

45: Fred Gordon Jones

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Fred Gordon Jones

Rank: Lance Corporal

Battalion / Regiment: 7th Bn. South Lancashire Regiment

Service Number: 15155

Date of Death: 5 July 1916

Age at Death: ?

Buried / Commemorated at: Thiepval Memorial, Thiepval, Departement de la Somme, Picardie, France

Additional information given by CWGC: None

Fred Gordon Jones of 27, Olive Road, Neston was aged 23 years 180 days when he enlisted in Liverpool on 7 September 1914. Born in Neston in January 1891, the son of labourer Henry Peter Jones and Margaret, he was baptised at Neston Parish Church on 3 April 1891. In the 1891 census the family was living off Bridge Street, Neston but by 1901 they were at Backwood, Leighton, Parkgate:

Henry P. Jones	Head	M	44	Coachman (Domestic)	Do	Beaumaris
Margaret Do	Wife	M	47			Saughall
William H. Do	Son	M	11			Liverpool
Edith Do	Daughter	F	9			Ledsham
Nellie Do	Daughter	F	6			Neston
Bessie Do	Daughter	F	3			Neston
Fred G. Do	Son	M	10			Neston
Margaret Jones	Servant	F	33	Sister, general servant		Beaumaris

1891 census (extract) – Birches Weint, Bridge Street, Neston

Henry P. Jones	34	general labourer (?), public houses	born Beaumaris
Margaret	38		born Saughall Massie
William H.	11		born Liverpool
Edith M.	9		born Ledsham
Nellie	6		born Neston
Bessie	3		born Neston
Fred G.	1 month		born Neston
Margaret Jones	33	sister, general servant	born Beaumaris

Henry Jones	Head	M	44	Coachman (Domestic)	Do	Beaumaris
Margaret Do	Wife	M	47			Saughall
Edith Do	Daughter	F	19	Dressmaker	Own Acc	Ledsham
Bessie Do	Daughter	F	13			Neston
Fred G. Do	Son	M	10			Do
Arnold E. Do	Son	M	6			Do

1901 census (extract) – Backwood, Leighton

Henry Jones	44	coachman (domestic)	born Beaumaris
Margaret	47		born Saughall
Edith	19	dressmaker (own account)	born Ledsham
Bessie	13		born Neston
Fred G.	10		born Neston
Arnold E.	6		born Neston

It is believed that William H Jones, Fred's older brother, moved to the USA and Arnold served with the 2nd Garrison Btn. Cheshire Regiment (59876 and 145549) during WW1.

Nellie Jones, Gordon's sister, was baptised at Neston 12 August 1885; Henry Peter Jones was recorded as a coachman and the family was living at Clay Hill. At the time of the 1901 census Nellie, 15, was recorded as a domestic servant in the household of a widower on Mill Street. Nellie, now 22 of Hilbre Cottage, married labourer Frederick William Dodd (25, Raby Road) at Neston Parish Church on 30 June 1907. Henry Jones, coachman, was recorded as deceased and the two witnesses were Nellie's siblings, William Henry Jones and Edith Mary Jones.

When Bessie was baptised at Neston on 14 August 1887 her father was recorded as a barman, in April 1891 he was a labourer and in April 1901 he was a coachman.

At the time of the 1911 census Fred Gordon Jones, now a joiner's apprentice, was still living at home with his mother in Olive Road.

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.															
Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in ink.															
The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.															
NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE				PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards				BIRTHPLACE of every person	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country	INFIRMITY		
<p>of every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder, or Servant, who</p> <p>(1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling, and was alive at midnight, or</p> <p>(2) arrived in this dwelling on the morning of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere.</p> <p>No one else must be included.</p> <p>(For order of entries see Examples on back of Schedule.)</p>															
		For Infants under one year state the age in months as "Four months," etc.	Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow" opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.	State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—	Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)	Completed years the present Marriage has lasted. If less than one year write "under one year."	Total (children born alive + "under one year")	Children still living.	Children who have died.	Personal Occupation.	Industry or Service with which writer is connected.	Whether Employer, Worker, or Working on Own Account.	Whether Working at Home.	<p>(1) If born in the United Kingdom, write the name of the County, and Town or Parish.</p> <p>(2) If born in any other part of the British Empire, write the name of the Dependency, Colony, etc., and of the Province or State.</p> <p>(3) If born in a Foreign Country, write the name of the Country.</p> <p>(4) If born at sea, write "At Sea."</p> <p>Note.—In the case of persons both elsewhere than in England or Wales, state whether "Domiciled" or "Visitor" in this Country.</p>	<p>State whether—</p> <p>(1) "British subject by parentage"</p> <p>(2) "Naturalized British subject" giving year of naturalization.</p> <p>(3) If of foreign nationality, state whether "French," "German," "Russian," etc.</p> <p>(4) "Totally Deaf" or "Totally Blind."</p> <p>(5) "Lame," or "Paralysed," etc.</p> <p>State the infirmity opposite that person's name, and the age at which he or she became afflicted.</p>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Margaret Jones	Head	37	Widow	32	X	X	X			Elementary School Teacher	C of E	Worker	At Home	Cheshire, Bidston	
Bessie Jones	Daughter	23	Single							Joiner's Apprentice	C of E	Worker	At Home	Cheshire, Bidston	
Fred Gordon Jones	Son	20	Single							Joiner's Apprentice	C of E	Worker	At Home	Cheshire, Bidston	
Arnold Eric Gordon Jones	Son	16	Single							Gardener (Domestic)	C of E	Worker	At Home	Cheshire, Bidston	

