

Thomas Friend on the Forest
from the Peter Kirby Collection

**Men of Ashdown Forest
who fell in the First World War
and who are commemorated
on the war memorials at
Forest Row and Hartfield**

Volume Two

1917 Onwards

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INTRODUCTION

The Ashdown Forest Research Group has carried out a project to write case studies on all the men who died while on military service during the 1914-18 war and who are commemorated by the war memorials at Forest Row and Hartfield in Sussex. These are parishes which lie on the northern fringes of Ashdown Forest and which traditionally have strong links to the Forest. Men commemorated at other locations around the Forest are not covered by this project.

We have produced 115 studies in total. The first volume dealt with the 46 men who died between Britain's declaration of war on 1 August 1914 and the end of 1916. This second volume deals with the those men who died from January 1917 onwards, including a number who died after the war ended from wounds suffered during the war.

We hope you will find these case studies interesting and thought-provoking. They highlight the contrasting backgrounds and circumstances of the men who fought and died: some were from very humble backgrounds, others from elevated social milieux; some saw action in the ranks, others were officers. A number of cases underline the severe impact that the loss of these men had on local families and communities. The studies are also a reminder of the varied activities that the men were involved in during the war, whether on land, at sea or in the air, and the different places in which they served – not only the Western Front but in more remote parts of the world such as Gallipoli, Palestine, Mesopotamia and east Africa. And, because there were various reasons why men came to be commemorated on war memorials, the studies range from those who had close connections to the area to others who had rather more tenuous links, for example, through the residency of their parents.

The Ashdown Forest Research Group consists of several independent researchers who undertake research into the historical geography of Ashdown Forest. The authors of each study are identified at the end of each article, and they would welcome any corrections, supplementary information or photographs that would help to improve them. They can be contacted by email at:

ashdownforestresearchgroup@yahoo.com

Ashdown Forest Research Group

LIST OF STUDIES, 1917 ONWARDS

Click on any man's name to go to their case study

Name	Date of Death
Baker, George Frank	06-11-1917
Bannister, William Henry	18-07-1918
Bassett, Albert	06-02-1919
Baylay, George Frederick	23-03-1918
Boakes, Ernest Stanley	26-04-1917
Brand, Albert Victor	03-08-1918
Brown, William George	26-09-1917
Brownlow, Wilfrid Herbert Cecil	28-05-1918
Burfoot, Bertram	14-12-1917
Cannon, Ernest Edward	04-11-1918
Cox, Raymond	11-08-1917
Divall, Edward	29-04-1917
Divall, Reginald	06-12-1917
Draper, Thomas James	29-09-1918
Dunstan, Herbert George	02-12-1918
Farley, Victor Frederick	21-08-1918
Fisher, Edmund Montague Prinsep	31-03-1918
Fisher, George Kenneth Thompson	03-09-1917
Gladman, Archibald Frederick	03-05-1917
Gordon, Ronald Granville	19-09-1918
Grayer, Harold	09-12-1918
Harding, Ernest	06-11-1917
Heasman, George James	09-10-1917
Horlick, Gerald Nolekin	05-07-1918
Hill, Frederick William	31-07-1917
Humphrey, Thomas	09-10-1918
Kekewich, George	28-10-1917
Kekewich, Hanbury Lewis	06-11-1917
Kensett, Henry James	10-04-1917
Leney, Cyril Henry	27-05-1918
Luxford, Bernard	10-09-1918
Luxford, Edward James	08-05-1918

Luxford, William	23-11-1917
Martin, William Gerald	14-01-1917
Medhurst, John Arthur	09-04-1917
Miles, Walter Alfred George	19-04-1917
Mills, Albert	31-07-1917
Mitchell, Albert	19-04-1918
Padgham, William	03-09-1917
Page, Harry	23-03-1918
Parker, Edward John	12-01-1917
Parker, William George	31-08-1917
Pannet, Reginald Henry	21-03-1918
Richardson, Albert Edward	27-02-1917
Robinson, Cyril Charles	28-04-1918
Robson, Robert Charles	15-05-1918
Sands, William Thomas	31-08-1917
Sippetts, Jack Frederick	05-10-1918
Southey, Frederick Charles	02-01-1919
Stevens, Charles Edward	21-03-1918
Styles, William Joseph	29-07-1918
Syms, Charles	04-04-1918
Tester, William Edgar	24-09-1917
Titcomb, Arthur William	29-01-1917
Tomsett, Albert Ernest Standen	26-03-1918
Villiers, Algernon Hyde	23-11-1917
Waters, Eric Gordon	24-01-1917
Webber, Frederick Percy	04-07-1917
Weeding, George	03-05-1917
Weeding, John	20-08-1917
Weekes, David	09-04-1917
Wheatley, Charlie	08-02-1921
Wheatley, George	03-05-1917
Wheatley, Harry	26-03-1918
White, Albert Henry	11-10-1919
Whitfield, Nigel Bernard	07-07-1918
Woodhams, Thomas Henry	13-04-1917

BAKER, GEORGE FRANK

Private, 270166, 10th Battalion, Royal East Kent Yeomanry (“The Buffs”)

Killed In Action on 6 November 1917, Battle of Gaza, Palestine, aged 28

Buried in Beersheba Military Cemetery, Plot 1, Grave 14



Beersheba War Cemetery, Palestine

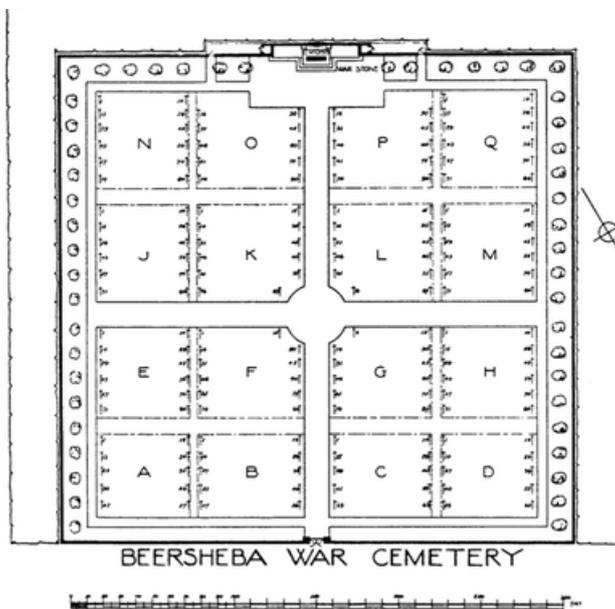
George Baker was born in 1890 at Mereworth in Kent. His parents, Frank Baker and Fanny (née Histed), were married in 1886 in East Grinstead but in the year after George's birth, 1891, his father died. In the 1891 census George was recorded as living in Butchers Lane, Mereworth with his mother Fanny, a widow of 25, who was born in Forest Row and who was described as a butcher. Also resident was Louisa Young, a general domestic servant, who was born in Hartfield.

George does not appear locally in the 1901 census returns but by 1911 he was living at Fernside, London Road, Forest Row, where he was described as a butcher's shop man. He was boarding at Fernside with Trevor Duncan in the household of W.G. Witham and Fanny, next door to Harry Histed, his uncle, a retired butcher.

His attestation papers when he first enrolled at Broad Oak, Sturry, Kent on 5 September 1914 record that he was a meat salesman and was 5ft 8 inches tall. George was initially posted to the Royal East and West Kent Yeomanry Regiment, number 1870, but was then transferred to the East Kent Yeomanry, number 270166. He first served in the Balkan theatre of war from 24 September 1915.

George died during the 3rd Battle of Gaza in the action leading to the capture of the Sheria position.

The 1st Battle of Gaza from 17 April 1917 resulted in a Turkish/Ottoman victory. In the following 2nd Battle of Gaza the Turkish 4th Army strengthened its defensive positions in and around Gaza to protect the area from an expected attack from the Allied Egypt Expeditionary Force. The 3rd Battle of Gaza began with the expected attack on 31 October 1917. This resulted in a British victory, but George, acting as part of the EEF 74th Division, was killed in action on Tuesday 6 November 1917.



Plan of Beersheba War Cemetery, Palestine

George Baker is buried in Beersheba Military Cemetery at Plot 1, Grave 14. The inscription on the grave reads “Till The Day Dawns”. The cemetery at Beersheba, which is now in Israel, lies on the edge of the Negev desert 75 km (47 miles) south-west of Jerusalem. It contains 1,241 Commonwealth casualties 67 of whom are unidentified. The cemetery opened immediately after General Allenby's successful attack in October 1917 on the Turkish stronghold of Beersheba. After the Armistice the cemetery was expanded by the bringing in of burials from associated scattered sites and small burial gardens.

Kevin Tillett

WILLIAM HENRY BANNISTER

Lance Corporal, 1610, 8th Royal Sussex Regiment

Died of Wounds, Military Hospital, Étaples, France, 18 July 1918

Buried at Military Cemetery, Étaples

Grave U 202, now Plot 25, Row K, Grave Iia



Étaples Military Cemetery (from Creative Commons)

Until he went to war, William Henry Bannister had probably spent all his life in Forest Row. Indeed, while the 1901 and 1911 censuses give Forest Row as his birthplace, the illegible entry in 1891 could possibly be read as Highgate. Either way, both he and his parents were locally born. Station Road and Hartfield Road are the addresses given in the two later censuses.

William Henry's birth was recorded in the East Grinstead Registration District and he was baptised at Forest Row on 13 May 1888; both events give his surname as Wickenden, and his parents, Edward Bannister and Martha Rosa Wickenden didn't marry until 25 December that year. A sister named Mercy Annie Maria Jane was baptised in 1893, and appears on the census more simply as Annie, while a late child, Edith Gladys, was born in 1903. Edward was a labourer, variously carter and cowman, and William also appears on the 1911 census as a labourer, so presumably was expecting to follow his father into agriculture.

Bannister enlisted as part of the British Expeditionary Force at Chichester, date unknown, but, even if it was at the outbreak of war, he would already have been 26 years old, probably more mature than some of his compatriots, which may partly explain why he was given the rank of Lance Corporal.

In the last quarter of 1914, William married Helen Emily Maria Westgate at East Grinstead. She was born at Rollesby in Norfolk, but in 1911 was in service at Lancing College. The Commonwealth War

Graves site places her at Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, in its records, but the burial of Helen Emily Maria Bannister, widow, is recorded at Great Yarmouth in 1953, so presumably at some point she returned to her roots.

The information in the Forest Row Memorial Book was given by William's sister, Annie Bannister, then living at 1 Rose & Crown Cottages, West Croydon. Their father Edward had died in 1915, and mother Martha died in 1929.

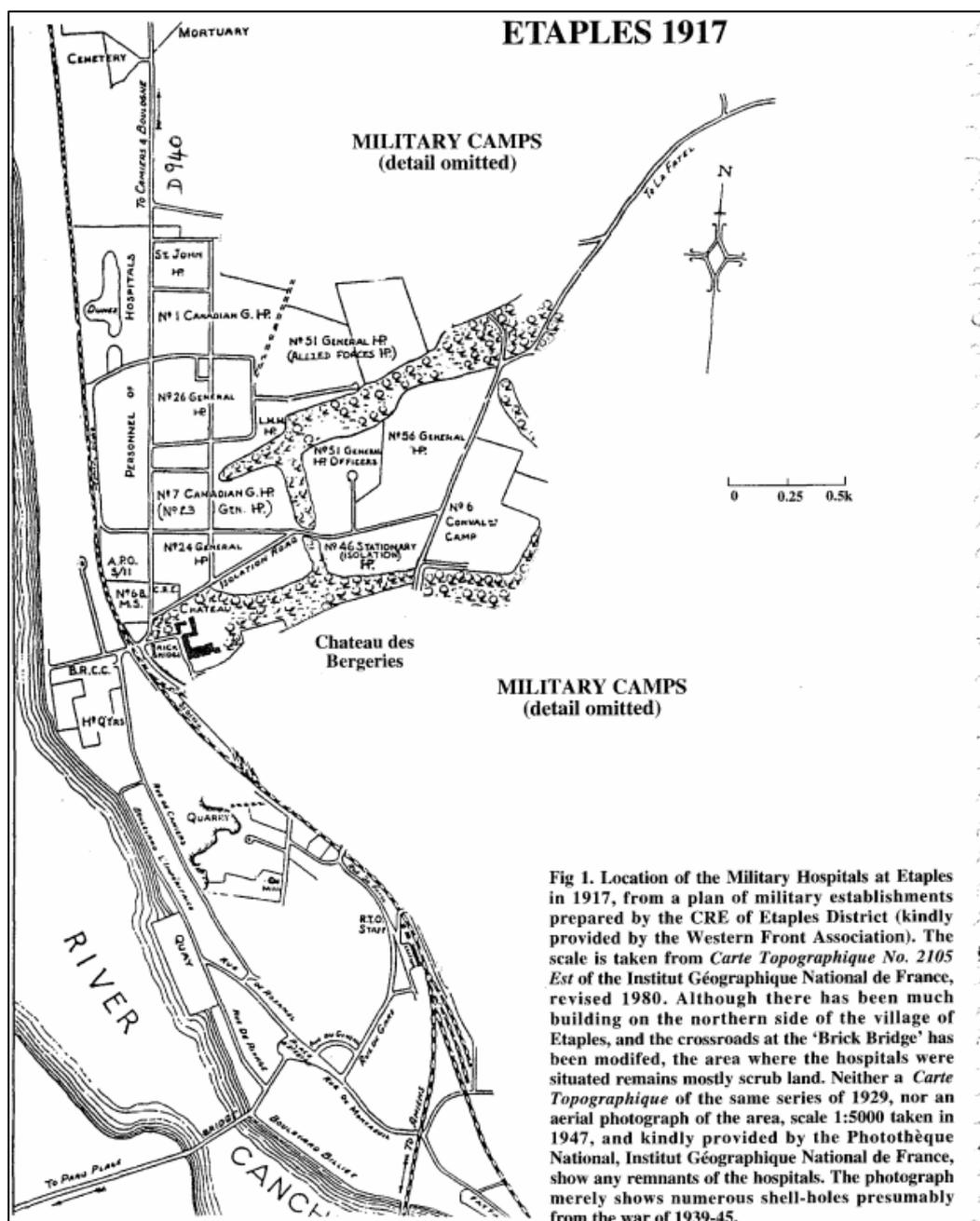


Fig 1. Location of the Military Hospitals at Etaples in 1917, from a plan of military establishments prepared by the CRE of Etaples District (kindly provided by the Western Front Association). The scale is taken from *Carte Topographique No. 2105 Est* of the Institut Géographique National de France, revised 1980. Although there has been much building on the northern side of the village of Etaples, and the crossroads at the 'Brick Bridge' has been modified, the area where the hospitals were situated remains mostly scrub land. Neither a *Carte Topographique* of the same series of 1929, nor an aerial photograph of the area, scale 1:5000 taken in 1947, and kindly provided by the Photothèque National, Institut Géographique National de France, show any remnants of the hospitals. The photograph merely shows numerous shell-holes presumably from the war of 1939-45.

Etaples Military Hospitals complex - from <http://jramc.bmj.com/>

Étaples is in the Pas de Calais, and was an important centre for the British as it was relatively safe from attack. At its peak, 100,000 troops were housed there, and there was a complex of hospitals. It has been suggested that the 1919 flu pandemic probably started in the crowded conditions there.

Over 11,500 identified casualties are interred in the military cemetery which was designed mainly by Lutyens and unveiled by George V and General Haig in 1922.

Pam Griffiths

ALBERT BASSETT

Sapper 537927, 350th Engineering and Mining Company, Royal Engineers

**Died from bronchial pneumonia at No.12 Stationary Hospital,
St. Pol-Sur-Ternoise, France, on 6 February 1919, aged 31.**

Buried in St. Pol British Cemetery: Grave II.E.9



St. Pol British Cemetery

Sapper Albert Bassett was born in Hartfield in 1879. He enlisted on 19 August 1914 at Hastings, Sussex. He was serving with the 350th Engineering and Mining Company, The Royal Engineers, when he died from bronchial pneumonia, on 6 February 1919, at No.12 Stationary Hospital, St. Pol-Sur-Ternoise, France.

He was the son of William, born 1847 in Withyham, and Harriet Bassett (née Baldwin), born 1848 in Hartfield. His father was an agricultural labourer. In 1881 Albert was living at Orchard Cottage in Hartfield with his parents and siblings William, Emma and Albert. Their given places of birth suggest that this family moved around as their father searched for work as an agricultural labourer. By 1891 the family was at Cotchford Cottage, Hartfield, and there were three further, younger siblings. In 1901 Albert was a labourer working on the roads and a boarder with the Payne family in Hartfield.

In the 1911 census Albert was listed as a single gardener, aged 30, and he was a boarder with the Divall family at Worth Tyes, Cabbagestalk Cottage, Hartfield. When he enlisted in 1914 he was recorded as a labourer and he had previously been rejected as “not tall enough”.

Albert married Ellen Harriet Berry in the Uckfield district in 1918. She subsequently married a Mr Marden in March 1921 and moved to Hatch End, Middlesex.

Albert originally served with the 5th Royal Sussex Regiment, service number 2259, and transferred to the Royal Engineers on 22 June 1917. His Medal Roll records that he first arrived in France on 11 July 1915.

The Royal Engineers maintained the railways, roads, water supply, bridges and transport – allowing supplies to the armies. They operated the railways and inland waterways, maintained wireless, telephones and other signalling equipment, making sure communications existed. The Royal Engineers grew into a large and complex organisation. By 1 August 1914 the RE consisted of 1,056 officers and 10,394 men of the regular army and Special Reserve, plus another 513 and 13,127 respectively serving with the RE of the Territorial Force. Before the Second World War, Royal Engineers recruits were required to be at least 5 feet 4 inches tall (5 feet 2 inches for the Mounted Branch). They initially enlisted for six years with the colours and a further six years with the reserve or four years and eight years. Unlike most corps and regiments, in which the upper age limit was 25, men could enlist in the Royal Engineers up to 30 years of age. They trained at the Royal Engineers Depot in Chatham or the RE Mounted Depot at Aldershot.

St. Pol-sur-Ternoise, where Albert Bassett died, was a military administrative centre during the whole of the First World War and was taken over by Commonwealth troops from the French in March 1916. No.12 Stationary Hospital was posted on the race-course near the town from 1 June 1916 to 1 June 1919. St. Pol British Cemetery was begun in March 1918, when the extension to the communal cemetery was almost full; the last burial was made in July 1920. St. Pol British Cemetery contains 258 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.



The hospital in Winter 1917.

Albert's elder brother, James Baldwin Bassett, was killed at the Battle of Loos on 8 October 1915, aged c. 38.

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. Army Form W. 3372.

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM

Commune St, Pol REPORT No. 12 SCHEDULE No. 12c.

PLACE OF BURIAL ST. POL BRITISH CEMETERY

Map Reference 44b.S.22.d.7.8.

The following are buried here:— P LYOTTONS.

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd.	Plot, Row and Grave No.
4/N.Z., M.G.C.	10/2320	STEADMAN	Sgt. J.	24-1-19	Yes	E.6 ✓
Tank Corps	75056	BLOOMFIELD	L/Cpl. R.	31-1-19	Yes	E.7 ✓
F. Coy. 2/6 Durham	301474	CROSS	Pte. A.R.	2-2-19	Yes	E.8 ✓
350/E.&M. Coy. R.E.	357927	BASSETT	Spr. A.	6-2-19	Yes	E.9 ✓
17 (A.C.) Tank Batt.	309556	EWING	Pte. R.	12-2-19	Yes	E.10 ✓
16/Tank Corps Batt.		WAY ✓	Capt. S.H.	6-5-19	Yes	E.11 ✓
Att. 550 ^{929/area 8mp} E.& M. Coy. _{Labour Corps}	73085	WINSBEY WINSBEY	Pte. A.C.	15-2-19	Yes ^{RU/584}	E.12 ✓
3/Tank Battn.	95248	CROMIE	Cpl. T.C.	17-2-19	Yes	E.13 ✓
47/B.G.O. Coy. ROD. RE.	276179	DUNN	Spr. G.	3-2-19	Yes	E.14 ✓
(R.O.D., R.E. 25758		FERGUSON	Cpl. A.	18-2-19	Yes	E.15 ✓
(47/B.G.O. Coy. ROD. RE. ^{WR/} 125758		FERGUSON	Cpl. A.	18-2-19	Yes ^{WW/29/13283}	E.15 ✓
350/E. & M. Coy. R.E.	519021	POPE	Spr. G.	18-2-19	Yes	E.16 ✓
(R.A.S.C., M.T.R.V.P.) ^{ME/} 194979		LEADER	Pte. A.	24-2-19	Yes	E.17 ✓
(att. Tank Corps)						
RASC. att. 6/London FA. ^{T4/} 245911		SUTTON	Dvr. F.	21-2-19	Yes	E.18 ✓
15/Tank Corps	96945	HALES	L/Cpl. R.E.	22-2-19	Yes	E.19 ✓
1/Tank Stores TK. Cps. 201624		ROU RKE	Sgt. R.	25-2-19	Yes	E.20 ✓

6 51 5) W1163—P133 45,000 10/17 HWV(P117) Forms 1/3/17
144—1908 70,000 4/18

ENTERED. ac. 23-9-19
SLIPS CHECKED. ac. 18-5-21.

Albert Bassett's entry on the Graves Registration Report Form for St. Pol British Cemetery

Listed on the War Memorial in Hartfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

GEORGE FREDERICK BAYLAY

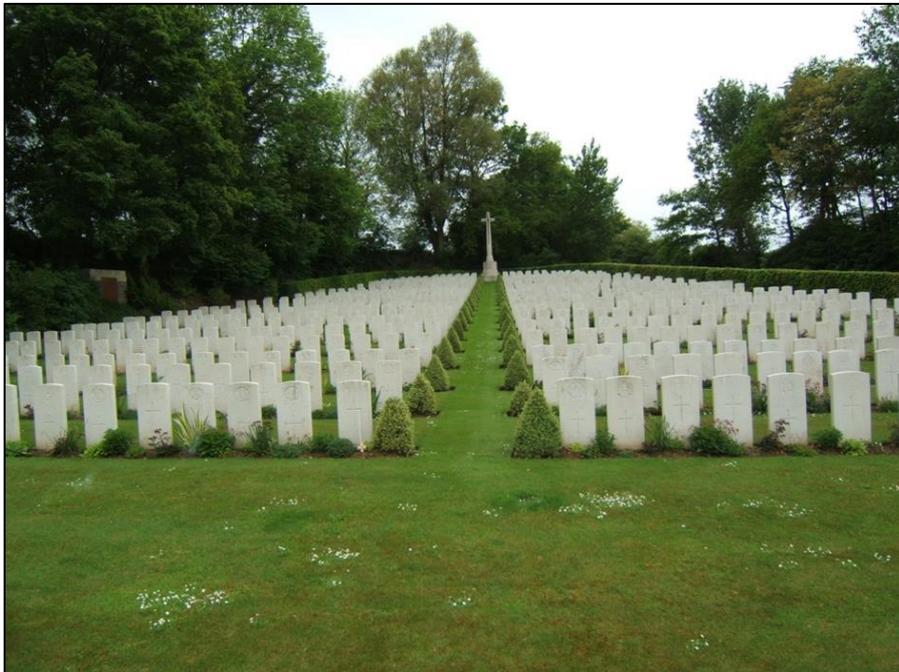
Lieutenant, 1st Cavalry Field Squadron, Royal Engineers

Killed in Action, 23 March 1918

Buried at Pargny British Cemetery, Somme, France, Grave Ref. II C 6



Lieutenant George Frederick Baylay was killed in action aged 20 on 23 March 2018. He was involved in the Battle of St. Quentin which formed part of the defence against the German Offensive in Spring 1918.



Pargny British Cemetery, Somme, France

Lieutenant George Frederick Baylay, 1st Cavalry Field Squadron, Royal Engineers, was born in Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland on 23 April 1898. He lived at Ravelin House, Portsmouth.

2eme Region Serial No. 769.

Army Form W. 3372.

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

COMMUNE: PARGNY.
DEPT: SOMME.COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.

REPORT No. 1

SCHEDULE No. 16.C.

(This report cancels all previous reports).

PLACE OF BURIAL

PARGNY BRITISH CEMETERY.

Map Reference 1/40000. 66D.C.16.c.2.2.

The following are buried here:— Graves read from left to right.

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd.	Plot, Row and Grave
						<u>Plot 2.</u> <u>Row C.</u> <u>Grave No.</u>
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER.		E.	1. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER.		E.	2. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER. Cpl.		E.	3. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER.		E.	4. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER.		E.	5. ✓
R.E.		✓ BAYLEY.	Lieut. G.F.	23-3-18.	E.	6. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER.		E.	7. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER.		E.	8. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER. 1/CPL.		E.	9. ✓
Rif. Bde.	MOORE	UNKNOWN	BRITISH OFFICER.	2nd. Lieut. E.F.C.	E. 24.3.18	10. ✓
Rif. Bde.		UNKNOWN	BRITISH SOLDIER.		E.	11. ✓
2/Rif. Bde.		S/33162. BIRCH.	Rfn. H.	23-3-18.	E.	12. ✓

(6 31 5) W3160—P2723 109,000 9/19 HWV(P1024) Forms/W3372/3

D 1021
A.C.3.2.21

Grave Registration Report Form for George Frederick Baylay

In the 1911 census he was listed as a scholar at a school in East Blatchington, near Newhaven, East Sussex. He later attended Haileybury School (also attended by alumni including Clement Attlee and Field Marshall Allenby). He attended Sandhurst in 1915 and was commissioned into the Royal Engineers.

During the German offensive of 21/22 March the Royal Engineers were tasked with blowing up the bridges spanning the St. Quentin canal. George Frederick Baylay could have been involved in this.

He was the son of Colonel Frederick Bayley (b.1865), Royal Engineers (see more below), and his wife Marion Kirkpatrick (b.1871) Baylay. The family lived at Brompton Barracks in Gillingham, Kent in 1901, when he was aged two.

His sister Jean Hamilton Baylay was born in 1900. She married Philip J. Story in East Grinstead Registration District in 1928, which may help us understand his links to the area.

He is not listed on either of the war memorials in Coleman's Hatch and Hartfield. There is a brass plaque on the south wall of Holy Trinity Church, Coleman's Hatch in his memory, though it has not been possible to ascertain any link to Coleman's Hatch. His father rose to the rank of Brigadier General, which was his rank when he applied for his so's medals in September 1920.



Captain Frederick Baylay of the Royal Engineers (father of George Frederick Baylay).

Photograph taken c. 1893

George Frederick Baylay's father, Frederick Baylay, was born on 6 February 1865 in Dublin, Ireland the son of Frederick George Baylay of the Royal Artillery and Ann Louisa Murray.

He was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers on 5 July 1884. At the time of his appointment he was assigned to the Submarine Mining Service in Rangoon. He was appointed Captain on 1 April 1893 and was an Instructor, School of Military Engineering – 30 January 1901.

He was appointed Major - 13 August 1901 and Lieutenant Colonel - 9 June 1909. He was appointed Colonel (local rank) while commanding the North Eastern Coastal Defences - 22 June 1912 and full Colonel in June 1914. He went on to half pay on 25 March 1915 based at Headquarters. He retired on 28 June 1919 and was appointed Honorary Brigadier General - 28 June 1919. Baylay was appointed to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for war services on 3 June 1919.

Frederick Baylay was married to Marion Kirkpatrick. They had at least two children, George Frederick Baylay and Jean Hamilton Baylay.

