died on 26 October 1918 of wounds received in France and is buried in Bothwell Park Cemetery.

James Collins had 9 siblings.

1. **Helen (Nellie) Collins** was born 1890 at Dalziel. In 1913 she married John Graham a 22 year old coal miner from Bothwellhaugh. Helen died in 1952 at Bathgate.
2. **Thomas Collins** was born c1893 at Bothwellhaugh. He was a pony driver in the Palace Colliery and in 1915 married Elizabeth Aiton at Bothwell. Thomas died as the result of an accident at Bellshill in 1952.
3. **William Collins** was born in 1895 at Bothwellhaugh and died there in 1898.
3. **James Collins**
4. **John Collins** was born in 1900 at Bothwellhaugh and died there in 1901.
5. **Margaret Collins** was born c1903 at Bothwellhaugh. She was a shop assistant and in 1922 at the Manse Bothwell she married Alexander Gunn a 21 year old coal miner from Bothwellhaugh. Margaret died in 1968 at Bellshill.
6. **Alice Collins** was born c1905 at Bothwellhaugh. She was a laundress and in 1931 at St Brides Church, Bothwell she married James Hunter, a 22 year old coal miner from Bothwellhaugh. Alice died in 1968 at Bellshill.
7. **Mary Collins** was born c1908 at Bothwellhaugh. Mary was a laundress and in 1933 at St Brides Church, Bothwell she married David Grant, a 27 year old coal miner from Bellshill. Mary died in 1976 at Bellshill.
8. **Elizabeth Collins** was born in 1909 at Bothwellhaugh. Elizabeth was a laundress and in 1935 at St Brides Church, Bothwell she married 24 year old William Graham, a coal miner from Viewpark. Elizabeth died in 2000 at Wishaw.
9. **William Collins** was born c1913 at Bothwellhaugh. He was a contractors storekeeper and in 1940 married Janet Paul a 22 year old laundress from Bothwell Haugh. At that time William Collins was serving in the armed forces during the Second World War.
10. **Henry Collins** was born in 1914 at Bothwellhaugh and died in infancy.



*In  
Loving Memory  
Of  
Pte James Collins ASH  
Died of wounds received in  
France 26<sup>th</sup> October 1918 aged 26 yrs  
William John and Harry  
Died in infancy  
Their mother  
Helen McCafferty  
Beloved wife of  
William Collins  
Died 27<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1936 aged 65 yrs  
The above  
William Collins  
Died 28<sup>th</sup> June 1946 aged 80 yrs  
Gravestone in Bothwellpark Cemetery*

## **PRIVATE JAMES CRAWFORD**

### **Machine Gun Corps**

**T**he Commonwealth War Graves Commission has no record of the death of a Private James Crawford of the Machine Gun Corps during 1914-18 War. There are no Army service records for of a Private James Crawford of the Machine Gun Corps living or enlisting in Bothwell or the surrounding area. There were two James Crawfords who lived in Bothwell in the early 1900's but both died much later than 1914-18. The life story of James Crawford of the Machine Gun Corps is not known. He is, however, commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial and acknowledged here.

## PRIVATE WILLIAM DAY

(12793)

### Highland Light Infantry 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 25 September 1915**

**W**illiam Day was born on the 15 January 1888 at Haywood, Carnwath, Lanarkshire. His father, George Day, was born c1855 at Lesmahagow and worked as a coal miner. William's mother, Margaret Laidlaw, was born c1848 in Lanark. She married George Day in 1875 at Lanark. The couple started their married life at Kirkfieldbank before moving with their family to Baird's Square, Fallside Road, Bothwell. On the 18 January 1900 George Day was killed by a fall of coal from the roof of Bothwell Castle No 2 Pit. Five years later in 1905 his widow, Margaret died at Murray Place Bothwell. William Day and his brother George and sister Helen continued to live at Murray Place and are recorded there in the 1911 census.

William Day enlisted with the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry and was killed in action on the 25 September 1915, the first day of the Battle of Loos. Seven men from Bothwell also died at Loos and details of the Battle are given on page 25.

Private Day is buried at Cambrin Churchyard Extension, France.

William Day had 5 siblings.

1. **George Day** was born c1876 at Lesmahagow. In 1919 he was a coal miner living in Glasgow and he married his cousin Margaret Day. George died at 1 Fallside Road, Bothwell in 1952.
2. **John Day** was born c1878 at Lesmahagow. In 1908 at Pinkerton House, Green Street, Bothwell he married 28 year old widow Janet Wood nee Gray. John Day worked as a steelworks labourer, latterly living at Halfway, Cambuslang. He died in 1954.
3. **Margaret Day** was born c1880 at Lesmahagow. She was a domestic servant and in 1899 at Baird's Square, Bothwell, she married 22 year old miner, Richard Greenwood. Latterly they lived at Cambusland and Margaret died in 1966.
4. **Helen L. Day** was born c1886 at Haywood, Carnwarth. She was a barmaid and in 1915 at Hamilton she married 45 year old Andrew Mair, a coal miner from Bothwellhaugh. Andrew's brother John Mair was killed in action in 1915 at Ypres. Helen died in 1949 at 1 Fallside Road, Bothwell.
5. **William Day**
6. **Mary B. Day** was born c 1898 at Lesmahagow. She was a munitions worker when in 1917 she married 21 year old John Mackenzie, a coal miner from Bothwellhaugh. She later married Harold Lister, living latterly in Glasgow and Mary died there in 1955.

# ALEXANDER DOBBIN

(19695)

## Highland Light Infantry 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 2 November 1918**

Alexander Dobbin was born on the 27 October 1888 at Gartsherrie, Lanarkshire. His father, Thomas Dobbin, a coal miner, was born c1857 at Bothwell. Alexander's mother, Catherine Wallace, was born c1863 at Kirkintilloch. She and Thomas Dobbin were married in 1881 at High Riggend near Airdrie. Around 1890 the couple with their family moved to Kirkstyle, Bothwell. The tenemental houses (now demolished) at Kirkstyle were next to the Douglas Arms. Thomas Dobbin found work at the Bothwell Castle Colliery as an ostler, looking after the pit ponies underground. From Kirkstyle the family moved to Rait's Land, Main Street, Bothwell and then to Griqua Terrace and it was there that Thomas died in 1914. His wife Catherine remarried in 1926, living at Fallside Road until her death in 1949.

Alexander Dobbin enlisted with the 14<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry. The Battalion was formed at Hamilton in July 1915 as a Bantam Battalion and moved to Gailes Camp, Troon. In September 1915 the Battalion moved to Blackdown, now known as Deepcut Barracks, Surrey as part of the 120<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 40<sup>th</sup> Division. This Division was originally formed as a Kitchener's Army 'Bantam' division. 'Bantam' personnel were those who were under the Army regulation height of 5ft 2ins but otherwise fit for service. The Division moved to the Western Front in June 1916 and served there throughout the war. Alexander Dobbin was promoted to Lance Corporal and was taken prisoner by the Germans. He died on the 2 November 1918 in a prisoner of war camp at Giessen Germany and is buried at Cologne Southern Cemetery, Germany.

Alexander Dobbin had 9 siblings.

1. **Mary M. Dobbin** was born c1881 at Monklands. In 1902 at Bothwell, she married 22 year old locomotive engine fireman James Kennedy and they had four of a family. Mary died in 1912 of scarlet fever.
2. **James H. Dobbin** was born c1885 at Bothwell. He was a coal miner and in 1907 at the Royal Hotel, Uddingston he married Jeanie Gemmell, a 23 year old domestic servant from Uddingston. James later became a spirit salesman and he and Jeanie had three of a family. James died in 1944 at Main Street, Bothwell.

3. **Annie S Dobbin** was born c1886 at Bargeddie, Lanarkshire. In 1917 at Griqua Terrace, Bothwell, she married James Wilson, a motor driver. Annie died in 1966 at Hartwood.
4. **Alexander Dobbin**
5. **Catherine Dobbin** was born c1891 at Bothwell. In 1931 at Bothwell Parish Church, Catherine, a domestic servant living at Mossend married James Jackson, a mason's labourer from Harthill. Catherine died in 1977 at Harthill.
6. **Susan Dobbin** was born c1893 at Bothwell. In 1912 at the Public Hall in Bothwell she married Alexander Russell, a 22year old coal miner. Alexander enlisted with the Cameronians and died in 1918 in a prisoner of war hospital in Germany.
7. **Henrietta Dobbin** was born c1896 at Bothwell. Henrietta was a domestic servant and in 1917 at the Mission Hall, Bothwell she married 26 year old Blantyre coal miner, Matthew Robson. Henrietta lived in Blantyre and died in 1972.
8. **Jeanie S. Dobbin** was born 1897 at Bothwell. She was a domestic servant and in 1920 at the Mission Hall, Bothwell she married Archibald Donnelly, a 24 year old coal miner from Bothwellhaugh.
9. **Thomas Dobbin** was born in 1902 at Bothwell. In 1922 at Kirkwood manse he married Giles Tinto Cathcart. Latterly he was a gas works labourer and he died in 1969 at Langside Road, Bothwell.
10. **Margaret Dobbin** was born c1907 at Bothwell. She was living in Glasgow in 1928 when she married 21 year old Robert Lees, a nurse at Hartwood Asylum. Margaret died in 1987 at Shotts.

We pictured his safe returning,  
And longed to clasp his hand;  
But God postponed that meeting,  
Till we meet in a better land.

*Epitaph placed by Alexander Dobbin's mother in the Hamilton Advertiser.*



*Cologne Southern  
Military Cemetery,  
Germany*

# PRIVATE ALEXANDER LOCHHEAD DOBSON

(9132140)

## Machine Gun Corps 21<sup>st</sup> Company

**Died 24 April 1918**

Alexander Dobson was born on 27 October 1898 at the Oil Works Cottage, Fauldhouse, Linlithgowshire. His father David Dobson was born in 1870 at Dalsersf. At the age of 20 he was a steam crane engine keeper living with his parents at Shotts. In 1895 David married Jane Lochhead, a 22 year old from Shotts. Two years later their eldest was born at New Cumnock. The following year they had moved to the Oil Works Cottage, Fauldhouse where Thomas was born. By 1901 the family had moved to Main Street, Bothwell and David Dobson had secured a position as a brickworks manager. They later moved to Ashley Villa, Fallside, Bothwell. At some later stage David and Jane moved to Stonehouse where David was a tomato grower. It was there that David died in 1941 followed by Jane in 1958.

Private Alexander Dobson enlisted and was posted to the 21<sup>st</sup> Company of the Machine Gun Corps. This Company was attached to the 21<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division. On 6 November the Division sailed to le Havre and Boulogne. The 30th Division subsequently remained in France and Flanders and took part in numerous actions throughout the war.

At the end of 1917 the German high command began to prepare a massive attack to be launched the following spring before the American Army fulfilled its fighting potential on European soil. The offensive would concentrate on the British Army that the German strategists considered to be exhausted after fighting four bloody and fruitless offensives in the course of 1917. The Germans had great hopes for their offensive, giving it the grand name of Kaiserschlacht, the "Emperor's Battle".

The first part of the offensive, Operation Michael, was expected to breach the British front at Arras and then head north to cut off their railway supply lines. This would, it was hoped, allow the Germans to envelop the British forces and secure their surrender. The 30<sup>th</sup> Division, including Private Dobson and the 21<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Corps were part of the defence of the British front line.

Launched in 21 March 1918, Operation Michael came as a complete surprise to the British troops who bore the brunt of its violence. Using to great effect their numerical superiority (fifty-eight divisions against sixteen), the Germans created a wide breach in the British front in the space of a few hours. Those units that were not dislocated made a



fighting retreat through the increasing chaos of congested roads and German artillery bombardment.

The German advance began to slow after a few days because of logistical problems (supplies of munitions and food for the troops were insufficient) and the increasing resistance of the Allies. Slowly but surely the German Army's initial and spectacular success began to flounder. Despite the huge losses the Allies succeeded in stabilising the front and by 29 April the Kaiserschlacht had run its course, ending in failure.

Private Alexander Dobson was reported missing and presumed to be killed on 24 April 1918. His body was never found and he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium.



*Tyne Cot Memorial*

Alexander Dobson had 3 siblings.

1. **Alexander Dobson**
2. **David Dobson** was born 1903 at Ashley Cottage, Bothwell. He followed in his father's footsteps and became a brickworks foreman at Rhyl, Wales. However in 1923 he came back to Scotland to marry Margaret Cowan, a 35 year old domestic servant from Motherwell. David later became a mechanical engineer and died in Motherwell in 1989.
3. **Thomas Dobson** was born 1907 at Ashley Cottage, Bothwell.
4. **Jessie Dobson** was born 1909 at Ashley Cottage, Bothwell.

## **PRIVATE EDWARD DOYLE**

### **Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders**

**T**he Commonwealth War Graves Commission has no record of the death of a Private Edward Doyle during the 1914-18 War. There are no Army service records for a Private Edward Doyle of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders living or enlisting in Bothwell or the surrounding area. Neither the census nor birth records give any clue to the life of Edward Doyle associated with Bothwell.

He is, however, commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial and acknowledged here.

# PRIVATE ALASTAIR AITKEN DUNCAN

(2824)

## Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 2 July 1916**

**A**lastair Duncan was born 28 April 1898 at Inverneil, Bothwell. His father was Clydesdale Duncan who was born c1850 in Glasgow. He was a silk mercer (merchant) who worked in the family business of Thomas Duncan and Sons of the Trongate, Glasgow. In 1875 at Airdrie Clydesdale Duncan married Violet Jones a 21 year old from Airdrie. They had one daughter, Mary born 1876 at Dennistoun before Margaret died in 1878 at Uddingston. Clydesdale then married Helen Falconer in 1888 at Glasgow and the couple set up home at Clifton Place, Glasgow. City life did not appeal to them and by 1901 they had moved to 'Inverneil', Uddingston Road, Bothwell. Clydesdale died there in 1917.

Alastair Duncan was a clerk and enlisted as a reservist with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders at Dunoon on 22 January 1915. He embarked for France on the 6 December 1915 and eighteen days later joined No 5 Entrenching Battalion. On the 8 January 1916 he was admitted to hospital with a sprained ankle and rejoined his unit a fortnight later. He was transferred to the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion on the 7 March 1916 as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> reinforcement draft and was posted to A Company. In the War Diary it is recorded his Battalion was on the left sector of Vimy Ridge. At 2pm on the 2 July 1916 there was a heavy bombardment and a hostile mine was exploded at the Battalion front. 5 men were killed and 12 were wounded. Private Duncan was one of the men killed that day. He was 18 years old when he was buried at Maroeuil British Cemetery, France and he is commemorated on the family gravestone at Sighthill Cemetery, Glasgow.

Alastair had 4 siblings.

1. **Mary Duncan** was born in 1876 at Dennistoun.
2. **Clyde Duncan** was born 1890 at Glasgow.
3. **Eric Duncan** was born c1895 at Bothwell. In 1924 at Dunoon he married Elizabeth Ferguson, a 25 year old from Dunoon.
4. **Alaistair Duncan**
5. **Rhoda Duncan** was born 1900 at Bothwell. In 1927 she married Thomas Ruane at Romford Essex and they had 5 sons. Rhoda died in 1980 at Oswestry, England.



# LANCE CORPORAL JOHN FLYNN

(9310)

## Highland Light Infantry 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 18 February 1916**

John Flynn was born on 30 March 1886 at Dalry, Ayrshire. His father, James Flynn, was born c1850 in Ireland and was a general labourer and later a carter. His mother was Ellen Smith, born c1853 in Ireland. John's parents were married in 1879 at Co Down, Ireland. By 1891 the couple were living at Dalry, Ayrshire where seven of their children were born. They then moved to Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh where their eighth child, Richard, was born in 1894. Latterly James Flynn was a pithead ostler living at Brandon Place, Bothwellhaugh and he died there in 1921.

John Flynn enlisted with the 10th (Service) Battalion, Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regiment). This Battalion was raised at Hamilton in August 1914 as part of Kitchener's First New Army. After initial training close to home they joined 28th Brigade in 9th (Scottish) Division. The 9th Division began its move to France on 8 May 1915, the first of the New Army divisions to go on active service, and at the beginning of July it took over a sector of the western front around Festubert. The Division's first major battle was at Loos in September 1915, in which it suffered 6,000 casualties in three days. The Battalion spent the first part of 1916 in the trenches at Ploegsteert (or Plug Street as the British called it) that was to the south of the Ypres Salient.

It was there that Lance Corporal John Flynn died 18 February 1916 and he is buried in the Gunners Farm Military Cemetery, Belgium.

John Flynn had 7 siblings

1. **James Flynn** was born c1877 at Dalry. He was a miner.
2. **Mary Flynn** was born c1879 at Dalry. She was a dressmaker and c1901 married Charles Tyrrell a Bothwellhaugh coal miner. They emigrated to USA c1910.
3. **Charles Flynn** was born c1882 at Dalry. He was a miner
4. **Agnes Flynn** was born c1877 at Dalry.
5. **John Flynn**
6. **Bernard Flynn** was born c1899 at Dalry.
7. **Patrick Flynn** was born c1892 at Dalry.
8. **Richard Flynn** was born c1895 at Bothwellhaugh. He was a coal miner and in 1922 at St Bride's Church, Bothwell he married Catherine McCreadie, a 25 year old from Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh.

## CHIEF WIRELESS OPERATOR JAMES GIBSON

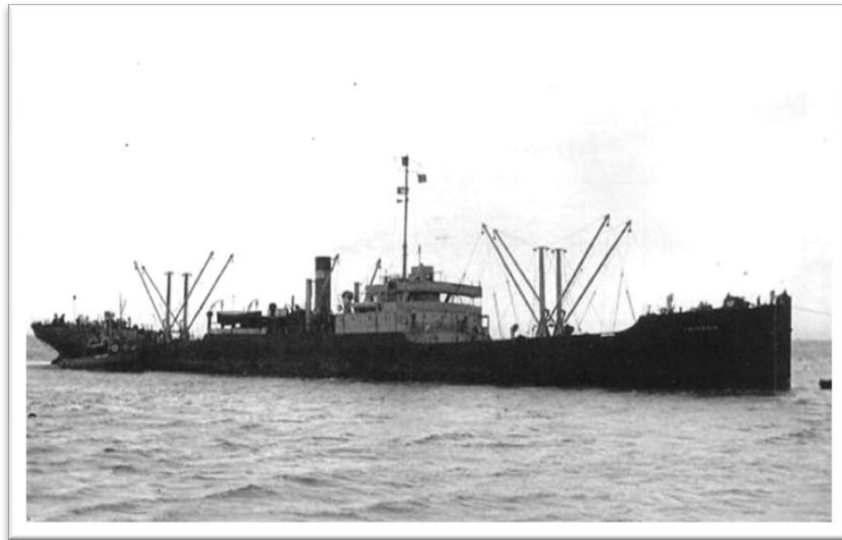
### **“SS War Emu” Merchant Navy**

**Died 27 November 1918**

**J**ames Gibson was born c1899 in Glasgow. His last known address was 11 Waverly Place, Bothwell. He was chief wireless operator on the “SS War Emu” of the Merchant Navy. He died aged 19 years, mid Atlantic Ocean, on 27 November 1918 from the pandemic Spanish influenza.

James Gibson is commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial and on the Bothwell Parish Church Roll of Honour.

The “SS War Emu” was a cargo vessel built in 1918 by Caird and Co, Greenock for the Ministry of Shipping and managed by the Donaldson Line. After the War in 1919, she was renamed the SS Tritonia and was sunk in 1929 when a gunpowder cargo exploded at Buenaventura, Colombia.



*“SS War Emu”*

# PRIVATE GEORGE GORDON

(18569)

## Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 1 September 1918**

George Gordon was born c1882 at Ballynahinch, Co Down. It was there he met and married his wife, Violet who was born c1880 in Ireland. They moved to Scotland to get work and in 1901 George and Violet were living at 5 The Square, Bothwell. Ten years later they were still in Bothwell but they now had two sons, Alexander, born 1903 and James, born c1904.

When war was declared, Private George Gordon, 18569, enlisted at Hamilton, aged 32 and was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. No service records are available for him. Possibly they were destroyed along with the 60% of WW1 service records burned during the London Blitz of May 1940.

In 1914 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers was stationed at Dover but later moved to Norfolk. On 22 August 1914 the Battalion landed at Le Havre, France. After seeing action with several different Divisions, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was transferred in February 1918 to the 109<sup>th</sup> Brigade in the 36<sup>th</sup> (Ulster) Division.

At the end of March 1918 the 36<sup>th</sup> Ulster Division saw action in the German Offensive on the Somme. In the face of the German onslaught the salient held by the 36<sup>th</sup> Division suddenly caved. A Captain Bryans described the defence by one group of British soldiers on the 24 March 1918. *"The enemy was upon them there was scarce a round left to fire. Many had only their bayonets left. Rather than wait for the end, they jumped from the entrenchments and met it gallantly. It was an unforgettable sight. We were overwhelmed, but not disgraced."*

The remaining troops of the 36<sup>th</sup> Division were ordered to withdraw and, after days of fighting faced a 15 mile march. The men's faces were deeply marked by overwhelming fatigue and lack of sleep. Some moved in a sort of trance, stumbling forward oblivious to their surroundings. In some cases their boots had given out. Many company officers, in the course of the last few miles, dispensed with the regulation halts, because they found it almost impossible to get their men on their feet again after them. However the Division managed to reorganise and put up a stiff resistance, halting the German advance. In a dispatch from Lord Haig he said the 36<sup>th</sup> Division near Andechy played



Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

"no small part in preventing the enemy from breaking through between the Allied Armies."

Then, on the 8th of August, came a second mighty blow. The Fourth British and First French Armies began a great offensive down the Amiens - Roye Road.

On the 22 August men of the 36<sup>th</sup> Division were ordered to carry out an attack and advanced the front line by a quarter of a mile. Twenty-two prisoners and two machine-guns were captured.

A curious and vastly effective ruse was employed during this operation. The Livens Projector was a simple mortar-like weapon that could throw large drums filled with poisonous chemicals into the enemy lines. The demoralizing effect of the Livens projector upon the enemy was well known, but its use, charged with gas, would have prevented any immediate attack by our troops upon the area bombarded. The drums were therefore filled with a scent that resembled the smell of gas. Many of the enemy had run back before our men advanced, while others were caught wearing their respirators.

By the beginning September 1918 the 109<sup>th</sup> Brigade had a wide frontage and was making a steady advance against the German lines in the teeth of considerable machine-gun fire. The Belgian village of Neuve Eglise was the first objective for September the 1st. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Inniskillings was ordered to extend its left flank as far as the road from that village to Dranoutre, and advance with its left upon Wulverghem. The severest resistance was met at Westhof Farm and De Broeken, where German machine-guns caused serious loss. German artillery fire was also heavy. The various strong points were taken one by one. The German rearguards slipped back in each case before the British came upon them. By afternoon the enemy had been driven back to the western outskirts of Neuve Eglise. Some of the 2nd Inniskillings appear actually to have reached its houses, but the line finally taken up at night was five hundred yards short of it.

It was in this action on the 1 September 1918 that Private George Gordon lost his life. He is buried at Wulverghem – Lindenhoek Road Military Cemetery.



*Wulverghem – Lindenhoek Road Military Cemetery*

## **PRIVATE ROBERT GRAHAM**

(240087)

### **Cameronians 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 26 April 1917**

**R**obert Graham was born c1889 at Workington, England. His father, Robert Graham, was born c1857 at Auchinleck, Ayrshire and was a coal miner. His mother, Elizabeth Crossgay, was born c1863 in Ireland and had travelled to Hamilton to work as a domestic servant. In 1883 she and Robert Graham were both living at Baillies' Causeway, Hamilton and there they were married. Robert then found work in the mining area of New Cumnock, Ayrshire where their eldest son Thomas was born c1884. A move to the mining town of Workington, Cumberland followed and it was there that their sons, William and Robert, were born in c1889 and c1893. The family moved back to Ayrshire, this time to Rankinston, Coylton, where four more children were born. It was at Rankinston that Robert Graham senior died in 1901 aged 37. Widow Elizabeth Graham, with seven of a family, then married James Murray, a miner, and the couple sat up home at Castle Square, Bothwell.

In 1911, 21 year old Robert Graham was living there and working as a coal miner in the local Castle Colliery. On the 13 July 1914 at Glasgow, Robert Graham married 19 year old Catherine Doyle, a local girl from Green Street, Bothwell.

Robert Graham enlisted with the Cameronians, initially with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion but then with the 10<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion. The 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed in Hamilton in September 1914 and moved to Aldershot for training with the 46<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. The following year they embarked for France, landing at Boulogne in July 1915 and soon saw action at the Battle of Loos. The following year the Battalion was engaged in various actions on the Western Front.

The 9 April 1917 was the start of the Battle of Arras, a British offensive against the German defences near the French city of Arras on the Western Front. The 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians took part in that Battle in an action known as the Second Battle of the Scarpe. At 0445 hours on the 23rd April British troops attacked on a front of about nine miles from Croisilles to Gavrelle. On the main front of attack good progress was made at first at almost all points. By 1000 hours the Cameronians as part of the 15<sup>th</sup> Division had pushed through to the village of Guemappe.

At midday and during the afternoon the Germans counter-attacked in great force and with the utmost determination. Many of these counter-attacks were repulsed after severe fighting, but ultimately the British were compelled to withdraw from the ridge west of

Cherisy and from Guemappe. Orders were then issued to renew the advance at 1800 hours. In this attack Guemappe was retaken and fighting of a more or less intermittent character continued in this area all night. In that one day of fighting, the 23 April 1917 the British suffered 10,000 casualties. In the early morning of the 24th April the enemy's resistance weakened all along the front and the objectives of the previous day were met without serious opposition.

Private Robert Graham took part in the Second Battle of the Scarpe and died of his wounds two days later on the 26 April 1917. He is buried at Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun, France.

Robert Graham's widow, Catherine Doyle, remarried George McKeown at Bothwell in 1920 and died there in 1964.

Robert Graham had 6 siblings

1. **Thomas Graham** was born c1884 at New Cumnock, Ayrshire.
2. **William Graham** was born c1886 at Workington, Cumberland
3. **Robert Graham**
4. **James Graham** was born c1893 at Rankinston, Ayrshire.
5. **Elizabeth Graham** was born c1895 at Rankinston, Ayrshire.
6. **Catherine Graham** was born c1896 at Rankinston, Ayrshire.
7. **Margaret Graham** was born c1901 at Rankinston, Ayrshire.

## **PRIVATE SIMON GRAHAM**

### **Seaforth Highlanders**

**Died 12 July 1922**

**S**imon Graham was born on 17 April 1893 at Aitkenhead Road, Glasgow. His father, also Simon Graham, was born c1864 at Symington, Ayrshire. His mother was Mary Bryce, born c1869 at Douglas, Lanarkshire and it was there his parents married in 1888. In the 1901 census Simon Graham Snr is recorded as a stationmaster living with his wife and family at Glebeside Cottage, Fallside Road, Bothwell. By the 1911 census he is recorded as a 'wharfinger', (archaic term for a keeper of a wharf) while living at Camphill Place, Bothwell. The Caledonian Railway Company owned the Monkland Canal so he may have improved his prospects by transferring to a job on the Canal. By the time of his death in 1923 he was a coal export clerk living at Langside Road, Bothwell. His wife, Mary, predeceased him by 11 years, dying in 1921.

Simon Graham was recorded in the 1901 census as a railway clerk. However 10 years later he had moved jobs to become a jointer with an Electricity Company. Private Simon Graham enlisted with the Seaforth Highlanders but nothing is known of his military career. On his discharge from the army he returned to live with his parents at Langside Road, Bothwell and died on 12 July 1922 of disseminated tuberculosis at Hartwood Asylum, Shotts.

## **SECOND LIEUTENANT ALEXANDER GRANT**

### **Highland Light Infantry 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> (Blythswood) Battalion (Territorial)**

**Died 24 April 1917**

Alexander Grant was born c1896 at Bristol, England. His father, William Grant, was born in 1857 at Urquhart, Inverness-shire. He moved to England where he found employment as a commercial traveller. Alexander's mother was Ada Mower, born in 1871 at Exeter, Devon. She was a domestic servant working at Stoke-on-Trent when she married William Grant in 1892 at Bristol. By 1901 they were still living in Bristol, now with three sons. The family then moved to Scotland and in 1911 were living at Derwent, Bothwell. William Grant was recorded in that year's census as a furnishing warehouseman. They later lived at Ashgrove, Bothwell and had an apartment at 10 Buchanan Street, Glasgow. When Ada died in 1951 she was living at 10 Glasgow Road, Uddingston.

Alexander Grant was a prominent member of the Corinthian Athletic Club and enlisted with the 7<sup>th</sup> Territorial Battalion, H.L.I. He was promoted to sergeant and later gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion was part of the 52<sup>nd</sup> (Lowland) Division, initially assigned to the defence of the Scottish coast but then moved to Gallipoli arriving there in early June 1915. After the failure of the Gallipoli campaign the division moved to Egypt as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. In August 1916, along with an Anzac force, the 52<sup>nd</sup> successfully defended the Suez Canal from an attack by a joint Ottoman and German force at the Battle of Romani. This victory, the first against the Ottoman Empire in the war, ensured the safety for the Suez Canal and ended the Central Powers' ambitions of disrupting traffic through the canal. The HLI then took part in the First Battle of Gaza that was fought on 26 March 1917 during the first attempt by the Egyptian Expeditionary Force to invade the southern region of Palestine in the Ottoman Empire. In late afternoon with approaching darkness and concerns about Ottoman reinforcements a strategic withdrawal was ordered. The Second Battle of Gaza was fought 17-20 April 1917. Gaza was defended by the strongly entrenched Ottoman Army garrison, which had been reinforced after the first battle by substantial forces. They manned the town's defences and a line of strong redoubts which extended eastwards along the road from Gaza to Beersheba. The defenders were attacked by three British infantry divisions, supported by two mounted divisions, but the strength of the defenders, their entrenchments, and supporting artillery decimated the attackers.

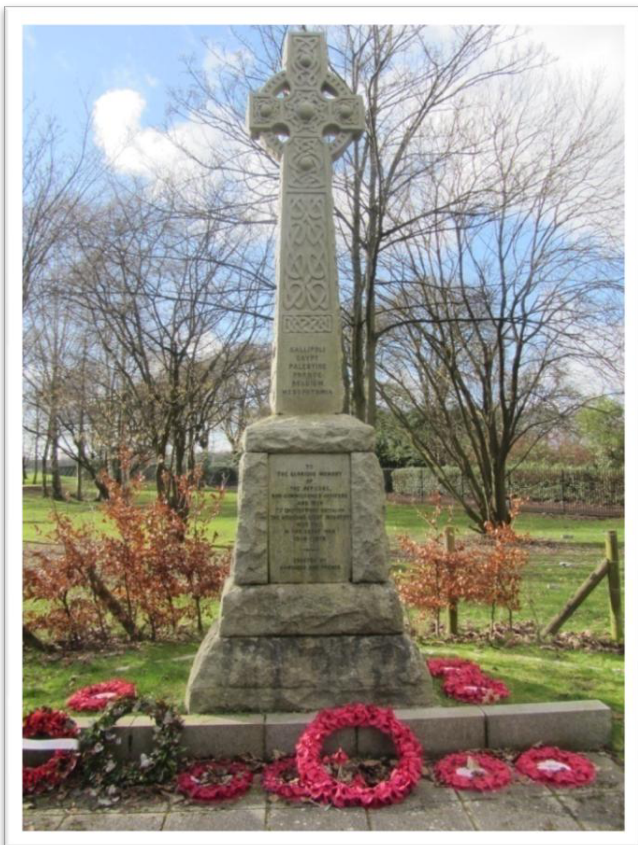
The 7<sup>th</sup> Regimental Diary described their situation:

20 April 1917    OUTPOST HILL. Held position all day, at midnight withdrew into Reserve in conjunction with troops on either flank through a new outpost line taken up by the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> HLI and went into Brigade Reserve. Enemy sniping was heavy all day. Casualties – 1 Officer (Lt Davie) killed. 2 Officers wounded (Capt Brown and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt A. Grant) (both since died).

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Alexander Grant died of his wounds four days later on 24 April 1917 and is buried at Deir El Belah War Cemetery, Palestine.

Alexander Grant had 2 siblings.

1.    **William G. Grant** was born c1893 at Bristol. He was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the H.L.I. and was killed in action at Gaza, Egypt in 1917, seven days before Alexander, his younger brother.
2.    **Alexander Grant**
3.    **Ralph M. Grant** was born c1900 at Bristol. He lived at Whitecraigs, Newton Mearns.



*Gallipoli  
Egypt  
France  
Belgium  
Mesopotamia*

*To the Glorious Memory  
of the  
Officer's NCO's and Men  
of the  
7<sup>th</sup> (Blythswood) Battalion  
The Highland Light Infantry  
who fell in the  
Great War 1914-18*

*Monument in Dassie Park,  
Glasgow Green, Glasgow.*

## **SECOND LIEUTENANT WILLIAM GORDON GRANT**

### **Highland Light Infantry 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> (Blythswood) Battalion (Territorial)**

**Died 17 April 1917**

**W**illiam Gordon Grant was born c1893 at Bristol, England. His father, William Grant, was born in 1857 at Urquhart, Inverness-shire. He moved to England where he found employment as a commercial traveller. William's mother was Ada Mower, born in 1871 at Exeter, Devon. She was a domestic servant working at Stoke-on-Trent when she married William Grant in 1892 at Bristol. By 1901 they were still living in Bristol, now with three sons. The family then moved to Scotland and in 1911 were living at Derwent, Bothwell. William Grant was recorded in that year's census as a furnishing warehouseman. They later lived at Ashgrove, Bothwell and had an apartment at 10 Buchanan Street, Glasgow. William Grant senior, died in 1933 at Camphill Avenue, Cathcart, Glasgow and when his widow Ada died in 1951 she was living at 10 Glasgow Road, Uddingston.

William Grant was a prominent member of the Corinthian Athletic Club and enlisted with the 7<sup>th</sup> Territorial Battalion, H.L.I. He was later gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant William Grant fought alongside his younger brother at the Second Battle of Gaza and was killed in action three days before him. The Second Battle of Gaza was fought 17-20 April 1917. Gaza was defended by the strongly entrenched Ottoman Army garrison, which had been reinforced by substantial forces after the first battle. They manned the town's defences and a line of strong redoubts which extended eastwards along the road from Gaza to Beersheba. The defenders were attacked by three British infantry divisions, supported by two mounted divisions, but the strength of the defenders, their entrenchments, and supporting artillery decimated the attackers.

The details of the action in which 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant was killed are contained in the Regimental Diary:

17 April 1917 EL BURJALIYE. The Brigade advanced on Mansura Ridge, which was captured without much resistance and few casualties were sustained. Officer's patrols cleared it, a little machine gun fire and some artillery fire was experienced. We then consolidated a position on the ridge about 700 yards over the crest under heavy artillery fire, sustaining some casualties. 3 lines of trenches were dug, getting in touch with 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> HLI on either Flank. Tanks co-operated in the

attack. Casualties – 1 Officer killed (2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. W.G. Grant) and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Taggart wounded. 1 other rank killed and 29 other ranks wounded. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant William Grant was killed in action on the 17 April 1917 and is buried at Gaza War Cemetery.

William Grant had 2 siblings.

1. **William Grant**
2. **Alexander Grant** was born c1896 at Bristol. He was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the H.L.I. and died of wounds at Gaza, Egypt in 1917, seven days after William, his elder brother.
3. **Ralph M. Grant** was born c1900 at Bristol. In 1926 at Prestwick, Ralph Grant married Mary Brock. At that time he was a manufacturing agent but later became company chairman. He and his wife lived at Whitecraigs, Newton Mearns and he died there in 1977.



*Gaza War Cemetery*

## RIFLEMAN JOHN HAMILTON

(41452)

### **Cameronians 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 5 March 1917**

**J**ohn Hamilton was born on the 22 July 1897 at Scott Street, Hamilton. His father William Barclay Hamilton was born in 1873 at Cambusnethan, Lanarkshire. John Hamilton's mother was Marion Sommerville born c1975 in Lanark and she married William Hamilton in 1896 in Hamilton. By 1901 the couple were living at Quarry Street, Hamilton with husband William working as a milk purveyor. Ten years later the family had moved to Sweethope Farm, Bothwell with William now a farmer with a dairy herd. William Hamilton died in 1948 at Fairfield Place, Bothwell and Marion six years later at The Bungalow, Blantyre Mill Road, Bothwell. Sweethope Farm passed to son James Hamilton in 1948 and then sold, in the 1950's, to Neil Dalrymple who also farmed at Laighlands.

John Hamilton enlisted with the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians. The Battalion was part of the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division that came into existence in August 1914. The Division was formed of volunteers, under the administration of Scottish Command. Training started immediately and gradually arms and equipment were obtained. By May 1915 the recruits were judged to be ready for war and embarked for France that month. The 9th Division served on the Western Front throughout the war, and was regarded by many as one of the best fighting formations of 1914-18.

At the beginning of March 1917, Private Hamilton and his comrades in the 9<sup>th</sup> Cameronians were ordered to Monchy-Breton a training area some 18 miles to the west of Arras. There the Battalion practiced for the Spring Offensive against the Germans and for the Battle of Arras in April. During training at Monchy-Breton, Private Hamilton was accidentally killed by a rifle grenade on the 5 March 1917. He is one of four WW1 casualties buried at Monchy-Breton Churchyard.

John Hamilton had 4 siblings

1. **John Hamilton**
2. **Jeanie Hamilton** was born in 1899 at Hamilton. In 1924 at Bothwell Parish Church she married John Williamson of Burnhead Farm, Bellshill. Jeanie died in 1936.
3. **Ann Hamilton** was born in 1902 at Hamilton. In 1926 at Sweethope Farm she married farmer's son John Steel of Glendhue, Fallside Road, Bothwell.

4. **Marion Hamilton** was born in 1907 at Ferniegair, Hamilton. In 1932 at the Clyde Hotel, Bothwell, she married 26 year old James Smellie, then a machineman from Airbles Farm, Motherwell, later to work for Shanks and McEwan at Coatbridge.
5. **James Hamilton** was born in 1910 at Bothwell. On his father's death he took over Sweethope Farm but later sold it and moved to farm in Stirlingshire.



**Before and After**

*The 7<sup>th</sup> century Abbey of Mont St Eloi  
located on the outskirts of Arras  
and damaged by shelling during the  
Battle of Arras*

# SAPPER THOMAS HANDS

(151253)

## 255<sup>th</sup> Tunnelling Company, Royal Engineers Formerly 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Cameronians

**Died 2 July 1916**

Thomas Hands was born on 21 November 1892 at Watson Street, Burnbank. His father Patrick Hands was born c1858 at Carluke and he was a coal miner. In 1885 at Hamilton, Patrick married Isabella Wilson, a 22 year old Glasgow girl. By 1901 the family were living at Old Mill Road, Bothwell and ten years later, in 1911, had moved to Craighead Rows, Stonefield, Blantyre. By 1916 Patrick and Isabella were living at 7 Green Street, Bothwell but two years later had moved across country to Red Row, Oakley, near Dunfermline. It was there that Patrick Hands died in 1939. After Patrick's death Isabella went to live near her daughter Agnes at Birkenshaw and it was there she died in 1945.

Thomas Hands was a miner like his father and enlisted with the Cameronians in September 1914 at Uddingston. He was posted to the 4<sup>th</sup> (Reserve) Battalion at Fort Matilda, Greenock. During WW1, Fort Matilda was a training camp where recruits were initially housed in rows of tents and later in huts. There was no parade ground, so The Esplanade on the seafront was taken over for that purpose. The camp normally turned civilians into soldiers with fourteen weeks training. In March 1915 Private Hands was transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Cameronians and sent to the Western Front in France. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion came under orders of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 8<sup>th</sup> Division and Thomas was part of a draft of men sent to France to replace the 469 men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion killed, wounded or missing at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle earlier that month. From mid March to May Thomas and his comrades spent their time between the front line trenches and their billets behind the lines. During this time in the trenches they were subjected to sporadic shelling, sniper fire and raids by the Germans. Private Hands first saw action at the Battle of Aubers on 9 May 1915, a bloody encounter with more than 11,000 British casualties sustained on that day. One of these wounded that day was Lt Colonel Vandeleur, Battalion Commander who, after the war, came to live at Orchard Avenue, Bothwell. For the remainder of that year the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion resumed front line duties and, whilst they were not involved in any frontal attacks, they suffered intermittent enemy shelling resulting in frequent deaths.