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)

Total	
Males	Females
2	2
4	

Initials of Enumerator: *MD*

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (House, Tenement, or Apartment). Count the Kitchen as a room, but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop.

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: *Margaret Jones*

Postal Address: *27 Olive Rd, Neston, Cheshire*

1911 census (condensed) – 27 Olive Road, Neston

Margaret Jones	37	widow	born Bidston
Bessie	23	elementary school teacher	born Neston
Fred Gordon	20	joiner's apprentice	born Neston
Arnold Eric Gordon	16	gardener (domestic)	born Neston

Margaret had been married for 32 years and six of her seven children were still living.

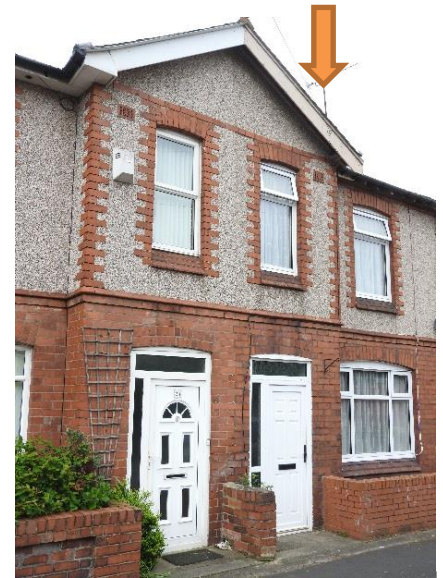
Henry Peter Jones had died sometime after the 1901 census and before June 1907 although his death does not appear to have been recorded in Wirral and he is not buried in the family grave in Neston Cemetery.

Arnold Eric Gordon Jones was baptised at Neston on 12 April 1894 when the family was still living at Backwood, Leighton, and Henry was a coachman.

In March 1921 Arnold (25) was still living at 27, Olive Road with his older sisters, Edith Jones (38) and Nellie Dodd (34).

Another sister, Bessie Grimshaw (Bessie Jones married Moses Grimshaw at St Andrew's Church, Bebington in April/June 1912) was living at 6, Ashbrook Terrace, Bebington.

Before he enlisted Gordon - the name he seems to have used - worked as a joiner for William Fleming & Co., a firm of Neston builders. At his attestation (he enlisted for 3 years) he was described as being 5ft 10 ins tall, weighed 140lb (10 stone / 6.3kg), having a 36½-inch expanded chest, a fresh complexion, brown eyes and black hair. He was said to have 'good physical development' although he had 'defective upper teeth'. His next of kin was given as his married sister, Nellie Dodd, who was living at the family home at 27, Olive Road, Neston. Gordon enlisted in the 7th Battalion South Lancashire Regiment (also called the Prince of Wales's Volunteers) in Liverpool.



27 Olive Road, Neston

The 7th (Service) Battalion South Lancashire Regiment was formed at Warrington in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Second New Army and moved to Tidworth, south-east Wiltshire, under the command of the 56th Brigade in the 19th (Western) Division. We know that Gordon was posted on 24 October 1914 and the Division moved to billets in Andover in December 1914, to Clevedon

Army Form B. 178.
To be used for recruits enlisting direct into the Regular Army only.
Army Form B. 178^A to be used for Special Reserve recruits and Special Reservists enlisting into the Regular Army.

MEDICAL HISTORY OF

Surname Jones Christian Name Gordon

TABLE I.—GENERAL TABLE.

Birthplace .. Parish Neston County Cheshire

Examined on 7th day of Sept 1914
at LIVERPOOL

Declared Age 23 years 180 days.

Trade or Occupation .. Joiner

Height 5 feet, 10 inches.

Weight 140 lbs.

Chest Measurement { Girth when fully Expanded 36½ inches.
Range of Expansion 2½ inches.

Physical Development .. Good

Vaccination Marks { Arm .. Right .. Left ..
Number 8

in February 1915, before moving back to Tidworth in March. The troops were mobilised in mid-July 1915 and we know that Gordon embarked at Folkestone on 17 July before landing at Boulogne on 18 July 1915, the troops concentrating near St. Omer. The following month Gordon received an injury to his right knee, caused by a shell, which necessitated him being taken to the 2nd London Casualty Clearing Station at Merville, west of Lille. This injury cannot have been too serious as, on 23 August, Gordon rejoined his unit.