Baylay was also a member of the Kipling Society and an Associate of the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

Source on Frederick Baylay: <http://soldiersofthequeen.com>

THE LONDON GAZETTE, 18 FEBRUARY, 1916.

CORPS OF ROYAL ENGINEERS.

Edward Alan Barclay-Smith.
Ralfe Davidson Davies.
Donald Fraser Brown.
Harty Naismith Obbard.
James Eric Parkes.
Henry William Jones.
Thomas Frederick Marter Gayford.
William Henry Hutton Aitken.
William Langford de Courcy-Baldwin.
Joseph Patrick Coghlan.
Emil Gwyn William Pearse.
Thomas Abro Nubar Bent.
George William Sutton.
Thomas Cottrell Wilson Bowen.
Charles Tillard Bendyshe Crowther.
Foss Hunter Brown.
Louis Belloc.
Charles Fairbridge Augustin Bird.
John Henry Rondel Le Sueur.
Hugh Wilbert Blakeney.
Harold Neagris Sylvester.
Victor John Eric Westropp.
Ernest Rawdon Green.
Ronald George Lamb.
Clement Topham.
Michael Godfrey Tate.
Geoffrey Stuart Blake.
James Robert Travers Aldous.
Charles William Stephen Littlewood.
Alexander Maurice Cameron.
Leslie Innes Jacques.
Cyril Collier Duchesne.
John Francis Dawes Steedman.
George Frederick Baylay.
Kenneth Nugent Simpson

*George Frederick Baylay's commission into the Corps of Royal Engineers
as recorded in the London Gazette.*

Source: London Gazette, supplements August 1914 - January 1920

2nd Lieutenants—continued.

NAME.	DATE OF BIRTH.	2ND LIEUTENANT.	NAME.	DATE OF BIRTH.	2ND LIEUTENANT.
Baylay, George Frederick...	23 Apr 98	R. Eng. 19 Feb 16			
Hammond Robert Geoffrey	28 July 98	R. Art			

George Frederick Baylay's promotion to 2nd Lieutenant on 19-02-1916 as recorded in the Quarterly Army List for 31 Mar 1916, Pt 2, Q2, 1916.

Source: British Army, Army Lists 1839-1946, 1916

Lieutenants—continued.

NAME.	DATE OF BIRTH.	FIRST APPOINTMENT.	LIEUTENANT.	STAFF SERVICE, &C.
Sylvester, Harold Mayris...	8 Apr 98	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Westropp, Victor John Eric	24 May 97	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Green, Ernest Rowdon ...	31 July 93	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Lamb, Ronald George ...	2 Jun 95	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Topham, Clement ...	28 Dec 96	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Tate, Michael Godfrey ...	19 Sept 98	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Aldous, James Robert Travers	5 Oct 98	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
✕Cameron, Alexander Maurice, MC	30 May 98	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Jacques, Leslie Innes ...	11 Dec 97	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Duchesne, Cyril Collier ...	20 May 98	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Steedman, John Francis Dawes	30 Nov 97	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —
Baylay, George Frederick...	23 Apr 98	2nd Lt. R. Eng. 19 Feb 16	R. Eng. 19 Aug 17	— —

George Frederick Baylay's promotion to Lieutenant on 19-08-1917 as recorded in the Quarterly Army List for 31 Mar 1918, Pt 2, Q1, 1918.

Source: British Army, Army Lists 1839-1946

BAYLAY George Frederick of Ravelin House **Portsmouth** lieutenant R.E. died 23 March 1918 in France on active service Administration **London** 30 August to Frederick Baylay late colonel R.E. Effects £1078 15s. 10d.

Lt. George Frederick Baylay's entry in the National Probate Calendar

ERNEST STANLEY BOAKES

Private, 45690, 6th Company, the Machine Gun Corps

Died 26 April 1917 at Étaples hospital, Pas de Calais, France of gunshot wounds to the head sustained on 9 April 1917. He was 19.

Buried at Étaples Military Cemetery: Grave XVIII. A. 5A



Private Ernest Stanley Boakes, 45690, 6th Company, the Machine Gun Corps, was born in Hartfield in 1897. He was the son of John (b. 1851) and Hester (née Fermor, b. 1856) Boakes.

In the 1911 census he was listed as a scholar, age 13, and living at Rogers Town, Holtye, Cowden, Kent. His pre-war occupation was as an agricultural labourer.

Ernest's elder brother Horace, aged 17 was listed in 1911 as a farm labourer, and another brother, Frank, who was 15 at the time, was listed as a houseboy. Horace later worked on the railway at Groombridge and died in 1969. Frank emigrated to the USA and in 1919 enlisted in the US Army. He was posted to Germany in 1919. By 1921 he was back in the US, living in Newport, Rhode Island. Frank died in the USA in 1977 in New Jersey aged 82.

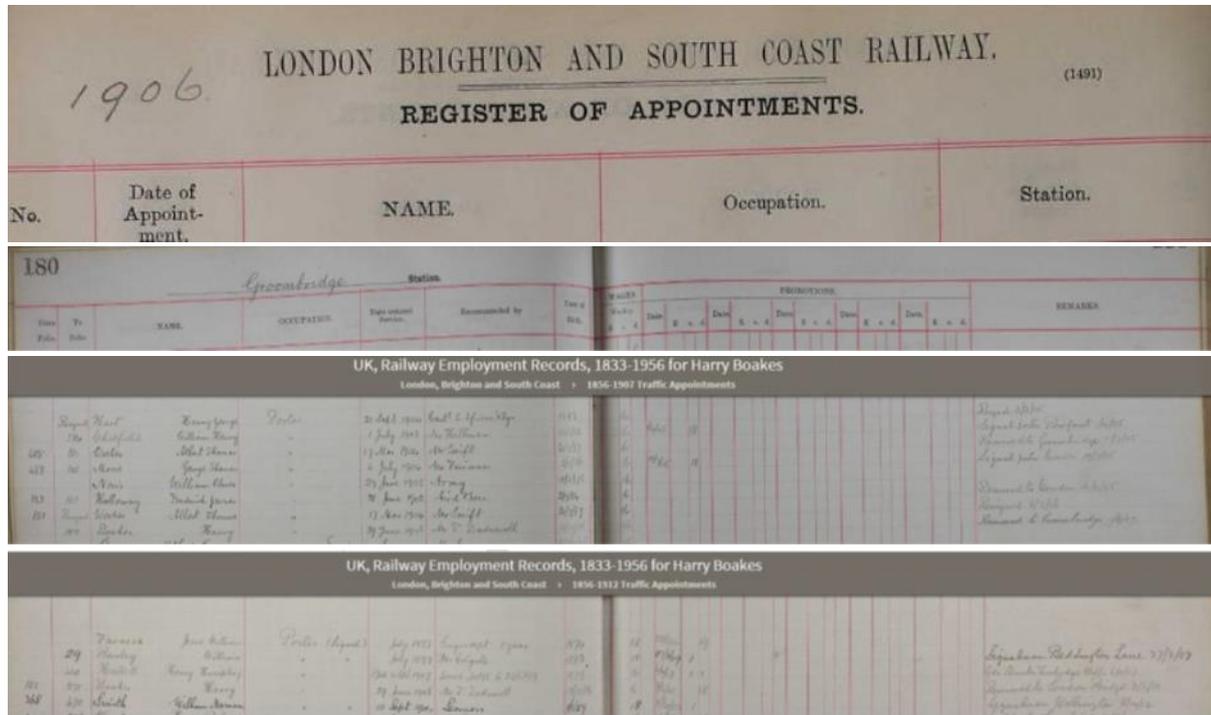
Unfortunately, their brothers Harry and William died in December 1915. Harry was 28 and John was 24. Harry was born on 18 December 1886. In 1906 he was working on the railways at London Bridge. John was christened William George and was a baker in 1911 and lived with Albert and Alice Crittenden in Hartfield. Despite reviewing the East Grinstead Observer and other sources from late 1915 and early 1916 we could not find any records around the cause of death.

Their father, John Boakes, died in May 1924 and their mother, Hester, in 1929. They were both aged 73.

Ernest enlisted on 10 May 1916 at Chichester, originally in the East Surrey Regiment. He died aged 19 on 26 April 1917 at Étaples hospital, Pas de Calais, France of gunshot wounds to his head

sustained on 9 April 1917. He is buried at Étaples Military Cemetery: Grave XVIII. A. 5A. He is listed on the war memorials in Hartfield and on the Holtye Road.

Carol O'Driscoll



(above) The employment records of Ernest Boakes' brother, Harry, with the London, Brighton & South Coast railway company. They appear to show that he entered service with the company on 29 June 1906, but moved to Groombridge, Sussex, in June 1907 where he served as a porter earning 16 shillings a week, then moved as a porter (signal) to London Bridge on 3 June 1910, apparently earning 18 shillings a week.

ALBERT VICTOR BRAND

Private, G/25693, 1/4th Royal Sussex Regiment,

formerly of the Royal Army Medical Corps, no. 33623

Died of Wounds at the 2nd General Hospital, Le Havre on 3 August 1918, aged 26

Buried at Ste Marie Cemetery, Le Havre, Seine Maritime, France

Division 62. III. Row O.7



Albert Victor Brand, aged about 18

Albert Victor Brand was born in June 1892, at Felbridge, Surrey, the son of John and Mary Brand and baptised on 4 September at Holy Trinity Church, Forest Row. His father had been born at Dormans (or Dormansland), Surrey, and was a gamekeeper, Mary had been born in Lingfield, Surrey.

The 1901 census records the family as John Brand, aged 42 and Mary Brand, 46, his wife, with their children George, 17, a domestic gardener; John, 15, a baker; Edmund, 14 also a domestic gardener; Ada Emma, 10; Albert Victor, 8; and Frank, aged 4, all living at Felbridge. Ellen, their eldest child, aged 19, had already left home. George and John were born in Newton Abbott, Devon; Edmund and

Ada at Salisbury, Wiltshire and Albert and Frank at Felbridge. It may be that John senior moved to different jobs as a gamekeeper through the informal connections employers with shooting estates had with each other. Felbridge is in Surrey but the censuses note it as Sussex. Felbridge is now on the outskirts of the town of East Grinstead in West Sussex.

By the 1911 census Mary, widowed after John's death aged 45 in 1905, had moved a few miles south to Forest Row, East Sussex, living at 'Underwood' in Highgate, then a separate hamlet from the main part of the village. Mary is the head of the household; with her are Ada, now 21, Albert, aged 18, working as domestic gardener and Frank, 14, a 'house boy'. Also living in this seven-roomed house is Mary's stepfather James Cook, aged 75, a cowman on a farm. The older children had presumably set up house on their own.

As a 'domestic gardener' Albert would most likely have worked for various local middle-class families, people who had a garden with flowers, lawns, some vegetables, soft fruit and perhaps a couple of fruit trees. Depending on size and inclination such families employed a gardener or a man and boy for two or three days each week. Gardening for middle-class men and women was considered suitable exercise, a worthwhile interest and many publications were targeted at this lucrative market.

Domestic gardeners usually lived at home with their families and walked or cycled to work, their employers providing tools and equipment. George and Edmund, two of Albert's brothers, had also been domestic gardeners and probably provided Albert with useful contacts. These freelance workers often started as a 'gardener's boy', learning from an older, experienced man and set up on their own once they felt they had sufficient expertise. This was in contrast to an 'estate gardener' who would work on a large estate as part of a team under a head gardener and with a more formal training. Estate gardeners were usually housed by their employers.

The date of Albert's enlistment at Horsham is unclear. Mary died in 1915 so possibly he enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps, service number 33623, about that time. He was later transferred to the Royal Sussex Regiment, 1/4th Battalion service number 25693.

The 1/4th Battalion Territorial Force was originally stationed at Horsham attached to the Home Counties Division. On 24 April 1915 the battalion moved to Cambridge and was transferred to the 160th Brigade of the 53rd Division. On 16 July 1915 the battalion embarked at Devonport, arriving at Alexandria on the 28th. It took part in the Gallipoli campaign, afterwards being evacuated to Egypt due to heavy casualties, disease and poor weather conditions. In 1916 the battalion fought in Palestine at the Battle of Romani and in 1917 at the Second and Third Battles of Gaza and the capture and defence of Jerusalem. During 1918 the battalion fought at the Battle of Tel'Asur before embarking for France in May via Alexandria. As Albert's date of transfer to the battalion is unclear it is not known to what extent he took part in these campaigns.

The Royal Sussex Regiment War Diaries show that on 1 July 1918 Albert's battalion, now in France, was recorded as having 29 officers and 941 Other Ranks (O.R.). During that month the battalion was involved in close fighting in the area of the Bois de Boeuf, St Remy Blaney. On 21/22 July the battalion billeted in Pusieux. On the 23rd the battalion moved to a nearby wood and bivouacked there, the orders were to act as a reserve. It was heavily shelled. Three companies were sent to the L. N. Lancs. (Loyal North Lancashire) to support an attack. They were not needed and returned. One officer and 47 O.R.s were wounded during the shelling. Two O.R.s were wounded during 24th /25th. On 27 July the battalion was relieved by the French and marched to Bois de Boeuf, near St Remy Blaney. On 28th orders were received to proceed to a point of assembly along the railway S.W. of Bois de Montcran. Their French guide had however 'completely lost direction' by 9.30pm. The assembly point was finally reached by 2.45am on 29th. At 3am the commander Captain Weekes was killed, another captain wounded, Captain Middleton took command. On a two-platoon frontage the battalion advanced, supported by and supporting the Queen's Regiment on the left and the King's Own Scottish Borderers (K.O.S.B) on the right. The advance was halted by enemy machine guns firing from the wood. It was impossible, owing to lack of communications, to obtain artillery support and the line withdrew to a road and was reorganised. The wood was successfully rushed by bayonet and the machine-guns captured. At 7am the advance continued, was held up by more machine-gun fire. The line withdrew again, was able to obtain artillery support, retreated out of line of fire until the wood was cleared of the enemy. The battalion's line was consolidated by 8.45am and held during the day. Three officers and 42 O.R.s had been killed, 4 officers and 125 O.R.s were wounded during this action. During 30 and 31 July the infantry was not in action but enemy artillery was active. Altogether 179 O.R.s were wounded during the July fighting. Orders were received on 31st to 'occupy the objective assigned for 29th' from 4.45am on 1st August. This time there was artillery assistance. By 2 August the objective was reached with less resistance than expected and enemy machine-guns captured. The battalion bivouacked on 3 August.

At some time during this fighting Albert was wounded in the right arm by gunfire, presumably from the enemy machine-guns. He would have been evacuated behind the lines and taken to the hospital at Le Havre, dying on 3 August 1918. The letter to his next of kin is dated 6 August, sent from N.2 Infantry Record Office at Hounslow and was probably received on 7 or 8 August.

Albert's sister Ada had married Alexander Padgham in 1913 and was living at Pavilion Cottages, Highgate when she received the official letter informing her of Albert's death at the 2nd General Hospital at Le Harvre on 3 August. Mary Brand had died in 1915 so it is likely that Ada was listed as Albert's next of kin. The memorial book in Holy Trinity Church, Forest Row is signed by his brother Frank, also living at Pavilion Cottages, a couple of hundred yards from Underwood, where they had lived in 1911.

As customary, the family requested and received a photography of Albert's grave with its wooden cross, sent by the Director of Graves Registration and Enquiries. This was later replaced by the usual stone memorial.

Albert Victor Brand was entitled to the Victory Medal and the British War Medal.

Vivien Hill

4 November 2018

Acknowledgement

The AFRG would like to acknowledge the help of the Brand/Padgham descendants for copies of their family documents.

WILLIAM GEORGE BROWN

Private, 55569, 198th Company, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Killed in Action on 26 September 1917 near Ypres, Belgium, aged 25

No known grave and is listed on the Tyne Cot Memorial



Private William George Brown, 55569, 198th Company, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry), was born in Hartfield in 1892. He lived at Fincham Farm, Cat Street, Hartfield, and in Forest Row and enlisted in Tunbridge Wells. He was killed in action on 26 September 1917 near Ypres, Belgium, aged 25. He has no known grave and is listed on the Tyne Cot Memorial.

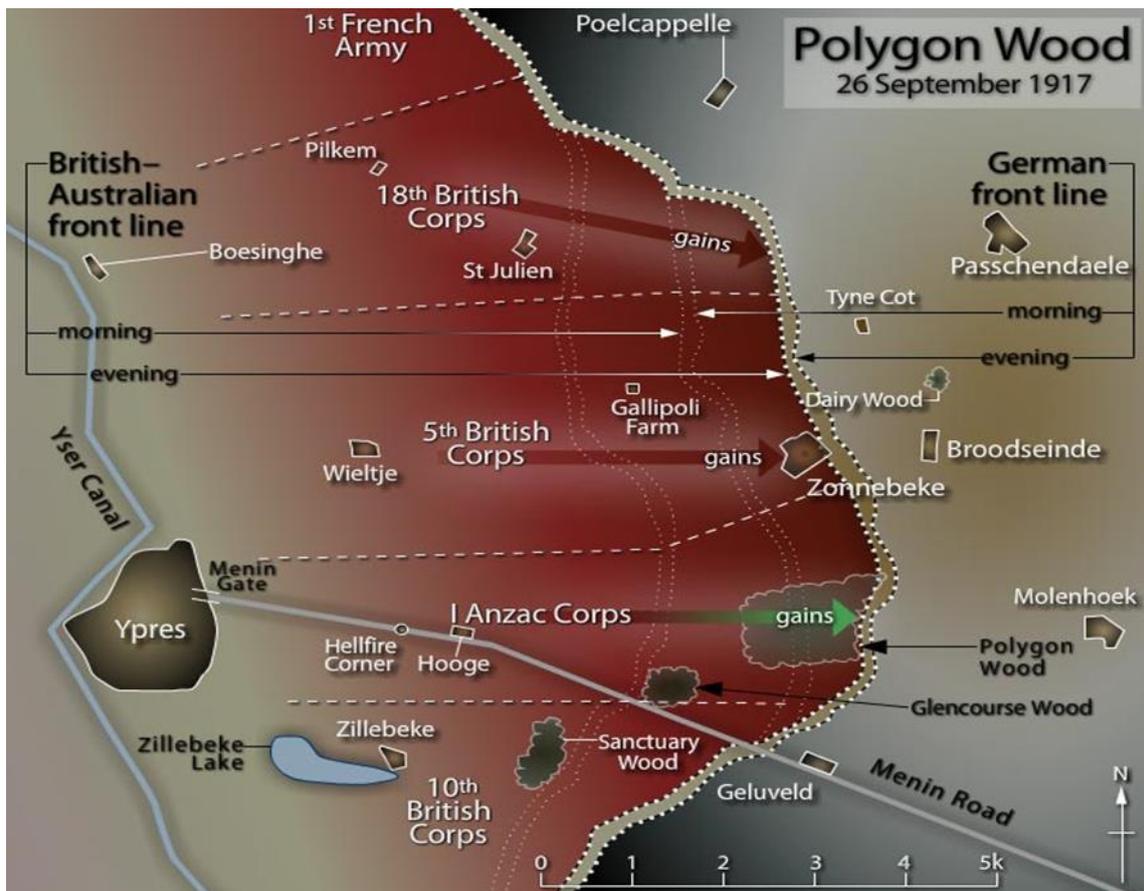
He was the son of Jane Ann Brown. He married Ethel Brown (nee Heasman) in the summer of 1914. Ethel Heasman was the sister of George James Heasman who was killed on 9 October 1917, less than a month after his brother-in-law.

William's pre-war occupation was as a builder's clerk. In 1911 he was living with his grandmother, Esther Heasman, aged 70, her son James Heasman, a builder's carter, aged 50, and his mother Jane Ann Brown, aged 41, at Fincham Cottages, Hartfield.

It is very likely that William Brown was killed in the battle for the Battle of Polygon Wood (26-27 September). The 198th Machine Gun Corps had been transferred to the 174th (2/2nd London) Brigade of the 58th London Division.

The 58th Division attacked with one brigade at 5:50 a.m on 26 September. In a thick mist some of the British troops lost direction and were then held up by fire from Dom Trench and a pillbox; after these were captured the advance resumed until stopped at Dear House, Aviatik Farm and Vale House, about 400 yards (370 metres) short of the final objective. A German counter-attack pushed the British back from Aviatik Farm and Dale House and an attempt to regain them failed. Another

attack at 6:11 p.m. reached Nile on the divisional boundary with the 3rd Division. German troops trickling forward to Riverside and Otto pillboxes were stopped by artillery and machine-gun fire. (Source: McCarthy, C. (1995). *The Third Ypres: Passchendaele, the Day-By-Day Account*. London: Arms & Armour Press)



Source: Matt McLachlan Battlefield Tours

Listed on the War Memorial in Hartfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

WILFRED HERBERT CECIL BROWNLOW

Captain, 2nd Battalion, Attd 12th/13th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers

Killed in Action at the Massif de St Thierry during the Battle of the Aisne

on 28 May 1918, aged 28

Buried in Hermonville Military Cemetery, Departement de la Marne,

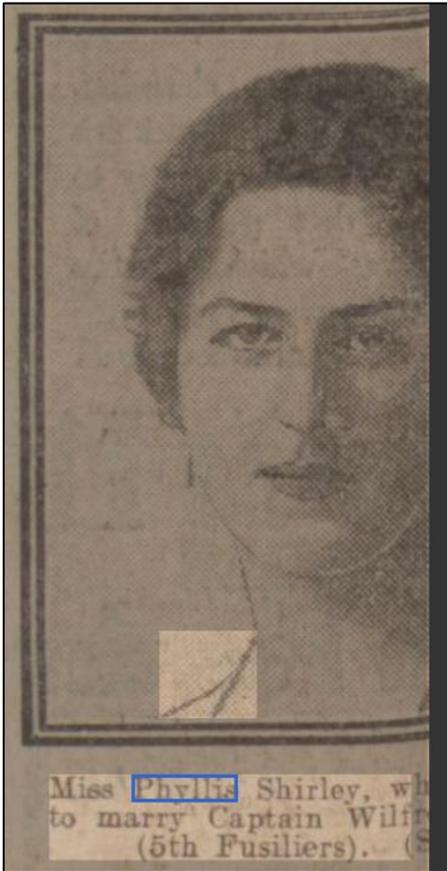
Champagne-Ardenne, France



Wilfred Herbert Cecil Brownlow was born on 25 October 1889 at Murree in India, part of the Rawalpindi District in the Punjab, now part of Pakistan. He was the only son of Colonel Cecil Barry Brownlow (1864-1935) and Minnie Blanche Brownlow of The Old Well Cottage, Forest Row. His father, a career soldier in the Indian Army and an expert on Afghanistan, had been promoted from Lieutenant to Captain on 23 November 1886. Wilfred probably never lived in Forest Row, but his parents had settled there on Cecil's retirement from the army.

Wilfred Brownlow was educated at Summerfield School for Gentlemen's Sons in Oxfordshire. He joined the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers at Dover in 1909, where he was awarded the British Humane Society Medal for saving a life at Dover.

Wilfred married Phyllis Shirley in June 1916 at St Peter's Church, Eaton Square, in Belgravia, London SW1. According to the 1911 census, she lived in Hanover Square, Mayfair, London W1, aged 18, with her widowed mother. They had seven servants, including a cook and a butler. Her father, who died in 1904, had been a landowner in Warwickshire. Emily died in 1982, aged 89.



MARRIAGE OF CAPTAIN W. BROWNLOW AND MISS SHIRLEY.—The marriage took place on Saturday last week at St. Peter's, Eaton-square, London, of **Captain Wilfred Brownlow**, 5th Fusiliers, only son of Colonel and Mrs. Cecil **Brownlow** and Miss Phyllis Shirley, elder daughter of the late S. E. Shirley, of Ettington Park, Warwickshire, and Mrs. Shirley. The bride, who was given away by her brother, **Captain Evelyn Shirley**, Warwickshire Yeomanry, wore a gown of white satin with an underskirt of Carrickmacross lace, a long bridal veil of old Brussels lace (the gift of her godmother, Lady Augusta Palmer), and a wreath of myrtle leaves. Miss Frances Shirley (sister of the bride), Lady Phillida Shirley, and the Misses Denham-Cookes and Kathleen Cardew (cousins of the bride) were the bridesmaids, and wore dresses of pale pink ninon trimmed with cream lace, and pink tulle hats trimmed with red roses. **Captain H. R. Barkworth**, 5th Fusiliers, was best man. Among the invited guests were:—Earl and Countess Ferrers and Lady Joan Shirley, Lady Mary and Lady Laeta Shirley, the Hon. Ralph Shirley, Lord and Lady Sydenham, Lord Lurgan, Lady Stewart of Grantully, General and Lady Kathleen Brownlow, Sir John and Lady Rolleston, and Colonel the Hon. J. R. **Brownlow**.

(above left) Announcement of the engagement of Phyllis Shirley to Captain Wilfred Brownlow, Daily Record, 15 August 1915; (above right) A report of their wedding in the Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser, 10 June 1916

After returning from India with his regiment Wilfred had served on the Western Front from December 1914 onwards. He was badly wounded at Ypres in February 1915 and only returned to the front on 15 May 1918. He was killed organising a rearguard action on 28 May 1918 at the Massif de St Thierry. A fellow officer reported that “he was hit by a piece of shell and knew at once he was dying and said ‘Give my people my love and tell them I died with a smile on my face’ ”.

The Rector of St. Mary's Church, Stoke D'Abernon, Surrey, was Wilfred Brownlow's uncle, and he made sure his injuries and death were recorded locally. This item reporting the wounding of Wilfred at Ypres is from the Surrey Advertiser of 27 February 1915.

STOKE D'ABERNON.

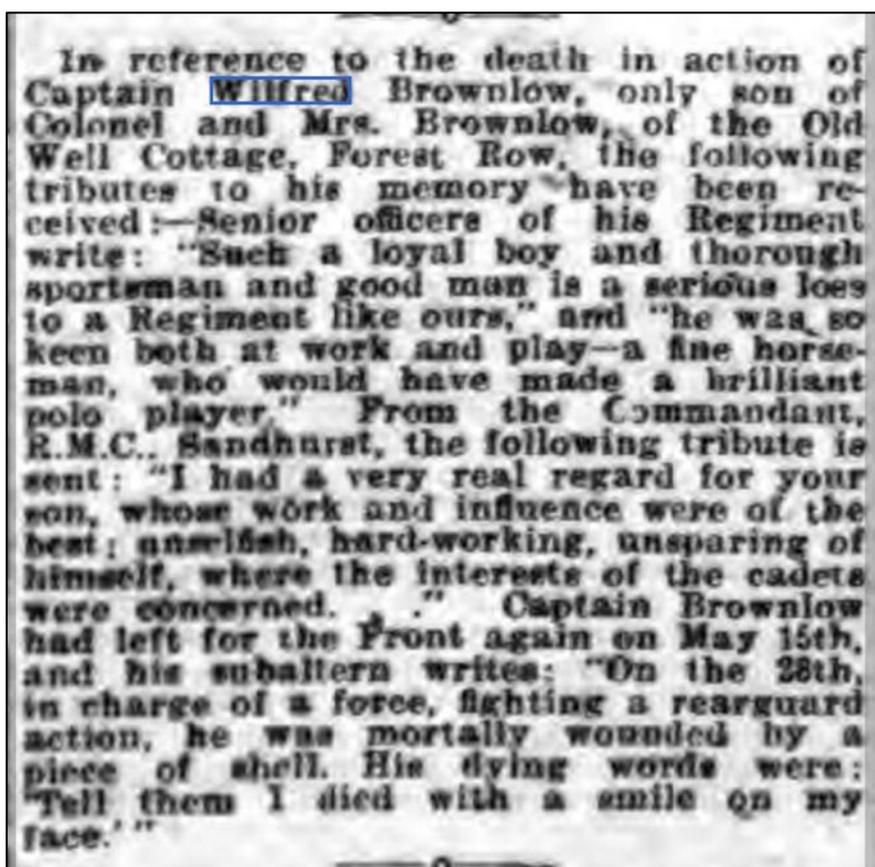
RECTOR'S NEPHEW WOUNDED.