*Royal Engineers*

On 5 January 1916 Thomas Hands, was transferred to the 255<sup>th</sup> Tunnelling Company of the Royal Engineers. The 255<sup>th</sup> Company was formed in January 1916 and moved into

the Neuve Chapelle sector. By mid-1916 the British had around 25,000 trained tunnellers. Almost twice that number of 'attached infantry' worked permanently alongside them acting as beasts of burden, fetching and carrying the many essential elements of mining paraphernalia, pumping air and water and removing spoil.

Sapper Thomas Hands was killed in action on 2 July 1916 and is buried at Loos British Cemetery.

Thomas Hands had 7 siblings.

1. **Agnes Hands** was born c1886 at Quarter, Lanarkshire. In 1905 she was a domestic servant living at Baird's Square, Bothwell and married James Morris a coal miner from Bothwell Haugh.
2. **James Hands** was born c1887 at Hamilton. By 1919 he was living at Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh.
3. **Thomas Hands**
4. **Maryann Hands** was born c1895 at Hamilton.
5. **Isabella Hands** was born c1897 at Bothwell. She was a dairymaid and in 1920 at Glasgow she married John Wilson, a ploughman from Oakley, Fife.
6. **Elizabeth Hands** was born c1900 at Bothwell. In 1919 at Glasgow she married Charles McArthur, a coal miner from Greengairs.
7. **Alice Hands** was born c 1903. In 1923 at Glasgow she married Robert Smith, a ploughman of North Couston Farm, Blantyre
8. **John Hands** was born c1905 and was a miner. In 1937 at Dunfermline he married Martha Watson of Newmills, Fife.

Thomas Hands is listed on the War Memorial as *Thomas Hand*

# PRIVATE CHARLES HANNAH

(7732)

## Cameronians 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

### Died 23 October 1916

Charles Hannah was born on the 13 June 1894 at West Benhar, Shotts. His father, Samuel Hannah was born in 1868 at Gartloch, Lanarkshire and he worked as a coal miner. His mother, Jane (Jeanie) Smith was born in 1856 at Tarbolton, Ayrshire. His parents married in 1893 at West Benhar where Jeanie worked as a dressmaker. They then moved to Baird's Square, Bothwell where their daughter Jeanie was born in 1900 but sadly she died the following year of whooping cough. They then moved to the Jubilee Rows, Fallside Road, Bothwell where Samuel Hannah worked as a coal hewer in the local Castle Colliery. By 1911, 16 year old Charles Hannah and his parents were living in Griqua Terrace, Bothwell and young Charles had followed his father to be a coal miner. Charles's mother Jane died in 1917 at Tannochside aged 56 followed his father in 1933 at the Gallowgate, Glasgow.

Private Charles Hannah was a reservist recalled to the colours at the outbreak of war. He joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians which were part of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Brigade 8<sup>th</sup> Division. The Division moved to France in November 1914 and fought on the Western Front for the duration of the war, taking part in the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, the Battle of Aubers Ridge and the Battle of Le Transloy which was part of the Battle of the Somme. This latter battle began on the 1 October 1916 in good weather. Pauses were made from 8–11 October due to rain and 13–18 October to allow time for a methodical bombardment, when it became clear that the German defence had recovered from earlier defeats. The attacks on the enemy lines resumed at 2.30pm on the 26 October when Private Charles Hannah and his comrades in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cameronians assaulted the German trench known as Zeneth opposite Le Transloy. The Battalion War Diary records the action.

*"The Battalion gained its objective and held it in spite of severe opposition; on our front entry into the enemy trench was only effected after the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of men were held up but the advance was carried out with the utmost gallantry and determination by all ranks under heavy artillery and machine gun fire. This success was to a great extent due to the gallantry of 2/Lt Ferguson, Sgt Hawkins and Pte Murray, who bombed along the German trench. 2/Lt Ferguson being responsible for the destruction of three German machine guns. He was unfortunately killed after clearing almost the whole front opposite the Battalion."*

There were 240 casualties that day of which 53 were killed. Private Hannah was one of those killed in action. He was aged 22 and is buried at Guards' Cemetery, Lesboeuifs, Somme.

# PRIVATE ROBERT HARVEY

(12/372)

## Auckland Infantry Battalion 6<sup>th</sup> (Hauraki) Company

**Died 8 August 1915**

Robert Harvey was born in 1892 in Bothwellhaugh to John Harvey, a miner, and Sarah Jane Watson. John who hailed from Kilburnie and Sarah Jane from Whitburn, were married in 1888 in Pennsylvania, USA. They returned to Scotland and by the 1901 census were living at Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh. They had eight of a family, David, born in the USA, and Robert, Jeanie, Helen, Maggie, Elizabeth, Christina and Mary all born at Bothwellhaugh.

In 1908 Sarah Jane, 42, son David, 20, and daughters Jeanie, Maggie, Elizabeth, Christina and Mary emigrated to New Zealand aboard the SS Corinthic. It appears that John Harvey and son Robert went ahead of them to get established in New Zealand.

At the start of the war Robert enlisted and sailed from Auckland for Suez on the 'Star of India' on 16 October 1914. The Battalion first saw action on the Suez Canal against the Turks in February 1915 and took part in the landing at Gaba Tepe, Gallipoli on April 25 1915. One of New Zealand's epic stands on the Gallipoli peninsula was in the heat of August 1915 at Chunuk Bair, one of the three high points on the Sari Bair range. These were the main objectives of the Anzacs' offensive of early August 1915 when they tried to break out of the stalemate with the Turks in the Anzac sector.

The New Zealand Infantry Brigade advanced up Chailak Dere and Sazli Beit Dere during the night of 6-7 August to capture Chunuk Bair. The attack had fallen behind schedule and the New Zealanders were still a kilometre short of the summit when dawn broke on 7 August, sheltering at a position below Rhododendron Ridge that would become known as The Apex. In a mid-morning attack the Auckland Battalion suffered heavy casualties to reach the Pinnacle, 200 m from the summit. In the pre-dawn darkness of 8 August the men from the Wellington and Auckland Battalions moved swiftly up Rhododendron Ridge on to the summit, which almost inexplicably had been abandoned by its Turkish defenders. When the sun rose, the New Zealanders along with British troops engaged in a desperate struggle to hold off the Turks.



*Private Robert Harvey*

However two days later the Allied forces succumbed to a massive counterattack launched by the Turkish commander. The summit was lost, but the New Zealanders stemmed the Turkish flood down the seaward slopes of the hill. The Apex was held until the end of the campaign.

Robert Harvey was killed in action on the 8 August 1915 during the attack on Chunuk Bair and is buried in Chunuk Bair Cemetery, Gallipoli, Turkey along with 850 of his New Zealand colleagues.

Two months after Robert's death his brother David enlisted in the New Zealand Medical Corps. David was killed at Ypres, France on 12 April 1917 and is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial.



*Chunuk Bair (New Zealand) Memorial  
Gallipoli, Turkey*

# **PRIVATE JOHN HENDERSON**

## **Cameronians**

### **5<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

#### **Died 2 March 1917**

**M**ilitary service records show that a Private John Henderson of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians died on the 2 March 1917 in France and Flanders. The records also note that he was born in Newbattle, Midlothian and was a resident in Bothwell.

There were two John Hendersons born in Newbattle in the years that would have allowed them to be of an age to fight in the First World War, one born in 1877, the other in 1879. Which of these two men was the one who fought and died in the War is not known.

The 1911 census is the nearest reference document to those who lived in Bothwell and who fought in WW1. This census has only one John Henderson living in Bothwell and he was born in Tannochside, Lanarkshire thus eliminating him as a possible candidate.

With the information currently available it is therefore not possible to identify the family background of the John Henderson whose name is on the Bothwell War Memorial.

# **PRIVATE JAMES HENRY HERBERTSON**

(8115)

## **Cameronians 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion**

### **Died 27 August 1917**

**J**ames Henry Herbertson was born on the 31 March 1890 at Wilsons Rows, Tannochside. His father, James Herbertson, a coal miner, was born c1851 at Dalry, Ayrshire. He married 38 year old Charlotte Armstrong (née Waters) c1887 at Newcastle, England. Charlotte was a widow with four of a family. The couple then moved to Calderbraes, Lanarkshire and by 1901 were living with their family at the Jubilee Rows, Bothwell. The 1911 census records James Herbertson, a miner, living with his mother at Castle Square, Bothwell. James Herbertson senior, died in Hamilton in 1913 and Charlotte died 15 years later at Waverly Place, Bothwell.

James Herbertson enlisted with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Cameronians. In late July 1917 the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was in billets at Conde, Somme, France. On 31 July they marched the 7 miles to Pont Remy station and entrained for Dunkirk some 120 miles to the west. From there they were taken by barges 23 miles on the Dunkirk-Furnes Canal to Guyvelde and proceeded by march route to camp on the sands at Bray – Dunes. For the next fortnight the Battalion trained for forthcoming assaults but the men were also allowed ‘recreational bathing’ in the sea. They also held their church services on the sands. On the 15 August the men marched 10 miles across the French-Belgian border to a camp near Koksijde.

The following day the Battalion relieved the West Riding Regiment in the front line trenches at Lombardsijde. For the next ten days the 1<sup>st</sup> Cameronians held the line repulsing daily attacks by the Germans including the use of gas against them. During this ten day tour of duty 24 Cameronians were killed and 62 were wounded. On the night of the 25 August the Battalion was relieved and returned to their billets at Koksijde. Private James Herbertson died two days later and it can only be assumed it was from wounds received in the trenches of Lombardsijde. He is buried at Coxyde (Koksijde) Military Cemetery.

James Herbertson’s sister Margaret was born in 1893 at Hall St, Blantyre. She was a dressmaker and in 1918 at Wooddean Manse, Bothwell she married James Forrest a blacksmith. Margaret died in 1976 at Uddingston.

# **GUNNER ROBERT BENJAMIN HEWITT**

(300535)

## **Royal Garrison Artillery 4<sup>th</sup> Highland Mountain Brigade Latterly transferred to the Labour Corps**

**Died 5 July 1918**

**R**obert Benjamin Hewitt was born on the 25 May 1872 at the Main Street, Bothwell. His father, Gavin Hewitt, was born c1845 at Bothwell. In 1866 at Dalziel he married Agnes Armour, a 20 year old from Strathaven. They set up home at 35 Main Street, Bothwell where Gavin was a partner in the firm of Hewitt and Adam, Joiners, Bothwell. The partnership was dissolved in 1891 and thereafter the business was continued by Gavin Hewitt under his own name. Agnes died in Bothwell in 1885 followed by Gavin in 1925.

Robert Hewitt was a tailor and lived with his parents at Bothwell but when war came he enlisted at Rothsay, Bute. He joined the 4th Highland (Mountain) Brigade that consisted of the Bute Battery, the Argyll Battery and the Ross & Cromarty Battery. It was a Territorial Force unit created in 1908 as a "mountain" artillery unit as a part of the 51st (Highland) Division. Most of the Brigade fought in Gallipoli and was the first artillery on the beaches at Suvla Bay. They literally wore their guns out on Gallipoli and manhandled their guns up cliffs and hills that their animals weren't able to negotiate in order to provide fire support for the Allied forces. After Gallipoli, the Brigade then went to Egypt and later on to Salonika in Greek Macedonia.

Around the beginning of 1917, Robert Hewitt was transferred to the Labour Corps. The Labour Corps was formed in January 1917 and grew to some 390,000 men. The Corps was manned by officers and other ranks who had been medically rated below the "A1" condition needed for front line service. Many were returned wounded. Their duties would have been anything from helping in stores, taking equipment up to the front, repairing roads and such like, helping at rest areas, burial duties and even by manning theatres and cinemas.

In 1918 Robert Hewitt was diagnosed with pneumonia and was sent to the Military Hospital at Catterick, Yorkshire. He died there on the 5 July 1918 and is buried at Hipswell (St John) Churchyard, Yorkshire.



*Hipswell (St John) Churchyard*

Robert Hewitt had 6 siblings

1. **Jane Hewitt** was born in 1867 at Bothwell. She was a dressmaker and lived at the family home at Main Street, Bothwell. Jane died in 1948
2. **Helen Hewitt** was born in 1868 at Bothwell.
3. **Elizabeth Hewitt** was born in 1870 at Bothwell. She lived in the family home and died there in 1924.
4. **Robert Hewitt**
5. **John Hewitt** was born in 1874 at Bothwell
5. **Annie Hewitt** was born c1882 at Bothwell.
6. **Gavin Hewitt** was born c1883 at Bothwell. He was a shoemaker.
7. **William Hewitt** was born 1884 at Bothwell. He was a cobbler and lived in the family house at Main Street, Bothwell. He died there in 1952.

## PRIVATE ROBERT HOTSON

(S/11633)

### Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 24 October 1916**

Robert (Bertie) Hotson was born on the 10 June 1895 at Hamilton Palace Colliery Rows, Bothwellhaugh. His father, Henry Hotson, was born c1867 at Langholm, Dumfries-shire and he was a grocer. His mother, Agnes Steel was born c1868 at Carluke and she married Henry in 1891 at Camlachie, Glasgow. At that time Henry was the Co-operative store manager at Bothwellhaugh and was lodging at Fairfield Cottage, Bothwell. After their marriage Henry and Agnes set up home at Bothwellhaugh where their daughter Jessie was born in 1892. By 1898 the family had moved to Old Cumnock, Ayrshire where their son James was born. The family returned to Bothwell where Henry died in 1911 at Thornbank, followed by his widow Agnes in 1917 at Little Bog, Langside Road, Bothwell.



*The Co-operative Store, Bothwellhaugh*

Robert Hotson enlisted at Hamilton with the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. This Battalion was formed at Stirling in September 1914 and came under orders of 45th Brigade in 15th (Scottish) Division. They moved to England for training

and on the 9 July 1915 embarked for Boulogne, France. The Battalion was in action in the The Battle of Loos in 1915. In spring 1916, they were subjected to a German cloud gas attack, near the German-held village of Hulluch, a mile north of Loos. The gas cloud and artillery bombardment were followed by raiding parties that made temporary lodgements in the British lines. Two days later another gas attack was launched, that blew back over the German lines causing a large number of German casualties, that were increased by British troops firing at German soldiers as they fled in the open.

Later that year Private Robert Hotson was accidentally killed at Lozenge Wood during the Battle of the Somme on the 24 October 1916. He is buried at Adanac Military Cemetery, Miraumont, Somme.

Following her mother's death in 1917, Robert's sister Jessie moved back to her father's roots at Langholm where she worked as a milner. In 1925 at Langholm she married James Scott, a licensed grocer living at Main Street, Bothwell. She and James took up residence at Main Street, Bothwell and it was there she died in 1942.



*Erected  
by  
Agnes Steel  
in  
Affectionate remembrance  
of her husband  
Henry Hotson  
who died 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 1911  
aged 45 years  
also their son  
James  
who died in infancy  
**Their son**  
**Pte Bertie Hotson, A.S.H.**  
**killed in action**  
**24<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1916 aged 21 years**  
The above Agnes Steel died in  
Bothwell 6<sup>th</sup> May 1917  
aged 49 years*

*Gravestone in Bothwell Park Cemetery*

# PRIVATE JOHN HOUSTON

(37319)

## Cameronians 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

**Died 21 September 1918**

John Houston was born on 3 August 1892 at 59 Beckford Street, Hamilton. His father, Andrew Houston, was born c1855 at Dalry, Ayrshire. His mother, Jane Sneddon, was born c1860 at Bo'ness, Falkirk. Andrew and Jane were married in 1880 at Shotts where Andrew was an ironstone miner. They lived at Main Street, Harthill until about 1884 when they moved to Beckford Street, Hamilton where Andrew was employed as a coal miner. Jane Houston died there in 1913 followed by her husband, Andrew in 1914.



John Houston's father,  
Andrew Houston

John Houston was an 18 year old coal miner still living with his parents at Beckford Street, Hamilton in 1911. When he enlisted at Hamilton with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Cameronians his place of residence was given as Bothwell, and as a miner it is probable that he was employed at the Castle Colliery, Bothwell.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Cameronians fought with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division 19<sup>th</sup> Brigade at Flanders and by 1918 they were in the Passchendaele area. The Battalion alternated between front line duties and spells in billets to the rear. Their War Diary entry for 22 February typified their existence in the trenches. "*Rain in morning. Little shelling all day. Usual machine gun fire at night.*" Throughout the spring and summer of 1918, Private Houston and his comrades took part in patrols, raids and attacks on the enemy but there were always army routines; parades and inspections, musketry practice, close order drill, physical training, gas drills church parades and working parties helping the Royal Engineers repair trenches and so on. However there was always time for a concert or a game of football against another regiment.

By autumn the Battalion was preparing for the Advance to Victory in Picardy and Artois, between the Somme and Loos. On the 15 September 1918 the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was located at Etricourt and three days later moved to the front line trenches in preparation for an attack. At 5.40 a.m. on the 21 September the Battalion attacked the German trenches. They were met with intense machine gun fire and were held up by uncut wire. Little was gained that day but resulted in 44 men of the Battalion killed, 204 wounded and 23 missing.

Private John Houston was one of the Cameronians killed that day. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial in the Pas de Calais.

John Houston had 8 siblings

1. **Mary Houston** was born c1880 at Harthill. Mary was a factory worker and in 1906 at Hamilton she married James Peerce, a 37 year old wagon builder from Motherwell.
2. **David Houston** was born c1881 at Harthill and was a coal miner. He died in Stirling in 1942.
3. **Agnes Houston** was born c1883 at Harthill and was a domestic worker. In 1899 at Glasgow she married William Gordon, a cabinetmaker. Agnes died in 1952 in Stirling.
4. **James Houston** was born c1884 at Hamilton. He was a coal miner and in 1904 at Bo'ness married Annie Milligan, a 24 year old domestic servant.
5. **William Houston** was born c1886 at Hamilton and worked in an ironmongers shop.
6. **Andrew Houston** was born c1888 at Hamilton and was a coal miner. He married Helen Wallace and died in 1933 at Easterhouse, Glasgow.
7. **John Houston**
8. **Jeanie Houston** was born c1896 at Hamilton.
9. **Alexander Houston** was born c1898 at Hamilton. He married Elizabeth Swinburne in 1921 at Hamilton and died in 1975 at Coventry.

NB. On the War Memorial John Houston is listed as being with the Royal Engineers.

## **SERGEANT ARCHIBALD JARVIE**

(6434)

### **Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders**

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion**

**Died 16 January 1917**

Archibald Jarvie was born c1885 at Kilsyth, Stirlingshire. His father, John Jarvie was born c1851 at Banton, Kilsyth and was employed as a miner. James's mother Janet Penman was born c1849 at Polmont, Stirlingshire and she and John Jarvie married in 1873 at Polmont. Initially the couple lived at Banton but then moved to Kilsyth and it was there that Janet Jarvie died in 1892. Seven years later at Kilsyth John Jarvie married 45 year old housekeeper Margaret Clelland and the couple then moved to Green Street, Bothwell. It was there that John Jarvie died in 1899. After his mother's death Archibald Jarvie moved in with his sister Agnes and her husband Francis McWhinnie who were living in Kilsyth. Archibald was a miner and moved to Bothwell to join his brother James who was working at the Palace Colliery at Bothwellhaugh. At the outbreak of War, it would appear that Archibald and James both enlisted at the same time at Glasgow with the Cameron Highlanders as their service numbers are consecutive James being 6433 and Archibald 6434.

Archibald enlisted with 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Cameron Highlanders that just returned from garrison duty at Poona, India. The Battalion came under the orders of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 27<sup>th</sup> Division that was formed in late 1914 by combining various units that had been acting as garrisons about the British Empire. The Division spent most of 1915 on the Western Front in France before moving to the Greek port of Salonika in December 1915 as part of the British Salonika Army. The troops were sent to provide military assistance to the Serbs who had recently been attacked by combined German, Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian armies. The intervention came too late to save Serbia and after a brief winter campaign in severe weather conditions on the Serbian frontier, the British-French forces found themselves back at Salonika.

During the early months of 1916 the British Salonika Force prepared the defences around Salonika. Large amounts of barbed wire were used and fortifications built around the city. This area was known as the 'birdcage' on account of the quantity of wire used. In the summer of 1916, British-French forces were reinforced by Serbian, Russian and Italian units. Several battles were fought by the international force but without a significant breakthrough into the Balkans. The campaign concluded with the surrender of Bulgaria on 30 September 1918.

Records do not show how Sergeant Archibald Jarvie died on the 16 January 1917. Malaria proved to be a serious drain on manpower during the campaign. In total the British forces suffered 162,517 cases of the disease and of these 4,200 died. This malaria death rate is appalling when compared with the 1,400 men who were killed in action fighting the enemy. With the campaign being a low priority for the War Office the assistance rendered by voluntary medical organisations, such as the Scottish Women's Hospitals, proved invaluable. Sergeant Jarvie is commemorated on the Doiran Memorial, Greece.

Archibald Jarvie had 4 siblings.

1. **John Jarvie** was born c1874 at Banton, Kilsyth.
2. **Agnes Jarvie** was born c1877 at Banton, Kilsyth. In 1897 at Kilsyth she married Francis McWhinnie, a coal miner. In 1901 the couple were still living at Kilsyth with Archibald lodging with them. By 1911 Agnes and Francis, along with brother James, had moved to Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh, where Francis and James worked in the Castle Colliery. Agnes died in 1956 at Castle Square, Bothwell.
3. **Alexander Jarvie** was born c1888 at Banton, Kilsyth.
4. **Archibald Jarvie**
5. **James Jarvie** was born c1887 at Kilsyth. James enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Cameron Highlanders and was killed in action at Flanders on 26 September 1914.



*Doiran Memorial, Greece.*

# PRIVATE JAMES JARVIE

(6433)

## Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

**Died 26 September 1914**

James Jarvie was born c1886 at Kilsyth, Stirlingshire. His father, John Jarvie was born c1851 at Banton, Kilsyth and was employed as a miner. James's mother Janet Penman was born c1849 at Polmont, Stirlingshire and she and John Jarvie married in 1873 at Polmont. Initially the couple lived at Banton but then moved to Kilsyth and it was there that Janet Jarvie died in 1892. Seven years later at Kilsyth John Jarvie married 45 year old housekeeper Margaret Clelland and the couple then moved to Green Street, Bothwell. It was there that John Jarvie died in 1899.

After his mother's death James Jarvie went to stay with two unmarried uncles. In the 1901 census 15 year old James was living with them at Kilsyth and working as a coal mine drawer. By 1911 James had taken lodgings with his married sister Agnes McWhinnie at Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh and working at the Palace Colliery. At the outbreak of war it would appear that James and his brother Archibald both enlisted at the same time at Glasgow with the Cameron Highlanders as their service numbers are consecutive James being 6433 and Archibald 6434.

James was placed with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion that in August 1914 was based in Edinburgh. On the 14 August the Battalion sailed for Le Harve and joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade in the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, part of the British Expeditionary Force.

Having been defeated in the First Battle of the Marne (3-9 September 1914), the Germans retreated to the line of the River Aisne and then turned to face the pursuing Allies. There they held one of the most formidable positions on the Western front. The Aisne River winds westward and is about one hundred feet wide, ranging from twelve to fifteen feet deep. Low-lying ground extends a mile on each side, rising abruptly to a line of steep cliffs three to four hundred feet high, then gently levelling to a plateau. The Germans settled on the higher northern side two miles beyond the crest, behind a dense thicket that covered the front and slope. Low crops in the unfenced countryside offered no natural concealment to the Allies. Deep, narrow paths cut into the escarpment at right angles,



*The badge of the  
Cameron Highlanders*

exposed an attacking force to extreme hazard. The forces on the northern plateau commanded a wide field of fire.

In a dense fog on the night of 13 September 1914, the British Expeditionary Force crossed the Aisne on pontoons and partially demolished bridges. Under the thick cover of the foggy night, the BEF advanced up the narrow paths to the plateau. When the mist evaporated under a bright morning sun, they were mercilessly cross-raked by fire. Those caught in the valley without the fog's protective shroud fared no better.

It soon became clear that neither side could budge the other and since neither chose to retreat, the impasse hardened into stalemate that would lock the antagonists into a relatively narrow strip for the next four years. On September 14, the BEF was ordered to entrench but few digging tools were available. Soldiers scouted nearby farms and villages for pickaxes, spades and other implements. Initially the troops merely dug shallow pits in the soil but soon the trenches were deepened and braced with timber.

Fighting continued until 28th September when it was realised that frontal infantry attacks on well-defended positions, would cause heavy casualties and was unlikely to gain a breakthrough. Both sides then dug in for a long war of attrition while manoeuvring to outflank their enemy.

It was on the 26 September 1914 that Private James Jarvie was killed and he is commemorated on the La Ferte-sous-Jouarre Memorial for soldiers who have no known graves and also on the Banton War Memorial.

James Jarvie had 4 siblings.

1. **John Jarvie** was born c1874 at Banton, Kilsyth.
2. **Agnes Jarvie** was born c1877 at Banton, Kilsyth. In 1897 at Kilsyth she married Francis McWhinnie, a coal miner. In 1901 the couple were still living at Kilsyth with Agnes's brother Archibald lodging with them. By 1911 Agnes and Francis, along with brother James, were living at Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh where Francis and James worked in the Palace Colliery. Agnes died in 1956 at Castle Square, Bothwell.
3. **Alexander Jarvie** was born c1888 at Banton, Kilsyth.
4. **Archibald Jarvie** was born c1885 at Kilsyth. He was a miner and had moved to Bothwellhaugh before enlisting with the Cameronians. Archibald was killed in action on the 16 January 1917 at Salonica in the Balkans.
5. **James Jarvie.**

## **PRIVATE SAMUEL JOHNSTONE**

**Highland Light Infantry  
10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 6 September 1916**

**I**t would appear from military records that the only Samuel Johnstone of the Highland Light Infantry who died in WW1 and had a connection to the Bothwell area was a Private Samuel Johnstone, number 540, of the 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, who was born in Farntown, Armagh, Ireland, resided in Portadown, Armagh and enlisted in Uddingston. He died of wounds on the 6 September 1916 at Flanders and is commemorated on Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-L'Abbe.

A search of census and other records did not show a Samuel Johnstone living or working in or around Bothwell around the time of the Great War. He is, however, commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial and acknowledged here.

# CAPTAIN HUBERT EUSTACE HATHORN JOHNSTON-STEWART

## Highland Light Infantry 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 17 May 1915**

Hubert E.H. Johnston-Stewart was born on 15 July 1880 at Glasserton House, Wigtownshire. His father was Robert H. Johnston-Stewart JP, DL, a landed proprietor, born 1824 in Edinburgh and died in 1899 in Wigtownshire. His mother was Anne Murray Maxwell, born in 1836 at St Ninians, Stirling and died 1920 in Edinburgh. Robert H Johnston-Stewart was a Captain in the 93<sup>rd</sup> Highlanders and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Light Dragoons and married Anne Maxwell in 1856 at Wigtownshire.

Hubert Johnston-Stewart was gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in April 1900 to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry He served in the South African War and took part in operations in the Transvaal, Orange River Colony and Cape Colony for which he received the Queens Medal with clasps. After the Boer War the Battalion was stationed at Lucknow, India where Lieutenant Johnston-Stewart enjoyed colonial life playing in polo tournaments and hunting game. On 15 September 1909 he took a month's leave with a fellow officer to shoot and fish in the Kumaon Hills in northern India. His trophies included a bear and a sambhur (a large deer). In 1910 Johnston-Stewart was promoted to captain and in 1912 returned to Britain. In Edinburgh that year he married 28 year old Violet Corse-Scott of Synton, Roxburghshire.

He was then temporarily seconded to the 3<sup>rd</sup> HLI, a reserve Battalion, based in the barracks at Hamilton. During this period whilst in Lanarkshire the newly married couple lived in Silverwells House, Hamilton Road, Bothwell and it was there that their son Stair Johnston-Stewart was born in 1913.

When forces were mobilised in 1914 Captain Johnston-Stewart was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion HLI. The Battalion had returned from a tour of duty in Ireland and by then were training at Aldershot as part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. On the 14 August 1914 the Battalion embarked for France and they were immediately put to the defence of the front line where they repulsed numerous German attacks.



*Captain H.E.H. Johnston-Stewart*

The following year they were in action at the Battle of Festubert which was fought by the British First Army under Sir Douglas Haig against a German salient between Neuve Chapelle to the north and the village of Festubert to the south. On the 13 May 1915 the British bombardment opened with a total of 433 guns and howitzers firing on a 5,000 yard front. The 36 six-inch howitzers fired on the enemy breastwork parapet, to blow gaps through which the infantry could pour; the other guns aiming at support trenches at the German wire. By day and night, more than 101,000 shells were fired. On the 15 May at 11.30pm the assault began on the German trenches against heavy machine gun fire. It was the first British night time attack of the war. The German lines were breached in places and by 4am the British were working their way along the enemy trenches using hand grenades. Two hours later the Scots Guards were forced to withdraw a little, after being hit by British artillery that was firing by the map and timetable, unaware of the precise position of their infantry. The Germans counter-attacked and the men in the most advanced positions came under intensive German shellfire. By mid-day some 800 yards of enemy trench had been taken and 190 Germans captured. The battle continued for the rest of the day and that night the British consolidated their positions. The following day, the 17<sup>th</sup> May, dawned with heavy rain, and low cloud. The German units along part of the front began a systematic withdrawal to a new line, some 1200 yards to the rear. The British recommenced shelling and the German garrison of the Quadrilateral was badly hit. The survivors attempted to surrender but were cut down by both German and British shelling. However approximately 450 men managed to reach British lines and were taken prisoner. German shelling on captured areas was heavy throughout the day. An advance by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion HLI ran into heavy machine gun fire. Further advances along the front proved slow due to worsening weather conditions.

It was during this day, the 17 May 1917 that Captain Johnston-Stewart was killed in action, age 35. He is commemorated on Le Touret Memorial, France, on the Roll of Honour at Bothwell Parish Church and on a memorial in Glasserton Church.

The Battle of Festubert raged on for another six days. By the end of the battle the British lines had advanced by nearly 2 miles on a limited front at a cost of 16,000 casualties.



*Memorial to  
Herbert Johnston-  
Stewart in  
Glasserton Church*

Herbert Johnston-Stewart had 9 siblings

1. **Admiral Robert Johnston-Stewart** CB, MVO, was born in 1858 at Champfleurie House, Linlithgowshire. He married Olive Marshall in 1902 and in 1904 assumed his first command of the cruiser Gibraltar. In 1908 he was appointed Captain Superintendent of the Sheerness Dockyard. He was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral in 1909 and to the rank of Admiral in 1918. Robert Johnston-Stewart died in 1940 at Glasserton House, Wigtownshire.
2. **Nora Johnston-Stewart** was born in 1861 at Champfleurie House, Linlithgowshire.
3. **Anne Johnston-Stewart** was born c1864 in France.
4. **Captain William Johnston-Stewart** was born in 1865 at Champfleurie House, Linlithgowshire. He was an officer with the Royal Marine Light Infantry and died in 1896 at Glasserton House, Wigtownshire.
5. **Margaret Johnston-Stewart** was born in 1868 at Glasserton House.
6. **Blanche Johnston-Stewart** was born in 1869 at Glasserton House.
7. **Captain James Johnston-Stewart** was born in 1871 at Glasserton House. He served with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in the North West Frontier of the India Campaign in 1898 and in the Asanti Campaign on 1900. He then served with the Kings African Rifles the South African War in 1901-02 and was four times mentioned in dispatches and received medals and clasps. Captain James Johnston-Stewart was killed in action at Cumburru, Somaliland on 17 April 1903.
8. **Constance Johnston-Stewart** was born in 1873 at Glasserton House.
9. **Edith Johnston-Stewart** was born in 1875 at Glasserton House.
10. **Herbert E. H. Johnston-Stewart**

# PRIVATE WALTER HENDERSON KEIR

(73285)

## Royal Army Medical Corps 75<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance

**Died 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1918**

Walter H Keir was born at Swinton, Baillieston on 23 December 1891. His father, Robert Keir, was an engine keeper who was born in 1858 at Old Monkton. He met and married Jessie Sneddon, a 23 year old from Kilmarnock. They started their married life at Swinton, followed by a move to Russell Place, Tannochside and finally to Watson Street, Uddingston where they brought up their seven children. Jessie died in 1921 at Uddingston, followed by Robert in 1931.

Walter was a grocer before he enlisted in the 75<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance of the RAMC. Little is known of his time with the 75<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance that served with 25th Division. The Division was formed in September 1914 and proceeded to France in late September 1915. Their first action was in defence of the German attack on Vimy Ridge in May 1916. They were then in action at The Somme, Bazentin, Pozieres and Ancre Heights. In 1917 they fought at the Battle of Messines and at the third battle of Ypres. In 1918 they returned to the Somme, and fought in the Battles of the Lys, where they suffered heavy casualties.

It was possibly during this battle that Private Kier was injured resulting in his death on 3 October 1918.



Badge of the RAMC

Private H.D. Jackson was a comrade of Walter Keir's in the 75<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance and he wrote about his experiences during the War.

*"No one can describe what the Battle of the Somme was really like unless they were there. It was one continuous stream of wounded, dead and dying. You had to forget all sentiment. We went in action on the Somme the midnight before the action started. The field ambulance we were taking over from were taking rather a long time getting out and we were all crouched down outside waiting to go in, while shells were bursting around us. We used to put stretchers on wheels (we could run them down the road, if there was a road at any time.) Bits of shrapnel were sparking on the wheels and we were wondering if we were going to live to get to the dressing station. Anyway we got in.*

*When the ration party came up with supplies, it was two mules and a sergeant on horseback. A shell came over and burst in the middle of them,*

*killing them. All our dressing stations outside were distempered with blood. We had four days and four nights there, and it was one continuous stream of wounded.*

*I remember one chap who was shell-shocked very bad. It took four or five of us to hold him down. He thought we were taking him back to the trenches again, instead of taking him to hospital. And I remember one wounded man, who gave me a letter he had written. "See this goes" he said "it's to my wife, bless her heart!" So I said "right, I will see that it goes." A bit later I went to the dugout to sleep. It was where they put the dead before they were picked up. I lay down on an improvised bunk made out of wire netting and I happened to see an arm on a stretcher poking out from a blanket. I pulled the blanket over and it was the chap who'd given me the letter. When things happened like that it really brought it home to you. Life seemed cheap."*

Private Keir is buried at the Abbeville Communal Cemetery Extension at the Somme, France and is commemorated on Bothwell Parish Church Roll of Honour.

Walter Keir had 6 siblings

1. **James Keir** was born in 1883 at Swinton. Like his father he was Colliery engine keeper and in 1908 he married Margaret Campbell, a mantle maker from Aitkenhead.
2. **William Keir** was born in 1887 at Swinton. He was a joiner to trade and in 1915 married Mary Graham, a milner living at Langside Road, Bothwell.
3. **Barbara Keir** was born in 1890 at Swinton.
4. **Walter H. Keir**
5. **Alexander Keir** was born in 1894 at Swinton. He was a coal miner and in 1919 at Uddingston he married Margaret Anderson, a shop assistant from Maryhill, Glasgow.
6. **Robert Keir** was born in 1896 at Swinton. He was a general labourer working at Kirn when he married a local girl, Elizabeth Lawson in 1924 at Dunoon.
7. **Jessie Keir** was born c1898 at Tannochside.

## SERGEANT SAMUEL KNOX

(1145)

### **Cameronians 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 15 June 1915**

Samuel Knox was born on 27 February 1893 at Blackwell Terrace, Bellshill. His father, Robert Knox, a coal miner, was born c1869 at Bothwell. His mother, Jeanie Mair, was also born in Bothwell in 1873 and it was there they married on the 31 December 1890. The couple initially lived at 30 Russell Place, Tannochside, later moving to Murray Place, Bothwell and by 1915 were living at 2 Maxwell Place, Bothwell. They had 5 of a family. Jeanie Mair's brother, John Mair was killed in action on 23 November 1915 at Ypres.

Samuel, the second eldest, grew up in Bothwell and worked as a hewer in Bothwell Castle Colliery. He served for five years with (E) Coy, 1/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians. He was a good shot and was the winner of the Captain Playfair silver challenge cup in 1913 for the best aggregate score over the season. Sergeant Sam Knox was killed in action on the 15 June 1915 in an attack on the German lines near Festubert, France. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31.

Samuel Knox was aged 22 when he was killed and he is commemorated at the Le Touret Memorial, France.



*Sam Knox*

In his death notice in the Hamilton Advertiser, his family placed the following.

Now the labourer's task is o'er,  
Now the battle day is past;  
Now upon the further shore,  
Lands the voyager at last.  
Father in thy gracious keeping,  
Leave we now our servant sleeping.

Sam Knox had 4 siblings.

1. **Janet Knox** was born 1891 at Bothwellhaugh. Janet, a domestic servant, married William McMillan, a pithead man, in 1917 at the Manse, Bothwell.
2. **Samuel Knox.**
3. **William Knox** was born in 1899 at Bellshill. He was an electrical wireman and married Jean Gilchrist, a draper's assistant in 1920 at Carluke.
4. **Elizabeth Knox** was born in 1903 at Bellshill.
5. **Agnes Knox** was born in 1909 at Bothwell.



*Le Touret Memorial, France*

# CAPTAIN ALLAN JAMES LAWRIE

## Cameronians 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 16 May 1915**

Allan James Lawrie was born on 10 September 1887 at Regent Square, Lenzie, Dunbartonshire. His father, Frank Lawrie was born c1856 at Wemyss, Fife and he was variously a commercial traveller, commission merchant and wholesale dealer. Allan's mother was Julie Edwards who was born c1867 in London. Allan's parents were married in 1885 at London. By 1891 the family was living at Hillside, Bothwell. Julia Lawrie died there in 1910 followed by Frank Lawrie in 1926. Their son, George V Lawrie continued to live at Hillside until his death in 1967. On the 1 April 1908, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Allan James Lawrie was gazetted from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Volunteer Battalion, the Cameronians to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion. He was later promoted to Captain. After war was declared the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion left Falkirk for France on the 19 March 1915 and disembarked at Le Havre two days later. The battalion strength was 31 officers (including Captain Lawrie) and 953 other ranks. On the 31 March they relieved the Middlesex Regiment at the La Boutillierie trenches.

For the next month the battalion was either on a 6 day tour of duty at the front line trenches or in billets behind the lines. While at the front line, duties included night patrols and repair and maintenance of the trenches while all the time under intermittent shell and sniper fire. After their front line tour of duty, there was no relaxation in the rear billets with rifle drill, training exercises and 5 mile route marches. During this period the weather was variable ranging from very hot and humid to incessant rain and thunderstorms, the latter making the trenches very muddy.

About 3.30 pm. on the 16 May 1915 Captain Allan Lawrie was killed by an enemy sniper in a communication trench, the first Officer casualty in Battalion. He was buried in Rue-du-Bois Military Cemetery, Fleurbaix.

Allan Lawrie had two brothers.

1. **Frank W K Lawrie** was born c1887 at Lenzie. He studied medicine and qualified as a doctor joining the Royal Army Medical Corps as a captain during the War. He relinquished his commission in November 1918 moving to general practice at Alnwick, Northumberland. He died in 1936 at Oban Cottage Hospital.
2. **George V Lawrie** was born in 1896 at Bothwell. He was gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians in September 1914 and joined the Battalion in France in July 1915 two month after his brother Allan was killed. In July 1916 he was posted to the 4<sup>th</sup> London Regiment as Regimental Transport Officer. After the War he returned to live in Hillside House, Bothwell and was employed as a manufacturer's agent. He died there in 1967.

Captain Lawrie's friend and fellow officer, Captain James Lusk wrote movingly about his friend's death, recorded in a book of his letters and memories.

Monday Morning 17 May 1915

"Yesterday, in the comparative quietness of the afternoon, we lost our first officer. Captain Lawrie, our machine gun officer, was shot through the head when going along one of the communication trenches from one of his guns to the other. He stopped to speak to two men, and had possibly straightened himself up so that his head showed over the parapet. I was especially fond of Lawrie.... He had such a nice face and was just altogether such a nice soul. Oh, it is so sad that one should be taken and another left. It happened yesterday afternoon. I went up at about 6 o'clock. A grave had already been dug in a little soldiers' cemetery just behind the trench lines, where men of other regiments had been laid, and this one was for Allan Lawrie. Mr MacGibbon our Chaplain was with us, and we were glad of that. He was brought on a stretcher, wrapped in a waterproof sheet and with his head covered. We fell in behind, - Colonel, Major, Doctor, Adjutant, Chaplain and myself. The stretcher was laid alongside, and he was lifted from it and laid to rest. Our heads were bared, and in the midsts of the cracks of the rifle shots the chaplain stood at the head of the grave and prayed. It was 7.30pm on Sabbath Evening May 16<sup>th</sup>. ..We could have missed many another better than him. His horse will miss him too. .. God is over all and His ways must be Best. And we must 'carry on'."

