

March 1916



V.C. FOR EGREMONT SOLDIER.

**PRIVATE HARRY CHRISTIAN,
2ND KING'S OWN ROYAL
LANCASTER.**

There was great rejoicing at Low Mill, Egremont, on Friday evening last, when word was received that Private Harry Christian, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Christian, had received the V.C. for conspicuous bravery. Flags and bunting were displayed at several of the houses, and Mr. and Mrs. Christian were the recipients of numerous congratulatory telegrams and messages from all parts. The family came to Egremont from Ulverston about eight years ago, and are well known. In addition to the telegrams, &c., there were many callers at their residence to offer their congratulations. Mr. and Mrs. Christian have three sons fighting in France, and five nephews. John Christian, their eldest son, joined the Army (Border Regiment) in September, 1914, and has been fighting in France since September, 1915. William, another son, is in the 4th Battalion King's Own Regiment, and has been in France, but was invalided home with frost-bitten feet. He was sent to Winchester Hospital. Then to Blackpool to recuperate, and expects to go back to the front at any time. Harry Christian, the winner of the V.C., is a private in the 2nd King's Own Royal Lancasters. He was stationed in India when war broke out, and after a very brief visit to his parents in Egremont he was ordered to France in January, 1915. He has been through several engagements, in one of which he received a wound over the eye. On recovering he again entered the firing line, where the exploit which won him his distinction was performed. His parents received word from him about a month ago. He was then in Salonica. In addition to the V.C. he was promoted to second-lieutenant for his most conspicuous bravery. He was holding a crater with five or six men in front of the trenches. The enemy commenced a very heavy bombardment of the position with heavy "minenwerfer" bombs, forcing a temporary withdrawal. When he found that three men were missing, Private Christian at once returned alone to the crater, and although bombs were continually bursting actually on the edge of the crater, he found the dug-out, and carried one by one into safety—all three men—thereby undoubtedly saving their lives. Later he placed himself where he could see the bombs coming, and directed his comrades when and where to seek cover.

9 March 1916

German U-boats' attempts to blockade the UK—the most important market for Portuguese products—brought tensions to a head and Portugal into the war.



**GUNNER JAMES KERR
(WHITEHAVEN),
DIED OF WOUNDS.**

GUNNER JAMES KERR, whose mother resides at 11, Queen-street, Whitehaven, enlisted on Boxing Day, 1914, and has been eight months on active service in France. A letter from his sergeant stated: "Your brother Jim has asked me, as sergeant of his sub-section, to write and let you know that while the battery was in action he had the misfortune to receive a wound this afternoon, February 11th. First aid was at once rendered, and as a hospital is situated within a couple of hundred yards off the battery I am thankful to be able to tell you that your brother received immediate expert treatment. The injury was sustained owing to an accident in a gun pit, a shell having exploded in the gun and a piece of metal flew back and caught his leg just above the foot. In the doctor's opinion your brother's life is in no danger and I can assure you that I and all his other colleagues are sincerely glad of the fact. As Jim was a warm favourite of all with whom he came in contact with his cheerful presence will be missed by every man in the battery. The plucky manner in which the lad bore himself after this accident made us all feel proud to have been associated with him. While tendering to you and other members of the family an expression of our sincere sympathy in the misfortune that has befallen Jim, all here, I am certain, would wish to express the earnest hope that his injury may not prove as serious as was at first anticipated."

Unfortunately this hope was not to be realised for Gunner Kerr has since died from his wounds. He had a brother-in-law with the R.F.A. now in Egypt.

3 March 1916

SINGLE MEN REPORTING.

Another call to single men—with the exception of the youngest men who have attained the age of 19 years since August last, the only remaining call to the single—fell due on Saturday.

Under the group system men in groups 14 to 23 and classes 13 to 23 began to report for service.

At none of the London remaining stations were scenes of briskness witnessed, recruits being received at stated periods of the day and dealt with expeditiously and with little trouble.

23 March 1916

**SPRING THOUGHTS AT THE
FRONT.**

Oh to be in England,
Now when Spring's so near,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees the morning quite a change,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood
sheaf,
Round the elm tree bole, are in tiny leaf,
While the goldfinch sings on the orchard bough,
In England—now!
And after April when May follows,
And the blackbird builds and the sparrow,
Where my blossom apple tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the green
Blossoms and dew-drops, at the bent sprigs'
edge.
That's the wise linnet; he sings each song twice
o'er,
Lest you think he never could re-capture
The first fine careless rapture.
And though the fields look rough with hoary
dew,
All will be gay, when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the children's dower,
Far brighter than the gaudy melon flower.

PTE R HARKER (1835)

Lewis Machine Gun Section
5th Border Regiment, France

3 March 1916

**WHITEHAVEN GUNNER'S
DEATH.**

Mr. John Gilmour, of Ribton-lane, Whitehaven, received a wire on Saturday morning from the General Hospital, Brighton, stating that his brother, Gunner Gilmour, of the R.F.A., passed away on Friday night. No particulars were given as to the cause of death. Gunner Gilmour, who was 33 years of age, was the second son of the late Mr. John Gilmour, fruiterer, Quay-street, Whitehaven, and joined the R.F.A. after the outbreak of war. He had previously served in the Cumberland Militia, and when war broke out was engaged with his brother in the fruit trade.

