

2: Walter Anderson

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Walter Anderson

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: 17th Bn. The King's (Liverpool Regiment)

Service Number: 16698

Date of Death: 07 May 1918

Age at Death: 21

Buried / Commemorated at: La Clytte Military Cemetery, Heuvelland, West Flanders, Belgium

Additional information given by CWGC: The son of Charles and Margaret Sarah Anderson, of The Cottage, Leighton Road, Neston. Native of Liverpool.

Walter was both born and enlisted in Liverpool and, when he was killed in action, his home address was Birkenhead. Whilst Walter's age at death is recorded as 21 by the CWGC, the age shown on his gravestone at La Clytte Military Cemetery is 22.

Unusually, there does not appear to be a report of his death in any local newspaper.

Charles Anderson married Margaret Sarah Clegg at St Augustine, Everton on 3 March 1872; Charles, an engineer, was 'of full age' and both he and Margaret gave their address as Everton. Charles's father, also Charles, worked for HM Customs and Margaret's father, Joshua Clegg, was a brassfinisher. At the time of the 1881 census Charles and Margaret were living at 10 Lyell Street, Everton:

Charles Anderson	Head	Mar	30	Engineer's fitter
Margt S.	Wife	do	30	
Mary F.	Daughter		8	Schooler
Fred.	Son		6	do
Wm H. G.	do		4	do
Charles G.	do		2	
Harry	do		5 mo	

1881 census (extract) – 10 Lyell Street, Everton

Charles Anderson	30	engineer's fitter	born Liverpool
Margaret S.	30		born Liverpool
Mary F.	8		born Liverpool
Fred.	6		born Liverpool
William Henry	4		born Liverpool
Charles G.	2		born Liverpool
Harry	5 months		born Liverpool

In 1891 they were still at 10 Lyell Street but at the time of the 1901 census the enlarged family had moved about ½ mile south and was living on Woodville Terrace, off Whitefield Road, Everton.

Walter was the youngest of 11 children and the house where the family lived for many years in Everton was large, with 9 rooms.

Whilst no record of the baptism of either Mary or Frederick has been found other baptisms, all at St Saviour, Everton, are known. In each record Charles is recorded as an engineer and the address is given as 10 Lyell Street:

William Henry	born 11 December 1876	baptised 7 February 1877
Charles George	born 24 January 1879	baptised 12 March 1879
Harry	born 12 October 1880	baptised 29 December 1880
Margaret Foster	born 25 September 1882	baptised 7 March 1883
Percy John	born 12 March 1885	baptised 9 September 1885
Francis	born 8 May 1887	baptised 21 June 1887
Herbert Foster	born 30 May 1890	baptised 6 August 1890
George	born 25 December 1892	baptised 8 February 1893
Walter	born 20 May 1896	baptised 17 June 1896

Charles Anderson	Head	M	50	Engine & Machine Fitter
Margaret do	Wife	W	50	do
Frederick do	Son	P	26	do
Charles do	do	S	22	Tailor
Harry do	do	S	20	Carver Wood & Stone
Margaret do	Daughter	S	18	do
Percy do	Son	S	16	Iron Moulder (general)
Francis do	do	P	13	Clerk Ship Brokers
Herbert do	do	P	10	do
George do	do	P	8	do
Walter do	do	P	4	do

1901 census (extract) – 51 Woodville Terrace, Everton, Liverpool

Charles Anderson	50	engine and machine fitter	born Liverpool
Margaret	50		born Liverpool
Frederick	26	engine and machine fitter	born Liverpool
Charles	22	tailor	born Liverpool
Harry	20	carver, wood and stone	born Liverpool
Margaret	18		born Liverpool
Percy	16	iron moulder (general)	born Liverpool
Francis	13	clerk, ship brokers	born Liverpool
Herbert	10		born Liverpool
George	8		born Liverpool
Walter	4		born Liverpool

Two other surviving children were recorded in the 1891 census: Mary (18) and William (14, apprentice carver).



