

The Middlesbrough **Roll of Honour of the Great War** **Supplementary Names, - "R"**

Compiled by Robert Coulson (1952 – 2008)

The names below are found on the Supplementary Panels on the Middlesbrough War Memorial. The names were received for inclusion after the official unveiling of the Memorial, and are included on the 3 supplementary panels.

In the years 1914-1918 thousands of Middlesbrough men and women served their country in a time of hardship, stress and suffering both for the troops on the battlefronts and those left at home.

After the Armistice in November of 1918 handsome memorial tablets and plaques recalling the fallen were erected in the works, shops and churches of the Middlesbrough area.

At this time a committee was formed to consider the question of a war memorial for the town as a whole to remember the citizens who had laid down their lives. In the words of the committee,

“We recognise the splendid sacrifice made by our men and we desire that our children and our children’s’ children should hear the story and share in the inspiration which such sacrifice will always give”.

The response of the townspeople resulted in the fine cenotaph of Aberdeen granite and the wall of Portland stone containing the bronze panels with the names of the fallen that we see today at the entrance to Albert Park.

The memorial works were completed at a cost of approximately £17,000 and the people of the town attended in their thousands for the dedication and unveiling ceremony which took place on November 11th 1922.

This roll of honour contains close to 3500 names of the fallen who are remembered on the memorial and also those whose names were put forward by their families after the unveiling ceremony.

I felt it fitting that as the centenary of the onset of the Great War approaches I should try and add a little information on those remembered and the actions in which they laid down their lives.

I would just add that much as I regret it, details on some of these brave people is not available due to the passage of time but their names will still appear in the text as they do on the memorial panels.

Finally just a few points to consider,

It will be noticed that on some of the entries no Middlesbrough connection may be obvious, indeed the person appears to have come from well outside the area or even the country.

It must be remembered that it was the townspeople who put the names forward for inclusion and as an example a relation who stayed with the family in the town occasionally, could well appear after his family took the trouble to forward the name.

Middlesbrough was a thriving centre of industry at the time and a person may well have been employed in the town before hostilities and had their name included by workmates.

Serving under an alias is also quite common and although sometimes used to cover criminal activity, was normally just a person keen to serve but underage and using another identity.

Also a mother who had taken another man's name might have offspring who preferred to serve using their natural father's name.

Double entries for the same name also appear quite a few times, for example, Samuel Alder and S Alder.

I believe they are one and the same person named twice as a result of a large family with different branches putting the name forward twice.

The person will appear in the listing as named on the memorial with any variations in spelling and second names being included in the text.

It will be noticed that some entries begin "I believe this to be".

These are people who to the best of my judgement are those named but can not be 100% certain. They are included with the best intentions and if a mistake is made I make my apologies in advance.

Robert Henry Coulson died on 8 November 2008. His papers were donated to the Green Howards Museum in Richmond, and the work below comes from these papers.

Names on the Middlesbrough War Memorial

Rankin, John Henry Walter.

On the 1901 census John Henry Walter Rankin was 12 years old and born and living in Middlesbrough.

The Medal Index Cards at the National Archives in London show that he served with the Yorkshire Regiment and with the York and Lancaster Regiment.

His name does not appear however on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorial listings.

Ratcliffe, T H.

A Merchant Navy man, T H Ratcliffe was 1st Engineer aboard the SS William Dawson. He perished on August 21st 1915 when the William Dawson struck a mine one mile off the French port of Boulogne.

His body was recovered and he is buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery on the French channel coast.

Richardson, George.

George Richardson was born in Stockton and enlisted in Middlesbrough to serve with the Yorkshire Regiment before transferring to the 9th battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.

Private Richardson was killed in actions during the Battle of the Aisne on May 27th 1918 at the age of 19.

Having no known grave his name is remembered on the Soissons Memorial situated sixty miles north east of Paris in the town of Soissons.

He was the son of Sarah Jane Mulholland, formerly Richardson of 36 Arthur Street in Middlesbrough and the late George Richardson.

Rider, R G.

Born and enlisting in Middlesbrough, Robert Garthwaite Rider was a member of the 1/4th battalion of the East Yorkshire Regiment.

Taken as a prisoner of war by the Germans, Private Rider died in enemy hands aged 19 on August 19th 1918.

He is buried in Niederzwehren Cemetery six miles to the south of Kassel in Germany. Robert Rider was the son of Mary A Rider and the late John George Rider of 32 Caxton Street in Middlesbrough.

Righton, Richard.

I believe this to be a double entry referring to Richard Wright in the main listing.

Names on the Middlesbrough War Memorial

Robinson, F.

Fred Robinson was Middlesbrough born and enlisted in the town for war service with the 14th battalion of the Durham Light Infantry.

Private Robinson was killed in actions to the south of Wieltje in the Ypres Salient on February 13th 1916.

His grave can be visited today in Potijze Burial Ground Cemetery situated two miles east of Ypres town centre.

Robson, Bert.

Bert Robson was born in Middlesbrough but was living and working in Canada at the onset of war.

Corporal Robson enlisted with the 4th battalion of the Canadian Railway Troops and died at the age of 21 on November 30th 1917.

He has no known grave and is remembered today on the Vimy Memorial five miles north east of Arras on the highest point of Vimy Ridge.

Bert Robson was the son of Mrs Emma Hunt of 31 Barritt Street in Middlesbrough.

Rounce, Chas.

Merchant Navy man Charles Rounce was Master of the Middlesbrough registered ship the SS Sixty Six.

He lost his life along with five of his crew on June 29th 1918 when the Sixty Six was torpedoed three miles east of Scarborough.

His name is remembered today on the Tower Hill Memorial to merchant seamen in Trinity Square in London.