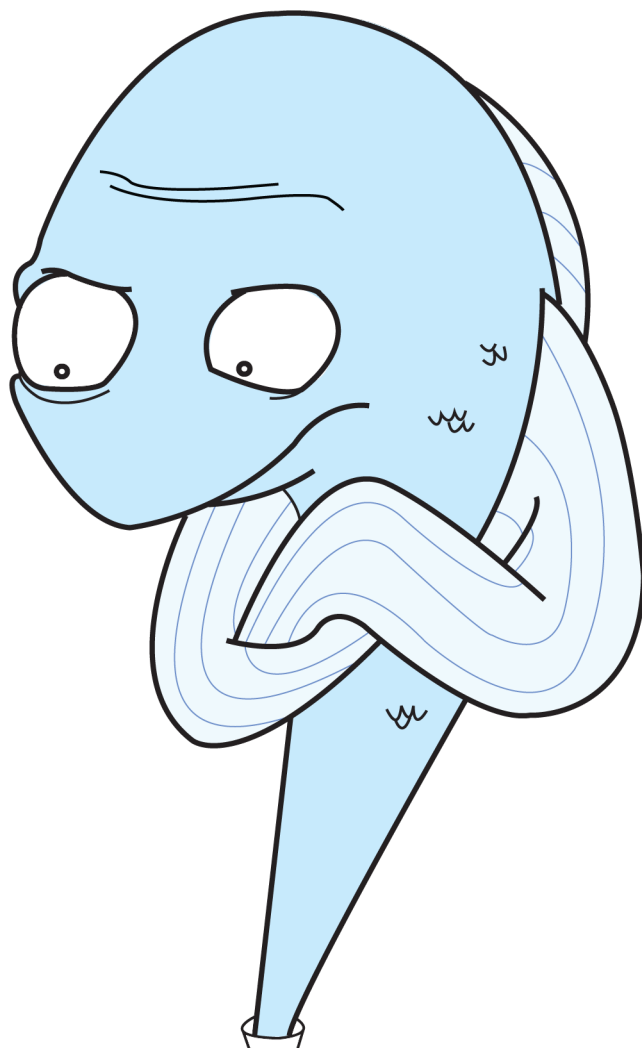


# Harry does not eat fish!

At 11 a.m. on November 11th 2008, we marked the 90th anniversary of the end of the Great War (World War I), and those who saw the numerous news stories will have remembered the three survivors of the war living in the UK\*. With a touch of irony one survives from each branch of the services, the senior service the Royal Navy, and the youngest service the Royal Air Force created during the war itself and the Army "Tommy's" who took brunt of the highest casualties throughout the four long years. It was a war that affected everybody where the whole country knew someone who was serving, or a casualty of the war, and thanks to the media we still know the three remaining survivors Bill Stone, Henry Allingham and Harry Patch.

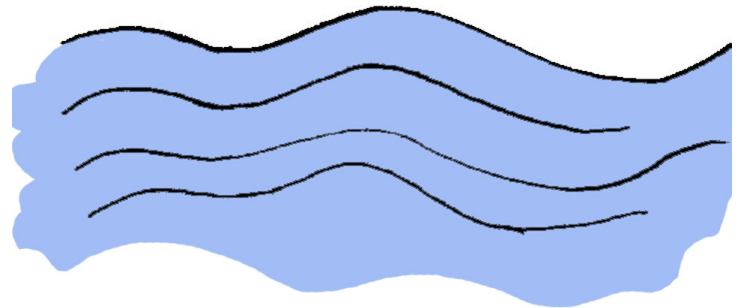
These old men have survive due to excellent care and of course nutrition, and as our member Sue Helliker Somerset Care Ltd Quality Assurance manager, says Somerset Care are naturally proud that they have been caring and supporting Harry Patch for the past fourteen years. Good nutrition obviously plays a part in the well being of our Nation's last "Tommy " hero. Born in Coombe Down, Somserset, Harry who is now 110 years of age and can be found on the 1901 census as a two year old, and is living in his beloved Somerset.

Being the last "Tommy", he saw life and action in some of the most ferocious fighting on the western front including in one of the names synonymous with horror and attrition ..... Passchendaele (officially the Third Battle of Ypres 1917 in which over 70,000 British troops were killed). He was a private, and part of a four man Lewis (machine) gun team with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, when on September 22 after four months of the battle a light shell known as a "whizz bang" exploded above his team's head, his three pals died in the explosion, and Harry was injured with shrapnel in his abdomen but survived.



*-Harry told the BBC in 2007 the Great War was a “calculated and condoned slaughter of human beings” and said that “war isn’t worth one life.”*

**T**oday, Harry eats little and often, and he has a small appetite and will choose to have what he fancies when he fancies. Harry most definitely though dislikes fish. He says that his favourite food is egg and chips plus puddings. Harry always has two glasses of full fat Somerset milk each day. Is full fat milk Harry’s secret? He has also been quoted as saying he put his great age down to not smoking or drinking, the former was definitely bucking the trend in his generation where smoking was a way of life. Who knows but there are generations who might agree full fat the answer!



**A**nother little know fact is that Harry, is the oldest retired fire fighter being a member of the Auxiliary Fire Service which he joined during the Second World War as he was too old to fight. As Harry told the BBC in 2007 the Great War was a “calculated and condoned slaughter of human beings” and said that “war isn’t worth one life.” I have stood on the top of the ridge at Passchendaele and looked back towards Ypres the direction from which Harry and his pals would have come and wondered two things “Why?” ..and “Could I have done what they did?” I would urge everyone at sometime to visit the battlefields from either war in Northern France or Belgium and ask yourself these questions, and think of Harry’s words on World War I in Colour ..“...if any man tells you he went over the top and he wasn’t scared, he’s a damn liar.”

\* Sadly all three of the surviving veterans passed away during 2009 after we first published this story in the NACC Catercare 2009 Yearbook. With their passing away the living link with the Great War has gone, but I would recommend anyone reads at least one of their biographies as they are tales of ordinary people who did extraordinary things.