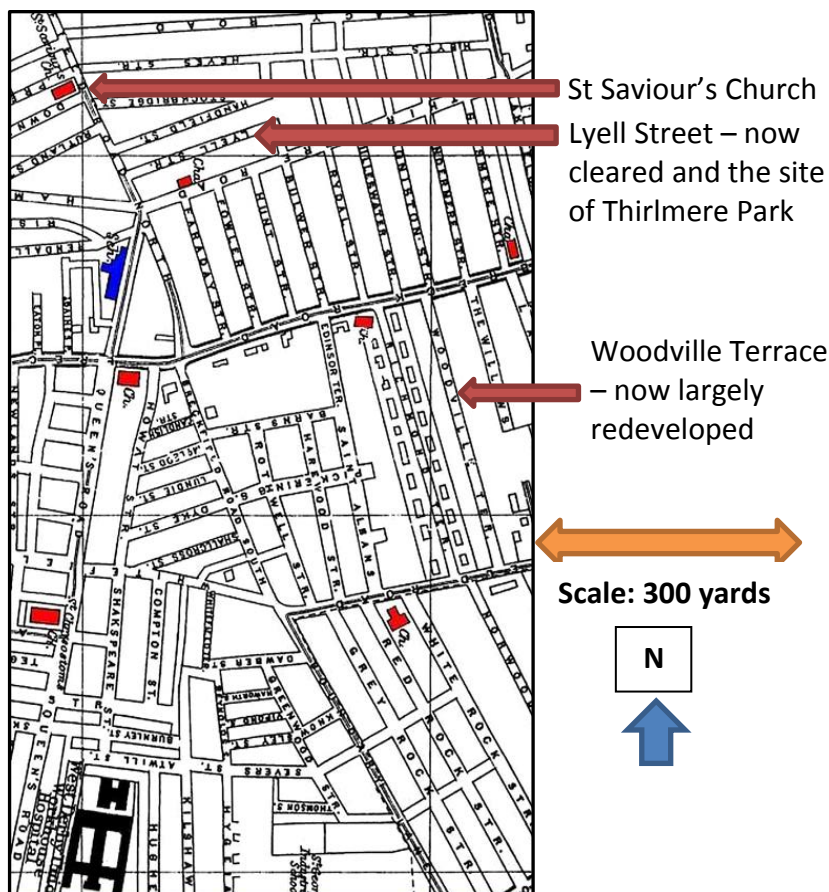
St Saviour's (C of E) Church on Breckfield Road North was built in 1870 to replace an earlier iron church. It is associated with the foundation and early history of Everton Football Club; young men from this church and the neighbouring St Domingo Methodist New Connexion Chapel (opened in 1871) had football and cricket teams who played on Stanley Park nearby.

St Saviour's Church, Everton, from a print by Frank Green

Whilst Woodville Terrace still exists, the older houses having been replaced by a new development.

At the time of the 1911 census the family was still living at 51 Woodville Terrace, Everton.

It is not clear when or why the family moved from their Everton roots to Neston, but it is probable that Charles and Margaret moved here in the course of employment - in the 1911 census Charles was recorded as being unemployed - and, as the youngest member of the family, Walter would have accompanied his parents.



1	Charles Anderson	Head	60	Married	39	11	11	Fitter	996	Unemployed	+	Liverpool	No. 1
2	Margaret Sarah Anderson	Wife	60	Married	39							"	"
3	Harry Anderson	Son	30	Single				Sculptor	141	Sculptor	Employer	"	"
4	Margaret Foster Anderson	Daughter	28	Single								"	"
5	Percy John Anderson	Son	26	Single				Iron Moulder	190	Engineer	Worker	"	"
6	Francis Anderson	Son	23	Single				Joiner	210	Building	Worker	"	"
7	Herbert Foster Anderson	Son	20	Single				University Student	380			"	"
8	George Anderson	Son	18	Single				Clerk (Stockbroker)	850	Stockbroking	Worker	"	"
9	Walter Anderson	Son	14	Single				School	390			"	"

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)				(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling)			
Total			Total			I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.	
Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Signature	Postal Address
7	25	91				Charles Anderson	51 Woodville Terrace

1911 census –(condensed) 51 Woodville Terrace, Everton, Liverpool

Charles Anderson	60	fitter (unemployed)	born Liverpool
Margaret	60		born Liverpool
Harry	30	sculptor	born Liverpool
Margaret Foster	28		born Liverpool
Percy John	26	iron moulder	born Liverpool
Francis	23	joiner	born Liverpool
Herbert Foster	20	university student	born Liverpool
George	18	clerk (stockbroker)	born Liverpool
Walter	14		born Liverpool

Charles and Margaret had been married for 39 years and all eleven children were still living.

