



# **WORLD WAR ONE**

**In Clementhorpe, Scarcroft  
and South Bank, York**

**A HERITAGE MAP**



**The First World War affected every business, institution and household in the Clementhorpe, Scarcroft and South Bank area, much of which was a newly built and expanding suburb of York in 1914.**

**The Ordnance Survey Plan of 1852 shows the area as largely open fields and, except for the 17th-century Bar Convent, all the buildings in this guide appeared after the mid 19th century, as the railway network expanded with York as a major hub. The area was fashionable, with two grand Victorian mansions built close to the Racecourse by horse-loving aristocrats. The working class employed on the railway and in manufacturing were being housed in new streets. Newly built churches were vying for congregations of hundreds, and new schools were built to fulfil the requirements of a succession of Education Acts which by 1899 made elementary schooling compulsory between the ages of five and twelve.**

**This map explores the impact of war on the developing area, and on some of the people who lived here. It encompasses locations associated with the conflict itself, stories of how residents responded to the challenges war brought, and public memorials that the community raised to those it lost. Land use changed and continued to change as a result of the war. While the big private estates became less viable and were broken up, war also brought new allotments to the area, and York's very first public park.**

## 1 The Bar Convent



**T**he Bar Convent, home to members of the Congregation of Jesus Community, is the oldest surviving Roman Catholic Convent in England. Established secretly in 1686 by Francis Bedingfield, a follower of Mary Ward, at a time when Catholicism was illegal in England, the order found support in continental Europe, especially Germany.

By 1914 the Bar Convent was a well-established girls' day and boarding school. On the outbreak of war it converted its concert hall into a ward affiliated to York Military Hospital. Its first patients were Belgian soldiers, who received visits from the Lord Mayor and Sheriff and messages from Royalty.

These men dispersed in late 1914. One left to live with his wife and child who had journeyed to York via Holland. Another married his Belgian fiancée and moved to Kensington Street, South Bank.

From January 1915 to July 1917 the hospital treated many British soldiers, often en route to other hospitals.

The Convent also supported Belgian refugee children and families. By late March 1915 it was looking after so many Belgian children that a separate school was formed for them within the Convent, under the charge of Belgian nuns.

The Convent's Chronicles record how the order met the challenges of war – suspicion of its German nuns, the Zeppelin raid, outbreaks of scarlatina, diphtheria, and flu – with pragmatism and prayer.

In 1985, the Convent School became All Saints Roman Catholic School.

The Bar Convent Heritage Centre now welcomes visitors of all faiths and none, 10 am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday.

## 2 Scarcroft School

Scarcroft School, designed by Walter Brierley, opened in 1896, for up to 1,200 children aged 5 to 14.

Autumn term 1914 started chaotically, as the school had been notified troops would be billeted there. Children were sent elsewhere, then recalled 10 days later when plans changed. But December 1914 saw the school taken over as a military billet until April 1915, and again the following winter. The Zeppelin raid **12** of 2 May 1916 caused deep anxiety which affected attendance. The Head, Holtby Robert Morrell, worried that he would lose his entire male staff to war service.

Scarcroft children helped the war effort in specific ways. Boy Scouts were trained as War Office messengers, carried out coastguard duty, guarded railway lines, and harvested crops. Entertainments and sales of work at the school supported the troops, and packages of clothes and food were posted out. Children collected horse chestnuts for use in manufacturing cordite, and fruit stones and nutshells used in the manufacture of gas-masks. Ground near the school was dug up to create two allotments.

Despite the disruption there is little evidence in school log-books of any breakdown in discipline. Following the war, politicians recognized elementary school education had helped to create an effective military and civilian workforce, and this contributed to far reaching reforms, including the Education Act of 1918 which ended child labour.

On Armistice Day in 1924 the Lord Mayor and City Sheriff unveiled a plaque in the school with the names of 66 former pupils and teachers killed on active service.



### 3 St Clement's Church

The foundation stone of St Clement's, Parish Church for Scarcroft, Clementhorpe and South Bank, was laid in 1872. George Marsham Argles (1841–1920) was its first priest, staying in post for 47 years. Through his sense of mission the new parish came into being, catering for York's then fastest growing suburb.

