

# BRITISH JEWS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

*We Were There Too*

## *We Were There Too* Project Update

Rosh Hashanah Edition, September 2019

THE *WE WERE THERE TOO* TEAM WISH ALL THE PROJECT'S SUPPORTERS  
AND VOLUNTEERS A HAPPY NEW YEAR AND WELL OVER THE FAST

Shanah Tovah Umetukah –Have a Good and Sweet Year

This time last year, September 2018, *We Were There Too* was celebrating the award of a second grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to expand the work of 'London Jews in the First World War', now re-named *British Jews in the First World War - We Were There Too*, to work in the North West HLF Region. Nearly 10 months on, it is remarkable what has been achieved.

At the end of August the WWTT Team uploaded to the website our 100th Personal Record from the North West, and below are a few examples of the variety of stories we have unearthed.

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### NORTH WEST PERSONAL RECORDS

#### [Louis Loofe](#)

Louis enlisted as a civilian into the Royal Flying Corps in 1916, and was transferred into the RAF in 1917. He was a successful boxer, and whilst stationed at the Heliopolis Prisoner of War Camp in Cairo, took part in several boxing matches with both local men and fellow servicemen.

#### [Samuel Pulcovitch](#)

Samuel joined the army in 1914. According to family legend, Sam's nickname became 'the mad Jew' as he volunteered for the most dangerous duties. He did this to prove that Jews weren't cowardly, as he experienced some anti-Semitism but secretly he was scared. One day his commanding officer called him a dirty little Jew. A keen boxer, Sam thumped him in the nose and was arrested with a view to court martial and possibly being shot. Soon after, the Germans launched an offensive and he was released to fight.

#### [Louis Golding](#)

Louis served with the Friends Ambulance Unit in Salonika and in France. Whilst he was serving he wrote a number of poems which were published in the collection 'Sorrows of War' in 1919. Golding was also a novelist, and his most famous novel 'Magnolia Street' was published in 1932.



Louis Loofe, Samuel Pulcovitch and Louis Golding

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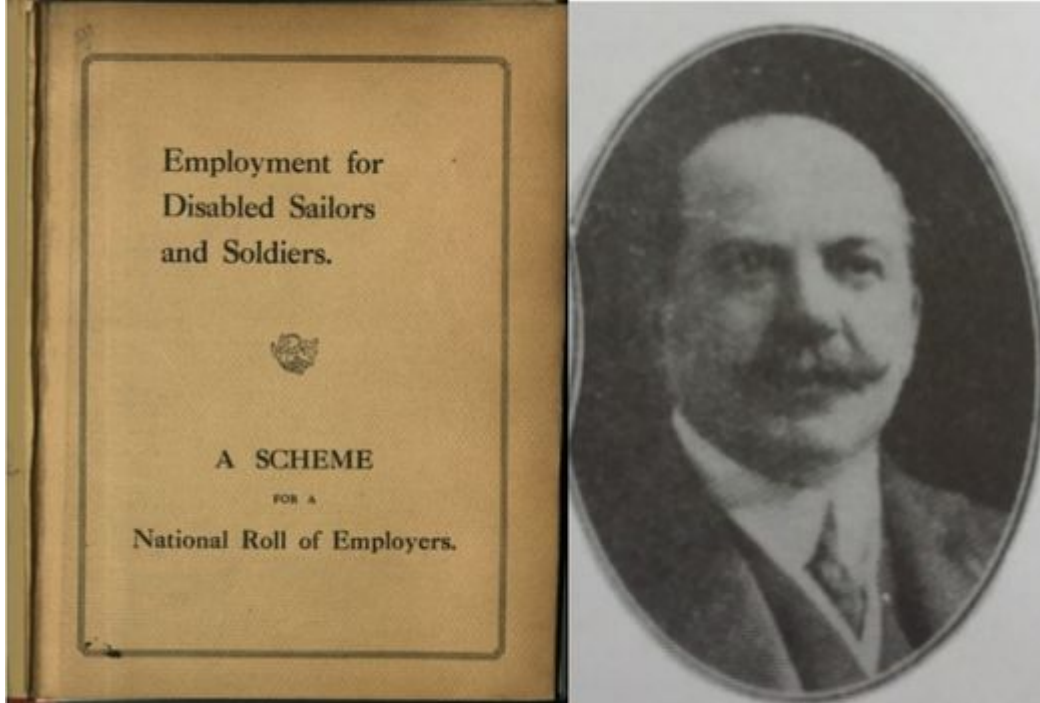
## NORTH WEST COLLECTIONS