Walter's Service Record notes that he was aged 19 years 75 days when he enlisted with the 18th Battalion King's (Liverpool Regiment) ¹ in Liverpool on 2 September 1914; if this is correct then he was born on about 19 June 1895. On enlistment he was said to be 5ft 4ins tall with a weight of 116lb (8 stone 4lb / 52½kg) and an expanded-chest size of 34½ins so he was very small, and probably underweight, for his age. Walter's eyes were recorded as being grey, his complexion was fresh and his hair brown and he had no distinguishing marks. His occupation was given as *clerk*.

On enlistment Walter joined the 18th Battalion (the '2nd Liverpool Pals'), under orders of the 89th Brigade, 30th Division; he remained in Britain for training for 1 year 66 days before embarking for France on 6 November 1915, disembarking at Boulogne the following day ².

On 25 December 1915 the battalion transferred to the 21st Brigade in the same Division.

Whilst it is not possible here to detail the actions of the 18th Battalion through 1916 and 1917 it is known that, in 1916, they were in action at The Battle of Albert (1 - 13 July), the first two weeks of the Anglo-French offensive operations in The Battle of the Somme in which the Division captured Montauban and The Battle of the Transloy Ridges (1 - 18 October, a part of The First Battle of the Somme). This action in October was the last officially acknowledged battle fought by the Fourth Army, under Rawlinson, although fighting continued on that front into November. To assist in this conflict it is recorded that Walter Anderson was, on 14 October, attached to the 21st Trench Mortar Battery and that he remained with them until 23 October 1916 when he resumed duty with the 18th Battalion. Shortly afterwards, on 29 October 1916, Walter

was admitted to the 96th (County Palatine) Field Ambulance, the hospital unit which at that time serviced the 30th Division. Although few details of Walter's admission are known it is understood that he was suffering from 'inflamed connective tissue' (ICT) of the heel ³. Certainly, the problem was serious enough to prevent Walter from returning to duty until 21 November 1916 and he spent ten days (from 11 November) at the 30th Divisional Rest Station [DRS] ⁴.



A contemporary postcard showing (probably in training) a Trench Mortar Battery.

¹ It was known also as the 18th (Service) Battalion (2nd City).

² By the end of 1915 the King's Regiment had 15 battalions in France and Flanders.

³ This was, most probably, the injury known as heel bursitis, a painful condition caused by repeated or over-use of the ankle by too much walking, running, or jumping. Wearing ill-fitting shoes or boots contributes to this.

⁴ *When away from the trenches a field ambulance's role was to keep the fighting men fit and healthy. This was achieved by setting up Divisional Rest Stations [DRS] and baths (usually sited in a Brewery where up to 50 men could be bathed at a time in the large vats)* [https://www.ramc-ww1.com/chain_of_evacuation.php]

Divisional Rest Stations were established in France in early 1915, their purpose being to look after sick and lightly wounded men. Generally, a man would usually stay no more than about ten days at a DRS before being returned to his unit.

However, his unit does not appear to have been involved in any action during his absence.

On 2 September 1916 Walter was awarded a good conduct badge as he had then completed two years' service and on the same date he was granted Proficiency Pay Class 1 - this additional pay recognised that the soldier had fulfilled stated conditions regarding service and qualification which may, at that time, have been worth around 6d per day.