The son of a Bishop, with a classics degree from Balliol College, Oxford and with considerable wealth, Argles believed in the power of education and temperance to improve his parishioners' lot. He obstructed the licensing of public houses, while founding and partly funding Cherry Street Elementary School **13**. His was a model parish, offering amenities including a Penny Bank and Library, Mothers' Meetings, a Girls' Friendly Society and a Lads' Brigade, Annual Flower Show, Sports clubs and a Choral Society. Assisted by three curates Argles conducted 4 services on Sundays and 2 each weekday. In 1892 a mission room opened in Clementhorpe, and in 1901 a Mission Church on Southbank Avenue **16**. St Clement's imposing Rectory stood on Bishopthorpe Road, on the present site of Rectory Gardens **17**.

The Church of England was supportive of the war, while acknowledging the sacrifices involved. Argles was a member of York Citizens' Committee, formed to ensure that *'any want, disturbance of trade, or other trouble consequent upon the War may be relieved as far as possible'*. The Committee organised relief after the Zeppelin attack of May 1916.

St Clement's Church war memorial names 157 men of the parish. The Church also houses Cherry Street School's memorial, remembering 73 teachers and former pupils.





## **4 Scarcroft and** **5 Hospital Field Allotments**

In 1914 an estimated 60% of the nation's food, and 80% of its wheat, was imported by sea, and at risk. The Government responded by encouraging local authorities to create allotments and urging people to grow their own food. The *Yorkshire Gazette* declared *'the man who, knowing how to grow potatoes does not at once ask for land and get to work, will be as blameworthy as would the corporal who, seeing a chance to capture an army of the enemy, put off the effort until it was too late.'*

Scarcroft & Hospital Field Allotments were established by York Corporation in 1916. Scarcroft offered 319 plots of 300 square yards. At least two thirds of each were to be planted with potatoes – which became a substitute for wheat in bread – at a rent of 10 shillings a year.

Both sites are part of Micklegate Stray – a stretch of land from Nunnery Lane to Hob Moor on which the Freemen of Micklegate had, until 1907, enjoyed the right to graze cattle. While the allotments changed the character of the Stray, they respected the ancient drove road, now a footpath leading through the site from Scarcroft Road to Albemarle Road. The site is bounded to the south and east by a high brick wall, built in 1853 as part of the Nunthorpe Hall Estate **7**.

There were smaller, more established allotments in the area – at Clementhorpe, Beresford Terrace, and Campelshon Road, as well as a larger site at Bustardthorpe.

## 6 Kentmere House and 1 Telford Terrace

**B**y the end of the 19th century the Primitive Methodists had debts of over £1 million. The Chapel Aid Association was set up in 1890 by Sir William Pickles Hartley of Hartley's Jam to remedy this by raising money to loan to debt-ridden chapels on favourable terms.

The Association moved to its newly built premises in Telford Terrace in 1900. Kentmere House accommodated its Secretary, with offices and boardroom next door. In WW1 the Secretary was Rev. Thomas J Gladwin. His son Albert, a Private in the First Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, was killed, aged 20, in July 1917.

The Association bought stocks and shares, and in February 1915 invested in railway stock. During the war demand for loans declined, while interest rates rose, enabling further investment, including the purchase of War Bonds. These, which paid 5%, were issued in 1917 as the government sought to finance the cost of the war, promising '*Unlike the soldier, the investor runs no risk.*'

Primitive Methodism flourished in the area. In 1879 the Nunnery Lane Mission Room was replaced by Victoria Bar Chapel **18**, which could accommodate 900 worshippers. Many Primitive Methodists enlisted in 1914. Followers also included Frederick Wickenden of Nunnery Lane, a conscientious objector who became a Quaker.

The Primitive Methodists amalgamated with the other branches of Methodism in 1932. The Chapel Aid Association now operates from 1 Telford Terrace, as *MCA: Funding for Churches*, supporting churches of all denominations. Kentmere House was sold in 1983, and now houses Kentmere House Art Gallery.





