

Henry G Cooper

Henry G Cooper was a private in the 12th Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment. He was born in 1898, to Benjamin and Amelia Cooper; in 1901 the family was living in Bank Cottages, Nursling. Benjamin was a labourer, born in Redbridge, while Amelia came from Wimpson. Their eldest child, Bessie, had been born in Totton while the others – Lily, Henry and young Benjamin – were born in Nursling. The family were still at Bank Cottages – number 5 – in 1911, with Benjamin working as a labourer in a corn mill, Bessie and Lily both general servants (domestic) with Henry and James (the same boys as the one previously listed as Benjamin?) at school, along with their younger brother Albert. Two other children, Reginald and Edith, completed the family.

Henry was working as a labourer when he enlisted at Winchester, on 13th November 1916, at the age of 18 years, 329 days; his enlistment papers show the name of the Cambridgeshire regiment. He said he wasn't married, had no preference for a particular branch of the service but didn't want to serve in the navy.

The 12th Battalion Norfolk yeomanry were formed in Egypt in February 1917 and in May 1918 embarked for France from Alexandria, arriving at Marseilles. They engaged in various actions on the Western Front including the Battle of Ypres and the action of Tieghem. Henry was posted to France in July 1918.

Henry died on 20th August 1918, after sustaining wounds the previous day, during the action near Hazebrouck, France. The last of the Nursling men to die during the war, he is buried at Longueness (St Omer) Souvenir cemetery.

Ann Laird - Rownhams October 2014