



John Joseph McMullen

1890 - 1916

John was born in Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham in 1890. His father was Richard McMullen, born in Ireland in 1864 and died in 1921. His mother was Sarah Ellen (née McAndrew) born in Sunderland in 1863 and died in 1947. They were married in Stockton-on-Tees in 1887.

Their other children were; Richard, born in 1888 and died in 1912, Ann Maria (Annie), born in 1892, Alexander, born in 1894 and was killed in action at Asiago, Italy on 15th June 1918, Celia, born in 1896, James, born in 1899 and Thomas, born in 1902.

John came to live in Dewsbury in 1909 and worked as a conductor and later a tram driver for the Heavy Woollen District Tramways, he was married to Lily Swallow (born in 1890 and died in 1951) on 13th January 1912 at Our Lady and St. Paulinus Church, they lived at 5, Lister's Yard, Webster Hill and had one child; Mary, born in 1912.

A pre-war reservist in the West Yorkshire Regiment, he enlisted in the 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment serving as Private 18332 and was sent to the Western Front on 18th March 1915. He was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme on 15th September 1916 during the first day of the battle of Flers-Courcelette. His grave must have been lost or destroyed in later battles as he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme. Although his surname on all his service records was spelt correctly, his name in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records and on the memorial was spelt *Macmullen*. John was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

News of his death was conveyed to his widow by his Commanding Officer; *"Dear Mrs McMullen, I am very grieved to have to inform you of the death of your husband, who was a stretcher-bearer in the company under my command. It will be some slight solace to you to know that he was one of the bravest men it was my pleasure ever to meet, and that if he had survived I should have recommended him for the Distinguished Conduct Medal. He was a real hero and everyone in the company regarded him as the most reliable of stretcher-bearers. Please, therefore, accept my deepest sympathy in your sad bereavement. The position of his grave will, I believe, be known at the War Office, and you should apply there"*

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.

John is also 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 and on the Stockton-on-Tees War Memorial.

In April 2021 Dewsbury Sacrifices submitted his existing service records to the CWGC and one month later their database was amended to the correct spelling of his surname. In 2022 his name on the Thiepval Memorial was also changed.

In Memory of

Private

John McMullen

18332, 2nd Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 15 September 1916

Remembered with Honour

Thiepval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

MCMULLEN J.