News was received on Wednesday that Lieut. Wilfred **Brownlow**, Northumberland Fusiliers, a nephew of the Rev. A. S. P. Blackburne (Rector of **Stoke D'Abernon**) had been dangerously wounded in the head whilst fighting in the trenches, and is now lying in a hospital at Boulogne. Only last week in a letter home he said: “I am as fit as blazes, and the Tommies are simply splendid.” Lieut. Brownlow some time ago received the Royal Humane Society's medal for saving life at Dover.

In July 1918 the parish magazine of St. Mary's recorded the death of Captain Wilfrid Brownlow as follows:

Captain Wilfrid Brownlow, Northumberland Fusiliers, only son of Colonel and Mrs Cecil Brownlow. He joined the 5th Fusiliers in 1909 at Dover, where he gained the Royal Humane Society vellum certificate. He returned from India in December 1914, with his regiment. He was dangerously wounded in an attack to retake a trench at Ypres on February 21st, 1915. He joined the RMC [Royal Military College], Sandhurst, as Staff Captain, in August, 1916. He left for the front on May 15th last, and joined the Northumberland Fusiliers on the 25th. His Major writes: 'on 28th May I was in command of a composite force fighting a defensive action. He was mortally wounded by a piece of shell during the action. He was perfectly wonderful amongst the men' – From the 'Times' Obituary

The following report was published in the *Kent and Sussex Courier* on 21 June 1918:



In reference to the death in action of Captain **Wilfred** Brownlow, only son of Colonel and Mrs. Brownlow, of the Old Well Cottage, Forest Row, the following tributes to his memory have been received:—Senior officers of his Regiment write: "Such a loyal boy and thorough sportsman and good man is a serious loss to a Regiment like ours," and "he was so keen both at work and play—a fine horseman, who would have made a brilliant polo player." From the Commandant, R.M.C., Sandhurst, the following tribute is sent: "I had a very real regard for your son, whose work and influence were of the best; unselfish, hard-working, unsparing of himself, where the interests of the cadets were concerned." Captain Brownlow had left for the Front again on May 15th, and his subaltern writes: "On the 28th, in charge of a force, fighting a rearguard action, he was mortally wounded by a piece of shell. His dying words were: 'Tell them I died with a smile on my face.'"

Wilfred was buried in Hermonville Military Cemetery, Marne, about 6½ miles north-west of Reims. This originally contained, on the west side, 407 French and 99 German graves, but these were later

removed. The British graves are those of soldiers from the United Kingdom, mainly of the 21st Division, who fell in May and June 1918, and were reburied here after the Armistice.



The 12th (Service) Battalion 2nd Northumberland Fusiliers was formed at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in September 1914 as part of K3 and came under orders of 62nd Brigade, 21st Division. It landed in France in September 1915. On 10 August 1917 it amalgamated with the 13th Battalion, becoming 12th/13th Battalion.

In 1918 the Battalion served in the the Battle of St. Quentin, the First Battle of Bapaume, the Battle of Messines, the Second Battle of Kemmel and the Battle of the Aisne, 1918. Captain Brownlow was killed in the Battle of the Aisne.

When Captain Brownlow died his address was given as Old Well Cottage, Forest Row – his parents' address. He left £6,506 9s 10d in his will to his father. Probate was granted on 15 October 1918.

Carol O'Driscoll

8 September 2018

BERTRAM BURFOOT

Private, 18547, 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards

Died 14 December 1917 at Le Treport, near Dieppe, France, aged 20

He is buried at Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, France: Grave VI. D. 11A



Private Bertram Burfoot, 3rd Battalion, the Coldstream Guards, was born in Tonbridge in 1897. He lived at Wren's Warren, Hartfield and enlisted in July 1916 in East Grinstead. He died of wounds in the face, back and right forearm, and subsequent gas gangrene on 14 December 1917 at Le Treport, near Dieppe, France, aged 20, and is buried at Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, France: Grave VI. D. 11A.

He was the son of Horace (b. 1870), listed as a licensed victualler in the 1901 census and Kate (née Ashby) Burfoot. Horace ran the Black Horse pub in Wilmington, Sussex. By 1911 the family had moved to Nutley and his father was listed as a gardener.

Bertram was the second of five sons. His youngest brother Wilfred died on 12 February 1943 of natural causes on board the troopship HT Duchess of Richmond en route to the Far East. He was aged about 36 and was buried at sea. He is listed on the Singapore Memorial: Column 427.

In November-December 1917 the 3rd Battalion, the Coldstream Guards fought in the Battle of Cambrai, at Gonnelleu, Gouzaucourt and Gauche Wood, losing 125 officers and 2,966 men. At the end of November 1917 the 3rd Battalion was defending the Bapaume Cambrai road.

During the First World War, Le Treport was an important hospital centre and by July 1916, the town contained three general hospitals (the 3rd, 16th and 2nd Canadian), No.3 Convalescent Depot and Lady Murray's B.R.C.S. Hospital. As the original military cemetery at Le Treport filled, it became necessary to use the new site at Mont Huon.

Listed on the war memorials in Coleman's Hatch and Hartfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

ERNEST EDWARD CANNON

Private, 769490, 28th London Regiment Artists' Rifles

Died at the Military Hospital, Warley, Essex, 4 November 1918

Buried Forest Row Cemetery, Grave 934



Grave of Ernest Edward Cannon – Forest Row Cemetery

Despite giving his place of birth as Leatherhead on the 1911 census, Ernest Edward Cannon was actually born in Penshurst, Kent, though the family moved to Leatherhead when he was very young. He was the third child of Thomas Cannon and Fanny (née Horton) who had married in Bidborough in 1887. Ernest's older siblings were twins Frederick and Rosalie, also born in Penshurst. In 1891 the family was recorded at Kingston Road, Leatherhead, and Thomas was working as foreman in a coal yard. Ten years later they were living at Market Terrace in Hastings, and Thomas was now a dairy manager, probably a step up. A daughter Dorothy had joined the family.

Ernest was obviously a bright boy, as was his brother. The *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* reported that at a Children's Exhibition in 1900, Frederick had won first prize for Maths and Ernest

third prize. Ernest also gained a first for Grasses. In 1898, he was given a prize by the Parochial School for Good Conduct and Progress. In 1902 the paper noted that, at the St Leonards Sunday School prize distribution, Ernest had not only 'gained all possible marks' but had also won a medal for unbroken and punctual attendance. He repeated his Sunday School 'full marks' score the following year. In 1904, at the St Leonard's Parochial School, Ernest shared the Standard VII medal with another boy, but the Headmaster also awarded him the prize for general intelligence. In the same year he was presented with 2/- from the Diamond Jubilee Prize Fund by the Archdeacon of Lewes for his knowledge of scripture. By 1906 he was at the Municipal School of Science and Art in Hastings, and, according to the *Observer*, still winning accolades, this time for a pass in a Physiography exam. In fact, it seems the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* was for ever printing his name.

In 1911 the family was still at Market Terrace, and Thomas was still a dairy manager. However, he has written 'at home' in the column of the census return specifying where work was carried on, so presumably he was 'living over the shop' so to speak. His family were doing well for themselves: Frederick was a jeweller and watch repairer; Rosalie was a clerk to a gasfitter and electrician; and Ernest was, at 20, already a teacher at a National School run by the Borough Council.

No record of Ernest's training has been found, but he entered the teaching profession as times were changing with regard to teacher training¹:

In 1906 King's Scholarships were abolished. From 1907 there was a 'Preliminary Examination for the Elementary School Teachers' Certificate' which was in two parts – Part I had to be passed, and only those who passed it could take Part II.

All of Part I was compulsory, in Part II, English, History and Geography were compulsory and then candidates would sit 3 or more options from 3 groups – Elementary Maths, Elementary Science and Foreign Languages.

In April 1907 Morant went much further in dismantling the existing system when he issued Regulations 'for the Preliminary Education of Elementary School Teachers'. This introduced an alternative to the traditional method of Pupil-Teacher training. From Aug 1907 selected pupils at Secondary Schools could be awarded 'Bursaries' – grants to enable them to stay an additional year at school between 16 and 18. On completing this year they could either enter training college straight away, or could serve in schools as 'Student Teachers' for up to one year and then enter college.

From Aug 1909 Board of Education would only recognise applicants who had been pupils at recognised Secondary schools for at least the 3 previous years and would only pay a grant to Bursars who passed (either during their Bursary year or within one year after) one of the exams qualifying them for entry to training college. Bursars could be accepted at training college at 17, a year earlier than pupil-teachers.

¹ https://www.history.ac.uk/history.../history.../teacher_training_-_up_to_the_1960s.do...



Dorothy Cannon

Ernest's mother died at St Leonards in 1937, but Thomas lived on until 1950. Presumably they are buried in Hastings somewhere, but his widow, who was living in Westcliff-on-Sea in Essex by the time she submitted her husband's details for the Forest Row Memorial Book, presumably chose to have him buried at Forest Row, where he had been headmaster.



Thomas and Fanny Cannon in later life

Ernest's wife Dorothy never remarried. She evidently settled in Essex, and died there in 1948. Her sister-in-law Dorothy was also living in Essex at the time, with her husband Rev. Frederick Stroud.

Pam Griffiths

RAYMOND COX

Private, 19019, 6th Middlesex Regiment

Killed in Action in Belgium, 11 August 1917.

Buried at La Laiterie Military Cemetery, Kemmel, Belgium

Plot 1, Row C, Grave 20



La Laiterie Military Cemetery

Raymond Cox was the ninth of eleven children belonging to Stephen Cox and his wife Mary Ann, née Gammon. He was born in Withyham and baptised there on 7 June 1885. Stephen was an agricultural labourer and clearly often moved to find work, as children in the family were born variously at Maresfield, Buxted, Withyham, Hever, Brasted and Hartfield. In 1891, though, the family was at Forstal Cottage, Hartfield, as it was in 1901 when Raymond was enumerated as a ‘carter’s boy on farm’.

In 1910, he married Florance [sic] May Baker, in the East Grinstead Registration District. He and his new wife were enumerated in 1911 at Prospect Cottages, Ashurstwood, and Raymond was now recorded as an agricultural worker. A short-lived son, also named Raymond, was born in 1911.

At a time unknown, according to *Soldiers who died in the Great War*, Raymond enlisted at Chichester in the 16th Battalion of the Duke of Cambridge’s own (Middlesex) Regiment. This seems slightly unlikely as this was subtitled Public Schools but is corroborated by the Army Register of Soldiers’ Effects. The 16th Battalion was formed in London in 1914; in November 1915 it landed at

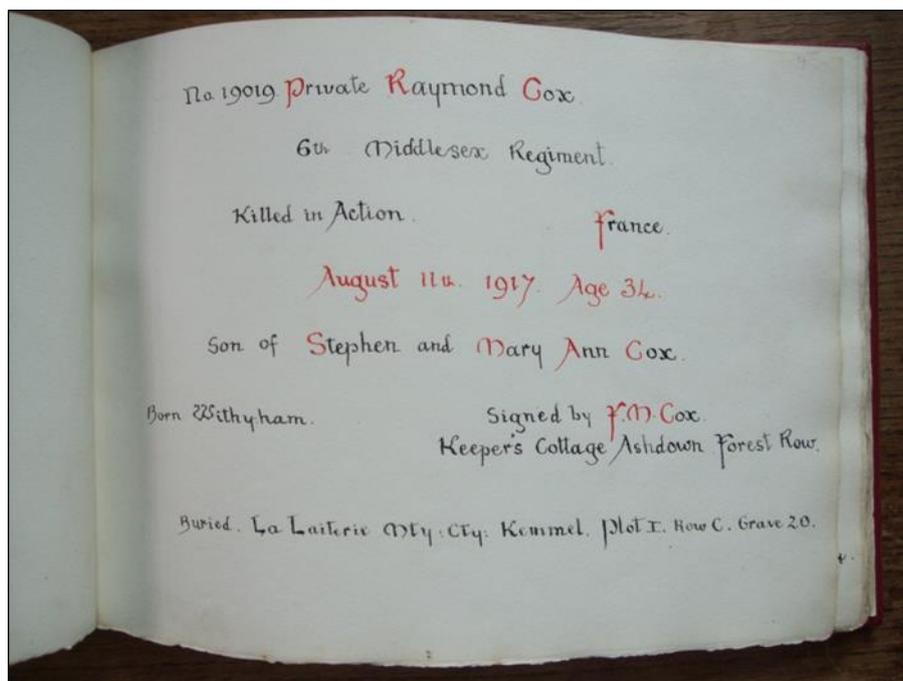
Boulogne, and presumably stayed on the Western Front until it was disbanded at Poperinghe in 1918.

The regiment was in Flanders in August 1917 and the regimental diary records the events at the time of Raymond's death. On 10-11 August, the 16th Battalion found itself on the front line, between the French on the left and the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers on the right, near Steenbeek. On 11-12 August:

...at 4.20 a.m. under a pocket barrage attack[ed] PASSERELLE FARM...Two machine guns and one howitzer captured... Total casualties for tour: Other ranks – 30 killed, 83 wounded.

Several officers were also killed.

Although the Forest Row Memorial Book (pictured below) suggests that he was killed in France, the Army Register of Soldiers' Effects places the event in Belgium. His widow Florence was authorised to receive his effects of £2 8s 3d on 28 November 1917, and received a further war gratuity payment of £3 on 21 October 1919. By this time she may well have been living at an address recorded in the book as Keeper's Cottage Ashdown Forest Row.



It seems likely that Florence remarried in 1922 in East Grinstead, and became Mrs John S Pankhurst, although there were no further children. Her death was registered at Cuckfield in 1968.

Pam Griffiths

EDWARD DIVALL

Private, 46126, 7th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers, 63rd Royal Naval Division

Died 29 April 1917 near Arras, France, aged 41

No known grave. Listed on the Arras Memorial, Bay 3



The Arras Memorial

Edward Divall was born in Hartfield in 1876, the son of Thomas and Hannah Divall (née Davies), of Hurstland Cottages, Hartfield. In 1881 he was living at Chuck Hatch with his parents and brother. His father was listed as a 'road man'. His grandfather was a brickmaker. By 1891 he had moved to Hartfield with his family, and he and his father were listed as general labourers. He had two sisters and two brothers. In the 1901 census he was recorded as a boarder, aged 24, in Ridgewood, Uckfield, Sussex, where his occupation is given as brickmaker (Ridgewood was the centre of brickmaking in Uckfield).

He was married to Ellen Divall (née Mitchell, b.1880), of 37, New Road, Ridgewood, and they had a daughter Sophia Grace (b.1906). Edward's pre-war occupation was as a file presser at the Sussex Pottery, Brick and Tile Works, Uckfield.

The Royal Naval Division

Originating in the Royal Navy, and manned by sailors and marines, the Royal Naval Division was incorporated into the Army in 1916. Illustrious figures served in it, such as the poet Rupert Brooke, Bernard Freyberg (the future governor-general of New Zealand) and the author and later

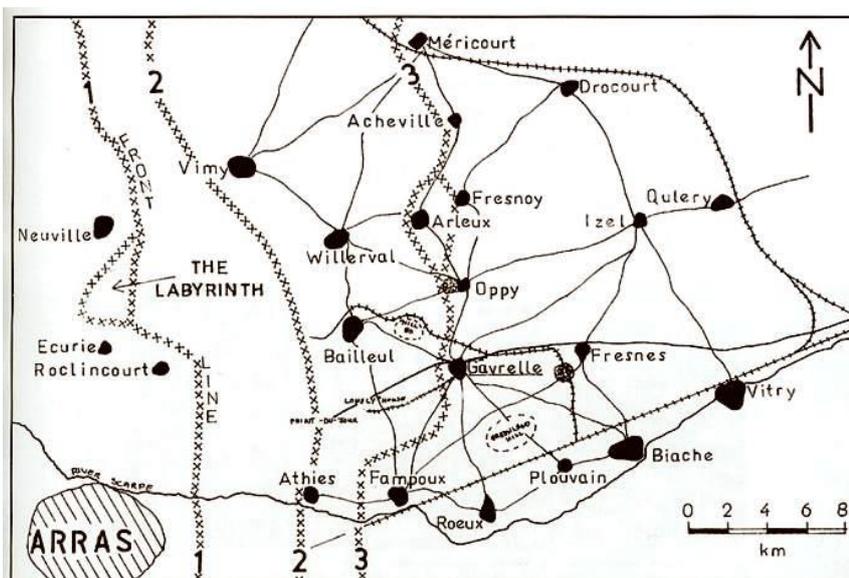


parliamentarian Alan Herbert, but also Edwin Dyett, later executed for cowardice. At the declaration of the war on 4 August 1914, there was a surplus of some 20-30,000 men of the reserves of the Royal Navy who would not find jobs on any ship of war. It was recognised that this was sufficient to form two naval brigades and a brigade of marines for operations on land as, at the end of the Division's involvement in the Gallipoli campaign, very few men with sea service remained. The Division was transferred from the authority of the Admiralty to the War Office on 29 April 1916 and was redesignated as the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division on 19 July 1916.

The Arras Offensive and the battle for Gavrelle

The Division moved to France, arriving at Marseilles on 12-23 May 1916, after which it remained on the Western Front for the rest of the war. There it took part in the Battle of the Ancre, a phase of the Battles of the Somme 1916 (13-18 November 1916), the Operations on the Ancre (January-March 1917), the Second Battle of the Scarpe (23-24 April 1917), a phase of the Arras offensive, and a further phase of this offensive in which the Division captured Gavrelle in the Battle of Arleux (28-29 April 1917). It is likely that Edward Divall was involved in these battles.

The Arras offensive of 9 April-16 June 1917 became known primarily for the conquest of Vimy Ridge by the Canadians, who placed their national memorial there. The British launched their offensive on 9 April 1917. The Third Army, led by General Edmund Allenby, was under orders to proceed to the north and south of the river Scarpe. The 4th British and 9th Scottish Divisions attack to the north of



the river. The first day went well: the Germans were surprised and the aims were achieved. Making some three miles of progress in one day was unheard of since the battle of the Somme. The front moved north of the Scarpe to beyond the line between Athies and Vimy (see map, line 2), and even the village of Fampoux was reached. Progress after that was appreciably more difficult

on account of German action. In mid-April an attack on the village of Roeux, situated on the river, failed and Douglas Haig ordered a break in operations.

On 16 April, meanwhile, the French had launched their attack at the Chemin des Dames, which was a failure from day one. The French demanded however that the British continue their offensive. And thus, fighting carried on. The Royal Naval Division was ordered to take Gavrelle and breach the third German defensive line. The attack on Gavrelle commenced on 23 April and was carried out by the 189th and 190th brigades. At 4.45am Nelson and Drake battalions went ‘*over the top*’ under cover of an artillery barrage. The first line of German trenches was quickly taken, and an hour later the attack was ceased at the edge of the village. The artillery barrage was relocated across the village, which was reduced to rubble. Other battalions from the brigade were moved forward. House-to-house fighting led to the taking of Gavrelle, at the cost of 1,500 casualties.

On the next day the Germans launched a counter-offensive to re-take Gavrelle, starting with an intense bombardment. This was beaten off, and on 26 April, the attacking battalions were relieved. In the *Official History of the Great War* the following is printed with regard to the fighting at Gavrelle between 23rd and 25th April:

‘Full justice has not been done to the achievement of the 63rd Division, because the details of the street fighting in which it showed skill and determination are too intricate for description. The division had taken 479 prisoners and in defeating the counterattacks had obviously inflicted heavy loss upon the enemy.’



*Artist's impression of the fight for the windmill at Gavrelle
(War Illustrated, 17 July 1917)*

The relief troops had to continue the British attack towards the windmill, a reinforced German position north-east of the village. This task was allocated to the marines and the Anson battalion of the 188th Brigade, who had not been deployed on 23 April. The attack started at 4.25am. The second battalion of marines succeeded in taking the windmill, and held it as an enclave in German-held territory. That was the only British gain, because after a day of bloody fighting, the situation

was basically unchanged from the start. That did not change until the troops of 31st Division relieved them in the night of 30 April.

The Royal Naval Division suffered 3,000 casualties in the fighting at Gavrelle. In particular, the losses of the Royal Marines Light Infantry were severe, with 850 casualties and many dead, including the commanding officer of the first battalion of marines, lieutenant-colonel Cartwright.

Private Edward Divall died on 29 April 1917 near Arras, aged 41. He has no known grave and is listed on the Arras Memorial, Bay 3. He is listed on the war memorials in Hartfield and Uckfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

REGINALD DIVALL

Private, SD/4882, 11th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action on 6 December 1917 near Ypres, Belgium, aged 26

He is buried in White House Cemetery, St Jean-les-Ypres



Private Reginald Divall, SD/4882, 11th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, was born in Coleman's Hatch in 1891. He was the son of Leonard (b. 1849) and Hannah Tasker (née Weeding) Divall (b. 1852). He married Sarah (née Carpenter) Divall on 12 February 1916 in the parish church at West Hoathly. Reginald's father was recorded as a farming and carting contractor in the 1911 census. His pre-war occupation was a gardener.

Reginald lived in Bishopstoke, Hampshire. He enlisted on 6 September 1915 in Tonbridge, and was listed as living in Tunbridge Wells at the time.

In December 1917 Reginald Divall was serving on the Western Front with the 11th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, based in a camp near Ypres.

He was killed in action by a bomb dropped from an enemy aircraft on 6 December 1917 near Ypres, Belgium.

On 3 December the Battalion War Diaries recorded enemy aircraft overhead and dropping bombs which caused some casualties among the Middlesex Regiment camp nearby. Weather conditions

were cold and snowing and the soldiers were billeted in tents; floor boards were put down on the 5th.

On 6 December 3 men were recorded as being wounded in a working party and later enemy aircraft bombed the camp including the latrines and one of 'B' Company's tents. This resulted in 6 killed and 10 wounded. One of the dead is likely to be Reginald Divall.

Reginald Divall was 26 when he died. He was buried in White House Cemetery, St Jean-les-Ypres : Special Memorial 10. He is listed on the war memorials in Coleman's Hatch, Hartfield and Bishopstoke.

Carol O'Driscoll

THOMAS JAMES DRAPER

Bombardier, 95855, 109th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

Died of Wounds at Ypres, West Vlaanderen, Belgium, on 29 September 1918, aged 27

Buried in Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, Grave V. B. 1.



Regimental Badge of the Royal Field Artillery

Thomas James Draper was born in East Grinstead in 1891 and baptised there on 31 January 1892. His parents were Ambrose and Minnie Draper of East Grinstead. He married Elizabeth in mid-1912.

In the 1901 census he is to be found at Poplar Farm in Forest Row. His father Ambrose, born in East Grinstead, was 42 and a bricklayer. His mother Minnie was 37 and born in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Also in the household were Eliza, aged 14, and Horace, aged 12, both born in East Grinstead, and Rose, aged 8, May, aged 6, Minnie, aged 3 and 10-week-old John, born in Forest Row.

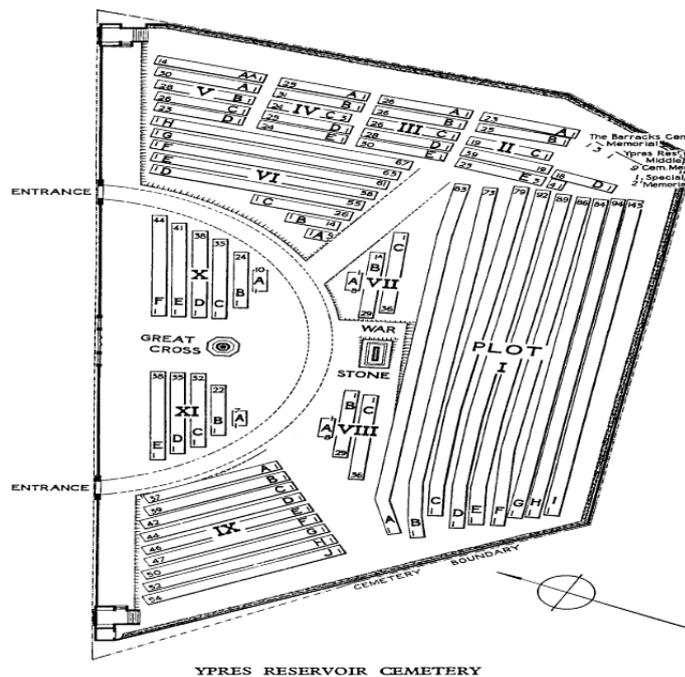
According to the 1911 census, the household was now at 9, Highfields, Forest Row. Ambrose and Minnie had been married for 24 years and had had seven children. Thomas, aged 20, was described as a painter working for a builder. Also recorded in the household were May, Minnie and John.

According to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Thomas was a Gunner (Acting Bombardier) serving with the 1st/36th Division Ammunition Column, Royal Field Artillery. As an Acting Bombardier (a rank in certain artillery regiments equivalent to a Lance Corporal) he would be entitled to wear one chevron or stripe on his uniform. Thomas had also served in the Royal Horse Artillery.

(The *Royal Regiment of Artillery* consisted of three components: the *Royal Horse Artillery* were highly mobile units used in support of the Cavalry and the Royal Field Artillery; the *Royal Field Artillery* were mobile, horse drawn medium calibre guns and howitzers used close to the front line; and the *Royal Garrison Artillery* were mainly concerned with developing the technical aspects of gunnery, manning forts and fortresses, and controlling the heavy guns attached to each infantry division.)



Thomas was killed in action (died of wounds) at Ypres, West Flanders, Belgium, on Sunday 29 September 1918. He was aged 27. He is buried in Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, Grave V. B. 1. The grave inscription, chosen by his mother, reads “*Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling*”. The cemetery, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, contains some 1,579 identified WW1 casualties. Burials began there in October 1915 and it was used up to the Armistice in 1918. It was later enlarged with graves brought in from smaller battlefields and burial grounds from around the Ypres Salient.



Thomas was awarded the Victory Medal. The award of the 1914-1915 Star notes that his disembarkation date was 27 November 1915. He would automatically have been awarded the British War Medal for those killed in action.

