



Name, Rank & Regiment of Soldier:
Harold Millns
Private
15th Bn Prince of Wales Own West Yorkshire Regiment
 Service no. **40365**
formerly
Lincolnshire Regiment
 Service no. **53617**

Date of birth	Died of wounds	Age
1896 (Jan-March qtr)	15 Dec 1916	20yrs

Background: **Harold Millns**

Harold's parents were bricklayer Tom Nicholson Millns (1863-1946) and his wife Emma (1865-1943). Harold was the youngest of four children all born in North Collingham.

1901 Census: High Street, Collingham next to Tom's brother William and his family on one side and the Bunns on another (see Charles Bunn's profile RIP).

Tom Nicholson Millns	37yrs	b. N Collingham
Emma née Longbottom	37yrs	b. Newark
Tom	13yrs	b.N Collingham c1888 d. 1961
John Edward	12yrs	b.N Collingham c1889 d 1937 Coll.
Eva	10 yrs	b. N Collingham 1891 d.1938 Coll.
Harold	5yrs	b. N Collingham c1896 d 1916

1911 Census: Low Street next to Grange Farm¹. All four children are still living at home and Harold (15) is working on a farm. With them is also an 11-year old niece, Gladys Hill.

1924 The Electoral Roll shows the remaining family back on the High Street with William's family at 'Bank House' & possibly the cottages behind (?). Some of William's family were victims of the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918/1919 with two daughters and a granddaughter dying.

¹ John Henry Clayton, farmer, lived on Grange Farm. He was ordered to enlist by the Newark Rural Tribunals in 1916 (see T Frecknall 'Collingham & District in the Great War')

Military History: Pte. Harold Millns

It is unknown² when Harold enlisted or transferred from the Lincolnshire Regiment to the 'Leeds Pals' but an extract from a history of the Lincolnshire Regiment gives an indication of the level of preparedness of some of the soldiers in 1914 '*... on 4th August the 1st Battalion received orders to mobilise the ranks contained a large proportion of young soldiers whose service ranged from 2 years to a few weeks, the percentage of old soldiers was very small ... mobilised reservists were kitted out with clothing and equipment ... several days was spent in strenuous training for service overseas...*'

The 15th (Service) Battalion (1st Leeds AKA the 'Leeds Pals')

Sept 1914: Formed at Leeds by the Lord Mayor and the City and then moved to Colsterdale.

June 1915 Moved to Ripon and joined the 93rd Brigade of the 31st Division – this was a new army division comprising mainly of Yorkshire and Lancashire Pals Battalions.

10 Aug 1915 Taken over by the War Office and moved to Fovant, Salisbury Plain.

Dec 1915 Moved to Egypt and took over a section on the Suez Canal defences.

Mar 1916 Moved to France and engaged in various actions on the Western Front including, two battles of the Somme offensive:

Battle of Albert: 1st – 13th July. The 31st Division's first major action was on the first day of the Somme Campaign (1 July 1916). The division suffered 3,600 casualties and failed to reach any of its objectives.

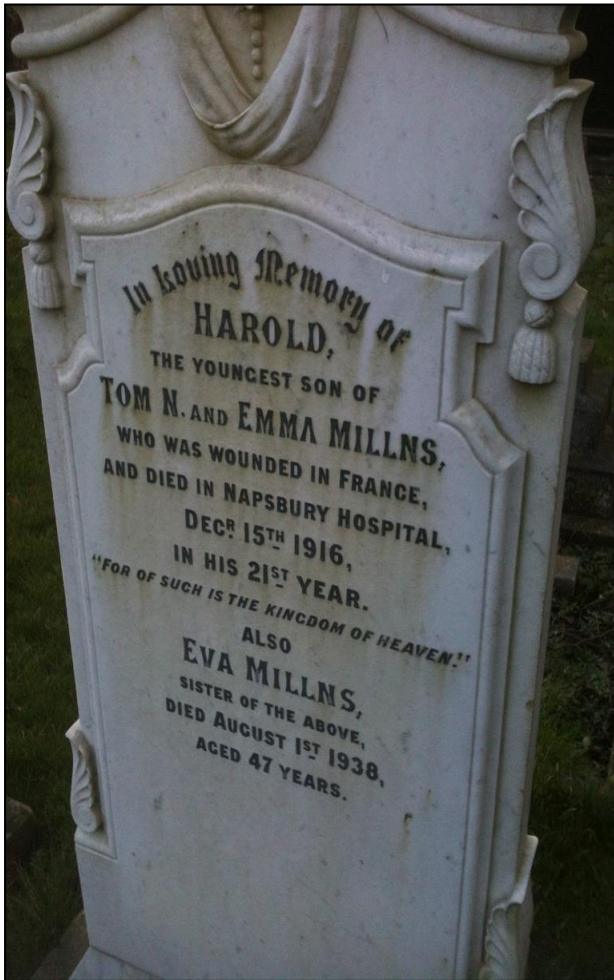
The Battle of the Ancre: 1st October – 11th November. A confusing succession of unremitting attacks, to capture intricate German defensive positions which involved brutal fighting in poor weather and appalling battlefield conditions.