## 7 Nunthorpe Hall Hospital



*Nunthorpe Hall, demolished 1977*

**N**unthorpe Hall was built in the 1850's and was demolished in 1977. Its grounds ran between Scarcroft allotments and Philadelphia Terrace. Part of its former site is now occupied by Coggan Close. It was home to the Lycett Green family, wealthy industrialists with a keen interest in horse-racing and hunting.

During WW1 the Hall was lent to the Red Cross by its owner, Sir Edward Lycett Green, as a hospital. It opened on 1 October 1915; its first patients were men injured in the Battle of Loos. Initially there were 50 beds, later increased to 76. An inspection report of 22 January 1916 describes the hospital as being in excellent order.

Mrs. Lycett Green was the Commandant, assisted by a female Quartermaster. Trained staff included a matron, three sisters and two Medical Officers, Dr Armytage, and Dr. Louise Fraser – a pioneer of women's medicine who had launched a public appeal to establish York's first maternity home. There were in addition 24 Voluntary Aid Detachment nurses. VADs organised local auxiliary hospitals throughout Britain to care for wounded soldiers. By the time Nunthorpe Hall closed as a hospital on 14 April 1919 it had treated a total of 915 patients. Mrs Lycett Green received the OBE for her work at Nunthorpe Hall and Dr Fraser was awarded the MBE in 1920.

On the night of 2/3 May 1916, 2 Zeppelin bombs set fire to the house and 4 fell in the garden, resulting in considerable damage and the temporary evacuation of the hospital.

## 8 Queen Victoria Street and Balmoral Terrace



**O**n 30 July 1913, South Bank tram route opened: 3 electric trams ran from the Station along Bishopthorpe Road and up Balmoral Terrace and Queen Victoria Street to turn at Albemarle Road. Powered from overhead cables each blue and cream vehicle took up to 48 passengers on 2 floors – the top open to the elements. A wartime shortage of male staff led to the trams' brakes being fitted with gearing, making them easier for women to operate. The trams ran till 1935, when they were replaced by buses.

In 1914 these streets were more commercial than a century later. Kelly's Directory of 1913 lists – along with St Clement's Working Men's Club – a Post Office, fried fish seller, confectioner, 2 grocers, the York Equitable Industrial Society housing the Quaker adult school, a baker, blouse-maker, fruiterer, costumier, and the receiving office of Wenlock Laundry Ltd.

At least 5 men from Queen Victoria Street lost their lives at war: Robert Henry Cairns, 29; Fred Long, 24, and his brother Edward, 22 and Arthur Neilson, 28, all of the West Yorks Regiment; and Matthew Henry Glover, 25, of the Royal Garrison Artillery.

Percy Rosewarne, a railwayman living at 7 Balmoral Terrace, was a conscientious objector. He was court-martialled 3 times and imprisoned on Salisbury Plain and in Wandsworth, where treatment was harsh.

Lemmon's, advertising in the *Southlands Messenger*, welcomed the New Year: '1914 is now with us. To make this year a year free from worry, and every day a joy day, order all your Newspapers and Periodicals from R. Lemmon, Newsagent and Stationer, 2, Queen Victoria Street, York'.

## 9 Knavesmire School

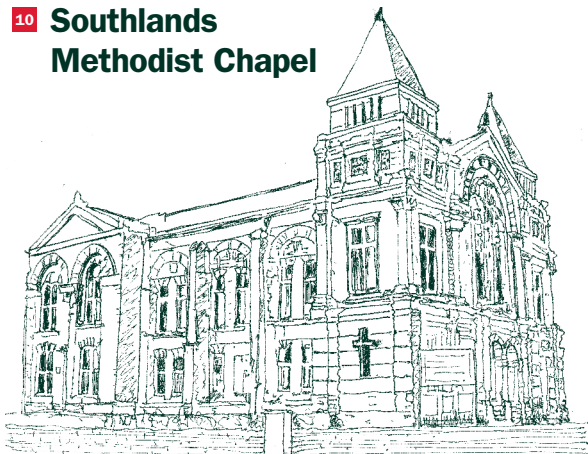
**B**ut for the War there would doubtless have been an auspicious ceremony for the opening of the new Knavesmire Council School on Monday' the Yorkshire Gazette reflected on 15 April 1916. Instead, there was a simple handing over of a not quite completed building by the Chairman of the Sites Sub-Committee. The Gazette reported that the continuing war, and resulting labour shortage, had delayed works which should have been completed a year earlier.