Kevin Tillett

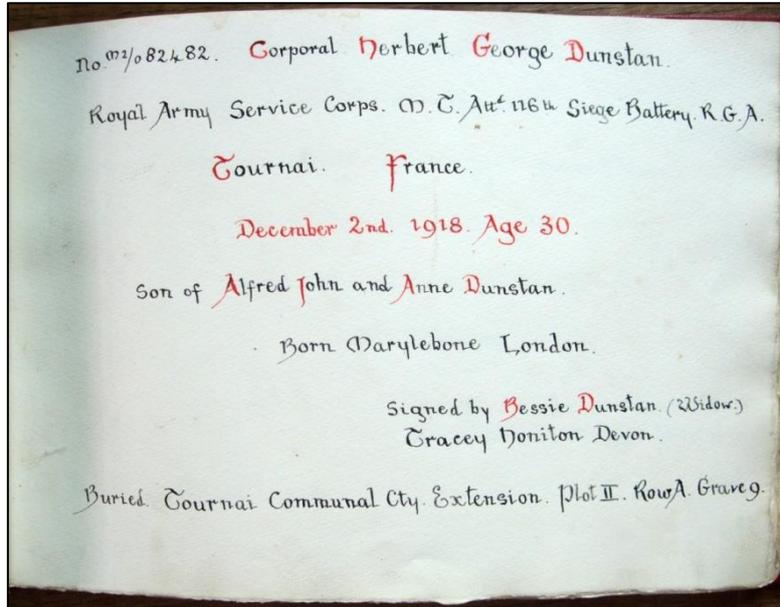
30 October 2018

HERBERT GEORGE DUNSTAN

Corporal M2/084282 Royal Army Service Corps MT Attd 116th Siege Battery RGA

Died at Tournai, France, 2 December 1918

Buried Tournai Communal Cty Extension, Plot II Row A Grave 9



Entry for Herbert George Dunstan in Forest Row Memorial Book

Herbert George Dunstan owes his place on the Forest Row memorial to his widow Bessie, but as she was from Honiton in Devon when she submitted his details, it is not immediately clear what his connection with Sussex was. He was born in St Marylebone, third son of Alfred John Dunstan, a wheelwright, and his wife Annie née Bland. Both parents were Londoners by birth, and seem to have lived there all their lives. There had been six other children, but all had died before 1911, leaving just Alfred junior, Arthur and Herbert in the household in 1901.

By 1911 Herbert had probably left home as the census finds him visiting the Beadell family at the *William IV* pub in Albury in Surrey. Alternatively, he may have been on holiday, visiting friends or relatives or working in the area. He gives his occupation as motor driver mechanic. Three years later, but before war broke out, he married Bessie Hansford at Honiton in Devon. Bessie had been born in Dunkeswell in Honiton, but was in service as a cook in what was clearly a sizeable household in Tracey Honiton in 1911.

Two newspaper items suggest that his work involved a fair amount of travel. The first, in the *Brighton Gazette* on 16 March 1907, depicts him and several other men as victims of attempted fraud by criminals who made a living offering bogus posts in exchange for a payment of 10/-. The *Hampshire Chronicle and General Advertiser* dated 19 September 1909, reporting for the court in Basingstoke, shows that he lived for a time in Essex:

Herbert George Dunstan, motor driver, of Colchester ... was summoned for exceeding the speed limit at The Hatch cross-roads, where there is a danger signal, at 9 a.m. on Monday September 7th..... the car [was timed]... and [police] ascertained the speed to be between 26 and 27 miles an hour... the driver was in the service of an army officer. There was a corporal with him, and they were returning from the Salisbury manoeuvres.

There is no record of when Herbert enlisted, but there were no children from the marriage, and Bessie received a war gratuity of £21, which suggests he joined up in September 1914. As the extract above shows, he presumably already had experience of working with army personnel. His effects, which included the gratuity, amounted to £28 12s. 10d. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission record places him in the XIX Corps Heavy Artillery at the end of his life, and gives Bessie's address as Wood Cottage Combe Raleigh, Devon. It also lists an inscription on his grave:

Until the day breaks.

Bessie had given Tournai, France as Herbert's place of death, but Tournai is actually in Hainaut in Belgium, though close to the border. He had survived four years of war and the cessation of hostilities only to die, aged 30, of pneumonia three weeks after the armistice was signed.



Badge of the Royal Army Service Corps

The Royal Army Service Corps, in which Dunstan served, was responsible for supply and transport. It seems probably that, with his driving experience, Herbert was involved in the delivery of food, fuel and hospital supplies, along with ammunition, from railhead to front line. He may also have carried soldiers, tanks or bridging equipment. He would also have needed to maintain his own transport, something for which his experience as a mechanic made him ideally suited.

The 116th siege battery, to which Herbert was attached, was sent to France on 18 June 1916. A post on the Great War forum suggests that the XIX Corps Heavy Artillery was at Amiens in April 1918, and as Dunstan died at Tournai, it seems that he may well have experienced a variety of areas on the

Western Front. To date, though, no explanation has been found for his appearance on the Forest Row memorial. Maybe his wife was in service at one of the big houses there while her husband was away, and only returned to her native Devon after his death.

Pam Griffiths

VICTOR FREDERICK FARLEY

Shoeing Smith, 11366, 9th Lancers

Killed in Action, 21 August 1918, at Ablainzeville, Bapaume, France, aged 21

Buried at Plot 11, Row F, Grave 1 in the Douchy Les Alette British Cemetery

Victor Frederick Farley was born in 1897 at Shipley near Horsham. His parents were Peter (1871-1941) and Edith (née Divall) Farley (1862-1945), who married at Uckfield in 1893.

The Book of Remembrance in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by his mother Edith, of Redfern Cottage, Forest Row.

In the 1901 census Victor, aged 3, was to be found at Elm Hall Stables near Hawkhurst, Kent. His father Peter was a 30 year old coachman/domestic born in Ashurstwood and his mother Edith, aged 36, had been born in East Grinstead. Victor had a six year old sister, Gertrude. Elm Hill stables were next door to Elm Hill house occupied by Charles Jennings, a solicitor and member of the Inner Temple.

On 2 April 1911 the census recorded Victor as a schoolboy/patient with a matron and five other patients at a convalescent home at 23, Beach Road, Southsea, Hampshire.

Victor enlisted in the army as a shoeing smith at Brighton. About one million horses were sent to war and only about 62,000 came back. Most horses were domesticated and therefore needed frequent shoeing with horse shoes to prevent injury. The horses suffered wounds and death alongside the men who rode them and looked after them.

Victor initially joined the Queens Royal West Sussex Regiment, then joined the Household Cavalry (1st Division) and later the 9th Lancers, the Queen's Regiment.



After the near collapse of the Allied armies after the German Spring Offensive in 1918 the Allied armies quickly regrouped, restored their equipment and were bolstered by America troops. General

Foch, commander in chief, decided to launch a general offensive, not focused on a single point, but a series of attacks to wear down the enemy. The Lancers, part of the Third Army, were part of an ambitious plan for combined British, Commonwealth, French and American troops to carry out a co-ordinated assault on various fronts in the region, partially aimed at freeing up railway communications. French and American troops were to attack the eastern end of the front while the British attacked the Picardy/Artois region. The British Army, with Australian and Canadian support, first attacked at Albert on 21 August. To maintain the element of surprise preparations for the attacks were kept highly secret. Only on the morning of the 21st were the men told of the battle plan.

Victor Farley died on 21st August.



Douchy Cemetery lies south of Arras on the road to Amiens, in the Pas de Calais. The village was under German occupation from October 1914 to 21 March 1917. The British Cemetery began in August 1918 and was enlarged after the Armistice by centralising the graves from several nearby battlefields. It now contains over 738 World War 1 casualties, 493 being identified.

The inscription on Victor's grave reads:

"Beloved son of Peter and Edith Farley, Forest Row."

Kevin Tillet

EDMUND MONTAGUE PRINSEP FISHER

2nd Lieutenant, 36th Divisional Ammunition Column,

Royal Field Artillery, 194301

Died London, 31 March 1918, aged 46, having been

invalided home from St. Quentin, France.

Buried at Brockenhurst churchyard, Hants



Brockenhurst Churchyard and Memorial

(Photograph by Carol O'Driscoll)

Edmund Montague Prinsep Fisher was born on 13 January 1872 to Herbert and Mary Louisa Fisher, nee Jackson, at Brompton, Middlesex.

He was one of a family of eleven children, the 1881 census shows the family at Hove, East Sussex with father Herbert William, aged 56, mother Mary Louisa, 39, Florence Henrietta, 17, Emmeline Mary Morris, 12, Adeline Maria, 10, Edmund, 9, Hervey George Stanope, 7, William Wordsworth, 6, Charles Dennis, 3 and Cordelia, aged 1. Herbert had been tutor and secretary to the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII.

The 1891 census shows the family at 19, Second Avenue, Hove. Herbert, 66, is registered as a barrister-at-law, solicitor and JP. Mary is now 49. With them on census evening are Adeline, 20, Edmund, now a 'student of architecture' aged 18, Hervey, 17, Charles, 13, Cordelia, 11, and Edwin, aged 7.

The Fisher family were related by blood or marriage to other well-known or influential families. Mary Jackson's sister, Julia Prinsep Jackson had married firstly Herbert Duckworth, their son Gerald started the publishing company. Her second marriage was to Leslie Stephen, who organised and wrote much of the Dictionary of National Biography. Leslie Stephen's first wife had been

Harriet, daughter of the author William Makepeace Thackeray. Leslie's children Vanessa (Bell) and Adeline Virginia (Virginia Woolf), Edmund's cousins, gave links to the Bloomsbury Group. The Princep family were also related to the Fishers.

Edmund's siblings, through marriage, extended his connections. Florence's second marriage in 1913, to Francis Darwin, Charles Darwin's son, gave him introductions to the Darwin and Wedgwood families. Adeline married Ralph Vaughan Williams, the composer. Edmund's brother Herbert Albert Lauren (known as Hal), president of the Board of Education, was the prime mover of the Fisher Education Act, 1916, which raised the school leaving age to fourteen among other reforms. William entered the Navy, later becoming an admiral. In May 1917 he was appointed director of the newly formed anti-submarine division.

The Thackerays were cousins to the Ritchie family, their cousins were the Freshfields of Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row. Probably through this extended cousinship Edmund met Janie Magdalene Freshfield, daughter of Douglas Freshfield and his wife Augusta, née Ritchie. Edmund and Janie were married on 6 June 1899 at Holy Trinity, Forest Row. They had seven children, John Hervey, Herbert Douglas, Roderick, Magdalene, Katherine, Thoby and Mark. The Freshfields were also related to the Kekewiches, the Darwins were related to the Hambros. Members of the Kekewich and Hambro families also owned Kidbrooke Park at some time.

By 1901 Edmund is a fully qualified architect living at 5, Swan Walk, Chelsea, living there until he volunteered for war service. His designs are described as 'domestic' but this was domesticity on a large scale. He was employed by wealthy or gentry families, designing houses that 'appear to grow out of the ground as natural parts of the surrounding scenery' ('The Times Digital Archive'; obituary). He also designed many schools and some university and office buildings. In Forest Row Edmund designed Wych Cross Place, completed in 1903, for his father-in-law and also the Jubilee Fountain placed in the centre of the village.

Edmund's brothers, William and Charles served in the Navy in WWI. Both fought in the Battle of Jutland, William as captain of a battleship. Charles, a member of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve aged 38, died during the battle. Arthur had died in March 1902 from injuries sustained during the Second Boer War.

Edmund was considered too old for active service at the beginning of the war, instead he volunteered in 1915, working as a hospital orderly helping with X-ray work at the Hôpital Temporaire d'Arc-en-Barrois at Haute-Marne, France. This was an emergency evacuation hospital for French troops organised and staffed by British and other allied volunteers.

Casualties during the war were such that a man like Edmund who was too old (at 35) to fight in 1914 was accepted for active service later on. Edmund completed training for the Royal Field Artillery by

June 1917. The RFA provided artillery support for the infantry, Edmund served during the Ypres Salient engagement and the Battle of Cambrai.

In January 1918 he developed appendicitis and was invalided home. He was treated at Lady Inchcape's Military Hospital which was affiliated to the Queen Alexandra's Military Hospital. Lady Inchcape had opened her home in Seamore Place, Mayfair, London as a hospital in 1915. Registered as 'Military, Convalescent' this small hospital took ten officers at a time. Many such small voluntary hospitals existed throughout the war.

At that time an operation to remove the appendix was very dangerous, often it was hoped that rest and careful nursing would effect a remission or cure. In Edmund's case such care did not help. He developed peritonitis and died on 31 March, Easter Day, 1918. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas, Brockenhurst, Hampshire where he and other members of the family were buried. His gravestone reads 'In memory of Edmund Montagu Prinsep FISHER, Second Lieutenant RFA, son of Herbert William FISHER, born Jan 13th 1872, died March 31st 1918'.

Edmund was entitled to the Victory Medal and the British War Medal. The memorial book in Holy Trinity Church is signed by his widow, Janie Magdalene Fisher, Wych Cross Place.

Vivien Hill

7 November 2018

GEORGE KENNETH THOMPSON FISHER

Captain, 1st/4th (Territorial) Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Died of wounds, 3 September 1917, aged 38

Buried in Gaza War Cemetery, Palestine

Grave Reference: Plot XXIV, Row A, Grave 12



Gaza War Cemetery

George Kenneth Thompson Fisher was born on 4 August 1879 in Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire. He was the eldest son of Bishop George Carnac Fisher, who was successively Bishop of Southampton and Ipswich and Hon. Canon of Norwich, and Mary Penelope Gwendoline Thompson, daughter of the late Thomas Charles Thompson, who had been an M.P. for Durham City. In the 1881 census he is enumerated at The Vicarage, Salthouse Road, Barrow, but by 1891 he is enumerated at The Granville, Ramsgate, Kent, then in 1901 at Burgh House, Burgh St. Margaret (more commonly known as Fleggburgh), Norfolk, and finally in 1911 at 108 Ebury Street, SW1. On 23 August 1914 he married Janet Katherine Mary Anson of 23, Launceston Place, Kensington, W8, at St. Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield, EC1, by special licence from his father. They had two sons.

George graduated with a B.A. from New College, Oxford, in 1902, having studied Art under G. A. Storey, R.A., Frank Brangwyn, R.A., and Arnesby Brown, R.A. He then travelled in Asia Minor and the Balkans before taking an appointment as a labour exchange clerk at the Board of Trade.

Captain Fisher was given a commission on the outbreak of the war in the 4th Norfolks. He sailed with them for Gallipoli in June 1915 and took part in the landing at Suvla Bay (8-15 August), when he was Mentioned in Despatches. He was invalided home suffering from dysentery and then held a staff appointment and subsequently a position in the Ministry of Munitions, but returned to his regiment and sailed for Egypt in March 1917. On the night of 2 September 1917 he was out on patrol and,

being somewhat in advance of the rest, was mortally wounded by a bomb thrown by a Turkish sniper. He was brought back into the lines by the patrol but died a few minutes after his return. He was buried in the cemetery four miles south of Gaza.

His Colonel wrote:

“Ever since I took over the command of the Battalion he had been one of my chief supporters... I can't tell you what a help he was to me. I cannot replace him either as an Officer or companion.”

The Chaplain wrote:

“We could ill afford to lose such a fine character. He was a great favourite and beloved by all who knew him. He was always the same, cheerful and good-humoured. I may say that I have lost a true friend.”

Sir George Barnes, K.C.B., Member of the Indian Council, wrote:

“He will be a real loss to the Board of Trade, for, starting at the very bottom, he had steadily won his way upwards by his industry and by his force of character... All the advancement he got he won for himself, and it is no easy thing to win advancement from the bottom in Government employ.”

Captain George Kenneth Thompson Fisher's links with Ashdown Forest are based on his residence at Ashdown Park, his wife's father's residence, which he inherited. Thomas Charles Thompson M.P. had acquired the estate in 1867 and had promptly knocked down the existing building and set about building a neo-Gothic Victorian manor house that still stands at the heart of Ashdown Hotel and Country Club. The Memorial Book is signed by his widow, Janet, whose address is given as Burgh House, Fleggburgh, but formerly as Ashdown Park.

Carol O'Driscoll

ARCHIBALD FREDERICK GLADMAN

Private, 60646, 8th Royal Fusiliers

Killed in Action on 3 May 1917 at Arras, France, aged 28

Buried in the Military Cemetery at Arras

Private Archibald Frederick Gladman was born in 1889 at Horsted Keynes (West Hoathly). His parents were Thomas and Lois Gladman. The Memorial Book of Remembrance in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by his widow, Fanny Gladman, who was living at 2, Rosemary Cottages, Forest Row.

In the 1891 Census he was living at Birch Grove, West Hoathly, and in 1901 was to be found at Brambletye Mill Cottages in Forest Row.

In the 1911 census, Archibald , still at the same address, was recorded as being a cowman.

In May 1917 Private Gladman was serving in the Arras region as part of the 20th Division of the 3rd Army under General Allenby. The main offensive in this part of the Battle of Arras began on 9 April with a major Canadian attack on and the taking of Vimy Ridge. This was later described as “one of the greatest single day’s achievements in the history of the Western Front.” The British offensive continued for several months until, without a major breakthrough, General Nivelle ended the offensive.

Kevin Tillet

RONALD GRANVILLE GORDON

2nd Lieutenant, 3rd Battalion/Attached 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action at Pontruet, near St. Quentin, Somme, France, 19 September 1918.

He was aged 19.

Buried at Cerisy-Gailly Military Cemetery, Somme. Plot III. J. 13



The person in the above photograph is believed to be Ronald Gordon

Ronald Granville Gordon was born in 1899 and baptised on 12 March 1899 at Acton Green, Middlesex. His parents were Granville Dempster Gordon, a solicitor, and Louisa Maud Elphinstone Gordon of 6, Bedford Road, London.

In the 1901 census he was living at 6, Bedford Road, Acton. His father Granville was 41 and a solicitor born in Cheshunt, Hertfordshire. His mother Louisa was 38 and was born in London. Ronald lived with his sister Ethel, aged 6, and brother Graham, aged 5. Also listed at 6, Bedford Road were Kate Davies, a 29-year-old cook/domestic, Maud Short, a 21-year-old parlour maid, Elizabeth Clark, a 34-year-old nurse, and Rose Clark, aged 18, also a nurse.

In 1911 Ronald was a scholar living at Shalesbrook, Forest Row. Granville was now 51, Louisa 47, Ethel 16 and a student, and Ronald 12. Graham does not appear in this census return and was recorded elsewhere. Also recorded were Violet Wright, a 25-year-old cook/domestic, Katherine

Ovenden, a 21-year-old parlour maid, Elizabeth Clark a 26-year-old house maid, and Maude Wilson, a 17-year-old kitchen maid. Granville and Ethel had been married for seventeen years and had had three children.



Ronald Gordon was killed in action on the Western Front at Pontruet, near Saint Quentin, Aisne, France on 19 September 1918. According to the battalion war diaries 2nd Lieutenant Gordon was a Platoon Commander. On 18 September 1918, at 4.30am, Battalion soldiers and Australian comrades were at their jumping off position. They were part of a much larger offensive by the 3rd and 4th Armies. The front was about 1,000 yards wide and 400 yards deep. They were supported by guns of the 2nd Trench Mortar Battery. At 5.20am a creeping barrage began 200 yards ahead of the jumping off point. The leading companies closed up under it and advanced. The first objective (the Green Line) was the German trench system 1,000 yards east of the road junction to Vadencourt. The second objective (the Red Line) was to secure the high ground and slopes overlooking Pontruet. Attacks would then be made on enemy positions around Ste. Hélène.

The left front of the attack met little resistance up to the Green Line but the right flank faced strong resistance and were unable to keep up with the creeping barrage. The left flank turned to attack down the enemy trenches with infantry weapons. Despite a “stiff fight” all resistance was overcome and the objective of taking the Green Line was achieved 30 minutes before the attack on the second objective was due to begin.

This attack took off at Zero Hour plus 190 minutes. Many of the enemy tried to escape before the advance but large numbers of them were captured. The second objective was reached on time and was quickly consolidated for defence despite the slopes being continually swept by enemy machine gun fire. These guns were kept under fire by Lewis and Vickers machine guns.

Later two platoons started forward patrols into the valleys and slopes and made good progress but then met strong resistance and an enemy counter-attack which was successfully repulsed. By late evening the Battalion and Australians were advancing to secure a foothold in the sunken road passing through Ste. Hélène. While some companies made good progress others suffered under heavy machine gun fire.

On the morning of the 19th the Battalion was relieved by the 1st Northamptonshire Regiment and were moved back to Brigade Headquarters. They had captured 300 prisoners, 9 field guns, several mortars and numerous machine guns, rifles and pieces of equipment.

2nd Lieutenant Gordon was one of ten 2nd Lieutenants to take part in the action and he and three of his fellow officers were killed in action, 2nd Lt. Gordon falling on 29 September 1918. 21 Other Ranks were killed, 123 were wounded and four were recorded as missing.

Immediately after the action letters of congratulation were received from Army, Corps and Brigade Commanders. The Divisional Commander also made a personal visit.



*Gravestone of Ronald Gordon in Cerisy-Gailly Military Cemetery.
The inscription reads: "Younger son of Granville D. Gordon".*

Following his death, Ronald Gordon was initially buried at Ste. Hélène British Cemetery, near Pontruet in the Département de la Somme. This cemetery was developed in September and October 1918 during the capture of the hamlet of Ste. Hélène during the attack on Pontruet. It contained 88 UK soldiers and one airman. His grave was later relocated when Ste. Hélène British Cemetery was consolidated, along with four other small cemeteries in the Somme region, into the larger Cerisy-Gailly Military Cemetery, which lies about 10 kilometres south-west of Albert. This latter cemetery, originally known as the New French Military Cemetery, was begun in February 1917 and was increased after the Armistice with the graves brought in from the smaller Somme battlefields already referred to. The cemetery now contains 745 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. 114 of the burials are unidentified and special memorials commemorate five

casualties buried at Maricourt and Ste. Hélène whose graves could not be found. The cemetery was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

On the 4 October 1918 Ronald's death was recorded in the *Sussex Agricultural Express* where he was recorded as the second son of Granville and Louisa Gordon. On 11 October 1918 the *Kent and Sussex Courier* added that Ronald had been educated at Lexden House, Seaford, Harrow School, and the Royal Military College. It was noted that Ronald had been killed after being on active service for only a few weeks. Ronald was 19.

Out of his surviving effects Ronald Gordon left £11.2s.4d to his mother, £11.2s.2d to his brother Graham and two amounts of £11.2s.2d to his sister Ethel.

His next of kin would also have received the standard memorial Death Plaque, a bronze commemorative plaque given to the next of kin of those who died in the war. It was inscribed "He died for freedom and honour".

The Memorial Book in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by his mother, Louisa, formerly of Shalesbrook, Forest Row, but now living at 8, Scroope Terrace, Cambridge.

Kevin Tillet

30 October 2018

HAROLD GRAYER

**Private, M/339580, Royal Army Service Corps,
648th Mechanical Transport Company.**

**Died of pneumonia in hospital in Pemba, Cabo Delgado,
Portuguese Mozambique, 9 December 1918. He was aged 28.**

He is buried in Pemba Cemetery, Mozambique, in former Portuguese East Africa.



Harold Grayer was the son of Josiah and Sarah Grayer and husband of Florence Grayer of 2, Morris's Cottages, High Street, Forest Row, Sussex. He was born in Hove, Sussex, in 1890 and had eight siblings at the time of the 1901 census. His father was listed as a coachman. His elder brothers, Reginald and Albert, were listed as grooms. Albert also served with the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC), enlisting in December 1915 aged 27. He survived the war and died in Brighton in 1967. There is no record of his brother Reginald serving in the war.

In the 1911 census Harold was listed as a domestic motor cleaner, aged 20, living at Staplefield Place, Staplefield, Sussex, about 15 miles south-west of Forest Row.

Harold married Florence Emily Lily Grisbrook in the autumn of 1915. Florence was born in Forest Row on 16 August 1891. Her father was listed as a coal car man in the village in the 1901 census and as a bricklayer in 1911. He died, aged 50, in December 1918. In 1939 Florence was living in Brighton, listed as a widow and an unpaid domestic servant. She died, aged 91, in 1982.

Florence's brother Alfred Llewellyn Grisbrook enlisted on 8 April 1916, joining the 13th Service Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment and serving with the British Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders. Alfred was killed in action on 21 December 1916. He is covered in another case study compiled by the Ashdown Forest Research Group.

Harold Grayer died in Portuguese Mozambique serving with the RASC 648th MT Company.

-3-
FINAL

PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA 1-3c
MOZAMBIQUE

Plot No.	Row	Old Grave No.	Old Grave No.	Regtl. No.	Rank.	Name & Initials.	Unit.	Date of Death.	INSCRIPTIONS ON CROSSES & REMARKS.
c 1	B.	16	66	12269	Corpl.	Green, A.K.	Mil.Leb.Corps.	27.4. 18. ✓	Ex.from INKINJIRI.
c 1	B	17	67	9	Sergt.	Nicholson, L.L.	1/2 K.A.R.	12.4. 18. ✓	" " MEDO.
c 1	B	18	68	DM2/209543	Pvte.	Capner, P.M.	A.S.C.M.T.	19.10.18. ✓	" " "
c 1	B	19	69	S4/146192	Pvte.	Checkley, L.A.	A.S.C.	25. 5.18. ✓	" " "
c 1	B	20	70	268320	Pnr.	White, W.	R.E.	29. 1.18. ✓	" " MTUGI.
c 1	B	21	71	JR/13/26366	Sergt.	Evans, H.R.	1/2 K.A.R.	24. 4.18. ✓	" " BALAMA.
c 1	B	22	72	12100	Sergt.	Danvers, J.	Mil.Leb.Corps.	4. 3.18. ✓	" " BANDARI
c 1	B	23	73	M/338338	Pvte.	Collet, P.A.	A.S.C.M.T.	14. 4.18. ✓	" " ANKUARE.
c 1	B	24	74	55161	Sergt.	Flatman, W.	G.C.R.	10. 4.18. ✓	" " CHIRIMBA HILL
c 1	B	25	75	16086	Sergt.	Kent, C.	2/S.A.Inf.Bde.	23. 5.18. ✓	" " WANAKOTE
1	C	1	26	DM2/171355	Pvte.	Hinchliff, J.	A.S.C.M.T.	7.12.18. ✓	Unit 2/S.A.Inf.Bde att.N/Rgt. Name spelt HINCHCLIFF and date 17/12/18.
1	C	2	27	MT/5907	Drvr.	Du Toit, C.J.F.	S.A.S.C.M.T.	9.12.18. ✓	Unit on Cross A.S.C.M.T.
1	C	3	28	DM2/137832	Pvte.	Clark, A.A.	R.A.S.C.M.T.	8.12.18. ✓	Regtl.No DM2/137932 and Initials H.A.
1	C	4	29	92489	A/Sgt.	Latto, J.	R.A.M.C.	6.12.18. ✓	
1	C	5	30	0/28452	Pvte.	Holloway, C.H.	R.A.O.C.	9.12.18. ✓	
1	C	6	31	DM2/154013	A/L/G.	Gaved, F.	R.A.S.C.M.T.	7.12.18. ✓	
1	C	7	32	24644	Pvte.	Ashfield, W.N.	R.A.M.C.	6.12.18. ✓	
1	C	8	33	MT/6859	Drvr.	Scrooby, M.J.	S.A.S.C.M.T. 648 Coy	5.12.18. ✓	
1	C	9	34	M/339580	Pvte.	Grayer, H.	R.A.S.C.M.T. }	9.12.18. ✓	

ENTERED 1/12/25
CHECKED 20/11/17

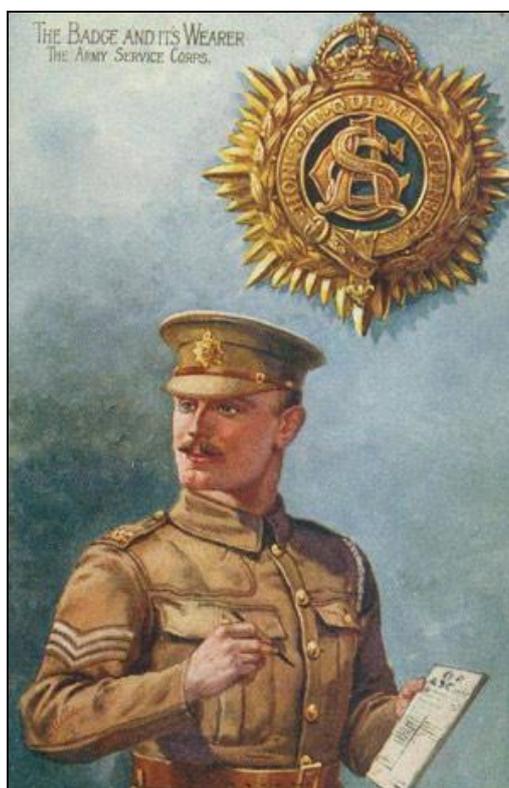
The Royal Army Service Corps was the unit responsible for keeping the British Army supplied with all provisions apart from weaponry and ammunition, which was the responsibility of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.