Between 4 -15 December 1916 Walter Anderson attended the 30th Division Grenade School - this would have been in the field - and on 27 December he returned to the UK for a short period of leave, rejoining his unit on 8 January 1917. Walter's problem with his heel was, clearly, a recurring problem and he was admitted to the 97th Field Ambulance (a second hospital unit serving the 30th Division) for further treatment on 25 January 1917 although he returned to duty a few days later. On 12 February 1917 Walter was back at the 96th Field Ambulance, again with 'inflamed connective tissue' of the right heel, and again was referred to the at the 30th Divisional Rest Station. Walter resumed his duties with the battalion on 29 January but the problem persisted and, on 12 February 1917, he was re-admitted to the 96th Field Ambulance although he returned to his unit on the same day.

On 22 March he was back to the 97th Field Ambulance where the problem, now intensified, was identified as being 'inflamed connective tissue of the leg'. From 25 - 29 March Walter was back with the 30th Divisional Rest Station. Less than two weeks after having rejoined his battalion, Walter was admitted once more to the 30th Divisional Rest Station (10 April, ICT right heel) where he remained until 27 April when he was moved to the 1/3rd Northumbrian Field Ambulance. Here he stayed until 30 April when he resumed his duties.

From 14 March - 5 April 1917 the 17th Battalion was in action during the period which became known as 'the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line' but it is not known how far Walter's medical condition affected his participation in this.

The Long, Long Trail records that:

During Somme fighting the Germans constructed a formidable new defensive system some miles in their rear. From February 1917 they began to withdraw into it, giving up ground but in carrying out "Operation Alberich" they made the ground as uninhabitable and difficult as possible. British patrols eventually detected the withdrawal and cautiously followed up and advanced, being brought to a standstill at the outer defences of the system.

The 18th Battalion King's (Liverpool) Regiment was in action in The First Battle of the Scarpe (9 - 14 April 1917) and The Second Battle of the Scarpe (23 - 24 April 1917), two significant conflicts in the opening stages of The Second Battle of Arras when British and Empire troops attacked German defences near the French city of Arras on the Western Front. However, it is again unknown how far Walter Anderson was involved in these conflicts.

From 31 May 1917 to 6 August it seems that Walter was attached to the Assistant Provost Marshal, the person in charge of a group of the military police and general discipline. This was, perhaps, recognition of his medical problems and that he was not fully fit for front-line service. This period of Walter's service overlaps with the 17th Battalion's action at The Battle of Pilckem Ridge (31 July - 2 August 1917), the opening attack of the main part of The Third Battle of Ypres, so again he may have seen only limited action.

Walter resumed his duties with the 18th Battalion on 6 August 1917 but on 8 September he was sent to the 2nd Army Rest Camp, a military-run centre which provided a period of recuperation for injured soldiers. On 20 September Walter returned to duty with the 18th Battalion but was posted to the 17th Battalion King's (Liverpool Regiment) - the 'sister' battalion to the 17th - on 7 October where he joined 'D' Company. At the beginning of 1918, on 8 January, Walter Anderson was at the X Corps. Signalling School; this may, again, suggest that it was accepted that he could better serve the military if he was distanced from front-line action.

By 1917 a whole system of schools at army, corps, divisional and even brigade level had been established. The GHQ, Army and Corps Schools had been established in France 'to assist in the individual training of junior officers and NCOs'. The GHQ Schools dealt with special arms or services, for example the Machine Gun School, Anti-Aircraft Gunnery School, and the Physical and Bayonet Training School etc., while Army and Corps Schools had been established to train junior officers and NCOs to become 'efficient instructors'.

Army Schools included the Infantry School to train company commanders and NCOs as well as commanding officers, the Trench Mortar School, the Artillery School, the Telescopic Sight School to train battalion sniping officers and NCOs, the Signalling School, and the Musketry Camp while the Corps Schools were the Combined Lewis Gun and Stokes Mortar School and the Signalling School. The Divisional Infantry School was to 'teach junior officers and NCOs to become platoon commanders and platoon sergeants'. Every battalion was required from 1916 in accordance with GHQ's instructions to retain a permanent Instructional Staff, which did not go into battle.

Extracts from: *British Generalship on the Western Front 1914-1918: Defeat Into Victory*
Simon Robbins 2004 Routledge

Walter Anderson appears to have spent almost three months at the Signalling School, rejoining the 17th Battalion on 2 April 1918 shortly after (28 March) receiving some further treatment for an unrecorded illness at a Field Ambulance. A month later, on 7 May 1918, Walter was killed in action.