AN 'APPEAL BY THE MAYORESS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE WHITEHAVEN NEWS.]

SIR,—May I appeal through your paper for gifts of food for our Whitehaven men now prisoners of war in Germany?

Contributions such as butter, potted meats, small cheeses (in cartons), tea, coffee, sugar, cocoa, bun loaves, and jam will be most acceptable, and if handed in at the Town Hall will be packed and despatched from there.—Yours truly,

S. J. MUSGRAVE (Mayoress).

Town Hall, March 14th, 1916.

16 March 1916

WORKINGTONIAN KILLED IN ACTION.

Workington and district people regret to learn that there is no longer any lingering doubt concerning the fate of Private William Canlyle McKay, the elder son of Mr. and Mrs. J. McKay, No. 3, Washington-street, Workington. That he died from wounds sustained on Tuesday, March 6th, in the British No. 2 Clearing Station in France, is regarded as evident from the fact that the sister-in-charge could only know his home address from letters found in his pockets. The letter of the sister-in-charge is as follows:—

"Dear Mrs. McKay,—I am sorry to tell you your son, Private E. McKay, was brought in here to No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station last night very seriously wounded in the abdomen and passed peacefully away at 5-30 this morning.

He was too collapsed to be able to give any message for you, but I enclose a lock of his hair which you may like to have. He will be laid to rest to-morrow among his comrades in our special part of the cemetery here, the name of which and number of his grave will be sent to you later from headquarters. A little wooden cross bearing the name and date marks each resting place.—With much sympathy, yours sincerely,

L. E. JOLLEN, Sister-in-Charge."

16 March 1916

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TO NEWSAGENTS AND READERS.

PAPER SUPPLIES CUT DOWN.

In the near future the Supply of Paper available for Newspaper Production will be Greatly Reduced by an Administrative Order of the Government. Readers are requested to do all they can to effect an Economy of Paper by Ordering "The Whitehaven News" from the Newsagent in Advance.

Supplies are Cut Down to the Lowest Number that can be Sold Weekly, and there will be no provision for casual purchases.

3 March 1916



PRIVATE HUGH McLINDEN
(FRIZINGTON),
2ND BORDER REGIMENT,
KILLED IN ACTION IN FRANCE

(Photograph by Isaac Miller, Main Street, Frizington.)

16 March 1916



**Driver C. H. DENT,
TWICE WOUNDED AT YPRES.**

DRIVER C. H. DENT, Army Service Corps, joined the Colours on August 6th, 1914, and arrived in France on the 6th September. Was attached to the anti-aircraft section and has been in the firing line for eighteen months, during which time he has had many narrow escapes. He was twice wounded at Ypres and buried in an explosion; a shell having burst in a house where he was sleeping and destroying all his clothes. He is now on the French battle front. He also served through the South African War, and in the present war has four brothers and three brothers-in-law now at the front. Mrs. Dent is the eldest daughter of Mr. Isaac Allison, Mill House, Seascale, and formerly of Gosforth.

30 March 1916

These articles are taken from the *Whitehaven News*, held on microfilm at Whitehaven Archive and Local Studies Centre, and indexed by volunteers.

The issues covering the time of the Great War have been indexed by a group of volunteers in an eighteen-month long project undertaken to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of war, and to act as a lasting memorial to all whose lives were touched by the events.

WHITEHAVEN SOLDIER'S DEATH.

A wounded soldier named Private John Fisher, aged 37, of the 2nd Border Regiment, died on Tuesday at the Desford Convalescent Home, near Leicester, under distressing circumstances. He had been wounded in France, and had been at the Home for seven weeks, making fair progress towards recovery. During the night he left his bed and went to the lavatory, where he was found dead with his throat cut. He was formerly a platelayer at Whitehaven, where he has a wife and family living at Lady Pit Terrace.

30 March 1916



**PRIVATE E. DIXON
(HARRINGTON), 6TH BORDER.
KILLED IN ACTION IN
FRANCE, FEB. 24, 1916.**

The following is a copy of the letter which the Sergt.-Major of the 5th Border has sent to Mr. and Mrs. Irving Dixon, Burnside, Harrington, notifying them of their son's death:—

"It is with great regret that I have to inform you of the death of your son, No. 1776, Pte. E. Dixon, 5th Border Regiment, who was killed in action on 23rd February, 1916. He died instantly, and did not suffer any pain. He was laid to rest to-night in the military cemetery behind the firing line; the brigade chaplain reading the service. A wooden cross inscribed with his name, rank, regiment, has been placed on his grave. I enclose photos, &c., found on his body. Please accept my sincere sympathy in your hour of sad trial; and may God give you strength to bear up.—I am, yours very sincerely,

R. HAYTON, Sergt.-Major,
5th Border Regiment.

In the Field, 23/2/16."

23 March 1916