



John Morris

The Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)
and The Army Service Corps

Born: 1896

Served on the Western Front from 1914.

Awarded: The 1914 Star, The British War Medal and Victory Medal.

Died: 1991

Johnny Morris saluting at the Menin Gate at Ypres, together with other Great War veterans. Many of these men marched along this road during the war, going up to the line.

Johnny was an 'Old Contemptible' part of the British Expeditionary Force that went to Belgium in August 1914.



Sidney Lovell M.M.

1/1st Buckinghamshire Battalion
The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry

Born: 1894

Served on the Western Front from 1915.

1916 - The Battle of the Somme

1917 - The Third Battle of Ypres

1918 - The Italian Campaign

Died: 1992

Awarded the Military Medal for Bravery in the Field.

265712 Sgt. Lovell, S. 1st Bn. (Tring) Italy.

Listed in the London Gazette - 29th March 1919.

Sid told me that the Military Medal was for clearing dugouts in the Italian Campaign.

Sid was also awarded The 1914-15 Star, The British War Medal and Victory Medal.



I first met Jack at his son's home at High Wycombe. His son Ken and his wife provided a salmon lunch.

His battalion was at Hooge where they saw some fierce fighting. His Division was first to be attacked by flamethrower.

Jack took part in a trench raid where he had to lay out in 'No Man's Land'. He said 'holding your nerve was vital for survival'.



On Jack's final return to Flanders in 2002, he was taken to Hooge, where in 1915 he served in the trenches. The field behind Jack in this photograph is said to be where those trenches were located. His brothers were also near here and Jack risked court martial when he decided to find them. After the meeting and on his return his commanding officer offered him the choice of a court martial or his punishment. Jack choose the latter and was docked a week's pay.

Robert 'Robbie' Burns

7th Battalion The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders

Born: 1895

Served on the Western Front from 1915.

1915 - The Battle of Loos

1916 - The Battle of the Somme - wounded

Awarded: The 1914-15 Star, The British War Medal, Victory Medal and The French Legion of Honour.

Died: 2000

Robbie took part in the attack at Loos, where he recalls being hit by a piece of hot shrapnel. He was saved from serious injury by his great coat that was wrapped around his back.

When wounded on the Somme, he was pushed into the bottom bunk of a horse drawn ambulance, 'like a loaf into the oven'. He felt something on his lips, it was from the man above who was bleeding from his wounds.

There was terrific shell fire which tipped the ambulance over. The medical orderlies got him out. He could hear the awful naying from one of the badly injured horses and saw that the other horse had its head blown off.

Robbie was in a residential home when I photographed him. A small room with one window, the walls were covered with mementoes of his meetings with the great and the good.





William 'Bill' Hay

9th Battalion 'The Dandy Ninth'
The Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment)

Born: 1895

Served on the Western Front from 1915.

1915 - The Second Battle of Ypres

1916 - The Battle of the Somme
High Wood, Beaumont Hamel

1917 - The Battle of Arras - Roclin court - wounded

1917 - The Third Battle of Ypres - Passchendaele

1917 - The Battle of Cambrai

1918 - The German offensive - prisoner of war

Awarded: The 1914-15 Star, The British War Medal,
Victory Medal and The Territorial Medal.

Died: 1985

Bill in the Sanctuary Wood trenches near Ypres,
where he saw action in May 1915. He lost a lot
of 'youthful chums' here, so his wish was to be
scattered amongst them after his death.



Bill served the whole war on the Western Front. He survived
some fierce fighting, was wounded, blinded in his left eye at
Arras, gassed and made a prisoner of war in 1918.

He escaped twice but was recaptured, put on meagre rations
and in solitary confinement.

He never lost his love for the pals he left behind.

11th November 2008 will be remembered as the last Remembrance Day attended by Great War veterans. The last three represented all three services, land, sea and air.

William Stone – Royal Navy

Harry Patch – Army

Henry Allingham – Royal Air Force

At the time of his death Henry was the world's oldest man.



Henry Allingham prior to laying his wreath at the Cenotaph.

Henry John 'Harry' Patch

7th Battalion The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry

Born: 1898

Served on the Western Front from 1917.

1917 - The Third Battle of Ypres - Pilkem Ridge - wounded

Awarded: The British War Medal, Victory Medal,
The French Legion of Honour and The Knights of Leopold Medal.

Died: 25th July 2009

Little did I know, that, on my visit to Wells in January 2002
to meet Harry, he would become the 'Last Fighting Tommy'.

His fame had not spread nationwide at that time, with his familiar
voice and story unknown to all but a few.

Over those years he remained the same, both modest and humble.
A wonderful representative of his generation.



Harry Patch's coffin being carried into Wells Cathedral, headed by the Dean of Wells and the Bishop of Taunton.

The coffin was borne by six young soldiers of 1st Battalion The Rifles.

This was a fitting tribute to the last of the generation that served during the Great War, 1914-1918.

6th August 2009.

