



# NOT FORGOTTEN

Raising Awareness of the Meaning of Remembrance Day

Supported through  
Their Past Your Future 2 (TPYF 2) Programme

written by Peter Daniel  
design by Camilla Bergman

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# INTRODUCTION

At 11am, on 11th November, 1918 an armistice was agreed to end World War One. The war which started on the 4th August 1914 had claimed the lives of 885,138 British servicemen. Many who died had no known grave, which only added to the suffering of those who were grieving.

On the armistice's second anniversary, the Unknown Warrior was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey with the belief that this grave would represent all those who had no known grave. It was hoped that it would help to bring closure for grieving relatives, who were still struggling to come to terms with their loss.

In July 2009 both of the last surviving veterans, Henry Allingham and Harry Patch died. Now they have gone, the living link to the Great War has gone with them. It will be increasingly difficult for future generations to realise the significance of not only the Unknown Warrior, but all of the many war memorials that remain with us. The Not Forgotten project seeks to meet this challenge.

The project is funded by *Their Past Your Future 2*, a Big Lottery funded initiative, which seeks to increase young people's understanding of conflict. The partners in this project reflect the final journey in 1920 of the Unknown Warrior through Kent to Westminster. It includes East Kent, Medway, Bexley and Westminster Archives and aims to bring alive the story of the Unknown Warrior for a younger audience by looking at the stories of four soldiers with no known grave who all have a link to Kent.

The four soldiers reflect a range of ranks and social backgrounds, including the first soldier shot for desertion and Britain's first black infantry officer. They span the key campaigns from Mons in 1914, the Somme in 1916, to the final German offensive in 1918.

The soldiers and the schools chosen to study them are:

- Second Lieutenant Walter Tull, a former Spurs and Northampton footballer and Britain's first black infantry officer, remembered on the Dover War Memorial, Folkestone War Memorial and Arras War Memorial, France (Our Lady of Rosary Primary School, Blackfen, Sidcup)
- Sergeant Richard 'Monty' Daniel, a shipwright from Chatham Dockyard killed at the Somme, remembered at Chatham Dockyard War Memorial and Thiepval War Memorial, France (Westminster Cathedral Primary School, Westminster)
- Private Thomas Highgate, first British soldier to be shot at dawn for desertion, remembered at Sidcup War Memorial and La Ferte-Sous-Jouarre War Memorial, France (Our Lady of Rosary Primary School, Blackfen, Sidcup)
- Captain Francis Gibbon Swainson, killed on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, remembered on the Westminster Rifles memorial scroll at Westminster Abbey and Thiepval War Memorial (St Vincent De Paul Primary School, Westminster)

The Not Forgotten story is a fictional story based on an article that appeared in the Evening Standard on November 11th 1920 called "The Mothers of Britain." I found this article in Westminster Abbey Archive and have used it as a basis of bringing together the stories of our four soldiers. The soldiers' stories are all factual, based on the archive sources that have been available to us.

I have to admit a personal bias here. When I was 10 years old, my grandfather Bill Daniel lent me a picture of his Uncle Monty for a school project. He told me that he remembered his uncle buying him sweets on the day he went off to war and that was the last he ever heard of him. Just before my grandfather died he gave me Monty's picture and I promised that I would find out what happened to him. The research on his story used in this project forms part of that promise I made to him.

I hope that the education pack and exhibition linked to this project will be a fitting tribute not just to Monty, Walter, Thomas and Francis but to all those who lost their lives in the Great War.

**Peter Daniel**

Education and Interpretation Officer  
City of Westminster Archives



# The Unknown Warrior

*The Unknown Warrior is buried in Westminster Abbey in memory of those who died in World War One who have no known grave.*

The idea that the body of an unknown soldier, sailor or airman lying in an unmarked grave abroad be returned to England for burial in Westminster Abbey was first made by the Reverend David Railton. He believed that the grave would represent all those who had died in World War One and who had no known grave.

Four bodies were exhumed from each of the main British battle areas on the Western Front on the night of 7 November 1920, and brought to the chapel at St Pol, in northern France. Each was covered with a Union Jack. The commander of British troops in France and Flanders, Brigadier-General L.J. Wyatt, picked one. This was placed in a coffin which was taken to Boulogne, where it was transported to Dover on 10th November by HMS Verdun. On the same day the coffin was taken to Dover Maritime Railway station and arrived at platform 8 at Victoria Station at 8.32pm that same evening. It remained there that night to await burial in Westminster Abbey the following day on the second anniversary of the Armistice.

On the morning of 11 November 1920, the Unknown Warrior was draped with Railton's own Union Jack that he'd used for battlefield services in France, and was then drawn through immense silent crowds to the Cenotaph. This war memorial on Whitehall, designed by Edwin Lutyens, was then unveiled by King George V. At 11 o'clock there was a two minutes silence, and the body was then taken to Westminster Abbey. It entered the abbey through a ceremonial guard of one hundred recipients of the Victoria Cross and was buried at the west end of the nave. One hundred women who had lost their husbands or all their sons also witnessed the burial.

The coffin was interred in soil from each of the main battlefields in France and the grave was eventually capped with a black Belgian marble stone (the only tombstone in the Abbey on which it is forbidden to walk). It features an inscription made from melted down wartime ammunition.

To the surprise of the organizers, in the week after the burial, an estimated 1,250,000 people visited the abbey, and the site is now one of the most visited war graves in the world.



# Not Forgotten



**THE SHRINE OF HONOUR.**

"WHO GOES THERE?"  
"I HAVE NO NAME. I DIED FOR MY COUNTRY."  
"PASS, UNKNOWN WARRIOR."

*Lurch* Nov 10  
1920

1

# Monty's Widow Jessie

She got into the train at Gillingham. A young woman completely dressed in black, who wore a look of sadness that no woman of her age should have borne. A brooch stood out on the collar of her somber dress. It was an army cap badge, a Kentish horse polished until it shone.

RAILWAY STATION  
GILLINGHAM KEN 9



THE GREAT WAR. Pictures from the Front.  
CENOTAPH DAY SOUVENIR NUMBER TO-MORROW -  
PAGES OF PICTURES  
**The Daily Mirror**  
CERTIFIED CIRCULATION LARGER THAN THAT OF ANY OTHER DAILY PICTURE PAPER  
No. 829 THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1918 (16 PAGES) One Shilling



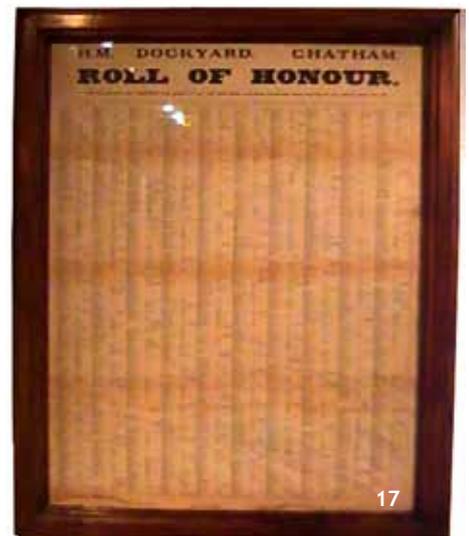
“Is this right for Victoria?” she asked addressing the other passengers. The man in the corner said he thought it was; but that they would have to change at Lewisham. She looked out of the window for a long time, and when she turned her gaze the man in the corner offered her a copy of the Daily Mirror to read. She looked intently at the pictures on the front page before replying.