As well as Personal Records, we have also been very fortunate to uncover and put together several new Collections and upload them to the website, two of which are set out below.

Sir Henry Lesser Rothband began campaigning for an employment scheme for disabled ex-servicemen in 1915, issuing pamphlets detailing his proposals for a "royal roll of employers willing to employ one or more disabled men, that is to say, a permanent guarantee of employment embodied in book form and distributed to all employment agencies, and not a mere agency itself" (Manchester Guardian, October 1918). Mr Rothband then published all of his ideas into a book entitled "Employment of Disabled Sailors and Soldiers", published in 1917, which you can view as part of the [Collections section of the site](#).

Finally, in 1919, the Scheme was given national recognition, and King George V issued a special proclamation appealing to employers to support it. In November 1919, the Manchester Guardian reported that 7000 firms were on the National Roll, and that these undertakings covered 1,100,000 workpeople, and would guarantee employment to nearly 70,000 disabled men.

Read more about Sir Henry Lesser Rothband's life and contribution to employment on his [Personal Record](#), and more about the scheme in a new [History Window](#).



Another new Collection we were able to compile and upload was literally found a three minute walk away from the WWTT Northern Office in Whitefield Manchester: [The Marks Simons Collection](#)

Marks Simons was born Marks Simonovitch in Strangeways, Manchester on 9th June 1894.

He joined the Royal Engineers in February 1916 and served as a Sapper on the Western Front. He was wounded in Arras in May 1917 and was treated for his bullet wound through the shoulder at St Thomas' Military Hospital in London. A magazine published by the hospital during Marks' stay is included in this collection.

Marks' daughter Doreen Jacobs currently lives in Whitefield, North Manchester, and still owns all of these original documents belonging to her father, and keeps them in the same wallet he kept them in during the First World War.

It is thanks to Doreen that we have been able to digitise these documents and create this collection, which contains not only Marks' service papers and certificates, but also his prayer book, which was distributed to all soldiers and sailors who identified themselves as Jewish, and his pay book for use on active service, which each soldier will have carried with them.

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Regiment or Corps <b>ROYAL ENGINEERS.</b><br>Squadron, Battery, or Company _____<br>No. <b>116741</b> Rank <i>Sapper</i><br>Name in full <i>Simonovitch, Marks</i><br>Date of Attestation <i>26-2-16</i> and _____<br>Age on Enlistment <i>21 years, 10 months</i><br>If appointed to a unit formed on Mobilisation, the designation of such unit should be clearly stated here—<br>NOTE.—The amount of the soldier while on active service will be kept in the Office of the Paymaster paying the Base Depot of his Unit, or by the Paymaster at the General Office Station of his Unit, and all communications relating to his accounts should be addressed accordingly. 2014 |  | Rates of—<br>Pay ... .. <b>12</b><br>Proficiency Pay ... ..<br>Service Pay ... ..<br>Corps Pay or Engineer Pay ... .. <b>14</b><br>Total ... .. <b>26</b><br>Deduct Allotment or Compulsory Stoppage <b>16</b><br>† NET DAILY RATE FOR ISSUE (words) <i>One Shilling</i> <b>10</b><br>Signature of Soldier <i>M. Simonovitch</i><br><i>A. C. Carey</i><br>O. C. Company, 6th<br>O.C. No. 2 DEPOT CO. R.E.<br>Date and Station <i>30/10/16</i> <b>CONWAY, N. WALES.</b><br>† Subject to amendments (if any) on page 4. |  |
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Marks Simons' Pay Book

