

Private Henry Brown[©]
Regimental number: 33218
1/5th Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment

born: 1893 – died: 15 August 1917

Private Henry Brown's name was recorded in the journal of the chaplains of the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station,¹ which recorded the names of all those who died at the 1st CCCS. But Henry's name was entered and then crossed out. It is not clear what this signifies, because he did, in fact, die at the 1st CCCS on 15 August 1917.²

Henry was born in 1892 in Skipton, Yorkshire,³ the son of William and Margaret Ann Brown. His father was born in about 1869 in Gargrave, Yorkshire and his mother, the former Margaret Ann Tosney, in about 1870 in Skipton.⁴ They married in Skipton in 1890⁵ and had three children. Henry was their first child. He had a younger brother, (John Willie, born in about 1894) and a younger sister (Mary Ann, born in about 1896).⁶

In 1901, the family was living at 29 Bennett Street in Skipton, where Henry's father was a tailor. Ten years later, they were at 102 Keighley Road in Skipton. Henry was now working as a cotton weaver. Four years later he enlisted in the army in Keighley, Yorkshire. When he enlisted on 10 November 1915, he was living at 11 Gladstone Street in Normanton, Yorkshire. He was 23 years old, a porter and measured 5' 7³/₄". He was mobilized on 20 March 1916. He served first with the 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment (Regimental number: 31293). Just before joining the Western Front he had a disciplinary issue. When on active service, he was absent from 11:55 p.m. on 14 June 1917 until 9:15 p.m. on 18 June. This absence resulted in five days of field punishment No. 2 and the forfeiture of five days' pay.⁷

On 21 June 1917, he left England to join the Front. He was with the 9th Battalion of the West Yorkshire Riding, but the next day he joined the 34th Infantry Base Depot in Etaples and then transferred to the 1/5th York and Lancaster Regiment on 6 July 1917. Just six weeks later, Henry suffered multiple gunshot wounds. He was admitted to the 1st CCCS on 14 August and died the following day. He was buried in Adinkerke Military Cemetery (Grave Reference: A. 32). Adinkerke Military Cemetery is 20 kilometres east of Dunkirk, in the community of De Panne, just across the border into Belgium. There are 168 Commonwealth soldiers from the Great War buried in the cemetery.⁸

Although no next of kin was identified in the chaplains' journal, the monies owing to Henry from the army upon his death were sent to his father.⁹ He also received his personal possessions, which included letters, photos, cards, false teeth and a wallet.¹⁰

Henry was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹¹

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¹ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 – 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 and 2016), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 342

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- ² "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 May 2016), entry for Henry Brown
- ³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 May 2016), entry for Henry Brown, Registration district: Skipton, Inferred County: West Yorkshire Riding, Volume: 9a, Page: 50
- ⁴ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 May 2016), entry for Henry Brown, Registration district: Skipton, Registration district number: 485, Sub-registration district: Skipton, ED, institution, or vessel: 14, Piece: 25804
- ⁵ "England & Wales marriages 1837–2008," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 23 May 2016), entry for Willie Brown, District: Skipton, County: Yorkshire, Volume: 9A, Page: 71
- ⁶ "1911 England Census," entry for Henry Brown
- ⁷ "Field Punishment No. 1, nicknamed "crucifixion" by the soldiers, entailed labour duties and attachment to a fixed object such as a post or wheel for two hours a day. Soldiers viewed Field Punishment No. 1 as particularly degrading. Field Punishment No. 2 differed only in that the soldier was not bound to a fixed object." "Discipline and Punishment," *Canadian War Museum* (<http://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/history/life-at-the-front/trench-conditions/discipline-and-punishment/>: accessed 27 December 2015)
- ⁸ "Adinkerke Military Cemetery," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (<http://www.cwgc.org/>: accessed 30 April 2016)
- ⁹ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 May 2016), entry for Henry Brown
- ¹⁰ "British Army WWI Service Records, 1914–1920," entry for Henry Brown
- ¹¹ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 May 2016), entry for Henry Brown