No details of Gordon's service from August 1915 until he was killed in action, apparently by a sniper, on 5 July 1916 are given in his Service Records although it is probable that he was involved in the South Lancashire's first major action at Pietre on 25 September 1915, a diversionary action supporting The Battle of Loos.

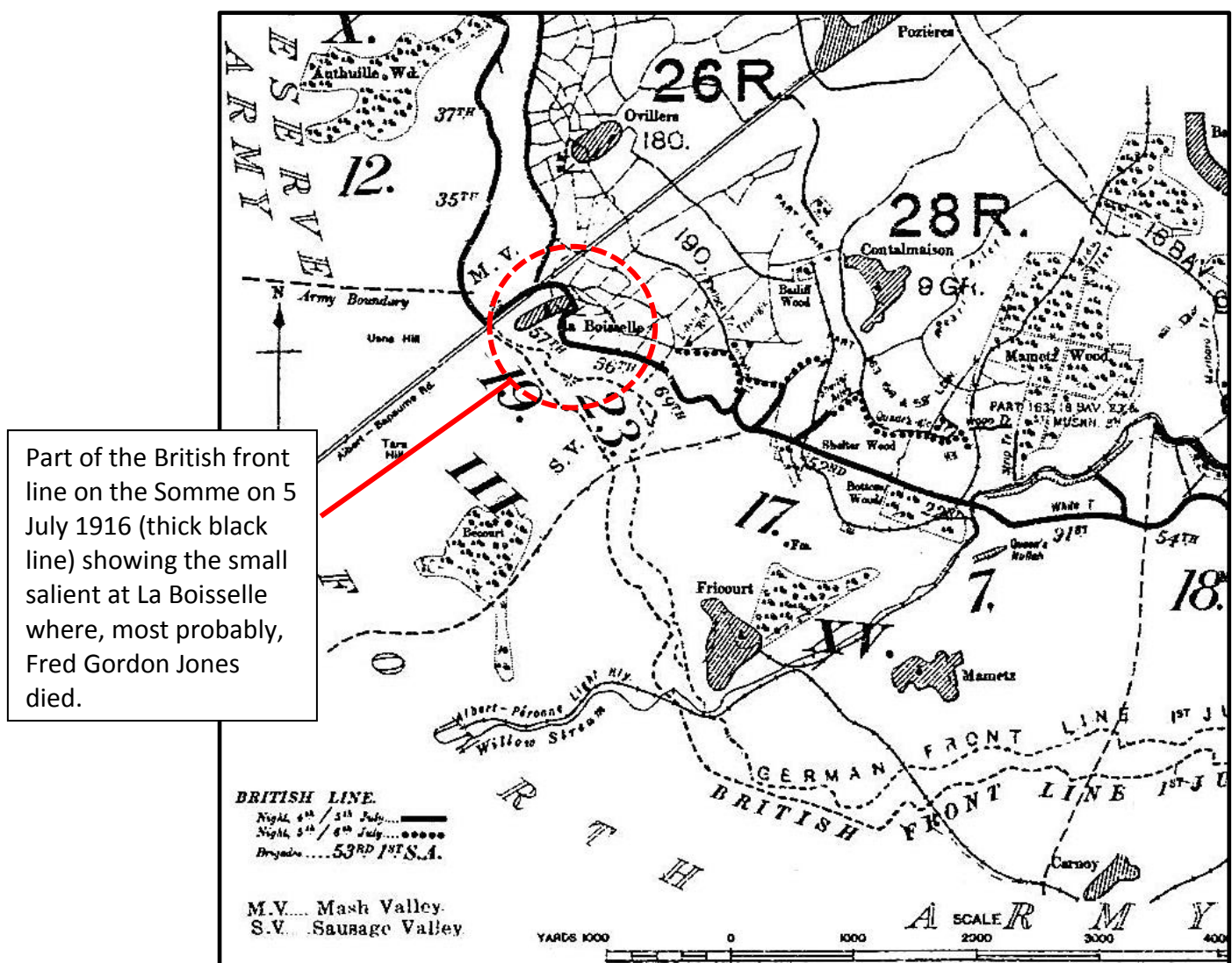
In 1916 they were in action during the various conflicts which comprised The Battle of the Somme, and Gordon was killed during the early stages of this, at The Battle of Albert which took place 1 - 13 July 1916:

In this opening phase, the British assault broke into and gradually moved beyond the first of the German defensive complexes on the Somme. Success on the first day in the area between Montauban and Mametz led to a redirection of effort to that area, for the initial attack was defeated with huge losses north of Mametz. There was a stiff fight for Trones Wood and costly, hastily planned and piecemeal attacks that eventually took La Boisselle, Contalmaison and Mametz Wood.

[The Long, Long Trail : The British Army of 1914-1918]

It has been recorded that, on Wednesday 5 July 1916, the 19th Division '...attempted to straighten out the re-entrant on the east side of La Boisselle with bombers of 56 and 57 Brigades. However, it met with little success.'

