

Great War Bulletin

No. 11...Newark...Monday 12 October 1914

WANTED: MORE CAVALARYMEN!

SHERWOOD Rangers Yeomanry – the area's regiment of mounted cavalrymen – are advertising for 300 more men who are "wanted immediately" for a reserve unit that is being formed.

The first unit is already in training in East Anglia, having had the honour of being chosen for service overseas in the near future.

Death on the Home Front

ONE of the hastily-assembled National Reserve guarding the tubular bridge over the Trent at Newark has been killed by an express train.

Thomas Bowers of 4 Eldon Place off Eldon Street was carrying a bucket of water from Quibell's fertiliser works when he was struck from behind.

And nobody could understand why he did not hear the train approaching.

Their best guess was that another train was rattling past in the other direction at the same time.

Thomas was 43 years old, and an iron moulder by trade.

He and his 42-year-old wife Elizabeth had a daughter, Daisy, age 5.

Town's first sacrifice in trenches

Newark's first soldier to perish in battle was officially named on Tuesday.

An intimation was received that Trooper William McLeod, of the 14th Hussars, had died of wounds received in the Battle of the Aisne.

Born in 1885, the youngest son of widow Sarah Ann McLeod, a 69-year-old charwoman living in 1 Tallents Row, off Pelham Street, he was educated at Mount School.

Leaving at 13, as was the custom, he worked for a pork butcher initially and then at Ransome's wood-working factory until 1906 when he joined the Hussars.

He served in India for six years, and returned home in November 1913 content in the knowledge that he had 'done his bit' for his country; and believing that he could rebuild a civilian life while caring for his elderly but immensely resilient mother.

But as a reservist, he was called-up on the outbreak of this Great War.

His mother had heard nothing from him until the Cavalry Record Office at York sent notification of his death to her by telegram last week.

A century on, modern records available at <http://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/ViewRecord>

Brave Willie the reservist is killed on the Aisne

[/1674145?reference=arrowLinks](#) reveal that Private 5721 McLeod was 28 years old and was in fact attached to the 20th Hussars when he perished on 17 September 1914.

William's heroics are remembered on La Ferte-Sous-Jouarre Memorial at Seine et Marne, less than 50 miles from the French capital of Paris.

He was one of 3,738 officers and men of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) who fell at the battles of Mons, Le Cateau, the Marne and the Aisne between the end of August and early October 1914 and have no known graves.

Mrs McLeod, who raised six children after being widowed in the 40s, reached the age of 82 before she passed away early in 1930.

Where Willie McLeod disappeared

THE First Battle of the Aisne from 13 to 28 September marked the end of mobile warfare on the Western Front and the start of the period of static trench warfare that would last until deep into 1918.

On 11 September, having been defeated in the First Battle of the Marne that had been fought between 3 and 9 September, the Chief of the German General Staff, Hermuth von Moltke, issued orders to retreat to the line of the River Aisne and to fortify the high ground north of the river.

This was his last act as Chief of the General Staff – on 14 September he was replaced by Erich von Falkenhayn.

On the same day the

Significance of the First Battle of the Aisne

German 1st and 2nd armies took up their positions on the Aisne and began to dig in.

The new German line was an ideal defensive position.

Any allied attack would have to cross the River Aisne and then attack up a 500 foot high ridge.

On top of that ridge was the Chemin des Dames, a road that gave the Germans an easy route along which to move troops along the top of the hills.

The German army had practised entrenching manoeuvres before the War.

So they quickly dug themselves in with their First Army to the west and their Second Army to the east.

But the battle of the Aisne began before the Germans had reached their new

positions on the ridge.

On 12 September the British 11th Infantry Brigade had reached the crest of the high ground at Venizel, in the middle of the Aisne line, but the BEF soon became bogged down in the centre of the line.

On 13 September the French Sixth Army had attempted to get around the western flank of the Chemin des Dames ridge near Compiègne, but had been stopped by German resistance.

The best chance for the Allies came on the right of their line, where the French Fifth Army found a gap between the two German armies, and reached Berry-au-Bac, on the northern side of the river.

