SCHOMBERG SOCIETY

Mourne Remembers 1914 - 1918

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

On the 4th August 1914, the British Empire entered what was to become known as The Great War. Britain and its allies took up arms to defend the rights of small nations, such as Belgium, who had just been invaded by Germany and its allies.

All across the world, Britain was mobilising its forces and hundreds of men and women from all sections of the Mourne community answered the call. Their subsequent sacrifice, bravery and heroism brought much honour and pride and indeed, tears and sorrows to the people of Mourne.

This exhibition produced by the Schomberg Society to mark the centenary of the armistice is dedicated to their memory and we hope it will give a better understanding of the tremendous sacrifice given by these brave men and women on all our behalfs during 'The War to end all Wars'.

We Will Remember Them

Company Sergeant T. J. Cunningham of The Square, Kilkeel, was wounded in action and for his bravery, was awarded the Military Cross. (photo right)

Lance Corporal Robert Purdy, Moneydarragh, Annalong, Killed in Action on the 1st July 1916. (photo above)

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Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

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COL. JOSEPH H. THOMPSON
CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOUR

Colonel Joseph Thompson, better known as 'Colonel Joe' was born in 1871 in Ballyardle, Kilkeel. Aged 18, he emigrated to America, where he joined the U.S. Army in 1917. He became a highly decorated First World War veteran, a lawyer and Pennsylvania State Senator.

During The Great War, Joseph Thompson saw action in both Mexico and France, where he was repeatedly wounded. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the Croix de Guerre, the Purple Heart and the Congressional Medal of Honour, which is the highest award for bravery in America.

Joseph Thompson was awarded the Medal of Honour for his actions of valour on the 1st October 1918. His citation described how Major Thompson with great gallantry and coolness rushed forward under heavy machine gun and anti-tank gunfire, succeeding in capturing an enemy gun nest, making it possible for the infantry to advance.

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Mourne Remembers
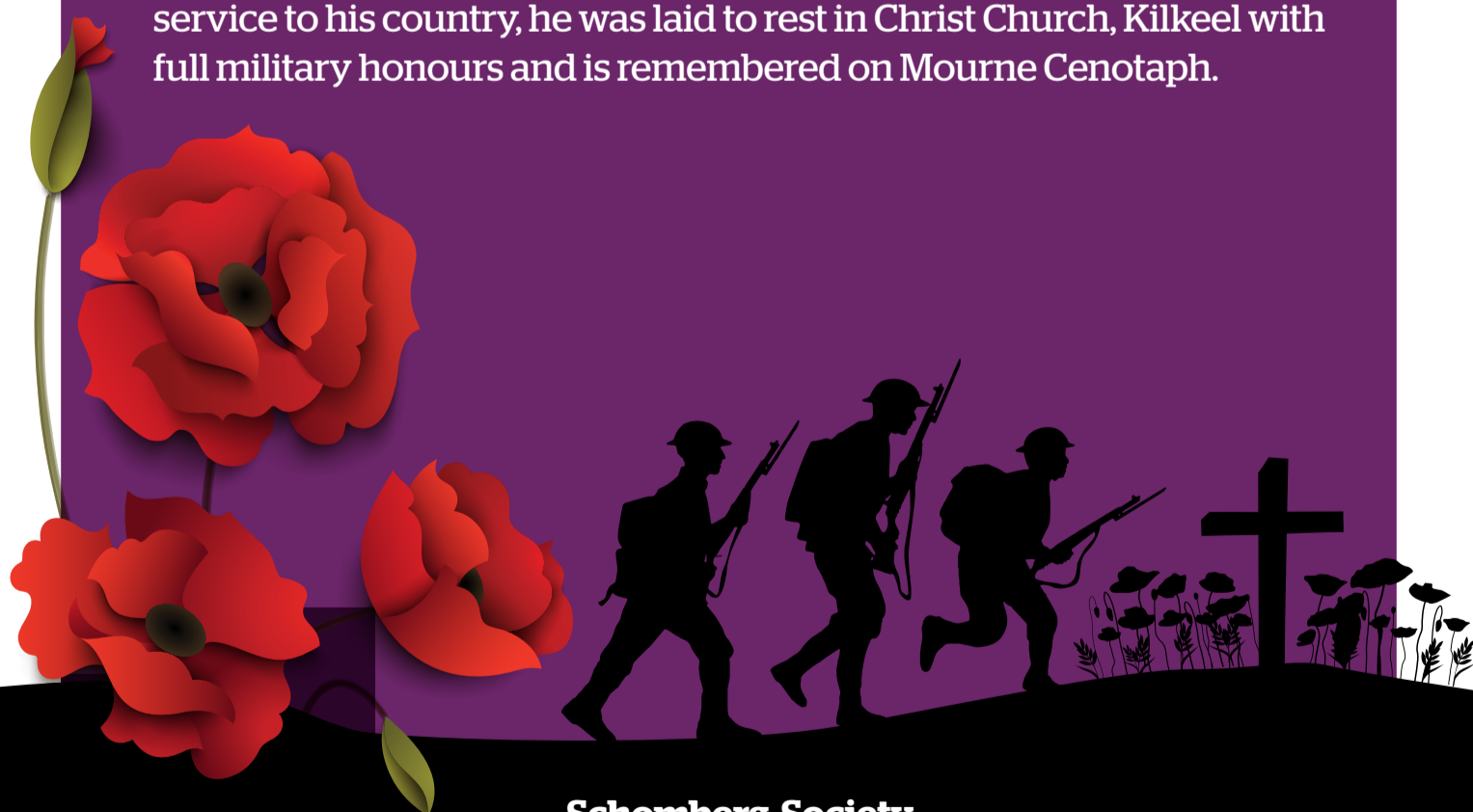# 1914 - 1918
ROBERT SCOTT
VICTORIA CROSS

Robert Scott, born in 1874 was the son of Mr and Mrs James Scott, originally from Ballinran Kilkeel. He is best known for winning Britain's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross at the Battle of Ladysmith during the Boer War in 1900. However, Robert Scott is also renowned as one of only a handful of people to have actively served in all three wars, the Boer War, the First World War and despite his age of 65, also the Second World War.

