

LANCE CORPORAL DONALD LACEY PRIESTLEY

762550, 1st/28th Battalion, London Regiment (Artists Rifles)

Died aged 30 on 30 October 1917

Remembered with honour at **Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium**; Panel 153

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross, in the Abbey and on the Grammar School Memorial



*Memorial to the Missing,
Tyne Cot Cemetery, Belgium*



'D.L.P.'
1907 Cricketer



*28th County of London
Battalion (Artists Rifles)*

DONALD LACEY PRIESTLEY was born in 1887, the third son of Joseph Edward Priestley, for many years Headmaster of the Grammar School in Church Street, and Henrietta (formerly Rice).

His obituary in the *Tewkesbury Record* read: ‘*D.L.P.*, as he was popularly known, was one of the most brilliant amateurs of the Town Cricket Club; his batting, fielding, and bowling on many occasions giving his side the victory. Oft times his batting score exceeded the century in local cricket, and as a result he was selected to play a few matches for ... Gloucestershire but, for some unaccountable reason, he failed to reach his form, which was a disappointment to himself as well as to his many admirers.’ In the 1907 season, when he was photographed, he scored a noteworthy 1,141 runs.

The obituary noted also that he ‘made the stand on behalf of Christianity – especially in connection with the great Brotherhood Movement and the Wesleyan Methodist Denomination’. In 1912 he married a fellow Methodist, Edith, daughter of Mr. W.T. Boughton, clothier, of Barton Street, the oldest Town Councillor of the borough. There were no children of the marriage.

By profession Donald was a Commercial Traveller in 1911 and in February 1916 he was working for Wm. Rice & Sons, Corn Millers (his mother’s family firm). Although D.L.P. was not commemorated as a volunteer, he and his wife were involved in entertainment for soldiers at the Red Cross Hospital (Mitton Manor) and in April 1916 at a Soldiers’ Farewell.

Donald attested under the ‘Derby Scheme’ on 7 December 1915, then went home ‘on reserve’

until September 1916. He was mobilised on 28 September 1916 and posted to the 1st/28th County of London Battalion (Artists Rifles), one of the battalions in the Territorial Regiment. Just over a month after being mobilised, Donald was posted overseas on 6 November 1916, joining the battalion in the field three days later.

Even though he spent some eight months with the battalion when it was operating as a training unit, Donald was not commissioned as an Officer, unlike his brothers, but in October 1917 he was appointed as an ‘unpaid Lance Corporal’. In 1917, he took part in the *Arras Offensive* before becoming involved in the *Second Battle of Passchendaele*, the final phase of the *Third Battle of Ypres* which resulted in the capture of the Passchendaele Ridge.

Lance Corporal Donald Priestley was killed in action on 30 October 1917, four days into the battle. He is commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing at **Tyne Cot Cemetery**, Belgium. The headline in a newspaper read: ‘*ANOTHER BRILLIANT TEWKESBURY CRICKETER MAKES THE GREAT SACRIFICE; The sorrowful news came through ... that he had been killed instantaneously while leading his platoon by the explosion of a large German shell.*’

The other cricketer sacrificed had been his brother (the youngest son), **Lieutenant Stanley Priestley** [†], as far back as July 1916. Two other brothers were still serving: ‘*Captain J.H. Priestley, Intelligence Department, formerly of Bristol University, and Captain R.E. Priestley, Wireless Section R F, of Antarctic fame*’. Their father had resigned as Headmaster in the autumn of 1917, and died in 1921.