[The Somme : The Day-by-Day Account Chris McCarthy Arms & Armour Press, London 1993]



At the time of his death on 5 July 1916 Gordon had served for a total of 1 year 303 days, 354 days being spent in France. He was aged 25½.

The family announcement (*Liverpool Echo* 14 July 1916) gives the date of his death incorrectly as 7 July and the report of his death in the *Chester Chronicle* records him as a Private whereas his rank was actually Lance Corporal.

The actions of the 7th Battalion South Lancashire Regiment around the time of Gordon's death were detailed in an appendix to the Regimental War Diary and the first two pages of this are reproduced below:

Precis of Fighting 3rd - 9th July 1916.

*Reference: Trench Map 57 D.F.E. 1-20,000.
and Map of LA BOISELLE 1-5,000.*

3rd July Battalion in TARA N USNA, line placed at disposal
10 A.M. of G.O.C. 57th Inf Brigade.

Appendix IX
10-15.A.M. O.C. reported to G.O.C. 57th Brigade, and received
Append. 10. verbal orders to send 1st the whole Battn, but subsequently
X. two Companies to take over portion of old British line held
by Royal Warwickshire Regt. Sent A and D Companies via
St Andrews Avenue. Every sixth man carried a box of bombs.
Congestion in St Andrews Avenue was very bad, and the
trench was fairly heavily shelled. On arrival at KEATS
REDAN the congestion was awful and movement in any
direction was practically impossible. I got down ahead
of the Companies, saw Colonel de Wiart - ascertained the
situation and returned to 57th Brigade Headquarters to
report. Received verbal orders to take remaining two
Companies to O.B.L., moving by platoons at 10 minutes
interval via St Andrews Avenue. Congestion again was
intense. I arrived ahead of the Companies and went
to Headquarters 8th Gloucesters, as I had received an
order en route, to place two Companies at disposal of
O.C. 8th Gloucesters. On arrival found O.C. 8th Gloucesters
had arranged to move A and D Companies up to LA BOISELLE
preparatory to attacking and taking the part of the
village east of a line X14C1575 to X14C53.

Append. XI. A. Company were given the line X14C39 to X14C79 as
their objective, and "D" Company X14C79 to X14C96.
These two Companies were assembled in the open about the
junction of the Albert-Baupau road and the crater about
8.0 P.M.

Their attack began at 9.30 P.M. "A" Company after
some bombing gained their objective, but were driven back.
After another fight they retook and held points 39 and 79
establishing good blocks. At point 39 the enemy had made
a bonfire with a shade on their side. This shewed up our
men clearly and enabled the enemy to see while they
remained in the shadow. The Battn Bombers did most of
this fighting. Meanwhile "D" Company moving on the
right advanced 100 yards without much difficulty. They
then encountered a strong point on which they could make
no impression. It was held by enemy bombers, snipers,
and two machine guns. Bombs having run out, and having
sustained a good many casualties, the O.C. Company gave
the order to return to the support line. Apparently he
lost his way for the Companies got to Northumberland
Avenue at about 3 A.M. on the 5th.

Appen. XI. During the evening the other two Companies occupied
the O.B.L. from Keats Redan to a point where the right of
the 12th Division were. The night was fairly quiet, and
a great many wounded - mainly Tyneside Scottish - were
collected and brought in by our men. Many of these
wounded were in a pitiful condition, having been out four
days - several of them drank their own urine.

Append. XIII. At 5.30. A. M. 4th July I received orders to meet the
Brigade Major 57th Brigade at Headquarters 8th Gloucesters.
I met him there at about 6. A. M., and received verbal
orders to take and consolidate the line.

I returned to my Battn Headquarters - issued verbal
orders to O.C. B and C Companies at about 7.15.A.M., and
immediately went up to point 39 to reconnoitre the ground
and issue orders to O.C. A Company. Having done this I
returned to Battn Headquarters 10th R. Warwicks about
X14C28, where I had arranged to meet Company Commanders,
and give them final instructions. The head of the two
Companies arrived at this point at 9.A.M., and I at once

sent them to attack in order that they should keep level with the 56th Brigade, which I was informed would attack on my right at 8.30.A.M. It subsequently transpired that this attack was delayed for one hour.

C. Company attacked in the centre towards the line X14C97 - 79 through the houses. Their attack was carried out by the Company bombers under 2nd Lieut., W.E.C. Sturman, the remainder of the Company feeding them with bombs and supplying replacements to casualties. The enemy made a very stout resistance in the houses which were fortified, and in numerous shell craters and small transverse trenches (which are not shown on the map).

Append. A house at X.14.C.51.5 proved a particularly formidable obstacle and nearly two hours were occupied in outflanking and capturing it. This turned out to be the Battalion Commander's house, and was in a very strong state of defence. Meanwhile "B" Company had attacked on the right towards the line X.14.C.96 - 97, and had made good progress using bombers and Lewis Guns. Two Officers of this Company, 2nd Lt., O.C. Harvey and 2nd Lt., W.H. Miller were killed early in the attack.

