



CORPORAL TOMMY ANDERSON

7th Battalion The Northamptonshire Regiment

Service number 15290

Killed in action 18 August 1916, Delville Wood, Somme, age 21

Buried Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval

Born Great Brington January 1897

Parents George and Mary Anderson of Whilton Road,

later 73 Great Brington

1914-15 Star, Victory Medal, British War Medal

William Thomas (Tommy) Anderson appears in the 1901 Census aged 4, with his brothers John and Henry and sisters Elizabeth and Annie. By 1911 the family had moved around the corner to 73 Great Brington and had grown to include Walter and Elsie. Tommy's occupation then was 'general carrier's assistant'.

Tommy enlisted for Short Service – 'Three years with the Colours' - at the Northamptonshire Regiment Depot on 7 September 1914, giving his age as "19 years 8 months" and his occupation as bricklayer when his true age was only 17. His obituary appeared both in the *Mercury* and the *Herald* on 15 September 1916 and again in the *Independent* on 30 September, when his true age on enlistment was given correctly.

Tommy joined the 4th Battalion which embarked for France in August-September 1915, and would have gone through the Battle of Loos in which the Battalion was fed into the line unrested and unprepared and suffered heavy losses. He was obviously highly thought of because it appears he had his first stripe within the year before he left for France and his full corporal's second stripe within the next.

He was killed on the Somme in the 24th Division's attack on Guillemont on 18 August 1916, one of many such battles in the Somme Offensive.

<p>Tommy's mother wrote asking for a photo of his grave</p>	<p>... which was sent</p>

Tom's brothers Jack and Henry both served and survived.

The following are extracts from the 7th Northampton's war diary for that fateful attack:

7th Northamptonshire Regiment.
 on the
 Operation Order No
 by
 Lt Col E. R. Mobbs. No 3
 Ref. Map. WNGEVAL 1/10000.

(1) Information. The Battalion has been ordered to attack the enemy's front line from T.25.A.02 to S.25.D.95

(2) Attack

"A" Company will attack on the right in two waves 100 yards apart, the Lewis Guns going with first wave and one machine gun will go forward with the second wave.

"C" Company will attack on the left in two waves with the Lewis Guns going over with the first, and one machine gun with the second, this to be on the left flank covered by Bombers.

"B" Company will attack in one line with the Headquarter Bombers and "D" Company Bombers in the centre. The flank platoons of this Company will push forward over the attacked trench about 30 yards & dig in and form a

Page 1 of the Commanding Officer's Operation Order – Lt Col Edgar Mobbs' orders for the attack.

... and C Company's report afterwards.

"At ZERO 'C' Company moved in two waves on the left of the Battalion sector and advanced on a front of 100 yards. Very few casualties were suffered until the first wave arrived within 20 yards of the enemy trench. The enemy then offered much resistance, throwing a considerable number of bombs. The trench was rushed and the enemy was seen to be retiring ... Much trouble was caused by bombers from a small strong point about 40 yards to the left of the QUARRY and also by snipers from the mound directly behind ... By this time all the Company Officers were casualties and the Company was under command of a Corporal. There was no shelling by the enemy. Casualties were caused by our own guns. .. By 7pm everything was fairly normal."

7th (B) Bn. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE REGT.
 "C" Company movements in Attack.

At ZERO "C" Company moved in two waves on the left of the Battalion sector and attacked on a frontage of 100 yards. Very few casualties were suffered until the first wave arrived within 20 yards of the enemy trench. The enemy then offered much resistance, throwing a considerable number of bombs. The trench was rushed and the enemy was seen to be retiring towards the Station. Much trouble was caused by bombers from a small strong point about 40 yards to the left of the QUARRY and also by snipers from the mound directly behind the QUARRY. The latter were killed by bombers.

By this time all the Company Officers were casualties and the Company was under the command of a Corporal.

There was no shelling by the enemy. Casualties were caused by our own guns.

The work of consolidation was then begun the Company digging in about 50 yards beyond the enemy trench on a small 12 Lewis guns were pushed out to cover this work.

Shortly afterwards reinforcements arrived under an officer who took command.

By 7 p.m. everything was fairly normal.