Harold is likely to have taken part in one or both of the above. Research thus far only indicates that Harold was wounded in France and died of his wounds in the County of Middlesex War Hospital, Napsbury, near St Albans, on December 15th 1916. His funeral, in Collingham, was reported in the Newark Advertiser as follows:

Tuesday 19 December 1916: With full military honours, Harold Millns, 21, was laid to rest in North Collingham Churchyard, four weeks after the death of his comrade in arms Charles Titchener. He was wounded in France and died in a London hospital on Friday. The first part of his funeral service was held in the Wesleyan Chapel, where he had been a scholar and Sunday School teacher. He was so respected that Collingham Boys' School was closed so the staff and pupils could attend the funeral³

² As Harold did not receive the 1914/15 Star medal he probably wasn't in action until after 1915

³ c/o Trevor Frecknall 'Collingham and district in The Great War' p 79.



Left: Harold Millns' grave in All Saints' Churchyard. Plot no 73

Photo HP 2015

Pte. H. Millns is buried in All Saints Churchyard, Collingham and remembered on the North Collingham Roll of Honour & War Memorials.

He is also commemorated on the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry Roll of Honour, at St Swithuns Church, Retford, indicating he may have been in the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry before joining the Lincolnshire Regiment.

With thanks to Jeremy Lodge for his research on Harold Millns (2014)

Additional Information

Napsbury Military Hospital, St Albans

It is likely that Harold, along with thousands of others wounded during the catastrophic Battle of the Somme, would have received rudimentary treatment at one of the Casualty Clearing Stations (CCS) near the front line. Once patched up, he would be taken by train to the French coast and shipped across the Channel to an English hospital. Napsbury was one of several institutions made into a temporary military war hospital during World War One. It had been the county asylum before then and returned to that facility afterwards. Known as

the County of Middlesex War Hospital, it had 1,600 beds for treating wounded soldiers in addition to wards for those with psychiatric problems and 'war strain.' Following the war, the hospital was returned to its original purpose of the Middlesex County Asylum (Founded 1898). There is an excellent blog by Harriet Richardson about the history of Napsbury Hospital featured on 'Historic Hospitals' online here: <https://historic-hospitals.com/2016/09/20/napsbury-park-formerly-middlesex-county-asylum/>



Above & below: patients on a ward at Napsbury, 1917 from an original taken by Ricardo Studios, St Albans (in business between 1907 – 1929). Reproduced with kind permission of Peter Aitkenhead



Sources 2014 (Jeremy Lodge)

<http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2750188/MILLNS,%20H> Accessed 28/08/2014

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/30072303> Accessed 28/08/2014

<http://www.hertfordshire-genealogy.co.uk/data/places/places-n/napsbury/napsbury-ricardo.htm>
Accessed 28/08/2014

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/D4061200> Accessed 28/08/2014

Milner. H (1998) *Leeds Pals*

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=XargAAQBAJ&pg=PA254&lpg=PA254&dq=Harold+Millns+40365&source=bl&ots=UDPZg5Ya3J&sig=YmyeJLbj5aWkqSud8Qv39gmhXB4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ID3_U8aMOaXb7AaQj4GwDg&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=Harold%20Millns%2040365&f=false
Accessed 28/08/2014

<http://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/3532/west-yorkshire-regiment/> Accessed 28/08/2014

<http://www.1914-1918.net/westyorks.htm> Accessed 28/08/2014

<http://www.cwgc.org/somme/content.asp?menuid=2&id=2&menuname=Albert&menu=main>
Accessed 28/08/2014

<http://www.cwgc.org/somme/content.asp?menuid=31&id=31&menuname=Ancre%20Height%20s&menu=main> Accessed 28/08/2014

Additional sources (2018):

- 🕒 East Trent Genealogy database
- 🕒 Nottinghamshire County Council Roll of Honour War Memorials page (St Swithun's info)
- 🕒 Trevor Frecknall's book 'Collingham and District in The Great War' (cover right) & photo of Harold Millns
- 🕒 Hertfordshire Genealogy Society
- 🕒 Historic Hospitals website
- 🕒 Peter Aitkenhead (photographs of Napsbury Military Hospital)