Monday Night 24 May 1915

One of Lawrie's men made a wooden plate to go on a cross which we shall put on his grave, and I am trying to carve an inscription on a piece of wood. I have begun to do it myself with what tools I can get, and hope I shall have the time to finish it properly. I would like to do it myself. It is better and more permanent to cut the letters on the wood than simply to paint them.

Letter from Rev J. MacGibbon, Battalion Chaplain.

After Lawrie was buried behind the trenches, Captain Lusk procured an oak tablet to be placed on the cross that marked Lawrie's grave. The carving of the inscription was a labour of love. Day by day he occupied his spare time cutting out the letters. Though his tools were primitive the letters were perfectly formed. When he had finished the whole inscription, his fastidious taste found that the surface was unequal. He ruthlessly planed this smooth which involved fresh labour in deepening nearly all the letters; yet he stuck to it working for hours on end, to make the whole as worthy as possible of the comrade who had trusted him. Then he made a rubbing of the tablet to send to Lawrie's father.

Captain James Lusk was killed in action seven months later in December 1915.

# PRIVATE JAMES MACKIE

(1476)

## Cameronians 6th Battalion

**Died 15 June 1915**

James Mackie was born c1896 at Falkirk. His father John Mackie was born c1875 at Stonehouse. James's mother Helen Ferguson was born c1877 at Falkirk and she and John Mackie were married in 1895 at Denny, Stirlingshire. Not long after their marriage they settled at Hill Place Bothwellhaugh where John worked in the Palace Colliery as an underground foreman. In 1898 John Mackie enlisted with the Imperial Yeomanry Volunteer Force and in 1908 was transferred to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians. He was promoted to Sergeant in 1914 and the following year to Colour Sergeant. From March 1915 to April 1916 he fought with the British Expeditionary Force in France and was discharged at the end of his period of engagement in May 1916. His service record notes that the only medical treatment he received during his 8 year tour of duty was in March 1915 when he had 14 teeth remodelled at a cost of 2/6d each, a total of £1-15/-. Helen Mackie died in 1945 followed by John Mackie in 1951, both at Motherwell.



*James Mackie*

James Mackie followed his father into the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians. James was killed in action on the 15 June 1915 in an attack at Festubert. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31.

Private James Mackie was 19 years old when he died and he is commemorated on Le Touret Memorial, France.

James Mackie had 8 siblings

1. **James Mackie**
2. **Robert Mackie** was born in 1896 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh. In 1921 at Campsie, Stirlingshire he married Elizabeth Boyle. Robert died in 1966 at Gosford, NSW, Australia.
3. **John L. Mackie** was born in 1899 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh. John died in 1966 at Gosford, NSW, Australia.

4. **Cecilia B. Mackie** was born in 1902 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh.
5. **Hugh W. Mackie** was born in 1904 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh.
6. **Ann W. MacKie** was born in 1908 at Bothwellhaugh and died in 1953 at Queensland, Australia.
7. **Helen F. Mackie** was born in 1910 at Avon Place, Bothwellhaugh. Helen died in 1968 at NSW Australia.
9. **William B. MacKie** was born in 1911 at Bothwellhaugh and died in 1995 at Westmorland, England.

## LANCE CORPORAL JOHN MAIR

### Highland Light Infantry 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

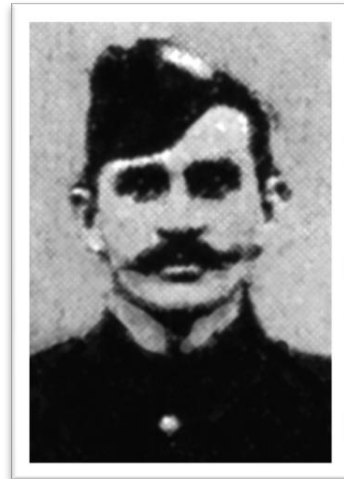
**Died 23 November 1915**

John Mair was born on 20 April 1882 at the Agra Bank Buildings, Main Street, Bothwell. His father, William Mair, was born c1842 at Bailieston, Lanarkshire and was a miner. John's mother, Janet Ramsay, was born c1843 at Tollcross, Glasgow and she and William Mair were married in 1862 at Carmyle, Lanarkshire. The couple first lived in Carmyle before moving to Overtown. From there they moved to Orbiston Rows, Bellshill and finally to Kent's Land, Green Street, Bothwell. It was there that William Mair died in 1899. His widow, Janet, aged 56, then obtained work as a washer woman and moved into lodgings in Green Street with her son John. Janet died in 1914 at Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh.

In 1901, at the age of 18, John Mair was a pony driver in a stone mine. Shortly afterwards he enlisted in the Army and went to South Africa to fight in the Boer War. He survived the South African War without a scratch and was awarded the South African Medal with two bars. On his return, in 1903 at the Royal Hotel, Uddingston he married Agnes Roy, a laundress. The couple set up home at Flemming's Land, Green Street, Bothwell where their eldest son was born. From there they moved to Murray Place, Bothwell where they had two more sons.

At the outbreak of the Great War he rejoined the colours with the 11<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry and was promoted to Lance Corporal. The 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed at Hamilton in August 1914 came under command of 28th Brigade in 9th (Scottish) Division. After training at Aldershot, the Division crossed to France in May 1915. There the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion fought at the Battle of Loos in September of that year. The Division were then recuperating from their ordeal during the Battle in trenches to the east of Sanctuary Wood in the Ypres Salient when L/Corp Mair was killed by shellfire on the 23 November 1915. He was aged 33 when he died and is commemorated on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial.

After John Mair's death his widow, Agnes, married, in 1919, Richard Bullar, a coal miner living at Castle Court, Bothwell.



*John Mair*

John and Agnes Mair had 3 sons

1. **William Mair** was born in 1905 at Flemming's Land, Green Street, Bothwell. William was a farm labourer aged 21, when in October 1926, he emigrated to New York, USA.
2. **Allan Mair** was born in 1908 at Murray Place, Bothwell. In 1936 he was a Police Constable living at the police barracks, Coatbridge, when, at Blantyre, he married Alison Nelson, a 30 year old grocers assistant. Allan Mair was latterly a foreman tyre inspector and he died in 1960 at Coatbridge.
3. **Walter Mair** was born in 1910 at Murray Place, Bothwell. In 1936 he was a coal cutting machine-man when, at Blantyre, he married Elizabeth Bell, a 25 year old aerated water worker. Walter Mair latterly lived at Auchinraith Road, Blantyre and died in 1943 at No 1 Pit, Bothwell Castle Colliery leaving a wife and two daughters.

John Mair had 10 siblings.

1. **William Mair** was born c1863 at Carmyle. In 1886 he was a builder's carter and married Susan Smith at Green Street, Bothwell. By 1891 William was employed as a coal miner and the family were living at Minto's Land, Main Street, Bothwell. They then moved to Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh and in 1901 William was a stone miner. William and Susan Mair had 8 of a family.
2. **Agnes Mair** was born c1865 at Cambuslang.
3. **Walter Mair** was born c1868 at Overtown. At the age of 13 he was a message boy but later became a police constable. In 1890 at Shotts, Walter married Marion Roy and they set up home in Airdrie. By 1901 Walter had quit the police force and was working as a stone miner with the family living at Haugh Place, Bothwellhaugh. Walter later became a colliery store keeper and died in 1912. He and Marion had three of a family, Marion, William and Mary. Their son William Mair, born 1900, married Elizabeth Kidd in 1924 at the Mission Church, Bothwellhaugh. William and Elizabeth had five of a family, Elizabeth, Walter, George, Marion, and Margaret. Daughter Elizabeth (1926-2009) married John Gray in 1949 at Bellshill and their son Alexander is a Bothwell resident and past captain of Bothwell Castle Golf Club. Son Walter Mair, great nephew of John Mair, was born 1929 and still lives in Bothwell. He married Elizabeth Jackson in 1952 at Hamilton and they had three of a family, Willie, Barbara and Evelyn. Willie is a prominent member of the golf club and he and sister Barbara are also Bothwell residents.
4. **Andrew Mair** was born c1870 at Overtown. He was a roadsman at Bothwell Castle Colliery and in 1896 at Clackmannan married Jane Cousin, a factory worker. By 1901 the couple had moved with their three children to Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh with Andrew working as a stone miner. In 1914 Andrew's wife Jane died and the following year Andrew married Helen Day. Helen's brother

William Day was killed in action in 1915 at the Battle of Loos. Andrew switched work to become a coal miner and he died in 1918.

5. **Jane (Jeanie) Mair** was born c1873 at Orbiston Rows, Bellshill. In 1890 at Bothwell she married Robert Knox and her son Samuel Knox was killed in action at Festubert, France on 15 June 1915.
6. **Isabella Mair** was born c1876 at Orbiston Rows, Bellshill.
7. **Janet R. Mair** was born c1877 at Orbiston Rows, Bellshill. Janet was a domestic servant and in 1896 at the Reading Room, Hamilton Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh she married James Robertson, a pony driver at the colliery.
8. **Elizabeth Mair** was born c1880 at the Agra Bank Buildings, Bothwell. In 1899 at Green Street, Bothwell she married James Anderson. James was a coal miner at the Palace Colliery and the couple set up home at Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh. They had a daughter and a son before Elizabeth died in 1903 aged 23.
9. **John Mair.**
10. **Margaret Mair** was born c1884 at Springbank, Bothwell.
11. **Susan S. Mair** was born c1887 at Green Street, Bothwell. The 1901 census records her as a 13 year old domestic under nurse living at Govan, Glasgow. In 1908 at the Manse, Bothwell, she married 25 year old plasterer James Davis.

There is a little grave in France,  
That some eyes will never see,  
That little grave in France,  
Is the dearest spot to me.

*Inserted in the Hamilton Advertiser by his wife.*

# PRIVATE THOMAS MANUAL

(9312)

## Highland Light Infantry 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 29 April 1916**

**T**homas Manual was born on the 11 July 1891 at Simpson Street, Hamilton. His father, James Manual was born c1864 in Hamilton. Thomas's mother, Catherine Guy was born c1867 at Nova Scotia, Canada to an English father and an Irish mother. Her family returned to Britain to live at Bothwellhaugh and she married James Manual in 1884 at Hamilton. The couple lived initially at Simpson Street, Hamilton where four of their children were born. About 1900 they moved to Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh where James Manual worked in the Palace Colliery as a miner. James Manual died in 1901 and later that year his wife Catherine and family moved to Brandon Place, Bothwellhaugh. Catherine Manual emigrated to Detroit, USA, and died there in 1930.



Thomas Manual

In 1911 Thomas Manual was working at the Palace Colliery as a pit pony driver. When war broke out, he enlisted in September 1914, at the age of 22, with the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry and was sent to Fort Rennie, Plymouth. On 26 May 1915 he was sent to France to join the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion H.L.I.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion war diary records that in 1915 the Battalion was at the front line at a sector near the village of Loos. Extracts from the war diary give a glimpse of life for the soldiers at the front.

- 30-5-15            Very quiet day, very little shelling and practically no sniping. No casualties. Lte Richardson and 350 other ranks arrived. (*Presumably including Private Manual*)
- 2-6-15            Quiet day. Relieved by 9th HLI and go into billets in La Philosophie. 2 men wounded.
- 6-6-15            Owing to our billets being in view of German observing stations no parades or movement possible.
- 2-7-15            Work done on front line and wire put out at night. Quiet day. 3 men killed, 7 men wounded.
- 10-7-15           Our trenches enfiladed by German field guns from the direction of Auchy – right of our line damaged by minenwerfer (*mortar*).

- 13-7-15 A good deal of shrapnel from the Germans in the morning doing little harm. Relieved about 5.30pm by South Staffordshire Regiment and marched to billets in Bethune 1 man killed, 4 men wounded.
- 14-7-15 Kit inspections and general cleaning up. Bathing in swimming baths.
- 29-7-15 Our trenches shelled by howitzers and considerably damaged. Relieved about 5.30pm by Worcestershire Regiment and marched to billets in Beuvry. Lte A Douglas wounded. 1 man killed, 3 men wounded.
- 7-8-15 Quiet day. Relieved by South Staffordshire regiment and marched to billets in Bethune. 2 men killed, 8 men wounded.
- 10-9-15 Paraded at 2.30pm and marched to Givenchy to relieve Worcestershire Regiment. German aeroplane brought down behind German lines in the direction of Festubert. About 9.00am the Germans blew up a mine in front of 'C' company and opened rapid fire accompanied by a few shells. The crater was about 20 yards from our parapet and the explosion obliterated about 40 yards of our parapet and damaged most of it. Saps to the crater were immediately commenced and rear lip occupied. Captain Hope injured. 16 men wounded and injured.
- 23-9-15 Marched at 3.00pm to trenches at Givenchy and relieved the 1st Queens. Kept up burst of rapid fire all night to prevent Germans mending the wire. Very wet and trenches in a shocking state. Our bombardment continues. 1 man wounded.
- 25-9-15 **[Battle of Loos.]** The Battalion formed part of the 5th Brigade that attacked the enemy's lines at Givenchy. The enemy's wire had been cut by the artillery the previous 4 days. At 6.00am the Brigade advanced to the assault. The 2nd HLI occupied the German 1st line trench without suffering many casualties. Some of them got into the German supporting line after severe hand to hand fighting. Here they were met by strong German bombing parties that forced them back. Our bombs were chiefly the 'Ball' pattern. The weather was wet and most of the fuses would not ignite. The German bombs were more powerful than ours and having handles they were able to throw them further. Our men fought gallantly and well, but were gradually forced back and finally had to vacate the German trenches and retire to our own trenches as best they could. The same happened to the Queens and Oxfords and Bucks LI on the and by 9.00am the whole Brigade was back in their original lines.
- 4-12-15 Paraded at 9.00am and marched to Cambrin to relieve the Worcestershire Regiment in trenches east of Cuinchy. Owing to communication trenches being waist deep in places in mud and water, relief was not completed until 8.00pm.

- 30-3-16            The Brigade in reserve and supplying working parties for use in support and communications trenches. The Battalion had to find working parties of 250 men every night, working from 7pm to 1.30am.
- 19-4-16            S.W. wind wet and cold. A good deal of rifle grenade shooting in which we got the upper hand. Our trench blown in by heavy trench mortar bomb about 7.30pm. 1 man killed and 2 wounded. Very wet night.

Thomas Manual died on 29 April 1916 at the age of 24 and is buried at Noeux-les-Mines Communal Cemetery, France. In the letter to his mother from his commanding officer it stated that Private Manual was attached to the R.E. as an officer's servant at the time of his death.

Thomas Manual had 6 siblings.

1.    **Catherine Manual** was born c1886 at Simpson Street, Hamilton.
2.    **James Manual** was born c1888 at Simpson Street, Hamilton. He was a pit pony driver at the Palace Colliery.
3.    Gertrude Manual was born c1886 at Simpson Street, Hamilton. In 1911 she was a domestic servant.
4.    **Thomas Manual.**
5.    **Richard Manual** was born c1894 at Simpson Street, Hamilton. He was a coal miner at the Palace Colliery and in 1928 emigrated to the USA. He was married with four of a family and died in Detroit in 1984.
6.    **Samuel Manual** was born in 1901 at Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh. In 1923 at Glasgow he married Bridget Greenan and they had three of a family. Samuel died in 1971.
7.    **Bertie Manual** was born in 1902 at Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh. In 1923 he emigrated to Detroit, USA.

# PRIVATE ARCHIBALD MARSHALL

(S/22331)

## Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 19 July 1917**

**A**rchibald Marshall was born 10 January 1883 at Bellahouston, Glasgow. His father Archibald Marshall was a gardener/coachman who was born in 1855 at Milnathort Kinross-shire. His mother Christina Faulds was born in 1859 at Dreghorn, Ayrshire and married Archibald snr in 1882 at Bishopton, Renfrewshire. The married couple moved around the west of Scotland, presumably to wherever Archibald could find a job. Their eldest daughter, Christina, was born in Milton of Campsie followed by their son, James, who was born in Airdrie. From there the 1891 census records them living at Pollokshaws and ten years later living at Hutchesontown, Glasgow. Archibald snr died in 1891 leaving Christina a widow with a young family. By 1911 she had moved to Blantyre with her three youngest children who were all working and providing for their mother. At that time her son Archibald was a 14 year old working as a carter. Christina Marshall died in 1930 at Ferry Road, Bothwell.

Archibald Marshall's military records show that he was a resident of Bothwell when he enlisted at Hamilton with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameron Highlanders. Little is known of Private Marshall's military career. The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion were part of the Second New Army and late 1914 moved to Maida Barracks, Aldershot as part of the 45th Brigade of the 15th Division. In July 1915 they mobilised for war landing at Boulogne, France. From there they were transported to the Western Front where they saw action in 1915 at The Battle of Loos. The following year they suffered a German gas attack near Hulluch. There the enemy released gas from 3,800 cylinders along a 3km front. 1917 saw the 6<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders engaged in action at the Ypres Salient in the Battle of Scarpe (3-4 May) and the Battle of Pilckem (31 July-3 August). Private Marshall died on 19 July 1917 and is recorded as having "died of wounds received during a spell of trench duty in the Ypres Salient." He is buried at Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Popringe, Belgium and is commemorated on Bothwell Parish Church War Memorial.

Archibald Marshall had four siblings.

1. **Archibald Marshall**
2. **Christine Marshall** was born c1886 at Milton of Campsie.
3. **James Marshall** was born in 1888 at Airdrie. Like his father he was a gardener and in 1911 was living at Main Street, Blantyre. That year he married at Hamilton, Margaret Lambie, a farm servant. By 1930 the couple were living at the Lodge, Bothwellpark Cemetery.
4. **Jane Marshall** was born c1891 at Pollokshaws, Glasgow. At the age of 20 she was working as a firelighter maker and living with her mother at Blantyre.
5. **William Marshall** was born c1892 at Pollokshaws, Glasgow. By 1911 he was a market gardener living with his mother at Blantyre.

Archibald Marshall is listed on the Church Memorial as being with the Gordon Highlanders.

# PRIVATE GEORGE MASTERTON

(1254)

## Cameronians 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 15 June 1915**

**G**eorge Masterton was born 8 September 1894 at the Agra Bank Buildings, Bothwell.

His father, James Masterton was born in 1869 at Hamilton and worked as a blacksmith at the Castle Colliery. James Masterton died in 1932 at Murray Place, Fallside Road, Bothwell. His mother, Margaret Milne was born in 1864 at New Deer, Aberdeenshire and married James in 1893 at Kelvin, Glasgow. Margaret died in 1929 at Bothwell. They had six of a family.

George Masterton fought and died in the Great War. His obituary in the Evening Times of 5 July 1915 read as follows.

*Official intimation has been received by his parents of the death of Private George Masterton, Bothwell, 1-6th Scottish Rifles, who was killed in action on June 15. Deceased, who was the eldest son of Mr James Masterton, foreman blacksmith, 5 Murray Place, Bothwell, and had been connected with the Volunteers since 1910, was a blacksmith with Messrs William Baird and Company, Bothwell Collieries, before volunteering for active service.*



Private George Masterton was killed in an attack on the German lines at Festubert, France. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31. Private Masterton is buried at Brown's Road Military Cemetery, Festubert, France.



*Brown's Road Military  
Cemetery, Festubert, France.*

George Masterton had 4 siblings.

1. **George Masterton**
2. **Janet Masterton** was born in 1895 at Bothwell and died the following year.
3. **Elizabeth Masterton** was born in 1897 at Bothwell and died the following year.
4. **William Masterton** was born in 1898 at Bothwell. He was a joiner and married Elizabeth Mathie in 1925 at Wishaw. William died in 1998 at Bellshill.
5. **Rachel Masterton** was born in 1902 at Bothwell. She married Ian Smith, a merchant seaman, in 1932 at Govanhill, Glasgow. Rachel died in 1983 at Bellshill.



TO THE GLORIOUS MEMORY OF ALL RANKS  
THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES) WHO  
TO UPHOLD LIBERTY AND JUSTICE IN THE WORLD  
LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES IN THE TWO WORLD WARS  
1914-18 AND 1939-45

*Cameronians Memorial  
in the grounds of Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow.  
Unveiled by Field Marshall Earl Haig in 1927*

## **LANCE CORPORAL ROBERT MAXWELL**

(26183)

### **Royal Scots Fusiliers 1<sup>st</sup> Garrison Battalion**

**Died 11 March 1919**

**R**obert Maxwell was born on 17 May 1896 at Greenfield Old Rows, Burnbank, Hamilton. His father James Maxwell was born c1870 at Larkhall and was a coal miner (fireman). His mother Mary Glover was born c1870 at Galston, Ayrshire. They married in 1894 at Galston. Robert was their only son and by 1911 they had moved to Ardgowan Terrace, Bothwell. Seven years later in 1919 James and Mary had moved to Langside Road, Bothwell. Mary was widowed and died in 1927 at Glasgow.

Robert Maxwell was a machine turner and enlisted on 11 December 1915 with the Royal Scots Fusiliers. He was transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Garrison Battalion in October 1916 that had been formed in Gailes, Ayrshire that year. On 18 October 1916 the Battalion sailed from Devonport for Bombay, India arriving there seven weeks later. When the war started, many of the regular army battalions based in India were sent to the western front and later to other areas to augment the British forces. These had to be replaced, and some new, or less experienced, battalions went to India to man these garrisons. The 1<sup>st</sup> Garrison Battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers was one such battalion. They remained in India throughout the war under the command of Jhansi Brigade in 5th (Mhow) Division. Whilst in India Robert Maxwell gained the Army's 3rd Class Certificate of Education and the following year in 1918 gained the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Certificate. This enabled him to be promoted to Lance Corporal (unpaid) in 1917, receiving payment for his position a year later in 1918.

L/Cpl Robert Maxwell was admitted to King George's Hospital, Poona, India suffering from pneumonia and died in the hospital on 11 March 1919. He is commemorated on the Kirklee Memorial that honours more than 1,800 servicemen who died in India during the First World War and who are buried in civil cemeteries where their graves can no longer be properly maintained.

In the notice of his death in the Hamilton Advertiser his parents wrote:-

“In our lonely hours of thinking,  
Thoughts of him are very near.”

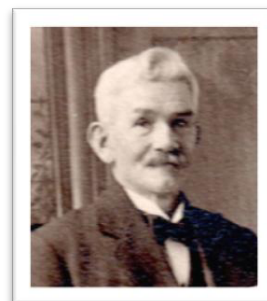
## PRIVATE WILLIAM McCART

(19785)

### Highland Light Infantry 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 25 September 1915**

William McCart was born on the 31 January 1878 at Cambusnethan. His father, Robert McCart, was a shoemaker, born c1849 in Ireland. His mother, Margaret McMaster was born c1854 in Ireland. She and Robert McCart married in 1873 at Ballymena, Co. Antrim where their eldest son John was born. They came to Scotland around 1875 and set up home in Cambusnethan where another three sons were born. In 1882 Margaret McCart died leaving Robert a widower with four young boys to look after. Three years later in 1885 Robert McCart married Jane Miller, a 25 year old domestic servant from Bellshill. Robert and his wife then moved to The Palace Rows, Bothwellhaugh. By 1901 the family were living at New Orbiston Rows, Bellshill where Robert, now aged 52, had changed from shoemaker to being employed as a coal hewer. Robert McCart died in 1926 at Paisley.



*Robert McCart*

William McCart was employed as an oncost worker at the Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh. He was also employed as a part-time barman in the Camphill Vaults in Bothwell. In 1899 at Bellshill he married Margaret Cunningham and they set up home at Avon Place, Bothwellhaugh where they raised their five children.

At the outbreak of war William McCart enlisted at Bothwell with 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry. He was killed in action on the 25 September 1915, the first day of the Battle of Loos. Seven men from Bothwell also died at Loos and details of the Battle are given on page 25.

Private McCart is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, France.

After William's death Margaret worked in the Palace Colliery stores. She later married Robert Mackenzie and died in 1965 at Hamilton.

William and Margaret McCart had 5 children.

1. **Marjory McCart** was born in 1900 at Mossend and emigrated to USA.
2. **Robert McCart** was born in 1902 at Bothwellhaugh. He was a coal miner like his father, and in 1933 at the Public Halls, Bothwell he married Agnes Neilson a housekeeper from Bothwellhaugh. Robert died in 1963 at Bellshill.
3. **Margaret McCart** was born in 1904 at Bothwellhaugh and emigrated to USA.
4. **William McCart** was born in 1908 at Bothwellhaugh and died in infancy.

5. **Mary McCart** was born in 1910 at Bothwellhaugh. In 1940 at Bothwell Parish Church she married Thomas Brown, a bricklayer from Hamilton.

William McCart had 10 siblings

1. **John McCart** was born in 1873 in Ireland. He was a haulage man at Hamilton Palace Colliery. In 1897 he married 21 year old Margaret Neilson at the Colliery Hall and they set up home at Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh. By 1911 they were living at Brandon Place and had seven of a family.
2. **Robert McCart** was born in 1876 at Wishaw, Cambusnethan. In 1898 at Bothwellhaugh he married Janet Anderson, a 19 year old domestic servant and they set up home at Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh. He was a haulage man at Hamilton Palace Colliery and was killed in an accident on 2 October 1914. The communication signal wire jammed between the pit bottom and the engine room and Robert was sent to free it. In doing so the bell rang, the cage moved and Robert McCart was thrown to the bottom of the shaft and instantaneously killed. He was 39 years of age, and left a widow and five children. Eldest daughter Janet McCart was born in 1899 and in 1920 at the Public Hall, Bothwellhaugh, married 22 year old Andrew McGowan, a coal miner from Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh. Their daughter Margaret Shanks (née McGowan), great niece of William McCart presently lives in Hamilton. Another daughter Margaret McCart, born 1906, married James McWhinney in 1930 at Bothwell. Their son Hugh McWhinney married Mary Mitchell. Mary's uncle Lieutenant John Mitchell was killed in action in 1918 in France.
3. **William McCart**
4. **James McCart** was born 1880 at Wishaw, Cambusnethan. He broke his neck playing football and as a result died in 1893 aged 12.
5. **Maria McCart** was born in 1885 at Bellshill. She was a domestic servant and in 1905 at Bellshill she married Thomas Skelton, a 23 year old boilermaker.
6. **Mary McCart** was born in 1887 at Wishaw, Cambusnethan. She was a domestic servant and in 1905 at Bellshill she married George Rafferty, a 20 year old coal miner.
7. **Ellen McCart** was born in 1889 at Wishaw, Cambusnethan. She was a domestic servant and in 1910 at Bellshill she married John Rae a 27 year old coal miner.
8. **Alexander McCart** was born in 1890 at Bothwellhaugh. He was a coal miner and in 1919 at Bellshill he married 25 year old Helen Hill.
9. **Elizabeth McCart** was born in 1894 at Bellshill. She worked as a farm servant at a farm in Renfrew and in 1912 she married John Crawford, a 25 year old farm servant from Inchinnan.
10. **James McCart** was born in 1896 at Bellshill. He was a baker and in 1922 at Bellshill he married 19 year old Mary Stevenson.
11. **Jean McCart** was born 1900 at Bellshill. In 1919 at Bellshill she married William Williamson a 22 year old crane driver.

# PRIVATE JAMES MCCONNACHIE

(19100)

## King's Own Scottish Borderers 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

**Died 13 June 1916**

James McConnachie was born in Mullinsalagh, Co Antrim, Ireland and it is assumed he came to Scotland to find work. He lived in Hamilton and it was there that he enlisted with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Scottish Rifles as Private McConnachie 18330. He was then transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion King's Own Scottish Borders, number 19100. At the beginning of 1915 the 1<sup>st</sup> KOSB came under orders of the 89<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 29<sup>th</sup> Division and moved to Rugby. Private James McConnachie would then have sailed with his comrades from Bristol on 18 March 1915. They sailed via Malta to Alexandria in Egypt but their final destination was Cape Helles on Gallipoli where they disembarked on the 25 April 1915. After the disastrous Gallipoli campaign the KOSB's were evacuated on 8 January 1916 and returned to Alexandria. From there they sailed to Marseilles for service in France, arriving 18 March 1916. During the latter part of March the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion KOSBs fought on the Somme. For the rest of the Great War they served on the Western Front in France and Belgium. Private McConnachie died on the 13 June 1916 and is buried at Dickebusch New Military Cemetery, Belgium.



*King's Own Scottish Borders*

# CORPORAL THOMAS MCCONNELL

(S/6280)

## Gordon Highlanders 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion

### Died 26 September 1915

Thomas McConnell was born 6 March 1888 at Bellgrove Street, Dennistoun, Glasgow. His father Thomas Barr McConnell was born in 1854 in Glasgow and worked as a dyer of fancy yarns and in 1883 he married Margaret McDonald, a 26 year old Glasgow girl. In the next eight years they had four sons and had moved to Temple Villa in Clincarthill, Rutherglen. Ten years later in 1901 they were still living in Temple Villa and had added two sons and a daughter to the family. Margaret died in 1911 at Blythswood, Glasgow, while Thomas Snr died in 1925 at Rutherglen.

Thomas McConnell was employed as a mining engineer, possibly at Bothwell Castle pit, and was a member of the Institute of Mining Engineers. He enlisted with the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders on the 8 September 1914. The 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders was formed at Aberdeen in September 1914 and consisted of a wide variety of Scots. The civilian soldiers were enthusiastic and faced stiff training although they did have some problems adapting to military life. The 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion came under orders of 44th Brigade in the 15th (Scottish) Division. Training began at Aldershot and on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 1914 Private McConnell was promoted to L/Corporal. As a 27 year old professional engineer he must have stood out amongst



*Corporal Thomas McConnell*

his comrades for 9 weeks later in February 1914 he was promoted to Corporal. With their training completed the Battalion sailed for Boulogne, France in July 1915.

Their first major engagement with the enemy was the Battle of Loos which was the largest British offensive mounted on the Western Front in 1915. The British offensive was part of the attempt to break through the German defences in Artois and Champagne and restore a war of movement.

The battle opened on 25 September 1915. In many places British artillery had failed to cut the German wire in advance of the attack. Advancing over open fields within range of German machine guns and artillery, British losses were devastating. The 15th (Scottish) Division, however, stormed two German defensive lines, captured the village of Loos and took Hill 70. The inevitable supply and communications problems,

combined with the late arrival of reserves, meant that the breakthrough could not be exploited. When the battle resumed the following day, the Germans were prepared and repulsed attempts to continue the advance. General Rawlinson wrote *“From what I can ascertain, some of the divisions did actually reach the enemy’s trenches, for their bodies can now be seen on the barbed wire.”* The twelve attacking battalions suffered 8,000 casualties out of 10,000 men in four hours.

Corporal Thomas McConnell died on the second day of the battle, the 26 September 1915. He has no known grave and is commemorated at the Loos Memorial, at the Pas de Calais, France.

In addition to his commemoration on the Bothwell War Memorial he is also listed on the War Memorial at Rutherglen Old Parish Church.

Seven men from Bothwell also died at Loos and details of the Battle are given on page 25.

Thomas McConnell had 6 siblings.

1. **William McConnell** was born in 1884 at Glasgow. He married Isabella Dunsmore in 1914 at Dunoon and died in 1922 at Gourock.
2. **Alexander McConnell** was born in 1886 at Glasgow. He married Helen McConnell in 1917 at Glasgow and he died in 1968 at Glasgow.
3. **Thomas McConnell**
4. **John McConnell** was born in 1890 at Rutherglen. In 1917 at Rutherglen, he married Evelyn Erskine and they had two daughters. He died in 1960 at Rutherglen.
5. **Robert McConnell** was born in 1892 at Rutherglen and died in 1918 at Shotts.
6. **James McConnell** was born in 1893 at Rutherglen. In 1925 at Aberdeen he married Ida Forbes and he died in 1977 at Montrose.
7. **Margaret McConnell** was born in 1895 at Rutherglen. She married Victor Stewart and she died in 1975 at Rutherglen.



*Thomas Barr McConnell  
and his wife  
Maggie McDonald*



## **PRIVATE THOMAS WILLIAM McCUBBIN**

(37110)

### **Highland Light Infantry 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 23 September 1917**

Thomas McCubbin was born on 14 April 1889 at Lady Street, Annan, Dumfries-shire. His father, John McCubbin was born c1857 at Annan and was employed as a 'letter carrier' or postman. Thomas's mother, Catherine Burgess, was born c1862 in England and she married John McCubbin in 1887 at Annan. The couple set up home in Annan where they raised their family. John McCubbin died in 1927 at Troqueer, Dumfries.

By 1911 Thomas McCubbin was working as a clerk of works in Aberdeen. He was described as a clerk and book keeper then moved down to live in the barracks at Bothwell Road, Hamilton where he was a sergeant in the Army Pay Corps. On the 29 September 1916 he married Helen McLennan a 20 year old clerks and bookkeeper who was living at Camphill, Bothwell. Helen's brother, John McLennan, enlisted with the Seaforth Highlanders and was killed in action in May 1917.

Thomas and Helen had a daughter, Christina H. A. McCubbin who was born on the 5 March 1917.

Thomas McCubbin enlisted with the 14<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry. The Battalion was formed at Hamilton in July 1915 as a Bantam Battalion and moved to Gales Camp, Troon. In September 1915 the Battalion moved to Blackdown, now known as Deepcut Barracks, Surrey as part of the 120<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 40<sup>th</sup> Division. This was a new formation, one of the last of Kitchener's 'New Army' divisions, and by the time it was organised the flow of volunteers had slackened and the army had to reduce its height requirement for infantry in an effort to attract recruits. This led to the creation of so-called 'Bantam' battalions of smaller men who were under the Army regulation height of 5ft 2ins but otherwise fit for service. The 40th Division embarked for France in early June 1916 and took its place on the Western Front to join in the continuous trench warfare.

Private Thomas McCubbin was killed in action at the Somme, Flanders, on 23 September 1917 and is buried at Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-le-Grand.

After Thomas's death, his widow Helen married, in 1928 at the Parish Church, Bothwell, James Hardman, a removal contractor from Manchester.

Thomas McCubbin had 4 siblings.

1. **Benjamin McCubbin** was born c1888 at Annan. In 1912 at Maxwelltown, Benjamin married 26 year old Thomasina Edgar. Latter he was manager of a furniture shop and he died in 1976 at Dumfries.
2. **Thomas McCubbin.**
3. **John McCubbin** was born c1891 at Annan. He was an oatmeal miller.
4. **Catherine McCubbin** was born c1893 at Annan. She was manageress of a book shop.
5. **James C. McCubbin** was born in 1900 at Back Lady Street, Annan.



*Fins New British Cemetery,  
Sorel-le Grand, Somme, France.*

## **GUNNER HUGH McGHEE**

(104672)

### **Royal Field Artillery 6<sup>th</sup> Battery**

**Died 16 December 1917**

**H**ugh McGhee was born in 1894 at Kilmarnock, Ayrshire. His father Hugh McGhee was born c1869 at Tarbolton, Ayrshire and was a coal miner. In 1890 at Kilmarnock he married Cecilia Flannigan. They lived initially in Robertson Place, Kilmarnock but within a few years had moved to Kilmaurs where Hugh senior worked as a colliery fireman. By 1906 the family had moved to Croftbank Terrace, Bothwell.

Hugh McGhee followed his father down the pit and the 1911 census records him as a 17 year old coal miner.

Little is known of Gunner McGhee's military career. After he enlisted he was posted to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battery, Royal Field Artillery and fought with the British Army in Mesopotamia.

At the outbreak of the war with Germany Britain moved to protect its interests in what was then known as Mesopotamia, part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The British Army occupied the oilfields and pipeline near Basra, Iraq and then moved to take the river junction at Qurna.

1915 saw some tactical moves by the British to seize important points beyond Basra. After an early string of successes the 6th Division of mainly Indian troops advanced upriver, towards the Mesopotamian capital, Baghdad. This left the Division with a very thinly stretched supply line of hundreds of miles behind it. The Division then received a bloody repulse at Ctesiphon and a dispiriting retreat back to Kut-al-Amara began.

The Turks pursued the retreating Division to Kut, and soon surrounded and cut it off. British forces in Mesopotamia were now growing and were ordered to advance north along the Tigris to relieve Kut. They ran into strong and stoutly defended lines and suffered some hard knocks; although they got close to Kut, the garrison there was surrendered on 29 April 1916. It was an enormous blow to British prestige and a morale-booster for the Turkish Army.

The British fought back with reinforcements culminating in the capture of Baghdad in March 1917. British forces closed in on the Turks throughout the autumn of 1917, and into the Spring of 1918. On the 1 October 1918 Turkey signed an Armistice.

Conditions for the British Army during the Mesopotamian campaign were atrocious and led to appalling levels of sickness and death through disease. During the campaign 11,012 were killed, 3,985 died of wounds and 12,678 died of sickness.

Gunner Hugh McGhee died on 19 December 1917, during a period of respite from the fighting. One can only assume that he died from wounds previously received or that he

succumbed to the diseases which claimed so many. He was buried at Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery.

Hugh had 5 siblings.

1. **Sarah McGhee** was born in 1900 at Ayr.
2. **Hugh McGhee.**
3. **William J. McGhee** was born c1899 at Kilmarnock. In 1927 he was a coal miner living in Glasgow when he married Ellen Fraser, a 26 year old hair spinner.
4. **Margaret McGhee** was born c1904 at Kilmaurs.
5. **Mary McGhee** was born c1906 at Bothwell
6. **Ellen McGhee** was born c1908 at Bothwell.
7. **Elizabeth McGhee** was born c1910 at Bothwell.

## LANCE CORPORAL DUNCAN McGREGOR

(745)

### Highland Light Infantry 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

**Died 11 January 1917**

**D**uncan McGregor was born on the 2 July 1893 at Sandyfauld Street, Hutchestown, Glasgow. His father Duncan McGregor snr was born c1864 at Kilmarnock, Ayrshire and he was a goods carrier. His mother, Isabella Taylor, was born c1864 at Shettleston, Glasgow. She married Duncan McGregor snr in 1885 at Paisley. At that time Duncan was a ploughman at Carnwadrick Farm, Eastwood and Isabella a farm servant. Six years later and the couple were living at Sandyfauld Street, Glasgow with Duncan snr described as a 'contractor'. By 1901 the couple, with their family, had moved to Green Street, carriers quarters, Bothwell. From there they moved round the corner to Thorntree House, Main Street, Bothwell. Thorntree House is now demolished but stood on the site of the car park next to the Library. Duncan McGregor snr died in 1941 in Bellshill and his widow Isabella ten years later in 1951 also at Bellshill.



*Bothwell Main Street.  
Thorntree House is in the centre behind the tram.*

In 1911, 18 year old Duncan McGregor was working with his father as a carrier of local goods. Records do not show when he enlisted with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry. In 1914 the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was stationed at Ambala, India but when war broke out they were sent to the Western Front travelling via Egypt and Marseilles. In December 1915 the Battalion embarked for Mesopotamia to assist in the defence of British oil interests in the region against the Turks. Britain relied on oil for its Navy and when war broke out in 1914 British and Indian forces occupied the oil fields of the Anglo Persian Oil Company in southern Mesopotamia in and around Basra. They encountered little resistance from the Turkish army and in 1914/15 advanced toward Baghdad. They overstretched their lines of supply and a reinforced Turkish army under German command inflicted a severe defeat on them in November 1915. The Poona Division of the Indian Army retreated to Kut-el-Amara where they were surrounded. They held out until May 1916 when they surrendered to the Turks. Britain had failed in the Dardanelles and did not wish to sustain another setback so three divisions, including the 1<sup>st</sup> H.L.I., were withdrawn from the Western Front and sent to Mesopotamia. They sustained heavy casualties in the early months of 1916 as they tried to advance to Kut. The rest of the year was spent consolidating and renewing arms and equipment. On 12 December 1916 a new offensive was launched with an advance up the Tigris. Kut was taken in February 1917 and Baghdad on 11<sup>th</sup> March. Several battles took place during the advance. On 11<sup>th</sup> January the battle of the Hai salient began and it was on this day that Duncan McGregor was killed in action. He was 24 years old and is commemorated on the Basra Memorial, Mesopotamia, Iraq.

Duncan McGregor had 6 siblings.