VC Scott served throughout the length of the First World War, rising to the rank of Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant in the Manchester Regiment and he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for his gallantry and dedication to duty.

In 1923, he returned to his family homeland in Ballinran, spending the rest of his life there with his family. At the outbreak of World War Two, Robert Scott once again volunteered for service and in 1942, with special approval from none other than Winston Churchill, Scott was accepted into the Royal Air Force until he retired at the end of the war, aged 71. After a life time of service to his country, he was laid to rest in Christ Church, Kilkeel with full military honours and is remembered on Mourne Cenotaph.

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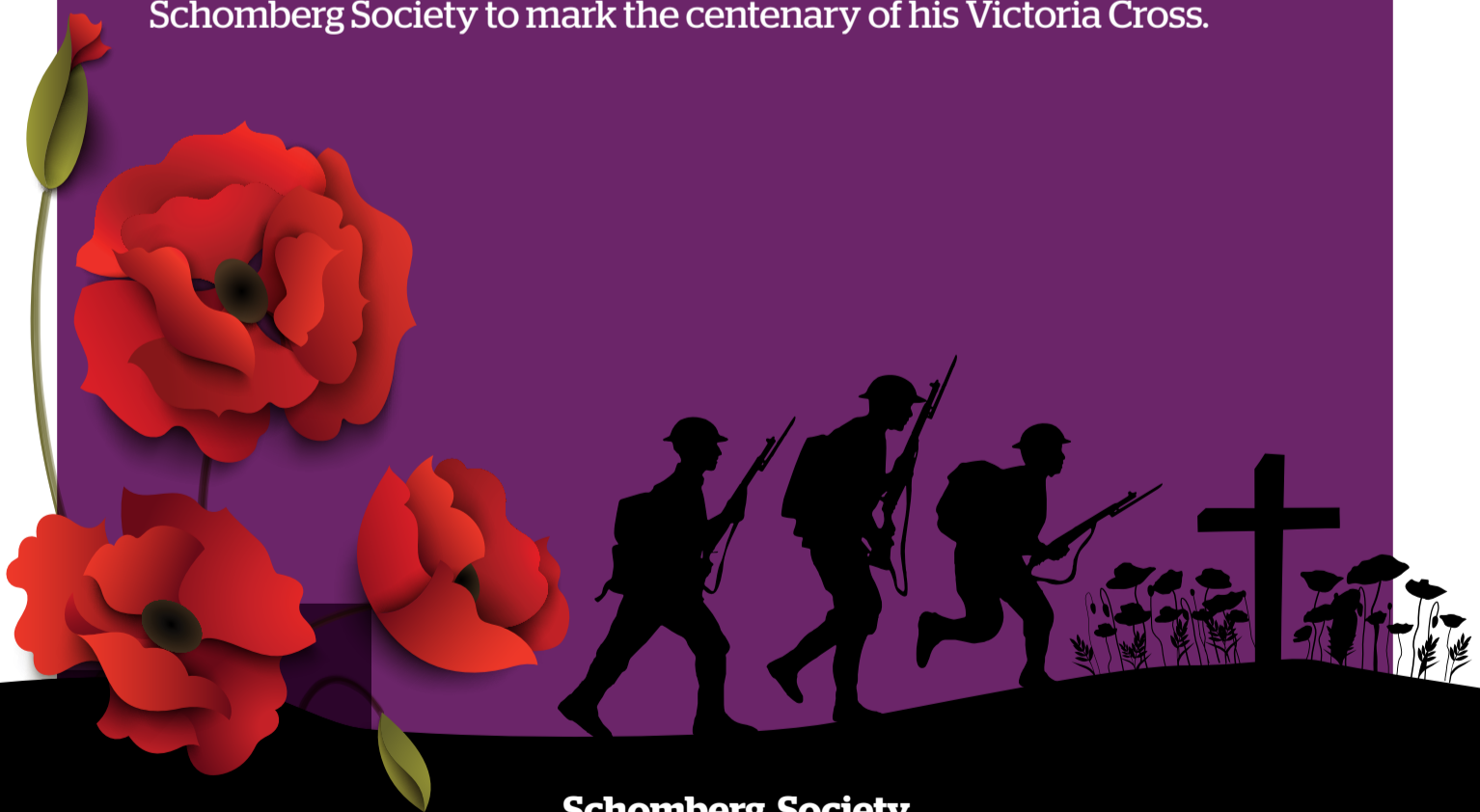## ROBERT HILL HANNA
VICTORIA CROSS

Sergeant Major Robert Hill Hanna was in born 1887 in Aughnahoory, Kilkeel to parents Robert and Sarah Hanna. Aged 18, he emigrated to Canada to work in the forestry industry. At the outbreak of World War One, he volunteered in the Canadian Army and as part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, he saw much action during World War One.

VC Hanna won his Victoria Cross on the 21st August 1917 at the Battle of Hill 70 near Lens, France when under heavy machine gun fire; he personally was responsible for capturing a heavily fortified German machine gun post, saving many of his comrade's lives.

On returning to his hometown of Kilkeel, he was received by a crowd of over 3,000 people, who had come out to salute him for bringing honour and distinction to Mourne.

Robert Hill Hanna is remembered near his home at Hanna's Close with a special Victoria Cross Memorial Stone, erected by the Schomberg Society to mark the centenary of his Victoria Cross.

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