Sgt Richard Monty Daniel (26th June 1888-26th October 1916) was killed by a German shell in the closing weeks of the Battle of the Somme.



Sgt R. M. Daniel, R.E.K.M.R  
1, York-ave, Gillingham.

Much sympathy has been expressed with Mrs Daniel, of 1, York-avenue, Gillingham, whose husband, Sgt. Richard Monty Daniel, was killed instantaneously by a German shell six days after he entered the trenches on October 20th. Sgt. Daniel joined the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles in August, 1914, and being transferred to the Buffs went to France in September, 1916. His officer, writing to the widow, says: "Though he was not with us for long we had the good favour of recognising his true mettle and worth." Sgt. Daniel, who belonged to Clive-road, Rochester, was educated at the Wesleyan Higher Grade School, Gillingham, and became a shipwright-apprentice in H.M. Dockyard, Chatham. He was twenty-eight years of age, and was married four months ago.

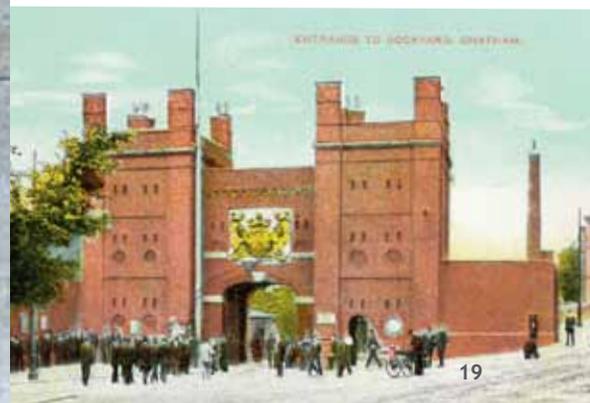


Dadson E.	Army.
Dally G.	" Killed.
Daltrey T.	"
Daly G. A.	"
Daniel R. M.	" Killed.
Daniel R. R.	"
Daniells A.	"
Daniells F.	"
Daniels A. E.	"

He has no known grave and is remembered on memorials at Thiepval, and Chatham Dockyard.



CRISPIN J.  
CRONIN D.  
CROUD F.  
CURNESSE F. G.  
DALTON N.  
DANIEL R. M.  
DAVIES G.  
DAVIS W. R. V.  
DAWSON G.  
DENHAM W.  
DOE A.  
DUNKLEY F.



“No thanks,” she replied, “I’ve got plenty to think on besides that I’m going to London to the funeral of my husband.” There was a pause. “Yes, they’re burying him in Westminster Abbey today.” Through the dimness of her tears she smiled.

Nobody said anything but the silence was painful.

Richard Monty Daniel was born into a family of Kentish bargemen in Snodland on 26th June, 1888. He grew up in Rochester near the River Medway in Kent and went to the Wesleyan Higher Grade School in Gillingham.



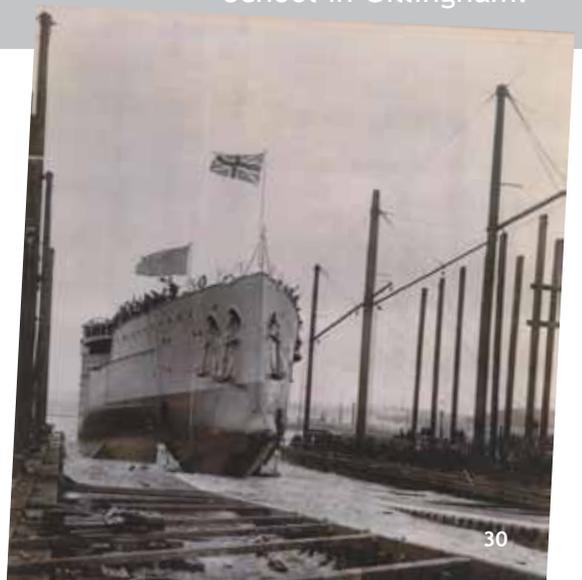
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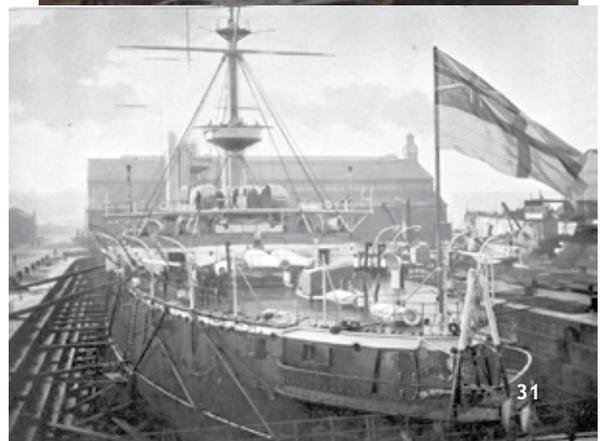
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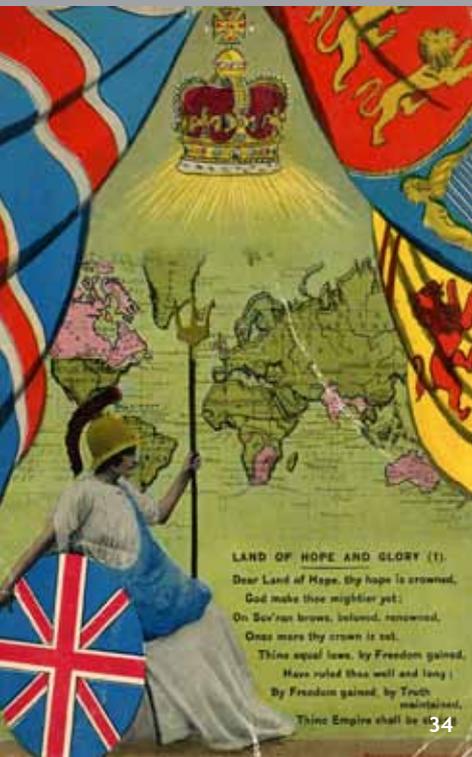
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Monty took an apprenticeship as a shipwright at H.M. Dockyard, Chatham.

# “It’s my Monty.”

“Yes,” she added, “the papers say they are going to bury an unknown warrior, but I know it’s him. I know. If a wife doesn’t know, who should? I’ve sort of felt all along it may be my Monty but last night it came to me in a dream, all sudden like, it was. He was a lovely man, my Monty.”

