

Winkleigh

A large congregation assembled at the parish church for the memorial service to Second-Lieutenant Lawrence Johnson who was killed in action in France on Saturday 16th July 1917. Among those present were many of the tenantry belonging to the Johnson Estate. The hymns, specially chosen by the family, were ‘Fight the good Fight’ ‘For ever with Lord’, ‘Ten Thousand Times Ten-thousand’, ‘How Bright these Glorious Spirits shine’, and ‘On the Resurrection Morning’. The sermon was preached by the Vicar, who took as his text Daniel X: 11 ‘A man greatly beloved’. The Vicar spoke feelingly of Lawrence Johnson’s life, how he had volunteered in the early days of the war, how he had served in the ranks for many months, how he had won his commission, not by influence but by merit, and how before he was 21 years old he had laid down his young life with his face towards the foe. He referred to the deceased’s spirit of friendliness, and to his power of sympathy, and said that lives such as his are never wasted : they enrich the soil of human character, and add fresh dignity and character to human life. After the service the ringers added their tribute of respect by ringing a muffled peal. During the last few weeks five young lives from Winkleigh have been given in the cause of freedom, and representatives of each of the families were present on Sunday night, showing by their presence the brotherhood of the church, and how in a common sorrow the heart of the cottage beats in harmony with the heart of the larger house.

The five deaths referred to by the Vicar were:

Private Thomas Knight, died as a prisoner of the Turks on 08.03.17

Private George Manley, killed at the battle of Arras on 10.04.17

Private Charlie Darch, died of wounds in Italy on 05.05.17

Private Thomas Harris, died of wounds on 16.05.17 following the battle of Bullecourt

2nd Lt. Lawrence Johnson, killed on 16.06.17
