

MINCHIN

James Basil MC DSO

Service Number: 358



Courtesy Robert Minchin

BASIC INFORMATION

Name: James Basil Minchin

Service Number: 358

Date of Enlistment: 21/9/1914

Age at Enlistment: 20 years 3 months

Civil Occupation: Farmer

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal, 1914/15 Star,
Military Cross, Distinguished Service Order

Height: 5 feet and 5 ½ inches

Weight: 136 lbs.

Chest Measurement: 34 ½ inches

Complexion: Fair

Eye Colour: Blue

Hair Colour: Brown

Father: James Andrew Minchin

Mother: Charlotte Eliza Hitchcock

Siblings: Arthur David, Margaret Ellen, Mabel Norah, Stephen Keane,
Charlotte Keane, Stanley Alfred, Maud Kean, Douglas Martin

Life Story

James Minchin worked on his family's property at Balkuling (between York and Quairading) before enlisting on the 21st September 1914. He landed at Gallipoli on Anzac Day, 1915, with the 16th Battalion and was involved in heavy fighting from the start of his career. Extraordinarily, James served throughout the entire campaign without being wounded or evacuated sick.

His battalion was deployed to the Western Front in June 1916, where he was promoted to Sergeant during the Battle of Pozieres. James was Mentioned in Despatches for 'continuously good and gallant service' during the fighting at Mouquet Farm.



James Minchin with other service men Circa 1915

Courtesy W.A Army Museum

In February 1917, James was selected for officer training and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. He was awarded the Military Cross for bravery under heavy fire during the Battle of Polygon Wood in September 1917.

During the attack on Hamel on the 4th July 1918, James was awarded the Distinguished Service Order for attacking a heavily-defended German post and capturing an officer and

twenty men armed with a machine gun and a trench mortar. Later in the advance, he stormed and captured another enemy machine gun post.

James was Mentioned in Despatches again at the end of the War. He returned to the family farm, married Jean McDonald in 1922 and moved to a cottage in Beverley. James was active in the R.S.L. until his death in 1936.

James' older brother, Arthur David, also applied to enlist in the Armed Forces in November 1917 but was declared unfit for medical reasons.



James Minchin with York's other two most highly decorated servicemen, Dominic McCarthy V.C and Harry Leak

Courtesy Neville Browning

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