Like most people in Edwardian times, Monty was very patriotic and in 1909 he became a part time soldier (a territorial) when he joined the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles.



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He loved the annual camp by the coast, with Captain Winch and the men of A (Chatham) Squadron because it gave him two weeks leave from Chatham Dockyard.

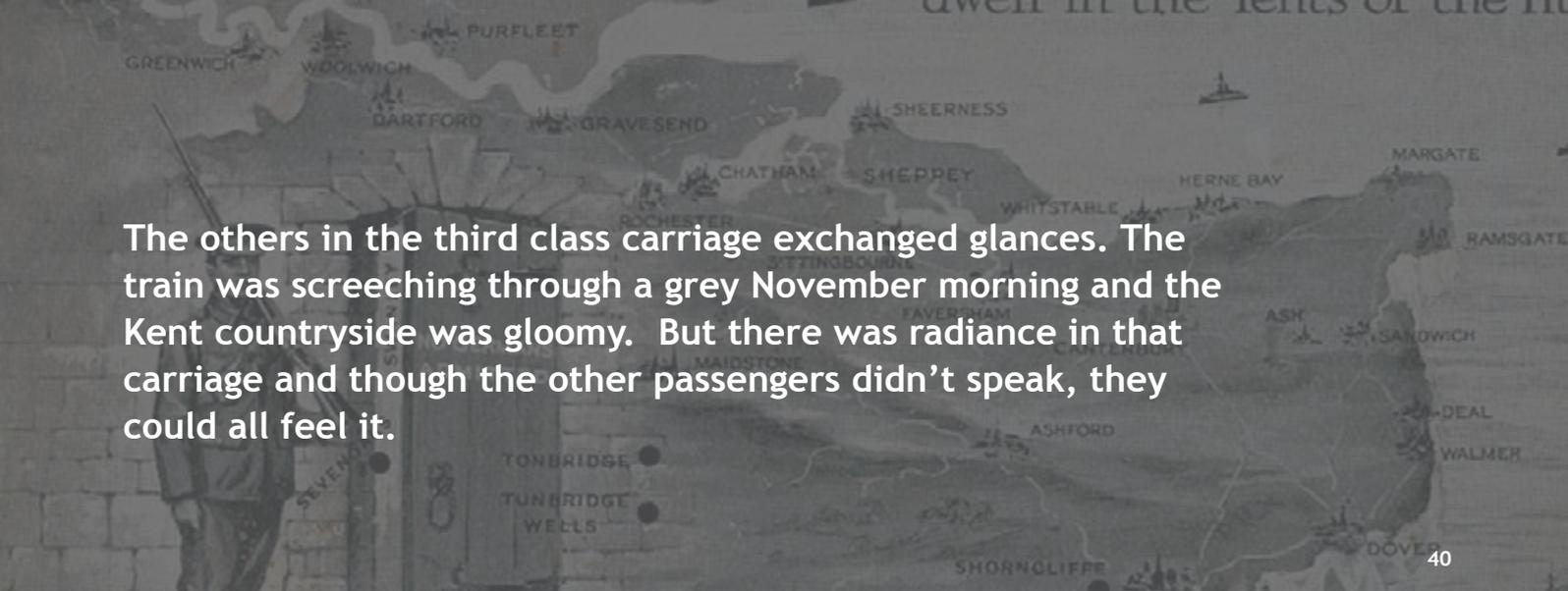


In January 1914, Monty took his fiancé Jessie Punnet, a Chatham grocer's daughter, to the Yeomanry Ball at the Town Hall. None of the revellers knew that they were a matter of months away from the beginning of the Great War.



39

The others in the third class carriage exchanged glances. The train was screeching through a grey November morning and the Kent countryside was gloomy. But there was radiance in that carriage and though the other passengers didn't speak, they could all feel it.



40



41

As a territorial soldier, Monty did not have to serve abroad. When war broke out in 1914, he found himself on garrison duty in Kent so that regular soldiers could be released for France.

The death of his sister, Ruth's, sailor husband, George Percival, in 1915 made him feel increasingly uneasy about this. He'd earlier spent time with wounded soldiers in Herne Bay Military Hospital, whilst recovering from bronchitis, which only added to his guilt.

WAR SCENES IN CHATHAM.  
ARRIVAL OF NAVAL AND ARMY RESERVE.  
THE LOCAL TERRITORIALS CALLED UP.  
EXCITEMENT IN THE TOWNS.

42



45



44

He decided to transfer to the Royal East Kent Regiment, "The Buffs," who had suffered heavy casualties on the Somme. This was despite having only recently married his sweetheart, Jessie Punnett, on 25th July, 1916.



43

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

GIVEN AT THE

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Occupation.	Rank or Profession of Father.
227	July 25 <sup>th</sup> 1916	Richard Monty Daniel	25	bachelor	Sergeant R.F.C.	7-6 Lins Road Rochester	David Daniel	Mariner (deceased)
		Jessie Emma Rose Punnett	25	spinster	Drapery Assistant	High Street Chatham	Henry Nelson Punnett	grocer

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England by licence or after \_\_\_\_\_ by us.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Richard Monty Daniel } in the presence of us, { Henry Nelson Punnett }  
{ Jessie Emma Rose Punnett } { Gladys Mary Jackson }  
Gladys Mary Jackson  
Gladys Mary Jackson

J. H. Cutting, Minister

47

**WANTED !!**  
Active young men for a SEDENTARY LIFE.  
HERE to-day & the SAME PLACE to-morrow.  
KENT, THE GARDEN OF EDEN!  
Check full of EYES but NO SNAKES.  
Bloody great SWORDS but NO RISK.  
ENGLAND hath need of thee!!  
**GOD HELP ENGLAND!!!**

46

“Monty you see, was killed at the Somme. The chaplain said it was very sudden, a shell you see. He died instantly, no pain the chaplain said. Died with his Sergeant’s stripes still on him.”  
 A look of sorrow came over her tired face. “I’d met him when he was a shipwright at Chatham Dockyard. He was just a part time soldier then. He told me it got him two weeks off in the summer. We’d only been married three months when he left.”

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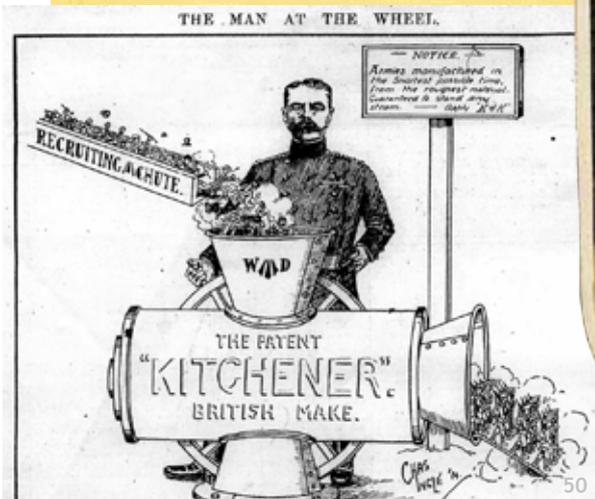
On 20th September, 1916, Monty left for France. Just over a month later he would be dead. Before he left, he took his 12 year old nephew Bill to a corner shop to buy him some sweets.