A new, purpose-built school in the area to serve its growing population was much needed. Designed by the Bolton architect J T Proffitt, Knavesmire School had a capacity of 800. Children were waiting. South Bank Temporary School had been operating in St Clement's Mission Room, South Bank Avenue **16** since 1906, and South Bank Temporary Infants' School in Balmoral Terrace Adult School **19** since 1911. There were also children in Cherry Street **13** and Scarcroft Schools **2** waiting to transfer to the new school.

Furniture was found. Sites Sub-Committee minutes of March 1916 record '72 desks from Brook St School, 30 from Scarcroft, 12 chairs, 1 Head Teacher's Desk and Assistant Teacher's desk from Scouts School'. With Mr G Rawling as headmaster and Miss E W Child as headmistress, Knavesmire School was up and running.



## 10 Southlands Methodist Chapel



**S**outhlands Wesleyan Methodist Chapel opened on 13 October 1887. It was designed by Charles Bell to accommodate a congregation of 750, with a Sunday School block of 15 classrooms. Supported by local businessmen the Chapel offered much-needed educational opportunities for children and young adults.

Southlands responded energetically to the outbreak of war. The Rest-Rooms Committee organized table-games and refreshments for soldiers billeted on the Knavesmire. Surviving letters demonstrate that this was much appreciated. In the winter of 1914 Southlands hosted a social event for over 250 soldiers, with a sit-down meal and a programme of entertainments in which the singing of Miss Blanche Humble and Mr T Wintersgill, Private John Ball's impersonations, and Trooper Dowe's sword-swinging display were noted highlights.

Southlands' Pastor in 1914, Stanley Parker, was more than supportive of the conflict. His sermons advocated fighting '*a war of civilization against barbarism; of liberty against despotism*' and vigorously encouraged local young men – some not yet 18 – to enlist.

However local Wesleyan Methodists were also associated with conscientious objection. William Varley, a printer's compositor at De Little and Fenwicks in Vine Street, was one – a socialist who refused to play any part in the killing. He was arrested, court-martialled, and sentenced to 2 years' hard labour in Wormwood Scrubs.

In 1920 a plaque was installed in Southlands Chapel to remember 8 men of the congregation who lost their lives in the war. A Thanksgiving Hall which opened at the same time was demolished in 2016.

## 11 Nunthorpe Court/Millthorpe School

The main building for Millthorpe School used to be Nunthorpe Court, a mansion built in 1856. Its estate of over 33 acres extended to Bishopthorpe Road. Colonel Richard Frederick Meysey-Thompson lived here with his wife Charlotte. Richard trained horses, and was a member of York Race Committee. Charlotte was a famous horsewoman. The 1911 census shows the household included 8 live-in staff – a cook, 4 maids, 2 grooms and a cowman.

Meysey-Thompson had commanded the 4th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment in campaigns on Africa's Gold Coast. He spoke forcefully about the duty of enlisting; but his campaign to retain an able-bodied man to look after 3 cows that supplied his household caused York Military Tribunal to go on strike. The tribunal prevailed, and Meysey-Thompson's man was sent to war.

By 1916 a sphagnum moss depot operated in Coney Street to manufacture absorbent dressings. By the beginning of 1917, 500 volunteers a month worked there. Moss from peat bogs across the country was dried, cleaned and made into dressings. Charlotte Meysey-Thompson contributed 7,200 hours at the depot between 1917 and 1919.

When the Zeppelin bombed York in May 1916 Charlotte took refuge in the basement of Nunthorpe Court with the servants and local residents.

The Meysey-Thompsons sold Nunthorpe Court and 11 acres of land to York City Council in 1920 to create Nunthorpe Court Secondary School for Boys, later Millthorpe School. Nunthorpe Grove and Crescent were built in the 1930s on the remaining acres. The Meysey-Thompsons moved to Scarborough where the Colonel died in 1926, and Charlotte in 1935.