The RASC 648th Company was formed on 9 February 1916. Originally a water tank company [MT] in the UK, it then went to East Africa. The company's role in East Africa was as the 4th Auxiliary [MT] Company [maintenance services] Artillery Support. The campaign in East Africa can be symbolised by the contrast between the machine gun, one of the most modern weapons, and the fact that this technology was carried by African porters. The lack of sufficient railways in East Africa, or roads that could be used by motor cars, meant that the moving armies relied on the most basic form of transport: human carriers. An established system of African porter transport existed in the region prior to the war. But the enormous demand for carriers by all armies resulted in an unprecedented

number of ordinary people – men, women and even children – being persuaded or forced into porter services.

The British brought in troops from the United Kingdom, India, South Africa, Nigeria, the Gold Coast, the Gambia, the West Indies, Nyasaland as well as both North and South Rhodesia to fight alongside with those from the Belgian Congo and Portuguese Mozambique. The opposing Germans, cut off by sea and blockage, used ingenuity, endurance and ruthless exploitation of their colonial subjects to survive in the field until the final Armistice in November 1918.



In contrast to the Western Front, the distances in East Africa were enormous and troop levels were low. Although there were a number of pitched battles, operations in East Africa were dominated by that of patrols and isolated columns moving through heavy bush with the nerve-wracking and constant threat of ambush. It was not uncommon for columns to advance a hundred miles through dense bush with their bases far in the rear and dependent on civilian carriers to move their supplies on their heads. Most of this had to be accomplished while marching on foot in terrain that ranged from arid deserts to tropical jungles to formidable mountains and usually on inadequate rations and in ragged clothing. Apart from the enemy, soldiers had to contend with dangerous wild animals such as lions, elephants and hippos as well as the clouds of voracious insects that carried pestilence and made life a misery. The results were unprecedented levels of sickness, including malaria, dysentery, and pneumonia, for humans, while nearly every single pack animal perished from disease.

It was to be a greatly expanded African force that led the clearance of German East Africa in 1917 and then the pursuit through Mozambique in 1918. They were backed by the thousands of carriers

who moved their food, equipment and ammunition as well as the hundreds of thousands of others who worked for the war economy.

(Source: *The Forgotten Front: East Africa 1914-1918*, by Ross Anderson, published by The History Press

<https://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/articles/the-forgotten-front-east-africa-1914-1918/>. See also “Misremembered history: the First World War in East Africa”, published by the British Council <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/misremembered-history-first-world-war-east-africa>)



Map source: “*The First World War in Portuguese East Africa: Civilian and Military Encounters in the Indian Ocean*”, by Ana Paula Pires, published by e-journal of Portuguese History http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Portuguese_Brazilian_Studies/ejph/html/issue29/html/v15n1a06.html

Harold Grayer is listed on the Forest Row war memorial.

Carol O’Driscoll

ERNEST HARDING

Private, 315387, 16th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action on 6 November 1917 near Beersheba, Palestine, aged 42

He is buried in Beersheba War Cemetery: Grave M 18



Private Ernest Harding was born in Maresfield in 1877. He lived at 1, Marsh Green Cottages, Hartfield and enlisted in Colemans Hatch. He was killed in action on 6 November 1917 near Beersheba, Palestine, aged 42, and is buried in Beersheba War Cemetery: Grave M 18.

He married Ellen Susanna (née Brand) Harding (1882-1967) in 1902 and they had the following children: John Ernest (b. April 1903), Edith Nellie (b. March 1904) and Gladys Evelyn (b. 1910). His pre-war occupation was gardener.

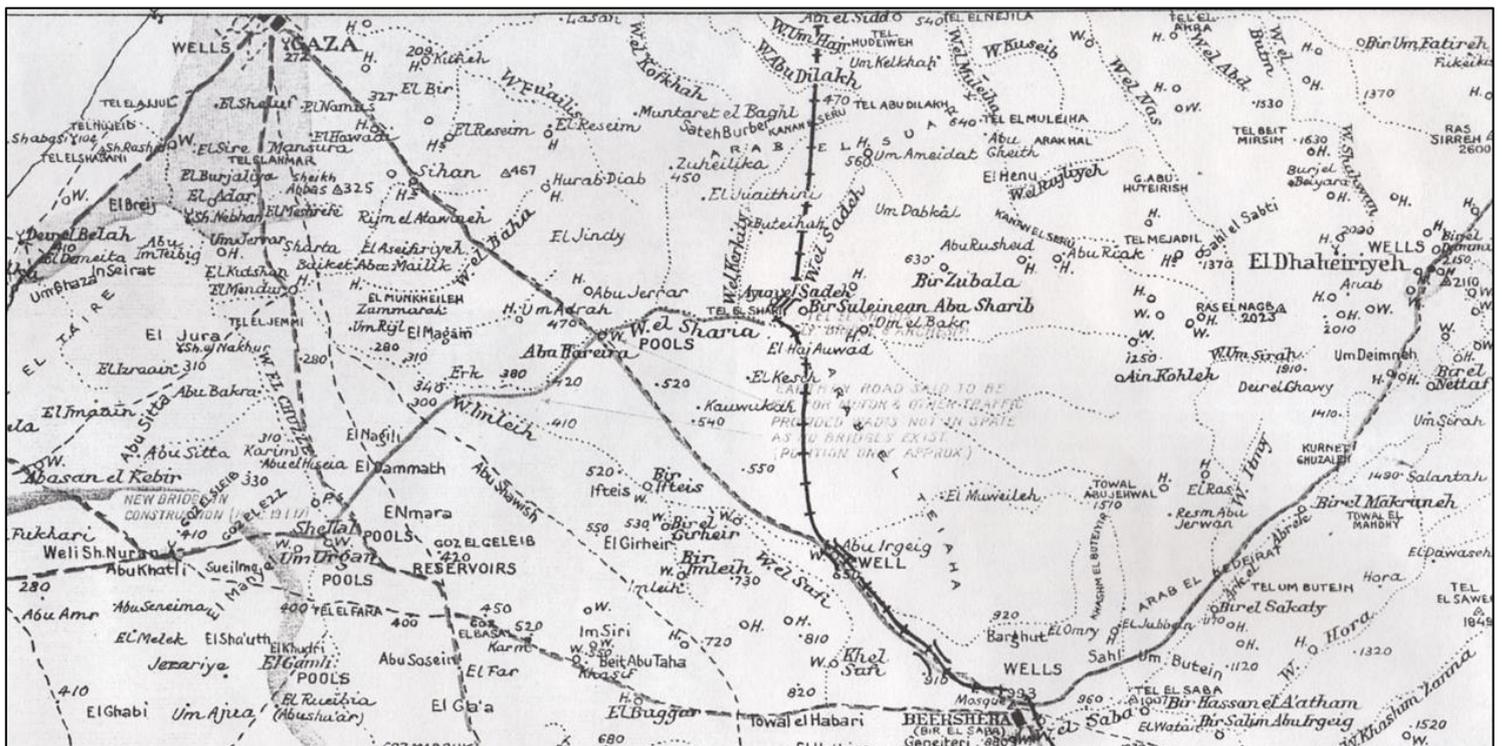
The 16th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment were involved in the Battle of Sheria in early November 1917. On 1 November they were in bivouac in the Wadi Saba and were helping to clear up the battlefield after the Battle of Beersheba. The following day they moved behind an old Turkish position and on the 3rd they served as an advanced guard to the brigade.

On 6 November they formed part of the initial attack in the Battle of Sheria and came under heavy rifle and machine gun fire. Interestingly Captain Hanbury Lewis Kekewich, who is commemorated on the Forest Row war memorial, was killed in the same battle. On 6 November 1917 he was in

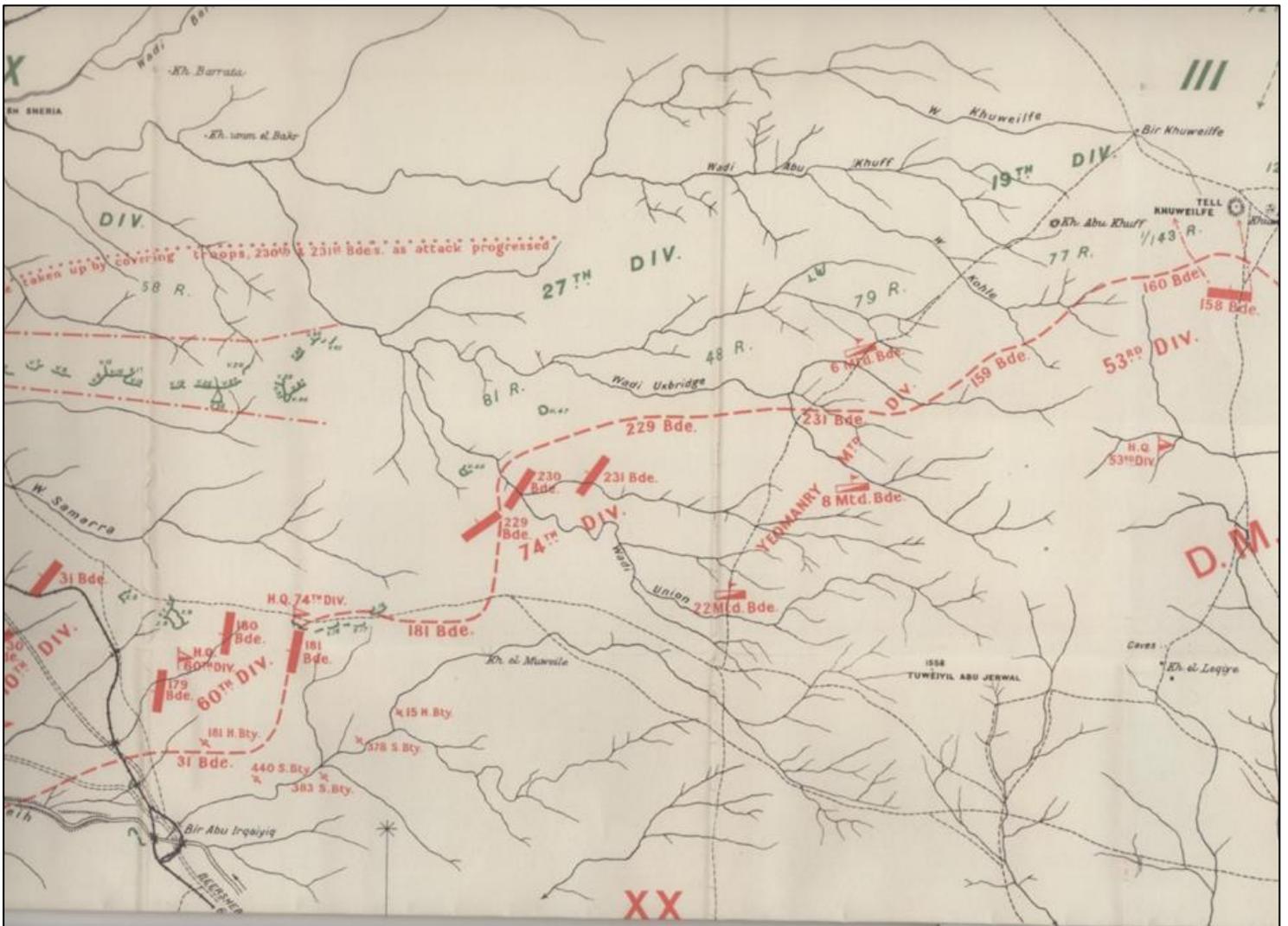
command of 'C' Company attacking the Turkish lines and defending Gaza with about 600 of the battalion. His case study has also been researched by the Ashdown Forest Research Group.



Three officers were killed in the battle (including Hanbury Lewis Kekewich), 19 other ranks were killed (which included Ernest Harding), and 98 were wounded with two missing.



Map showing the Gaza to Beersheba line, Sheria and Edh Dhaleiriye (ad-Dhahiriya), Palestine
(Source: British Army Survey of Egypt)



XX Corps attack on 6 November 1917 stretching from Tell Khuweilfe westwards towards Hareira. (Source: Cyril Falls, A. F. Beck "History of the Great War Based on Official Documents by Direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence Military Operations Egypt & Palestine from June 1917 to the end of the War", Vol. 2, Pt 1.) The 16th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment were involved in this offensive as part of the Battle of Sheria

Ernest Harding is listed on the war memorials in Colemans Hatch and Hartfield. There is also a memorial plaque in St John's Church, Felbridge. His name was also added to the war memorial in Danehill in 2001.

Carol O'Driscoll

GEORGE JAMES HEASMAN

**Private, 228699, 1st Battalion London Regiment /
Attached 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)**

Killed in Action on 9 October 1917 near Ypres, Belgium, aged 35

He has no known grave and is listed on the Tyne Cot Memorial: Panel 148 to 150



Private George James Heasman, 228699, 1st Battalion London Regiment / Attached to 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers), was born in Hartfield in 1882. He lived at Neaves Farm, Hartfield, but previously lived at Pump House, High Steet, Hartfield.

He was the son of George (1850) and Emily (née Gadd) Heasman. He was engaged to Miss C.M. Thrift.

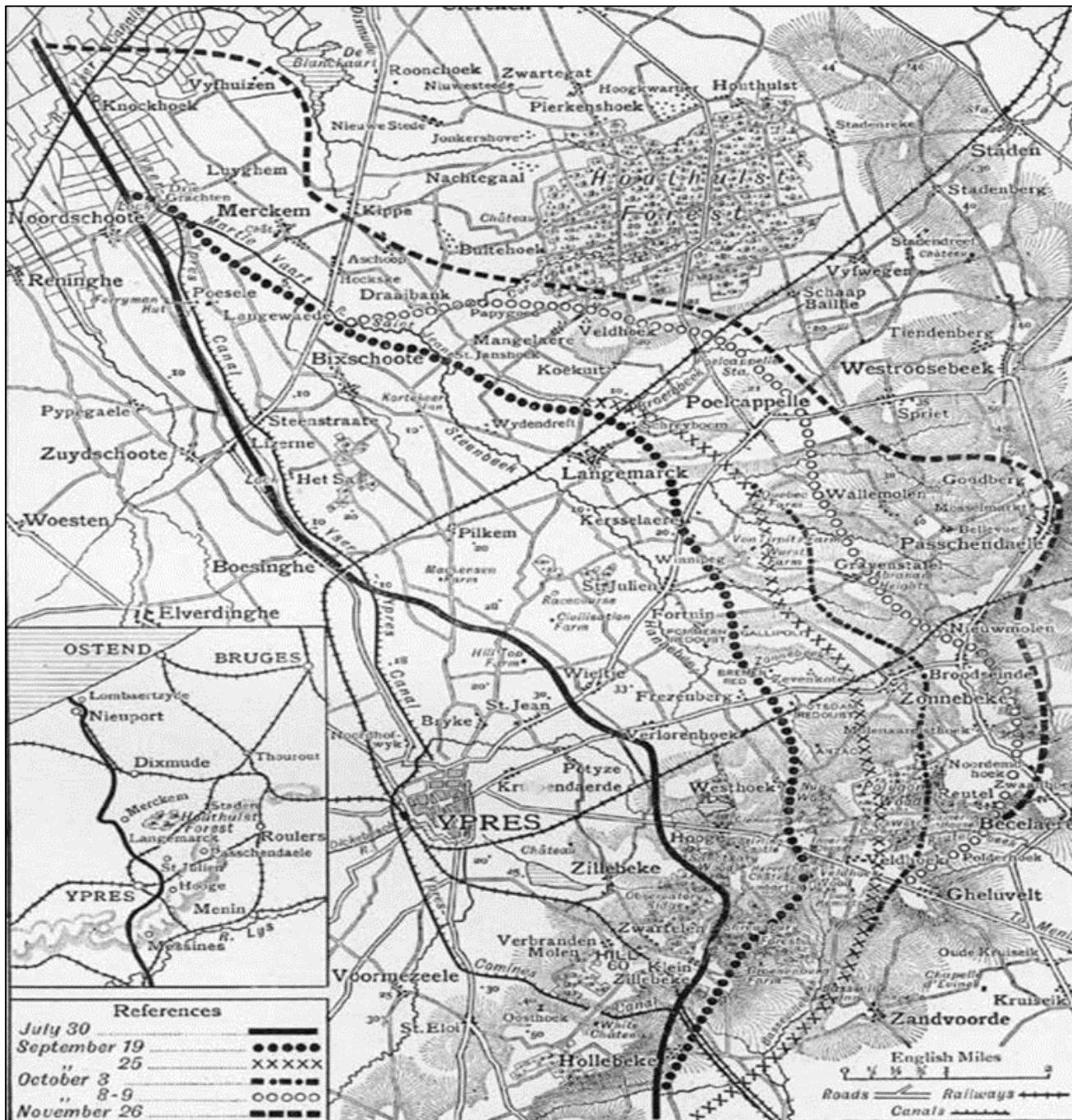
In the 1911 census he was aged 28 and listed as an agricultural labourer, as was his father, a widower aged 61. His sister Ethel aged 20 was their housekeeper and his brother Horace was a gardener aged 18. They all lived in the High Street, Hartfield.

His sister Ethel married William George Brown, Fincham Farm, Hartfield, in the summer of 1914. Her husband was killed on 26 September 1917 in the Third Battle of Ypres (his study may be found elsewhere in this compilation).

George Heasman enlisted in Hastings. He was killed in action on 9 October 1917 near Ypres, Belgium, aged 35. He has no known grave and is listed on the Tyne Cot Memorial: Panel 148 to 150.

During 1917 the 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers was engaged in the following battles: the First Battle of the Scarpe, the Second Battle of the Scarpe, the Third Battle of the Scarpe, the Battle of Langemarck, the Battle of Broodseinde, the Battle of Poelcapelle, the Battle of Cambrai.

On the day George Heasman died the Battle of Poelcapelle was raging as part of the Third Battle of Ypres. Bad weather in October led to the battlefield becoming an impossible quagmire.



The gradual eastwards advance from Ypres. (Source: The Long Long Trail)

Listed on the War Memorial in Hartfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

FREDERICK WILLIAM HILL

Gunner, 124708, 1st Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

Killed in Action on 31 July 1917 near Ypres, Belgium, aged 31

He has no known grave and is listed on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial: Panel 9

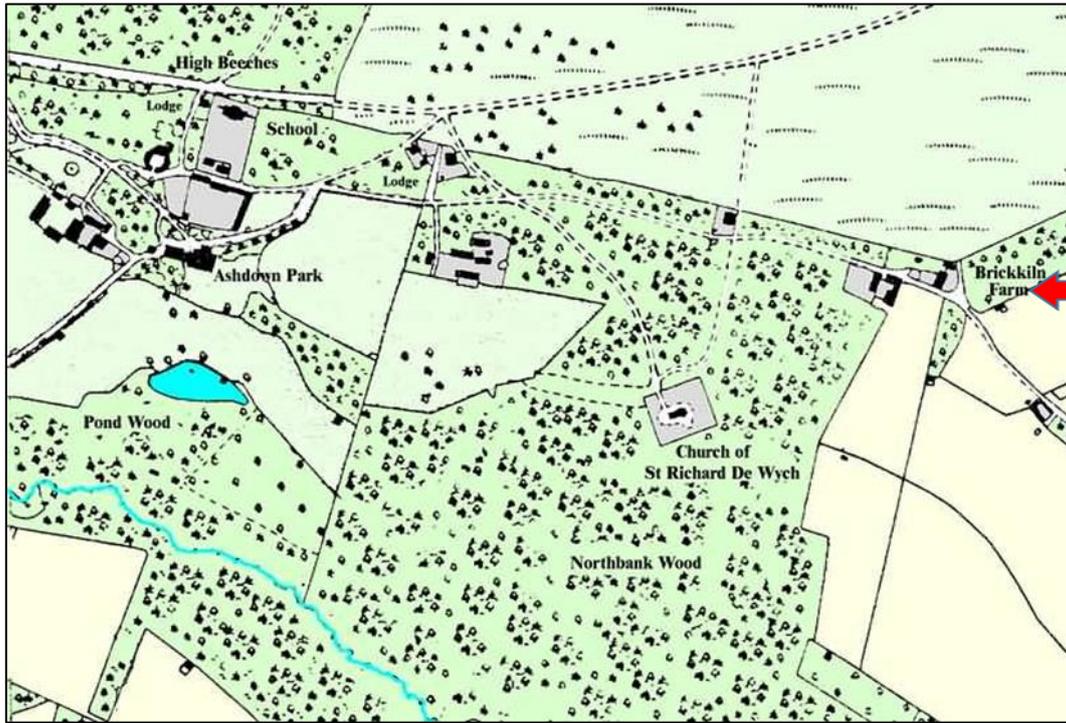


Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial

Frederick William Hill was born in Hartfield in 1886, the son of George and Emma Hill. The Hill family were recorded as living at Brick Hill Farm, Coleman's Hatch (near Ashdown Park) in the 1891 census when Frederick William was recorded as a five year old scholar. His father was listed as a farm labourer. At the 1911 census Frederick William lived with his parents and seven siblings at the same address; his father was now recorded as a farmer.

Known as William, prior to the war he lived in Tunbridge Wells and his pre-war occupation was a domestic gardener. He enlisted at Worthing and was killed in action on 31 July 1917 near Ypres, Belgium, aged 31. He has no known grave and is listed on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial: Panel 9. He is listed on the War Memorials in Colemans Hatch and Hartfield.

His parents were listed as living at 1, St. James Cottages, Balcombe, Haywards Heath at the time of his death. His younger brother Frank Edmund Hill was listed in the census as a farm labourer and one of his sisters was a dairy worker. Frank lived to the age of 84 and he died in Crawley in 1975. There is no record of him serving in the First World War.



Location of Brickkiln Farm in 1899 when Frederick William Hill may have been living there

Frederick William Hill served with the First Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery. The First Siege Battery was first deployed to France on 17 September 1914.

The Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA)

The RGA was equipped with much larger weapons than the Royal Field Artillery. Howitzers from 6 inch and 9 inch bore were common as were 60 pounder heavy field guns. These weapons became the first to be hauled by motor tractors rather than horse power. Some of the guns were so large that they could only be deployed on railway tracks.

The role of the Siege Battery in the First World War

The siege batteries of the RGA were equipped with heavy howitzers. These sent large calibre high explosive shells in high trajectory, plunging fire. The usual armaments were 6 inch, 8 inch and 9.2 inch howitzers, although some had huge railway- or road-mounted 12 inch howitzers. As British artillery tactics developed, the siege batteries were most often employed in destroying or neutralising the enemy artillery, as well as putting destructive fire down on strongpoints, dumps, store, roads and railways behind enemy lines.



*A Heavy Battery of the RGA tows its 60-pounder guns along the roads of Northern France.
(Source: The Long Long Trail.co.uk)*



*9.2 inch howitzers of a Siege Battery in action on the Western Front
(Source: The Long Long Trail.co.uk)*

GERALD NOLEKIN HORLICK

Major, Yeomanry, Royal Gloucestershire Hussars

Died at Alexandria, Egypt, 5 July 1918, aged 30

Buried at Hadra Military Cemetery, Alexandria; Plot B, Grave 67



Gerald Nolekin Horlick – as an officer in 1914, and later

Gerald Nolekin Horlick was 30 years old when he died at the Military Hospital in Alexandria of malaria contracted while on active service. It was 5 July 1918, but, having been army personnel since 1907, he probably saw service for almost the whole duration of the War. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star medal on 20 April 1915, and was mentioned in dispatches on 13 July and 10 October 1916, and 3 April 1918. The Star and Victory medals were posthumously granted to his father 'in respect of his late son'.

Horlick appears on the Forest Row Memorial by chance really, as his father had bought Kidbrooke Park from Lewes Pendarves Kekewich in 1916, and sold it to Ronald Hambro in 1921, so the family's connection with the area was a relatively short one. In fact, Gerald was born in Brooklyn, New York, on 1 February 1888, although he was baptised three years later, when the family was living at Barnes, at his father's old parish church at Ruardean in Gloucestershire. He was the third and youngest son of Sir James and Lady Horlick (née Burford, married in 1873 at St James Westminster). His two siblings were also born in the United States, Ernest in Wisconsin in around 1880 and James in Brooklyn in 1885, although he was brought back to England for baptism at Ruardean.

James junior's baptism in 1885 gives the family's abode as Brooklyn, but Gerald's says Barnes, so the family must have returned to England permanently between 1888 and 91. The 1891 census shows them at 6, Woodlands Road, Barnes, with father James, born in Ruardean, Gloucestershire, a Manufacturing Chemist, and mother Margaret, born in Leicester. Along with the three boys are Margaret's widowed mother and unmarried sister, and also a general servant and a nurse. James' pharmaceutical talents, with the help of his brother, developed the drink which bears his name, which was:

carefully developed ... to be a complete nourishment formula for infants and invalids.

A 'concentrated and easily digestible' product, it was apparently widely praised. Moving to America after his marriage, James launched J & W Horlicks in Chicago with his brother, but then moved to Wisconsin before making his home in New York.



Sir James Horlick

The Horlick home in Barnes may well have been part of the Limes Field Estate, where, according to the *Cheltenham Looker On* of 27 June 1914, he had built:

quite a small township of shops, houses, maisonettes and flats

to which he gave street names associated with Cowley Manor, acquired in 1895. It seems likely that he spent a further period of time in the States, as doesn't appear in the 1901 census and his wife was living in Westminster – in Albert Hall Mansions – with son James and a clutch of servants. This idea is borne out by his appearance on an incoming passenger list in 1904. Gerald, though, was away at school by this time, at Stoke House School in Stoke Poges in Buckinghamshire. 22 Albert Hall Mansions was occupied in 1911 by James junior – a commissioned officer and Lieutenant in the

British Army, his wife, and Gerald, who gave his occupation as Food Manufacturer, presumably working for his father's firm. One again, there are a number of servants.

James senior, still describing himself as a manufacturing chemist, was settled at Cowley Manor in Gloucestershire, with his wife, two American-born grandchildren, probably belonging to Ernest, and 16 domestic servants. For a saddler's son, he had done well!



Cowley Manor

Having completed prep school, Gerald moved on to Eton, where he obtained house colours for football and twice won bantam and light-weight boxing competitions. He then studied at Brasenose College Oxford, before taking employment as Assistant Works Manager at the Horlick's family business at Slough. In March 1907 he and his brother James joined the Gloucestershire Yeomanry as supernumerary lieutenants and he was gazetted 2nd Lieutenant on 1 April 1908. On 23 July 1912 he became 1st Lieutenant; on 12 July 1916 he made Captain – maybe as a result of the activities mentioned in dispatches, or maybe the promotion galvanised him into higher action. On 9 January 1917 he was made a major. He had been at Gallipoli from April 1915 and was then sent to Egypt and Palestine in May 1916. Here he was the commanding officer of the Cavalry Machine Gun Corps.