1. **Isabella McGregor** was born in 1885 in Pollokshaws, Glasgow. She was a shop girl and in 1908 at Thorntree House she married John Livingston a 27 year old fitter from Uddingston.  
One of their sons, Alexander, born in 1917 at Motherwell, was a sergeant pilot in the Royal Air Force in WW2. He joined 261 Squadron in March 1941 and later the 249 Squadron flying Hurricanes in the defence of Malta. On the 18 June 1941 he bailed out from his damaged Hurricane, but tragically he was too low for his parachute to open fully and he was killed. He is buried at Malta Naval Cemetery.  
Another son Ronald, born 1921 at Motherwell, was an engineering draughtsman and Director of Lanarkshire Welding Company but stayed many years in Bothwell. He married Wilma Wyper and had three children, Noreen who lives in East Kilbride, Ronald who lives in Blantyre and Euan who lives in Bothwell.
2. **William McGregor** was born c1887 at Eastwood and died age 6 at Hutchestown.
3. **Duncan McGregor**
4. **James McGregor** was born c1894 at Gilchrist's Land, Green Street, Bothwell.
5. **Elizabeth McGregor** was born c1897 at Bothwell.
6. **Claude McGregor** was born in 1899 at Bothwell. In 1931 at Glasgow he married Grace Williamson and they had two daughters and a son. Claude McGregor died in 1995 in Edinburgh.
7. **Thomas McGregor** was born in 1902 at Fairfield Lodge, Bothwell.

## PRIVATE ROBERT BAILLIE MCINTYRE

(S/11633)

### Gordon Highlanders "K" Coy. 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 16 December 1915**

Robert McIntyre was born c1896 at Bothwellhaugh. His father Stewart McIntyre was born c1858 at Rothsay. His mother was Margaret Baillie who was born in 1861 at Millport, Cumbrae and she married Stewart McIntyre in 1887 at Plantation, Govan. By 1891 the couple had moved to the Palace Rows Bothwellhaugh where Stewart was a colliery joiner. Margaret died in 1915 aged 54 at Bothwellhaugh. Her husband Stewart outlived her by 25 years, dying in 1940 at Motherwell.

At the age of 15 Robert McIntyre was a colliery clerk at the Palace Colliery but later was employed at Colvilles Steelworks, Motherwell. He enlisted at Hamilton and was posted to the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Gordon Highlanders. In 1914 the response to Lord Kitchener's campaign to raise a New Army of volunteers had been so positive that many men could not get in. As a result of the continuing flood of men coming forward, a Second New Army was authorised on giving Scots who had been unable to join the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division to get into 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish). Like all British Divisions at the time it was made up of three Brigades (44<sup>th</sup>-46<sup>th</sup>) each of four battalions. The 10<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders were formed in September 1914 as part of the Second New Army and came under the orders of the 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. After ten months of training at various locations in England they were ordered to France in July 1915 and given a period of acclimatisation in the Béthune area.



*Robert McIntyre*

The 10<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders first saw action at the Battle of Loos in September 1915. The 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade had the task of attacking the Lens Road Redoubt. The Black Watch was assigned to advance down the main road into the redoubt with the Seaforth Highlanders on their left and the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Gordon Highlanders covering the German trenches on their right. The Scots were met by machine gun fire but despite heavy casualties held their line and took the redoubt at 7.00am – just 30 minutes after zero hour. Ninety minutes later the village of Loos was in British hands although many Germans had been overlooked and had to be ferreted out of houses and dugouts. After attack and counter-attack the fighting subsided on 28 September, with the British having retreated to their starting positions. Their attacks had cost over 20,000

casualties, including three divisional commanders. On 8 October, the Germans attempted to recapture much of the lost ground, by launching a major offensive along the entire line, but abandoned the effort by nightfall, due to heavy losses. This marked the effective end of the battle.

At some stage in the Battle, Private McIntyre was wounded in the leg and was taken to the 2nd Stationary Hospital, Rouen where his leg was amputated. He died at the hospital on the 16 December 1915 at the age of 20 and is buried at St Seven Cemetery, Rouen, France.

Robert McIntyre had 2 siblings.

1. **Stewart McIntyre** was born c1893 at Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh. He started work as a colliery clerk and in 1921 at Airdrie married Jean Binnie. He later became a cashier and died at Stirling in 1972.
2. **Robert Baillie McIntyre**
3. **James McIntyre** was born in 1902 at Bothwellhaugh. He was a locomotive driver and in 1926 at Bellshill, married Janet Brown, a 24 year old from Bothwellhaugh. James died in 1959 at Motherwell.



*Gordon Highlander's badge*

# CORPORAL BENJAMIN MCKINNON

(1749)

## Cameronians 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 15 June 1915**

**B**enjamin McKinnon was born on 26 January 1892 at 'Little Bog' Bothwell. His father Alexander McKinnon was born c1853 in Glasgow and was a newsagent and barber. His mother Jane Martin was born c1853 in Alloa and she and Alexander married in 1874 at Blantyre. The family moved to Bothwell and lived at the upper level of Apsley House, 25 Main Street, Bothwell. Below was their shop and barber's salon. Alexander and Jane had nine of a family.

By 1911 Benjamin had move to Alloa to live with his brother Edmund and sister-in-law, Mary. There he was employed as a dye worker in a woollen mill. After the outbreak of war Benjamin McKinnon volunteered for the army and was promoted to Corporal with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians. On 15 June 1915 he was killed in an attack on the German lines at Festubert, France. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31.

Corporal McKinnon is buried at Brown's Road Military Cemetery, Festubert, France.

Benjamin McKinnon 9 siblings.

1. **Frances McKinnon**, known as Fanny, was born in Alloa in 1875 and worked as an assistant to her father in his shop. She married John Buchanan, a builder's carter, in 1902 and moved to Tannochside. Her brother-in-law Sergeant James Buchanan, DCM, fought in the HLI and was killed in Flanders in 1914. Francis died in 1966 aged 92. They had a son, Robert Buchanan.
2. **Alexander McKinnon** was born in Bothwell in 1878 and worked as a house painter. He married Isabel Harvie and they lived in West Avenue, Uddingston. He died in 1954 at Birkenshaw. They had a son, Robert McKinnon
3. **George McKinnon** was born in Blantyre in 1880 and worked as a brakesman.
4. Bella McKinnon was born in Blantyre in 1885 and by 1901 was working as a domestic nurse. In 1906 she married George Anderson, a pit woodworker at Alloa. At that time she was a millworker. By 1911 they had moved to Dundee where George was working as a plater in the shipbuilding industry. They had a son, George Anderson.

5. **Edmund McKinnon** was born in Blantyre in 1882 and started working as a vanman. By 1911 he was living in Alloa and employed by the NB Railway Company as a demurrage checker. He married Mary Walker in 1904 at Alloa and they had a son, Alexander and a daughter, Agnes.
6. **Elizabeth McKinnon** was born c1890 at Bothwell.
7. **Benjamin McKinnon**
8. **Margaret McKinnon** was born c1893 at Bothwell.
9. **Nellie McKinnon** was born c1895 at Bothwell.
10. **Jessie McKinnon** was born c1897 at Bothwell

# PRIVATE ROBERT MCLEAN

(8819)

## Seaforth Highlanders 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 25 April 1915**

Robert McLean was born on 8 December 1883 at Thorniewood Rows, Viewpark. His father William McLean, born c1846 at Westmuir, Lanarkshire, was a coal miner. He died at Pinkerton House, Bothwell in 1920. His mother, Elizabeth McCall, was born in Glasgow c1852 and died in Bothwell in 1901. William and Elizabeth had ten of a family.

Robert Maclean was a coal miner like his father and on 11 November 1914 he married Sarah Tierney nee Robertson, a 33 year old widow at the Manse High Blantyre. 15 months after Robert's death in 1915 she married James Sneddon.

Private Robert McLean, 8819, enlisted with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Seaforth Highlanders. Early in the War the Battalion was sent to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force and there they took part in the Second Battle of Ypres. It began in the northern sector of the Ypres Salient on the Western Front where the Allied line bulged eastward around the town of Ypres, Belgium. At around 5:00 pm on 22 April 1915, the German Army released one hundred and sixty-eight tons of chlorine gas over a 4 mile front. On the morning of 24 April 1915 the Germans released another cloud of chlorine gas, this time directly towards the re-formed Canadian lines just west of the village of St. Julien. On seeing the approach of the greenish-grey gas cloud, word was passed among the Canadian troops to urinate on their handkerchiefs and place these over their noses and mouths. Chlorine gas destroyed the respiratory organs of its victims and this led to a slow death by asphyxiation. It was a horrible death, but as hard as they tried, doctors were unable to find a way of successfully treating chlorine gas poisoning. In spite of only having the flimsiest of protection against the gas attack the Canadians held their ground for several hours before being compelled to retire. During the following few days the British made several attempts to restore the line with mounting losses.



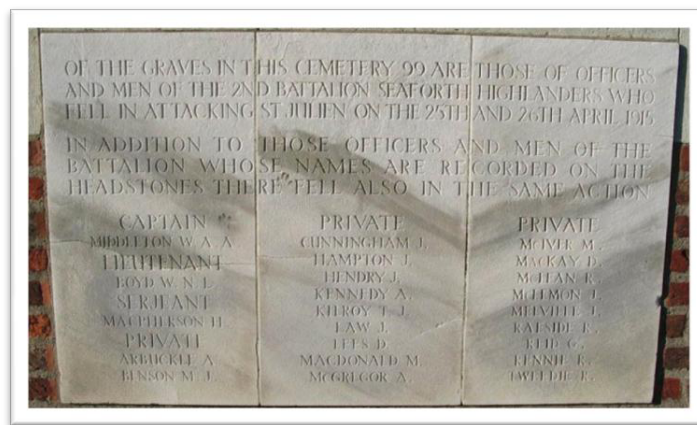
*William and Elizabeth  
McLean*

In his book 'The British Campaign in France and Flanders' Arthur Conan Doyle described the action.

*The advance was made at 6:30 in the morning of April 25, General Hull being in immediate control of the attack. It was made in the first instance by the 10th Brigade and the 1st Royal Irish from the 82nd Brigade. The remains of the indomitable 3rd Canadian Brigade kept pace with it upon the right. Little progress was made, however, and it became clear that there was not weight enough behind the advance to crush a way through the obstacles in front. Two flank battalions retired, and the 2nd Seaforths were exposed to a terrible cross-fire. "We shouted to our officers (what was left of them) to give the order to charge, knowing in our minds that it was hopeless, as the smoke was so thick from their gas shells that we could see nothing on either side of us." Some cavalry was seen, the first for many days, but was driven off by the machine-gun of the Highlanders. Finally a brigade of Northumberland Territorials came up to sustain the hard-pressed line, passing over some two miles of open country under heavy fire on their advance. It was then nearly mid-day. From that point onwards the attackers accepted the situation and dug themselves in at the farthest point which they could reach near the hamlet of Fortuin, about a mile south of St. Julien.*

It was during that attack on the 25 April 1915 that Private Robert McLean was killed.

On the main road a little south-west of the village of St Julien is Seaforth Cemetery, Cheddar Villa. Cheddar Villa was the name given to a farm on the west side of the road, and on the 25th and 26th of April 1915, during the battle of St. Julien there was



*Memorial at Seaforth Cemetery, Cheddar Villa.*

*On it is inscribed*

OF THE GRAVES IN THIS CEMETERY 99 ARE OF THOSE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> BATTALION SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS WHO FELL ATTACKING ST JULIEN ON 25<sup>TH</sup> AND 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1915

IN ADDITION TO THOSE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE BATTALION WHOSE NAMES ARE RECORDED ON THE HEADSTONES THERE FELL ALSO IN THE SAME ACTION

*The names include Private R. McLean*

severe fighting here. The British dead were buried here at this site, and the Cemetery originally named Cheddar Villa Cemetery. The name was changed in 1922, at the request of the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Seaforth Highlanders, as so many men from that battalion were buried here. Nearly 150 soldiers were buried here, 21 "Known Unto God" and 19 whose graves were later destroyed by shellfire (now commemorated by special memorials).

Robert Mclean had 9 siblings.

1. **Isabella McLean** was born in 1867 at Bothwell and married William Mackie, a baker, in 1889 at Bothwell. She emigrated to the States in 1916 moving to Ontario, Canada where she died in 1954. Isabella and William had six children.
2. **James N. McLean** was born in 1870 at Glasgow to Jeanie Neilson, a french polisher. The 1871 census records him as a 4 month old adopted son of William and Elizabeth McLean. He married Jeanie Crichton in 1895 at Bothwell and in 1912 emigrated to Australia. James died in 1954 in Sydney. James and Jeanie had six of a family.
3. **Hugh McLean** was born in 1873 in Bothwell
4. **Christina McLean** was born in 1875 at Uddingston. She emigrated to Canada in 1908 and died in 1925 at Hamilton, Ontario.
5. **Thomas McLean** was born at Thorniewood Rows, Viewpark. Thomas, a miner, married Janet Wilkie in 1901 and they emigrated to Canada in 1911. Thomas died in Vancouver in 1955.
6. **William McLean** was born at Thorniewood Rows, Viewpark. He married Jane Brown in 1901 at Glasgow and died at Brisbane in 1974.
7. Janet McLean was born in 1882 at Thorniewood Rows, Viewpark and died in 1934 at Cambuslang.
8. **Robert McLean**
9. **Elizabeth McLean** was born in 1886 at Thorniewood Rows, Viewpark. She married Robert Dickson, a coal hewer, in 1906 at Bothwell and in 1920 was living at Ardgowan Terrace, Bothwell. Elizabeth died in 1959 in Govan.
10. **Mary McLean** was born in 1888 at Thorniewood Rows, Uddingston. She married Robert McDowall in 1916 at Carluke and it was there she died in 1957.

# **PRIVATE JOHN McLENNAN**

(S/41090)

## **Seaforth Highlanders 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 16 May 1917**

John McLennan was born on 5 February 1898 at 26 Linthouse Buildings, Govan, Glasgow. His father, William McLennan was born c1870 at Thurso, Caithness and came down to Lanarkshire to join the Police Force. The 1891 census records that 21 year old Police Constable William McLennan was lodging with a colleague in the police, John Anderson and his family at Greengairs, Monklands. The Anderson family hailed originally from Aberdeenshire and their daughter Christina was born c1870 at Huntley. William's duties required him to move to Earnock, Hamilton but he had been smitten by Christina and they married in 1895 at Greengairs. The young couple started their married life at Hamilton where their eldest daughter was born. Police duties then required them to move to Govan where they had two further children. This was followed by a spell in the Lenzie area where their two youngest children were born. In the 1911 census Police Constable McLennan is recorded as living at The Cross, Douglas with his wife and family. After his nomadic life William McLennan and his wife were able to settle at Woodlands Avenue, Bothwell where he died in 1935 followed by Christina in 1956.

At the outbreak of war John McLennan enlisted initially with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders but then joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Seaforths which were a Territorial Battalion recruiting mostly from Caithness and Sutherland. John McLennan's father was born in Thurso and probably for that reason John transferred to that Regiment. The 5<sup>th</sup> Seaforth Highlanders were part of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division and took part in the attacks on the village of Roeux in the Battle of Arras from the 9 April to the 17 May 1917. Roeux is 4.5 miles east of Arras and was one of the fortified villages that formed part of the German defences behind the German front line. The battle ebbed and flowed with attack followed by counter attack. The sixth and final attack on Roeux began on 11 May 1917. The attack was preceded by a heavy bombardment and the infantry moved off at 7.30pm. By early the following morning (12 May), the western half of the village had been occupied. During the day efforts were made to consolidate the ground and that night the Germans evacuated the eastern half of Roeux. However, hopes that the enemy might retire further to the east were dashed when, on the night of 15/16 May, after a heavy German bombardment, a fierce attack was launched by two German Brigades. These attacks initially met with some success but the flanks held and the enemy were eventually repulsed. The Battle of Arras officially ended on 17 May 1917.

Private John McLennan died on the 16 May 1917. His body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

Major Bewsher, in his book "A History of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division", describes the horror of the aftermath of the battle.

*"After the German attack the 51<sup>st</sup> Division played a considerable part in clearing the battlefield in this area. The dead lay so thick on the countryside that drastic measures were necessary to deal with the situation. Accordingly a hundred men from the labour battalion were placed at the disposal of Lt Brown of the Royal Scots and formed a Divisional burial party. Altogether Lt Brown and his men buried over 3000 dead, not, however without having suffered some casualties themselves."*

John's family placed the following notice in the Hamilton Advertiser:

He sleeps beside his comrades,  
In hallowed graves unknown,  
But his name is written in letters of love  
In the hearts he left at home.

In the bloom of life death claimed him,  
In that pride of his manhood days,  
None knew him but to love him  
None mentioned his name but with praise.

To hold your hand our darling one,  
While your young blood ebbed away,  
Our hearts would not have felt so much  
The tears we've shed today.

John had 4 siblings.

1. **Helen McLennan** was born c1897 at Hamilton. In 1916 she was a clerkess/bookkeeper living at Camphill, Bothwell and on the 29 September 1916 she married Thomas McCubbin, He enlisted in the H.L.I. and was killed in action the following year. Helen and Thomas had a daughter Christina McCubbin, born on the 3 March 1917 at Camphill, Bothwell.
2. **John McLennan.**
3. **Margaret McLennan** was born in 1900 at Govan.
4. **Christina McLennan** was born c1903 at Lenzie. She was a clerkess and in 1933 at the Parish Church in Bothwell she married Alexander Lindsay, a steam plant traveller from Blantyre.
5. **Annie McLennan** was born in 1906 at Auchinairn. She was a typist and in 1933 at the Parish Church, Bothwell she married Peter Hastie, a sand quarrier from Blantyre.

# PRIVATE GEORGE McNAB

(606)

## Highland Light Infantry 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 16 July 1918**

**G**eorge McNab was born on 7 April 1870 in Springburn, Glasgow. His father, Gavin McNab was born c1843 in Glasgow and worked as brigade fireman and later as an engine fitter. George's mother, Christina Spiers, was born c1841 at Cambuslang. She and Gavin were married in 1864 at Hardgate, New Kilpatrick. They moved to Springburn where their three sons were born and Christina died there in 1872. Gavin McNab then married Sarah Smith in 1874 in Glasgow and by 1891 had moved to Dundee. He died there in 1895.

Meanwhile George and his two brothers, John and Archibald, went to live with their widowed grandfather at Glebe Street, Glasgow and were residing there in 1881. By 1911 George McNab was lodging with his elder brother, John, at Castle Square, Bothwell.

George McNab was a tinsmith and at Uddingston on the 1 September 1914 he enlisted with the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, H.L.I. On the 2 December 1914 he was found to be medically unfit and discharged from the Army.

He returned to Bothwell and on the 16 July 1918 George McNab died in Kirklands Asylum, Bothwell. He is commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial.

George McNab had 2 siblings.

1. **John McNab** was born in 1865 at Springburn. In 1886 at Glasgow he married 19 year old Annie McCowan, a book edge gilder. By 1911 John and Annie had a son and a daughter and were living at Castle Square, Bothwell where John was a boilermaker at the Castle Colliery. John McNab was living at 15 Fallside Road, Bothwell when he died in 1929.
2. **Archibald McNab** was born c1867 at Springburn and was a tinsmith. In 1887 at Glasgow he married Elizabeth McNaught, a power loom weaver. The couple remained in Glasgow and Archibald died there in 1927.
3. **George McNab.**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> LIEUTENANT JOHN BORRIE McCULLOCH MCNAB

### Royal Engineers

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company Lowland Divisional Engineers

**Died 14 February 1919**

John Borrie McCulloch McNab was born on the 14 May 1889 at the Clydesdale Bank House, 73 Main Street, Bothwell. His father, William B McNab, was born in 1840 at Forfar. His mother Margaret Borrie was born c1848 at Agra Bank, Barry, a small village near Carnoustie. They married in 1868 at Barry near Carnoustie and then lived at Kilburnie and Beith where their eldest two sons were born. The couple then moved to Bothwell around 1873 where they had three more of a family. William McNab became agent (manager) for the Clydesdale Bank in Bothwell and also Registrar for Bothwell. Around 1900 Margaret McNab moved back to her parents' home in Barry with 11 year old John while William McNab continued to live at the Clydesdale Bank House with the rest of the family. At the onset of the Great War William McNab became treasurer for the Bothwell War Fund. William McNab died in 1917 at Douglas Villa, Bothwell and Margaret in 1920 at Barry.



*The Clydesdale Bank, Main Street, Bothwell with the house above where William McNab and his family lived.*

By 1911 John B. M. McNab was back living with his father in Bothwell. He went to Glasgow University to study Civil Engineering and became a student member of the Institute of Civil Engineers. He joined the University Officer Training Corps and on 4 May 1915 he was gazetted as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant to the Royal Engineers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company, Lowland Divisional Engineers. Towards the end of the War, Lieutenant McNab was posted to the Curragh Camp, the largest British army base in Ireland. Early in 1918 he was home on leave with his mother in Barry and on the 1 March 1918 he

married Mabel Wilson at Erdington Villa, Carnoustie. Following the armistice he was posted to Germany and accidentally killed on a railway near Mons by a German mine. He died on the 14 February 1919 and is buried at Mons (Bergen) Communal Cemetery, Belgium.

John McNab had 5 siblings.

1. **David McNab** was born c1870 at Kilburnie. He became a solicitor in Glasgow and died there in 1923.
2. **William McNab** was born in 1872 at Beith. He was a banker like his father and in 1899 at Uddingston married 27 year old Margaret Stevenson. The couple then set up home at Westport Cottage, Main Street, Bothwell. William continued to live in Bothwell until his death in 1946.
3. **Alexander McNab** was born c1874 at Bothwell. In 1901 he was a medical student living with his father in Bothwell.
4. **Arthur R McNab** was born c1880 at Bothwell. In 1901 he was a licenced grocer living in boardings in Dundee. Six years later, in 1907, at the Alexandra Hotel, Glasgow, he married 26 year old Annie Stewart. At that time Arthur was described as a grocers assistant living at Agra Bank, Barry while Annie had been living at Douglas House, Bothwell, the home of Arthur's father.
5. **Margaret NcNab** was born c1885 at Bothwell. In 1901, 17 year old scholar Margaret was living with her father in Bothwell. Four years later in 1905 at Carnoustie she married James Pollok, a 35 year old solicitor from Hamilton. Margaret died in 1949 at Largs.
6. **John B.M. McNab**

## PRIVATE JOHN MEEK

(18234)

### Highland Light Infantry 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 6 February 1916**

John Meek was born c1883 at Riggside, Lanarkshire. His father, Alexander Meek was born c1852 at Blinkbonny, Midlothian and was a coal miner. His mother, Margaret Ralston was born in 1854 at Airdrie and married Alexander in 1876 at Forth. The couple settled in Forth where they raised a family except for a five year sojourn around 1882 when they moved to Riggside, Lanarkshire. By 1901 they had moved to Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh and it was there that Alexander and Margaret died in 1906 and 1918 respectively.

John Meek was a miner at the Hamilton Palace Colliery and in 1908 at Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh he married Elizabeth McMahon a 25 year old from Paisley.



*Hamilton Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh*

John Meek enlisted at Hamilton with the Highland Light Infantry and joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion H.L.I. was part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade and saw action in all major battles on the Western Front. At the end of January 1916 the Battalion took over front line duties at Festubert. The 31 January was noted in the war diary as a quiet day although one soldier was killed and one wounded. As January turned to February there was much work to be done in the trenches albeit in the face of

enemy fire. On the 2 February 8 soldiers were wounded although again it was described in the Battalion diary as 'otherwise a quiet day.'

On the 3 February the battalion was relieved and marched to Brigade reserve billets at Le Touret. Three days later on the 6 February 1916 John Meek died, presumably from wounds received. He is buried at Le Touret Military Cemetery, Richebourg-L'Avoue.

John and Elizabeth Meek had 2 daughters.

1. **Maria G. Meek** was born in 1910 at Bothwellhaugh. She was a domestic servant living at Roman Place when, in 1933 at St Brides Parish Church, Bothwell, she married James Henderson, a 26 year old joiner from Glasgow.
2. **Margaret R. Meek** was born in 1910 at Roman Place, Bothwell. She was a domestic servant living at Roman Place when, in 1933 at St Brides Parish Church, Bothwell, she married George Mann, a 21 year old coal miner from Bothwellhaugh.

John Meek had 8 siblings

1. **Thomas Meek** was born in 1877 at Forth, Lanarkshire. In 1901 he married Helen Kennedy and they settled in Bothwellhaugh raising seven children. Thomas enlisted with the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion H.L.I. and was killed in action at Flanders in 1915 six months before his brother John.
2. **David Meek** was born c1879 at Forth. He was a miner and in 1905 at Kirkfield Church, Bothwell, he married 26 year old Annie Craig who came from Paisley. David died in 1916 at Cathcart, Glasgow.
3. **Alexander Meek** was born c1881 at Forth. He was a miner and in 1904 at Pollokshaws, Glasgow, he married 26 year old laundress, Annie Hall. Alexander and Annie lived at Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh and he died in 1959.
4. **John Meek**
5. **Henrietta C. Meek** was born c1884 at Forth and died in infancy.
6. **Jane Meek** was born c1889 at Forth. She was a domestic servant and in 1912 at the Manse Bothwell, married James Frew. James was a mechanical engineer and lived at Croftbank Terrace, Bothwell. Jane died in 1958 at Motherwell.
7. **Margaret Meek** was born 1888 at Forth.
8. **Marion Meek** was born 1890 at Forth. In 1912 at The Manse, Bothwell she married 23 year old James Hutcheson, a coal miner from Bothwellhaugh. Marion died in 1970 at Bellshill.
9. **Henrietta Meek** was born c1896 at Bothwellhaugh. In 1928 she married Archibald Thorburn and they lived in Rothsay. Henrietta died in 1968.

# PRIVATE THOMAS MEEK

(2013)

## Highland Light Infantry 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 12 August 1915**

**T**homas Meek was born on 21 January 1877 at Forth, Lanarkshire. His father, Alexander Meek was born c1852 at Blinkbonny, Midlothian and was a coal miner. His mother, Margaret Ralston was born in 1854 at Airdrie and married Alexander in 1876 at Forth. The couple settled in Forth where they raised a family except for a five year sojourn around 1882 when they moved to Riggside, Lanarkshire. By 1901 they had moved to Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh and it was there that Alexander and Margaret died in 1906 and 1918 respectively.

Thomas Meek was a coal miner and worked in the Palace Colliery alongside his father and brothers. In 1901 at Paisley he married Helen (Nellie) Kennedy a 19 year old threadmill worker and they settled at Bothwellhaugh where they raised 7 of a family: Jeanie, Alexander, James, Thomas, Margaret, Helen and David.

In January 1915 Thomas enlisted with the 11th (Service) Battalion of the HLI. The 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been formed in August 1914 at Hamilton as part of Kitchener's First New Army. The 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion then moved to Aldershot to join the 28<sup>th</sup> Brigade that was part of the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. In May 1915 the Division mobilised for war and Private Meek and his comrades embarked for Boulogne en route for the Western Front. At the beginning of July it took over a sector of the line around Festubert at the Pas de Calais. It was the following month on the 12 August 1915 that Private Thomas Meek was killed by enemy shellfire. He was buried at Le Touret Military Cemetery. Richebourg-L'avoüe, France.

After Thomas's death his widow Nellie Meek married 27 year old Hamilton coal miner John Mooney. They were wed in 1917 at Glasgow.

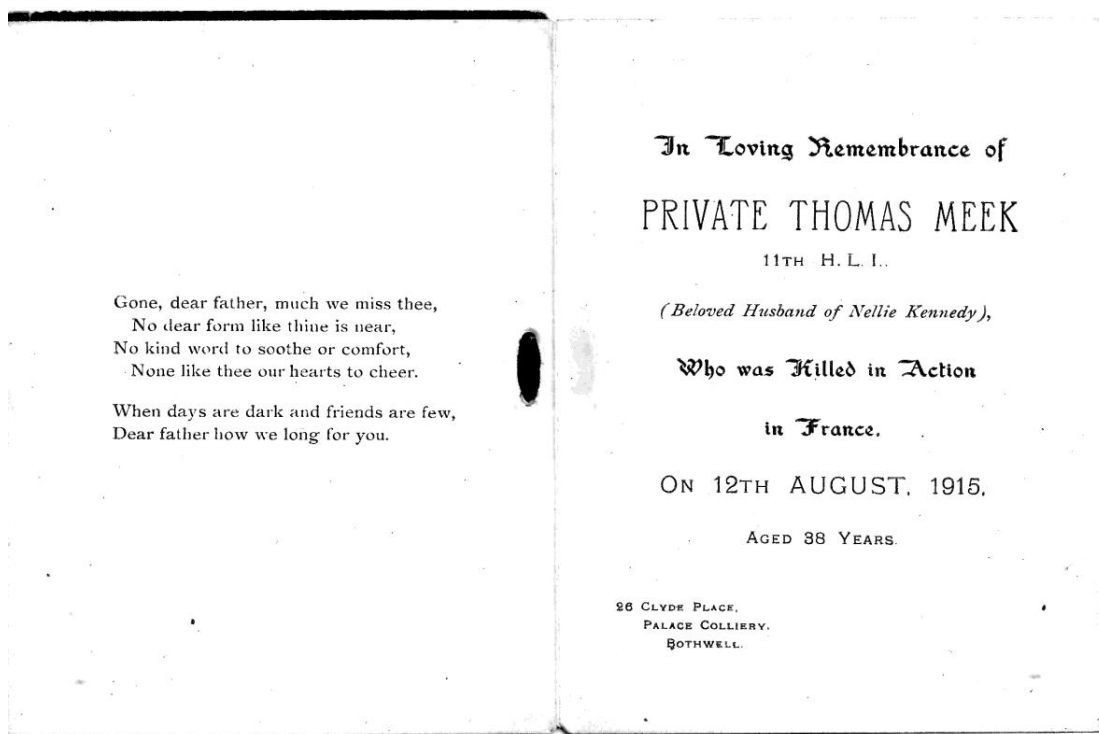
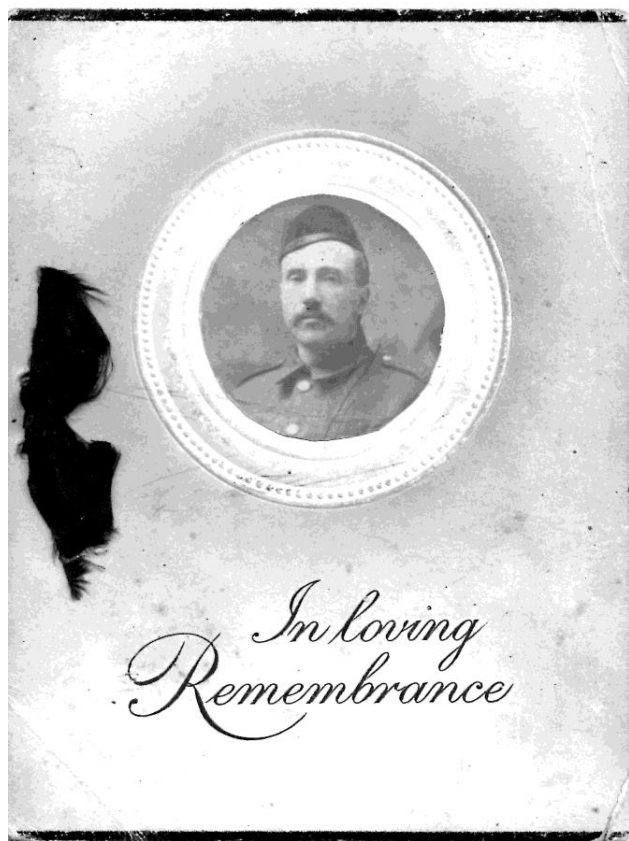
Thomas and Nellie Meek had 7 children

1. **Jeanie Meek** was born in 1902 at The Place, Bothwellhaugh. In 1937 at Hamilton she married Matthew Burley. Jeanie died in 1984 at Carmyle.
2. **Alexander Meek** was born in 1903 at Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh. He was a coal miner like his father and in 1929 at Hamilton married 25 year old Margaret McGonigle. They had two of a family, Alexander named after his father and Tom named after his grandfather. Tom, grandson of Private Thomas Meek, still lives in Bothwell with his wife Margaret.

3. **James K. Meek** was born in 1906 at Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh. In 1931 at Fife he married Isabella Anderson. Latterly James was a Colliery Deputy and died in 1969 at Kirkcaldy.
4. **Thomas Meek** was born in 1908 at Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh. He was also a coal miner and in 1932 at Hamilton married 20 year old Margaret Irons.
5. **Margaret Meek** was born in 1909 at Hill Place, Bothwellhaugh.
6. **Helen Meek** was born in 1911 at Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh. In 1933 at Blantyre she married John Devlin. Their daughter Helen, granddaughter of Private Thomas Meek, married William McLelland and she now lives in Blantyre.
7. **David Meek** was born in 1915 at Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh. He was a kiln burner and in 1939 at Hamilton he married 21 year old Catherine McNulty.

Thomas Meek had 8 siblings

1. **Thomas Meek**
2. **David Meek** was born c1879 at Forth. He was a miner and in 1905 at Kirkfield Church, Bothwell, he married 26 year old Annie Craig who came from Paisley. David died in 1916 at Cathcart, Glasgow.
3. **Alexander Meek** was born c1881 at Forth. He was a miner and in 1904 at Pollokshaws, Glasgow, he married 26 year old laundress, Annie Hall. Alexander and Annie lived at Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh and he died in 1959.
4. **John Meek** was born c1883 at Riggside. He was a miner and in 1908 at Bothwellhaugh, married Elizabeth McMahan. John also enlisted with the H.L.I. and was killed on the Western Front on the 16 February 1916 six months after his brother Thomas.
5. **Henrietta C. Meek** was born c1884 at Forth and died in infancy.
6. **Jane Meek** was born c1889 at Forth. She was a domestic servant and in 1912 at the Manse Bothwell, married James Frew. James was a mechanical engineer and lived at Croftbank Terrace, Bothwell. Jane died in 1958 at Motherwell.
7. **Margaret Meek** was born 1888 at Forth.
8. **Marion Meek** was born 1890 at Forth. In 1912 at The Manse, Bothwell she married 23 year old James Hutcheson, a coal miner from Bothwellhaugh. Marion died in 1970 at Bellshill.
9. **Henrietta Meek** was born c1896 at Bothwellhaugh. In 1928 she married Archibald Thorburn and they lived in Rothsay. Henrietta died in 1968.



# LIEUTENANT JOHN MITCHELL

## Royal Air Force

**Died 3 April 1918**

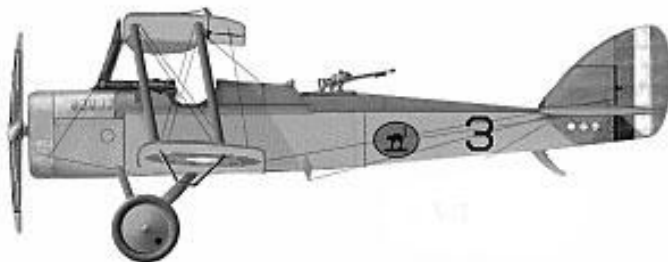
John Mitchell was born on 29 March 1895 at Scott's Land, Main Street, Bothwell.

His father John Mitchell was born in the remote Findhu Glen in Perthshire in 1860 and his mother Mary Prentice was born in 1871 at Carluke. They married in 1892 at Bothwell. By 1901 John's father was a railway passenger guard and the family were living at the Caledonian Railway Company Cottage at Fallside Road, Bothwell. John and Mary Mitchell had seven of a family, all born in Bothwell.

In the 1911 census John Mitchell was recorded as an apprentice draper. Three years later saw the commencement of the Great War and John signed up, initially with the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians. He was later transferred to the 25<sup>th</sup> Squadron Royal Flying Corps that was formed in 1915. The Squadron was formed at Montrose from personnel of No 6 Reserve squadron. Moving to France in February 1916, the squadron took up fighter/reconnaissance patrols over the Western Front with two seater FE2Bs. During 1917, the squadron transferred to long-range reconnaissance and high altitude bombing in Northern France and Belgium with newly received DH4s. The DH4 aircraft was specifically designed for daytime bombing and then extended its role to



*John's father, John Mitchell (1860-1915) in his uniform as a guard of the Caledonian Railway Company.*



*De Havilland 4 bi-plane*



*Lieutenant John Mitchell*

include long-range reconnaissance. It was fitted with a 375hp Rolls Royce Eagle engine that gave a maximum airspeed of 143 mph. The observer operated a Lewis gun and the pilot a forward firing Vickers machine gun. During the German Spring offensive of 1918 the squadron had engaged in low level attacks against infantry and artillery, but the DH4 was not really suited to this. It is probably a mark of the desperate measures of the time that they assumed this role.

In March 1918 the squadron moved base from Serny to Villers-Brettonneux. In April 1918 the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service were amalgamated to form the Royal Air Force. During his military career Lieutenant John Mitchell was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal.

It is understood that he was an observer in a DH4 flying over the German trenches when he was shot in the head and killed. He died on 3 April 1918 at Abbeville, France, aged 23 and is buried in Abbeville Communal Cemetery.

John Mitchell had 6 siblings

1. **Isabella Mitchell** was born in 1893 at Main Street, Bothwell. Bella died in 1913 aged 19 at her parents' house at Caledonian Railway Cottage, Fallside Road, Bothwell.
2. **John Mitchell**
3. **Margaret Mitchell** was born in 1897 at Blairston Lodge, Bothwell. In 1924 at Bothwell, she married Alexander Macormack Thomson and they had two children, Russell and Marabell. Margaret died in 1989 at East Kilbride. Macormack Thomson was one time editor of the Hamilton Advertiser and President of the Bothwell Horticultural Society and wrote the poem "Before the Cenotaph", the epilogue to this book.
4. **Janet (Jenny) Mitchell** was born in 1900 at Caledonian Railway Cottage. Jenny married James Shields, a railway booking clerk at Wooddean United Free Church, Bothwell. At the time of her marriage Jenny was a baker's clerkes living at Green Street, Bothwell. They had four of a family and daughter Murette McIntyre still lives in Bothwell.
5. **William Mitchell** was born in 1903 at Bothwell. William married Margaret Taylor in 1929 in the Clyde Hotel in Bothwell. At that time William was a rubber miller living at Green Street, Bothwell and Margaret was a dairy shop assistant.

William died in 2000 aged 97. William and Margaret had a two daughters, Morag and Mary and a son, John. Mary, niece of Lieutenant John Mitchell, was born in 1939 at Blantyre Mill Road, Bothwell and married Hugh McWhinney in 1961 at the Parish Church, Bothwell. Hugh and Mary had two sons and Mary still lives in Bothwell.

6. **Peter Mitchell** was born in 1906 at Bothwell. In 1931 he married Agnes Macdonald, at the Clyde Hotel, Bothwell. At that time Peter was a plumber living in Leith and Agnes a restaurant waitress from Bothwellhaugh. Peter died in 1966.
7. **Archibald Mitchell** was born in 1908. He married Annie Coffield by declaration at Glasgow in 1932. At that time he was a joiner living at Blantyre Mill Road, Bothwell and Annie was a domestic servant. Archibald lived in Motherwell and died in 1962.



*The badge of the Royal Flying Corps*

# PRIVATE ROBERT MORRISON

(S/7004)

## Gordon Highlanders 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

**Died 14 November 1914**

Robert Morrison was born c1879 at Cambusnethan, Lanarkshire. At the outbreak of war he enlisted with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders which was part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division. After a few weeks of training they embarked for France as part of the British Expeditionary Force, landing on the 16 August 1914. By the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month they had reached Mons with orders to defend the Conde-Mons canal near Nimy Bridge. It was here on the morning of the following day that the brunt of the German onslaught fell and two days later, after a long marched retreat, they made a stand at Le Cateau. Following a further retreat and action at the Aisne they moved in early October 1914 to Armentières. The Gordons had lost 80 percent of the regular men since the Battle of Le Cateau, but kept going, as with most units, on drafts of reservists.

In October and November 1914 the 1<sup>st</sup> Gordons saw action at the First Battle of Ypres, fought for the strategic town of Ypres in western Belgium. The German assault began on the morning of 20 October 1914 with a further attack the following day against the 3rd Division. They were ordered to retreat to a more suitable, less exposed defensive line that evening. The Germans had attempted to break through this line up until the 29 October. British artillery broke up attacks and machine guns prevented the German infantry from making noticeable gains. However at one point, German infantry did succeed in reaching the British lines and the inexperienced Gordons suffered heavily.

The end of the battle was not immediately apparent. Several more German attacks were made on 12 to 14 November. However, a stiff British defence and deteriorating weather conditions leading to heavy snowfall and hard frost ended large scale fighting.

It was on the 14 November 1914 that Private Robert Morrison was killed and is commemorated at Le Touret Memorial, France.

His sister placed the following notice in the Glasgow Herald of 5 December 1915.

