



## COOK, JOHN WALFORD

Nationality: United Kingdom

Private

Army Service Corps 18th Labour Company.

Died at Sea Date of Death: 13/08/1915

Service No: SS/13837

John is listed as one of the "Missing presumed drowned" when the Troopship *Royal Edward* was sunk on the 13th August 1915. The 18th Labour Company of the Army Service Corps were en route to Mudros on the Isle of Lemnos, when their troopship *Royal Edward* was sunk by a German torpedo on 13th August 1915. The *Royal Edward* had set sail from Avonmouth and made her first landfall at Alexandria, where she collected fresh supplies and more troops. As she picked her way through the Dodecanese Islands she was attacked by *UB-14* and sank, with great loss of life, 6 miles west of Kandelioussa Island in the Gulf of Kos.



A postcard of *Royal Edward* entering Avonmouth Dock

The recently arrived German submarine *UB14* sailed from Bodrum for the known steamer route between Alexandria and the Dardanelles. This small submarine of 127 tons was just over 90 feet long and less than ten feet wide and had a crew of 14. The *UB14* had been completed at Bremen Dockyard earlier that year. She had then been transported in sections overland by train to Pola in Austria, where she had been reassembled in June to operate against British and Allied shipping in the Mediterranean. On 6 July, she torpedoed and sank the Italian Armoured Cruiser *Amalfi* while operating under the Austrian flag off Venice. The *UB14* sailed for the Dardanelles on 16th July. This was at a time when the range of submarines was very limited, unlike today. To reach Bodrum, she had to be towed a considerable part of the distance by an Austrian destroyer. Even so, her engine broke down off Crete and her compass became defective. Despite these problems, she arrived safely at Bodrum on 24th July. On arrival, she recharged the batteries of the *UC14* which had arrived four days earlier

with engine problems. A maintenance team then had to travel from Constantinople to carry out necessary repairs to both submarines. At the time this journey was not easy being made partly by train and partly by camel. After leaving Bodrum, the *UB14*'s first sighting was a fully lit hospital ship seen that evening, which was not attacked. On 13th August 1915, she first sighted the P & O Liner *Soudan* in service, as a hospital ship. She then sighted the *Royal Edward* sailing unescorted for Mudros. The *UB14* fired one torpedo from under a mile away which hit her stern. The *Royal Edward* sank quickly. The after deck was awash in three minutes and the ship had sunk with her bows in the air in six minutes.

The unsung heroes of the British Army in the Great War - the ASC, "*Ally Sloper's Cavalry*" - were the men who operated the transport. Soldiers can not fight without food, equipment and ammunition. In the Great War, the vast majority of this tonnage, supplying a vast army on many fronts, was fetched from England. Using horsed and motor vehicles, railways and waterways, the ASC performed prodigious feats of logistics and were one of the great strengths of organisation by which the war was won.

John was born at Fingringhoe & was living at Mistley. He enlisted at London. The 1901 Census for the Cook family shows:- Arthur Cook, aged 18 born in Fingringhoe living at Colchester, working as an Agricultural Labourer. He was also killed in the war. Father Samuel was living at Wheelwright Arms, Horsley Cross, Mistley. Also, there was another known brother, Frederick Cook aged 20 born in Fingringhoe and living at Colchester working as a Bricklayer's Labourer. John gave as next of kin his sister Jane Howse (aged 51 in 1915) living at 21 Albion Rd, Colchester. There was a brother George aged 44 in 1915 living Bourne Road.

John enlisted at the age 45 on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1915. At that time his height was 5 foot 9 inches, weight 170 lbs with chest 41 inches



1914-5 Star    1914-20 War Medal    1914-19 Victory Medal

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
Cook	A.S.C.	PTE	SS/13837
John. W.			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY			
BRITISH	RASC 101 A3	214	} Rtd (1743 KR 1912) 8163/Adt
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			
			8163/Adt

Army Form No. 100  
 Casualty Form—Active Service  
 1st. Class Company  
 Regiment or Corp. 1st. Class  
 Regimental No. 13857 Rank Pl Name John Macfar 600B  
 Enlisted (a) 6/7/15 Terms of Service (a) Standard Service releases from (a) 6/19/18  
 Date of promotion to present rank \_\_\_\_\_ Date of appointment to lance rank \_\_\_\_\_ Numerical position on roll of N.C.Ds. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Extended \_\_\_\_\_ Re-engaged \_\_\_\_\_ Qualification (b) \_\_\_\_\_

Date	From what position	Event of promotion, selection, transfer, discharge, etc., being active service, as reported on Army Form No. 100, Army Form No. 101, or in other official documents. The authority to be stated in each case.	Place	Day	Month	Year	Remarks
		Entered Royal Army Medical Corps 12.8.15 12.8.15 Missing, believed drowned on the sinking of the H.M.S. Royal Edward on passage from Alexandria to Gallipoli 25.8.15	Alexandria				OR R

G. R. Lowe  
 Capt. G.O.C. A.F.C.  
 S/C A.I.D. Section  
 1st. Division  
 I.L.C.

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 199 or 233 to 236 and 331

Cemetery: HELLES MEMORIAL



The eight month campaign in Gallipoli was fought by Commonwealth and French forces in an attempt to force Turkey out of the war, to relieve the deadlock of the Western Front in France and Belgium, and to open a supply route to Russia through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea. The Allies landed on the peninsula on 25-26 April 1915; the 29th Division at Cape Helles in the south and the Australian and New Zealand Corps north of Gaba Tepe on the west coast, an area soon known as Anzac. On 6 August, further landings were made at Suvla, just north of Anzac, and the climax of the campaign came in early August when simultaneous assaults were launched on all three fronts. However, the difficult terrain and stiff Turkish resistance soon led to the stalemate of trench warfare. From the end of August, no further serious action was fought and the lines remained unchanged. The peninsula was successfully evacuated in December and early January 1916. The Helles Memorial serves the dual function of Commonwealth battle memorial for the whole Gallipoli campaign and place of commemoration for many of those Commonwealth servicemen who died there and have no known grave. The United Kingdom and Indian forces named on the memorial died in operations throughout the peninsula, the Australians at Helles. There are also panels for those who died or were buried at sea in Gallipoli waters. The memorial bears more than 21,000 names. There are four other Memorials to the Missing at Gallipoli. The Lone Pine, Hill 60, and Chunuk Bair Memorials commemorate Australian and New Zealanders at Anzac. The Twelve Tree Copse Memorial commemorates the New Zealanders at Helles. Naval casualties of the United Kingdom lost or buried at sea are recorded on their respective Memorials at Portsmouth, Plymouth and Chatham, in the United Kingdom.

#### OTHER MEMORIALS Colchester Town Hall



*THE UNITED BENEFICE OF ABBERTON, EAST DONYPOND, FINGRINGHOE, LANGENHOE*