51

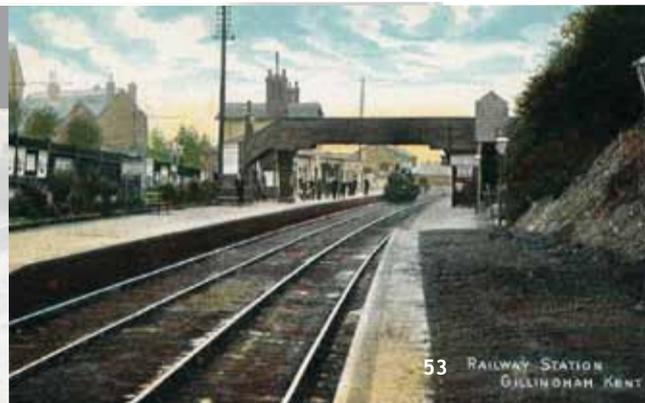


52



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Monty waved goodbye to him, before turning to Jessie, the new Mrs. Daniel, to kiss her goodbye.



53 RAILWAY STATION GILLINGHAM KENT

Before the door of the train slammed shut, he made her promise to be there for him on the platform the day he returned back home. However, none of his family would ever see him again.

# What Monty Said

“I remember what he said on the platform when he left for France. I was there with his mum and his nephew Billy. I told him he was to mind and be careful and he laughed and said that if anything happened he was to be given a swell burial in Westminster Abbey, and Emily, his mum, she laughed too, and cried a bit and said it would be Westminster Abbey sure. And so it is. I know.”

54



55

Monty arrived in France on the 21st September, 1916. The following day he found himself at the infamous “Bullring,” (The 38th Infantry Base in Etaples) where he was trained for trench warfare.



56

When Monty finally marched off to the Somme battlefield with the rest of his draft from the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles, he found himself part of the 7th Buffs.



59



58

These men looked on him as their Sergeant, as they struggled to cope with the awful conditions in the captured German, ‘Fabeck Graben’ trench. It was flooded and full of rats when they arrived on the 20th October 1916.



57



60



61

The young widow looked at the faces in the carriage daring them to contradict her.

“I hope,” said the man in the corner “you will have a good place at the Abbey today.”

62

Monty found that this was a very different war from the one he'd trained for. A new weapon, the tank, had taken the place of the cavalry's horses. Horses were of no real use in the trenches of France, so cavalymen like Monty were forced to become infantry foot soldiers.



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It seems almost incredible to us today that Monty would have trained to fight with a sword in 1915 when he was about to face machine guns, poisonous gas and explosive shells.

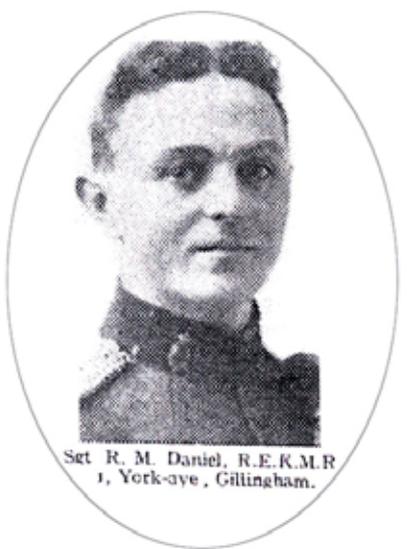
On 26th October, 1916, just hours before “The Buffs” were about to be relieved, the Germans shelled Monty’s trench and he was killed. It is likely that there was little left of Monty to bury. In any case, many graves became lost in the chaos of battle. Monty became one of the many killed on the Somme to have no known grave. The Regimental diary for the Buffs claims that the Fabeck trench was shelled from 5am to 6.30am. At 12 noon the diary reports that 3 OR (Other Ranks = ordinary soldiers) were killed one of whom was Monty. He had lasted just 6 days in the front line.



67

BUFF, 1916.

“No I’ve got no place. Maybe I ought to have written to them at the Abbey, and told them I knew it was our Monty that they were burying. But William, my brother in law, told me last night they were very busy in London and maybe I’d not get an answer. So I’m just going. I got on this train at Gillingham, and it was on the platform there that I last saw him. I promised I’d be there to meet him when he came back. Well here I am.”



Sgt R. M. Daniel, R.E.K.M.R 1, York-aye, Gillingham.

**SERGEANT R MONTY DANIEL**  
East Kent Regiment, The Buffs,  
Of Rochester  
Killed in action

The many friends of Sergt. R Monty Daniel of “The Buffs” East Kent Regiment will hear with regret but also with patriotic pride, that he has fallen in fighting the enemy “ Somewhere in France.” The bursting of a German shell, when he was serving in the trenches caused his death. Mrs Daniel received a touching letter from the Second Lieutenant of the Regiment on 31st October testifying to the zeal and tact displayed by this young soldier and saying how very sorry he was to lose him. The same post also brought a letter from his chum Sergt. Ward who crossed over to France with the battalion from their last training camp in England on September 20th, 1916. The writers of both letters state that death was instantaneous and consequently free from pain and that everything possible was done as regards burial etc. A native of Rochester, Monty was the youngest son of the late Mr Friend Daniel and of Mrs Daniel of 7 Clive Rd and was educated at the Higher Grade Wesleyan School, Gillingham. Leaving school he entered the Royal Dockyard as a shipwright apprentice and had been out of his time about eight years when the war broke out. In the meantime he joined the Royal East Kent Yeomanry, from which he transferred to the Buffs on arriving in France. Sergt. Daniel was married to Jessie, the only daughter of Mr and Mrs Henry Nelson Punnett of 1, York Avenue, Gillingham and the letters she had received from him up to the time of his death had shown that he was in the best of health and spirits.

Six months after Monty was killed the Army sent his belongings back to Jessie. She was upset to find that Monty’s rank was given as Private and not Sergeant.

No. 3946.



Harcourt Buildings,  
Temple, E. C.