*"Private Robert Morrison, brother of Mrs John Watson, Whiterock Terrace, Cambuslang, was killed in action at Dixmude on November 11. Private Morrison on the outbreak of war enlisted in the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders, and after three weeks training was ordered to the front. He was 38 years of age and unmarried. He was for four years in the volunteer force, and was the crack shot of the company. He was a fine athlete and was for five years a prominent player in Glaston F.C., as well as a member of the bowling club. For a number of years he was employed in the Bothwell district, and was a member of the Hamilton Caledonian Bowling club and a prize winner. This makes the fifth Cambuslang soldier killed."*

# PRIVATE JAMES MURRAY

(1974)

## Royal Munster Fusiliers 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 9 October 1916**

**J**ames Murray was born c1888 at Hamilton. His father, Thomas Murray was born c1856 in Ireland. He was a miner and in 1884 married Mary Ann Tyrrell, a 24 year old domestic servant from Coatbridge. Initially they lived in Hamilton but around 1890 the couple, now with a family of 3 children and expecting a fourth, moved to Blantyre, where Thomas worked in the local colliery. Ten years later, in 1901, the couple now with five children moved to Hamilton Road, Bellshill and Thomas branched out as a fruit and vegetable merchant with sons John and James working for him. His venture into business could not have been successful for by 1911, Thomas and family had moved to Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh and Thomas was back working down the pit as a miner. It was there at Roman Place that Mary Ann Murray died in 1944.

James Murray was a coal miner at the Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh. At the outbreak of war, James enlisted at Hamilton and was posted to the Royal Munster Fusiliers, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion. The Battalion was formed at Tralee in August 1914 and in July 1915 they embarked at Liverpool for Gallipoli arriving almost a month later. In October 1915 the battalion was moved to Salonika in Greek Macedonia and a year later, in the early days of October 1916, was involved in the occupation of Mazirko.

It was following this action that Private James Murray died of his wounds on 9 October 1916. He is buried in Lahana Military Cemetery, Greece.

James Murray had four siblings

1. **John Murray** was born c1886 at Hamilton.
2. **James Murray**
3. **Margaret Murray** was born c1889 at Hamilton. At the age of 22, she was a pithead worker.
4. **Thomas Murray** was born c1891 at Blantyre.
5. **Annie Murray** was born 1900 at Bellshill.

## PRIVATE DAVID LAPSLEY NEWTON

(23421)

### Royal Scots 1st/9th Battalion

**Died 20 September 1917**

David Lapsley Newton was born on the 19 October 1891 at Calder Street, Coatbridge. His father, William Newton was born in 1860 at Dalmeny, Linlithgowshire. David's mother, Lizzie Gallacher was born c1867 at East Kilbride and she married William Newton in 1885 at Auchinloch, Cadder, Dunbartonshire. By 1901 they were living at Glebe Park Cement Works Cottage, Bothwell where William Newton was foreman. By April 1911 Lizzie was a widow living with her family at 4 Langside Road, Bothwell.

David Newton was a miner and in November 1911 he married Kate Davidson at Sauchie, Clackmannanshire. They set up home at Glebe Street, Bellshill where their two children, William and Jessie were born in 1914 and 1916 respectively.

David Newton enlisted with the Royal Scots 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion at the Glencorse Barracks, Edinburgh on the 23 June 1915. He was sent to France on the 17 September 1915 to join the British Expeditionary Force as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> reinforcement. The 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion was in the 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. Private Newton arrived in France in time to take part in the Battle of Loos that commenced on the 25 September 1915. The following year the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion took part in the capture of Longueval and the Battle of Deville Wood which were engagements in the Battle of the Somme. The Battle of the Somme commenced on the 1 July 1916 and by 13 July, although under constant artillery bombardment, German forces still firmly held the town of Longueval to the west of Delville Wood. The 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division, was ordered to attack Longueval, the attack to be led by the 26th Brigade. The 27th Brigade would follow, mopping up any bypassed German elements and providing support for the intense fighting that was expected once the leading battalions had entered the fortified town. Once the town had been secured, the 27th Brigade was to pass through the 26th to take Delville Wood. By 16 July the 9<sup>th</sup> Division finally captured the northern part of Longueval although the Germans fought desperately for the Wood with counter attacks and heavy shelling. The final German forces were driven from Delville Wood on 3 September 1916. A German officer commented on this part of the battle that: ... *“Delville Wood had disintegrated into a shattered wasteland of shattered trees, charred and burning stumps, craters thick with mud and blood, and corpses, corpses everywhere. In places they were piled four deep. Worst of all was the lowing of the wounded. It sounded like a cattle ring at the Spring fair...”*

During the Battle for Delville Wood, on 21 August 1916 Private Newton was wounded in the arm and hand. He was evacuated a week later to Brighton General Hospital and later to the War Hospital, Croyden where shell fragments were removed from his arm. He was discharged from hospital on the 10 March 1917 and returned to the Western Front on the 5 June 1917, this time to the 1<sup>st</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion. This Battalion was part of the 154<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland Division) that was preparing for the third Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele which was to be launched on the 31 July 1917. The Battle of the Menin Road Ridge, was the third British attack at Passchendaele. The battle took place 20–25 September 1917, in the Ypres Salient in Flanders. The 51st Division had the task of advancing onto the Poelcappelle spur. The division advanced on a 1,400 yards front but the Germans were ready for them and fought from new machine-gun nests that they had dug in front of their front line, which had avoided the worst of the artillery bombardment. However the division was able to reach the final objective in sight of Poelcappelle village.

It was in this attack on 20 September 1917, the first day of battle, that Private David Newton was killed in action. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium and on the Bothwell War Memorial.

David Newton had 9 siblings.

1. **Ogilvie D. Newton** was born in 1885 in Cadder, Dunbartonshire. In 1908 she was a farm servant living at Fleming's Land, Green Street, Bothwell and there she married James Hillis, a ploughman. The couple later moved to Motherwell where James became a burgh gardener. Ogilvie died at Motherwell in 1948.
2. **William Newton** was born c1890 at Coatbridge.
3. **David L. Newton**
4. **Jeanie Newton** was born c1895 at Coatbridge.
5. **John A. Newton** was born c1897 at Bothwell.
6. **George Newton** was born c1899 at Bothwell.
7. **Elizabeth L. Newton** was born c1900 at Bothwell.
8. **Christina Newton** was born c1901 at Bothwell.
9. **Isaac G. Newton** was born in 1902 at Glebe Cottage, Bothwell. In 1919 at the age of 17 he emigrated to Canada.
10. **Bertram (Bertie) Newton** was born c1904 at Glebe Cottage, Bothwell.



*Delville Wood, The Somme  
1916*

# CAPTAIN STUART HENRY NIMMO

## Royal Scots Fusiliers 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 9 September 1918**

Stuart Henry Nimmo was born on the 18 August 1897 at Laurel Grove, King Street, Dunoon. His father Charles Stuart Nimmo was born c1868 at Dunoon. His grandfather, Michael Nimmo, had a clothier's business at 40 Gallowgate, Glasgow that employed 14 tailors. In 1894 the business was transferred to his son Charles Nimmo. The 1891 census records Charles Nimmo as a 22 year old clothiers assistant living with his parents at Monteith Row, overlooking Glasgow Green. In 1896 at Richhill, Co Armagh, Charles Nimmo married Edith Rebecca Reilly and the following year Stuart was born. Three years later in 1900 the family were living at Beardsen were their son Charles B. Nimmo was born. The family then moved to South Africa in 1903 returning in 1906 to live at Cathcart, Glasgow. A third son, Ian Nimmo, was born at Cathcart, that year. The 1911 census then records the family living at Kames Place, Dunoon. Seven years later, in 1918, Charles and Edith Nimmo had moved to The Crescent, Croyden Surrey. Charles died in 1922 aged 54 and Edith in 1924 also aged 54. They are buried in St Peter and St Paul's Church Cemetery, Felixstowe, Suffolk.

Stuart Nimmo was educated at Ardrossan Academy and Hillhead High School. The Hillhead High School Book of Remembrance records that;

*Stuart Nimmo stayed seven years at Hillhead High, and few pupils entered more whole-heartedly into the life of the School or remained more constant in his affection for it. He was by no means a student, as all his interests lay in the direction of games and action generally. He was noted for his cheerfulness and pluck, and his bright and happy nature will always be gratefully remembered by his schoolfellows. He was intensely fond of music, and the band of the Cadet Corps owed much to his enthusiasm and skill. On leaving School he entered the office of Messrs. Arbuckle, Smith & Co., shippers. The martial spirit was strong in Stuart, and when war began he tried to enlist, but a kindly old colonel turned him down with the words, "You look more like a schoolboy than a soldier." But on coming of age he applied again, and this time was granted a commission in the 9th R.S.F. In September 1916, he left for Salonica in the Balkans.*

*He was a singularly devoted son and brother, and his letters home were bubbling over with humour and cheeriness. Just before the big advance on Bulgaria he wrote, "If you don't hear from me for a time don't fret. I am absolutely full of life - and work." He was eagerly looking forward to leave, but a series of untoward circumstances kept it back. Then came the final act in the Balkan drama, and not an officer could be spared. Stuart, moreover, was Adjutant to his battalion, and could not get away.*

At the beginning of 1918 the Allied troops in Salonika were prepared for a major offensive intended to end the war in the Balkans. Opposing the Allies were the First Bulgarian Army who had joined forces with the Central Powers. The offensive began in July 1918 but the British contingent did not play a significant part until early September. The final assault began along the whole front on 15 September 1918 with the British attacking a series of fortified hills in the Lake Doiran area. The main assault was on the 18 and 19 September 1918 and was a disaster for the British Divisions. They had to frontally assault 'Pip Ridge' which was a 2000 feet high heavily defended mountain ridge with fortresses built on some of the higher mountains, notably Grand Couronne. The 77<sup>th</sup> Brigade, including the Royal Scots Fusiliers, took some Bulgarian trenches, but it was in an exposed position, being hammered by artillery and eventually retreated before the Bulgarians counter-attacked. The brigade suffered about 50% casualties.

The following article titled "*I saw the Futile Massacre at Doiran*" by 'An Unprofessional Soldier' gives some idea of what the men went through.

*It was now the turn of the Scotsmen - Fusiliers, Rifles and Highlanders of the 77<sup>th</sup> Brigade, undismayed by the dreadful evidence of havoc, ran forward among the Welsh and Bulgarian dead. Artillery demoralised the regiment of Zouaves on their left. A storm of machine-gun fire blew away the Greeks on their right, in uncontrolled disorder. Fighting on into a maze of enemy entanglements, the Scotsmen were being annihilated, their flanks withering under a terrible enfilade. A fine battalion of East Lancashires attempted to move up in support. The 65th Brigade launched another forlorn attack on the Pip Ridge. The broken remains of two Brigades were presently in retreat, leaving behind more than half their number, killed, wounded or missing. We had now sustained 3,871 casualties in the Doiran battle. Our troops were incapable of any further effort. A terrible high proportion had been lost or disabled. We gained only the unimportant ruins of Doiran Town and a cluster of small hills immediately above it, never of any value to the enemy or strongly defended. The fortress of Grand Couronne was unshaken, with crumpled bodies of men and a litter of awful wreckage below it. No one can view the result of the operation as anything but a tactical defeat.*

*In that attack on the 19 September 1918 Captain Stuart Nimmo was killed in action. One of his fellow officers wrote; "He was deservedly one of the most popular of officers both with his fellow officers and with men. During the two months before his death, when he held the position of Adjutant, he showed that, in addition to his qualities of being one of the best of good fellows and as straight as a die, he had ability, common sense, and tact to a surprising degree in one so young."*

Stuart Nimmo is commemorated on the Doiran Memorial situated in the north of Greece close to the Yugoslav frontier and near the south-east shore of Lake Doiran. He is also remembered on his parent's gravestone at St Peter and St Paul's Church Cemetery, Felixstowe, Suffolk and on the Kirkfield/Wooddean Church Memorial in Bothwell Parish Church.

# PRIVATE HUGH O'NEILL

(12033)

## Royal Scots Fusiliers 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

### Died 25 September 1915

**H**ugh O'Neill was born 3 May 1888 at Furnace Row, Quarter. His father, Henry O'Neill, was born c1845 in Ireland and was a furnace labourer. His mother, Margaret Campbell, was born c1856 at Cleland, Lanarkshire and they married in 1877 at Strathaven. At the time of their marriage they were both living at Furnace Row, Quarter and continued to do so after their marriage. Henry died c1890 leaving 34 year old Margaret a widow with four young children. She and her family then moved along Furnace Row to live with her father. By 1901 Margaret and family had moved to Shiellinghill, Hamilton and it was there she died the following year aged 43.

Hugh O'Neil worked as a miner and after his mother's death went to live at Barrack Street, Hamilton. On 17 July 1909 at Hamilton, Hugh married Mary Garrity a 20 year old domestic servant from Hamilton. A son Henry, named after his grandfather, was born to them in April 1910.

After war broke out, Hugh O'Neill enlisted with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers at Hamilton. The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed at Ayr in August 1914 and came under orders of 27th Brigade, 9th (Scottish) Division. They moved to England for training and on the 11 May 1915 the Battalion embarked for Boulogne. For the next week they marched the 68 miles to Steenwerke staying in billets along the way. On the 19 May they were bussed to the front line trenches near Armentieres and there they alternated trench duties with periods in billets behind the lines.

They first saw action at the Battle of Loos and Private Hugh O'Neill was killed in action, aged 27, on the 25 September 1915, the first day of the battle. He is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, Belgium. Seven men from Bothwell also died at Loos and details of the Battle are given on page 25.

Hugh O'Neill had 3 siblings

1. **Henry O'Neill** was born c1883 at Quarter. At the age of 18 he was a coal miner.
2. **Patrick O'Neill** was born c1881 at Quarter. He died aged 12 of typhoid fever.
3. **Catherine O'Neill** was born c1885 at Quarter. At the age of 15 she was a factory worker.
4. **Hugh O'Neill**

## CAPTAIN GAVIN LANG PAGAN

**Royal Scots  
Lothian Regiment**

**Died 29 April 1917**

**G**avin Lang Pagan was born on 13 April 1873 at Bothwell Manse. His father, the Very Rev John Pagan DD was born in 1830 at Wamphray, and attended Glasgow University where he graduated DD in 1886. Gavin's mother, Margaret Wiseman Lang, was born in 1843 in Glasgow. She married John Pagan in 1870 in Hamilton and the couple had four of a family. The Very Reverend John Pagan was the Minister of Bothwell Parish Church from 1865 to 1909, and Moderator of the General Assembly in 1899. He retired at the end of 1908 and died the following year at Largs, predeceasing his widow who died in 1933 at Largs.

Gavin Pagan attended Glasgow University where he was awarded an MA in 1895 and a BD the following year. He married Jessie Douglas in 1915 at Edinburgh. The following obituary that appeared in the Scotsman on 19 June 1917 describes his life and death.

### *THE LATE CAPTAIN GAVIN PAGAN*

*We deeply regret to announce that, according to information received through the Red Cross Society of Geneva, Captain, the Rev. G. L. Pagan, minister of St. George's Edinburgh, was killed in action on 28th April last. He led his company in one of the local engagements which took place in the advance against the Hindenberg Line, and his detachment was seen to reach its objective, and to begin entrenching in the face of a powerful German counter-attack. The hope that he might have survived has been dispelled by the message from one of his subalterns now a prisoner of war in Germany, that he was shot through the head and killed.*

*Gavin Laing Pagan was born in 1873 in the Manse of Bothwell. His father, Dr. John Pagan, was minister there and was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1883. After his schooling at Hamilton Academy, he proceeded to Glasgow University, where he had a distinguished record, graduating with first class honours in Philosophy. In 1889 he was called to Callander; three years later he was translated to Largs; and in 1909 he became minister of St Georges Edinburgh.*

*In the early months of the war Mr Pagan expounded the issues that were at stake, and enforced the appeal of the hour for recruits. In pointing out to others their duty, he was compelled to ask himself if it was not also his own duty. There were sufficient reasons why he should have thought himself exempt from the call. The Church of England had declared it unlawful for her clergy to join the army as combatants, and the Courts of the*

*Church of Scotland had as yet made no sign. He was past military age. But he came to the conclusion that in the conflict of duties the military need of the nation was decisive, and he held unfalteringly to his decision. In his last sermon in St. George's he announced his decision in simple and strong words:-*

*"Our country is in a position of extreme danger. The enemy is still at a distance, and he is being held in check by the splendid efforts of our Fleets and Armies, joined to those of our gallant Allies. But the struggle is still undecided. The call for men to fill the places of those who have been struck down, and to form new regiments for the battle is still being sounded. I feel that I cannot remain any longer here. I can serve you better by joining the Army. We must win this war, and win it at a distance, if our country is not to be swept from end to end, and reduced to ruins, like Belgium and France. I can see no way which this calamity can be averted except that the able-bodied manhood of the country should rally to the flag and beat back the aggressor. There will not be a man worthy of the name who will not wish that he were able to take part in the struggle. If I have claimed this great privilege, I beg you to bear with me, and to wish me strength for such honourable service."*

*The chief difficulty, curiously enough, was raised, not by the congregation or by the Presbytery, but by the Army authorities. As a chaplain, Mr Pagan had held the rank of an officer, and the regulations forbade him to enlist as a common soldier. But this obstacle also was finally overcome by his dour determination, and he was enrolled as a private in the Royal Scots. In due course, he received a commission, and went out to France, where he was soon gazetted Captain. He had experience of mortars and machine guns in the trench fighting, and later on he was utilised as an instructor at the Base, where many of the newly arrived contingents passed through his hands.*

*Captain Pagan leaves a widow, the only daughter of Gordon Douglas, manager of the Life Association of Scotland.*

The Allied attacks on the village of Roeux were part of the Battle of Arras (9 April 1917- 17 May 1917) carried out by British Third Army under the command of General Allenby. Arras was to be the British contribution to the Allied Spring Offensive. Roeux is 4.5 miles east of Arras and was one of the fortified villages that formed part of the German defences behind the German front line. The ground before Roeux posed many difficulties for the British, two of which were: the Arras - Douai railway line, which ran north-east to south-west in cutting and on embankment, and the River Scarpe with its surrounding marshland.

The original battle plan had envisaged an infantry attack on Roeux the following day (10 April), but the weather continued to be very poor and artillery movement was very difficult over the muddy ground. It was planned to attack with cavalry but they were too far back and could not be brought up in time so it was decided to mount an infantry attack the following day on the Chemical Works at Roeux.

On 11 April, the Seaforth Highlanders and Royal Irish Fusiliers took part in the first attack on Roeux. A new German trench line to the west of the Chemical Works was heavily armed with machine guns and the Highlanders suffered heavy casualties.

Indeed, only about fifty survivors of the attack force reached the railway embankment where they took shelter. The following day, two brigades from the 9th (Scottish) Division attacked Roeux over the same ground with similar difficulties. Although some of the attackers got within 20 yards of the German line, they suffered heavy casualties and they were forced to pull back. The Official History later concluded that the attack failed because of hurried preparation, inadequate reconnaissance, and ineffective artillery bombardment, that was not sufficient to suppress the German defences.

The third attack on Roeux began on the 23 April. Once again 9th Division was ordered to attack Roeux, this time with the 51st (Highland) Division. The attack made some progress into the village, but German counter attacks, supported by accurate artillery bombardment, were very effective and by the end of the day only the western outskirts of the village remained in British hands. On 28 April, a fourth attack was made on Roeux.

In his book "McCrae's Battalion: The Story of the 16th Royal Scots" Jack Alexander described the attack. *"On the right, the leading waves of the Royal Scots entered Mount Pleasant Wood to find all the paths and adjacent undergrowth thickly wired. Routes around these obstacles were covered by machine-guns. Taking advantage of the darkness, however, they managed to fight their way into the village and advance to their objective in the open fields to the east, where they dug a defence line. In command was Capt Gavin Lang Pagan, a 44-year-old minister of St George's Parish Church in Edinburgh, who had joined the Battalion as a private in November 1914. He had about 175 men, some of whom were wounded."*

In the centre, a heavy bombardment preceded the advance, but as the 101<sup>st</sup> Brigade moved forward behind their creeping barrage they encountered blockhouses, bunkers and tunnels and again faced strong counter attacks, which drove them back, with few gains. Captain Pagan and his men were thus cut off and it was at this time on the 29 April 1917, that he was shot and killed.

After two more attacks on the 3rd and 11th May, the village was taken. In the fighting for Roeux, from 9th April to the 17th May the British Army suffered approximately 20,000 casualties. Roeux was held by the British until the Spring Offensive of 1918 when the Germans swept west and re-took much of the old Arras battlefields.

Gavin Pagan is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, the family gravestone in Bothwell Kirkyard and on the Largs War Memorial.

Gavin Pagan had 3 siblings.

1. **John Pagan** was born in 1871 at Bothwell. He attended Glasgow University where he graduated DD in 1894. John was licenced by the Presbytery of Hamilton in 1894 and married Agnes Blair in 1906. Following a spell as an assistant minister at Ayr, John and his wife went to South Africa on account of his poor health. There he was ordained in 1900 and served in three townships before his death in 1913, The General Assembly declared that "No minister of the church has been more widely and more deeply beloved"

2. **Gavin Lang Pagan**
3. **Alexander Pagan** was born in 1875 in Bothwell. He married Rosalie Wyatt. He was a farmer and merchant and travelled between the home he shared with his sister at Saughtrees, Biggar and South Africa. He died in South Africa in 1968.
4. **Anna Pagan** was born in 1879 at Bothwell and died at the home at Saughtrees, Biggar in 1971.



*The Pagan family gravestone in Bothwell Kirkyard*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> LIEUTENANT THOMAS PATERSON PURDIE**

### **Royal Welsh Fusiliers 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 10 July 1916**

**T**homas Paterson Purdie was born on 15 November 1896 at Craigend, Bothwell. His father, Thomas Paterson Purdie Snr was born in 1864 at Hamilton and as a young man sought his fortune in Burmah. In 1896 he married 30 year old Jessie Clark Jack, who was born in Coatbridge. Jessie's father, William Jack JP, a mining engineer and managing director of a coal company, had settled in Craigends, Bothwell. Returned from Burmah around 1899 Thomas settled into his late father-in-laws house at Craigends, where he worked as a shipping agent. On several occasions he entertained the Bothwell Literary Society with lantern lectures on Burmah and became the Society's Honorary President. During the First World War he was engaged by the Government on several Committees dealing with shipping. In this connection, shipping lists record that in October 1914 he sailed from Liverpool to New York on the Lusitania returning to Belfast the following month. Around 1917 he was sent to Italy to represent the Ministry of Shipping, receiving the rank on Hon Lieutenant-Colonel. In addition to his Government duties, he was president of the Clyde Steamship Owners' Association and chairman of Anderson's Polytechnic Warehouse on Jamaica Street, Glasgow. The 1911 census records Thomas P. Purdie as a ship owner living at Craigends. In 1915 he published a book on "Time Charters of British Cargo Steamships." As a result of his time in Burmah he suffered recurring illness and died in a nursing home in London in 1919 in his 55<sup>th</sup> year. Thomas Purdie was buried at Bothwell Park Cemetery with the coffin draped in a white ensign. Those attending the service included two officers of the Italian Navy and a military and naval representative of the British Government. His wife Jessie predeceased him, dying at Craigends in 1908. Thomas and Jessie had four children.

Thomas Paterson Purdie Jr., He was educated at Glasgow Academy and Crieff Academy and subsequently took up a position on the office staff of Messrs P. Henderson & Co, Ship-owners, Glasgow. He was gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Welsh Regiment on 17 April 1915 and served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from 9 March 1916.

Following the early fighting on the Somme, the British Army had pressed the German Army back beyond the villages of Mametz and Fricourt and by the 5th July, 1916, they were facing them across the shallow valley to the south of Mametz Wood. The XV Corps which included the 13th Battalion Welsh Regiment was given the task of capturing Mametz Wood. Facing the Welshmen was the Lehr Regiment of the Prussian

Guard. At the roll call after the attack 12 officers and 350 other ranks were unaccounted for, with little or nothing achieved. A further assault took place two days later but was unsuccessful. At 3.30 am on the 10th July, 1916 an artillery barrage opened up followed twenty minutes later by the planned smoke screen.

On the right the 13th Welsh came under fire from two concealed German machine guns. Lieutenant Purdie was killed in action leading his platoon against the machine guns that were later captured and put out of action. The Regiment suffered heavy casualties and were beaten back on two occasions but a third attempt was made and they managed to get a foothold in the Wood. Fighting



*2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Thomas Purdie*

continued the following day but as dawn broke on the 12th July fresh units entered the Wood to relieve the tired troops only to discover that the Germans had retreated from the area.

The fighting for Mametz Wood was over at a cost to the Welsh Division of 4,000 casualties.

The poet Robert Graves fought in the battle, and having gone back into the wood once the battle was finally over, wrote:

"It was full of dead Prussian Guards, big men, and dead Royal Welsh Fusiliers and South Wales Borderers, little men. Not a single tree in the wood remained unbroken."

Thomas P. Purdie is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial at the Somme in France, on the Glasgow Academy War Memorial and on his parent's gravestone at Bothwellpark Cemetery.

Thomas Purdie had 3 siblings.

1. **Theodore Purdie** was born c1894 at Mandalay, Burmah. During the war he lived at Downhill, Glasgow and died in 1964 at Ayr.
2. **Clifford Purdie** was born c1895 at Mandalay Burmah and died in 1926 at Glasgow.
3. **Thomas P. Purdie**
4. **Margaret Purdie** was born c1896 at Rothsay.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> LIEUTENANT MATTHEW PRINGLE

### Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry Royal Field Artillery

**Died 27 August 1917**

Matthew Pringle was born on 24 February 1890 at Lesmahgow. His father John Pringle, born c1854 at Carluke, was a miner at the Lesmahgow coalfields. He later rose to be an Underground Colliery Manager living at Old Glasgow Road, Uddingston and died there in 1916. Matthew's mother was Marion Hamilton, born c1855 at Lesmahgow and she married John Pringle in 1875 at Lesmahgow. At the time of their marriage John was a railway brakesman and Marion a farm servant. Marion was a member of Bothwell Parish Church and died at Uddingston in 1920. She and John had 10 of a family.

Matthew was educated at Coatbridge Higher Grade School and from there he went to Glasgow Provincial Training College. (This was a teacher training college established in 1905, initially based in the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College, moving to Jordanhill in 1921 and renamed Jordanhill College of Education in 1959). Matthew completed his education at London University. He then became a teacher at Mount Vernon Public School.

At the outbreak of war in 1914, Matthew enlisted with the Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry and rose to the rank of sergeant.

This regiment of the British Army was formed in 1848 when a notice appeared in the Glasgow Herald seeking gentlemen interested in forming 'The Glasgow and Lower Ward of Lanarkshire Yeomanry Cavalry.' The commander of the corps was William the 11<sup>th</sup> Duke of Hamilton. The following year Queen Victoria visited Glasgow arriving at the Broomielaw on the Royal Yacht. The new Glasgow Yeomanry Cavalry had the honour of leading the procession and acting as carriage escort to the Queen. As a result the following year the Queen conferred the title the Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry. For its first half century the Regiment did little more than keep the peace during periods of industrial unrest and perform at ceremonial events. In 1871 they formed up in Blythswood Square and marched through Glasgow via Rutherglen, Cambuslang and Bothwell Bridge to their quarters in Hamilton. However at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a unit from the Regiment fought in the Boer War and the Great War. After WW1 the cavalry had become obsolete the Yeomanry was converted to a brigade of the



*The badge of the  
Queen's Own Royal  
Glasgow and Lower  
Ward of Lanarkshire  
Yeomanry*

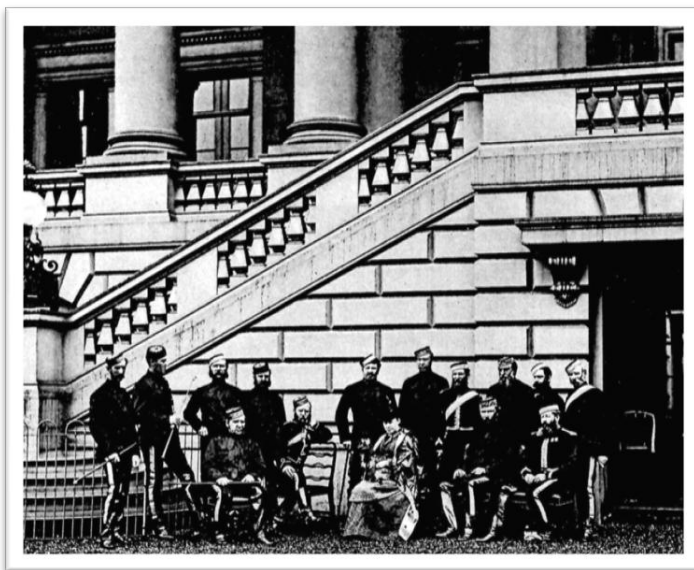
Royal Artillery. In 1939 it became the 64<sup>th</sup> (QORGY) Anti-Tank Regiment RA(TA) and as such fought in WW2. Post war, after a series of amalgamations the Regiment was disbanded in 1999.

In June 1917 Matthew Pringle was gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery and in August that year was sent to serve with the Expeditionary Force in France. On 28 August 1917 Lieutenant Pringle was killed in action at the Ypres salient. His commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Rainsford-Hannay wrote to his mother saying *"I only met your son once and I liked what I saw of him so much that I posted him to a battery at once. He was killed as he was running forward to man the guns. His battery commander spoke very highly of him and had he lived he would have had an early promotion."*

Matthew Pringle was buried at the Huts Cemetery, Dickebusch, Belgium. This cemetery takes its name from a line of huts that were used by field ambulances. Nearly two-thirds of the burials are of gunners as many artillery positions existed nearby.

Matthew Pringle was a first class athlete, played golf, football and cricket equally well. He had 8 siblings.

1. **Jessie Pringle** was born c1875 at Lesmahagow.
2. **James Pringle** was born c1879 at Lesmahagow.
3. **Marion Pringle** was born c1881 at Lesmahagow. By 1911 she was co-owner with her sister Jeanie of a dairy shop.
4. **William Pringle** was born in 1883 at Lesmahagow.
5. **Jeanie Pringle** was born c1886 at Lesmahagow. By 1911 she was co-owner with her sister Marion of a dairy shop.
6. **Matthew Pringle.**
7. **Sarah Pringle** was born c1893 at Lesmahagow. By 1911 she was a tailor's machinist.
8. **John Pringle** was born c1896 at Cadder.
9. **George Pringle** was born c1900 at Lesmahagow.



*The Officers of the Queen's Own Glasgow Yeomanry at Hamilton Palace 1876  
The Duke of Hamilton standing centre.  
To the right of the Duchess John Hamilton  
(Baron Hamilton of Dalzell)  
and Archibald Campbell  
(Lord Blythswood)*

# CAPTAIN STUART RAMSAY DSO

## The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment

**Died 2 June 1917**

Stuart Ramsay was born at Douglas Villa, Bothwell on 10 September 1886. His father, William Ramsay, a merchant, was born in Glasgow in 1854 and died in Hampstead, London in 1911. Stuart's mother Helen Peters, was born in Glasgow in 1859 and at the time of her son's death in 1917 was living at Dundas, Kilcreggan. She died at Dunoon in 1942. William Ramsay and Helen Peters married in 1881 at Pollokshields, Glasgow, but by 1891 had moved to Bothwell. They had six children.

Stuart Ramsay spent his formative years living at Moorpark, Bothwell. He went to school at Glasgow High and is commemorated on the school's War Memorial. By the 1911 census he is recorded as living at Hampstead, London.

In March 1914 Stuart Ramsay was transferred to Christchurch, New Zealand from the London office of the NZ Refrigerating Company. Shortly after he landed in Christchurch war was declared and New Zealand formed the Citizen's Defence Corps. Ramsay was appointed the officer commanding No 2 Platoon of the City Unit, but in April 1915 he returned to Britain to enlist. Back home he joined The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment as a commissioned Officer.

He was assigned to the 8th (Service) Battalion of the Regiment that was raised at Preston in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Third New Army. The Battalion



*William Ramsay*



*Stuart Ramsay  
third from the left*

joined the 74th Brigade, 25th Division and assembled in the area around Salisbury for training. The 8th Loyals remained in England for a full year after it came into existence, training and growing in strength. At the beginning of September 1915, it was announced that the Division was very shortly to sail for “an unknown destination.” This turned out to be Boulogne, France, Second Lieutenant Stuart Ramsay and his comrades disembarking on the 31 October 1915. Their destination after a train journey and route march was Armentières.

Their first action was at Ploegsteert Wood a sector of the Western Front in Flanders in World War I, part of the Ypres Salient. Captain Underhill of the 8<sup>th</sup> Loyals kept a diary and recorded

*“At 8 pm our strafe started. The artillery sent over 12 shells and then the trench mortar got busy and sent 7 great bombs over, three of which failed to explode. Those that did explode though were awful. After this little jollification, to which the Boche replied with one sausage which did no harm, Ramsay, our bombing officer, and two bombers went out and threw 6 bombs from about 20 yards range and then sprinted back.”*

It was also noted in the Regimental records that during the latter part of November 1915 some very useful reconnaissance work was carried out by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Ramsay and that he was wounded about this time.

The weather turned bitterly cold and the length of the tour of duty in the trenches was reduced to five days. Very wet weather was experienced at the beginning of December and the parapets and many of the dugouts fell in.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Loyals next saw action in defence of the German attack on Vimy Ridge in May 1916. They then moved to The Somme and joined the Battle just after the main attack, with 75th Brigade making a costly attack near Thiepval on the 3rd of July. Captain Underhill in his diary records the attack on the German trenches on the 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> July 1916

*“The enemy opened with heavy shrapnel fire on our trenches. They then commenced a bombing attack towards the point reached by the leading patrol and Lt Ramsay, with the battalion bombers, was sent up to hold this attack, which he successfully accomplished. We attacked the German trenches on the night of the 9<sup>th</sup>, and during the next two days we had the toughest fighting anybody could have asked for. We made an attack up a trench and bumped into the Huns preparing to attack. We stuck and repelled a Hun attack for seven or eight hours – one weak battalion against three Hun battalions. For five days previous to the 12<sup>th</sup> I had only ten hours sleep, and when I came out on the night of the 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> I was utterly fagged out and on the point of collapse from strain and fatigue, for Ramsey, Mason and I were the only company officers left.”*

The London Gazette of 25 August 1916 recorded that His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve of the appointment of the undernoted Officers to be Companions of the Distinguished Service Order, in recognition of their gallantry and devotion to duty in the Field.

Temp. Lt Stuart Ramsay, N. Lan. R

For conspicuous gallantry in action. When the enemy attacked our trenches in greatly superior numbers he repeatedly organised and led bombing attacks against them, keeping them at a distance. He frequently reconnoitred over the parapet, which was swept by machine gun fire, and gave valuable information to our artillery.

Subsequently Stuart Ramsay was promoted to Captain and on the 31 October 1916 the 25<sup>th</sup> Division took over the Ploegsteert sector, which had a frontage of some 6,000 yards. It was a relatively quiet sector but nevertheless Stuart Ramsay again distinguished himself and was mentioned in dispatches by General Sir Douglas Haig on 13 November 1916.

In February 1917 the Division was withdrawn from the line and provided working parties for road building, bomb-proof shelters etc.

By June 1917 the Battalion was once again up at the front line when orders were received to carry out a raid on the enemy position. "D" Company 100 strong, with Captain Stuart Ramsay and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Williams were to carry out the enterprise along with a party of equal strength provided by the Worcestershire Regiment. The purpose of the raid was to examine the German defences and obtain identifications. The raid, carried out on the 2 June 1917, was a failure, owing to the Company coming under

our own barrage and having to retire. Captain Ramsay, who was in command of the first wave, was killed. Lieutenant Williams again went forward with a patrol to try to recover Captain Ramsay's body, but the Germans were by this time on the alert and the patrol could not get far out. Lieutenant Williams was killed on the way back to the lines.

Captain Stuart Ramsay DSO was buried at St. Quentin Cabaret Military Cemetery, Belgium.



*Captain Stuart Ramsay DSO,  
front row, centre*

Stuart Ramsay 5 siblings.

1. **Nathaniel Ramsay**, the eldest was born in Glasgow in 1881 and married Mabel Jarvie in 1909 at the Grand Hotel, Glasgow. At that time he was recorded as a stockbroker living at Main Street, Bothwell.
2. **Margaret Ramsay** was born in 1883 at Shawlands, Glasgow and married William Jarvie in 1909 at London. She died in 1975 at South Africa. Margaret had three of a family all born in Bothwell.
3. **Marjory Ramsay** was born in 1885 at Cheshire and up to her late teens lived with her parents at Moorpark, Bothwell. She died in 1979 at Hampshire.
4. **Stuart Ramsay**
5. **William Ramsay** was born in 1888 at Dechmont Lodge, Bothwell, but spent his formative years living at Moorpark, Bothwell. He died in 1969.
6. **Muriel Ramsay** was born in 1895 at Bothwell and died in 1983 at Hampshire.

## **PRIVATE JOSHUA REID**

(S/41496)

### **Gordon Highlanders 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 23 November 1917**

Joshua Reid was born in 1888 at Braefoot Cottage, Fallside, Bothwell. His father, William Reid was born c1849 at Tynron, Dumfries-shire. He was a railway pointsman when, in 1877 at Glasgow, he married 28 year old Isabella Seaton a restaurant waitress from Sanquhar. Initially the young married couple lived in Govan. But by 1891 William was a railway station agent living with his wife and family at Braefoot Cottage, Bothwell. He was promoted to railway station agent and the family lived at the Caledonian Railway Station House, Fallside Road, Bothwell. After William retired the family moved to Adele Street, Motherwell and it was there that Isabella died in 1916 followed by William in 1919.

Joshua Reid was a bank accountant and worked at Peterhead before being transferred to the Clydesdale Bank at Helensburgh. He enlisted on 26 May 1917 at Stirling Castle and was posted to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders on 8 June. After a short period of training he embarked at Folkestone for Boulogne on 21 August and joined the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders the following day. On the 30 August he received word that he was to be transferred to the Gordon Highlanders and he joined the 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of that regiment on the 28 September 1917.

The 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders was part of the 152<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division and in late November 1917 saw action at the capture of Bourlon Wood, Flesquieres, part of the Battle of Cambrai. On the first day of the Battle, 20th November at 6.20 am, the British artillery, that had been silent during the preparations for the battle, suddenly opened fire in a massive onslaught of shells and smoke. Tanks began to advance in long waves crushing the belt of barbed wire then crossing the wide German trenches. They were followed closely by the Infantry of the 51<sup>st</sup> Division. The surprise was total. Many gaps were made in the Hindenburg Line. Nine thousand German prisoners were taken. At midday some of the tanks had reached their final objective and the Infantry successfully consolidated the position. To the south of Flesquières, long columns of black smoke rising from the destroyed and burning tanks clearly indicated that something was wrong. Due to a fierce resistance by the German field artillery, the tanks were stopped. The 51st Highland Division, too far away to help, was not able to prevent the disaster. However the Hindenburg Line had been broken at last. The advance was approximately 7 kilometres deep behind the German line and 12 kilometres wide.

On the morning of the 21st, Flesquieres was recaptured by the Scottish Highlanders who were determined that nothing would stop their advance. After the first day of surprise, the Germans quickly reorganised. Special equipment was sent to stop the tanks and their troops were ordered to contain any British attack. By the beginning of December the battle was over with the result virtually a status quo, but with very heavy casualties on both sides. The British had 44,000 casualties including more than 20,000 wounded and 7,000 missing and the Germans had 41,000 casualties.

Private Joshua Reid died on the 23 November 1917 aged 29 and is buried at Flesquieres Hill British Cemetery at the Pas de Calais, France.

Joshua had six siblings.

1. **Elizabeth Reid** was born in 1880 at Glasgow. In 1904 at Bothwell she married James Taggart and they lived in Motherwell.
2. **Jane Reid** was born in 1881 at Glasgow. In 1911 she was a school teacher.
3. **Isabella Reid** was born c1885 at Bothwell. In 1901 she was a domestic servant.
4. **William Reid** was born c1887 at Bothwell. In 1911 he worked as a steel plater.
5. **Joshua Reid**
6. **Janet Reid** was born c1890 at Bothwell. In 1911 she was a student teacher.



*Flesquieres Hill British Cemetery*

## ABLE SEAMAN THOMAS REILLY

(Z/5992)

### Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Howe Battalion, RN Division

**Died 30 December 1917**

Thomas Reilly was born on 28 February 1897 at Regent Street, Rutherglen. His father Thomas Reilly snr was born c1872 at Glasgow and was employed as a railway signalman with the Caledonian Railway Company. Latterly he lived at Laighmuir Street, Uddingston but died in hospital in Glasgow in 1955. His mother Helen Forrest was born c1872 at Carfin, Lanarkshire and worked as a cotton factory weaver. They married in 1896 at Blantyre and started their married life at Newton Caledonian Railway Buildings, Cambuslang where they raised five of a family. By 1915 they had moved to the Station House, Fallside Road, Bothwell.