Beyond the army and workplace, he took his role as the son of a country gentleman. In February 1909, the *Cheltenham Chronicle* recorded the celebrations for his coming of age:

The festivities... were attended by 121 employees and tenants on the Cowley Manor estate, to whom had been given a sumptuous supper..... Subsequently Mr Hitch... [made] a presentation of a silver cup to Mr Gerald Horlick ... inscribed: "Presented to Mr Gerald Nolekin Horlick , on his 21st birthday by the tenants and employees".

Ironically, this presentation ended with Mr Hitch hoping that:

Mr Gerald would live long and make as good a gentleman as his father was.

The servants presented him with a silver ink stand, and all sang, *For he's a jolly good fellow*, before Gerald made a gracious speech of thanks. The rest of the evening was devoted to entertainment – vocal and instrumental music, comedy acts and ventriloquism.

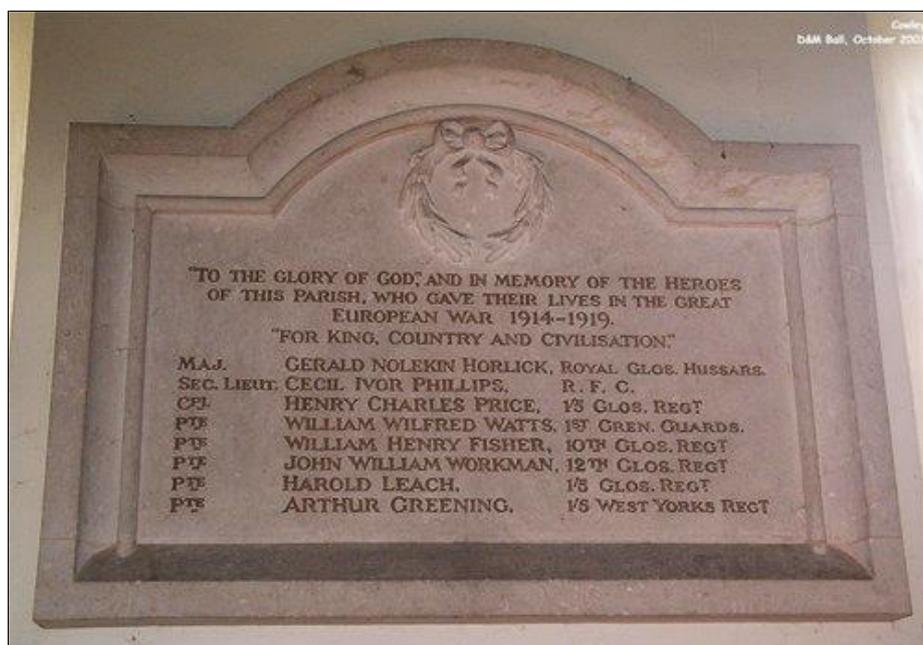
Although panegyrics on the war dead are frequently fulsome, Gerald Nolekin Horlick seems to have been as popular with his fellow officers as he was with the Cowley tenants. One wrote:

He was not only respected by all as a Commanding Officer, but also loved as a friend by everybody; we all feel that his place will never be filled. It seems hard that he should die this way after having gone through so many battles unhurt. It was devotion to duty that made him remain with his squadron in the Jordan Valley when he was not really fit to do so. He has done extraordinary good work during the war and will be a great loss to the army.

Another wrote:

Dear old Jerry was always the cheeriest man of the party, in spite of all sorts and manners of discomforts and dirt and general beastliness. His death will make a very marked difference to the brigade. All officers loved him and his men were devoted to him.

At some point prior to his death, although he never married, Gerald set up home for himself at 2, Carlton House Terrace, as this was given as his address in the National Probate Calendar. Probate was granted to his sister-in-law Flora, wife of his brother James. The estate was worth nearly £3,300.



Cowley Memorial

His parents clearly wanted their son remembered as widely as possible. As well as in the Forest Row Memorial Book and Forest Row Memorial, Gerald Horlick's name appears at Cowley, where his parents' main home was. He was also commemorated at Gloucester Cathedral, where his father paid for the reconstruction of the organ in memory of his son. A solemn ceremony was held in November 1920 in which Sir James addressed the Dean as follows:

On behalf of Lady Horlick and myself I ask you to receive this reconstructed organ as a memorial of our dear son.

After his parents' deaths, a bronze tablet commemorating them was put up in another Gloucestershire church, Elkstone, with the addition of the following words:

and of their youngest son Gerald Nolekin Horlick, Major, R.G.R.Y., who gave his life for his country...

His surviving brothers paid for this and a new treble bell to be added to the existing peal.

Gerald's brother James was in the Coldstream Guards during World War I, was mentioned in dispatches four times, and amongst other decorations, received the Military Cross. He survived conflict, but his son, also named Gerald, was lost with the submarine H.M. Thunderbolt in 1943. When the father erected a memorial to his son, he didn't forget the brother who was a namesake.



Horlick Memorial St Mary's Slough, Buckinghamshire

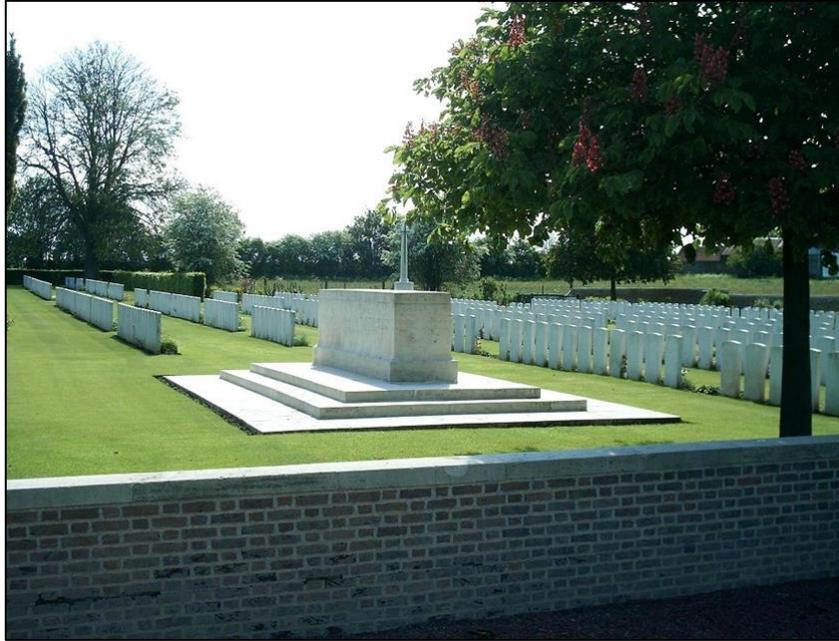
Pam Griffiths

THOMAS HUMPHREY

Private, 33438, 1st/8th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Died near Busigny, France, 9 October 1918, aged 36

He is buried in Busigny Communal Cemetery Extension: Grave V. A. 2



Busigny Communal Cemetery

Thomas Humphrey was born in 1883, the son of George Young Humphrey (1847-1912), a farmer, and Dorcas (née Wheatley) (1851-1930). In 1911 he was living at Thornhill, Coleman's Hatch, aged 28, with his wife Ann Caroline (née Hudson), aged 33, and they had been married for six years. No children are recorded in that census. Thomas was listed as a farm labourer.

Thomas had two siblings, Harry and Hannah. Harry was recorded as a gardener, aged 26, in 1901 and as a farmer with three children and a servant in 1911. He lived at Moss Cottage, 1 Newbridge, Colemans Hatch with his family. Their servant was called Gertrude Hudson and could have been a relative of Thomas Humphrey's wife, Ann Caroline. Hannah, who was born in 1877, married George Mitchell in 1903. He was a greenkeeper at the Ashdown Forest Golf Course in 1911. George's brother was Albert Mitchell, who was killed in action at Méteren, France, on 19 April 1918, aged 33. He has been written up by the Ashdown Forest Research Group.

Thomas's mother was born Dorcas Wheatley in 1851. Her sister Lucy married Daniel Weeding in 1858 in Hartfield and their grandsons George Weeding and John Weeding died in the First World War and their case studies have also been written by the Ashdown Forest Research Group. Her brother Jesse, born in 1845 was the grandfather of Charlie Wheatley who died in 1919 and has also been written up by the Group.

No. of Contract _____ dated _____
 Name and Address of Firm. _____

Imperial War Graves Commission.

Schedule 'A' Page 27

Name of Cemetery.

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (A) OF HEADSTONE INSCRIPTIONS
 to this report is attached
COMPREHENSIVE REPORT (B) HEADSTONE TEXTS
 (those headstones to be inscribed with texts are underlined)

BUSIG C.O.E.
 To be stencilled on foot of headstones below ground level abbreviated thus:—

and
TWO STANDARD LAYOUTS (the layouts to be used are quoted on the badge design).

BUSIG C.O.E.

Badge Design No. and Layout No.	1st Line.	2nd Line.	3rd Line.	4th Line.		Centre of Stone.	To be stencilled on foot of Headstones below ground level.	
	Number and Rank.	Initials, NAME and Honours.	Regiment.	Date of Death. <small>In any instance where the entry "NONE" appears in Col. 6, the Age will be omitted from the Headstone and the Date of Death centred laterally.</small>	Age.	Relig. Emb.	Plot P. Row R. Grave G.	No. of Stone.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1069/2D	240881	CORPORAL	E. MERRY	WORCESTERSHIRE REGIMENT	9TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 1	301
1064/1A	33438	PRIVATE	T. HUMPHREY	ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGT.	9TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 2	302
1064/1B	201080	PRIVATE	W.J. WEBB	ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGT.	9TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 3	303
1064/1A	306185	PRIVATE	A.C. JONES	ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGT.	9TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 4	304
1099/1A	D/7069	PRIVATE	P. DWYER	QUEEN'S BAYS	8TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 5	305
1115/1T	10626	PRIVATE	A. WRIGHT	(FOR PARTICULARS OF LAYOUT INSC. ETC. SEE SCHED. T.)			5 A 6	306
LAYOUT 1H		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER		(FOR PARTICULARS OF LAYOUT INSC. ETC. SEE SCHED. G/H)			5 A 7	307
1186/2C	SECOND LIEUTENANT	SIDNEY FRANCIS DAVES		ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	9TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 8	308
1116/1C	10513	PRIVATE	W.R. CRICKETT	XII ROYAL LANCERS	12TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 9	309
1119/1D	1007	PRIVATE	W. WILKINSON	15TH THE KING'S HUSSARS	8TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 10	400
1119/1A	11754	PRIVATE	H. SOUTHCOTT	15TH THE KING'S HUSSARS	8TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 11	401
LAYOUT 4H	109880/57859	UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER	J. DANCY	(FOR PARTICULARS OF LAYOUT INSC. ETC. SEE SCHED. T.)			5 A 12	402
1042/1A	14734	SERGEANT	J. CHAPMAN	NORFOLK REGIMENT	14TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 13	403
1186/2B	337994	GUNNER	R.C. BANKS	ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	12TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 14	404
1186/2A	207761	GUNNER	C. CHRISTIE	ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY	12TH OCTOBER 1918	CROSS	5 A 15	405

Stone No. 402 To X GROUP 80

*These headstones are not to be executed until further orders.

Proof Checked.
 Final Check No. 1.
 Office Copy Prepared.
 Final Check No. 2.

ISSO W11808/W104 100.000 10/20 146 3 8 S

Thomas Humphrey was killed in the Battle of Cambrai.

Carol O'Driscoll

5 November 2018

GEORGE KEKEWICH

Captain, Yeomanry City of London, Attd 103rd MGC

Died of Wounds, Beersheba, Palestine, 28 October 1917, aged c.27

Commemorated at the Beersheba Military Cemetery, Plot O, Grave 27



Captain George Kekewich

The Kekewich family originated in Lancashire, but over the centuries had moved first to Cornwall and then to London. There were links by marriage to another well-known Forest Row family, the Freshfields. Four of the sons of Lewis Pendarves Kekewich and his wife Lilian Emily Hanbury fought in World War I and three of them - including George - died during the conflict.

George was the third-born in the family, preceded by his brother Hanbury and sister Evelyn. He was born at Foots Cray in Kent in 1890, the Forest Row Memorial Book says at the family home, *Twisdens*, although, according to Byford, he was born at Lamorby Park, in Sidcup. Given that his mother gave the memorial book information, I am inclined to believe the former. His father also appears on the electoral role at 82 Ebury Street, St. George, Hanover Square until 1889, so clearly the family had more than one residence. Lewis was a metal broker in a company called Morrison, Kekewich and co, and the 1891 census shows George in a household wealthy enough to have five live-in staff. When George was still an infant, his father gave evidence in a fraud trial at the Old Bailey:

I live at Foots Cray; I am one of the executors under the will of George B. Ellicombe... I had to sign cheques as one of the executors—neither of these cheques were signed by me or by my authority—the imitation of my signature is good, but it would not deceive me...

The fraudster was found guilty.

Shortly after this, the family may have gone abroad, possibly to Argentina; a lady named Kekewich with a 7 year old male child, who would have been the right age to be George, appear on an incoming passenger list from Buenos Aires in 1896. George was sent away to school, and he is recorded aged 11 at Winkfield in Berkshire in 1901 as a pupil at Larnbrook, a prep school run by Edward Ransfield. From 1908, he was educated at Eton, where he was in the same house as his brothers, namely Broadbent. Ten years later, of the family, only Hanbury and George were at home at Kidbrooke Park on census night, although there were 11 staff. Both brothers were recorded as metal merchants.



Kidbrooke Park – home of the Kekewich family from 1909 – 1916

During his time living in Forest Row, George served as scoutmaster to the newly formed troop of boy scouts in the village. Forest Row Church Magazine referred to him as ‘the indefatigable scout master’. He apparently took 16 of the troop to the King’s Review at Windsor in 1911 and took the boys camping on Ashdown Forest and Birling Gap. When he relinquished the role of scout master he became the troop’s treasurer instead.

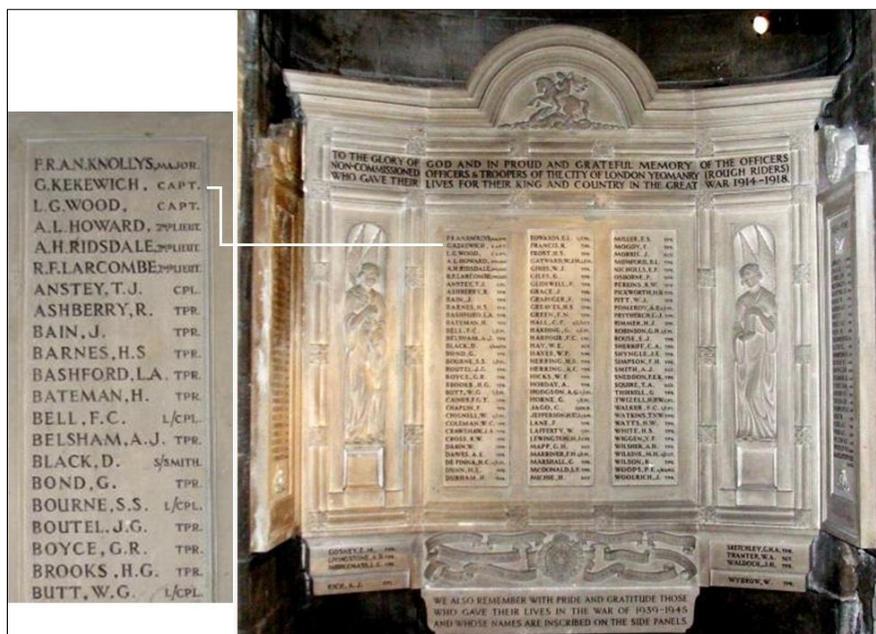
At the outbreak of war, George joined the City of London Yeomanry, nicknamed *The Rough Riders*, a Territorial Army force which was part of the Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line. In April 1915 his regiment embarked from Avonmouth on the Scotian, arriving off Cape Hellas between 23-24 April and steaming on to Alexandria where they arrived on 3 May. By August they had been moved to Suez where they were on patrol duty until August. After that they were moved to the Dardanelles, and George, a 2nd Lieutenant, was placed with the reserve at Chocolate Hill. These were called into action after a disastrous attack on the Turks at Scimitar Hill resulted in a loss of around a third of the men involved. The weather was atrocious and illness had also decimated the ranks. In October, George ordered an attack of grenades on the Turkish lines, but it produced little

positive result. However, their action under appalling conditions meant that George, along with other officers, was commended for his work.

In November 1915, George's regiment rested in Salonika before being moved back to Egypt to join the London Mounted Brigade. By March 1916, George's regiment was patrolling the railway in the Sinai Peninsula, dangerous work compounded by the effects of extreme heat, lack of fresh water and food, and illness. On 28 May the City of London Yeomanry marched to El Kubri, on the west bank of the Suez Canal, still on railway patrol and still subject to attack by the Turks. He was mentioned in despatches in July 1916. In an action on 3 August, George's horse, and others, stampeded while the soldiers were dismounted and he was forced to double up behind his commanding officer in order to get away. Later in the month he was promoted to Staff Captain, followed by a short period of leave.

Once again, George and his regiment went briefly to Salonika, sailing on 12 November 1916 but returning to Palestine the following summer. They were involved in numerous skirmishes there, and after a rest period between 18-24 October, they were moved up to El Buggar and George's D company was ordered to protect the outpost line which was under attack. There was little cover during their advance over open ground and George and several others were wounded. Despite this, their objective was successful, and they were strongly congratulated by Higher Command. Unfortunately, his wounds proved fatal and George died in Palestine on 28 October 1917. When he was buried at Shellal, according to Byford:

...every available officer in the regiment and a part of 'D' squadron attending the funeral



Memorial at St. Bartholomew's

The *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* reported his demise as 'killed in action' and noted his:

gallant stand when a line of cavalry posts thrown out in advance of our main position was attacked by a much more numerous force of Turks. General Allenby reports that, though outnumbered and enveloped on both flanks, detachments of London Yeomanry fought with great gallantry, holding their position for six hours until assistance arrived, and thereby rendering a great service to their infantry colleagues. The enemy, who numbered 3,000, with twelve guns, made repeated charges with their cavalry, but only succeeded in securing a slight gain of ground at the expense of heavy losses. The British casualties were under one hundred.

The *Western Times* more accurately states that he died of wounds rather than in action. Either way, it was a second blow for the family, as his brother John had been missing since 1915. The article also noted the Kekewich boys' relationship to their uncle, the late General Kekewich, defender of Kimberley, and to Trehawke H Kekewich of Peamore House in Exminster.

George Kekewich was buried at Beersheba War Cemetery in Palestine, but is remembered in a number of places. In London, he appears on the memorial of the Priory Church of St Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield. Possibly this is because the church is not far from his place of business in Gracechurch Street. A war tablet which included his name (and that of several other Kekewiches) was unveiled in 1920 at St. Martin's church, Exminster. It was inscribed:

Remember the following who gave their lives for God and their country in the Great War 1914 – 1919.

As a member of the MCC, he also appears on the Lord's Cricket Ground Roll of Honour, as well as on the Eton College War Memorial and the Hove Library WWI memorial. As the family lived at Kidbrooke Park for some time, he is also commemorated on the Forest Row War Memorial.

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Army Register of Soldiers' Effects

The National Probate Calendar records probate granted to his father on 26 November 1917, with effects of £10,241 7s 3d.

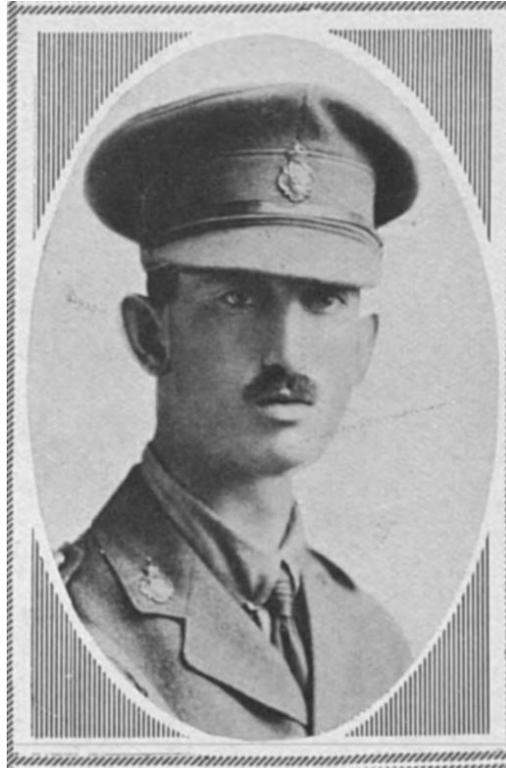
Pam Griffiths

HANBURY LEWIS KEKEWICH

Captain, 16th (Sussex Yeomanry) Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action, Beersheba, Palestine, 6 November 1917

Commemorated at the Beersheba Military Cemetery, Plot M, Grave 38



Captain Hanbury Kekewich

Hanbury Lewis Kekewich was the eldest of the three Kekewich brothers killed in the First World War, but the last of them to die. He was the first child of Lewis Pendarves and Lilian Emily Kekewich, was born on 30 July 1885 at the family's London home in Ebury Street, and was given his mother's maiden name as his first Christian name. As the daughter of Sampson Hanbury, Lilian was part of the brewing family of Truman, Hanbury and Buxton's. Their brewery, based in Spitalfields, was the oldest in London and may even have predated the Great Fire of 1666. No wonder Lilian wanted the name perpetuated.

By 1891 the family was living at Twisdens in Fooks Cray, Kent. Presumably, a few years later, like his brothers, he would have been sent away to Prep School, but where has not come to light. He is also absent from the 1901 census, when he would have been 16. In all probability he was still at Eton, where he was in Broadbent House, but he may have been abroad. Certainly once he joined the family business as a metal merchant, he travelled; he appears on an incoming passenger list in 1907 on a ship travelling from New York to Liverpool and made another return journey from New York in 1912.

Hanbury joined the Sussex Yeomanry as 2nd Lieutenant on 1 May 1910, giving his profession as metal broker. The *London Gazette* noted:

Supernumerary Second Lieutenant Hanbury L. Kekewich is restored to the establishment.

However, he still gave his occupation as metal merchant on the 1911 census at Kidbrooke Park. The 1st Line regiment of the Sussex Yeomanry was mobilised on 4 August 1914, at which time it was at Hode Farm near Canterbury. Hanbury was in the machine gun section, and later commanded C Company. On 1 November 1914 Hanbury married Dorothy Anne Lane at St. Barnabas, Clapham Common. A daughter, Sylvia Lilian, was born in 1916.

The regiment was camped at Maresfield in 1915 but in September that year it marched to Wrotham, Kent, to entrain for Liverpool. On 25 September it embarked on RMS Olympic, headed for Lemnos, where it arrived on 1 October. By the 8th the men had arrived in Gallipoli. Almost immediately, soldiers started to go down with enteritis. However, they also served in trenches at Border Barricade and Fusilier Bluff. On 30 December the regiment was evacuated to Mudros, and it must have been here that Hanbury gathered the seed which was later sent back to England and planted.



In February 1916, the regiment was moved to Egypt to defend the Suez Canal, and more particularly, the railway beside it. With some exceptions, the Sussex Yeomanry spent most of the year there. On 3 January 1917, following amalgamation of several units, the regiment was re-designated as 16th (Sussex Yeomanry) Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. Hanbury was promoted to commanding officer of C Company with a temporary Captaincy.

In July 1917 he was promoted to 2nd in command of the 16th Battalion. On 6 November 1917 he was in command of his company attacking the Turkish lines and defending Gaza with about 600 of the battalion. They came under heavy fire and he was killed in action along with around 125 others. He was buried near Gaza. His effects as a soldier were listed as £65 9s. 9d. Probate was granted to his wife, Dorothy Annie, on 27 September 1918, with the effects valued at £618 2s. 11d. Although he had died on active service, his address was given as 69, Elspeth Road, Clapham Common. In 1919 his widow remarried in a civil ceremony at St George's, Hanover Square, and became the wife of Hugh Page-Turner.

The *Western Times* reported Hanbury's death on 19th November 1917, saying:

Captain Hanbury L. Kekewich, Yeomanry, killed on November 6, aged 32, was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Kekewich. He had been seven years in the Yeomanry, and was a very efficient officer.



Kekewich Memorial, St Martin's, Exminster

A fine memorial remembers all three brothers in the church at Exminster, in which parish Peamore, the family estate, lies. Another tablet was dedicated at the same church on Remembrance Day 1920, which listed:

Those brave lads from the village who laid down their lives in the war.

As well as the three brothers, there were two other Kekewiches – Robert and Arthur.

Like his brothers, Hanbury Lewis Kekewich had numerous memorials. As well as Forest Row and St Martin's, Exminster, his name appears on the memorial at Hove Library, the MCC roll of honour and Eton College's roll of honour.

When Hanbury's mother gave information for the Forest Row Memorial Book, she was living at 14, Adelaide Crescent in Hove. Both parents must have been devastated by the toll the war had demanded of them. However, happier times were to come. On 2 October 1934, Lewes and Lilian celebrated their golden wedding at Peamore. The *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* reported that, to mark the occasion, Mr Kekewich planted a Golden Cypress tree. Despite their losses, the paper noted that they had one remaining son, Sydney, a married daughter and three grandchildren. Lewis was noted as a keen sportsman, passionate about hunting, shooting and golf, and one-time Master of West Kent Harriers, while Lilian was described as an enthusiastic sportswoman. She died on Coronation Day 1937 while Lewis survived a second war and died, aged 88, in 1947.

Pam Griffiths

HENRY JAMES KENSETT

Private, 5388, 13th Royal Fusiliers (London) Regiment

Killed in Action, aged 34, on 10 April 1917 at Monchy-le-Preux, France

Buried at Row D, Grave 22, at Orange Trench British Cemetery



Henry James Kensett was born in early 1883 at Shipley, Southwater, near Horsham, Sussex, to parents Reuben and Rose Kensett, who had married on 13 March 1873 at New Malden, Surrey.

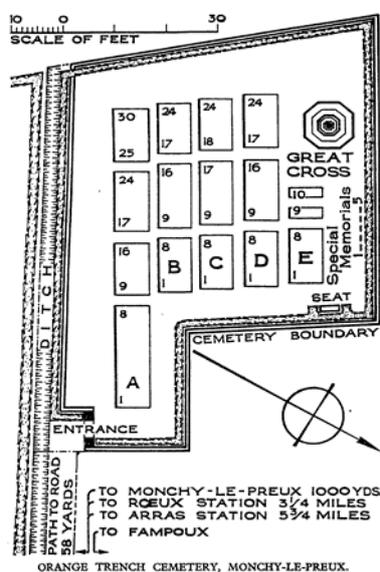
He was married to Charlotte Kensett, and they lived at Majuba Hill, Hartfield Road, Forest Row. The memorial book in Holy Trinity church was signed by his widow, Charlotte, by then living at The Broadway, Forest Row.

In the 1891 census, Henry James Kensett, aged 8, was living with his widowed mother, Rose, at Old House, Coolham, Shipley, Sussex, with three brothers and two sisters and a lodger, Raymond Lakers, an agricultural labourer. In 1901 he was living at 'Trawlers' in Shipley, where his occupation was recorded by the census as a poultryman and undergamekeeper. He was now the step-son of Raymond Lakers, who had married Rose after the death of Reuben; Raymond was by now a farm foreman and gamekeeper. The census identifies 'Trawlers' as being "on the north side of the main road leading from Cowfold to Billingshurst."

By the time of the 1911 census Henry James Kensett was living at Maplehurst Place, Maplehurst Farm, Nuthurst, Sussex, where he was recorded as a gamekeeper living as a boarder in the household of Samuel and Ruth Coles and their three children.