## 12 13 Upper Price Street and the Zeppelin Route

Damage to 13 Upper  
Price Street



**A**t approximately 10.30 pm on 2 May 1916 – a starlit night – the Zeppelin Airship L21, commanded by Kapitanleutnant der Reserve Max Dietrich, bombed York. It approached over the Knavesmire, emitting an eerie drone. Jack Kirby, 230 Bishopthorpe Road, wrote: *'The Zepp had passed clean over our house and branched off at an increased rate over the Rectory. The next we heard were three awful dull bangs which shook all the doors and windows very badly. These were quickly followed by four more and these by a lot more. Each bang absolutely shook the house.'*

Two bombs set fire to Nunthorpe Hall **7** which had to be evacuated. In Nunthorpe Court **11**, Charlotte Meysey-Thompson sheltered in the cellars. But others were attracted into the streets by the eerie humming. Emily Beatrice Chapman, 28, a typist for the North Eastern Railway, died in front of her home at 6 Nunthorpe Avenue as she watched with her mother and sister, who were both badly injured.

L21 proceeded to bomb 13 Upper Price Street, killing George Avison, 71, and his wife Sarah Ann. Their house was almost completely destroyed. It was later rebuilt. Caroline Street – the site of the present St Benedict Road – was hit, and as a result much of it was torn down. Here an 8 year old girl was pulled, alive, from the wreckage of her home by her father.

The Zeppelin continued its devastating course. In just 10 minutes it dropped a total of 18 bombs on York, killing 9 people and injuring 40.

## 13 Cherry Street School and Clementhorpe Community Centre

Clementhorpe Community Centre used to be the Infant Department of Cherry Street School. It opened in 1872, under the direction of George Marsham Argles, Rector of St Clement's **3**. It had departments for boys, girls, and infants. In 1915 its Sunday schools had over 1,000 children on the books, and the day school was almost as large. The St Clement's Library and Penny Bank, and night schools, were held on the premises.

Cherry Street Boys' School log book 1894-1918 gives an insight into the impact of war. In the first month 3 members of staff volunteered for the Front. In 1915 all male members of staff attested under the Derby Scheme, pledging their willingness to fight, and 4 more enlisted. Under an Education Committee directive remaining staff were required to do Ambulance Duty, and help in VAD hospitals (see **7**). Pupil attendance was affected by the Zeppelin raid, and by air-raid warnings. Some parents needed sons to do the work of others who had joined up, and, by 1917, to forage for food. Some older boys were removed to Scout School, to act as messengers, look-outs and agricultural labourers.

Did the school's patriotic spirit help its members to remain positive? The log book records the centenary of the Battle of Waterloo on 18 June 1915: *'Waterloo Day. Lessons in every class: diagrams of disposition of armies and full details of battle.'*

The Boys' and Girls' Department buildings were demolished in the 1960's, after pupils were transferred to Scarcroft School **2**. Their site is now occupied by Clementhorpe Health Centre.

A bronze memorial plaque of 1924, now in St Clement's Church **3**, commemorates the 73 members of staff and former Cherry Street pupils killed in WW1.





*Demolished 1987*

## **14 Terry's Confectionery Works, Clementhorpe**

**J**oseph Terry and Sons' factory at Clementhorpe was set up in a former brewery in 1858, in an area of wharfs and factories either side of Skeldergate Bridge. It offered access via the Ouse to the Humber Estuary. A twice-weekly steam packet brought confectionary ingredients, and coal. The ground floor flooded when the river ran high.

Terry's produced over 400 lines: boiled sweets (including Togo Bullets, Nelson's Pippins and Tom Thumb Drops), preserved fruit and chocolate. The factory consisted of many rooms in which different processes took place. In 1913 Frank Terry visited Germany, bringing back new chocolate making equipment.

Staff worked a 49 and a half hour week. There was a 'suspension room' for those who committed misdemeanours with pay docked accordingly, but there were also football, rugby, swimming and tennis clubs. Terry's Territorials – a small unit of the Territorial Force – was set up in 1913. Women's pay was 45% of men's, and women were expected to give up work on marriage, but the war saw many of what had been men's jobs done by women, including that of timekeeper.