Thomas Reilly was a grocer when he enlisted on the 18 August 1915 with the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. After several months at Blandford, Dorset, in February 1916 Thomas was drafted to join the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force at Salonika on the Macedonian Front. He was posted to the Howe Battalion that was part of the 2nd (Royal Naval) Brigade, an infantry brigade of the Royal Navy. In March 1916 he was hospitalised at Stavros for five weeks with a septic left foot. On the 21 August 1916 he was again in hospital with a gunshot wound to the chest and the following month was invalided to Britain. In October 1916 while being treated at the Northern General Hospital, Lincoln, he was granted 9 days furlough, presumably to visit his parents at Bothwell. By 16 December 1916 Thomas had recovered and rejoined his comrades in the Howe Battalion who by this time had moved from Salonika to the Western Front in France. There the Howe Battalion saw action at Passchendaele in October and November 1917.



*Howe Battalion crest*

In mid December 1917 the Royal Naval Division arrived at the trenches of the sector west of Cambrai known as 'Welsh Ridge' in the Flesquieres salient. In late December there was no reason to expect an attack but heavy shelling began on the 30 December 1917 and the whole battalion "stood to" ready to receive the attackers. The Howe

Battalion took a pounding from shelling and the subsequent German assault on their lines. Post battle analysis assessed that the Royal Naval Reserve had been attacked by over 15 German battalions plus stormtroops. Howe Battalion had about 30 men killed in action or died of wounds including their commanding officer and second in command. On that day Able Seaman Reilly was reported missing, assumed killed in action, aged 20. His body was never recovered and he is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing on the Somme.

Thomas Reilly had 4 siblings.

1. **Thomas Reilly**
2. **Robert Reilly** was born c1899 at Newton, Cambuslang.
3. **Mary Reilly** was born c1902 at Newton, Cambuslang.
4. **Janet Reilly** was born c1906 at Newton, Cambuslang.
5. **Adam Reilly** was born c1910 at Newton, Cambuslang.



*Map of the front lines at Welsh Ridge, Battle of Cambrai*

# **PRIVATE JAMES RENSHAW**

(350658)

## **Highland Light Infantry 18<sup>th</sup> (4<sup>th</sup> Glasgow Yeomanry) Battalion**

**Died 25 March 1918**

James Renshaw was born on 28 February 1895 at Bothwellhaugh. His father, David Renshaw, was born c1873 and came over from Ireland to work as a coal miner at Bothwellhaugh. In 1891 David Renshaw was an 18 year old miner lodging at the Palace Rows, Bothwellhaugh. That year he married Mary McMillan a 21 year old domestic servant. Mary was originally from Ireland but was lodging with her uncle at the Palace Rows, Bothwellhaugh. By 1901 they had moved to Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh with their three sons.

James Renshaw enlisted in Glasgow with the 18<sup>th</sup> (Glasgow Yeomanry) Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry. This Battalion was formed in Glasgow on 26 February 1915 by the Lord Provost as a Bantam Battalion. After initial training close to home, they moved to Girvan and then to Gales in May 1915. In June they joined 106th Brigade 35th Division at Yorkshire. The Battalion then moved to Salisbury Plain in August for final training. They were ordered to France in February 1916 and saw action during the Battles of the Somme. In 1917 they were in action during the pursuit to the Hindenburg Line and at the Second Battle of Passchendaele. In 1918 Private James Renshaw and his comrades in the 35<sup>th</sup> Division fought in the Battle of Bapaume at the Somme.

The German High Command decided to make a decisive attack on the Western Front in the Spring of 1918. They believed that the British were exhausted by the four major efforts in 1917 (Arras, Messines, Passchendaele and Cambrai). The Russians had sued for peace and by February 1918, the Germans had moved many of their Divisions from the now collapsed Eastern front to the West.

In the evening of 24 March 1918, after enduring unceasing shelling, the British Army evacuated the town of Bapaume that was then occupied by German forces on the following day. By night the Germans had reached Le Transloy and Combles.

The movements of the following day, the 25 March, were extremely confused and reports from different battalions were often contradictory. An unidentified officer's account of his demoralising experiences that day is quoted in the British Official History: "What remains in my memory of this day is the constant taking up of new positions, followed by constant orders to retire, terrible blocks on the roads, inability to find anyone anywhere; by exceeding good luck almost complete freedom from shelling, a complete absence of food of any kind except what could be picked up from abandoned dumps."

During the day, the German Army pressed forward at an alarming pace covering many miles. Allied troops and civilians with laden carts and wagons filled the roads streaming south and west. However the German advance became bogged down, as it became increasingly difficult to move artillery and supplies forward to support the troops over Somme battlefield of 1916 and the wasteland of the 1917 German retreat to the Hindenburg Line.

It was during this day, the 25 March 1918, that Private James Renshaw was killed in action, aged 23. His body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial at the Somme, France.

James Renshaw had four siblings.

1. **William Renshaw** was born c1893 at Bothwellhaugh. By 1917 he was a colliery under manager and that year at Langside Road, Bothwell he married Agnes Hunter a 27 year old dressmaker.
2. **James Renshaw**
3. **David Renshaw** was born c1898 at Bothwellhaugh. By 1926 he was an engineer's fitter living at Northumberland and that year at Blantyre he married 26 year old Cath Cossar.
4. **Robert Renshaw** was born in 1899 at Bothwellhaugh and died the same year.
5. **Edith Renshaw** was born 1904 at Bothwellhaugh.

# PRIVATE DAVID BROWN ROBERTSON

(PO/754)

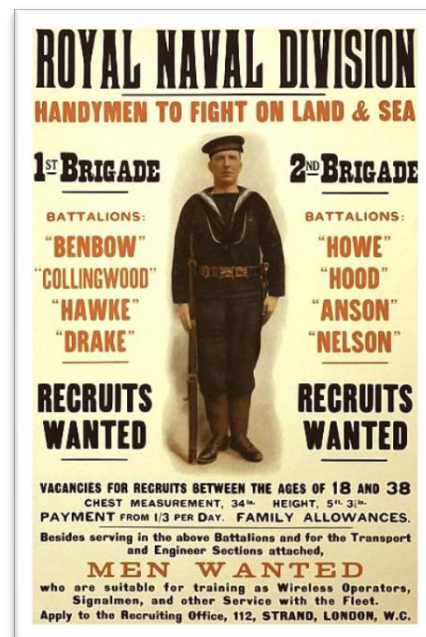
**Royal Marine Light Infantry  
2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Marine Battalion, RN Division**

**Died 26 October 1917**

**D**avid Brown Robertson was born on the 27 August 1895 at Uddingston. His father John Robertson was born c1874 at Douglas, Lanarkshire and he married Mary Muir, a 22 year old from Bothwell in 1895 at the Public Halls, Bothwell, John being employed as a colliery clerk while Mary was a domestic servant at Hillside House. John Robertson died in 1897 at Uddingston, only two years after his marriage. He left two children, David and Elizabeth who went to live with their maternal grandmother at Dickson's Brae, Garfield Place (now Langside Road), Bothwell. By the 1911 census widow Mary Robertson was living with her son David, a telegraph messenger, at Langside Road, Bothwell. Mary then emigrated to Long Island, New York and by 1917 she had remarried, her married name being Mary Hillett.

David Robertson enlisted with the Royal Marines and joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Infantry Battalion on the 10 December 1914. At the end of February 1915 Private David Robertson and the Royal Marine Division were sent to Gallipoli with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. After their unsuccessful campaign against the Turks, in May 1916 the Royal Marine Division were sent to France to support the British Expeditionary Force. While at the Western Front, on 14 November 1916 David Robertson received grenade wounds to his legs and 12 days later was invalided back to Britain. He rejoined the Royal Marines ten months later on the 24 September 1917.

His return to the Western Front coincided with preparations for the Third Battle of Ypres at Passchendaele infamous not only for the scale of casualties, but also for the mud. Ypres was the principal town within a salient (or bulge) in the British lines and the site of two previous battles in October-November 1914 and April-May 1915. The British plan was to attack the German front, which faced the canal bank, 1000m north of Ypres with Canadian troops and the Royal Marines. On the night of the 25th October the Royal Marine Light Infantry and Canadian battalions moved into the forward trenches. The area ahead of them was a natural swamp. During peacetime, farmers drained it, but the bombardment over the previous months had demolished the drainage systems and



had churned up the clay soil. The previous July had experienced the heaviest rain for 30 years, turning the soil into a quagmire, producing thick mud that clogged up rifles and immobilised tanks. It eventually became so deep that men and horses drowned in it.

At 5.40am on the 26 October 1917 the covering fire began and the Royal Marines charged forward in heavy rain, finding great difficulty in keeping up with the covering fire. Their main weapon for trench warfare was the Mills grenade and the bayonet. Three days of fighting resulted in over 2,500 casualties, for a gain of approximately a thousand metres. One of these casualties on the first day of the attack was Private David Robertson. He is commemorated at the Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

# SERGEANT DAVID ROBERTSON

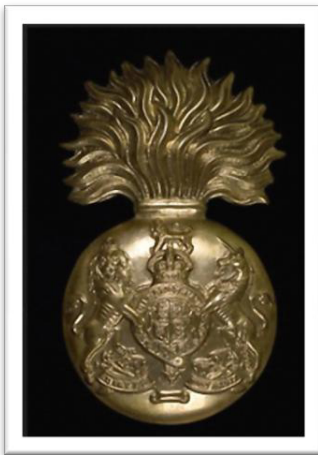
(7187)

## Royal Scots Fusiliers 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 12 March 1915**

David Robertson was born on 27 July 1877 at Draffin, near Lesmahagow. His father, Thomas Robertson, was born c1834 in Ireland and came to Scotland to work as a railway labourer. In 1860 at Mochrum, Wigtown, Thomas married Mary Love, an 18 year old local girl. They set up home at Stonehouse, where Thomas obtained a job as a miner. By 1871 the family had moved to Draffin Rows, Draffin. Ten years later they were living at Netherburn village. A further ten years later in 1891 Thomas was working at Bothwell Park Colliery and the family were living in the miner's rows there. Thomas and Mary ended their days at Laidlaw Street, Tannochside, Thomas passing away in 1902 and Mary in 1906.

David Robertson was recorded, in 1891, at the age of 13, as a coal miner living with his parents at 89 Bothwell Park. Between 1899 and 1902 he fought against the Boers in the South African Campaign with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Yorkshire Regiment and the Lovat Scouts. Returning home after the Boer War he returned to his old job as a miner and in 1911 was lodging at Waverly Place, Bothwell. He re-enlisted with the army around 1913 with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, the Royal Scots Fusiliers. 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion RSF was in



*Regimental badge of the  
Royal Scots Fusiliers*

Gibraltar when war broke out in August 1914. They returned to England, landing in September 1914 and joining 21st Brigade, 7th Division who were concentrating in the New Forest in Hampshire. The Division landed at Zeebrugge in the first week of October 1914, to assist in the defence of Antwerp, they arrived too late prevent the fall of the city and took up defensive positions at important bridges and junctions to aid in the retreat of the Belgian army. The 7th Division then became the first British troops to entrench in front of Ypres, suffering extremely heavy losses in the the First Battle of Ypres. By February 1915 the Division had been reinforced to fighting strength and they were in action at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. By this time 37 year old David Robertson had been promoted to acting sergeant. The Battle of Neuve Chapelle was preceded

by a 35 minute artillery bombardment of 342 guns across a 2,000 yard front. At 7.30 am on 10 March 1915 40,000 infantrymen from four divisions attacked the German trenches. Within 4 hours the German line had been broken and the village of Neuve

Chapelle taken. The German High Command dispatched reserves to Neuve Chapelle, launching a counter-attack on 12 March. The British nevertheless managed to hold their gains, some 2km of ground originally lost in October 1914, but further progress towards Aubers - which had escaped artillery bombardment, and where the front line wire was thus undamaged - proved impossible; of some 1,000 troops who attacked Aubers none survived. The attack was consequently halted on 13 March. Allied casualties during the battle were 11,200 including Sergeant David Robertson who was killed in action during the German counter-attack on the 12 March 1915. His body was not recovered and he is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, France.

David Robertson had 9 siblings.

1. **William Robertson** was born c1862 at Cambusnethan.
2. **Jane Robertson** was born c1865 at Stonehouse. She worked as a dressmaker.
3. **John Robertson** was born c1867 at Stonehouse.
4. **Robert Robertson** was born c1867 at Stonehouse. He was a coal miner and in 1899 at Wishaw he married Jemina Campbell.
5. **Thomas Robertson** was born c1872 at Stonehouse.
6. **Mary Robertson** was born in 1875 at Lesmahagow. She was a domestic servant and in 1894 at Bellshill she married James Jenkins. James lived with his parents at Bothwell Park Colliery Rows where he worked as a miner. They emigrated to New Zealand around 1902.
7. **David Robertson**
8. **James Robertson** was born c1880 at Lesmahagow.
9. **Seilina Robertson**, born c1882, Dalsersf, Lanarkshire. In 1901 she was a domestic servant at St John's Manse Hamilton.
10. **George Robertson** was born c1895 at Dalsersf, Lanarkshire.

## **2<sup>ND</sup> LIEUTENANT ROBERT HAMILTON ROBERTSON**

### **Hampshire Regiment**

**Died 30 November 1917**

**R**obert Hamilton Robertson was born c1893 in the USA. His grandfather, James Hamilton, was born c1828 in Bothwell, and in 1855 married Janet Ballantyne, a 28 year old from East Kilbride. James Hamilton is recorded in the 1861 and 1871 censuses as a farmer of 45 acres living at Main Street, Bothwell. By the 1881 census he had moved his family to the 180 acre Padstow Farm at Fordingbridge, Hampshire. James died in 1906 at Fleckney, Leicestershire He and Janet had five of a family.

Their second eldest was Marion Loudon Hamilton, born c1863 at Bothwell. She moved with her parents to Padstow Farm and in 1892 at Fordingbridge she married Robert Robertson, an architect. They emigrated to America where son Robert and daughter Jessie were born. Marion is then recorded on the passenger lists for the SS "Anchoria" sailing from New York to Glasgow in April 1897 as Mrs Marion Robertson travelling with son Robert, age 2 and daughter Jessie aged 10 months. Four years later in the 1901 census, Marion is described as a widow living with her brother Daniel at Bourtreehill, Cadzow Street, Hamilton along with Robert and Jessie. Ten years on and the 1911 census lists her living on private means at Bothwell Park Farm with daughter Jessie. By 1915 she had moved to Hillhead, Glasgow. Marion died at Marlborough Avenue, Broomhill, Glasgow in 1932. Her daughter Jessie Helen Robertson was born in 1896 in the USA. Jessie never married and died at Islington, London in June 1952.

Robert Hamilton Robertson was born c1893 in the United States of America. After sailing with his mother and sister to Glasgow in 1897, they lived with his uncle Daniel at Bourtreehill, Cadzow Street, Hamilton. He enlisted in August 1915 as trooper 3419 in 1<sup>st</sup> Life Guards. As a result of his action in France he was awarded the 1914-15 Star. He returned to Britain for training in the Officer Cadet Unit. On the 1 August 1917 Robert Hamilton Robertson was commissioned from the Officer Cadet Unit into the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Royal Hampshire Regiment as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. Shortly thereafter he was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion and sailed to France to join the Regiment. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Hampshires were part of the British Army's 29<sup>th</sup> Division that had fought at Gallipoli and then at the Somme. Lieutenant Robertson joined the Regiment as they prepared for action at Cambrai, a small French village near the border with Belgium. Cambrai had been the Duke of Wellington's headquarters at the Battle of Waterloo and was to be the site of another WW1 battle.

In mid-1917, Colonel Fuller, the Chief of Staff of the Tank Corps, devised a plan for using tanks to raid the German lines at Cambrai. Advancing behind a surprise bombardment, the tanks were to crush lanes through the German barbed wire and bridge the German trenches by filling them with bundles of brushwood known as fascines. Opposing the British was the German Hindenburg Line that consisted of three successive lines approximately 7,000 yards deep. At 6.20am on November 20, 1,003 British guns opened fire on the German position. Advancing behind a creeping barrage, the British had immediate success. Under pressure, the Germans abandoned Cambrai village that night. Over the next ten days, the British advance slowed greatly. As German reserves reached the area, the fighting took on the attritional characteristics of many battles on the Western Front. On November 28, the offensive was halted and British troops began to dig in. While the British had been spending their strength to capture Bourlon Ridge, the Germans had shifted twenty divisions to the front for a massive counterattack. Beginning at 7:00 AM on November 30, German forces employed "stormtrooper" infiltration tactics to attack the British lines. It was on this day that Lieutenant Robert Robertson was killed in action.

On December 3, Haig ordered a retreat from the salient, surrendering almost all of the British gains. During the two weeks of battle the British recorded a loss of 55,207 men (plus 179 tanks). The German Empire lost an estimated 45,000 men. The Cambrai Memorial near the village of Louveral in the Pas-de-Calais commemorates more than 7000 servicemen of the UK and South Africa who lost their lives in the Battle of Cambrai and for whom no graves are known. Robert Robertson's name is recorded on Panel 7.



*Robert H. Robertson's medals.*

*From right: 1914-15 Star awarded to Trooper 3419 R.H. Robertson 1<sup>st</sup> Life Guards: British War and Victory Medals awarded to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut R.H. Robertson: Robert Hamilton Robertson's Great War Memorial Plaque.*

*The medals and plaque were on sale in the internet for \$1,400 and were described as " Unmounted, very crisp detail, extremely fine. Naming is officially impressed on all three and on the plaque."*

Robert Robertson's mother, Marion Loudon Hamilton, had 4 siblings.

1. **Jessie Ballantyne Hamilton** was born c1858 at Bothwell and lived at Padstow Farm. Jessie married John Gilchrist and they lived at Orbiston Mains Farm, Bellshill where she died in 1930. Her husband John Gilchrist was the son of William and Margaret Gilchrist of Bothwell Park Farm and eldest brother of Dr Marion Gilchrist, the first woman to gain a medical degree in Scotland.
2. **Marion Loudon Hamilton** was born c1863 at Bothwell. In 1892 she married Robert Robertson. She died in 1932 at Glasgow.
3. **Thomas Hamilton** was born c1866 at Bothwell and by 1881 he was a veterinary surgeon living at Padstow Farm.
4. **Peter Hamilton** was born c1868 at Bothwell and by 1881 was living at Padstow farm.
5. **Daniel Hamilton** was born c1869 at Bothwell. In 1901 he was a veterinary surgeon living at Bourtreehill, Hamilton.

## **PRIVATE JAMES ROSS**

(132216)

### **Machine Gun Corps 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Infantry)**

**Died 23 April 1918**

**J**ames Ross was born on 10 June 1899 at Caldergrove, Newton, Cambuslang where his father was gardener. His father Peter Ross was born c1870 at Banffshire. His mother Agnes McGibbon was born c1875 at Kincardine-on-Forth. They married in 1894 at Alva, Clackmannanshire. They then lived in Greenock where their daughter Mary Margaret Ross was born in 1896. After a short time at Caldergrove, Newton the family had moved to Bridge House, Bothwell where they were living in 1901. Ten years later they were living at the gardener's house at Dunclutha Lodge, Bothwell. By 1918 Peter Ross had moved yet again to Craigrownie Castle, Cove, Dunbartonshire. It was there in 1918 that Mary Margaret Ross married Corporal Horace Nicols of the Australian Imperial Forces who hailed from Victoria, Australia. No further information is available on the Ross family and it assumed that newly married Mary Margaret and her parents emigrated to Australia.

James Ross enlisted at Hamilton and was posted to the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry).

Machine Gun Battalions were formed in Army Divisions in the early months of 1918. The Battalions took the number of their Division and consequently the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion Machine Gun Corps was part of the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. During WW1 the order of battle of the 9th (Scottish) Division included the 26<sup>th</sup> (Highland) Brigade. This Brigade in turn included the 26<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Company



which had been formed in January 1916 but was redesignated the 9<sup>th</sup> MG Battalion on 1 March 1918. It was with this unit that Private James Ross fought and died in the Great War.

In 1915 the Division fought at The Battle of Loos. This was followed by battles at Albert, Bazentin, Delville Wood and Le Transloy which were all phases of the Battles of the Somme in 1916. The following year the 9<sup>th</sup> Division fought at the Battle of the Scarpe which was part of the Arras Offensive and at Passchendaele at the Ypres Salient.

The Spring of 1918 saw Private Ross and his comrades in the 9<sup>th</sup> Division defending the front line at St Quentin on the Somme. They were part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Army under General Gough. On 21st March 1918 the German Army launched a large-scale offensive against the Allied front on the Somme battlefield. This offensive was codenamed Operation

Michael, and was the first of several attacks to be made against the Allies on the northern part of the Western Front in the spring of 1918. With 72 German divisions in positions ready to attack in three waves, thousands of infantrymen from three German Armies left the German Front Line after a five hour artillery bombardment by over 6,600 artillery pieces. Some 3.2 million shells were destined to land on the British-held front during that first day of the attack. To the Germans' advantage there was fog in the Somme battlefield sector, enabling the infantry to appear in the British forward positions without being seen to leave the German trenches. The southern part of the British front, held by the Fifth Army, was successfully broken by the German Eighteenth Army and the left wing of Second Army. The German advance continued but their line of supply was overextended and, with Allied reinforcements brought in to plug the gap, the German command sent an order on the 5 April to say that Operation Michael was terminated.

It was during the second day of the German offensive, the 23 March 1918, that Private James Ross was killed. He is buried at La Clytte Military Cemetery, Belgium.

# PRIVATE ALEXANDER RUSSELL

(242700)

## Cameronians 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

### Died 9 August 1918

**A**lexander Russell was born on 27 October 1890 at Craigneuk, Wishaw where his father was under manager at the Over Johnston Colliery. His parents were both born at New Stevenston, his father, John Russell c1854 and his mother Annie Coffrey c1855. They were married in 1873 at Holytown and in 1881 were living at Main Street, Holytown. From there they moved to the Victoria Pit Hamlet at Dalziel where John Russell was colliery under manager. The family then moved to Miller Pit Cottages, Bo'ness, West Lothian. By 1911 they were living at Fleming's Land, 5 Green Street, Bothwell. The couple later moved to Silverwells Place, 15 Hamilton Road, Bothwell where Annie Russell died in 1919 and husband John in 1936.

Alexander Russell was a coal miner and in 1912 at the Public Halls, Bothwell, he married 18 year old Susan Dobbins. They took up residence at Griqua Terrace, Bothwell but later moved to Murray Place, Bothwell. Alexander enlisted with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Cameronians. He fought at France and Flanders and was taken prisoner by the Germans. He died at the age of 28 of pneumonia at the Prisoner of War Hospital, Mainz, Hessen, Germany on the 9 August 1918 and is buried at the Niederzwehren Cemetery, Germany.

Alexander Russell had 2 sons.

1. **John Russell** was born in 1913 at Murray Place, Bothwell.
2. **Thomas Russell** was born in 1914 at Murray Place, Bothwell

Alexander Russell had 8 siblings.

1. **Rebecca Russell** was born c1877 at Holytown.
2. **Elizabeth Russell** was born c1878 at Craigneuk.
3. **Jane Russell** was born c1881 at Holytown.
4. **Janet Russell** was born c1883 at Holytown.
5. **John Russell** was born c1885 at Newton, Cambuslang.
6. **Joseph Russell** was born c1887 at Motherwell.
7. **Gavin Russell** was born c1889 at Maryhill, Glasgow.
8. **Alexander Russell**
9. **Annie Russell** was born 1893 at Bo'ness, West Lothian.

## Alexander Russell

Peaceful be thy rest, dear son,  
'Tis sweet to breathe thy name,  
In life we loved you very dear,  
In death we do the same.

Had his sister seen him at his last,  
Or watched his dying bed,  
Or heard the last sighs of his heart,  
Or Held his aching hand.

*(Inserted in the Hamilton Advertiser by his parents)*

'Tis only those who lost can tell,  
The pain of parting, not saying farewell.  
But Christ shall clasp the broken chain  
In Heaven, when we shall meet again.

*(Inserted in the Hamilton Advertiser by his wife)*

# PRIVATE ALEXANDER RUSSELL

(3353)

## Cameronians 6<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 18 August 1916**

Alexander Russell was born on the 31 April 1889 at Possilpark, Glasgow. His father, Angus Russell, was born c1851 at Ballieston, Lanarkshire and worked an engine keeper. Alexander's mother was Christina Wilson born c1852 at Airdrie. Angus and Christina were married in 1873 at Holytown. The couple set up home at Bell's Rows, Cambusnethan, where Angus looked after the winding engine at the local colliery. By 1891 the couple had moved to Cadder, Lanarkshire, with Angus looking after a brickworks engine. Another move by 1901 took them to Ramsay's Buildings, Hamilton. Angus Russell moved to work at Wemyss, Fife where he died in 1917. Alexander Russell's mother died in 1932 at Croftbank Crescent, Bothwell.

Before he enlisted in the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians, Alexander Russell was an oncost worker at Hamilton Palace Colliery but later was attached to the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Cameronians. He was killed in action, almost certainly by shellfire, on the 18 August 1916 in the support trenches of the Somme, near High Wood. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to those who died on the Somme.

Seventy years later, a Hawick man found a photograph of Alexander Russell on the bedside cabinet of an old lady his family had befriended. Apparently Alexander had met the lady when he was stationed in Hawick prior to being sent to France, and they fell in love. Alex had promised to marry her when the war was over and they wrote regularly to one another. Sadly Alexander was killed and they never had the chance to marry. The lady lived on into old age and never married. When she died the photo of Alexander was still at her bedside all these years after his death.

Alexander Russell had four siblings.

1. **Elizabeth Russell** was born c1875 at Newton. She was a domestic servant and in 1904 at the Manse, Bothwell, she married 30 year old Hamilton coal miner, David Dunn. Elizabeth Russell died in 1959 at Buckhaven Fife.
2. **Barbara Russell** was born c1876 at Cambusnethan and died there aged six.
3. **John Russell** was born c1877 at Cambusnethan. He was an engine keeper.
4. **Alexander Russell**
5. **Jessie Russell** was born c1892 at Gartcosh. She married Philip Clancy and died in 1970 at Leytonstone, England



*Alexander  
Russell*

## 2<sup>ND</sup> LIEUTENANT THOMAS WOOD RUTHERFORD

### The Yorkshire Regiment (The Green Howards)

Died 22 August 1915

Thomas Wood Rutherford was born in Surrey in 1884, the only son of Sir Robert and Lady Annie Rutherford (nee Wood) of Fairholme, The Millway, Reigate in Surrey. He was the grandson of William Wood, tailor and clothier, (1828-1905) and Ann Hewitt (1834-1879), of Forelaw House, Bothwell.

He was educated at Dulwich College where he excelled at athletics and on leaving school was apprenticed as an engineer with Richardson Westgarth at Hartlepool. From there he went to Glasgow University where he won his rugby Blue and then worked for John McNeil and Co of Govan and was supervising the building of a sugar factory for them in the Phillipines when war broke out. He returned home immediately and in September of 1914 joined a Public Schools and University battalion at Epsom and was then commissioned into the 11th Battalion Yorkshire Regiment in 1914.

The following year he joined the 6th battalion at Witley Camp in Surrey in June of 1915 and on Saturday July 3rd sailed with the battalion from Liverpool bound for Gallipoli. On July 10th the battalion landed at Mudros Bay on the island of Lemnos and ten days



Thomas Wood Rutherford



*Forelaw House, Bothwell. Home of Thomas Rutherford's grandparents.*

later moved to Imbros for training and acclimatisation. On August 6th 1915 an officers conference was called and plans finalised for the landing on Gallipoli the following day. In the darkness of the early hours of August 7th the battalion were towed ashore in lighters to land at Suvla Bay close to the Salt Lake.

2nd Lt Rutherford saw action during the capture of the hill of Lala Baba during their first day on Gallipoli. On August 22nd an attack was planned on the Turkish held position of Scimitar Hill. The attack went in at 3.30pm against the Turkish line some eight hundred

yards away at the base of the hill. 2nd Lt Thomas Wood Rutherford was killed in this action on August 22nd 1915 at the age of 31.

A senior officer later wrote of Thomas Rutherford

*“His comrades of every rank in the Yorkshire Regiment will have received as I did with very deep regret the news of his death. Tom Rutherford became one of the Battalion’s institutions. A platoon commander, he soon obtained the confidence and affection of his men. His never failing good spirits earned him many friends and he was a great favourite among the officers and men. His geniality and musical talents did much to consolidate the camaraderie which became characteristic of the mess and his musical sketches were a feature of every guest night”*

He has no known grave, his body lost to the battlefield. He has a memorial inscription on the Helles Memorial situated on the Gallipoli peninsula. Thomas Wood Rutherford also has a memorial inscription on his grandparent’s headstone in Bothwell Parish Kirkyard.



*Gravestone in Bothwell Parish  
Kirkyard in memory of William  
Wood and Ann Hewitt and their  
grandson  
Thomas Wood Rutherford.*

# LANCE SERGEANT DAVID SEMPLE

(15169)

## Border Regiment 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 5 July 1916**

David Semple was born on 26 October 1884 at Galston, Ayrshire. His father John Semple was born in 1860 at Cambuslang. The following year he moved with his parents to Dalsersf and ten years later was living in Hamilton. John then moved to Galston, Ayrshire where he worked as a coal miner. It was there that he married Annie Lawson in 1883. Annie was from Newmilns, Ayrshire, born in 1866. John and Annie then moved to Crosscanonby, Cumbria and from there to Bothwellhaugh. It was there that Annie died in 1913 followed by John in 1926. They had five children.

David followed his father down the mines and the 1901 census records him as a 16 year old, working as a miner and living with his parents at Roman Place, Bothwellhaugh.

At the outbreak of war David Semple travelled to Workington, Cumbria, where he enlisted with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Border Regiment. After training at Salisbury Plain, on 26 September 1915 the Battalion left Aldershot in two troop trains on bound for Folkstone and Boulogne. By the beginning of October they were in the trenches of Ploegsteert, near Ypres. It was here that the men were involved in their first major action against the Germans. The German artillery was particularly heavy at sporadic intervals and general sniper fire was also active. Men were lost not only because of the fighting but also because of the continual work that was needed to maintain the dire state of the trenches in this area. The parapets needed constant attention and the draining of the trenches seemed to be an ongoing problem, that did not make life any easier especially with sniper fire so active.

At the end of January 1916 they moved behind the lines to Strazeele where they engaged in training, route marches and Brigade sports. Around this time David Semple was promoted to Lance Sergeant.

By the middle of May the men found themselves occupying the front line trenches yet again and providing working parties at Neuville St. Vaast, a town roughly 4 miles north of Arras. Relieved from their front line duties the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion spent the month of June in training and preparation for the Battle of the Somme.

The morning of the 1 July 1916 was beautiful and sunny. The 8<sup>th</sup> Border Regiment received orders to take up positions in the front-line trenches south of Thiepval in readiness for their attack. Throughout the following day the trenches were heavily shelled by the Germans. The next day the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion were ordered over the top in a frontal assault on the German lines. The Battalion War Dairy describes the action on



that day and also gives an indication of the communication problems in the heat of battle.

“The Battalion advanced in 4 waves. D & A Coys from our front line B & C Coys from our support line.

Each company had two platoons in line crossing on a front of some 150 or 200 yards followed by the other two platoons. As the leading companies left the front trench their place was taken by the two leading Platoons of each supporting Company. The 1st two waves went out punctually at the appointed hour, the other two Coys were held in the front line till it was seen how things were going and till reinforcements were requested. A message was sent back asking for reinforcements and bombs and these were sent up immediately. The frontage occupied in the German line was about 180 yards which had been much damaged by our shell-fire and there was very little cover. The right flank giving way was the cause of the Battalion falling back and also the unfortunate word "retire" undoubtedly passed along from the right. Orders and messages referring to the operations took a very long time to reach Battalion HQ owing to the dark and the orderlies being near to the trenches. There was no telephone to Battalion HQ and all messages were by runners. This delayed instructions to companies and did not give them time to arrange bombing parties, etc. for clearing the German communication trenches. The German rifle & machine gun fire was not particularly severe and had communication with the right and left been kept up throughout the attack would have been successful.

During the operation we suffered the following casualties: 4 officers killed and 10 wounded, 430 casualties other ranks.”

Divisional records also described the attack:

“The four companies of the Cheshire, the 8th Borders and the 2nd South Lancs., suffered very heavy casualties, were met by heavy flanking machine-gun fire and never reached their objectives. In the centre the Borders were more successful, but were unable, owing to pressure on their flanks, to maintain themselves in the German front line for more than one and a half hours.”

Two days later on 5 July 1916 Lance Sergeant David Semple died, presumably of wounds received during the attack and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial at the Somme. For his courage he had been mentioned in dispatches.

David Semple had 4 siblings, Christina and John dying in infancy.

1. James Semple was born in 1887 at Cockermouth, Cumbria. He married Jane Semple in 1910 at Cumbria and worked as a plater. They had a daughter, Annie (1910-2000) and son, Thomas (1912-1977) both born in Cumbria. From there the family moved to Bothwellhaugh where they had another two children, both dying in infancy. The family emigrated to the USA in 1925 and James died in Florida in 1965.
2. Jeanie Semple was born in 1889 in Cockermouth, Cumbria, married there in 1910 and died in 1957 in Hawarden, Wales.

# MAJOR DAVID PERSTON SHAW

## Cameronians 6th Battalion

**Died 15 June 1915**

**D**avid Shaw was born at Glasgow in 1876 to Gavin Shaw J.P. (1841-1932) and Margaret Perston (1845-1913) of Earlston, Uddingston. Gavin Shaw was a Glasgow Tea and Wine Merchant and he and Margaret had nine of a family.

David Perston Shaw was born on the 18 July 1876 at Kelvin Glasgow. The 1881 census records him living with his parents and siblings at Black Pow, Earlston Villa, Uddingston. By 1901 he is still living there and is described as a clerk in the census. He served for four years as a private with the Volunteer Force and on the 17 January 1900 he was gazetted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Volunteer Battalion of the Cameronians. Two years later he married Helen Brown Graham, the daughter of a well known Glasgow merchant, in 1902 at Uddingston. They had two children. In 1912 David Shaw was promoted to Major.



*David Shaw*

At the outbreak of war Major Shaw was sent to France with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Cameronians. Following the wounding of the Colonel of the Battalion, Major Shaw was given command and on the 15 June 1915 led an attack on the German lines near Festubert. He was first wounded on the chin but still went on encouraging his men till he was shot through the heart. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31.

Major Shaw is commemorated at the Le Touret Memorial, France and on the family gravestone at Bothwell Kirkyard. There is also a plaque to him in Bothwell Parish Church.



*To the Glory of God  
And in Memory of  
David Preston Shaw  
Major  
6<sup>th</sup> Bn The Cameronians  
(Scottish Rifles)  
Second son of Gavin Shaw  
JP  
Earlston, Uddingston  
Who was killed in action at  
Festubert, France on 15<sup>th</sup>  
June 1915 in the Great War*

*Memorial in Bothwell Parish Church*

David Shaw had 8 siblings.

1. **Isabella Shaw** was born in 1898 at Kylepark. In 1898 at Uddingston she married Walter Wood, a colliery agent. Isabella and Walter had three daughters.
2. **Mary Shaw** was born in 1868 at Kylepark and died there in 1874.
3. **John Shaw** was born in 1871 at Kylepark and died there in 1901.
4. **Margaret Shaw** was born in 1872 at Glasgow.
5. **Annie Shaw** was born at Kylepark in 1875.
6. **David Perston Shaw** and Helen Graham had a son, Gavin 'Guy' Shaw, born in 1907 at Merchiston 21 Kylepark, Uddingston. He was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Welsh Regiment in WW2 and was awarded the OBE. Guy Shaw was killed in defence of the Greek island of Leros on 16 November 1943 and he is commemorated on the Athens War Memorial.  
David and Helen Shaw also had a daughter Anne G. Shaw, born 1904 at Kylepark, Uddingston.
7. **Jane Shaw** was born at Kylepark in 1879 and graduated M.B. from Glasgow University in 1905. Jane later became a Medical Officer of Health and died in Glasgow in 1966.
8. **Marion Shaw** was born in 1881 at Kylepark.
9. **Gavin Shaw** was born in 1883 at Kylepark. In 1918 at Uddingston he married Christian Cormack. Gavin was a whisky distiller and blender and died in 1953.



Guy Shaw

After the Great War, David Shaw's widow, Mrs Helen Brown Shaw stood unsuccessfully in the 1924 general election for the Bothwell constituency as the Unionist candidate. After two more unsuccessful attempts she was elected Member of Parliament in the Conservative landslide victory of 1931. She held the seat until 1935, when it was regained by Labour. Helen Shaw was awarded an MBE and died in 1964.



**Gravestone in Bothwell Kirkyard**

*Erected by Gavin Shaw, Merchant Glasgow  
and Margaret Perston, his wife*

*In memory of their beloved daughter Mary Milne  
who died at Uddingston 1<sup>st</sup> May 1894 aged 5 years*

*Also John their eldest son*

*who died 13<sup>th</sup> June 1901 aged 30 years*

*Also Margaret Perston beloved wife of*

*Gavin Shaw Earlston Uddingston*

*died 14<sup>th</sup> April 1913 aged 68 years*

*Also in memory of David Preston Shaw, Major*

*6<sup>th</sup> Cameronians 'Scottish Rifles' killed in action at*

*Festubert, France 15<sup>th</sup> June 1915 aged 38 years*

*Also Gavin Shaw JP who died at Earlston Uddingston*

*16<sup>th</sup> February 1932 in his 91<sup>st</sup> year*

# PRIVATE DAVID SIM

(2024)

## Cameronians 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 15 June 1915**

**D**avid Sim was born c1892 at Blackbraes in the Muiravonside district of Stirlingshire. His father Peter Sime was born c1858 at Cupar, Fife. He was a miner and in 1881 married Margaret Bell a 20 year old from Glasgow. For the first six years the family lived in the Hamilton area before moving to Stirlingshire. About 1899 they moved to Bothwell. The 1901 census 1901 shows them staying at 31 Clyde Place, Bothwell but 10 years later had moved to Scott's Land, Main Street, Bothwell. Peter and Margaret had 9 of a family.

The 1911 census records David working as a hewer in the coal pit, as were his father and brothers.

Private David Sim enlisted with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians. He was killed in action on the 15 June 1915 in an attack on the German lines near Festubert, France. A description of the Battalion's time in France and their assault on the German lines on that fateful day in June 1915 when eight men from Bothwell died is given on page 31.

Private Sim was 23 when he died and he is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, France.

After his death the following appeared in his death notice in the Hamilton Advertiser.



*David Sim*

We will not forget thee – we loved thee too dearly,  
For thy memory to fade from our lives like a dream,  
But the lips need not speak when the heart mourns sincerely,  
And the thoughts often dwell where they seldom are seen.

We miss his dear familiar form,  
We miss his smiling face,  
And there is none on all the earth,  
Can fill our dear one's place.

David Sim had 8 siblings.

1. **Peter Sim** was born c1882 in Hamilton. He was a coal miner and in 1904 at Hamilton he married Janet Hill.
2. **John Sim** was born c1884 at Blantyre. He was a coal miner and in 1906 married Elizabeth Pugh at Bothwell. By 1911 he was living at Castle Square, Bothwell with his wife and two sons. John Sim enlisted with the Black Watch and was killed in action on the 29 April 1916.
3. **Agnes Sim** was born c1887 at Hamilton
4. **Margaret Sim** was born c1889 at Tillicoultry. She was a housekeeper and she married Hugh Smillie, a coal miner, in 1914, at the Manse Bothwell.
5. **Janet Sim** was born c1891 at Muiravonside. She married William Campbell, a colliery clerk from Uddingston, in 1919 at the Manse, Bothwell.
6. **David Sim**
7. **James Sim** was born c1894 at Muiravonside. He was a steel worker who had married Annie McCord and he died in 1948 at his home at Main Street, Bothwell.
8. **Catherine Sim** was born c1897 at Muiravonside.
9. **Thomas Sim** was born c1889 at Muiravonside.