## REMEMBRANCE

As part of our Jewish New Year Progress Report we have an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifice made in the First World War by those servicemen who fought in the Third Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele; 31/07/1917 to 10/11/1917. Approximately 325 names can be found of men who died during the period of the Battle, and you can read about some of them on the [History Window](#) on the website. Extrapolating dates for the Jewish New Year to Yom Kippur September 30th to October 9th 1917, 38 British Jewish men were killed in the equivalent 10 days.

Amongst these names were [Private Hyman Cossack](#) from Salford, who died on October 9th, and [Lance Corporal Hyman Michaelson](#) from Manchester, who died on October 4th. Both of these men's stories are now recorded and available to read on our site.



Hyman Cossack, Private in the Lancashire Fusiliers

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## DISCOVERY EDUCATION

A collaboration between *British Jews in the First World War* and [Discovery Education](#) is moving ahead rapidly. The new resources being developed by Discovery Education will enable *We Were There Too* to engage with children and young people in an even more exciting and innovative way, by bringing the real stories that we have collected to life.

Phil Birchinall, Senior Director | Immersive Content Discovery Education said:

"Discovery Education are committed to the idea that the stories of ordinary people who participated in the First World War should be told and remembered. We are proud to contribute our expertise and development resources to the production of an immersive app to accompany this important website."

Watch this space for more collaborative ventures as *We Were There Too* continues to expand!

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## MEDIA

Since our last newsletter we have continued to add news items and coverage of all our work across the North West. From the numerous stories we have uploaded here are just a couple of highlights, the most recent being an article published in the [Bury Times](#), which includes just some of the stories we have uncovered from the local area.

The second is an album of photographs from a session with [Year 6 pupils at Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School](#), and shows a truly [attention-grabbing section of the website](#) in action.





Year 6 pupil from Bury and Whitefield Jewish Primary School using the Memorial Wall

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## LOOKING FORWARD

Post Rosh Hashanah *We Were There Too* has an exceptional calendar of events lined up. The North West Team throughout November will be delivering School Assemblies teaching children about Remembrance and emphasising that *We Were There Too!* We will also be starting our educational work with Secondary Schools using the IT Tools being developed in partnership with Discovery Education.

In April 2018 *British Jews in the First World War – We Were There Too* ran a [trip to the Somme](#), and we are exploring the possibility of running a similar trip in June 2020. More details will be available in our next Project Progress Report.

We have Roadshow events planned in St Annes and two events in Liverpool plus further presentations in Manchester. *British Jews in the First World War- We Were There Too* goes from strength to strength.

### British Jews in the South East

We are pleased to welcome our new partner [Shalom Sussex](#), a Heritage Lottery funded project researching Jewish life in Sussex during the First World War, who will be helping to develop the [South East Region](#) section of our website.



### Thank You

The WWTT North West Team would like to thank everyone who has supported and contributed to the growth of our website and leave you with this notion:

When we are out in the community meeting and talking to people who have attended presentations we ask “why have you never shared this with other people?”

and nearly all reply “Nobody has ever asked me”.

We will continue to ask and encourage people to tell us their family stories and to allow us to create a permanent record of the lives of Jewish men, women and families, 1914-1919, ensuring that their stories are not lost for future generations.



April 2018 WWTT trip to the Somme

Thanks for reading, make sure to visit the website [jewsffw.uk](http://jewsffw.uk) to upload your family stories, and to learn more about our project. We look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events.

To get in touch, call us on 0161 767 8890, email [contactus@jewsffw.uk](mailto:contactus@jewsffw.uk) or find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @jewsffw

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### The North West Team

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