During the war, Terry's was run by Henry Ernest Leetham, of Leetham's Flour Mills. Noel Terry joined the family firm in 1911. He married Leetham's daughter Kathleen in 1915, fought on the Somme, survived shrapnel wounds, and returned to take over the running of the company with his uncle Frank in 1923. They pursued a policy of employing war-disabled men, and opened the Chocolate Works on Bishopthorpe Road in 1926, overseeing the global expansion of the Terry brand.

In 1974 the Clementhorpe chimney was demolished. The rest of the old factory was brought down in 1987.



## 15 Rowntree Park

Joseph Rowntree's gift of a park to the people of York was his tribute to the 200 workers of Rowntree Cocoa Works who died or suffered in WW1. At the opening ceremony in 1921, he told the crowd: *'Is it not fitting ... that their loss should be perpetually commemorated by such a place as this, which will, we hope, help to bring new life and vigour into the lives of many.'*

The lych gate with its dovecote symbolises peace. A bronze memorial plaque in the arch expresses gratitude to the fallen and places hope in the League of Nations, the first international organisation for world peace, founded in 1920. The white garden fantail doves are believed to be direct descendants of the original peace doves of 1921.

The Park was built on Nun Ings, approximately 20 acres of water meadow, which Joseph Rowntree bought from the council. Designed by Arts and Crafts architects Fred Rowntree and W J Swain, it was York's first municipal park. Originally it included bowling greens, an outdoor swimming pool, aviaries, a tearoom and snack bar, and a bandstand for a full orchestra.

In 1954, as a memorial to the Second World War, the Rowntree factory donated the iron entrance gates on Terry Avenue, and a second bronze plaque was added to the lych gate.

On the fine afternoon of 16 July 1921 the Quaker philanthropist Joseph Rowntree ended his speech: "In conclusion, let me say how greatly I desire that in the days to come this park will afford to many rest and recreation from the stress and turmoil of life, and bring health and happiness to large numbers of lives".

