



# Frederick Noel Cope

## 131 Kedleston Road

On 3 September 1914 Frederick volunteered for the British Army as “Noel Frederick Cope”. On his attestation papers he gave his age as 19 years and 2 months but, born in 31 January 1896, Noel was just 18 years and 7 months when he signed up. This was not technically old enough to serve abroad in the army, but recruiting officers often turned a blind eye – no date of birth was required on signing up but only “apparent age” was recorded.

Noel signed up with the Royal Fusiliers and a statement on his papers suggested that he was enlisted with the 21st Battalion formed in September 1914 by the Public Schools and University Men’s Force. His regiment landed in France in November 1915 and Noel served with them until he transferred to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Royal Fusiliers in November 1916. A year later he was transferred to the Labour Corps, which offered logistical support to fighting regiments. There was a further transfer to the Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry in August 1918, serving all the while in France. He was demobilised in February 1919.

Noel’s early life had not been settled; his mother died when he was two, and by the time he was five he was living at a boarding school in Chesterfield along with three of his sisters – he was one of six children. He is recorded as living with his aunt, Mary Brentnall at 131 Kedleston Road in 1911 and

also after he left the army.

On 1 September 1921 Fred left England to work in British East Africa (now part of Kenya) as a farmer. He next appears in official records when he returned to Kenya on 3 September 1936 with his wife. Whether he had married in Britain or whilst living in Kenya is unknown.

**Description of Frederick Noel Cope on Enlistment.**

Apparent Age 19 years 2 months.  
(To be determined according to the instructions given in the Regulations for Army Medical Services.)

Height 5 ft. 7 ins.  
Weight 112 lbs.  
Chest (Girth when fully expanded) 33 ins.  
Range of expansion 1 1/2 ins.  
Complexion dark  
Eyes dark brown  
Hair dark brown

Distinctive marks, and marks indicating congenital peculiarities or previous disease.  
(Should the Medical Officer be of opinion that the recruit has served before, he will, unless the man acknowledges to any previous service, attach a slip to that effect, for the information of the approving Officer.)

Church of England Yes  
Presbyterian No  
Wesleyan No  
Baptist or Congregationalist No  
Other Protestants (denomination to be stated) No  
Roman Catholic No  
Jewish No

**Certificate of Medical Examination.**  
I have examined the above-named recruit and find that he does not present any of the causes of rejection specified in the Regulations for the Army Medical Service.  
He can see at the required distance with either eye: his heart and lungs are healthy: he has the free use of his joints and limbs, and he declares that he is not subject to fits of any description.  
I consider him fit for the Army.  
Date Sept 3 1914.  
Place 131 Kedleston Rd Derby.  
Medical Officer: C.H. Rappan M.D.

**Certificate of Primary Military Examination.**  
I hereby certify that the above-named recruit was inspected by me, and I consider him fit for service in the 23rd Royal Fusiliers and that due care has been exercised in his enlistment.  
Date 3rd Sept 1914.  
Place Derby.  
Recruiting Officer: Geo. Stace

**Certificate of Approving Officer.**  
I certify that this Attestation of the above-named recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required forms appear to have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the Royal Fusiliers.  
If enlisted by special authority, Army Form B. 203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original attestation.  
Date Oct 24 1914.  
Place Ashted.  
Approving Officer: Cap. M.B. Ross

Part of Fred’s enlistment record from 1914. It gives his height as 5’7”, his weight as 112 lb, and his complexion as dark, with dark hair and brown eyes. © The National Archives