In the Spring of 1918 the 17th Battalion was in action on The Somme and in The Battles of the Lys, 7 - 29 April 1918 (known also as The Lys Offensive or The Fourth Battle of Ypres), they suffered heavy losses. However, the German defences broke down on the

Lys and there followed a 3-month period, from May to July, which Sir Douglas Haig called the period of 'Active Defence' where the British line was preserved unbroken and rest and training could be given all the divisions. Nevertheless, this was still a period of localised activity and troop movement and the events leading up to, and including the time when Walter Anderson died can be summarised:

The 17th, 18th and 19th Battalions of the regiment, forming the 89th Brigade (30th Division) had, on the night of the 1st–2nd of May, reached an area between Ouderdom and Busseboom where they went into camps. This was the last occasion on which these three battalions constituted the 89th Brigade. Orders had gone forth that the brigade, with the 21st Composite Brigade, was to be reorganised into one brigade under the command of Brigadier-General R. A. M. Currie, and known as the 30th (Composite) Brigade. It was to be formed as follows: the 17th King's, who were to absorb all the available fighting men of the 18th and 19th King's; the 2nd Green Howards, and 2nd Bedfords, who similarly absorbed other battalions.

The 17th (Composite) Battalion, King's Regiment, was made up of the following—17th Battalion, "A" Company; 18th Battalion, "B" Company; 19th Battalion, "C" Company. "D" Company was formed by elements of the three battalions. The 17th (Composite) Battalion was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel G. Rollo. On the 3rd of May it was in St. Lawrence Camp, engaged in reorganising and cleaning up. On formation the battalion strength was twenty-seven officers and 750 other ranks. All surplus troops from the three battalions were despatched to Buysscheure, to await further orders.

The 17th (Composite) Battalion received orders on the 3rd of May to relieve the South African Brigade holding the Vierstraat sector on the night of the 5th/6th. The battalion was under the command of the 23rd Division.

The front line at this period ran from opposite (west of) Godstone Farm, on the south, to the southern edge of Ridge Wood, north. The close support line ran from just south of, and through, Klein Vierstraat Cabaret to just east of Eksternest Farm. The support line was about half-way between the close support and reserve lines. The reserve line ran in front (east) of the Hallerast–La Clytte road. French troops were on the right of the 30th (Composite) Brigade and the 98th Brigade on the left.

The 17th (Composite) Battalion, King's Regiment, had taken over the reserve line, the 2nd Bedfords the right and the 2nd Green Howards the left sub-sectors respectively.

On the 6th and 7th of May the artillery fire of the opposing guns was heavy, the enemy using a large proportion of gas shells. At 3 a.m. on the 8th the hostile guns put down a very heavy high-explosive barrage along the front of the 30th (Composite) Brigade, and deluged the support and battery areas with gas shell.

The History of the King's Regiment (Liverpool) 1914 – 1919 vol. 111 (1917 – 1919)
Everard Wyrall 1935 Edward Arnold & Co.

From Wyrall's account it would appear that Walter Anderson was a victim of the German artillery on 7 May although the War Diary entry gives little information other than, on that day, the Battalion was in Brigade Reserve and was shelled by high explosives and gas shells:

WAR DIARY				Army Form C. 2118.	
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.					
Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in P. S. Regs. Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.					
(Erase heading not required.)					
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices	
VOORMEZELE DEFENCES.	1/5/18.		Battalion relieved by the - 4 th Bn. Cheshire Regiment and moved to SCOTTISH CAMP, arriving about 2 am on 2 nd inst.	Ref Map.	
SCOTTISH CAMP.	2/5/18.	Noon.	Battalion moved to ST. LAWRENCE CAMP, near BRANDHOEK.	Sheet 25.	
ST. LAWRENCE CAMP.	- -	- -	The Brigade (17 th , 18 th and 19 th K.L.R.), was formed into a Composite Battalion - 17 th (Composite). Bn. K.L.R. and was commanded by Lieut. Col. G. ROLLO. D.S.O. Fighting strength on formation about 2700. 750 or 17 th K.L.R. formed 'A' Coy. 18 th K.L.R. - 'B' Coy. 19 th K.L.R. - 'C' Coy. 'D' company was made up by elements of the 3 Battalions.	1/4000.	
- do -	3/5/18.		Battalion in ST. LAWRENCE CAMP. - cleaning up and re-organising, etc.		
- do -	4/5/18.		- ditto - - - do -		
- do -	5/5/18.	10.45 PM	Battalion commenced to move to Forward Zone in front of VIERSTRAAT, and took up positions, in Brigade Reserve, on the LA CLYTE - HALLEBAST CORNER - line. Battalion Headquarters - MICMAC CAMP.		
VIERSTRAAT SECTOR - S. Rd. Reserve	6/5/18.		Enemy activity active throughout the day.		
- do -	7/5/18.		Heavy enemy shelling with H.E. and Gas shells.		
- do -	8/5/18.	9 AM.	Advanced Bn. H.Q. established by Major J. P. PITTS. and Lieut. J. HODGSON. at HALLEBAST CAMP. Day passed quietly until the afternoon.		
- do -	- -	2.45 PM	'A' and 'B' Coys. were moved forward to a position of readiness on a rough line from N. 3. v. Central. to N. 3. d. 70.		
- do -	- -	3.15 PM	5 th Bn. Scottish Rifles reached RESERVE LINE (LA CLYTE - HALLEBAST line), with their Battalion Headquarters at G. 36. v. 3/4.		
- do -	- -	4.30 PM	Front line ran through KLEIN VIERSTRAAT CASARRET (N. 10. a. 3/5) to N. 4. d. 70/95, with		

War Diary, 17th Battalion King's (Liverpool) Regiment

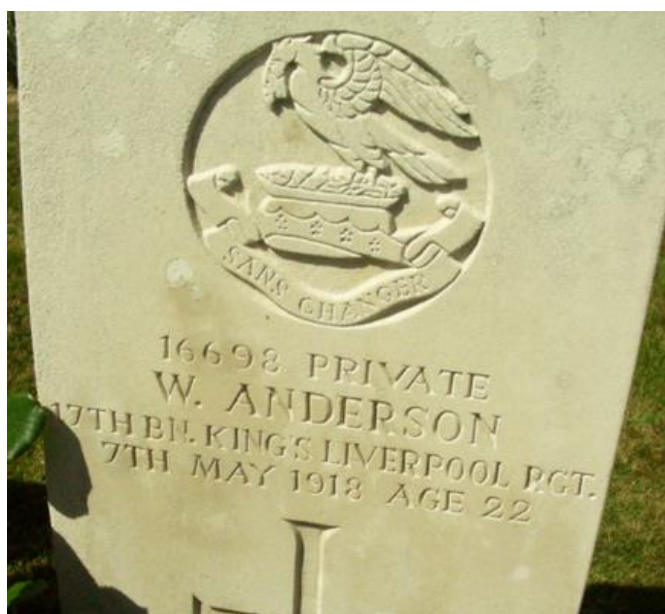
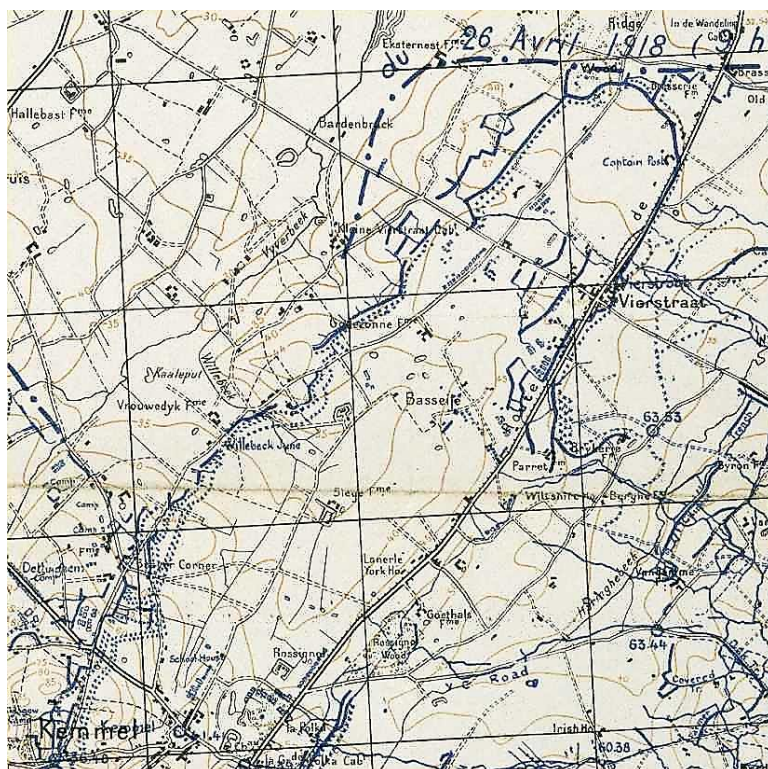
This extract shows the entries from 1 May to the afternoon of 8 May 1918. The entries are brief and contain little detail other than, at that time, the Battalion was in Brigade Reserve in the Vierstraat Sector around 5km SSW of Ypres.