A Company had been held up by our own barrage at point 79. I was not informed of this until I sent a message to the O.C. Company telling him to push on from point 79 towards X.14.C.96 in order to assist "C" Company in the centre. On the right a few 7th King's Own and about a Company of 7th L.N.Lancashire Regt had got drawn across to their left and assisted in turning the right flank of the village. Consolidation then began, and wire was put up. I sent up a Company of the 10th Royal Warwickshire to assist in this work and to clear dug-outs. "D" Company 7th S.Lancashire Regt arrived during the afternoon. I kept them in reserve. During the afternoon the enemy bombarded LA BOISELLE heavily. The night was fairly quiet and consolidation went on well.

Append. On the 5th instant the 1st Sherwood Forresters arrived in LA BOISELLE. I relieved the 10th Royal Warwickshires who were in support, and put the Sherwood Forresters in their

Append. place. This was done quickly and without hitch, as the trench was properly policed and traffic controlled. The Sherwood

Append. Forresters were ordered to take over certain parts of the

XVII. line and attack at 2.P.M., in conjunction with the 56th Brigade. They failed to advance beyond the line held by us the previous day and suffered a good many casualties. There was a considerable amount of shelling all day and night and

Append. a lot of casualties. On the morning of the 6th the 7th S. Lanc

XVII. Regt and 1st N & D.R. were relieved by the 9th L.N. Lancashire Regt and the 13th Cheshire Regt. Relief was completed without hitch by 5.A.M., and the Battalion marched in single file up the Baupaume Albert Road to the USNA N TARA line without sustaining any casualties. This was due to the fact, I think, that the enemy were shelling the valley heavily with lacrymatory shells and there was a good deal of smoke and mist which prevented good observation from OVILLERS, LA BOISELLE.

9.30. A.M. came under orders of G.O.C. 56th Infantry Brigade again. Moved to billets at Albert.

Append. Night of 7th. Moved up again to relieve

XIX. King's Own. Left TARA -USNA line 11 P.M., but owing to

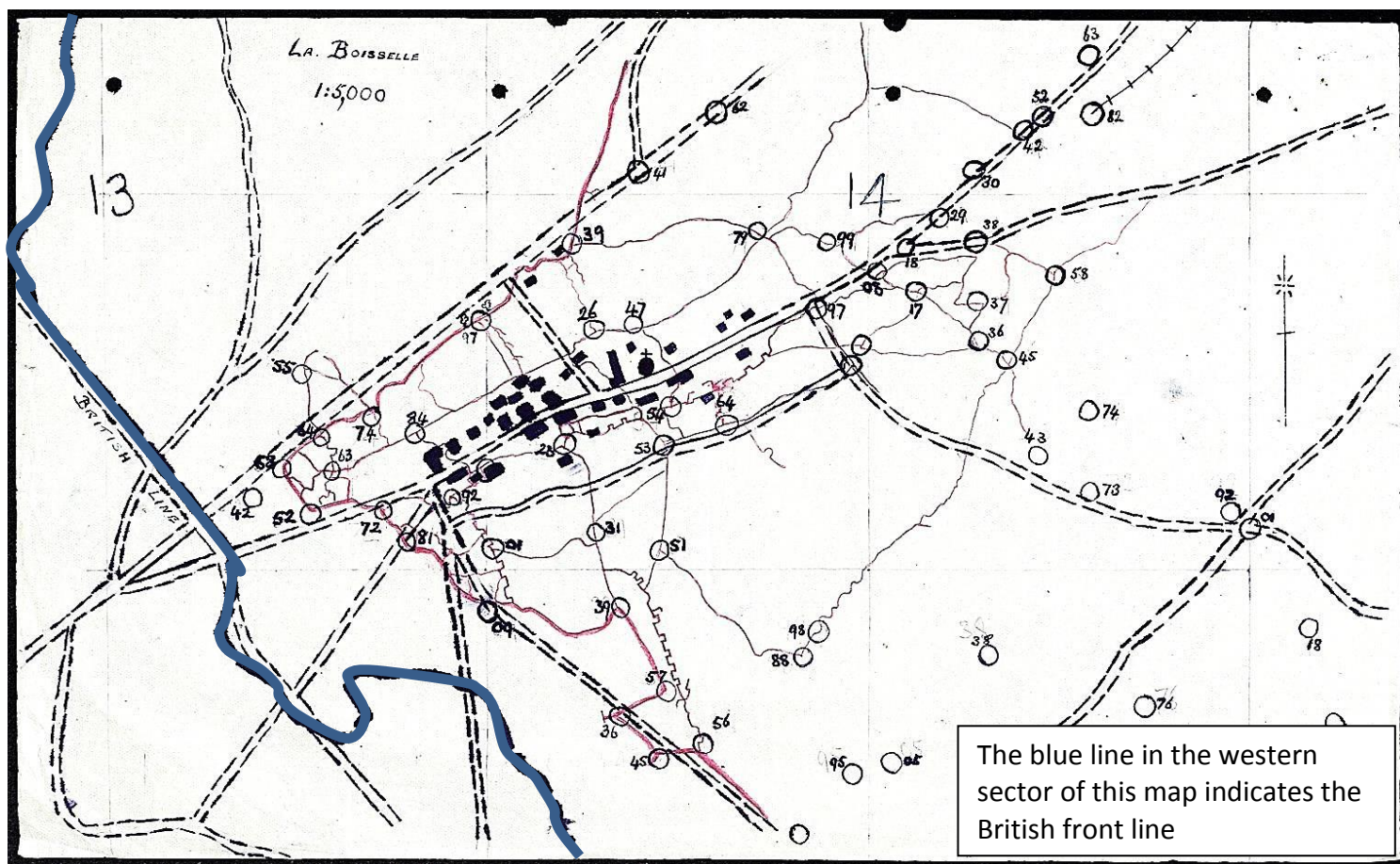
Append. bad guides did not reach our destination until 4.45.A.M.

