



## John Maguire 1879 - 1916

John was born at Beacon Parade, Southowram, Halifax on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1879; his birth name was recorded as *John Henry McGuire*. His mother was Bridget (*birth name recorded as McGuire*), born in Halifax in 1858 and died in the Halifax Poor Law Hospital in 1905 (surname recorded as *Mullins*).

On the 1881 Census John and his mother were boarders with the family of John and Mary Regan at 4, Beacon Parade, Halifax (surnames recorded as *McGuir*). In 1891 he is living at 2, Beacon Parade with his grandmother Mary who is recorded as the head of the family (surname recorded as *McGuire*). Bridget is recorded as living as a boarder at 15, Clifford Street, Listerhills, Bradford (surname recorded as *McGuire*). She had two children to Martin Mullin (born in Wolverhampton in 1856 and died of suicide by drowning in 1895); Michael *Mullens*, born in Keighley in 1893 and Anna *Mullins*, born in the Halifax Workhouse in 1896. On the 1901 Census they are living at 6, Pump Street, Halifax under the surname *Mullan*. John recorded as a serving soldier in the Yorkshire Regiment at Richmond Barracks, Yorkshire. In 1911 he is working as a labourer living at 9, Smithy Street, Halifax, a large lodging house managed by a Mr. George Wood which had 98 other lodgers. On the 1911 Census Michael and Anna are living at 5, Newhouse Street, Colne, Lancashire with a widower Joseph Barnett, (born in 1864 and died in 1948), their surnames are recorded as *Barnett*.

He attested at Sheffield into the Yorkshire Regiment on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1901 serving as Private 6513, having joined the Militia on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1900. He served in the South African Campaign (Boer War) and was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with Clasps for Cape Colony, Orange Free State and Transvaal. He was discharged on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1905 as medically unfit for further service. His conduct and character were recorded as *indifferent* and *addicted to drink*. On 20<sup>th</sup> June 1913 he was sentenced to 28 days hard labour in Wakefield prison for drunkenness.

He re-enlisted around July 1915 at Darlington, County Durham into the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry with the Service Number 25041 and was transferred on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1915 to the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers serving as Private 27899. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1915 the Battalion landed on the Greek island of Lemnos, which was the Allied HQ for the Gallipoli Campaign. The Lancashire Fusiliers suffered heavy losses on Gallipoli. He was killed in action in the Battle of the Somme on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1916 during the attempt to recapture Mouquet Farm, which was part of the Battle of Pozières. His remains were not found until 1919 and he was buried as an Unknown British Soldier in Courcellette British Cemetery, Somme, France but his identity was confirmed the following year. John was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Upon enlistment he gave his address as the one where he was lodging in Dewsbury with a Mr. Warburton. Sadly, his medals were sent there and were returned as "not at this address". His uncle, Mr. Thomas Maguire of 30, Woodside View, Woodside Road, Halifax was named as his beneficiary in his Will and Soldiers Effects.

The attack on Mouquet Farm began on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1916 with attacks by the Reserve Army and it was captured by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division of the Canadian Corps on 16<sup>th</sup> September. The farm was lost to a German counter-attack, before being recaptured on 26<sup>th</sup> September, during an attack by the 11<sup>th</sup> (Northern) Division as part of the Battle of Thiepval Ridge from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September. The 9<sup>th</sup> Lancashire Fusiliers bombed the exits of the underground positions and also managed to reach the second objective, at the west end of *Zollern* Trench, where German machine-gun nests had held up previous attacks. The 6<sup>th</sup> East Yorkshire (Pioneers) overwhelmed the last defenders with smoke grenades and took 56 prisoners. Mouquet Farm was the site of nine separate attacks by three Australian divisions between 8<sup>th</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1916. The attacks cost the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisions over 11,000 casualties, and not one succeeded in capturing and holding it.

Courcellette is a village some 10 kilometres north-east of the town of Albert, just off the road to Bapaume. The Cemetery is approximately 1 kilometre west of the village on the south side of a track from the secondary road from Courcellette to Pozières. The cemetery was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when almost 2,000 graves were brought in, mostly those of men who died around Courcellette and Pozières in 1916. There are now 1,970 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Courcellette British Cemetery, 1,180 of the burials are unidentified.

John is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial in Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church.

In Memory of

Private

**J Maguire**

27899, 9th Bn., Lancashire Fusiliers who died on 26 September 1916

Remembered with Honour

**Courcelette British Cemetery**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