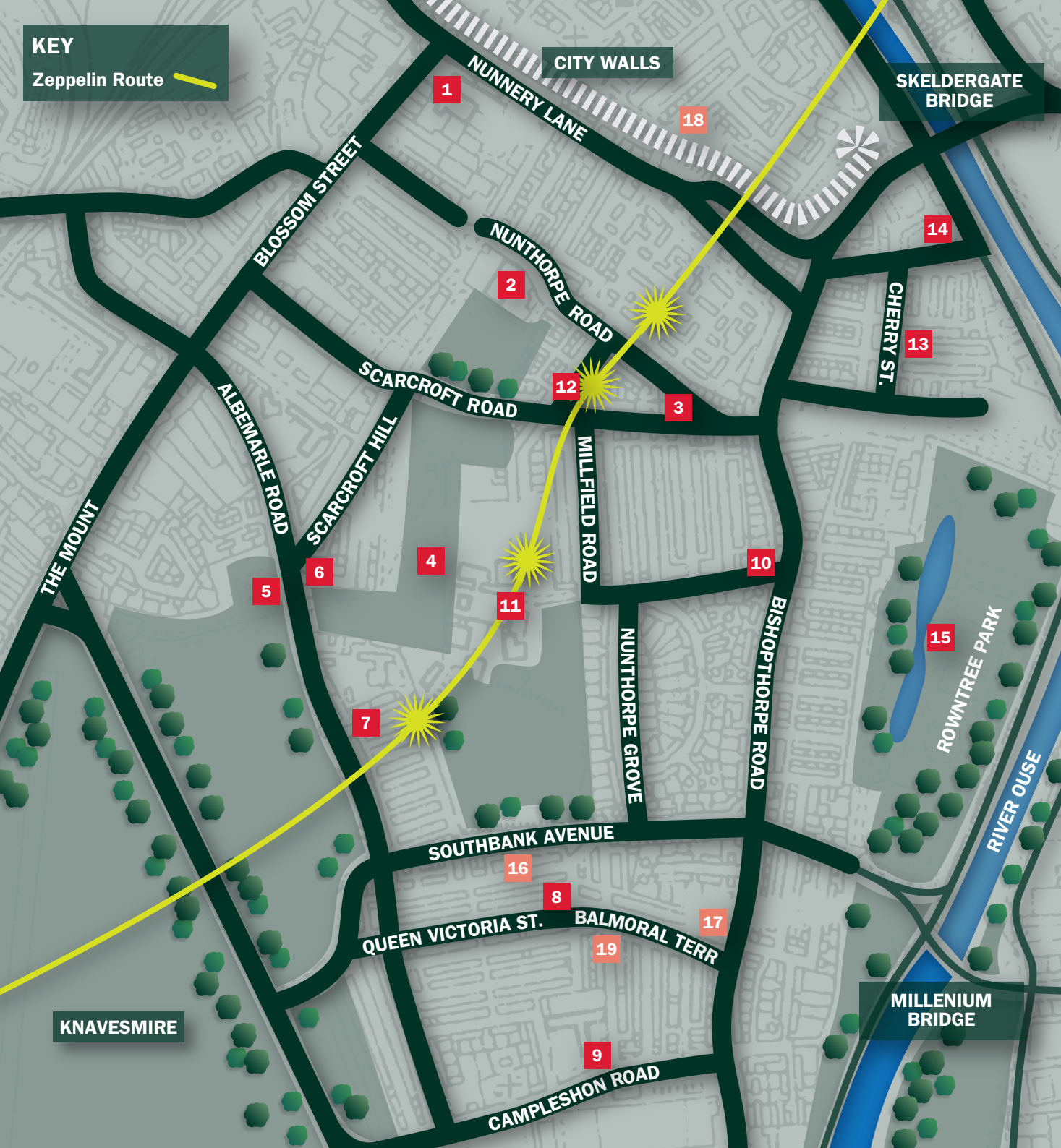


# Map Key

- 1 The Bar Convent**
- 2 Scarcroft School**
- 3 St Clement's Church**
- 4 Scarcroft Allotments**
- 5 Hospital Field Allotments**
- 6 Kentmere House and 1 Telford Terrace**
- 7 Site of Nunthorpe Hall Hospital**
- 8 Queen Victoria Street & Balmoral Terrace**
- 9 Knavesmire School**
- 10 Southlands Methodist Chapel**
- 11 Nunthorpe Court**
- 12 13 Upper Price Street and the Zeppelin route**
- 13 Cherry Street School**
- 14 Terry's Confectionary Works, Clementhorpe**
- 15 Rowntree Park**
  
- 16 St Clement's Mission Church**
- 17 Site of St Clement's Rectory**
- 18 Victoria Bar Primitive Methodist Chapel**
- 19 Balmoral Terrace Adult School**

**KEY**

Zeppelin Route



CITY WALLS

SKELDERGATE BRIDGE

1

18

14

2

13

12

3

BLOSSOM STREET

NUNTHORPE ROAD

CHERRY ST.

SCARCROFT ROAD

ALBEMARLE ROAD

SCARCROFT HILL

MILLFIELD ROAD

BISHOPTHORPE ROAD

10

5

6

4

11

15

7

16

THE MOUNT

8

ROWNTREE PARK

SOUTHBANK AVENUE

9

KNAVESMIRE

QUEEN VICTORIA ST.

BALMORAL TERR

RIVER OUSE

MILLENNIUM BRIDGE

CAMPLESHON ROAD

This map is based on research into the impact and legacy of the First World War on the Clementhorpe, Scarcroft and South Bank areas of York conducted by *Clements Hall Local History Group* between 2016 and 2018. The project was supported by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, as part of *The First World War Then and Now* programme, marking the centenary of the First World War.

**Clements Hall Local History Group** exists to explore the local history of the Clementhorpe, Scarcroft and South Bank neighbourhood. The group meets at Clements Hall, near Scarcroft School in York. All are welcome.

Contact **Clements Hall Local History Group** via Clements Hall on 01904 466086 or email [enquiries@clementshall.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@clementshall.org.uk)



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**Cover image:**

Millfield Road Peace Celebrations, 1919, courtesy of the late Hugh Murray

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