



Two sets of Cressy Brothers at War



The brothers Joseph and Charles Cressy

Joseph was born in Owersby in 1867 and Charles in West Rasen in 1869. When war broke out in 1914 both lived with their families in Market Rasen, Joseph at 4 Willingham Rd and George at 6 Rhodes Passage.

On 3rd April 1915, Joseph enlisted in the army, joining the 4th Lincolnshire Regiment. In order to do so, he lied about his age saying he was 38 when, in fact, he was 48. In doing so he also left his daughter Sarah, then 25, to look after her younger siblings aged 16, 13 and 9.

At the time he joined, Joseph is recorded as being 5 feet 4¼ inches tall and only 8 stone 11lbs in weight. It is not known what Joseph was doing in the army from his enlistment until 1917 but in January of that year he was promoted to Lance Corporal, transferred to the Reserve and moved to work in a munition factory in Sheffield where he stayed until he was demobbed in December 1918.

In April 1919 the Market Rasen Mail reported that Joseph had saved a woman from drowning in a canal in Sheffield and, for his bravery, had been awarded a medal by the Royal Humane Society. Charles Cressy, two years younger than his brother, also enlisted into the 4th Lincolnshire Regiment and, probably because of his age, was put into the Labour Corps.

The brothers George and Joseph Cressy.

These brothers were the sons of the elder Joseph (above). At the outbreak of war in 1914, George was a baker in Horncastle.

On the day after the declaration of war, 5th August, at the age of 18 years 11 months, he enlisted in the 4th Lincolnshire Regiment. It is not clear where he was between then and 1917 but in March of that year he joined the Machine Gun Corps. Just a month later he was hospitalised with an injury to his right hand sustained when trying to open a can of butter with a knife. He survived the rest of the war and was demobbed in March 1919. He then came back to Market Rasen and lived at 12 Willingham Road.

Joseph Cressy the younger was living in Market Rasen in 1914 but on 1st October that year, when 20 years old, he went to Grimsby and enlisted in the 10th Lincolnshire Grimsby Chums. He was in England until January 1916 having been promoted to Lance Corporal in September 1915.

On 1st July 1916 his battalion went "over the top" on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. On that day the British Army suffered nearly 60,000 casualties of which nearly 20,000 were killed. Joseph was one of those killed. Five other Market Rasen men also died that day and another died a few days later of wounds sustained on that first day.