

A FINE GREAT WAR YPRES 1915 D.C.M. AWARDED TO AN N.C.O. 1ST NORTHUMBERLAND FUSILIERS, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN PROMOTED FOR GALLANTRY AT MONS. SEVERELY WOUNDED AT YPRES, HE RETURNED TO FRANCE ONLY TO DIE OF WOUNDS RECEIVED AT THE BATTLE OF BELLEWAARDE RIDGE IN JUNE 1915



DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL G.V. '6931 SGT: J. CLARKE. 1/NTH'LD FUS.'

D.C.M. London Gazette 30 June 1915. The recommendation states:

"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty on the night of 14th April, 1915. when after a mine had been exploded in front of the house he was in and half the garrison were wounded or buried, he gallantly rallied the remainder to man the trench. It was largely owing to his untiring efforts that so many men were extricated"

John Clarke, from Birkenhead, a Postman at Liscard Post Office, had previously served in the army as a bugler. Recalled to service, he served with the 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers in France from 13 August 1914. He took part in the retreat from Mons and was advanced to Corporal. For his gallantry at Mons in "bringing in a wounded comrade under fire", he was promoted to Sergeant.

In April 1915, he played a conspicuous part at the battle of 'Hill 60', Ypres and for his gallantry would be awarded the D.C.M. However during the battle, he was severely wounded; struck in the abdomen by a bullet and in several parts of the body by shrapnel. Brought to Northampton Hospital, after recovery he was given a brief period of leave to recuperate at home, during which he was presented with his D.C.M. Refusing an operation to remove some

remaining shrapnel as he wanted to return to France. He died of wounds on 18 June 1915, shortly after his return to his unit, his wounds almost certainly received during the 'First Attack at Bellewaarde Ridge', an attack in which his Battalion was one of the leading attackers.

POSTAL OFFICIAL'S CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY.

As we announced at the time, the country's call to arms on the outbreak of the war witnessed the return to the colours of several Reservists belonging to the local postal service, some of whom have since been wounded, whilst two others are reported as missing. We have now extreme gratification in giving publicity to the fact that Sergeant J. Clarke, of the Northumberland Fusiliers who was formerly attached to the headquarters staff at Liscard Post Office, has had the signal honour of gaining the **DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL**, after having been previously for bravery promoted on the battlefield. This is, we believe, the first occasion that a Wallasey soldier has won such a high distinction as the D.C.M., and our readers will, we are sure, join heartily with us in congratulating Sergeant Clarke on his great achievement.



SERGEANT J. CLARKE.

Sergeant Clarke, D.C.M., who has for some time past resided with Mr. E. A. Carter (a postal colleague) and Mrs. Carter, of 4, West-street, Liscard, joined the Army as a bugler when quite young—he belonged to Birkenhead—and served some years in India, participating in a frontier expedition, for which he received a medal. He was on his way with his regiment to South Africa when peace was happily established with the Boers.

When war was declared in August last he was at once recalled to the colours, and within a few days landed on the Continent with the British Expeditionary Force. He took part in several of the early engagements, including the

GREAT RETREAT FROM MONS, and quickly received an additional stripe to that he already possessed as lance-corporal. On one occasion he performed a thrilling act of bravery by bringing in a wounded comrade from particularly dangerous territory between the British and German firing lines, and for this heroic deed he was promoted on the field to the rank of Sergeant.

He had several hair breadth escapes, a German bullet in one instance penetrating his kit bag and lodging in a tin containing his emergency rations. He was, however, at length stricken down, being

BADLY WOUNDED AT YPRES, not only by a rifle bullet in the abdomen, but also by several fragments of shell in other parts of the body, one of which was within an ace of severing his jugular vein. For three weeks he was a patient in a Nottingham hospital, and afterwards spent a month at Christmastide recuperating at his home with Mr. and Mrs. Carter. While at Liscard he went into the Wallasey Cottage Hospital for a week, and there had pieces of the shell removed. A bit still remained, and he was advised to undergo a further operation. When he learned that the fragment was not likely to cause him serious inconvenience, however, he declined to submit to another operation, remarking that he wanted to go out again and have another pop at them (the Germans)!

FIGHT FOR "HILL 60."

This characteristic British bull dog spirit had its sequel at the sanguinary struggle on April 14-15 for "Hill 60," in which Sergeant Clarke again played such a conspicuously gallant part that he was on Saturday last the recipient of the D.C.M., which was, we understand, presented to him by an officer of high rank at a special parade of the Northumberland Fusiliers, who were naturally highly elated by this striking recognition of their popular comrade's gallantry on the battlefield.

Clarke was 36 years of age and his buried at Kemmel no.1 French Cemetery.



Condition VF, couple of small EK's. Sold with digital copies of the Battalion War diary 1914-15, newspaper articles on recipient, MIC and medal rolls.