## PRIVATE JOHN SIM

(S/11262)

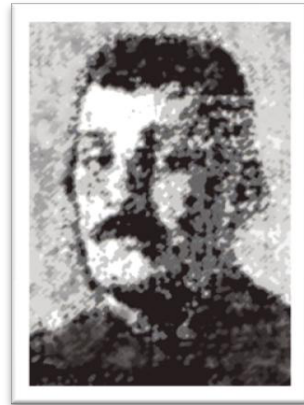
### Black Watch 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 29 April 1916**

John Sim was born c1884 at Blantyre. His father Peter Sim was born c1858 at Cupar, Fife. He was a miner and in 1881 married Margaret Bell a 20 year old from Glasgow. For the first six years the family lived in the Hamilton area before moving to Stirlingshire. About 1899 they moved to Bothwell. The 1901 census shows them staying at 31 Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh but 10 years later had moved to Scott's Land, Main Street, Bothwell. Peter and Margaret had 9 of a family.

John Sim was a coal miner and in 1906 married Elizabeth Pugh at Bothwell. By 1911 he was living at Castle Square, Bothwell with his wife and two sons. They later moved to Brandon Place, Bothwellhaugh.

John Sim enlisted at Hamilton with the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Black Watch. Formed at Perth on 13 September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Second Army the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion came under command of 44th Brigade in 15th (Scottish) Division. The Battalion then moved to Aldershot and other locations in England for training before embarking for Boulogne in July 1915. In September came the initially successful but horrifically costly attacks at Loos in which the 9th Battalion suffered over 700 casualties.



*John Sim*

Just before dawn on 27 April, part of the 15th Division including the 9<sup>th</sup> Black Watch were subjected to a German gas attack, near the German-held village of Hulluch, a mile north of Loos. The Germans began preparing for the attack during April and placed about 7,400 gas cylinders along a 2 mile front from Cité St. Elie to Loos. The 27<sup>th</sup> April was fine and warm, with a wind blowing towards the British lines. At 5.00am, German artillery began a high-explosive, shrapnel and trench-mortar bombardment. At 5:10 a.m. the German attack began with the release of smoke, followed by a mixture of chlorine and phosgene gas. Three German mines were exploded at 5:55 a.m., another artillery bombardment was fired and a second gas cloud was discharged. This caused many casualties to a Black Watch company, whose commander had ordered them to remove their gas helmets after the first gas cloud, under the impression that the helmets were useless after one exposure to gas. Several German raiding parties of about 20 men each then followed the gas and three managed to get into the British trenches. After fierce hand-to-hand fighting the raiding parties withdrew. On 29 April there was another

German artillery bombardment of reserve and communication trenches of the 16<sup>th</sup> Division. Total British casualties 27–29 April were 1,980, of whom 1,260 were gas casualties, 338 being killed.

Private John Sim was killed on the 29 April 1916 and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

John Sim had 8 siblings.

1. **Peter Sim** was born c1882 in Hamilton. He was a coal miner and in 1904 at Hamilton he married Janet Hill.
2. **John Sim**.
3. **Agnes Sim** was born c1887 at Hamilton
4. **Margaret Sim** was born c1889 at Tillicoultry. She was a housekeeper and she married Hugh Smillie, a coal miner, in 1914, at the Manse Bothwell.
5. **Janet Sim** was born c1891 at Muiravonside. She married William Campbell, a colliery clerk from Uddingston, in 1919 at the Manse, Bothwell.
6. **David Sim** was born c1892 at Blackbraes, Muiravonside. He enlisted with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Cameronians and was killed in action on the 15 June 1915 in an attack on the German lines near Festubert, France.
7. **James Sim** was born c1894 at Muiravonside. He was a steel worker who had married Annie McCord and he died in 1948 at his home at Main Street, Bothwell.
8. **Catherine Sim** was born c1897 at Muiravonside.
9. **Thomas Sim** was born c1889 at Muiravonside.

# PRIVATE JOHN SIMPSON

(2002)

## Highland Light Infantry 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion (4<sup>th</sup> Glasgow)

**Died 20 May 1918**

John Simpson was born in August 1888 at Hamilton Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh. His parents who married in 1880, moved to West Calder around 1881 where his father was a limestone miner. Ten years later they moved to Palace Row, Bothwellhaugh with their six children. John's father worked here as a colliery underground fireman and, after a promotion, as an assistant oversman. Three more children were born to the couple and the family moved to Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh. John's father was latterly a hall caretaker/librarian and died in 1916 at Store Place, Bothwellhaugh followed by his wife in 1925.

John Simpson followed in his father's footsteps and worked as a coal miner at Bothwellhaugh. In 1912 he married Euphemia Nimmo and they lived at Store Place, Bothwellhaugh.

At the outbreak of war, John Simpson enlisted with the Highland Light Infantry and fought in France at the Western Front.



*Hamilton Palace Colliery "The Pallis" Bothwellhaugh*

Private John Simpson died of gunshot wounds on the 20 May 1918 at the Southern General Hospital, Birmingham. He is buried at Bothwellpark Cemetery.

John Simpson had 8 siblings.

1. **William Simpson** was born c1881 at Fauldhouse, Bathgate.
2. **Thomas Simpson** was born c1882 at Fauldhouse, Bathgate. Thomas enlisted as a private in the Black Watch and was killed in action on 21 April 1916.
3. **James Simpson** was born c1885 at Bothwellhaugh.
4. **Archibald Simpson** was born c1887 at Bothwellhaugh.
5. **John Simpson**
6. **Annie Simpson** was born in 1890 at Bothwellhaugh.
7. **Leonard Simpson** was born c1893 at Bothwellhaugh.
8. **Jane Simpson** was born c1897 at Bothwellhaugh.
9. **Robert Simpson** was born c1899 at Bothwellhaugh.



*John Simpson's gravestone in  
Bothwellpark Cemetery.  
The stone was erected by the  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission*

## **PRIVATE JAMES GEORGE SIMPSON**

(41845)

### **12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Scots Formerly with the Cameronians**

**Died 19 August 1918**

**J**ames George Simpson was born on 30 May 1897 at Milnathort, Kinross-shire. His father, Robert Simpson, was born 1875 at Milnathort and was a stonemason. His mother was Sarah Crawford born c1874 at Crarae, Argyllshire but later moved to Glasgow with her parents. She was a domestic servant and married Robert Simpson in 1896 at Glasgow. In 1900 the family had moved to Auchtermuchty, Fife where daughter Mary Margaret was born. The following year Robert Simpson died aged 26. His widow Sarah and her two young children then moved back to Govanhill, Glasgow, to live with Sarah's parents. In 1904 at Thornliebank, Renfrewshire, Sarah married John Simpson, a 39 year old railway signalman and they had a second son John Simpson, born in 1912 at Cathcart, Glasgow.

By 1915 the family had moved to Maxwell Place, Bothwell and 18 year old James Simpson was employed as a pithead weigher employed by Baird & Co at the Castle Colliery. A year after the war started he enlisted in December 1915 and was assigned to the Army Reserve. In May 1917 he was mobilised and posted to the Cameronians. Four months later he was sent to France to join the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, part of the British Expeditionary Force. No sooner had he arrived in France when he was transferred to the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Scots. However 3 months later he was in hospital in Edinburgh with trench fever. After 35 days in hospital he was discharged in January 1918 and sent to Catterick Camp in Yorkshire. At the end of June 1918 he was sent back to France to join the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Scots. On his return to the Western Front James Simpson saw action at Outtersteene. This hamlet was captured by the British in October 1914 but was recaptured by the Germans in April 1918. It was retaken with the ridge beyond it, on 18 and 19 August 1918. During the assault on the second day Private James Simpson was killed in action. He is buried at Le Peuplier Military Cemetery, Caestre, France.

James's mother Sarah died in 1962 at the Saltmarket, Glasgow. His sister Margaret Mary was a grocer's clerkess living at Fallside Road, Bothwell when, in 1921 she married 28 year old, John MacLauchlan. He was a railway guard also living at Fallside Road, Bothwell.

James's brother John married Agnes Watson in 1940 at Dalziel and they lived in Motherwell.

Army Form B. 104-126

All further letters on this subject should be addressed to:  
 Officer in Charge  
 Station Hamilton  
 Date 21/1/1919  
 To Private J Simpson  
 From Officer in Charge  
**OFFICER IN CHARGE**  
**No. 2 DISTRICT**

Sir or Madam,

I am directed to forward the undermentioned articles of private property of the late No. 41845 Rank Pte Name Private J Simpson Regiment 12<sup>th</sup> R Scots and would ask that you will kindly acknowledge receipt of the same on the form enclosed.

These are the only articles at present forthcoming, but should any further articles be received at any time they will be duly forwarded.

Yours faithfully,  
*(Signature)*  
**OFFICER IN CHARGE**  
**No. 2 DISTRICT**

Letter received by Private J Simpson's mother enclosing his personal possessions

Station *Hamilton*  
 Date *21/1/1919*  
 From  
 Officer I/C Records  
 No 2 District

To *Mrs S Simpson*  
*2 Maxwell Place*  
*Fallside Road*  
*Bothwell*

Sir or Madam,  
 I am directed to forward the undermentioned articles of private property of the late No *41845* Rank *Pte* Regiment *12<sup>th</sup> R Scots* And would ask that you will kindly acknowledge receipt of the same on the form overleaf:-  
*Letters, Photos, Religious Books,*  
*Mirror in Case, Cards,*  
*Cig Case*

These are the only articles at present forthcoming but should any further articles be received at any time they will be duly forwarded.

Yours faithfully,

## PRIVATE THOMAS SIMPSON

(S/11351)

### Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

**Died 21 April 1916**

Thomas Simpson was born 17 April 1882 at West Calder, West Lothian. His father, John Simpson, was born c1853 in England. His mother was Margaret Watson, born c1857 in Bathgate. Thomas's parents married in 1880 at Edinburgh and by 1881 the couple were living at West Calder where John was a limestone miner. Ten years later John with Margaret and their six children had moved to the Palace Rows, Bothwellhaugh where John was working as an underground colliery fireman. By 1891 John had been promoted to an assistant oversman and with three additional children the family had moved to Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh. John was latterly a hall caretaker/librarian and died in 1916 at Store Place, Bothwellhaugh followed by his wife, Margaret in 1925.

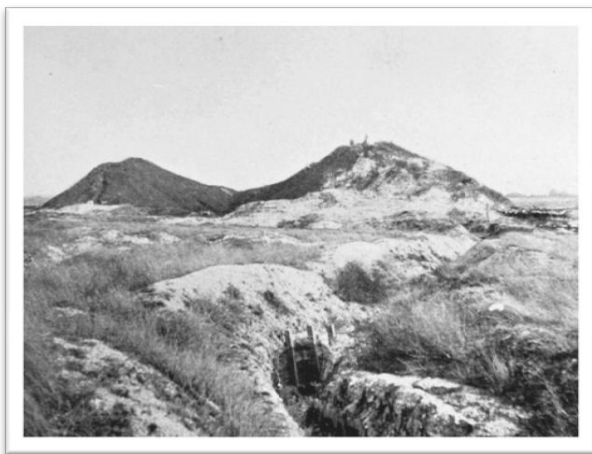
In 1902 at Hamilton Palace Colliery Hall, Thomas Simpson married Lizzie McCammont a 19 year old whose family came from Dalry, Ayrshire to Bothwellhaugh. Thomas and Lizzie settled in Bothwellhaugh, for their first year of married life at Calder Place where their eldest son was born, and then at Roman Place where the rest of the family were born.

Thomas and Lizzie had seven of a family.

1. **John Simpson** was born in 1903 at Bothwellhaugh.
2. **Elizabeth Simpson** was born in 1904 at Bothwellhaugh
3. **Margaret Simpson** was born in 1906 at Bothwellhaugh
4. **Jessie Simpson** was born in 1909 at Bothwellhaugh
5. **Annie Simpson** was born in 1911 at Bothwellhaugh
6. **Jeanie Simpson** was born in 1914 at Bothwellhaugh
7. **Mary Simpson** was born in 1915 at Bothwellhaugh

It was around 1914/15 that Thomas Simpson enlisted with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Black Watch. From the start of the war the Battalion saw active service on the Western Front. In September 1915 Private Simpson and his comrades in the Black Watch fought at the Battle of Loos. The following spring saw





*The double crassier at Loos*

*“The Twa Bings”*

them alternating between the front line and support trenches at Les Brebis and Maroc in the Loos sector. The main feature of this sector was the double crassier known to the Scottish soldiers as the “Twa Bings.” These were twin spoilheaps that dominated this flat mining area for miles around. The Black Watch trenches at the end of the crassiers always received a good deal of attention from the enemy’s artillery but the good dug-outs that existed there prevented heavy casualties. The trenches running up to the west end were continually blown in by shell fire, and in spite of being observed, parties of men from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion would zig-zag over the open to the top. Indeed to an observer the bings often seemed like great ant heaps, with khaki-coloured ants running up and down, occasionally being dispersed by a puff of smoke, burrowing in for a while and then running off again. Although at this time the Loos Sector was considered to be one of the ‘quieter’ sectors, there were still fatalities and woundings occurred almost on a daily basis due to the artillery shelling and sniping. The 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion war diary for the 21 April 1916 states tersely “*Quiet day. Fine morning, rain in afternoon. Casualties: other ranks 2 killed, 5 wounded.*” Private Thomas Simpson was one of 2 ‘other ranks’ killed that day. He was aged 28 and he is buried at St Patrick’s Cemetery, Loos.

Thomas Simpson had 8 siblings.

1. **William Simpson** was born c1881 at Fauldhouse, Bathgate. He was a coal miner and in 1905 at Bothwellhaugh married Maggie Baxter, a 24 year old domestic servant. William and Maggie lived in Bellshill.
2. **Thomas Simpson**
3. **James Simpson** was born c1885 at Bothwellhaugh and by the age of 16 was a pony driver in the Palace Colliery and living with his parents at Bothwellhaugh.
4. **Archibald Simpson** was born c1887 at Bothwellhaugh and by the age of 14 was a coal miner in the Palace Colliery and living with his parents at Bothwellhaugh. In 1917 at the Manse Bothwell, he married 22 year old Annie McMeekin, a 22 year old munitions worker from Bothwellhaugh.
5. **John Simpson** was born in 1888 at Bothwellhaugh. He enlisted with the Highland Light Infantry and was killed in action on 20 May 1918.

6. **Annie Simpson** was born in 1890 at Bothwellhaugh. In the 1911 census she was recorded as a dressmaker living with her parents but later that year, at the Public Hall, Bothwellhaugh, she married James McCallum, a 30 year old coal miner.
7. **Leonard Simpson** was born c1893 at Bothwellhaugh. The 1911 census records him as a 18 year old coal miner living with his parents. In 1923 at Uddingston, he married Mary Little, nee Hamilton, a 28 year old widow from Bothwellhaugh.
8. **Jane Simpson** was born c1897 at Bothwellhaugh. In 1911, at the age of 14, she was a dressmaker living with her parents. She later worked as a shop assistant and in 1922 at Bothwellhaugh she married William Faragher, a hardware merchant from Bothwell Chambers.
9. **Robert Simpson** was born c1899 at Bothwellhaugh In 1911 he was living with his parents.



*St Patrick's Cemetery, Loos*

## LANCE CORPORAL HUGH SNEDDON

(139271)

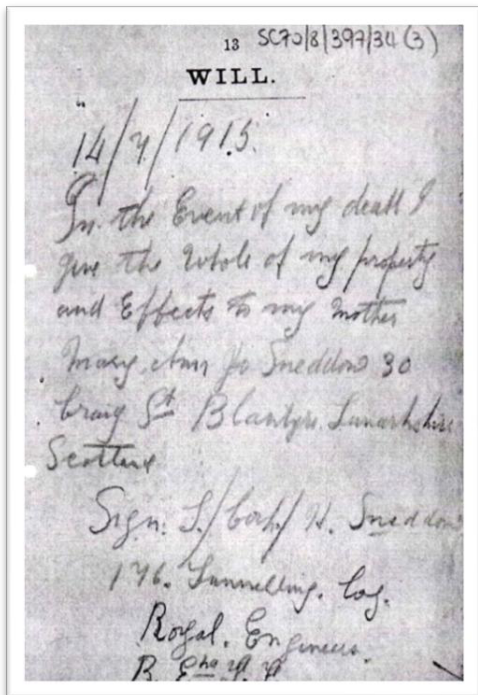
### 176<sup>th</sup>/254<sup>th</sup> Tunnelling Company, Royal Engineers Formerly Highland Light Infantry

**Died 20 August 1916**

**H**ugh Sneddon was born on the 5 March 1882 at Church Street, Kilsyth, Stirlingshire. His father Peter Sneddon was born c1856 at Monklands and worked as a coal miner. Hugh's mother was Mary Ann Johnston, born c1855 at Kilsyth and she and Peter Sneddon married there in 1877. By 1881 the couple were living at West Longrigg, north-east of Airdrie where Peter worked in the local colliery. Ten years later they had moved to Baird's Square, Holytown, now with eight children. Peter Sneddon died in 1896. By 1901 his widow and family moved to Jubilee Square, Fallside Road, Bothwell, where the three eldest boys worked as miners in the Castle Colliery. Later the family moved to Fleming's Land, Green Street, Bothwell and then to Craig Street, Blantyre. It was there that Mary Ann died in 1918.

Hugh Sneddon was a coal miner like his father and brothers and following the outbreak of war he enlisted as a private with the Highland Light Infantry. The war on the Western Front bogged down into siege conditions by November 1914. Both sides faced the need to break through the enemy's defensive entrenched positions. It was not long before both sides remembered the ancient tactic of undermining enemy positions. In February 1915 the British formed eight Tunnelling Companies, made up of

men drawn from the ranks, mixed with drafts of men specially recruited for this kind of work. Hugh Sneddon, a miner in civilian life, was ideally suited to this work and was transferred to the 176<sup>th</sup> Tunnelling Company of the Royal Engineers as a Lance Corporal. This Company was formed at Lestrem, France in April 1915, and after a spell at the Neuve Chapelle area was moved to Givenchy in June 1915.



WILL  
14/7/1915  
In the event of my death I give the whole of my property and effects to my mother Mary Ann Sneddon, 30 Craig St, Blantyre, Lanarkshire, Scotland.  
Sign: L/Corp H Sneddon  
176 Tunnelling Coy  
Royal Engineers

Around this time he was transferred to the 254<sup>th</sup> Tunnelling Company as a sapper. He was killed in action on 20 August 1916 and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France, for men with no known grave.

The hardships faced by Sapper Sneddon are illustrated by the following two accounts relating to his comrades in the 254<sup>th</sup> Company.

On the morning of 22 June 1916, Sapper William Hackett and four other miners of 254<sup>th</sup> Tunnelling Company were driving the Shaftsbury Avenue mine towards the enemy lines below the cratered surface of the Givenchy sector. The tunnel, 4ft 3ins high by 2ft 6ins wide was supported by timber props. They were about one-quarter of the way towards the German trenches at a depth of about 35 feet when a heavy German countermine was detonated, causing 25 feet of the tunnel to collapse, cutting the five men off from the shaft and safety. On the surface, a rescue party was immediately organised. After two days of digging an escape hole was formed through the fallen earth and broken timbers, and the tunnellers contacted. William Hackett helped three men to safety. However, with sanctuary beckoning, and although himself apparently unhurt, he refused to leave until the fourth man, who was seriously injured, was rescued. The rescuers worked on, but were frequently immobilised by German shelling and mortaring of the shaft-head. Conditions above and below ground became more treacherous by the minute. Eventually the gallery collapsed again, entombing the two men. Both still lie beneath the fields of Givenchy today. For his selfless gallantry Sapper Hackett was awarded posthumously the Victoria Cross.

Hugh Sneddon had 10 siblings.

1. **Charles Sneddon** was born c1876 at Kilsyth.
2. **John Sneddon** was born c1880 at Kilsyth.
3. **Hugh Sneddon.**
4. **Elizabeth Sneddon**, Hugh's twin sister, was born 1882 at Kilsyth.
5. **Maggie Sneddon** was born c1884 at Kilsyth.
6. **Peter Sneddon** was born c1887 at Kilsyth.
7. **James Sneddon** was born in 1888 at Wattston, Monklands. He was in the HLI and died on 4 September 1916 at the Somme, two weeks before his brother Hugh.
8. **Alexander Sneddon** was born c1890 at Bothwell.
9. **George Sneddon** was born in 1891 at Bairds Square, Bothwell
10. **Andrew Sneddon** was born c1893 at Bothwell.
11. **Isabella Sneddon** was born c1897 at Bothwell.

## PRIVATE JAMES SNEDDON

(8131)

### Highland Light Infantry 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 4 September 1916**

James Sneddon was born on the 24 February 1888 at Wattston, New Monklands Parish. His father Peter Sneddon was born c1856 at Monklands and worked as a coal miner. James's mother was Mary Ann Johnston, born c1855 at Kilsyth and she and Peter Sneddon married there in 1877. By 1881 the couple were living at West Longrigg, north-east of Airdrie where Peter worked in the local colliery. Ten years later they had moved to Baird's Square, Holytown, now with eight children. Peter Sneddon died in 1896. By 1901 his widow and family moved to Jubilee Square, Fallside Road, Bothwell, where the three eldest boys worked as miners in the Castle Colliery. Later the family moved to Fleming's Land, Green Street, Bothwell and then to Craig Street, Blantyre. It was there that Mary Ann died in 1918.

James Sneddon enlisted at Hamilton with the Highland Light Infantry. Both the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalions were separately formed at Hamilton in August 1914. The two Battalions then amalgamated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 1915 to form the 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> H.L.I. and joined 46<sup>th</sup> Brigade in 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. They were in action in the Battle of Loos in 1915. In spring 1916, they were involved in the German gas attacks near Hulluch and the defence of the Kink position. There the Germans used a box artillery barrage that effectively isolated a section of the front line so that neighbouring units couldn't intervene. The 15<sup>th</sup> Division then saw action at the Battle of the Somme that took place from 1 July to the 18 November 1916. Private James Sneddon was killed in action on the 4 September 1916 in the reserve line at High Wood, almost certainly by shellfire. He was buried in the Serre Road Cemetery No. 2.

James Sneddon had nine siblings.

1. **Charles Sneddon** was born c1876 at Kilsyth.
2. **John Sneddon** was born c1880 at Kilsyth.
3. **Hugh Sneddon** was born in 1882 at Kilsyth. Hugh was a Sapper in the Royal Engineers and was killed on the 20 August 1916 at Loos, two weeks before his brother James.
4. **Elizabeth Sneddon** was born in 1882 at Kilsyth.
5. **Maggie Sneddon** was born c1884 at Kilsyth.
6. **Peter Sneddon** was born c1887 at Kilsyth.
7. **James Sneddon**
8. **Alexander Sneddon** was born c 1890 at Bothwell.
9. **Andrew Sneddon** was born in 1892 at Baird's Square, Bothwell.
10. **Isabella Sneddon** was born in 1896 at Baird's Square, Bothwell.

## CORPORAL PETER SNEDDON

(106005)

### Machine Gun Corps Formerly Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

**Died 14 October 1918**

**P**eter Sneddon was born on 18 April 1898 at Townhead Street, Hamilton. His father Peter Sneddon Snr, was born c1865 at Dalsarf. He had various jobs, a weight checker, a coal miner, a mason's labourer and a golf course labourer. In 1890 at Hamilton he married Jeanie Madgwick, a nineteen year old Hamilton girl. Initially they lived with Peter's parents at Low Patrick Street, Hamilton but when a young family arrived they were able to get a place of their own at Townhead Street, Hamilton. From there they moved to Green Street, Bothwell. Peter and Jeanie had six of a family.

Peter Sneddon enlisted at Hamilton with the Cameron Highlanders but was later transferred to the Machine Gun Corps. He was promoted to Corporal but unfortunately his service record does not reveal any further details of his unit.

Corporal Peter Sneddon died on 14 October 1918 and is buried at Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium. The village of Dadizeele (now Dadizele) was in German hands for much of the First World War until taken by the 9th (Scottish) Division, on 29 September 1918. Severe fighting followed at Hill 41, a little south of the village. One can only assume that Corporal Sneddon was killed during this action and the final advance at Flanders.

Peter Sneddon had 7 siblings.

1. **Jeanie Sneddon** was born c1892 in Hamilton. In 1919 she married John Cassells, a house painter, at Bothwell. At that time Jeanie was a domestic servant living at Green Street, Bothwell.
2. **John Sneddon** was born c1894 in Hamilton
3. **Thomas Sneddon** was born in 1896 at Townhead Street, Hamilton and fought in WW1 with the King's Own Scottish Borderers. He was killed in action on 23 June 1918 at Flanders.
4. **Peter Sneddon**
5. **Robert Sneddon** was born in 1901 at Hamilton. He was a colliery lampman and in 1923 at Glasgow, he married Barbara Gough, a domestic servant working at Milngavie. In 1932 Barbara died of pneumonia at Dunfermline. In 1958 Robert, a uniformed messenger living at Baillie Drive, Bothwell married Mary Walker. Robert died in 1975 at Wardlaw Avenue, Rutherglen.

Robert and Barbara's son Peter Sneddon was born in 1927 at Hamilton. In 1949 at the Baptist Church, Uddingston, Peter married his cousin Jeanie (Jean) Madgwick Harrison. At that time Peter was a boot and shoe repairman living at 35 Main Street, Bothwell. Peter was the informant of his father's death in 1975 and at that time was living at Hume Drive, Bothwell. Peter and Jean had three of a family, Brian, Heather and Pamela.

6. **Margaret Sneddon** was born in 1903 at Townhead, Hamilton and died there the following year.
7. **Mary Sneddon** was born in 1905 at Hamilton. In 1927 at 5 Green Street, Bothwell she married John Harrison, a motor driver. Mary and John had a daughter, Jeanie (Jean) Madgwick Harrison, born in 1929 at Green Street, Bothwell. In 1947 Jean married her cousin Peter Sneddon, a boot and shoe repairer, at Uddingston. At that time Jean was a drapery saleswoman living at Green Street, Bothwell. She and Peter had three of a family as above. Jean Sneddon, niece of Peter Sneddon, still lives in Bothwell.
8. **Catherine Sneddon** was born in 1908 at Low Waters, Hamilton.

Peter Sneddon's obituary in 1918 in the Hamilton Advertise included the following:

When last we saw his smiling face,  
He looked so strong and brave,  
We little thought how soon he would  
Be laid in a soldier's grave.



*Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Moorslede, West-Vlaanderen.*

# **PRIVATE THOMAS SNEDDON**

(22707)

## **King's Own Scottish Borderers 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 23 July 1918**

Thomas Sneddon was born in 1896 at Hamilton. His father Peter Sneddon was born c1865 at Dalsersf and had several jobs, a colliery check weigher, a mason's labourer and a golf course labourer. His mother, Jeanie Madgwick was born c1871 in Hamilton and it was there that she and Peter married in 1890. By 1918 the family had moved from Townhead Street, Hamilton and were now living at Green Street, Bothwell. They had eight of a family, four boys and four girls.

Private Thomas Sneddon, enlisted with the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Kings Own Scottish Borderers. During the Great War the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Battalion was part of the 15<sup>th</sup> Scottish Division in the 46<sup>th</sup> Brigade. The KOSB's took part in the Second Battle of the Marne from July-August 1918.

On the 18 July 1918 the 15th Division arrived at Clermont, Liancourt, Laigneville and Pont St. Maxence, at first coming under the control of the French Third Army. The troops caused considerable interest among the civilian population, as it was the first time they had seen Scottish troops. The 18<sup>th</sup> July saw the beginning of the Allies counter-attack against the German lines. Late that night the 15<sup>th</sup> Division received orders to move at dawn the following day to join the 10<sup>th</sup> army engaged alongside American troops south of Soissons. The men endured a hot, dusty, 12 hours long journey by omnibus to Montigny, Haute Fontaine and Breuil area. Each town and hamlet was packed with jubilant French and American troops as news of the attack's success spread. By the evening of the 20th, the move was completed. They were then ordered to move to St. Pierre Aigle Le Jardin, and this commenced on July 21<sup>st</sup> at 9pm. It was a difficult move. The moon was full, the weather fine, but dust rising from the march attracted German Bomber planes round Coevres, and caused casualties. By 6am on 22nd the whole Division concentrated in villages round Coevres.

The Division was now in close support of the French and Americans who were attacking the heights between Tigny and Belleu. Losses had been heavy and fresh troops needed to exploit success. On 22<sup>nd</sup> July the 15th Division were ordered to relieve the American 1st Division and to attack enemy positions between Berzy-le-Sec and NW corner of Buzancy. Zero Hour was set for 5am on 23 July 1918. The Scots found that the Americans had not had time to bury their dead, so that became their first task, the identity discs being sent on to the American Commander. There was no time to reconnoitre. The Scottish men saw even less of the troops they were to relieve, and found the German position by walking right on top of it. This resulted in the Divisional

front being drenched by artillery and machine gun fire. Nevertheless the relief was completed on July 23rd two hours before zero. The 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> KOSBs fought alongside the 10th Scottish Rifles, 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, the 6<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders and the 8<sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Also for the first time in history American, French and British artillery acted jointly to provide the supporting barrage. However the enemy front lines were not where they were shown on the map and the barrage overshot the German machine gun nests.

The assault started at 5am and was straight away held up by machine gun fire the barrage had not touched. The barrage itself was poor, the 10th Scottish Rifles were not covered by it at all. To the north the Argylls could only advance a 100 yds and even then they were under constant fire in an exposed position.

By 10 am it was found that the French divisions on both flanks were unable to advance and the Scottish flanks were exposed as a result. A company of the 10th Scottish Rifles was sent to form a right-hand defensive flank with the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> KOSB - the flank being further reinforced later by trench mortar troops. About 6 in the evening a German counter-attack was driven off and the front line troops were able to reorganise and consolidate. During the night they were relieved by other battalions of the brigades.

It was during this battle on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1918 that Private Thomas Sneddon was killed. He is buried in Buzancy Military Cemetery, France.



#### **Monument at Buzancy Military Cemetery.**

The plaque has an engraving of a thistle and the lettering beneath reads

*“Ici fleuri a toujours le glorieux chardonné Ecosse parmi les roses de France”.*

which in translation reads

*“The Glorious Scottish Thistle will always flower here among the Roses of France”.*

This monument was built by the 17th French Div during July 1918 to commemorate the soldiers of the 15th (Scottish) Div. who along with the 34th Div attacked Buzancy on the 23rd of July and took it on the 28th.

Thomas Sneddon had 7 siblings.

1. **Jeanie Sneddon** was born c1892 in Hamilton. In 1919 she married John Cassells, a house painter, at Bothwell. At that time Jeanie was a domestic servant living at Green Street, Bothwell.
2. **John Sneddon** was born c1894 in Hamilton
3. **Thomas Sneddon**
4. **Peter Sneddon** was born in 1898 at Hamilton and fought in WW1 with the Machine Gun Corps. He was killed in action on 14 October 1918 at Belgium.

5. **Robert Sneddon** was born in 1901 at Hamilton. He was a colliery lampman and in 1923 at Glasgow, he married Barbara Gough, a domestic servant working at Milngavie. In 1932 Barbara died of pneumonia at Dunfermline. In 1958 Robert, a uniformed messenger living at Baillie Drive, Bothwell married Mary Walker. Robert died in 1975 at Wardlaw Avenue, Rutherglen.  
Robert and Barbara's son Peter Sneddon was born in 1927 at Hamilton. In 1949 at the Baptist Church, Uddingston, Peter married his cousin Jeanie (Jean) Madgwick Harrison. At that time Peter was a boot and shoe repairman living at 35 Main Street, Bothwell. Peter was the informant of his father's death in 1975 and at that time was living at Hume Drive, Bothwell. Peter and Jean had three of a family, Brian, Heather and Pamela.
6. **Margaret Sneddon** was born in 1903 at Hamilton and died in infancy
7. **Mary Sneddon** was born in 1905 at Hamilton. In 1927 at 5 Green Street, Bothwell she married John Harrison, a motor driver. Mary and John had a daughter, Jeanie (Jean) Madgwick Harrison, born in 1929 at Green Street, Bothwell. In 1947 Jean married her cousin Peter Sneddon, a boot and shoe repairer, at Uddingston. At that time Jean was a drapery saleswoman living at Green Street, Bothwell. She and Peter had three of a family as above. Jean Sneddon, niece of Thomas Sneddon, still lives in Bothwell.
8. **Catherine Sneddon** was born in 1908 at Low Waters, Hamilton.

Thomas Sneddon's brother Peter was killed in action in Belgium 4 months after Thomas. The following poems appeared with their obituary in the Hamilton Advertiser.

*Their youthful years, their every joy and pride,  
Were shared with us, when they were by our side.  
We would not daunt their eager manly hearts,  
They tugged the tender ties of love apart.*

*And when they went, they took our prayers with them,  
The sunshine of our lives was cold and dim.  
Their duty done, God gave them what was best,  
The haven of a loving Saviour's breast.*

Inserted by their loving father, mother, sisters and brothers (also for brother Peter)

*What happy hours we once enjoyed,  
How sweet their memory still,  
But they have left an aching void,  
This world can never fill.*

Inserted by their loving sister and brother-in-law, Mr & Mrs John Cassells (also for brother Peter)

# SERGEANT STUART NORMAN SPENCE

(752)

## Australian Imperial Force 41<sup>st</sup> Battalion Infantry

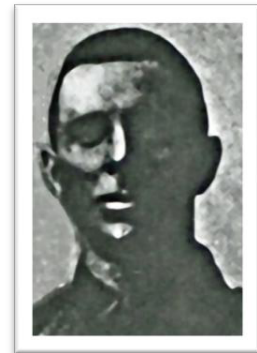
**Died 7 October 1917**

Stuart Norman Spence was born 27 August 1876 at St Vincent Crescent, Glasgow. His father, Stuart Spence JP, was born in 1837 at Dundee and had a wholesale stationer's business in Glasgow. His mother, Catherine Forgan Donaldson was born in 1853 at Scone, Perth. His parents were married in Tayport, Fife in 1874 and moved to Glasgow shortly thereafter. About 1881 they moved to a villa on Uddingston Road, Bothwell that they named 'Abertay', presumably to remind them of their place of marriage. They had five of a family. Stuart Spence was a local councillor who helped bring electricity to Bothwell, promoted the creation of pavements in Silverwells Crescent and was on the committee that dealt with the Donald Bequest.

Stuart Spence was educated at Bothwell Public School and at Hutcheson's Grammar School in Glasgow. He emigrated to Australia in 1908 and settled in Sydney as a farmer growing fruit. At Brisbane on the 23 August 1915 at the age of 37 he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force and was drafted to the 41<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Australian Infantry.

After training Private Spence, 752, embarked in May 1916 at Sydney and arrived in Plymouth two months later. Following further training in Britain, the 41st Battalion sailed for France on 25 November 1916. It entered the front line for the first time on Christmas Eve and spent the bleak winter of 1916-17 alternating between service in the front line, and training and labouring in the rear areas. In February 1917 Norman Spence was promoted to corporal.

At the end of June 1917, the 11th Brigade was ordered to establish a new front line west of Warneton, in full view of the Germans. Work carried on night and day under heavy shellfire and the period became known to the battalion as "the 18 days". The start of August found the 41st holding ground captured by two of its sister battalions in a feint attack on 31 July. Enduring continual rain, flooded trenches and heavy shelling many of the battalion's platoons dwindled from 35 men to less than ten. On the 10 August 1917 Corporal Spence was promoted to lance sergeant and a week later to temporary sergeant.



*Stuart Spence*

The battle of Broodseinde Ridge was part of the Ypres offensive of 1917. It was a large operation, involving twelve divisions, including the 41st Australian Imperial Force. The attack was to be preceded by a massive artillery bombardment; and a creeping barrage would lead the troops on to their objectives and then protect them while they consolidated their positions. The attack began before dawn on 4 October 1917. The Australian troops involved were shelled heavily on their start line and a seventh of their number became casualties even before the attack began. When it did, the attacking troops were confronted by a line of troops advancing towards them; the Germans had chosen the same morning to launch an attack of their own. The Australians forged on through the German assault waves and gained all their objectives along the ridge. It was not without cost, however. German pillboxes were characteristically difficult to subdue, and the Australian divisions suffered 6,500 casualties.

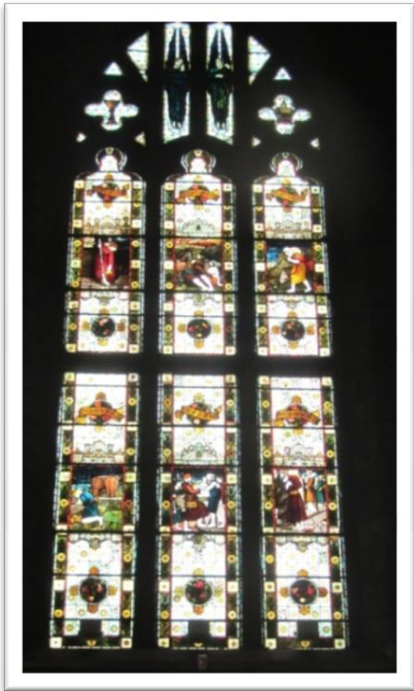
Sergeant Stuart Spence received shrapnel wounds to his shoulder and hip on the 4 October 1917 and died two days later in No 10 Casualty Clearing Station . He was aged 41 and is buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery .



*The gravestone of  
Stuart Norman Spence  
at  
Lijssenthoek Military  
Cemetery, Belgium*

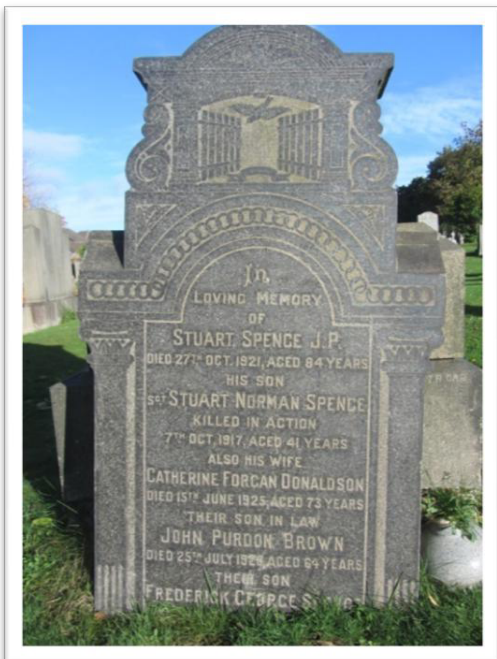
Stuart Spence had 4 siblings.

1. **James D. Spence** was born in 1875 at Glasgow.
2. **Stuart Norman Spence.**
3. **Frederick G. Spence** was born in 1879 at Glasgow, lived in Abertay and died in 1929.
4. **Mary E. Spence** was born in 1881 at Bothwell. Mary was a schoolteacher and in 1905 at Abertay she married John Purdon Brown an insurance surveyor living at Westport, Bothwell. After his death she married Alexander Findlay and lived at Giffnock. She died in 1962. Mary and John Brown had one son, John Spence Brown, born in 1906 at Milngavie and died in 1933 at Kilmory, Bute.
5. **Caroline M. L. Spence** was born in 1883 at Bothwell. In 1923 at Abertay she married David Hiddleston, a Hamilton solicitor. Caroline and her husband lived at 11 Blantyre Mill Road, Bothwell until her death in 1967.



*Centre window at Bothwell Parish Church  
On the wall beneath the window is a brass plate on which is inscribed:*

*“The stained glass in the tracery is in memory of John Purdon Brown, Abertay, born 1864, died 1928, and of his son, John Spence Brown, born 1906, died 1933, both devoted workers in this church. Gifted by the widow and sisters of the former, 1933”*



*In Loving Memory  
Of  
Stuart Spence J.P.  
Died 27<sup>th</sup> Oct 1921, aged 84 years  
His son  
Sgt Stuart Norman Spence  
Killed in Action  
7<sup>th</sup> Oct 1917, aged 41 years  
Also his wife  
Catherine Forgan Donaldson  
Died 1<sup>st</sup> June 1925, aged 73 years  
Their son in law  
John Purdon Brown  
Died 25<sup>th</sup> July 1928 aged 64 years  
Their son  
Frederick George Spence*

*Gravestone in Bothwell Park*

# **PRIVATE JAMES COSMO GORDON STEEL**

(3588)

## **Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 13 November 1916**

**J**ames Steel, known as Cosmo, was born on 22 October 1877 at Bothwell. His father James Steel was born in 1846 at Barony, Glasgow and was a drysalter and dyewood manufacturer. In 1870 at Bothwell he married Elizabeth Gordon, a 27 year old Glaswegian. The couple started their married life at Monklands but quickly moved to Maanar, Bothwell (one of the houses at Fyfe Crescent) where they brought up their family. James Steel Snr died there in 1901 while his widow died in 1907 at Hillhead, Glasgow.

In 1901 at the age of 23 James Cosmo Gordon Steel was still living with his parents in Bothwell and was working as an Insurance cashier. By 1909 he had moved to Gourock where he was an insurance broker. That year he married at Bonhill, Dunbartonshire, a Glasgow girl, Mary Stephenson. After being widowed in 1916 Mary married, in 1919, Captain James McBain of the RAF and went to live in Aston, Birmingham.