Dear Mr. Hodge,

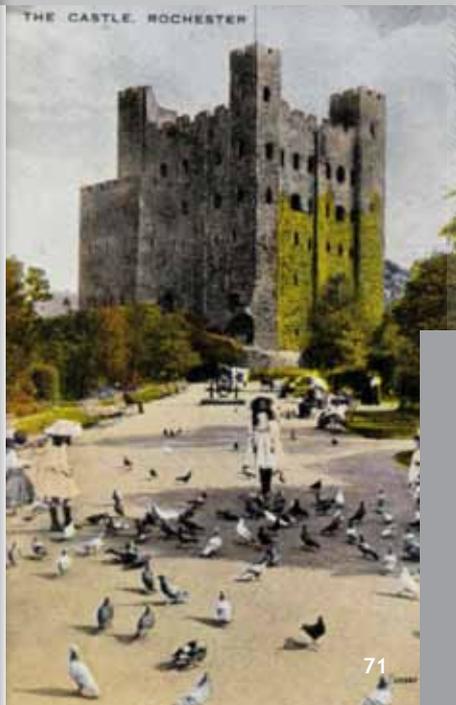
Mrs. Daniel the widow of Sergeant Daniel of the 7th Buffs, complains that she is only receiving a Private's pension - It appears Sergeant Daniel went to France in the R. E. K. Mounted Rifles & was killed on the 6th Oct. 1916. - Sergt. Daniel was killed with his stripes on him & the letters of the Lieutenant & Chaplain announcing his death, so described him.

Should be glad if you would have this matter put right with arrears.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Gerald F. Mohlen, M. P.

Jessie’s local M.P. Gerald Hohlen wrote to try and obtain for her a Sergeant’s pension. However, the Army refused, despite Monty being killed with his stripes on him.



At 11am on 11th November, 1918, Monty’s nephew, Bill, stood on top of Rochester Castle and played the Last Post to mark the end of World War One. As he did so he spared a thought for his uncle that had waved goodbye to him two years before and never came home.

# Sorrow in Sidcup

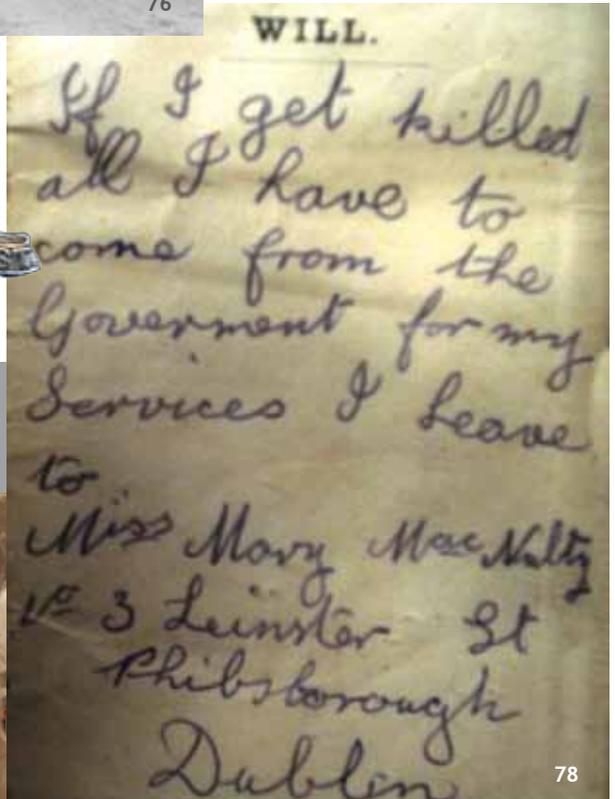
The wheels of the train scrunched, and it pulled up at a murky Sidcup station. There was a hurried movement on the platform. "You'd better get in here, love," and a porter jerked the door open. The passengers moved to make room for the newcomer. She was small, and her old face was as white as marble. Sorrow rested in that face. She was in black, and she was carrying a wreath. From it hung a card on which was written: "Thomas Highgate from mother." For a minute she held it on her lap, and then she carefully placed it on the rack. She sighed softly.

74

Private Thomas James Highgate (13th May, 1895 - 8th September, 1914) was the first British soldier to be convicted of desertion and executed during World War One.



Born in Shoreham Kent, Highgate was a farm labourer before joining the 1st Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment on 4th February, 1913, aged just seventeen.



He was first posted to Dublin and in his short time there he met his sweetheart Mary MacNulty. On the outbreak of war he was sent to France, as part of the British Expeditionary Force, where he found himself thrown into the battle and then the retreat from Mons.

Jessie finally broke the silence. "You've got your grief, too, missus."

"Yes," Mrs Highgate sighed, looking long and curiously at Jessie.

"He died at Mons." The words, however, fell on deaf ears.

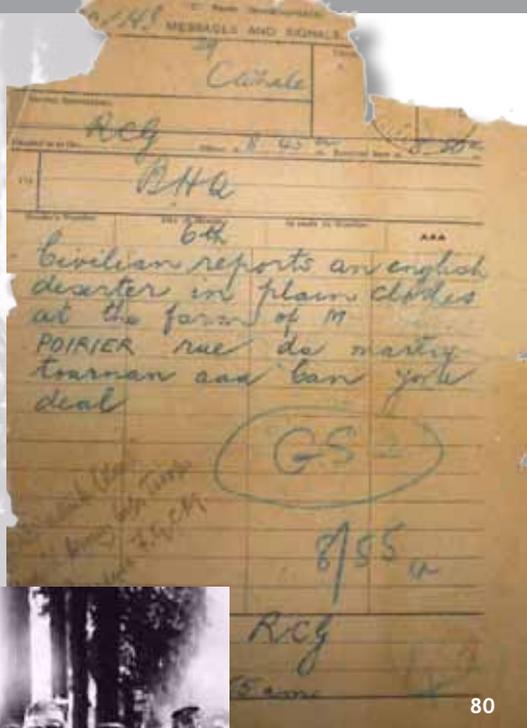
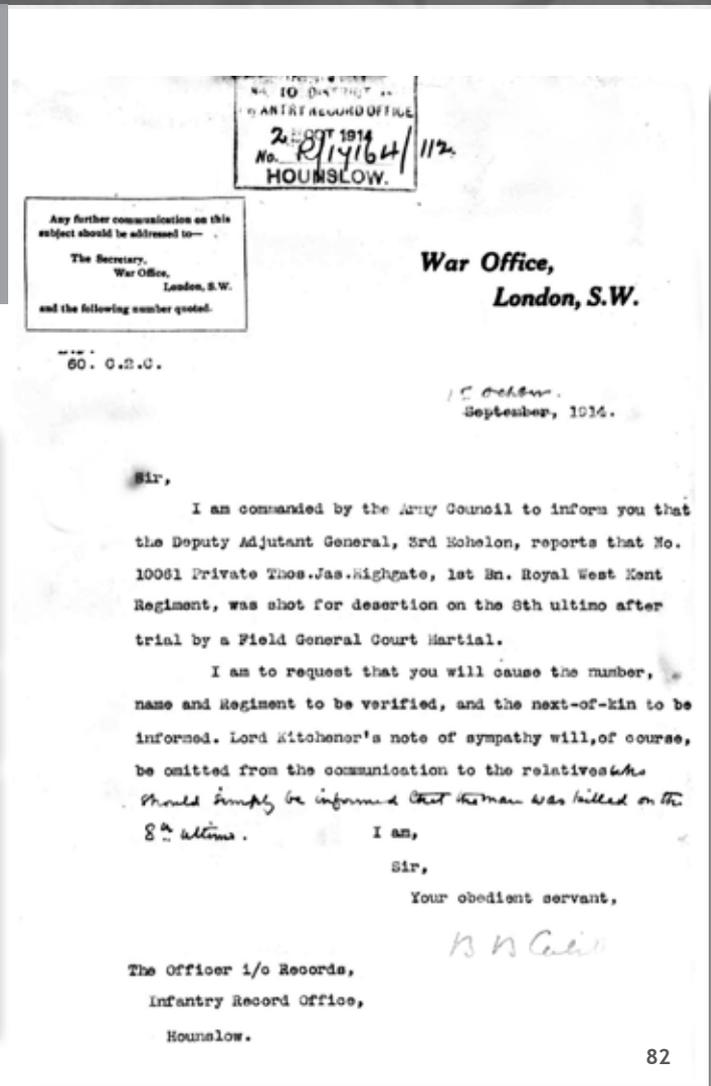
"Maybe you're saying good-bye to your sister or-brother?" Jessie asked.