XX. Everyone very beat owing to fearful heavy going, both in and out of trenches. King's Own were along a road under a bank from X.14.D.18 to X.14.D.89. They had dug down about a foot, - no traverses or wire. 13th R.F. were holding trench from X.14.d.89 to X.14.B.52. The 58th Brigade were in line along the road to our right. R.I.R. to our left front. Suffolks on the left. The men although very tired dug at once. They got down 5 feet then cut saps forward 10 feet at 12 foot intervals and made T. heads to join up as a fire trench.

Append. Wire was put out along the whole front. A store of enemy

XXI. sandbags came in very useful. During the morning the 13th R. Fus., vacated trench X.14.D.89 - X.14.B.52. I moved "D" Company, who were in trench X.14.D.38 - 57, up to hold this trench, and join up with the R. Fus at the tramway head.

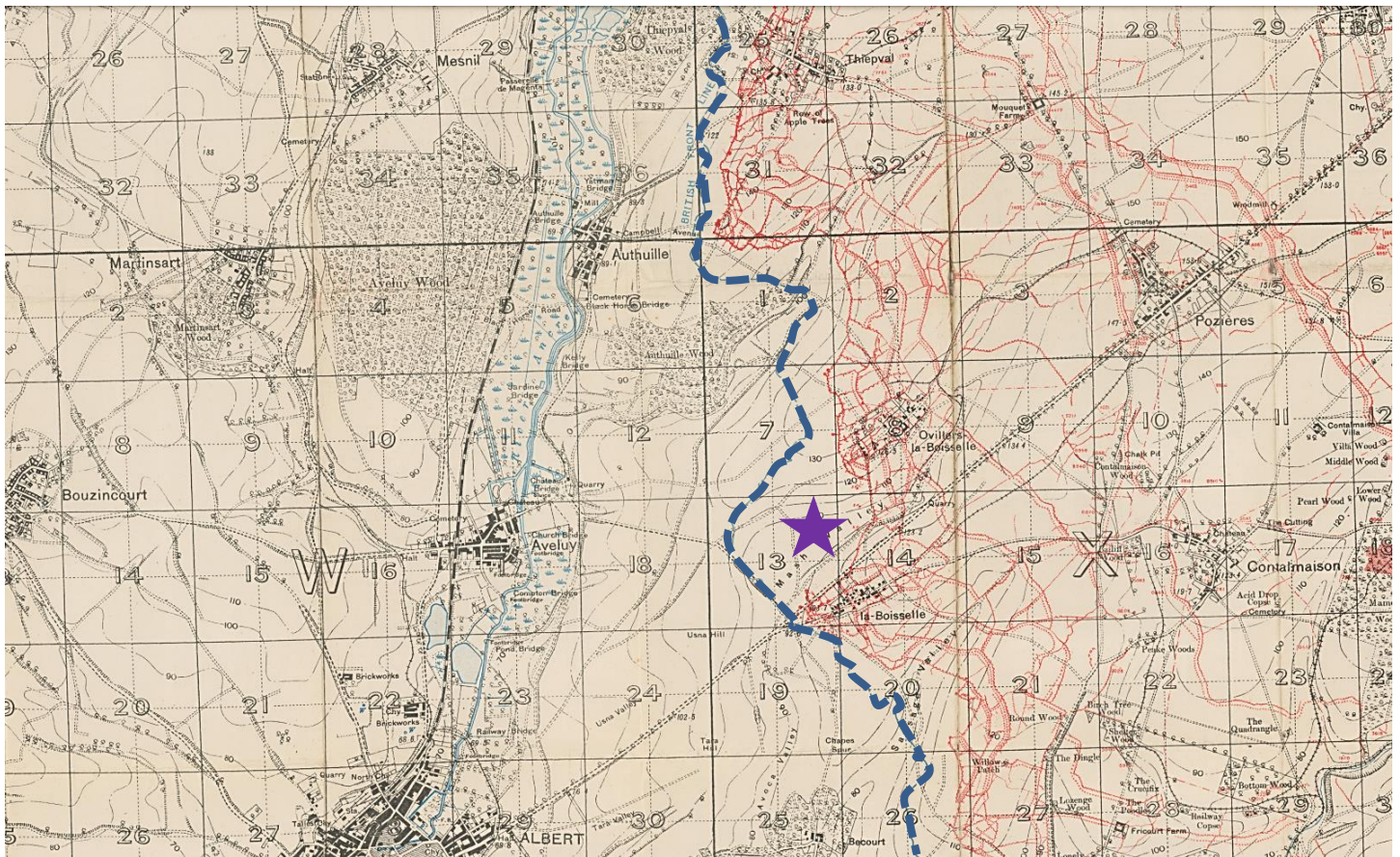
A sketch map of the situation in early July 1916 accompanied the 'Precis of Fighting' account, although this was unannotated and undated:



