

PRIVATE JOHN LAWRENCE JONES

41031, 6th Battalion, Kings Own Scottish Borderers Regiment

Died aged 31 on 23 September 1917

Remembered with honour at *Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium*; Panel 66 to 68

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey,
and on the Gloucestershire County Memorial



Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium



Kings Own Scottish Borderers

JOHN LAWRENCE JONES was born in Tewkesbury in 1886, son of Edwin Jones and Mary (formerly Lawrence). Edwin was from Eldersfield and Mary came from Gloucester; they ran a greengrocers in the High Street. John was a former pupil of Abbey School; according to the 1891 Census he was one of seven children, two boys and five girls. On the 1901 Census, the family was living at 85 Church Street, apart from John who was living on his own nearby at 2 Laights Court, Church Street; his occupation was described as 'Farm Labourer'. In 1910 John married Angelina Cull and in 1911 they were living in Evans Alley, Barton Street. Angelina Jones remarried in 1920 to Francis H. Booth, three years after John's death, and lived at Myrtle Court, Barton Street.

John volunteered and enlisted at Upton-on-Severn. According to the available military records, he initially joined the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry, a Territorial Force cavalry unit raised in Kirkcaldy in August 1914 as part of the Highland Mounted Brigade. At some point he transferred to an infantry battalion, the 6th (Service) Battalion, the King's Own Scottish Borderers. This was most likely because the Western Front had quickly settled into static trench warfare and, consequently, the need for infantrymen was greater than that for cavalrymen; the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry themselves became a dismounted unit in August 1915. The connection between John and his service in two Scottish regiments is a mystery!

John's battalion was originally formed at Berwick-on-Tweed in August 1914 as part of Kitchener's New Army and came under the

command of the 28th Infantry Brigade in the 9th (Scottish) Division. On 6 May 1916 the battalion was transferred to the 27th Infantry Brigade but still in the same Division.

Private John Lawrence Jones was killed on 23 September 1917 during the *Third Battle of Ypres*, sometimes referred to as *Passchendaele*. In fact it comprised a series of set-piece battles and Frederick was killed during the third phase, the *Battle of the Menin Road Ridge*.

According to the Battalion War Diary, they went over the top on the first day of the battle, their final objective being a strongpoint known as 'Zonnebeke Redoubt' which was captured on the opening day 'without any difficulty'. The battalion spent the next two days consolidating their position in the front line and repelling German counter-attacks before they were relieved on 22 September by the 1st Northumberland Fusiliers. The Battalion War Diary records casualties of eight Officers wounded, 26 Other Ranks killed, 200 Other Ranks wounded and 27 men missing.

Although Private Jones is reported to have been killed in action on 23 September, the War Diary does not make reference to any incident on that date: the entry for 23 September simply states '*On relief, Battalion proceeded to camp in Brandhoek area*'. It is possible but not certain, therefore, that he was actually killed in the earlier fighting. In any event, his body was not recovered and he is commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing at *Tyne Cot Cemetery*.

Private Frederick Taylor [†], his brother-in-law, was killed on 17 September 1917 in the same battle but in a different battalion.