"My son," was the reply, but Jessie still didn't really hear her.

"Yes, it's hard. It's hard to lose your son. My Monty, you know was a soldier and he was killed at the Somme. Had your son been sick long?"

"He died at Mons," whispered Mrs Highgate. Then went on: "Executed at 7.07am precisely."

His alleged offence, trial and death sentence all took place on 6th September, 1914. Highgate was undefended and called no witnesses, (his comrades were too scattered in the retreat to help with his defence) but claimed he was a 'straggler' trying to rejoin his regiment having got separated in the retreat.



The court martial found him guilty on the testament of one witness, who had initially discovered him. His previous desertion in February, 1914, when he'd tried to sign up for another regiment, also counted heavily against him.

# Shot at Dawn

She contined “He never had a chance. They caught him, tried him and sentenced him to death, all in one day. He was only 19. They even lost his body! I prayed they’d find him, now they have and they are burying him at Westminster Abbey today.”

83

Despite the fact that Highgate had kept hold of his paybook, thus retaining his identity as a soldier, his pleas of innocence were quickly dismissed by the court. This was because senior Officers wanted to make an example of him and insisted he was to be executed “At once, as publicly as possible.”

Date: *8th September 1914* No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Alleged Offender (s)	Offence charged	Plea	Finding, and If Convicted, Sentence (s)	How dealt with by Confirming Officer
<i>18051 Pals James Highgate West Kent Co.</i>	<i>When in active service Deserting from Majority's Service</i>	<i>Not Guilty</i>	<i>Guilty To suffer death by being shot</i>	<i>Captain Admiral Commanding Confidential</i>

84



85

Highgate was informed of his fate at 6:22am on 8th September, 1914, in the presence of a clergyman. An Officer then ordered a burial party and a firing squad to prepare, and Highgate was shot, aged 19, at 7:07am in front of men from the first battalions of the Dorset and Cheshire Regiments.



86



87

WILLIAM ANNETT  
 PERCY ASLIN  
 HENRY BLAKE  
 STEPHEN BLUNDELL  
 WALTER BLUNDELL  
 ALFRED BRISTOW  
 CECIL CHEESEMAN  
 RICHARD CHEESEMAN  
 WALTER CHEESEMAN  
 DAVID FARMER

ALBERT FORD  
 ARTHUR FRANKLIN  
 SYDNEY GILBERT  
 THOMAS KIMBER  
 HENRY LANE  
 ARTHUR LYNN  
 ALBERT LYNN  
 ALBERT MILES  
 GEOFFREY MOORE  
 HENRY MORGAN  
 HARRY NICOLLS

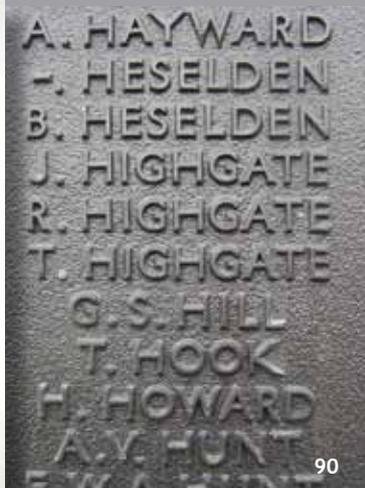
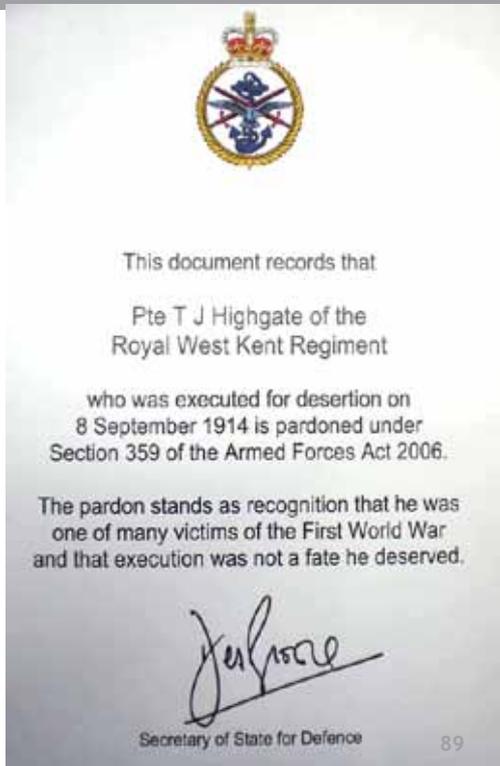
FREDERICK  
 WALTER PETT  
 WILLIAM PETT  
 WILLIAM PLANE  
 LEWIS TAPPIN  
 JOSEPH TAYLOR  
 THOMAS UPTON  
 PERCY WEBB  
 ARTHUR WELLS  
 THOMAS WILSON  
 ROBERT WOOD

The young widow looked at her. It seemed as though she wanted to speak. But the colour went from her face and a searching look came into her eyes.

“My Monty...” she began and then stopped.

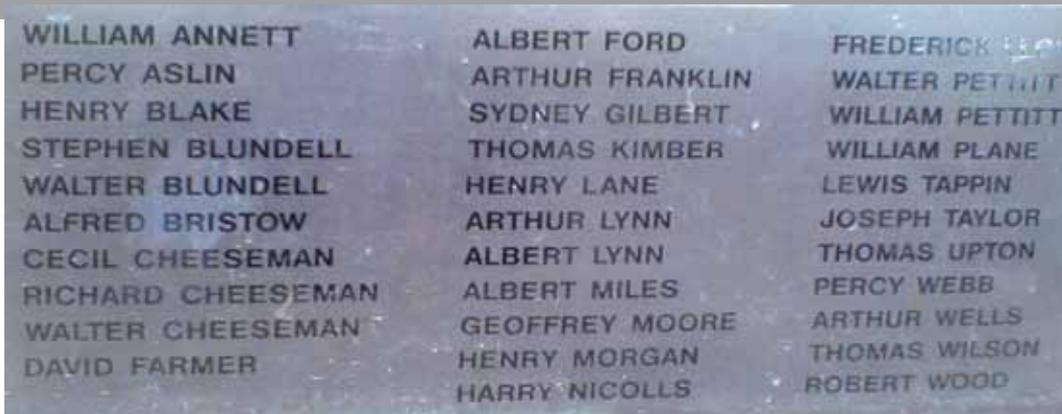
“Our Thomas...” began the other, and then stopped also.