"In the early morning of 2 July 1916, the British 30th Division, holding the newly won Montauban Ridge repulsed two determined German counter-attacks. Both British and German commands recognised it was here, in the cramped southern sector of the battlefield (where most of the meagre British successes of 1 July had been achieved), that offered the most likely opportunities for further exploitation. But in the immediate aftermath of 1 July Rawlinson [General Sir Henry Seymour Rawlinson, 1st Baron Rawlinson] sanctioned repeated assaults against unbroken German defences over the battle-strewn uplands of the entire line of his original attack.

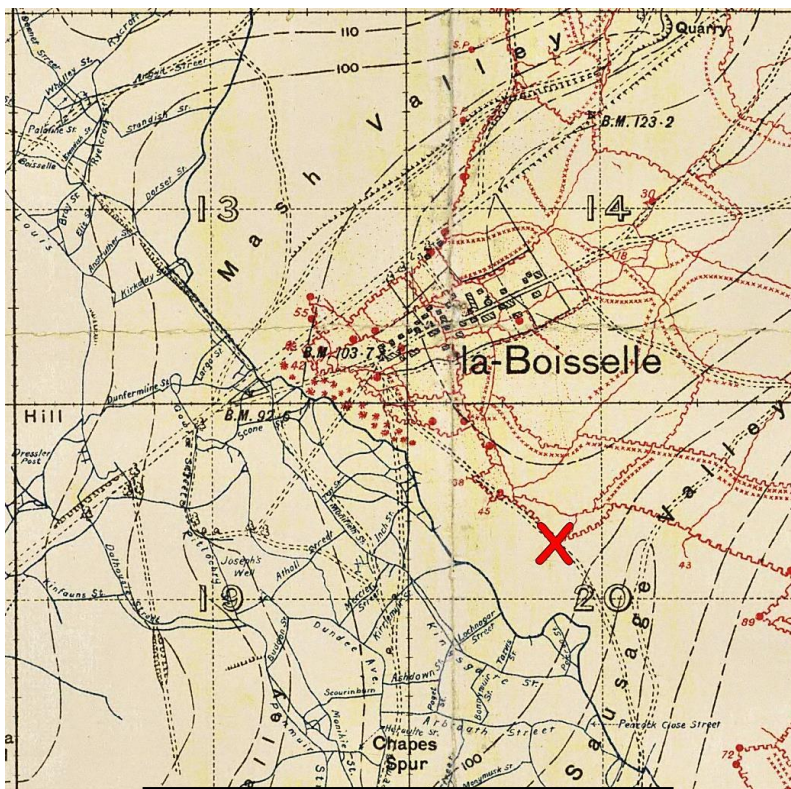
The period 2-13 July was characterised by a series of grindingly slow and costly British subsidiary attacks (principally in the southern end of the line), made to secure the flanks for a later major assault on the German second line positions. In a succession of bloody encounters the Fourth Army sought to secure Trônes Wood, Mametz Wood and Contalmaison; operations characterised by vicious hand to hand fighting, within devastated villages and shell-thrashed woods riddled with concealed strongpoints. Heavy rain on 3 and 4 July produced the first quantities of the infamous Somme mud and hinted at the difficulties which terrain and weather would pose later in the campaign. Chronology: 2 July Fricourt was occupied by British troops; 3 July saw the failure of the British attacks at Ovillers and Thiepval. La Boisselle was captured after much fierce counter-attacking between 4-6 July. Offensive operations began on 7 July to capture Mametz Wood, Contalmaison and Ovillers. 8 July saw the first attacks on Trônes Wood. The period 9-13 July witnessed bitter fighting for Trônes Wood and the eventual capture of Mametz Wood and Contalmaison".