After war broke out, James Steel enlisted with the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. His battalion was part of the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division and fought at the Battle of Ancre which took place in November 1916. However for the 51st Highland Division it will always be remembered as the Battle of Beaumont Hamel. Beaumont Hamel had previously been attacked on the first day of the Battle of the Somme but that attack had failed and the heavily fortified area was regarded as almost impregnable.

A further attack by the 5<sup>th</sup> Army was planned with the 51st Highland Division in the centre with the objective to capture Beaumont Hamel.

The attack had been originally planned for 24 October but because of the appalling weather in particular torrential rain, there were a number of delays until the attack was eventually re-scheduled for 13 November.

Because the attack had been planned to be launched earlier wire cutting using artillery and two inch mortars had begun in late October. Patrols were then sent out to establish the extent of the damage and where a route was clear. During the preparations before the attack a number of raiding parties and patrols were launched into the enemy trenches with the task of determining what units the attack would face.

In Major Bewsher's "The History of the 51st Highland Division" there is a very clear example of what this entails.

*"On 26 October both the Black Watch and the Gordon Highlanders entered the enemy's front line, the latter capturing a German prisoner. On the same night the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders made a similar attempt, but could not find a passage through the enemy's wire. In the raid by the Gordon Highlanders, Lance Sgt Morrison killed four Germans and disarmed 50. At this point Morrison had expended all ammunition and bombs and was faced by two more Germans with fixed bayonets. Appreciating the situation, Private Louis Thompson rushed past Sergeant Morrison and killed the first German with his entrenching tool. He then picked up the fallen German's rifle and with it killed the second. For this exploit both Sergeant Morrison and Private Thompson were awarded the military medal."*

In the days before the attack the weather had been atrocious and the ground had become a sodden mass. The move forward to the start line during the night was difficult and those that arrived there first had a long wait as the rest move slowly into position. At 5:45 a.m. on the 13 November 1916, the time selected to begin the attack, a mine was exploded as the signal after which an intense bombardment of the German position began. There had been no preliminary bombardment that would have risked giving away the preparations for the attack. There was a thick fog on the morning and this helped with the concealment and delayed the response of the Germans. The progress behind the barrage was deliberate and slow. The state of the ground made it impossible to move quickly and the rate of advance was about 25 yards a minute.

There was stiff resistance but by 7.50 a.m. the British had made a significant advance although pockets of resistance, emerging from tunnels, were still behind them. However the casualties were too heavy for a sustained attack. That night was spent consolidating their position and preparing to continue the attack the next morning.

It was on that day during the attack on Beaumont Hamel that Private James Steel was killed in action and he is buried at Maily Wood Cemetery, Maily-Maillet, Somme, France. He is also remembered on the family gravestone in Bothwell Kirkyard.

James Cosmo Steel had 6 siblings.

1. **John Steel** was born in 1871 and died in infancy.
2. **Rachel Steel** was born in 1871 at Bothwell. She was the Assistant Matron at Glasgow's Western Infirmary and died in 1932 at Hillhead.
3. **Gordon Steel** was born in 1874 at Bothwellbank Cottage. He was a shipping clerk and married 24 year old Mary Cullen in 1898 at the Bent Farm, Fallside, Bothwell. Gordon Steel died in 1941 at Copsewood, Kilmacolm.

4. **Agnes Steel** was born in Bothwell c1874 and died there aged 33.
5. **Elizabeth Steel** was born in 1874 at Bothwell. She married lawyer James Pennell at the Grand Hotel in Glasgow in 1903 and died in 1936 at Edinburgh.
6. **James Gordon Cosmo Steel**
7. **John Steel** was born in 1880. In 1901 he was recorded as an architect's draughtsman living with his parents at Maanar, Bothwell. He married Anne Douglas in 1909 at Glasgow and the couple took up residence at Airlie Gardens, Hyndland.



*Gravestone at Bothwell Kirkyard*

*In Memory of  
 Agnes Stenhouse Steel  
 second daughter of James Steel who died in Bothwell  
 14 November 1907 aged 35 years  
**James Cosmo Gordon Steel Pte 8<sup>th</sup> A&SH**  
 second son of James Steel killed in action at  
**Beaumont Hamel 14 November 1916 aged 39 yrs**  
 Rachael Johnston Gordon Steel RRC  
 eldest daughter of James Steel born 6 July 1871  
 died 14 September 1932 aged 61 yrs  
 Gordon Steel  
 eldest son of James Steel born 22 April 1873  
 died 18 March 1941 aged 67 years  
 Mary Cullen  
 Wife of Gordon Steel born 12 April 1873  
 died 4 November 1947 aged 74 yrs*

## **PRIVATE WILLIAM STEEL**

### **Gordon Highlanders**

**T**here is no record of a Private William Steel of the Gordon Highlanders who died in World War 1. There is however a Corporal William Steele of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, the Gordon Highlanders who died 25 July 1916. It was noted in his military record that he was born in Catrine, Ayrshire but there is no birth registration of a William Steele or Steel in the parish of Catrine for the time frame for a male of age to fight in WW1. There is also no known connection of that William Steele to Bothwell. William Steel is, however, commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial and his sacrifice is acknowledged here.

## SERGEANT PETER STEWART

(19872)

### Highland Light Infantry 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 14 June 1916**

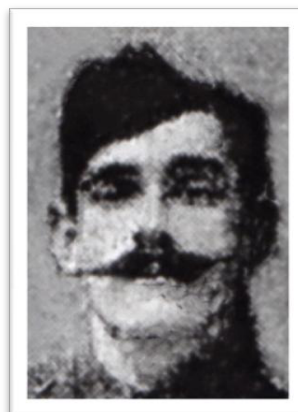
**P**eter Stewart was born on 7 March 1882 at Mungalmill, Stirlingshire. His father Arthur Stewart was born c1862 at Kincardine. Peter's mother, Helen McLuckie was born c1862 at Carronshore, Stirlingshire. She and Arthur Stewart were married in 1881 at Larbert. By 1891 they were living at Mungalmill where Arthur was a general labourer and Helen a dressmaker. Arthur died 1899 at Stenhousemuir. Helen and her two children moved to Larbert where she worked as a monthly nurse (a woman who looked after mother and baby for a few weeks after birth). She remarried in 1902 and died in 1938 in Falkirk.

In 1901 while living at Larbert Peter Stewart worked as a pattern iron moulder. Five years later he had moved to Kirklands, Bothwell where he was employed as an asylum attendant. There he met and married in 1906, Elsie Craig a nurse also working at Kirklands Asylum. Possibly attracted by a better wage to support a family, Peter obtained a job as a coal miner at the Castle Colliery and the couple moved to Murray Place, Bothwell. By 1911 they had two of a family and were living at Apsley Place, Bothwell.

When war broke out Peter enlisted at Bothwell with the 12th (Service) Battalion HLI. This Battalion was formed at Hamilton in September 1914 and came under command of 46th Brigade in 15th (Scottish) Division. The Battalion moved to England for training and then, on the 10 July 1915 they landed at Boulogne, France en route for the Western Front. The Battalion fought at the Battle of Loos in September 1915. Peter Stewart was promoted to Lance Corporal but his will, written in 30 September 1915, he was designated Sergeant. Sergeant Peter Stewart died of wounds received in the Loos sector during the so-called 'quiet period' while the 15<sup>th</sup> division was 'resting' prior to moving south to the Somme.

A personal letter from the Bethune Hospital Chaplain in France informed Mrs Stewart that her husband had died from wounds in that Hospital on 14 June 1915. He was 34 years of age.

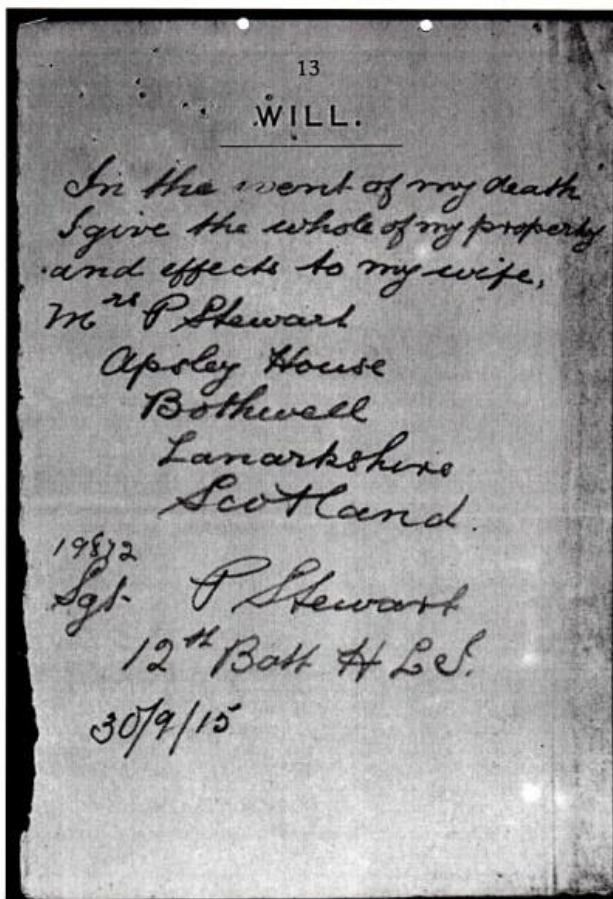
After Peter's death, in 1918, Elsie married Thomas Hannah, a 41 year old coal miner from Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh. Elsie latterly lived at Main Street, Bellshill and died there in 1941.



*Peter Stewart*

Peter and Elsie Stewart had 4 children.

1. **Agnes M Stewart** was born in 1907 at Murray Place Bothwell. In 1928 she married Andrew Anderson, an engineering shop clerk. Agnes died in 1969 in Motherwell. Her great grandson David Kelly (great great grandson of Peter Stewart) presently lives in Blantyre.
2. **Arthur J Stewart** was born in 1910 at Apsley House, Bothwell. He died in 1997 at Motherwell.
3. **Peter Stewart** was born in 1912 at Apsley House, Bothwell. In 1939 at Bellshill he married Winifred Baxter. Peter died in 1989 at Motherwell.
4. **Elsie C Stewart** was born in 1915 at Apsley House, Bothwell. Elsie was an engineering factory worker and she died in 1971 while living at Main Street, Bellshill.



*Sgt Peter Stewart's will, dated 30 September 1915 leaving his property and effects to his wife.*

## PRIVATE DAVID SUTHERLAND

### Seaforth Highlanders

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists five D. Sutherlands and three David Sutherlands. None of them have any obvious links to Bothwell. There were no David Sutherlands born in Bothwell of an age to fight in the war. The census records do not list any David Sutherland living in Bothwell. Any one of the undernoted men, born furth of Bothwell could have come to Bothwell seeking employment after the census of 1911 and would not be recorded on any official documentation.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Parents Residence</u>
Private D. Sutherland	8793	3 May 1917	Elgin
Private D. Sutherland	202518	8 April 1917	Caithness
Private D. Sutherland	240728	22 September 1917	Caithness
Private D. Sutherland	240152	8 May 1920	
Private D. Sutherland	265777	20 July 1918	
Private David Sutherland	9102	14 September 1914	
Private David Sutherland	s/12821	12 October 1917	
Private David Sutherland	2943	16 May 1916	

Which one of these men is the one on the War Memorial and what his connection was with Bothwell will lie in the original committee minutes which are now buried deep in the innards of the Bothwell War Memorial.

David Sutherland is, however, commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial and his sacrifice is acknowledged here.



2nd Lt. Ewart Alan Mackintosh served with the 5th Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders which was part of 51st (Highland) Division. On 16 May 1916, at the age of 23, he led a raid on the German lines. By the end of the night there were sixteen British casualties, which included fourteen wounded and two killed. Two of the wounded later died. Mackintosh received the Military Cross on 24 June 1916. His citation in the London Gazette read:

“For conspicuous gallantry. He organised and led a successful raid on the enemy's trenches with great skill and courage. Several of the enemy were disposed of and a strong point destroyed. He also brought back two wounded men under heavy fire.”



*Ewart Alan Mackintosh*

Private David Sutherland was mortally wounded during the raid and Lt Mackintosh carried him 100 yards back through the German trenches. Sadly David Sutherland died and had to be left in the German trench.

The experience of the raid clearly had a profound effect on Lt Mackintosh, particularly the death David Sutherland, and it inspired him to write the poem 'In Memoriam'.

Ewart Alan Mackintosh was later killed in action on 21 November 1917, aged 24.

Was the David Sutherland who died in that fateful raid the one commemorated on the Bothwell War Memorial? Unfortunately it appears that that question may never be answered, unless, sometime in the future, the War Memorial gives up the Committee minute book, and the identity of David Sutherland is revealed.

### IN MEMORIAM

So you were David's father,  
And he was your only son,  
And the new-cut peats are rotting  
And the work is left undone,  
Because of an old man weeping,  
Just an old man in pain,  
For David, his son David,  
That will not come again.

Oh, the letters he wrote you,  
And I can see them still,  
Not a word of the fighting,  
But just the sheep on the hill  
And how you should get the crops in  
Ere the year get stormier,  
And the Bosches have got his body,  
And I was his officer.

You were only David's father,  
But I had fifty sons  
When we went up in the evening  
Under the arch of the guns,

And we came back at twilight -  
O God! I heard them call  
To me for help and pity  
That could not help at all.

Oh, never will I forget you,  
My men that trusted me,  
More my sons than your fathers',  
For they could only see  
The little helpless babies  
And the young men in their pride.  
They could not see you dying,  
And hold you while you died.

Happy and young and gallant,  
They saw their first-born go,  
But not the strong limbs broken  
And the beautiful men brought low,  
The piteous writhing bodies,  
They screamed "Don't leave me, sir",  
For they were only your fathers  
But I was your officer.

# LANCE CORPORAL HUGH SWEENEY

(420355)

## Canadian Infantry 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion

**Died 11 April 1918**

**H**ugh Sweeney was born on 9 December 1884 at Larkhall. His father, Bernard Sweeney, was born c1852 in Ireland and he was employed as a coal miner. His mother Isabella Dick was born c1854 at Larkhall. Bernard and Isabella married in 1873 at Larkhall where their eight children were born. By 1911, Bernard and Isabella with three of their youngest moved to Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh.

In 1911 at Glasgow, Hugh Sweeney married Mary Heron, a 21 year old fancy box maker. They set up home at Douglas Place, Bothwellhaugh. In May 1911 Hugh enlisted in the Territorial Army as a sapper with the Lowland Division Engineers and later that year attended training camp. He was also a drummer in their pipe band. In May the following year he was discharged with a note “gone abroad.” Hugh had, in fact, sailed the previous month from Glasgow to St John, Canada. He was followed in April 1913 by his wife sailing from Glasgow to Quebec. Hugh and Mary settled in Winnipeg, Canada and Hugh, a machinist, enlisted with the 79<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders of Canada. This was western Canada's first highland regiment and was the result of persistent efforts by Winnipeg's Scottish community. The regiment came into existence in 1910.

When war was declared with Germany, the Canadian Army created the Canadian Expeditionary Force. On 18 December 1914, the Cameron Highlanders of Canada received authority to raise a battalion for overseas service with the Expeditionary Force. Six days later Hugh Sweeney volunteered for service with this battalion. The Battalion began training at Minto Armoury in Winnipeg and was soon re-designated the 43<sup>rd</sup> (Cameron Highlanders of Canada) Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force. On 29 May 1915 the Battalion entrained for Montreal and deployment overseas. They embarked on HMTS Grampian for England on 9 June with a complement of 39 officers and 1,020 other ranks. After further training in England the Regiment sailed for France to join the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division which had been formed in December 1915. Hugh Sweeney was promoted to Lance Corporal and he and his comrades saw action along the Western Front including



*Queen's Own Cameron  
Highlanders of Canada*

the Somme and Passchendaele. By April 1918 the Regiment was in billets at Hills Camp, Neuville-St Vaast. The war diary for 11 April 1918 records "*Intermittent shelling in vicinity of camp during the night. Direct hit on 'D' Coy hut by enemy HE shell resulting in 7 killed and 18 wounded.*"

Lance corporal Hugh Sweeney was one of those seven soldiers killed in the hut and he is buried at Targette British Cemetery, Neuvill-St Vaast.

Hugh Sweeney had 6 siblings.

1. **Elizabeth Sweeney** was born c1874 at Larkhall.
2. **Sarah Sweeney** was born c1876 at Larkhall. In 1902 at Larkhall she married James Whitelaw, a 25 year old iron moulder from Craigneuk, Lanarkshire. Sarah and James emigrated to America in 1910 and in 1940 were still living where they settled at Yonkers, New York.
3. **Isabella Sweeney** was born c1882 at Larkhall.
4. **Hugh Sweeney**
5. **Janet Sweeney** was born c1888 at Larkhall.
6. **John A. Sweeney** was born c1890 at Larkhall. He enlisted with the Highland Light Infantry and was killed in action at the Battle of Loos on 25 September 1915
7. **James Sweeney** was born c1893 at Larkhall. In 1911 was a coal miner living with his parents at Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh and working at Hamilton Palace Colliery.
8. **Agnes Sweeney** was born c1902 at Larkhall.

# PRIVATE JOHN THOMSON SWEENEY

(43448)

## Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 23 October 1916**

John Thomson Sweeney was born 7 April 1876 at Hamilton Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh. His father was William Sweeney, was born c1853 in Glasgow, and he was employed as an above ground colliery labourer. His mother was Mary Thomson, a cotton yarn winder born c1854 at Hamilton. She was a widow when she married William Sweeney in 1881 at Dennistoun, Glasgow. By 1891 they had moved to the Palace Rows, Bothwellhaugh where they raised their family. Ten years later in 1901 the family were living at Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh and it was there that Mary Sweeney died in 1900 followed by her husband William in 1923.

John Sweeney enlisted with the 9<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion of the Cameronians. This Battalion was raised at Hamilton in August 1914 as part of Kitcheners First New Army and joined 28<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 9th (Scottish) Division. They moved to Aldershot for training and in May 1915 embarked for Boulogne, France. They first saw action at The Battle of Loos in 1915. In 1916 the Battalion was transferred to the 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade. In October that year the Battalion fought at the Somme in the Battle of Le Transloy. It was there that Private John T. Sweeney was killed in action on 23 October 1916 aged 20. He is commemorated on the Theipval Memorial at the Somme.



*John Sweeney*

John Sweeney had 4 siblings.

1. **Catherine Sweeney** was born c1887 at Hamilton and died in 1951 at Calder Place, Bothwellhaugh.
2. **Robert Sweeney** was born c1887 at Bothwellhaugh. He was an above ground colliery labourer.
3. **Helen Sweeney** was born in 1891 at Bothwellhaugh. She was a shop assistant and in 1919 at Bothwell, she married Patrick Rafferty, a 29 year old miner from Bothwellhaugh. They were living at Clyde Place, Bothwellhaugh when Helen died in 1949.
4. **David Sweeney** was born c1894 at Bothwellhaugh. As a young man he was a colliery labourer but later became a blacksmith. David Sweeney died in 1971 at Bellshill.
5. **John Sweeney.**

# PRIVATE JOHN ARCHIBALD SWEENEY

(19875)

## Highland Light Infantry 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion

**Died 25 September 1915**

John Archibald Sweeney was born on the 31 December 1890 at Larkhall. His father, Bernard Sweeney, was born c1852 in Ireland and he was employed as a coal miner. His mother Isabella Dick was born c1854 at Larkhall. Bernard and Isabella married in 1873 at Larkhall where their eight children were born. By 1911, Bernard and Isabella with John, James and Agnes moved to Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh.

John Sweeney was a miner at the Hamilton Palace Colliery and in 1912 at Burnbank he married Agnes Orr a 21 year old from Hamilton. When war broke out John enlisted with the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry at Bordon, Hants. He was killed in action on the 25 September 1915, the first day of the Battle of Loos. Seven men from Bothwell also died at Loos and details of the Battle are given on page 25. Private Sweeney is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, France.

John Sweeney had 7 siblings.

1. **Elizabeth Sweeney** was born c1874 at Larkhall. She was a domestic servant and in 1900 at Glasgow she married 26 year old storeman, Frederick Wallace.
2. **Sarah Sweeney** was born c1876 at Larkhall. In 1902 she married James Whitelaw, a 25 year old iron moulder from Craigneuk, Lanarkshire. Sarah and James emigrated to America in 1910 where they settled at Yonkers, New York.
3. **Isabella Sweeney** was born c1882 at Larkhall. Isabella was a domestic servant and in 1901 at Larkhall she married 26 year old Archibald Campbell, a coal miner from Dalsarf.
4. **Hugh Sweeney** was born on 9 December 1884 at Larkhall. He emigrated to Canada with his wife and settled in Winnipeg. He fought in France and Flanders and was killed in action on 11 April 1918.
5. **Janet Sweeney** was born c1888 at Larkhall. Janet worked in a brickworks and in 1905 at Larkhall she married 19 year old miner, Charles McMaster.
6. **John A. Sweeney.**
7. **James Sweeney** was born c1893 at Larkhall. In 1911 was a coal miner living with his parents at Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh and working at Hamilton Palace Colliery.
8. **Agnes Sweeney** was born c1902 at Larkhall.



*John Sweeney*

## PRIVATE ROBERT AITKIN TODD

(B/8128)

### Cameronians 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 25 September 1916**

Robert Aitken Todd was born in 28 November 1894 at 30 Baird's Square, Bothwell. His father, William Todd, was born c1870 at Maryhill, Glasgow and worked as a coal miner. Robert Todd's mother, Sarah Aitken was born c1889 at Whifflet, Coatbridge where her father was a miner at the local Rosehall Colliery. Sarah and her parents then moved to Bothwell Park Rows and then on to live at 15 Baird's Square, Bothwell. William Todd and Sarah Aitken were married in 1888 at Bothwell and they set up home at 13 Baird's Square, later moving to number 30. By 1901 and now with six of a family, William and Sarah were living at the Jubilee Rows, Fallside Road, Bothwell. Sarah died in 1952 at Bothwell and William in 1948 at the Gorbals, Glasgow.

Robert Todd was a miner like his father and after the outbreak of war enlisted at Uddingston with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, the Cameronians. The 2nd Battalion embarked for France in November 1914 with the 23rd Brigade, 8th Division to reinforce the British Expeditionary Force. In 1915 they were in action at The Battle of Neuve Chapelle, The Battle of Aubers and the action of Bois Grenier. At the beginning of 1916 the Battalion were alternating between five day front duties at Boutillierie near Armentieres and five days in billets to the rear. Their front line duties included raids against the German lines and one such raid was at midnight on the 29 April at Authville Wood. The raid was successful with about 40 Germans being killed. In the midst of this brutal war, there were, however periods of relaxation and on the 23 May the Battalion team beat the 8<sup>th</sup> Divisional Cyclists in the final of the Divisional Football Cup, by 3 goals to 1. On the 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, a Special Order was issued to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cameronians by Brigadier General H D Tuscon CMG commanding the 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade. *"In the coming great offensive in which the British and French are fighting shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade has been selected, among many others, to be the first to break through the enemy's defences and to capture the village of Pozieres. This is only the first step in what is hoped will prove to be a decisive and signal victory. Many Divisions will pour through the gap opened for them by the Brigade. The enemy with all his faults is a brave fighter, and in all probability the task set will prove no light one. It is for us to show him that he has met more than his match at last and that English men will not let his crimes against Europe and humanity go unpunished. It is with the greatest confidence that I look forward to the successful accomplishment of our task, for if any Brigade can do it the*

*23<sup>rd</sup> can - and will. Officers, N.C.O's and men, the enemy has for years boasted about "The Day". The day is at hand. We have our duty to do and well I know you will do it."*

The Battalion took part in the Battle of the Somme near La Boisselle and were in Brigade reserve throughout the day, 'B' and 'D' companies occupying the front line trenches which at intervals during the day were very heavily shelled. During that first day, 70 men of the Battalion were killed or wounded.

On the 15 July the Battalion moved from Barlin to a bivouac near Bethune and from there to the front line trenches. Their War Diary records the incessant artillery and mortar bombardments of the trenches and on the 20 July two explosive packed mines were detonated by the Germans under the trenches wounding three Cameronians.

The War Diary for the 17 September records that *"the Battalion was relieved in the front line trenches and withdrew to billets in Saily Labourse. This tour of trenches was on the whole quiet, although there was a considerable amount of trench mortar fire on both sides."* Four days later they were back in the front line and the diary entry for the 24 September records that *"About 6.30 a.m. the enemy commenced a violent bombardment with heavy howitzers and field guns. This continued until about 1.30 p.m. 2 other ranks were killed in action and 4 other ranks were wounded in action."*

Private Robert Todd died the following day and it can only be assumed from wounds received during the previous day's shelling. He is buried at Philosophe British Cemetery, Mazingarbe, France.



*Private Robert Todd's  
gravestone at  
Philosophe British Cemetery*

*Photograph courtesy of his  
nephew, Bill Todd, who visited  
the cemetery and grave in 2008.*

Robert Todd had 10 siblings.

1. **Sarah Todd** was born c1889 at Bothwell. In 1912 at the Manse, Bothwell she married James Hunter a 22 year old coal miner. She was widowed and living in Castle Square, Bothwell when in 1927 she married Gavin McNab. Sarah died in 1947 at Fallside Road, Bothwell.
2. **Rose Todd** was born c1890 at Bothwell. In 1912 at Wooddean Church, Bothwell, she married Thomas Flinn. At that time Rose was living at Kilmacolm where she worked as a farm servant. In 1922 Rose, Thomas and their seven children emigrated to the USA. Rose died in 1926 in New York.
3. **John Todd** was born c1893 at Bothwell. John was a miner and in 1919 at the Manse, Bothwell he married Elizabeth Murphy, a 24 year old munitions worker from Uddingston.
4. **Robert Todd**
5. **Elizabeth Todd** was born c1896 at Bothwell.
6. **Bella Todd** was born c1899 at Bothwell
7. **William Todd** was born 1900 at Bothwell. He was registered at birth as James Todd but later his name was changed to William. He was a coal miner when in 1922 at the Manse, Bothwell, he married 20 year old Agnes Boyd of Clyde Place, Bothwell.
8. **Alexander Todd** was born c1902 at Bothwell. In 1931 at Hamilton he married Isabella Kirkwood, a 25 year old book-keeper. They had three children, nephews of Private Robert Todd. William (Bill) Todd, was born in 1931 in Hamilton and still lives there; Ian Todd , born 1937 in Hamilton, now deceased; and Margaret Todd, born 1946 in Hamilton and now living in Lancashire.
9. **Christina Todd** was born c1904 at Bothwell. In 1925 at the Manse, Bothwell, Christina, an estate worker married James Clelland, a 19 year old coal miner from Hamilton. Christina lived in Sweethope Place, Bothwell before she died in 1968.
10. **James Todd** was born c1906 at Bothwell.
11. **Matthew Todd** was born c1910 at Bothwell. Matthew was a coal miner when, in 1936 at the Memorial Mission in Bothwellhaugh, he married 24 year old Isabella Hanns, a laundress from Raith Place, Bothwellhaugh. Latterly he was a security gatekeeper and died in 1979 at Leven, Fife.

## **PRIVATE THOMAS VANCE**

(8512)

### **Highland Light Infantry 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

**Died 15 November 1915**

**T**homas Vance was born 27 August 1869 at Glasgow. His father, John Vance, was born c1845 in Ireland and was a furnace man at a chemical works at St Rollox, Springburn. His mother was Margaret Braiden, also born in Ireland c1835. She was a domestic servant and married John Vance at Glasgow in 1869. After their marriage they lived in Glasgow near Dobbies Loan before moving to Glebe Street. The family then moved to Mossend, Lanarkshire where John Vance worked as an ironworks labourer and it was there he died in 1882. By 1891 Thomas Vance was a miner, boarding at Airdrie but by 1901 was living with his widowed mother at Main Street, Bellshill and it was there that Margaret died 1903.

In 1904 Thomas Vance was a miner boarding at Hozier Street, Tannochside, the home of Margaret Graham, nee Loudon, a 27 year old widow from Wishaw. They married that year and later set up home at Bothwellhaugh.

Thomas and Margaret had 6 children, Margaret, born 1904 at Hozier Street, John, born 1906 at The Square, Bothwellhaugh, Christina, born 1908 at The Square (died the same year), Hugh, born 1909 at Haugh Place (died the same year), James, born 1910 at Haugh Place and Thomas, born 1913 at Haugh Place.

Thomas Vance enlisted with the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Highland Light Infantry which was part of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. Private Thomas Vance was killed in action on the 15 November 1915. He was only in France three weeks when he died and he is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, France.

After the war, Thomas's widow Mary and her four children continued to live at Haugh Place, Bothwellhaugh and it was there she died in 1922.

Eldest daughter Mary married coal miner Daniel O'Neill in 1926 at Hamilton and they moved to Prestonpans, East Lothian, where she died in 1983.

Son John Vance started his working life as a coal miner but later became an industrial photographer. In 1928 at Bothwell Parish Church he married Janet Scott, a 23 year old domestic servant from Bothwellhaugh. Latterly they lived at Bellshill and it was there he died in 1987.

# **PRIVATE JOHN WATT**

(S/11470)

## **Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion**

**Died 10 February 1917**

**J**ohn Watt was born c1882 at Uddingston. His father John Watt Snr was born c1853 in Ireland and was an engine keeper. His first wife was Janet Parker who died in 1874. He then married Elizabeth Bradford who was born c1874 and was also from Ireland. The couple came to Scotland and settled at Porters Well Row, off Old Glasgow Road, Uddingston. By 1901 they were living at Wood View, Main Street, Uddingston. Elizabeth Watt died in 1921 followed four years later by her husband John in 1925.

Private John Watt enlisted at Glasgow and joined the 2nd Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The Battalion were at Fort George when war broke out in August 1914 and were mobilised to join the British Expeditionary Force as Lines of Communication troops, landing at Boulogne on the 14th of August 1914. Their major actions in 1914 and 1915 respectively were at the Battle of Le Cateau and at the Battle of Loos.

The Battalion saw further action at the Somme in 1916 continuing into 1917. At that time the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion strength was approximately 36 officers and 855 other ranks. The war diary records that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion A&SH spent New Year's Day of 1917 in billets behind the front line at Ergnies. A special dinner was provided for the men which was most appreciated by all. Later that month two football matches were played against the 1<sup>st</sup> Middlesex Regiment, on 5<sup>th</sup> January which the A&SH won 2-0 and a return match played on the 13<sup>th</sup> January which was a draw. The 10<sup>th</sup> January saw the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion team compete in a Brigade cross-country race in which they came in second.

On the 19 January 1917 the Battalion marched from Ergnies and entrained for Morcourt some 38 miles to the east. From there they marched 1.5 miles to a camp near Chipilly where they stayed in huts overnight. The following day the Battalion was carried by buses 15 miles to Curlu and from there marched to take over front line trenches south of Bouchavesnes previously occupied by a French battalion. Four days later, on the 24 January they were relieved and took over dugouts at nearby Road Wood. On the night of the 27 January the Battalion were again relieved and after a long march occupied tents, dugouts and shelters at Suzanne that was behind the front line. There on the 29 January a concert was held with music provided by the regimental band.

On 31 January the battalion moved up to the front line trenches at Clery Sur Somme and relieved the 1<sup>st</sup> Cameronians. On the 4 February the Battalion were once again relieved of front line duties and moved to support trenches. Two days later on the 6 February the

Battalion moved back to front line trenches. During the preceding period the 1<sup>st</sup> Middlesex Regiment had been quarantined due to an outbreak of measles amongst the men. On the 10 February they were released from quarantine and relieved the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders from their front line duties. The Argylls then moved into Brigade reserve trenches.

The war diary recorded 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion casualties from 1<sup>st</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> February 1917 as:-

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Died</u>
Officers	Nil	1	Nil
Other ranks	3	17	1 – from cardiac trouble

It was on the 10 February 1917 that Private John Watt was killed. He is buried in the Hem Farm Military Cemetery, Hem-Monacu, France and is commemorated on the family gravestone in Bothwell Kirkyard.

John Watt had 6 siblings.

1. **Joseph Watt** was born c1873 at Uddingston and died there in 1912.
2. **Elizabeth Watt** was born c1878 at Uddingston and died there in 1878.
3. **Elizabeth Watt** was born c1880 at Uddingston.
4. **Susan Watt** was born c1883 at Uddingston.
5. **Joseph Watt** was born c1873 at Uddingston.
6. **John Watt.**
7. **Jessie Watt** was born c1883 at Uddingston.



*Erected by John Watt in memory of  
Janet Parker his beloved wife who died 22  
April 1874 aged 26 yrs  
also his infant daughter  
Elizabeth Wallace who died 23 December 1878  
aged 8 months  
also his youngest daughter  
Susan Martin who died 12 February 1909 aged  
26 yrs  
also his son  
Joseph who died 2 June 1912 aged 39 yrs  
also his youngest son  
Pte John Watt who died in the trenches in  
France  
10 February 1917 aged 35 yrs  
also his beloved wife  
Elizabeth Bradford  
who died 17 December 1921 aged 78 yrs  
also the above  
John Watt  
who died 24 February 1923 aged 73 yrs*

*Gravestone in Bothwell Kirkyard*

## LANCE SERGEANT WILLIAM RAE WILSON

(11303)

### Royal Scots Fusiliers 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

**Died 25 September 1915**

**W**illiam R Wilson was born on 1 May 1887 at Baillies Causeway, Hamilton. His father, Joseph Wilson was born c1856 in Ireland and worked variously as a miner, an insurance agent, a sewing machine agent and later a general labourer. His mother, Elizabeth Lewis was also born in Ireland, c1860 and came to Rosehall, Coatbridge to work as a cotton mill weaver. She and Joseph married in 1882 at Coatbridge. By 1891 the couple and their family were living at Gibson's Building in Bellshill. It was there that Elizabeth died in 1926 followed by Joseph in 1932.

William Wilson enlisted with the 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers. The 2nd Battalion came under the orders of the 21st Brigade, 7th Division. The Division landed initially in Zeebrugge in October 1914 as part of a force intended to relieve Antwerp, but almost immediately moved down to Ypres where it joined the main British Expeditionary Force. After seeing action at the first Battle of Ypres the following year the Division fought at Neuve Chapelle, Aubers, Festubert, Givenchy and the Battle of Loos. The first day of the Battle of Loos was on the 25 September 1915 and the Division took part in the initial assault north of the Vermelles-Hulluch road, facing the Quarries and a series of strongpoints. Suffering badly from British cloud gas - which was not moved sufficiently by the gentle breeze - and badly cut up by German machine gun fire and artillery, the Division nonetheless seized the Quarries and only failed to penetrate the third German line due to the relative weakness of the numbers of men that got through.

Lance Sergeant William Wilson was killed in action on that first day of Battle, the 25 September 1915 and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial for men with no known grave. Seven men from Bothwell also died at Loos and details of the Battle are given on page 25.

William Wilson had 5 siblings.

1. **George Wilson** was born c1883 at Airdrie and was an engineman
2. **Joseph Wilson** was born c1883 at Airdrie. He was a general labourer and emigrated to the USA in 1904. Later that year at Ohio, USA, he married Agnes Penman a 24 year old from Falkirk. Joseph died at Framington, USA in 1953.
3. **William Wilson.**
4. **John Wilson** was born 1891 at Bellshill.
5. **Jane Wilson** was born c1894 at Coatbridge.
6. **Stewart Wilson** was born in 1901 at Bellshill.

# GUARDSMAN JOHN YOUNG

(9495)

## Scots Guards 1st Battalion

**Died 11 November 1914**

John Young was born on 2 March 1870 at Gartsherrie, Lanarkshire. His father William Young was born c1839 at Glasgow. He was a coal miner and, in 1861 at Gartsherrie, married Agnes Robertson. Agnes was born c1841 at Denny, Stirlingshire and died at Gartsherrie in 1873 aged 32. William and Agnes had five of a family at Gartsherrie, William c1863, Thomas c1864, Agnes c1866, Alexander c1868 and John born 1870. After Agnes died, William remarried Elizabeth McKinlay in 1875 at Monkland. William, Elizabeth and family moved to Bargeddie where Elizabeth gave birth to four children; daughter Elizabeth born c1877, Margaret born c1878, Rebecca born c1879 and James born c1880. From Bargeddie William, Elizabeth and family moved to Stonefield, Blantyre and by 1891 were living at Bothwellpark where William worked in the colliery. William died in 1901 at Blantyre.

In 1894 John Young was a miner living and working at Hamilton Palace Colliery, Bothwellhaugh. There he married Jeanie Watson, a 19 year old, also from Bothwellhaugh. They moved into 17 Brandon Place, Bothwellhaugh and raised six children.

Guardsman John Young was in his early forties when he enlisted at Hamilton and was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Scots Guards. The battalion was part of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Guards) Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division and in August 1914 they departed for Le Havre, France as part of the British Expeditionary Force. Their first engagement was at the Battle of Mons and the subsequent retreat from Mons. In September they saw action at the Battle of the Marne that saw the German advance halted after much bitter fighting. Later in September and into November the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion took part in the First Battle of Ypres.

The Battle for Nonnebosschen occurred towards the end of the first battle of Ypres. At this part of the British front line, there were three woods: Polygon Wood, Nonnebosschen Wood and Glencourse Wood. In a gap between Polygon Wood and Glencourse Wood was Black Watch Corner, a stronghold held by the Black Watch. Also in this section of the line were the 1<sup>st</sup> Scots Guards, the 1<sup>st</sup> Cameron Highlanders and the 1<sup>st</sup> Kings.



*Crest of the Scots Guards*

On the morning of 11 November 1914, the German attack began at 06.30 with a heavy artillery barrage from the German guns and the Prussian Guards moved out into No Man's Land. 17,000 German infantry advanced on less than 7,000 men of the British Army. The infantry assault began after the barrage had lifted and thousands of Prussian Guards streamed across the gap between Polygon Wood and the Menin Road. The 1<sup>st</sup> Kings in Polygon Wood were the only surviving troops left after the barrage had forced the Cameron Highlanders, Scots Guards and Black Watch back. As the Prussians came in sight, the batteries behind the Guards opened up with shrapnel.

At 08.45 the position was critical – 1st Cameron Highlanders and the 1st Scots Guards were still out of their trenches and Black Watch Corner was the only strongpoint held in the line; this consisted of 40 men in a trench inside the hedges of a cottage garden protected by a few strands of barbed wire. Artillery fire from the two batteries and rifle fire from stragglers from 1st Brigade aided a motley collection of soldiers (cooks, officer's servants, medical orderlies, clerks, and engineers) stemmed the enemy advance and eventually with the aid of reserves, drove them back to their own lines.

It was on that day, the 11 November 1914 that Guardsman John Young lost his life at the age of 44. His body was never recovered and he is commemorated at Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial.

Three months later the following notice was placed in the Glasgow Herald of 19 February 1915 "*Private John Young (9495), 1st Scots Guards, has been missing since November 11. Any information will be gratefully received by his wife. 17 Brandon Place, Bothwell Haugh, Bothwell.*"

John Young left a wife and six children when he went off to war.

1. **Agnes Young** was born c1899 at Blantyre.
2. **Jeanie Young** was born 1901 at Bothwellhaugh. She was a domestic servant and in 1921 at the Manse, Bothwell she married John Gray a miner from Burnbank.
3. **John Young** was born c1903 at Bothwellhaugh.
4. **Janet Young** was born c1905 at Bothwellhaugh.
5. **Mary Young** was born c1907 at Bothwellhaugh.
6. **James Young** was born c1908 at Bothwellhaugh. James was a fitter living at Strathaven and in 1940 at Crossford he married Marion Caldwell a 24 year old assistant forewoman in a hosiery factory.

# BEFORE THE CENOTAPH

by

A. MacCormack Thompson

Two minutes silence....  
How still the people stood – as carved from wood.  
So still – the papers said – that even a pin let fall  
Might have been heard by that mute multitude  
There met, to own a debt they could not pay, nor yet forget.

Two minutes silence....  
God! What tumult rent my ears as I stood there:  
The shriek of shells, the groans of mangled men,  
The screams of horses maddened with their pain:  
The air around them seemed splitting with the sound  
Of bursting bombs that tore the breast of earth  
And shred the very crosses of the soldiers dead.

Two minutes solomn silence!  
My smothered sob – half laugh,  
Was heard by none before the Cenotaph.

MacCormack Thomson was a prominent Bothwell resident who fought in the Great War and died in 1962. His poem “Before the Cenotaph” was published in the Hamilton Advertiser 8 November 1930.

## **Subscribers to “Lest We Forget”**

David and Marjory Barclay  
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