No grave is known for Highgate, though his name is shown on the British military memorial at La Ferte-sous-Jouarre, Seine-et-Marne and on the Sidcup war memorial in Kent.



His name sits beneath his two brothers, L/Cpl Robert Highgate, 24, killed in France on 3 January 1915, and Pte Joseph Highgate, 19, who died of wounds on 6 June 1916.

The place of his birth, Shoreham, has continued to exclude his name from their local war memorial, despite Highgate receiving a posthumous pardon in August, 2006. A space has been left in case this decision ever changes.



# An Elegant Mother from Blackheath

The train pulled into Lewisham station and those who needed to change for Victoria left the train. Nobody spoke on the platform. They were joined by another lady. She too wore black, but the elegance of her dress hinted at a wealthy background not shared by the others. The Victoria train arrived and was soon tearing on its way, and the world outside was damp and murky.



92



93

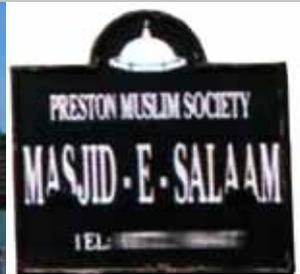
Francis Gibbon Swainson (2nd October, 1894 - 1st July 1916) was born into a family of wealthy Preston tea merchants in 1895. His birth place, 49 Watling Street Road, Preston is now a mosque.



94



95

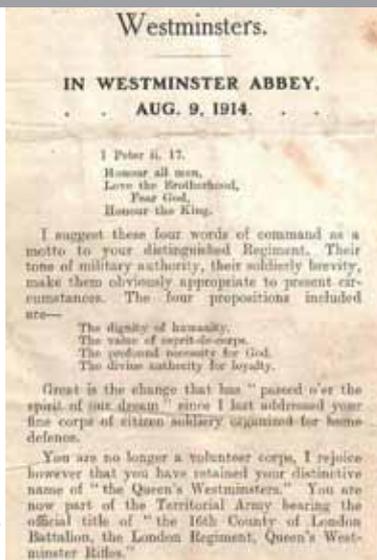


96

After leaving Reptan Public School he came to London in 1911 aged just 16. He joined the Queens Westminster Rifles and went to France as a raw 19 year old 2nd Lieutenant in November, 1914, but a month later was forced to return home with frostbite.



99



97



98



100



101

By 1915 Swainson was back in France and because of his earlier bravery at Ypres, he was promoted to temporary Captain in October of that year. In December, 1915, he was in the front line when poison gas was first used against the Westminsters.

The passengers, who had been together since Gillingham, looked at each other and then, a little furtively, they looked at the elegant new comer. It was Monty's widow who broke the silence. She'd noticed that the newcomer wore a military badge like her. "That's a pretty brooch." The elegant lady reached for her brooch. It was in the shape of a cross but was expensively enameled in red, blue and silver.

102



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At 7:30am on 1st July, 1916. Captain Swainson was waiting to lead his men over the top at Gommecourt, on the first day of the Somme. Just two weeks before, he'd been home on leave having been awarded his Military Cross. At his mother's house in Blackheath he was able to see both her and his young niece Joan (the mother of the late BBC DJ John Peel) before returning to France.

20. 6. 1916

My dear Auntie Midge,  
 Thanks very much indeed for your letter. The M.C came as a great surprise to me. I got it for a little show at Ypres I believe but it is not for bravery because I am always very frightened. Somebody you know said "War is made up of hours of boredom relieved by moments of abject horror"!!

I was home on leave for four days & only got back here on the 15th & have been busy getting up the

stairs again so as to speak. Joan has grown enormously. She is very bad humoured. She spat several times at her Uncle - Godfather!!

Please thank Frank for his letter. I will write to him later. Will you tell him that I had a long talk with Major Hussey the other night. We are in the same Brigade.

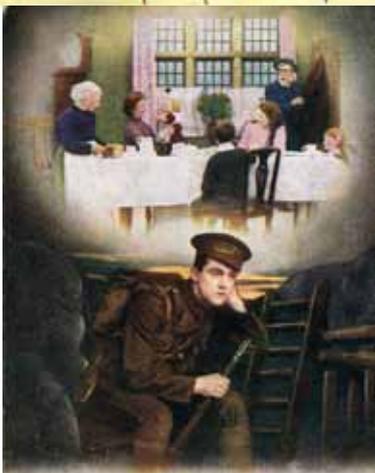
Your affectionate cousin  
 Francis Swainson

103



105

When the Westminsters left the safety of their trenches, the German machine gunners were waiting for them. As they bunched around a gap in the German barbed wire the Germans opened fire. The Westminsters didn't stand a chance.