Commonwealth War Graves Commission: <http://www.cwgc.org/somme/>



Trench map (only the German-held positions, in red, are shown) of the area between Thiepval in the north, Contalmaison in the east, Albert in the south and Bouzincourt in the west on 28 April 1916, around 10 weeks before Fred Gordon Jones was killed. The blue line, trending north-south, indicates the British front line and, to the west, the marshy floodplain of the River Ancre was a scene of significant conflict throughout the war. On this map the approximate location where Fred Gordon Jones was killed is indicated by the purple star; this is to the east of the front line shown on this map as, following the British assault which started on 1 July, the line had been pushed eastwards.

[Source: <http://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/index.cfm#zoom>]



The enlarged map section (left), indicates the position on 1 July 1916, and represents and names the British front line trenches. On this map the large red cross shows the position of the Lochnagar Crater (considered to be the largest man-made crater) which was created by the detonation of a huge mine below the German defences at 7.28am on 1 July 1916 and just before the British advance.

No record of any of the family has been found in the 1939 Register.

<http://www.lochnagarcrater.org/July011916.html>:

sleep. —From his Fiancée Hannah (Nance) BOO
JONES—July 7 shot by sniper, aged 25 years. Lance
Corporal Fred Gordon Jones (South Lancashire Regt
ment). (Deeply mourned by his sorrowing Brother
and Sisters.)—27, Olive-road, Neston.

Effects.—Form 118.

ANDUM FOR

The Officer in charge of

Records,

WAR OFFICE,
PARK BUILDINGS,
ST. JAMES'S PARK,
LONDON, S.W.,

15/10/16

1/11/16

Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to—
The Secretary,
War Office,
Park Buildings,
St. James's Park,
London, S.W.,
and the following number quoted.

E. 1204401/1/1 (Accounts 4.)

Will you please note that any articles of personal property now in your possession or subsequently received by you, belonging to the late No 15155. Lance Corporal Fred Gordon Jones, 7th Bn, South Lancashire Regt. should be despatched to:—
Miss Edith M. Jones
27 Olive Road
Neston, Cheshire
who should be informed that such articles are the joint property of herself and deceased brother and sisters.

Assistant Financial Secretary.

INSPECTION RECORDS
NO 4 DISTRICT
8, NOV 1916
SHREWSBURY

The Effects Form of 8 November 1916 gives Edith Jones as Fred's next-of-kin, but notes that his effects are the joint property of herself and her brothers and sisters.

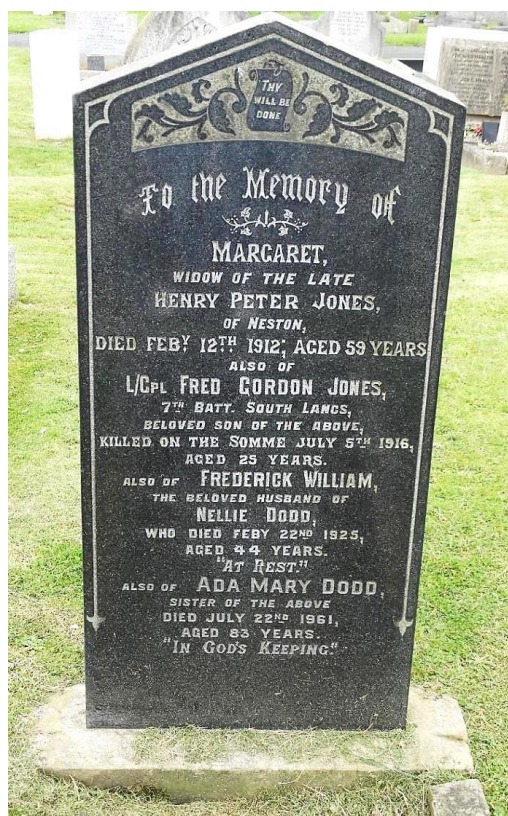
PTE. GORDON JONES, OF NESTON, REPORTED KILLED.

Pte. Gordon Jones, who was in action with the South Lancashires, and is reported this week to have been killed, was a fine, muscular youth of 25, and previous to enlisting was employed by William Fleming and Co. He was very popular and respected by his colleague and friends, and was a "bosom pal" of the hero son of the late Mr. James Anderson and Mrs. Anderson, of Five Ways, Neston.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 22 July 1916



The inscription for Fred Gordon Jones on the Thiepval Memorial, Thiepval, Departement de la Somme, France. His body was unrecovered or his grave is unknown.



The family gravestone in Neston Cemetery records the death of L/Cpl Fred Gordon Jones.

Margaret Jones, Gordon's mother, died 12 February 1912 aged 59 although Henry Peter Jones, Gordon's father, is not buried here and his date of death is unknown (but would be between the census of 1901 and June 1907).

It is believed that Nellie Dodd died in April/June 1962 when her age was given as 81.

S. LAN. R
7-58

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the
British War Medal Victory Medal
893. granted in respect of the service of 15155.
Pte. F. J. Jones.
Date 6 Oct. 1921.
Signature a Jones.

Fred's British war Medal and Victory Medal were received by Fred's brother, Arnold, on 6 October 1921. At that time Arnold was probably still living at 27, Olive Road.

