

**Sergeant Herbert Waddington**  
6152  
13 Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers  
Killed in Action  
1 July 1916  
Remembered with Honour  
Thiepval Memorial

Herbert Waddington was the son of James Henry and Harriet Waddington of Cliffe House, 249 Otley Road, Bradford. His mother had passed away by the time Herbert went to war.

A successful family, who, according to the 1891 Census, were able to employ a servant in their previous home at Cowper Place. Herbert was a student at Bradford Grammar School.

He joined the army in September 1914 and was sent to France a year later. According to the Bradford Telegraph he was gassed but did not allow this to prevent him going through the battle of Loos (at which his Division suffered 3,800 casualties) and other 'big' battles successfully. Sadly, he was killed in action, at the head of his platoon, on July 1 1916.

### **Young Giant**

Herbert seems to have been an imposing figure, described by the Bradford Telegraph as "an exceptionally fine specimen of young manhood, measuring 6 feet 4 inches in height at only 19 years of age.

His Brigadier-General's description suggests "He was a splendid young fellow, and the longer I knew him, the better I liked him. We all mourn his death."

### **Equipment**

The 13 Northumberland Fusiliers issued an Operation Order (NO 64,65,66) in June 1916 giving instructions for future operations with regard to dress and equipment to be worn/carried into battle. The list included;

- Ground sheet
- Smoke helmets (2)
- Ammunition
- Grenades
- 2 sandbags
- Tools
- Rations and water

Soldiers were told that "Every opportunity should be taken to collect water and

rations from wounded men going or men killed.”

### **1 July 1916**

We are given an insight into the events of 1 July by the Commanding officer in the Battalion’s War Diary.

“Two minutes before 7.25 the enemy machine gun, rifle fire and shrapnel were directed against the parapet of our assembly trench – the southern half of Bradford Trench – causing us to suffer considerably. A lot of men never got off the ladder, but fell back; and many fell back from the parapet in getting over.

On getting out of the trenches to take up our position in front, we lost heavily through the line of shrapnel, machine gun and rapid rifle fire; by the time we attained our position in front of Bradford trench, most of the Officers, NCO’s, and many men, were knocked out.”

All of this occurred before zero hour, when the signal to advance would be given. The diary describes this advance;

“We found ourselves then half way between Leeds trench and the front line.... In our advance we passed the majority of “A” Company, lying on the ground killed or wounded.”

Those men who survived to this point were collected together and organised to advance again.

“At this moment the enemy started shelling our front line very heavily, with shrapnel and high explosive – this would be about one hour after zero. Within a very short time, all the men we had collected were knocked out, including Lt Jowett who gave me instructions to make my way to Brigade Headquarters and report that there were no men left.”

Sergeant Herbert Waddington was one of those killed on this day.