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| **Name** | **WILLIAM RICHMOND CLEPHAN M.C.** |
| **Birth** |  1884 Stockton on Tees  |
| **Enlistment/Occupation** | Enlistment date unknown/Bank Clerk |
| **Death, date, location** | 07/07/1917Reported missing / Killed in actionHenin sur CojeulFirst entered France 20/04/1915(Medal Rolls) |
| **Age** | 33 |
| **Unit, rank, service no:** | 6/2301Second LieutenantNorthumberland Fusiliers6th (City) Bn.(Territorial) |
| **Awards** | **SUPPLEMENT TO THE EDINBURGH GAZETTE, APRIL 19, 1917.** MILITARY CROSS.2nd Lt. William Richmond Clephan, North’d Fus.For conspicuous gallantry and devotion toduty. He carried out several dangerousreconnaissance’s and obtained most valuableinformation. Later, he led an offensivepatrol and made a gallant attempt to rushan enemy sap. He was wounded.2nd Lt. William Richmond Clephan is the only individual named on the war memorials in Wylam who was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry during the First World war.Also recorded in London Gazette 17/04/1917 |
| **CWGC Family Acknowledgement**  | Son of Thomas Richmond Clephan and Margaret Emily Clephan, of Finkle Chambers, Finkle St., Stockton-on-Tees. (CWGC) |
| **Family** | Efforts to trace much information about William Richmond Clephan’s life prior to the 1901 census have so far yielded little. He was born 1884 in Stockton during the July-Aug-Sept quarter (Vol10a p.75). His parents were Thomas Richmond Clephan and Mary Emily (nee Hunter) who married at Middlesbrough during the Jan-March quarter 1877 (ref 9D 727). His father Thomas Richmond was a Borough Councillor in Stockton on Tees for several years in the 1880’s. At the 1891 census William’s parents are recorded as visitors staying with a grocer and his family in Aysgarth, N. Yorks, but William is not with them there and has not been traced elsewhere. Whellan & Co. Directory of Durham for 1894 records Thomas as a ship-owner living at Castle Hill in Middleton St. George; other members of the Clephan family were architects and builders in Stockton in the Victorian era and designed several of the public buildings in the town In the 1901 Census Thomas is described as a secretary to an iron works and boarding at Middleton St. George. At the same 1901 census William Richmond was 16 and is described as a visitor (no occupation given was he still a scholar? – if so where?) at Piercebridge Mill, west of Darlington, staying with Stephen Clarke 48 a farmer and his wife Annie 49, their young son Stephen 6, and Ellen Richmond 15, a niece and described as a domestic servant.By the 1911 census William Richmond Clephan is a banker’s clerk living in Wylam in a furnished bedroom above the shop in Laburnum House in the Main Street in the centre of the village. A fellow lodger was a George Douglas Alexander aged 26 from Glasgow and working as a colliery clerk. The landlord was David Dunn, a grocer/draper who lived in the rest of the house with his family. (This David Dunn was uncle to Capt: Frederick George Dunn, RFC who also originated from Wylam and who died in 1919 and is commemorated on the School War memorial.)William Richmond Clephan continued to keep his Wylam address up to his death in the war in 1917 and he is registered in the local voter’s lists for 1914 & 1915.We do not have full information on William Richmond Clephan’s enlistment with the 6th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers which was Newcastle based and known as the ‘City Battalion’ recruiting business and office workers such as William Clephan a bank official.The Medal Rolls record that William’s initial rank was that of Private and his new rank of 2nd/Lt. was added to the record afterwards presumably in 1915 when he was gazetted. **12298 SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE, 8 DECEMBER, 1915.**William Richmond Clephan to be SecondLieutenant. Dated 4th December, 1915The Medal Rolls also show that William entered France in April 1915 which indicates that he was probably already an active member of the Battalion when the war broke out or he was amongst the many to volunteer for military service very early on.His award of the Military Cross in April 1917 has been set out earlier. He had been wounded in the action which resulted in the award. Four months later on 7th July 1917 the War Diary of the 6th Battalion records his death when the battalion was at Henin Sur Cojeul. |
| **Battalion War Diary 6th Bn. Northumberland Fusiliers**  | ***01/07/1917*** *Cherisy. 7th Bn Northumberland Fusiliers relieved us in front line. The Battalion moved into Support at Egret Nest arriving 9.15p.m.****02 July 1917*** *5th Bn Northumberland Fusiliers relieved us in the afternoon and the Battalion moved back into Brigade Reserve at Henin arriving at 5.00pm.****Henin Sur Cojeul******3rd July 1917*** *The day was devoted to cleaning up and training.****4th July 1917*** *Baths and musketry training.****5th July 1917*** *Battalion relieved the 5th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers in support, and at 7.30pm the same day relieved the 7th Ban.* *Northumberland Fusiliers at the Quarry in the left* *sector.****6th July 1917*** *Lt. Col. F. Robinson DSO rejoined the Battalion and took over the command from Major E. Temperley. 2nd Lieut. F. P. Aldrich and 1 O.R. took out a picqueting patrol of 10 O.R. He and 1 O.R. failed to return.* ***7th July 1917.*** *Heavy thunderstorm**2nd Lieut. W. R. Clephan M.C. took out a fighting patrol of 10 O.R. He gave instructions when near the enemy wire that the patrol was to return in pairs to our own line and he and his servant would bring up the rear. Neither he nor his servant have been seen since.’**(O.R. = other ranks)*At the time of his death his parents address was at Finkle Chambers, Finkle Street, Stockton on Tees. |
| **Battalion** | **The 1/6th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers**, a territorial battalion was based in St George's Drill Hall, Newcastle when war broke out in August 1914. After training they proceeded to France in April 1915, to join the 149th Brigade, 50th (Northumbrian) Division (TF). They took part in the Second Battles of Ypres in 1915 and the Battle of the Somme in 1916, the Arras Offensive where they captured Wancourt Ridge and The Second Battle of Passchendaele in 1917. In 1918 they again saw action on The Somme and Battles of the Lys & Hindenburg Line. |
| **Memorials** | Bay 2 and 3.ARRAS MEMORIALThe Arras Memorial at Faubourg-D´Amiens Cemetery, ArrasAlso commemorated in:-War memorial Plaque St.Oswin’s church, WylamWar Memorial Monument, Village Green, WylamWar Memorial, Stockton on Tees Parish Church. |
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| **Sources** | UK Soldiers died in Great War 1914-1919Commonwealth War Graves CommissionMedal Rolls[www.The](http://www.The) Long Long Trail1881/1891/1901/1911 CensusLondon GazetteEdinburgh GazetteWar Diaries 6th battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, Fusiliers Museum of Northumberland, Alnwick. |