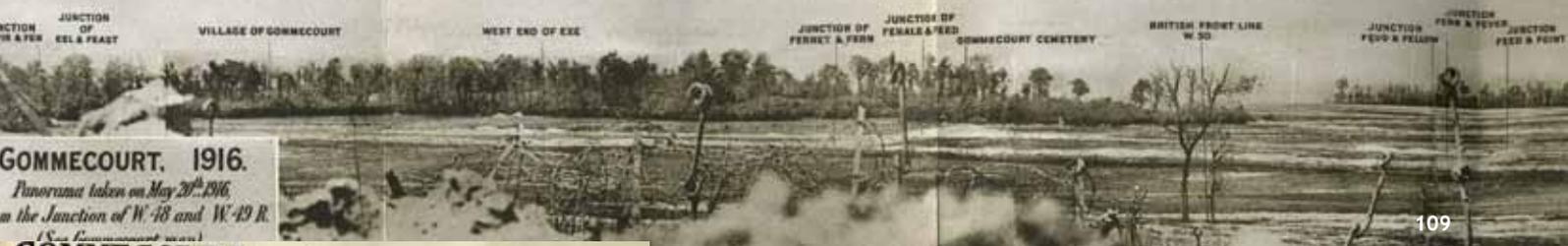
106



107

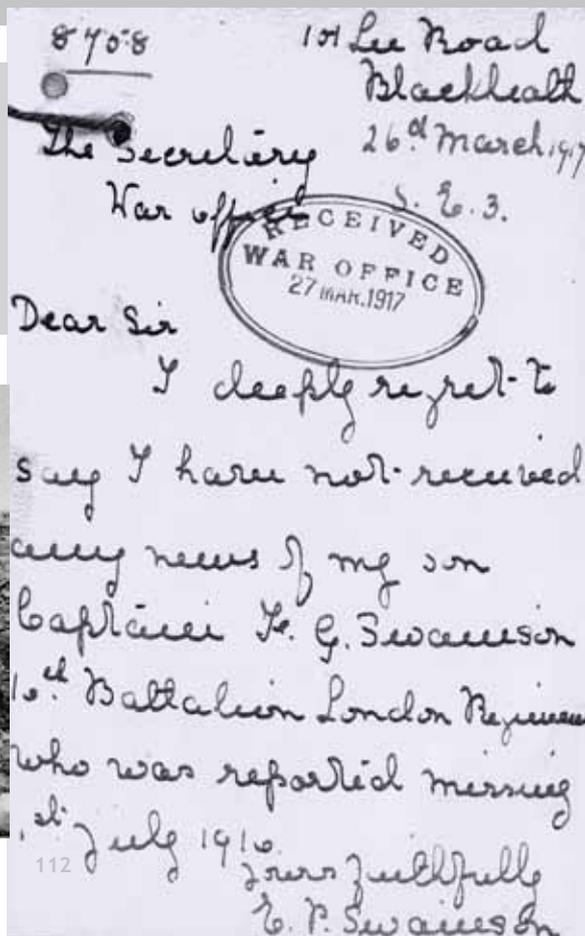
“My son gave me this the last time he came home to see us in Blackheath. He was only 21 but already a captain. Captain Francis Gibbon Swainson of the Queen’s Westminster Rifles. I was so proud of him when he won the Military Cross. I told all our friends in Preston, that’s where we’re from, you know.

Swainson made the second German trench. Displaying suicidal bravery, he charged out of this trench, and was seen falling under a hail of bullets. Captain Francis Gibbon Swainson MC of the Queen’s Westminster Rifles was dead.



Out of 689 men of the Westminster who went into battle at Gommecourt on the 1st July 1916, 494 were killed or wounded (72% of the Battalion). The total number of British casualties on the first day of the Battle of the Somme were 57,470 including 19,240 dead - the bloodiest day in the history of the British army.

X Marks the spot where Swainson was killed near the Junction of Feed and Etch trenches.



Then he went missing on the first day of the Somme. The 1st July 1916, the worst day of my life. Now they've found him and are burying him in Westminster Abbey."

Swainson was initially listed as missing. His mother Eliza did not have confirmation of his death until nearly a year later.



C. 2, Casualties, 9/London Regt. /8758. April, 1917.

Madam,

I am commanded by the Army Council to thank you for your letter of 26th March, to the effect that you have received no further information concerning Captain F. G. Swainson, 16th Battalion, The London Regiment.

The Army Council are in consequence regretfully constrained to conclude that this officer died on or since 1st July, 1916, and I am to express their sympathy with you in your bereavement.

I am,  
Madam,  
Your obedient Servant,

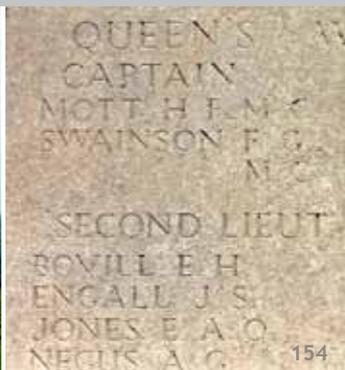
*Ed. B. B. Cobden*

114



She was sent his prayer book, writing case and Military Cross on 28th June, 1917, but she never found out what happened to his body.

He is remembered, on the Thiepval Memorial in France and on the Westminster's memorial scroll kept within Westminster Abbey.



# The Man in the Corner

It was then that the man in the corner spoke. He had sat listening intently to the story that the elegant lady, Mrs Swainson, told.

118

Walter Daniel John Tull, was born on the 28th April, 1888, in Folkestone, Kent. His father was a carpenter from Barbados and his mother was from a family of farm labourers in West Hougham, Dover, Kent.



Both his parents died by the time he was nine and Walter and his brother, Edward, were sent to the Bonner Road Children's Home and Orphanage in East London, where Walter joined the orphanage football team. Walter suffered a further blow when his brother, Edward, was adopted by a Glaswegian dentist, leaving Walter alone in the orphanage.

Walter joined amateurs Clapton F.C and later was spotted by Tottenham Hotspur, who signed him in 1909 and took him on their tour of Argentina and Uruguay.



In 1911, Walter joined Northampton Town, after being dropped by Tottenham, after a racist incident in a match for Spurs v Bristol City.

“Yes, it will be your boy, who will be laid to rest in Westminster Abbey. That is the beautiful idea. And not just your boy only, but the boy of every mother and husband of every wife....”

WHAT THE

124

On the 21st December, 1914, Walter enlisted in the Football Battalion, he was the first of his team, Northampton Town F.C., to have done so.



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**DO YOU WANT TO BE A CHELSEA DIE-HARD?**  
 IF SO  
**JOIN THE 17<sup>th</sup> BATT. MIDDLESEX REGT.**  
 "THE OLD DIE-HARDS"  
 And follow the lead given by your Favourite Football Players  
 OFFICES:  
 FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, 42, RUSSELL SQUARE, W.C.  
 WEST AFRICA HOUSE  
 TOWN HALL, CHELSEA



**PLAY THE GAME**  
 SHARPEN UP 'SPURS  
 COME FORWARD NOW  
 TO HELP TO REACH THE  
 GOAL OF VICTORY  
 SHOOT! SHOOT!! SHOOT!!!  
 AND STOP THIS  
**"FOUL PLAY"**  
 Join the Football Battalion  
**OF THE DIE-HARDS**  
 (17th Middlesex)

**DAILY CHRONICLE**  
**WALTER TULL LEADS THE WAY.**  
**FIRST OF THE COBBLER SENIORS TO ENLIST.**  
 Walter Tull has led the way among the Cobblers' first team in enlisting in the new Football Battalion. Other members of the side are hinting that they may do so early in the New Year.

126

Walter fought in the major battles of WWI, including the Somme and it wasn't long before Walter rose up the ranks to become 2nd Lieutenant Tull, an extraordinary achievement as this broke army regulations, which up until WWI operated a colour bar.

Register No. 174661  
 Muster Roll No.  
 55. *Sgt Walter Daniel Tull*  
*25th Batta Middlesex Regt*  
 (submitted for appointment to a commission in \_\_\_\_\_)  
 has been accepted for admission to No. 10 Officer Cadet Battalion,  
 to join at *Salisbury*  
 on the 20 JAN 1917 at *7 1/2*  
 Form B. D. 601 and *20/1/17*  
 6 FEB 1917  
 See London Gazette  
 15 JUN 1917  
 SPECIAL LISTING

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