But the gap was closed by the arrival of the German

Seventh Army under General Josias von Heeringen.

The battle continued until the end of September, but it quickly became a side issue.

Both sides attempted to use the fighting on the Aisne to pin their opponents in place, while their remaining mobile armies took part in the Race to the Sea – with the British desperate to stop the enemy reaching the Channel ports, which would have made an invasion of England virtually inevitable.

Both sides attempted to find an open flank which would allow them to outflank the enemy.

By the time the Race to the Sea and the First Battle of Ypres came to an end, the Western Front had taken shape – a 475 mile long line of fortifications running from the North Sea to the Swiss border.

And Trooper William McLeod would no longer be Newark's only man to give his life on the Western Front.

Helmets – but they're woollen!

HELMETS have been sent to the Newark district's men in the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters who are in training at Harpenden in Bedfordshire, preparing to join the War.

But they are made of wool rather than steel.

Mrs Oliver Quibell of the fertiliser manufacturing family has sent 110 knitted sleeping helmets which she collected from friends.

Within four days, she received a letter of "very many thanks" from J K Lane, Officer Commanding B Camp.

Two more years will elapse before steel head protection is provided for the British troops facing endless shell-fire in the trenches of the Western Front.

Verminous children warning in Newark

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Education Committee members are so concerned about "verminous children" that they have asked Newark Board of Guardians to withhold financial support from people in unclean homes.

The Guardians replied at their fortnightly meeting on Thursday that they always take into consideration the condition of the house and inmates when determining applications for relief.

The problem is that there are many houses in the yards around Newark town centre that are themselves over-run with disease-carrying vermin.

Art show

IN an attempt to give residents respite from the rigours visited upon them by the ever-growing impact of the War, an exhibition of local artists' work has opened at the Municipal Museum, Appletongate.

Fire trial

EVIDENCE that Zeppelin bombers are feared: Newark Fire Brigade had a few minutes practice in the Market Place to test its steamer and appliances under the leadership of Captain Harrison – watched by a large crowd.

Butchers trim opening times

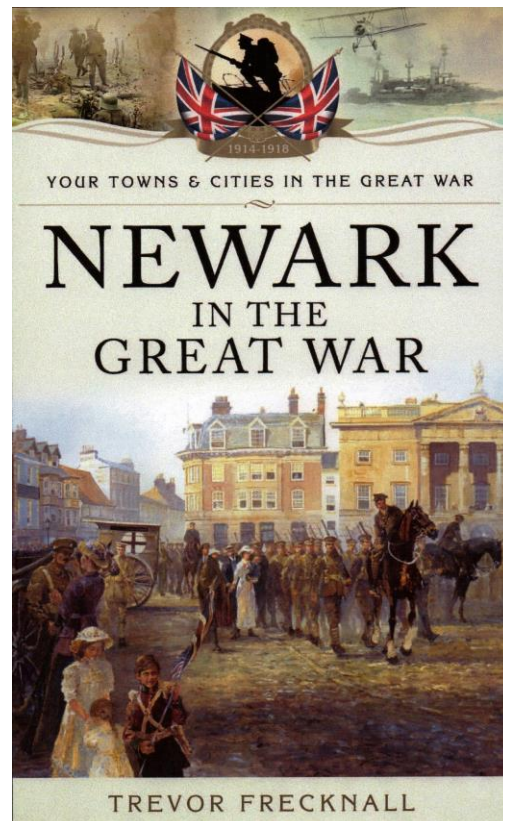
A SIGN that many shops are running short of assistants in the wake of the rush of patriots to enlist...

From today, members of the Newark and District Butchers' Association announce they will keep their shops open until 7pm on Mondays, 7.30pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 1pm on Thursdays, and 8pm on Fridays and Saturdays "as usual".

Fund boosts

THE Mayor's Fund to aid families whose breadwinners have gone to fight has topped £2,000 thanks to £86 2s 6d from the Newark Tradesmen's Association and £54 6s 6d from members of Newark Golf Club.

Now read the full dramatic account of...



£14.99 from WH Smith