British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920

Margaret S Anderson, Walter's mother, died on Wirral in mid-1932 aged 81.
Charles Anderson, Walter's father, died on Wirral in late 1941 aged 91.

Campaign :-		1914-15.			(A) Where decoration was earned.						
					(B) Present situation.						
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Roll on which included (if any)							
(A) ANDERSON.	Lpool R	Pte	16698	H/2/2B/123.							
(B) WALTER.	- - -	- - -	- - -								
Action taken	MEDAL	ROLL	PAGE	Deceased							
	VICTORY	H/2/102 B	824								
	BRITISH	Do	Do								
	STAR										
THEATRE OF WAR.		(1) France.									
QUALIFYING DATE.		7-11-15									
(6 34 46) W231-HP5590 500,000 4/19 HWV(P240) R608											
[OVER]											

Source: <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=94674>

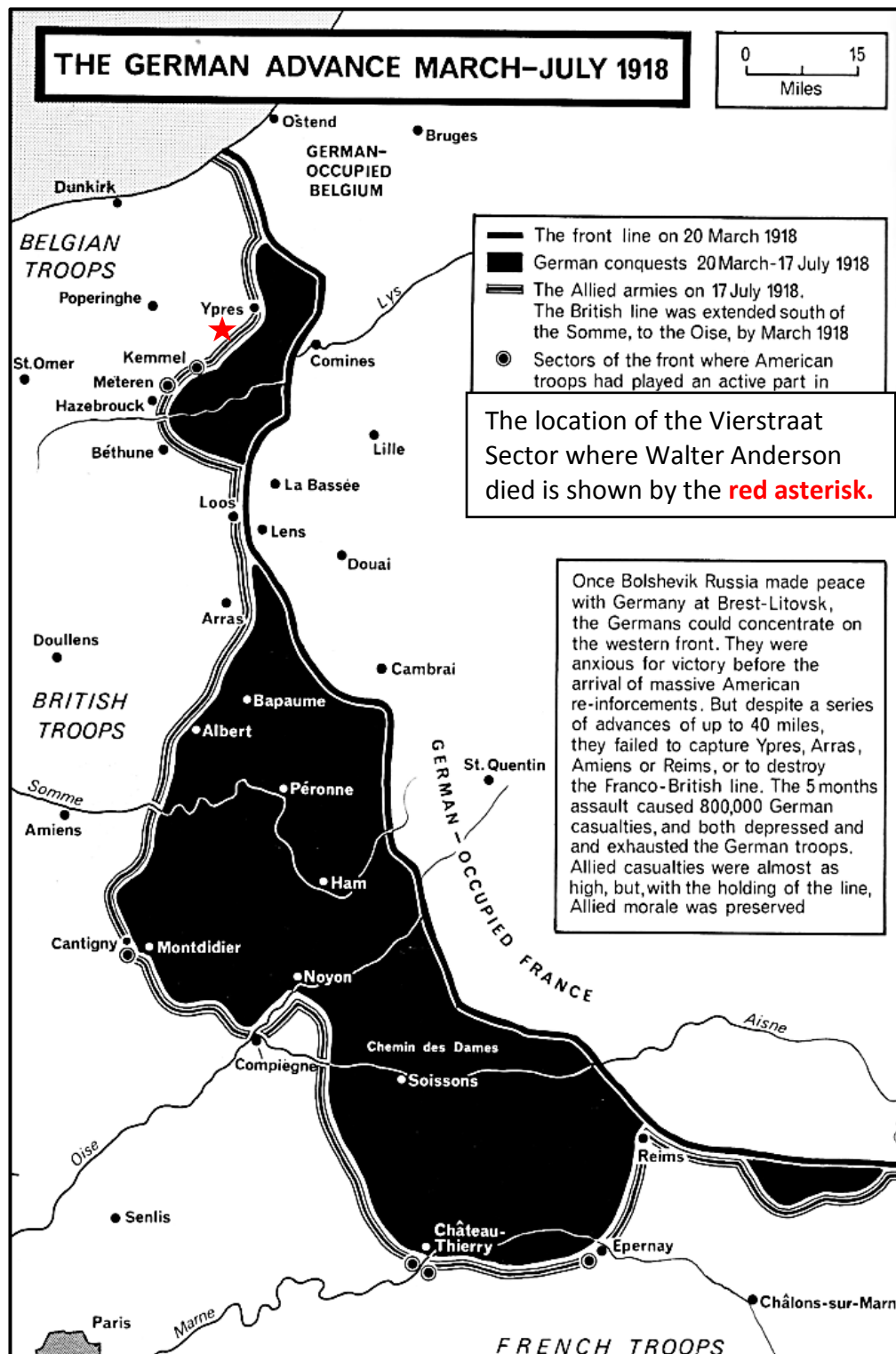


The grave of Walter Anderson at La Clytte Military Cemetery, West Flanders, Belgium
[Source: CWGC]

[illegible]

In Summer 1919 the army paid outstanding credits – mainly remaining wages – to soldiers or, in the case of those who had died, their family or nominated representatives. At the same time a War Gratuity was often paid.

The War Gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those men who had served in WW1 for a period of 6 months or more home service or for any length of service if a man had served overseas. The rules governing the gratuity were implemented under Army Order 17 of 1919 but the amount paid was related to the length of war service.



The 1918 Spring Offensive or *Kaiserschlacht* (Kaiser's Battle), also known as the Ludendorff Offensive, was a series of German attacks along the Western Front beginning on 21 March 1918, which marked the deepest advances by either side since 1914. The Germans had realised that their only remaining chance of victory was to defeat the Allies before the overwhelming human and matériel resources of the United States could be fully deployed. They also had the temporary advantage in numbers afforded by the nearly 50 divisions freed by the Russian surrender (the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk).

There were four German offensives, codenamed Michael, Georgette, Gneisenau and Blücher-Yorck. Michael was the main attack, which was intended to break through the Allied lines, outflank the British forces which held the front from the Somme River to the English Channel and defeat the British Army.

Once achieved, it was hoped that the French would seek armistice terms. The other offensives were subsidiary to Michael and were designed to divert Allied forces from the main offensive on the Somme.

No clear objective was established before the start of the offensives and once the operations were underway, the targets of the attacks were constantly changed according to the battlefield (tactical) situation. The Allies concentrated their main forces in the essential areas (the approaches to the Channel Ports and the rail junction of Amiens), while leaving strategically worthless ground, devastated by years of combat, lightly defended.

The Germans were unable to move supplies and reinforcements fast enough to maintain their advance. The fast-moving stormtroopers leading the attack could not carry enough food and ammunition to sustain themselves for long and all the German offensives petered out, in part through lack of supplies. By late April 1918, the danger of a German breakthrough had passed. The German Army had suffered heavy casualties and now occupied ground of dubious value which would prove impossible to hold with such depleted units.

[Sources: map - The Routledge Atlas of the First World War Martin Gilbert 2nd Ed.2003) Routledge (Taylor & Francis Group, London) Text - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring_Offensive