Henry James Kensett enrolled in the army at East Grinstead and served in France and Flanders. He was probably awarded the standard three medals known as 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred' (the 1914-1915 Star, the British war Medal, and the Victory Medal, automatically awarded to soldiers who had served and died on active service).

On the day he died, according to the Battalion War Diary, the battalion withdrew at 4.00am to Freuchy Chapel, before advancing at 10.00am to the railway line under slight enemy artillery and machine gun fire until they were checked by intense machine gun fire about 600 yards west of Monchy-le-Preaux. At this time their casualties, including Henry James Kensett, were fairly heavy. Over the two days they lost 12 officers and 240 other ranks.



Plan of Orange Trench British Cemetery

Henry James Kensett is buried in Orange Trench British Cemetery at Row D, Grave 22 (above). This cemetery in the Pas de Calais on the road from Arras to Cambrai, holds 118 burials with 59 identified casualties. Commonwealth forces were active in this area south of the River Scarpe in April 1917,



during the Battle of Arras. The cemetery was made after fighting between April 9th and 11th when the 12th, 15th and 37th Divisions took Monchy-le-Preaux and the area between it and the River Scarpe.

Memorial Death Plaque

The next of kin of the war dead (except Commonwealth military personnel who were executed following a court martial) later received in the post a small bronze Memorial Death Plaque of which from 1919 over 1,150,000 were produced. Of these over 600 were for women. These plaques became known as the Dead Man's Penny or the Widow's Penny. The plaque was inscribed with "he died for freedom and honour".

In January 1918 a War Gratuity of £2 18s. 4d was authorised and paid in September 1919 together with £3 os.od. to his widow Charlotte.

Kevin Tillet

CYRIL HENRY LENEY

Private, 91839, 15th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry

Killed in Action, 27 May 1918, near Hermonville, Marne, France, aged 19

Buried in Hermonville Military Cemetery, Marne, France: Special Memorial 5



Private Cyril Henry Leney, 91839, 15th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry, was born in West Hoathly, Sussex, in November 1898. He lived at Hartfield Grove and Shrewton, Wiltshire and enlisted in October 1916 in Devizes, Wiltshire at the age of 17 years and 11 months. He was killed in action on 27th May 1918 near Hermonville, Marne, France, aged 19, and is buried in Hermonville Military Cemetery, Marne, France: Special Memorial 5. His exact grave has been lost.

He was the son of George (b.1873) and Elizabeth (b.1874) Leney. In 1911 he was aged 12 and living with the family in West Hoathly, a village on the western fringes of Ashdown Forest. His father, George was listed as a domestic coachman. His sister, Clara, was born in nearby Danehill around 1889. George died in 1940 in Uckfield, Sussex, aged 67. Cyril had an elder brother William George listed as aged 14 in the 1911 census. He also had a younger sister, Maud Elizabeth, aged 10. All were listed as scholars.

His brother William George married Florence K. Pattenden in East Grinstead in the summer of 1928. William George died in 1969 in Devon, aged 72. It is likely that he served in the Royal Navy in the First World War. His mother, Elizabeth, died in Devon in 1968 aged 94. She was born in

Broxbourne in Hertfordshire in 1870 and was listed as a servant in Streatham in the 1891 census. Her maiden name was Kirkby. She was married in St Albans in 1893. Her father was a general labourer in Hertfordshire. His father, George, grew up in West Hoathly, the son of Abraham and Mary. Abraham was a carpenter in 1881 and was born in Lingfield, Surrey.

Cyril Henry Leney's pre-war occupation was a baker's motorman. He originally served as M/318138 in the Motor Transport in the Army Service Corps. He then transferred to the 53rd Royal Fusiliers with the new service number 62527.

The 15th Division of the Durham Light Infantry were involved in the Battle of the Aisne on 27 May 2018. The attack was launched early on 27 May with a ferocious heavy artillery bombardment of 4,000 guns across a 40 km front, against four divisions of IX Corps. Owing to the heavy concentration of primarily British troops in front-line trenches, casualties from the bombardment were severe; IX Corps itself was virtually wiped out. The bombardment was accompanied by a gas attack, designed to disable defensive gun crews, after which 17 divisions of German infantry, under Crown Prince Wilhelm, began their advance through a 40 km gap in the Allied line.

With the Allied forces entirely taken by surprise, the rapid progress of the German troops was reminiscent of the more fluid war of movement of the opening months of the war. Between Soissons and Reims the Germans broke through a further eight Allied divisions, four British, four French, reaching the Aisne in under six hours. By the end of the first day the Germans had gained 15 km of territory and had reached the River Vesle. By 30 May the Germans had managed to capture 50,000 Allied soldiers and 800 guns, arriving within 90 km of Paris by 3 June. Cyril Henry Leney was killed on the first day of this battle.

Cyril Henry Leney is listed on the war memorials in Colemans Hatch and Hartfield. He is not commemorated on the West Hoathly memorial despite the family connection there. There is a link to Hartfield via Cyril Henry's paternal great-grandmother, Marie Wilmhurst, who was born in Hartfield in 1791 and later moved to London Road, East Grinstead. She died in 1874. His great-uncle James Leney lived in Forest Row in the 1881 census and his other great-uncle, John, lived in Ashurst Wood at the same time.

Carol O'Driscoll

BERNARD LUXFORD

Battery Sergeant Major, 56943, 129th Battery, Royal Field Artillery

Killed in Action at Vaulx, France, 10 September 1918, aged 27

Buried in Vaulx Hill Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

Grave Reference: Plot 1, Row J, Grave 12



Bernard Luxford was born in Forest Row in the spring of 1891 and christened on 7 June 1891. His parents were William Peter and Mary Luxford. William was the brother of Job Luxford, a prosperous local builder and contractor. Job's son Edward was Bernard Luxford's cousin and he was killed in action on 8 May 1918. Bernard's brother William was also killed in action on 23 November 1917 during the Battle of Cambrai. Both Edward and William are profiled elsewhere in this document.

At the time of the 1901 census Bernard was living at Woodbine Cottages, Forest Row. His father, William, born in Maresfield, was recorded as a 44-year-old bricklayer, while his mother, Mary, was aged 40 and was born in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. Bernard lived with his brothers Frank (14) and William (8) and his sisters Mary (6) and Ellen (2). Frank was recorded as a general labourer.

In the 1911 census Bernard is missing from the family recorded at Woodbine Cottages but the parents William and Mary and their children Frank, William, Mary and Ellen are all present. Frank (24) was a bricklayer, William (18) an apprentice with a motor engineer, Mary (16) a dressmaker and Ellen was at school.

Also recorded on the census form, completed on 2 April 1911, was Herbert Cook an 18-year-old boarder, who was a domestic gardener born in East Grinstead. He was killed in action on 14 May 1916 and is also profiled in this document.

Bernard Luxford enlisted in 1914 and on 19 August 1914 he was a Corporal (later Warrant Officer Class 2) in the 30th Royal Field Artillery. The RFA, the longest arm of the artillery, provided artillery

support for the British army. They were reasonably mobile and were mainly responsible for medium calibre guns and howitzers deployed close to the front line. They also provided the manpower for operating heavier mortars (the lighter trench mortars were usually manned by the infantry). The RFA were organised into brigades and were then attached to larger divisions.



As a Battery Sergeant Major Bernard Luxford was the senior warrant officer in a regiment or battalion with a senior management role. In this capacity he would be responsible under the company commander or second-in-command for all aspects of the duty and discipline of all Non-Commissioned Officers and men in that unit.

Bernard Luxford was killed in action at Vaulx-Vraucourt in the Pas de Calais region of northern France. He is buried in Vaulx Hill Cemetery, pictured below. This cemetery was started in September 1918 and then expanded after the Armistice with graves brought in from the smaller surrounding battlefields, including the Vraucourt Churchyard British Extension, which contained 185 British and 7 Australian graves from 1917 and 1918. According to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission his grave can be found at Plot 1, Row J, Grave 12. The inscription on the grave reads "*The Lord Knoweth Them That Are His*".



Bernard Luxford was awarded the Victory, British War Medal and Star.

In his will granted on 26 April 1919 Bernard left £284.0s.0d. to his mother Mary, widow of William Peter Luxford. A further War Gratuity of £31.0s.0d. was granted to Mary on 15 December 1919.

The memorial book in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by his mother, Mary Luxford, of Woodbine Cottage, Forest Row.

Kevin Tillet

4 November 2018

EDWARD JAMES LUXFORD

Gunner, 277542, 119th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

Killed in Action near Ypres, Belgium, 8 May 1918, aged 43

Buried in the British Cemetery, Gwalia, Poperinge, Belgium

Grave Reference: Plot 11.F.17



(left) Edward James Luxford pictured in 1916 with his wife before leaving Tilbury for France and Belgium. (centre and right) His gravestone and memorial in the British cemetery at Poperinge, Belgium.

Edward James Luxford was born in 1875 in Forest Row. He was the son of Job and Jane Luxford. At the time of the 1881 census they were living at Witch Cross (sic) Inn. In the 1891 census they were recorded as still living in Forest Row. Although they did not appear in the 1901 census, by 1911 they were living at Little Parrock Farm, Coleman's Hatch.

The entry for Edward James in the Book of Remembrance held in Holy Trinity Church, Forest Row, recorded him as the husband of Elizabeth Luxford of 2, Highfields, Forest Row. They had married in 1906. The Remembrance Book entry was signed by his father, Job Luxford, of The Cottage, Highfields, Forest Row.

In 1891 when Edward James was 16 his occupation was given by the census as 'house painter, builder's apprentice'.

Edward James would have worked for his father, who was a well known local builder and contractor who, according to a 1909 advertisement in the Forest Row Church Monthly, operated from the Steam Joinery Works in Forest Row. He advertised as a painter, glazier, house decorator, plumber

and gas and hot-water fitter. He was also the authorised plumber to the East Grinstead and East Surrey water companies.

Edward James Luxford had originally enlisted in 1895 at the age of 20 years and 9 months. At various times he served in India, Aden, Gibraltar and at home. He was approaching the age of 40 when the First World War broke out. Now a gunner in the 119th Siege Battery, the Royal Garrison Artillery, Edward was killed in action near Ypres, Belgium, on 8 May 1918. He was 43.

He is buried in the British cemetery at Gwalia, Poperinge, Belgium, plot number 11.F.17. The cemetery holds 467 Commonwealth burials of which 465 are identified.

Kevin Tillet



(above) Gwalia cemetery, Poperinge, West Vlaanderen, Belgium.

WILLIAM LUXFORD

Sergeant, 260225, 8th Battalion, The Royal Tank Regiment

**Killed in Action at Fontaine on 23 November 1917 during the Battle of Cambrai, aged 24
Commemorated on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval Military Cemetery, Louveral,
France**



Cambrai Memorial

William was born in Forest Row in 1893. He was christened on 12 March 1893. His parents were William Peter Luxford and Mary Ann Luxford (née Isaac). William Peter was the brother of Job Luxford, a local builder, whose son Edward was killed in action (presumed dead) at the Battle of Ypres on 8 May 1918.

In the 1901 census the family were living at Woodbine Cottage in Forest Row. William Peter, born in Maresfield, was 44 and a bricklayer. Mary Ann was 40 and had been born in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. Young William was 8 and he had two older brothers, Frank, a 14 year old general labourer, and Bernard, aged 9. There were also two younger sisters, Mary, aged 6, and Ellen, aged 2.

By 1911 William Peter was 54 and still bricklaying and Mary Ann was 50. Frank was also a bricklayer and William at 18 was an apprentice to a motor engineer. Mary was a dressmaker and Ellen a Scholar. There was also a boarder named Herbert Cook, a gardener from East Grinstead.

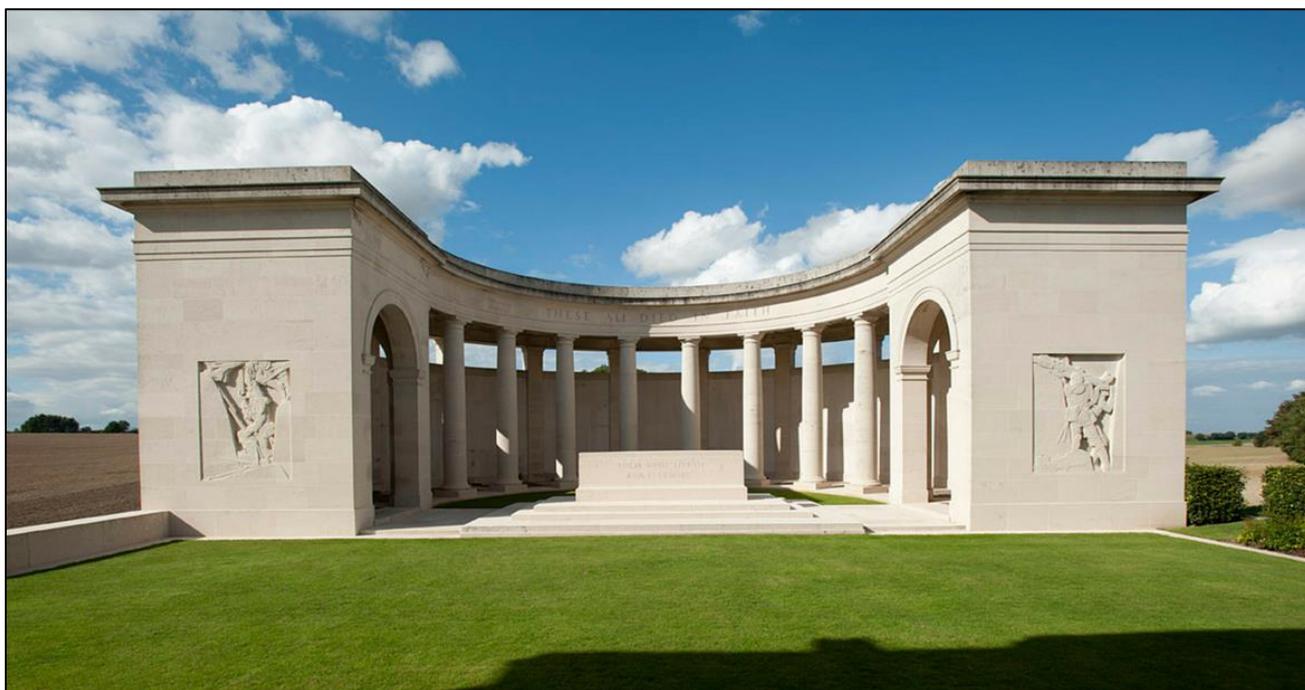
William Luxford enlisted at Brighton, initially with the Royal Sussex Regiment Machine Gun Corps. He entered the war on 22 May 1915. He later joined the Royal Field Artillery as a private gunner, then as a sergeant in the 8th Regiment, the Royal Tank Corps.

On 20 November 1917 the British Third Army launched an attack on Cambrai using a new method of assault. There was to be no traditional preliminary artillery bombardment. Instead, a large force of newly-developed tanks took part in a significant attack. The aim was for the tanks to break through the German barbed wire followed by infantry under the cover of a smoke barrage. The early morning attack had initial success but by the 22nd the advance had to be halted to allow for rest and reorganisation. This break allowed the German defences to be reinforced. Over the following week fighting became focused around Bournon Wood but by the 29th a German counter-attack had been organised. In the days that followed most of the ground gained by the tank advance was lost. Therefore the result of the attack was disappointing although the Allied generals under Douglas Haig did learn very important lessons about tank strategy and future tank tactics that later proved very valuable.

William was awarded the Victory Medal, the British Medal and the 1914/15 Star. Credit of £20.8.1 was forwarded to his father in December 1918 and a War Gratuity of £ 18.0.0 was approved in August 1919 for payment to his father Willam Peter.

The Remembrance Book in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by his mother, Mary Ann Luxford, of Woodbine Cottage.

The Cambrai Memorial (pictured below) at Louverval in the Nord region of France commemorates 7,069 First World War casualties, mainly those from Britain and South Africa who died in the Battle



of Cambrai and who have no known grave. The Memorial was designed by Harold Bradshaw, with sculpture by Charles Jagger. The Memorial was finally unveiled on 4 August 1930.

Kevin Tillet

WILLIAM GERALD MARTIN

Captain, King's Royal Rifle Corps

Killed in Action at Sailly-Saillisel, France, 14 January 1917, aged 27

**Commemorated at Combles Communal Cemetery,
Extension Plot VII, Row N, Grave 40**

William Gerald Martin, although commemorated on the memorial at Forest Row, was not a local man. He was born in London on 2 February 1889 and his parents, Edward Martin and Alice Maud Martin née Cammell both hailed from Yorkshire. He was christened at Christ Church, Lancaster Gate, near his home, on 9 March 1889 but in 1891 the young William was staying with his parents and members of the extended family at Rempstone in Nottinghamshire where his widowed grandmother was head of the household at The Hall, an 18th century mansion recently (2010) on the market for £2.5 million. His father was a barrister at law, his brother was at Eton, and a staff of eight was serving the family. William was clearly born into a privileged position.



Rempstone Hall, Nottinghamshire

The family home was at 4 Queen's Gardens, near Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park, and this was where William had been born. Like most boys of his class he was sent away to school, and in 1901 he was enumerated as a boarder at Hazelwood School, Limpsfield. I am indebted to the school's war memorial website for much of the following information. In 1902 William went to Eton, where he was in Mr McNaughton's House.

On leaving school in 1906 he presumably intended to follow a career in property, as in 1911 he was boarding in the household of an estate agent at Swindon, recorded as a Pupil to Estate Agent. He had already studied with several land agents, and was an Assistant Land Agent at Ockham Park in Surrey at the time war broke out. In the interim period (1908-9) he had been a Sandhurst cadet at the Royal Military Academy in Woolwich but didn't at that time graduate.

Soon after the outbreak of war, though, he obtained a commission (on 28 November 1914) as a Second Lieutenant in the 12th Battalion of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, B company. On 1 December the following year he was promoted to First Lieutenant. He became a Captain on 7 December 1916, possibly in an acting capacity. The 12th battalion, formed in September 1914 at Winchester, had moved to Blackdown by November and then to billets at Hindhead in February 1915. In April it was at Larkhill and on 22 July the battalion reached Boulogne as part of the British Expeditionary Force. Lieutenant Martin served in France and Flanders from 23 July 1915. His battalion saw action at a number of battles in the year leading up to his death early in 1917: namely Mont Sorrel, Delville Wood, Guillemont, Flers-Courclette, Morval and Le Transloy, the latter engagements being part of the larger Battle of the Somme. However, in July 1916, he was sent back to England suffering from flu. He had also been troubled with tonsillitis and neuralgia headaches, and it was only in early September that he was considered fit for light duties and posted to the 18th Reserve Training Battalion at South Camp at Seaford. By the third week in September he was pronounced fit for duty and returned to France.

The Hazelwood School War Memorial page gives an account of William Gerald Martin's last hours:

On the afternoon of the 12th of January 1917 the 12th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps entered support trenches in the area of Bolueax Wood. The following day they moved into the front line trenches at Sailly-Saillisel where they relieved the 11th Battalion of their regiment. B Company, under the command of William Martin, was on the left of the battalion's line. On the night of the 14th of January William Martin went out to check on the condition of the wire in front of his Company's positions. He was hit by a rifle bullet and killed.

The same website prints the telegram his father received a few days later:

Deeply regret to inform you Lieut. W.G. Martin Kings Royal Rifles was killed in action January fourteenth. The Army Council express their sympathy.

According to *De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour* Martin was buried in the cemetery at Leuze Wood, known to the troops as 'Lousy Wood', and a scene of earlier battles. Presumably his body was moved to nearby Combles Cemetery later.

De Ruvigny also quotes his commanding officer's comments:

His death is a great loss to us all, both as a friend and an officer. I know that all of us, both officers and men, had a great regard for him and will miss him exceedingly. He was always willing and did his work well, and was always cheerful even in trying circumstances, and I could not have wished for a better or braver officer.

Administration was granted to his father. The entry in the probate index describes him as a Lieutenant, and gives his address as Woodcote, Forest Row. He left £425, a considerably smaller sum than that later left by his father.

William Gerald Martin was a keen golfer, and was a member of both the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club and an original member of St George's Hill Golf Club in Weybridge. He won many prizes at club and open meetings. Colin Strachan in *Fair Ways in Ashdown Forest* describes him as one of the club's top players. Listed amongst his achievements are: the July Monthly Medal (1907), the Royal Ashdown Cup (August 1907), the Elms Cup (1909 and 1911), the Standen Cup and the Eton Prize (1909), the Gold Club Medal (1911 and 1912), and the Spring Challenge Cup in 1912. In a match in 1913 he was considered 'equally good' as Abe Mitchell. The following year he again won the Spring Challenge Cup. At St George's Hill he is remembered through the Gerald Martin Trophy, presented in 1921 by family and friends, and still played for annually.

Presumably his parents had moved to Forest Row, where they settled at Woodcote, by 1907, which explains why William was playing golf on Ashdown Forest and is recorded on the Forest Row memorial. Although his father described himself as a retired barrister on the 1911 census, he signed the Memorial Book as Edward Martin JP. He died in 1928 and his wife in 1931. William's three much older siblings, Edward, Winifred and Sybil, all outlived their brother by a considerable period. Edward died in 1937 and the sisters in the 1950s.



William Gerald Martin

From *De Ruwigny's Roll of Honour*

Pam Griffiths

JOHN ARTHUR MEDHURST

Sapper, 146264, 91st Field Company, The Royal Engineers

Killed in Action, 9 April 1917, aged 25

Buried in Duisans British Cemetery, Nord Pas de Calais, France

Grave Reference: Plot I. L. 1



John Arthur Medhurst enlisted on 2 December 1915. He was the son of Arthur Bromley Medhurst, a builder, and Fannie Medhurst, the village post mistress, who lived at Vine House, Hartfield. John was a carpenter and joiner by trade, and had two siblings, elder sister Nellie, a post office clerk, and a younger brother, Frederick George, a motor engineer who also served in the First World War but survived and died in 1956. The Medhurst family are now funeral directors in Hartfield and still operate from Vine House, now a grade II listed building. John never married.

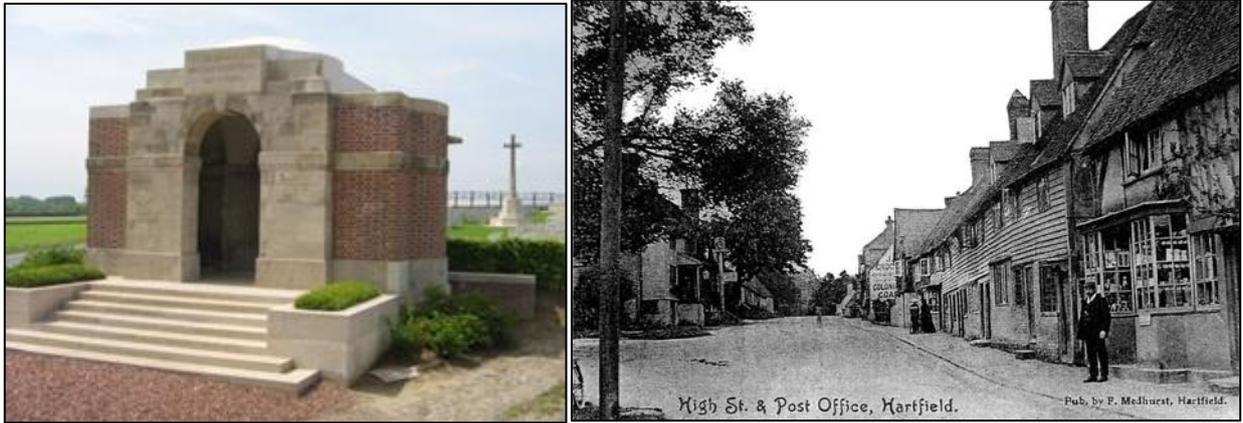
John served with the 91st Field Company, The Royal Engineers. The latter joined the 15th (Scottish) Division in January 1915, which had been formed in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Second New Army. They proceeded to France in the second week of July 1915 and saw action in the Battle of Loos (25 September - 18 October 1915). In Spring 1916, they were subject to the German gas attacks near Hulluch and fought in the defence of the Kink position. They were in action during the battles of the Somme, including Pozières, Flers-Courcelette, and the capture of Martinpuich, the battle of Le Transloy and the attacks on the Butte de Warlencourt. In 1917 they were in action in the first and second battle of the Scarpe, including the capture of Guémappe during the Arras offensive.

John was killed in action on 9 April 1917, aged 25, and is buried in Duisans British Cemetery in Etrun. The area around Duisans was occupied by Commonwealth forces from March 1916, but it was not until February 1917 that the site of this cemetery was selected for the 8th Casualty Clearing Station. The first burials took place in March and from the beginning of April the cemetery grew

very quickly. Most of the graves relate to the Battles of Arras in 1917 and the trench warfare that followed.

John is commemorated on Hartfield war memorial and in Hartfield churchyard.

Carol O'Driscoll



WALTER ALFRED GEORGE MILES

Private, 200170, 1/4 Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action, Battle of Gaza, Palestine 19 April, 1917, aged 23

Buried Jerusalem War Cemetery, Palestine

Commemorated on Upper Panel 26

Walter Alfred George Miles was born at Forest Row in the second half of 1893. His parents, Walter William Miles and Edith Taylor, had married at East Grinstead in summer 1890, and by the time of the 1891 census had a baby daughter, Lena. They were living on Tomsetts Bank in Forest Row, and Walter senior, known by his second name William, was a butcher. By 1911, the family had moved to Mount Cottage, Forest Row, where it looks as if Edith might have been the principal breadwinner as a laundress, although laundryman is written in beside William's name in a fainter ink. Walter Alfred George was presumably known by his second name as he appears as Alfred Miles, a 17 year old post boy working for the GPO. A six-year-old brother Charles completes the household.

Alfred joined the Royal Sussex Regiment at East Grinstead, although no precise record survives to say when. However, his name appears as a member of the Forest Row troop on a list of scouts who joined up before June 1915* so it was certainly during the first year of the war. It is possible that he joined up at the same time as fellow Forest Row post boy Alfred Jesse Sands, two years his junior, although the latter enlisted at Horsham. Before the war, there were eight companies in the regiment, but with the outbreak of hostilities, these were brought together as one battalion, and the 4th Battalion became Army Troops in the Home Counties division. Alfred was probably part of 'C' Company which took men from East Grinstead, Crawley and Horsham. The battalion became the 1/4th as it was later followed by a 2/4th and 3/4th. His medal card gives as the 'previous unit served' 4/1568 1 / 4 Royal Sussex Regiment.

Alfred probably sailed from Devonport with his battalion on HMT Ulysses in July 1915 to join the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. By the end of the month, the ship had sailed first to Alexandria and then to Port Said. From there it sailed to Gallipoli and Mudros. On 8 August, a date marked on his medal card as being his date of entry into the Balkans theatre of war, the men disembarked at Suvla Bay in an attempt to draw Ottoman troops away from where an earlier landing of allied troops had become bogged down. Inevitably, the new contingent was also drawn into the stalemate of trench warfare, and it was decided to evacuate the 4th battalion on 13 December 1915. Alfred had probably survived his first experience of the trenches in worse conditions than those on the Western Front.

There seems little material available on the battalion's movements in Egypt; the War Diaries have not survived, but in 1917, Alfred would have been moved with his comrades to Palestine. The first

battle of Gaza was fought in March, and once again, Alfred survived the experience, although it ended in defeat for the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, as the Ottoman Army was strongly defending the area. Following the first battle, the Turks brought in reinforcements to protect both the town, a line of redoubts, and the road out towards Beersheba.

