



Armed Forces Special Edition

Charles Pepper, cricketer and Hero

Charles Pepper was professional at Darlington in 1902 and remained at the club until 1904. An Irishman by birth, he grew up in Youghall, County Cork where he was born on June 6th 1875. He moved to England as a young boy and soon showed enormous talent for the game.

As a teenager he was employed as a professional with Rye cricket club in Sussex and then Brechin in Scotland. Obviously an all round athlete he was also a footballer player for Bedford Town FC.

It was reported that he was a careful batsman with a "good array of shots all round the wicket" His favourite shot being the leg glance.

He could bowl either medium pace or leg breaks. He was brilliant at varying his pace, something we think of as a modern addition to a bowler's armoury.

Having topped the club's batting and bowling averages in 1902 he was re engaged the following year. A very popular player, he saddened many when he then accepted an offer from Bedfordshire and left the club.

It is reported that many local cricket lovers were sorry to see him go.

He was a Nottinghamshire cricketer and played ten times for them around the turn of the century.

When war broke out Charles joined up with his local regiment, The Sherwood Foresters (Sergeant 32476 Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby Regiment)



In Memory of
Serjeant
C Pepper
32476, 16th Bn., Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby Regiment) who died on 13 September 1917

Remembered with Honour
La Clytte Military Cemetery



He was part of the initial force sent to France at the start of the Great War as the Sherwood Foresters served with distinction in the major battles of world war one. He rose through the ranks from private to Sergeant.

At the battle of Paschendale (the third battle of Ypres) in 1917 the Foresters were to play a major part in General Hague's "big push". The battle began in July and was known as The Battle of the Mud.

On July 18th a ten day barrage of shells was fired over the German lines. Three thousand artillery guns fired over four million shells. Therefore, the German army in the area fully expected a major Allied attack - so any vague hope of surprise was lost, as was true in any attack that started with a major artillery bombardment.

The infantry attack started on July 31st . The Germans, as happened at the Somme, were fully prepared and the Allied attack, launched across a eleven mile front, made only small gains. Then in the early days of August, the area was saturated with the heaviest rain the region had seen in thirty years. The area in Flanders became effectively a swamp. Tanks, sent forward to help the infantry, simply got stuck. Infantry soldiers found movement very difficult. The impact of the artillery bombardment had destroyed the drainage systems of the region which greatly added to the problem. The shell craters made by the Allied shelling filled with water and did not allow advancing men the opportunity to hide in them. The fields through which men should have gone became impassable.

These were fought between September and October 1917. These gave British forces the advantage in the territory to the east of Ypres. Haig became convinced that German morale was on the verge of collapsing and ordered that the offensive be continued to Passchendaele Ridge.

For the whole of the "Going down of the sun " WW1 poem visit the club roll of honour page on our website by clicking on this photograph below

It was on 13th September that Charles Pepper was killed in action and he was buried in Belgium at La Clytte Military Cemetery. He died bravely in an action by the 16th battalion of The Sherwood Foresters, The Notts and Derby Regiment.



*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

Charles Pepper 1902

Season	Matches	Innings	NO	HS	Runs	Ave	100s
1902		14	0	70	352	25.14	0

Season	Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wickets	Ave	Econ_Rate	Strike_Rate
1902+	+	+	+	56+	+	+	+

Season	Catches	Stumpings
1902	3	0

*La Clytte Centery in Belgium.
The final resting place of the
Darlington professional Charles
Pepper.*



If you have enjoyed reading this piece about Charles Pepper and would be able to help us produce more pieces on past players who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country then get in touch. If you have a relative who played for the club and lost their lives in either world war, please get in touch.

The war Graves Commission can provide a photograph of their burial place if the person's name and number is provided and a date of death. Research is needed from a variety of sites, some of which incurs a charge. The photos seen here incur a small charge of £3.50 but I am sure you'll agree they are of a high quality. I am still searching for a portrait photo of Sergeant Pepper.

The Great War 1914-1918

- Charles Bennett
- James Bradford (Military Cross) D.L.I
- A Brown
- J Brown D.L.I.
- W Cleminson Royal Flying Corps
- A Robinson D.L.I.
- R Stephenson Royal Navy
- E M Ward Kings Liverpool Regiment
- Sgt. C Pepper Sherwood Foresters

Initial research reveals several names that appear on the War memorial at the Memorial Hospital and match up to names of cricketers who played first team cricket for Darlington.

If anyone believes that any of these names are not those of known cricketers, please let us know so we can alter the research.

Similarly, any additional facts/names to help produce a Roll of Honour for both world wars and additional conflicts would be appreciated.

A list of those who served and survived conflicts with our armed forces is also being compiled. Any names and stories will be gratefully received.

Matty "you were only supposed to blow the bloody doors off" Shaw

Some readers will remember Matty Shaw who played for Darlington Cricket Club in the early nineties. Matty joined the army in 1995 and has served all over the world. He married Jacque a lovely Northern Irish girl and they now have a beautiful family. He has played cricket in a variety of great places for the army and against some terrific International cricketers.

Matty had one of the toughest jobs in the army in Iraq disposing of I.E.D.'s and de fusing bombs and other devices.

He recently sent me the following breakdown of his life and service in the armed forces. He is a top bloke, a brave and fun guy to know and we wish him and his colleagues well. Stay safe mate.

Hi Tim

I joined the Corps of Royal Engineers in Jan 1995 deployed to Northern Ireland on Operation Descant 2000-2001 and again 2002-2003 both of these years were operational medals for public order and construction tours

In 2009 I deployed on Operation Brockdale on the Iraq and Kuwait border for the withdrawal of British troops then sept 2010 to April 2011 Operation Herrick 13 as a counter IED operator disposing of Improvised Explosive Devices and more recently my second tour in Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 16 as a Formation Reconnaissance Engineer Sergeant

From April - November 2012

My extensive Cricket career is as you know Darlington 3rds and 2nds the Doghouse then the Royal Engineers from 1996 to present day and The Army under 25's 96 and 97 Did I mention played in Barbados for the corps when David Lewis watched my horrific innings against Pedro Collins Top tip "DON'T PULL PEDRO COLLINS" !!!!! Love Matty x

Matty sometimes gets back up North when he is back from operations. If you see him in the cricket club...buy this guy a beer.

He is one of our heroes.



Your Club Needs You!



"Task Force" Weekend

Sat 06th & Sun 07th April 2013

**We need volunteers to help with an initiative
to improve our Club.**

**We aim to improve several areas
(cleaning / painting / tidying) around the
Clubhouse and Ground to improve our
facilities for the coming season.**

Families welcome!!

**PLEASE ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LIST
IN THE CLUBHOUSE**

Hopefully the weather will improve for the Task Force weekend.

Below the Battleground of Passchendaele. "The Battle of Mud" 1917

