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| **Name** | **FREDERICK HUNTER** |
| **Birth** | Born 1896 Fishburn Co. Durham |
| **Enlistment/Occupation** | Colliery Clerk |
| **Death, date, location** | 01/07/1916First day of Battle of SommeKilled in actionFrance & Flanders |
| **Age** | 20 |
| **Unit, rank,service no:** | Private8508Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)11th Battalion |
| **Family acknowledgement CWGC** | Son of Jane Hunter, late of Trimdon, Co. Durham, and the late Roger Hunter. (CWGC) |
| **Family** | In 1891 Roger Hunter (b.1858) from Edmundbyers and his wife Jane (nee ) were living in Front Street, Trimdon Co. Durham with three daughters Edith 4, Hannah 2, and Lydia 3 months. He was an Education Officer in the densely populated colliery villages in that area of Durham. By the 1901 census the sexes in the family had been balanced with the birth of three sons James Alexander 7, Frederick 5, and Stanley Fletcher 2 and the family were now living at Birkett’s Buildings, Trimdon Colliery. Father Roger had died and daughter Edith had left home by the 1911 census when mother Jane, now head of the household, was living at 16 Grosvenor Terrace , Trimdon Colliery with daughter Lydia 21 a grocer’s book-keeper, the two eldest sons James Alexander 17 and Frederick 15, both described as colliery clerks and Stanley 12 still at school.All three of the Hunter brothers joined the army during the First World War. They did not all join at the same time, but when they did join all gave 5 Algernon Terrace, Wylam as their home address and gave Jane Hunter, their mother, also at 5 Algernon Terrace, as their next of kin. The Algernon Terrace houses were built by the local squire Col. E. U. Blackett in the period 1913-1915 And some were rented to local colliery employees. The eldest son James Alexander, gives North Wylam Colliery Co. as his last employer on his military records so it is possible that it was his position at the colliery which secured the tenancy for the family at Algernon Terrace.Frederick was certainly unlucky in the 11th battalion Royal Fusiliers being killed in the disaster of the first day of the battle of the Somme 1st July 1916.Further research shows that the 11th Btn Royal Fusiliers were part of the 18th Division (Eastern) part of 13thCorps. On 1st July 1916 the 11th Btn Royal Fusiliers took part in the assault on Montauban with the specific objectives of Pommiers trench part of the German defences. Frederick was 1 of 59 men of the 11th Btn. killed on that day. His name is commemorated on the Thiepval memorial.Fred and his family are referred to in the report of a Memorial Service held on 05/11/1916 in St.Oswin’s church Wylam which is reported in the Hexham Courant 11/11/1916. The report refers to Fred as the son of Mrs. Hunter 5 Algernon Terrace. The service was held to commemorate Fred Hunter, Joe Appleby, Jacob (Jake) Irwin and Jack Winder and Joseph McCarthy all casualties of the Somme battles.Brother Stanley Fletcher Hunter joined the army aged 18 on 06/06/1916. He joined the Royal Regiment of Artillery and served as a driver mainly at home in the Woolwich area until 29/05/1918 when he was posted to France. He was demobilised in 1919. Stanley’s service record provides an insight into the many minor ways in which an ordinary soldier might infringe the rules of the military and receive punishment. There are four offences recorded; he overstayed his leave by 1 day was admonished and forfeited 2 days, for Smoking in a stable he was fined 1 day’s pay, Out of bounds and travelling without a rail pass he received 24 hours detention.Brother James Alexander, colliery clerk at North Wylam Colliery Co. joined the army aged 22, 11/12/1915. He joined the 3rd Battalion, Durham Light Infantry. His military records survive in a very poor condition making it very difficult to extract useful information. However, they do show that he achieved the rank of Lance Corporal and he survived his service in the First World War. |
| **War Memorials** | Pier and Face 8 C 9 A and 16 A.THIEPVAL MEMORIALAlso commemorated in:-War memorial Plaque St.Oswin’s church, WylamWar Memorial Monument, Village Green, Wylam**Historical Information re: Thiepval Memorial**On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter.The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916 |
| **Comments** | The 1st July 1916 was the first day of the Battle of the Somme. Two other Wylam casualties are recorded on this day James Leadbitter Knott and Joseph Pattinson. |
| **Sources** | 1901 & 1911 CensusUK Soldiers killed in Great War 1914-1918British Army WWI Service Records 1914-1920Commonwealth War GravesHexham Courant 11/11/1916 |
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