In an attempt to turn things around in a second battle, fought between 17 and 19 April, the British employed tanks, and, for the first time in Palestine, gas shells – 4,000 of them. The Turks were outnumbered two to one, but it was the British who suffered most. Casualty figures were three times as high as for the Ottoman army, and the British lost 6,444 men in three days, one of whom was Walter Alfred George Miles. After this second battle was lost, the British turned to French and Italian reinforcements, and finally took Gaza in a third battle in November 1917.

The Commonwealth War Grave Registration Report accurately gives Alfred's full name and those of his parents, but gives his age as 21. In fact, he must have been 23, an age which is correctly recorded in the Forest Row Memorial Book. This is not surprising given that the submission was signed by his father, W W Miles, then living at 1, Triangle Cottages, Forest Row.



Jerusalem War Cemetery

Pam Griffiths

* *Thanks to Nigel Steer, ASL First Polegate Scouts, for this information.*

ALBERT MILLS

Lance Corporal, 17879, 12th Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action at the Battle of St Julien, 31 July 1917, aged 20

Buried at New Irish Farm Cemetery, St. Jean-les-Ypres

Plot IX, Row F, Grave 18

Albert Mills was baptised on 27 June 1897 in East Grinstead, the son of James Mills and his wife Sarah Ann (née Coomber). The family – consisting of builder's foreman James, Sarah Ann, James junior, Minnie, Arthur, Albert, Nellie and Stanley – were all born in East Grinstead but were enumerated in 1911 at Highgate in Forest Row. An older daughter, Edith, had married by this time. Ten years earlier, the family was living in Glenvue Road in East Grinstead, and a second daughter, Alice, was still at home; James was then a bricklayer.

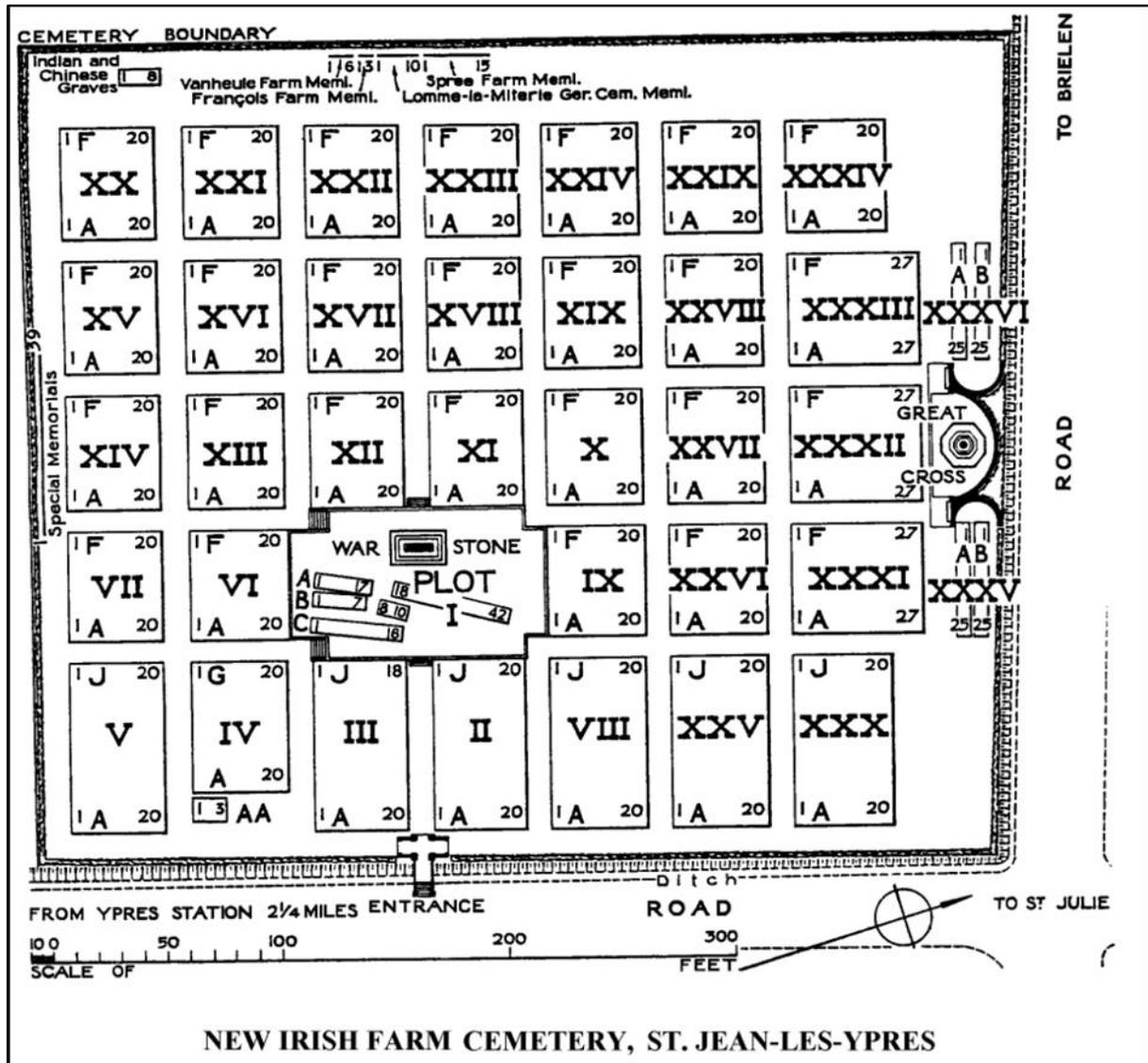
Albert was 13 and still at school in 1911 and must have been very young when he took the king's shilling. Unfortunately, his attestation papers have not survived, so it's not possible to tell when he joined up, but his rank of Lance Corporal suggests he must have served for a reasonable length of time. However, original members of the 12th Battalion who signed up in November 1914 were given the prefix SD for South Downs on their regimental numbers, so Albert must have been a later recruit. In all probability, though, by the time the battalion crossed to France, landing at Le Havre in March 1916, Albert would have been part of it.

The Forest Row Memorial Book, which records information given by his father James (living after the war at Felbridge Park) says that Albert was killed in France. However, the Battle of St Julien was fought to release the Flanders village of St Juliaan, north-east of Ypres, from the Germans - who had held it since 1916. The World War I Battlefields website <http://www.ww1battlefields.co.uk/flanders/stjulien.html> suggests the village was taken on 31 July 1917 – the day of Albert's death – by the 13th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, but both the War Memorial Book and Commonwealth War Graves Commission place Mills in the 12th. Other sources suggest the 11th, 12th and 13th battalions were almost seen as an entity, which may be the reason for the confusion. Certainly, when the 12th battalion ceased to exist in February 1918, some of its surviving members were used to reinforce the 11th and 13th. The Battle of St Julien took place on the first day of the much longer 3rd Battle of Ypres.

Albert was buried in West Vlaanderen in Belgium, not far from Ypres, one of 1,450 casualties interred at New Irish Farm, Sint Jan. This cemetery, named after a nearby farm, was opened at the outbreak of the 3rd Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele, on land that had until the beginning of 1917 been the front line.

Albert's oldest brother James Mills joined the Territorial Army in 1910, attesting his willingness to be part of the Royal Sussex 4th Battalion. He was discharged in February 1916 having completed his five year term and been awarded the 1914 and 15 Star and the British War and Victory medals. In his initial attestation he gave the name of the family home at Highgate as Oakfield Cottages.

The two other brothers, Arthur and Stanley, have left no record of their war service, but appear to have lived to a ripe old age.



Pam Griffiths

ALBERT MITCHELL

Private, 1st Battalion, The Middlesex Regiment

Killed in Action at Meteren, France, 19 April 1918, aged 33

Buried in Meteren Military Cemetery, France

Grave Reference: 1 E 141



(above) Albert Mitchell in 1900

Albert was born in 1885 in Forest Row, East Sussex, the son of Arthur and Susan Mitchell.

In the 1891 census Albert was recorded as living at The Forest, in 1901 he was living at Forest View, near Broadstone, and in 1911 he appeared in the census as being at St. Leonards. In 1901 Albert was recorded as being a golf caddie at Royal Ashdown Golf Club and by 1911 he had progressed to being a golf assistant at St. Leonards' Golf Club, where his brother Arthur was the professional.

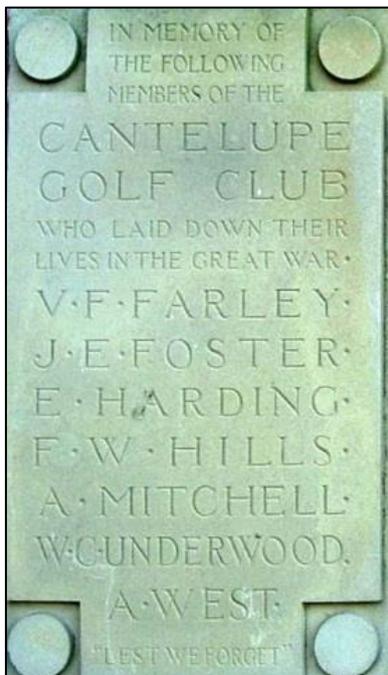
The extended Mitchell family, who had a long-standing association with Ashdown Forest as foresters, labourers and farmers, were an important local golfing family closely connected to the development of courses on the forest at the end of the 19th century. The Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club was formed around 1889 and the adjoining Cantelupe Golf Club for artisan golfers in 1894. There was a friendly rivalry between the two clubs on neighbouring courses. In the first Cantelupe Handicap Tournament that was won by Alfred Padgham, 8 of the first 9 places were members of local Mitchell families. One of them, Abe Mitchell, was to become a very famous golf professional.

Following the outbreak of war Albert enlisted in the West Kent Yeomanry in February 1915. In 1916 he transferred to the Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment 1st Battalion) and was posted to France. He was wounded the same year at the battle of the Somme. After a period of convalescence in England, he returned to France in 1917. Private Albert Mitchell of the 1st Battalion

the Middlesex Regiment was killed in action near Meteren in France on 19 April 1918 aged 33. His grave, numbered 1E141, is in Meteren Military Cemetery in France.

His mother Susan signed the entry in the Book of Remembrance in Holy Trinity Church, Forest Row. At the time she was living at Forest View, Forest Row.

Kevin Tillett



(above) Memorial commissioned for the Cantelupe Golf Club. (below) Meteren Military Cemetery.



WILLIAM PADGHAM

Private, SD/3199, 9th Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action at Ypres, Belgium, on 3 September 1917, aged 31

He was buried at La Clytte Military Cemetery, Reningheist, Belgium

The grave is found at Plot 1, Row F grave 36



William Padgham's gravestone in La Clytte Military Cemetery

Private William Padgham was born in 1885 and christened in Forest Row on 27 December 1885. He was the son of Alfred and Mary Agnes Padgham and the brother of Spencer Padgham, who was killed in action on 3 September 1916 (also profiled).

In the 1891 census William was recorded as living with Alfred, a carpenter and joiner aged 42, who had been born in Rye, Mary Agnes, aged 36, born in Forest Row, and four brothers. By 1901 the same family unit was together at 2, Medway Cottages, with the addition of a sister, Dora, aged 7.

In the 1911 census Mary is recorded as a widow. Alfred had died in March 1910 and William, now aged 26, is recorded as a single, rural postman. His brother Hector was a domestic gardener, Alexander was a grocer's assistant, and Dora was in domestic service.

William enlisted at Horsham, joining the 13th Royal Sussex Regiment, then the 11th and then the 9th Royal Sussex Regiment Service Division. His battalion was part of the 24th Division.

William was wounded on 21 October 1916 and transferred to a sick convoy with Number 27 Ambulance Team on the following day. He was taken to Number 3 Casualty Clearing Station. On 29 November 1916 he was listed as wounded by the War Office. Under admission number T2035 William is recorded as suffering gunshot wounds to his back and spine causing simple flesh contusions and wounds. (During the war some 2,272,998 men were wounded out of a total force of about 8,500,000. This meant that there was almost a 1 in 4 chance of being wounded.)

By Army Order 204 dating from 6 July 1914 William was entitled to wear a wound stripe on his uniform (*see photo*). A wound stripe could be awarded for each wound suffered. It was a two-inch stripe of gold Russian braid that was stitched onto the left sleeve of a uniform jacket. The gold braid often tarnished easily and had to be repeatedly cleaned with brass polish.



In 1917 William's battalion saw action at Vimy ridge, Messines, Piskew Ridge. Langemarch and Cambrai.

The Battle of Langemarch was part of the 3rd Battle of Ypres. It was an indecisive affair with successful Allied advances in the north but progress in the south was forced back by a powerful German counter attack. Also, progress was limited by particularly bad weather and soaking ground conditions in low-lying areas that were heavily bombarded.

From September 1st to the 3rd the battalion was based in camp in a supporting role at Dickebusch. Enemy aeroplanes were very active during this period, particularly dropping bombs on the rear supporting areas. On 3 September the battalion was relieved with the 3rd Rifle Brigade coming into the line. During the day there was heavy enemy shelling including the use of gas shells. It was on this day that William Padgham died.

William was buried in La Clytte military cemetery in the West Flanders region of Belgium. The cemetery took casualties from November 1914 up to mid-1918. After the Armistice in November 1918 many small local graveyards were relocated and concentrated at La Clytte. The area was a brigade headquarters and many of the burials were carried out by soldiers from the infantry, artillery and engineers. Some 1,082 casualties were buried or commemorated in the cemetery of which 238 are unidentified. The cemetery was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

William would have been awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal, automatically awarded on death in active service between August 1914 and November 1918. This award was

certified on 10 November 1920 by the Colonel-in-Charge of the Record Office at The Barracks, Hounslow.

After his death, William's effects included credits of £7.1s.9d. in October 1917 and a further one shilling in December. On 3 April 1918 money was dispersed as follows. £1.3s.10d. for his mother Mary, £1.3s.10d for his brother Alfred, £1.3s.9d. each for his brother Alexander and sister Dora, and £1.3s.9d. for Elizabeth Padgham, widow of his brother Spencer Padgham. On 13 June 1918 a further £1.3s.10d. was awarded to Mary at the request of William's brother Hector. A War Gratuity of £12.10s.0d. was confirmed in August 1919 and on 30 April 1920 Mary was awarded the sums of £10.8s.4d. and £2.1s.8d.



La Clytte Military Cemetery

The Memorial Book in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by William's mother Mary Agnes, resident at 1, Medway Cottages, Forest Row.

Kevin Tillet

6 October 2018

HARRY PAGE

Private, 7th The Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment

Killed in Action, Ferrar's Wood, France, 23 March 1918, aged 23

Buried in Chauny Communal Cemetery, Aisne, France

CWGC Reference: IWGC 8.4.22

Harry Page was born in 1895 at Meadowlands, Forest Row. He was the son of John and Charlotte Page. In the 1901 census Harry is recorded as living at Shepherds Well (previously Highgate) and in 1911 he was recorded as living in Hartfield Road. At that time he was listed as a builder's labourer.

The entry in the Book of Remembrance held in Holy Trinity Church, Forest Row was signed by Daisy Page (widow) of Rosemary Lane, Haddenham, Berkshire. Harry had married Daisy in 1917 at Steyning, Sussex.

Private Harry Page of the 7th The Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment was killed in action at Ferrar's Wood in France on 23 March 1918, aged 23. He is buried in the British Military Extension of Chauny Communal Cemetery in Aisne, France (Commonwealth War Graves Commission reference IWGC 8.4.22). The British extension was formed after the Armistice in 1918 specifically to hold remains collected from battlefields on the Aisne and to centralise remains from nearby smaller cemeteries. Some of the headstones therefore say 'believed to be' and some say 'buried near this spot'.

Kevin Tillet

REGINALD HENRY PANNET

Private 54458, 2/7 Battalion, Manchester Regiment

Killed in Action, Battle of the Fifth Army, aged 19

Hargicourt, Peronne, France, 21 March 1918

Buried at Pozières Cemetery, France



Reginald Henry Pannet

Reginald Henry Pannet looks out of his photograph with a mix of pride and trepidation, as well he might. His birth was registered in the final quarter of 1898, so he was only 19 when he died. Although he is recorded as having enlisted at Horsham, his attestation papers have not survived, so it is impossible to know how long he served for. His medal card shows he was awarded the Victory and British Medals, but makes no reference to which theatres of war he might have served in, suggesting perhaps a short army career. The Register of Soldiers' Effects shows that his father was paid £13 12/1 on his son's behalf on 20 September 1919.

Reginald was the son of Sussex-born Moses Pannet and his wife Mary Meadows (married 1897), and in 1891 the couple were running the Highgate Stores in Forest Row, where Moses was enumerated as a grocer. Mary came from Essex, but her two children were shown as born in Forest Row; Reginald, aged 2 in 1891 and his 9 month old sister Florence. By 1911 the family had moved to 9 Balfour Gardens, Forest Row, and Moses now gave his occupation as Colonial Butcher. There was also another daughter in the household, Beatrice, aged 8. All three children were listed as at school.

His mother signed the application for his name to appear in the Forest Row Memorial book, giving her address still as 9, Balfour Gardens, and it was therefore she who described Reginald's death as in the Battle of the Fifth Army. No battle appears to have been fought with this precise name, but the Fifth Army was a field army which was part of the British Expeditionary Force. The name Fifth Army was taken on in October 1916.

The 1918 Battles of the Somme began with a Spring Offensive launched by the Germans on 21 March 1918. This lasted until August, but it seems that Reginald did not even survive the first day. His mother recorded that he was buried at Pozières Cemetery, but it seems more likely that he was commemorated at the Pozières Memorial. This relates to a period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers during the German offensive across battlefields which had already been fought over on the Somme. This offensive lasted for some months before the Advance to Victory, which began on 8 August 1918.

The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom who have no known grave and who died on the Somme between 21 March and 7 August 1918. There are 600 names from the Rifle Brigade, another 600 from The Durham Light Infantry, 500 from the Machine Gun Corps and over 400 names from the Royal Horse and Royal Field Artillery. The Manchester Regiment, to which Reginald Henry Pannet belonged, commemorates approximately 500 men at this site.



Pozières Memorial to the Missing, Somme Battlefields

The Pozières Memorial and the cemetery were designed by W H Cowlshaw with sculpture by Laurence A Turner; it was unveiled by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien on 4th August 1930.

Pam Griffiths

EDWARD JOHN PARKER

Private, 5396, 11th Royal Fusiliers

Died in hospital at Abbeville, France, 12 January 1917

Buried at Abbeville Communal Cemetery, Plot 11, Row B, Grave 12



The Badge of the Royal Fusiliers

Edward John Parker was born in Hartfield, and baptised at the church there on 29 April 1883, the son of William and Harriet Parker. By 1891 the family was living in Forest Row, at Gilliam's Lane, near the cemetery. William was a cowman. There were three children in the family at this time: William George – listed as William, Edward John – recorded as John, and Helen Mary – known as Helen. By 1901 they had moved to Parkside Cottages, Forest Row, and another daughter, Edie, or Edith Annie, had been born. Edward, or John as he seems to have always been known, was working as a gardener. The 1911 census shows that the parents were now living at Birchgrove, but John, still working as a gardener, was boarding with John and Sarah Jenner at Morris's Cottages, Forest Row.

In early 1913, John married Lydia Mary Brooks, somewhere in the East Grinstead Registration District. She was born in Brampford Speke in Devon, but had been working as a servant in the household of Sir Lewis Dibdin (an ecclesiastical lawyer) in Dormansland. A son, Cecil, was born to John and Lydia later in the year.

According to *Ancestry's Soldiers died in the Great War*, John Parker enlisted at 'Grimstead', but I suspect this is a mis-transcription for East Grinstead. The year is not given, and no attestation papers survive. However, the Royal Fusiliers 11th Battalion (London Regiment) formed on 6 September 1914 at Hounslow, and John may well have joined up in the early days of the war. In July 1915, the battalion was mobilised and subsequently landed at Boulogne. During 1916, John may well have seen action at the battles of Albert, Bazetin Ridge, Delville Wood, Thiepval Ridge and

Ancre Heights. The battalion was also involved in the capture of Regina Trench and the Battle of the Ancre.

PARKER, Pte. Edward John, 5396. 11th Bn.
Royal Fusiliers. Died of disease 12th Jan., 1917.
Age 33. Son of William Parker, of Forest Row;
husband of Lydia Parker, of Ryst Wood Cottage,
Forest Row, Sussex. II. B. 12.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Graves Registration Register

Sources differ as to the cause of his death. Edward John Parker either died of wounds or disease, but he did die in hospital at Abbeville, which, for much of the war was headquarters for the Commonwealth lines of communication. There were a number of hospitals serving the troops, but the most likely one to have nursed John was either No. 5 British Red Cross B section or No. 2 Stationary Hospital. Both of these were operational in the right time frame. These base hospitals were part of the casualty evacuation chain, further back from the front line than the Casualty Clearing Stations. Presumably Private Parker was considered suitable for repatriation, but didn't survive to return to 'Blighty'. The Communal Cemetery at Abbeville where he was buried was in use from November 1914 until September 1916 when an extension was begun.

Lydia signed the Hartfield Memorial Book as Lydia Parker (widow), Rose Hill Cottage, Forest Row. In 1920, she married again, to Frederick Gurr. She didn't forget John though and his headstone bears the following inscription:

Thy memory shall never fade Lydia and Cecil

The Graves Registration Report form refers to her as Mrs L.M. Gurr, Lavender Platt, Forest Row, Sussex.

Pam Griffiths

WILLIAM GEORGE PARKER

Private 60759, 8th Royal Fusiliers

Killed in Action at Monchy-le-Preux, France, 31 August 1917, aged 36

Buried at Monchy British Cemetery, Plot 1, Row L, Grave 4

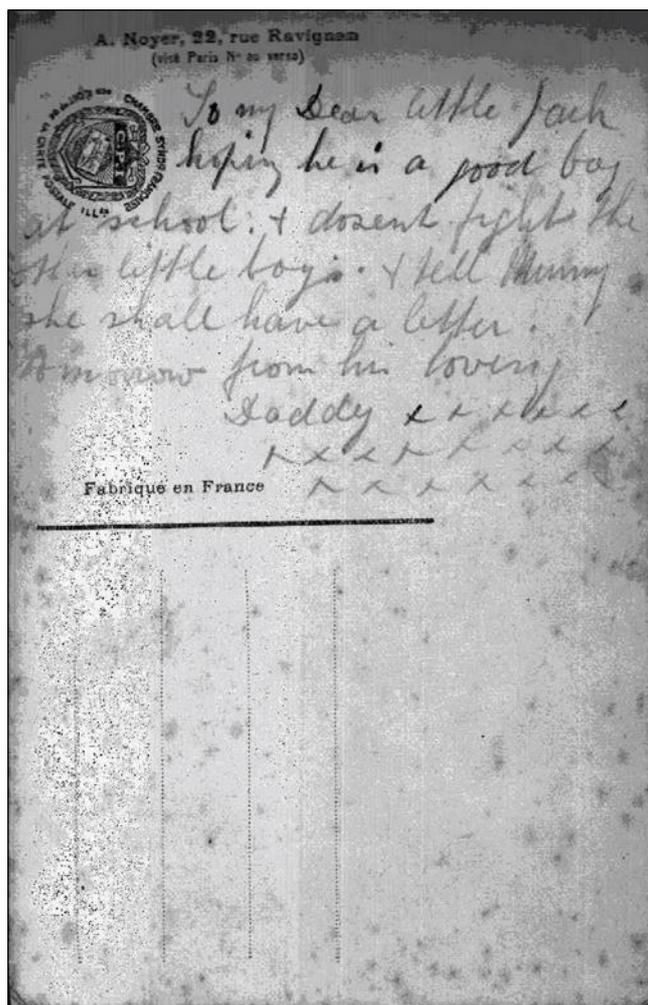


William George Parker

William George Parker was born in Hartfield where he was baptised on 30th October 1881. His parents, William Parker and Harriet Tidy, had married the year before. In 1891 the family was living in Forest Row, at Gilliam's Lane, near the cemetery. William was a cowman and there were three children: William George – listed as William, Edward John – recorded as John, and Helen Mary – known as Helen. By 1901 they had moved to Parkside Cottages, Forest Row, and another daughter, Edie, or Edith Annie, had been born, but by this time, William had left home and was living as a boarder with a family named Morris at Carterhayes Road in Enfield. He was working as a gardener in a Nurseries.

By the time of the next census he was lodging at Cedars Cottage, Harrow Weald, but working as a domestic gardener. In June that year he married Adelaide Turner, a local girl and daughter of a church cleaner. William's brother Edward was one of the witnesses to the wedding at All Saints Harrow Weald. Two children were born in London – William John in 1912 and Helen May in 1913, but by the time twins Joyce and Joan were born, in November 1914, the family was living near

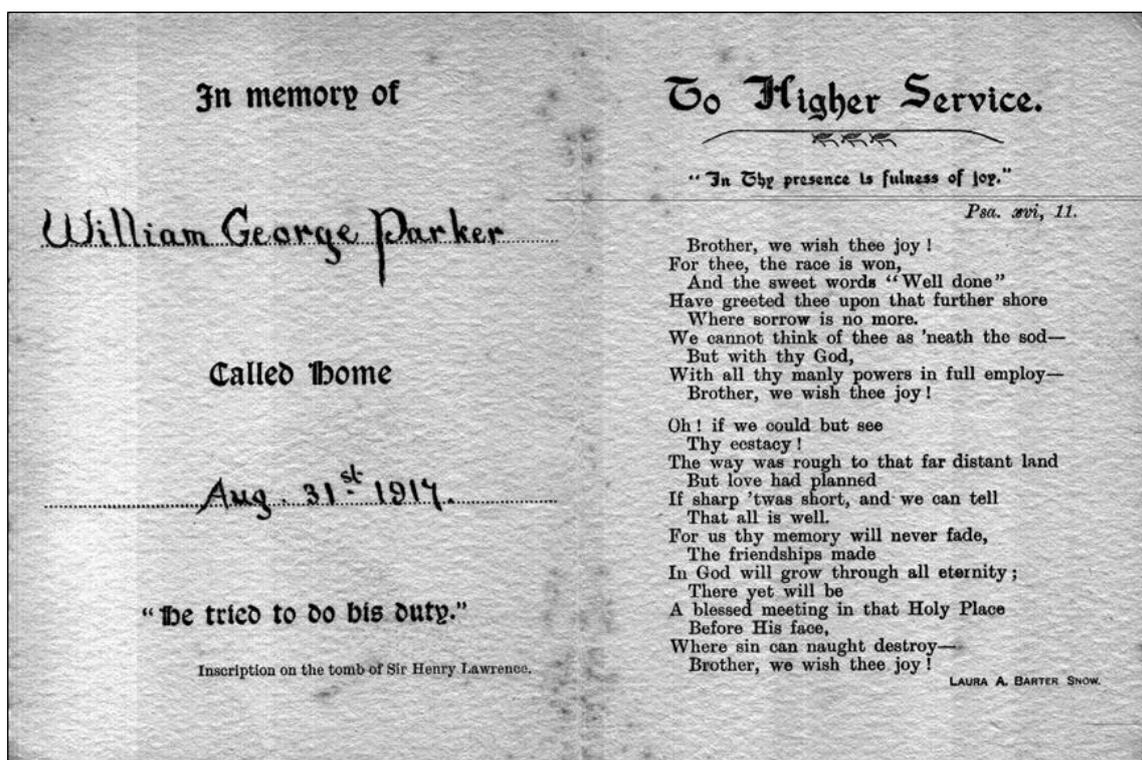
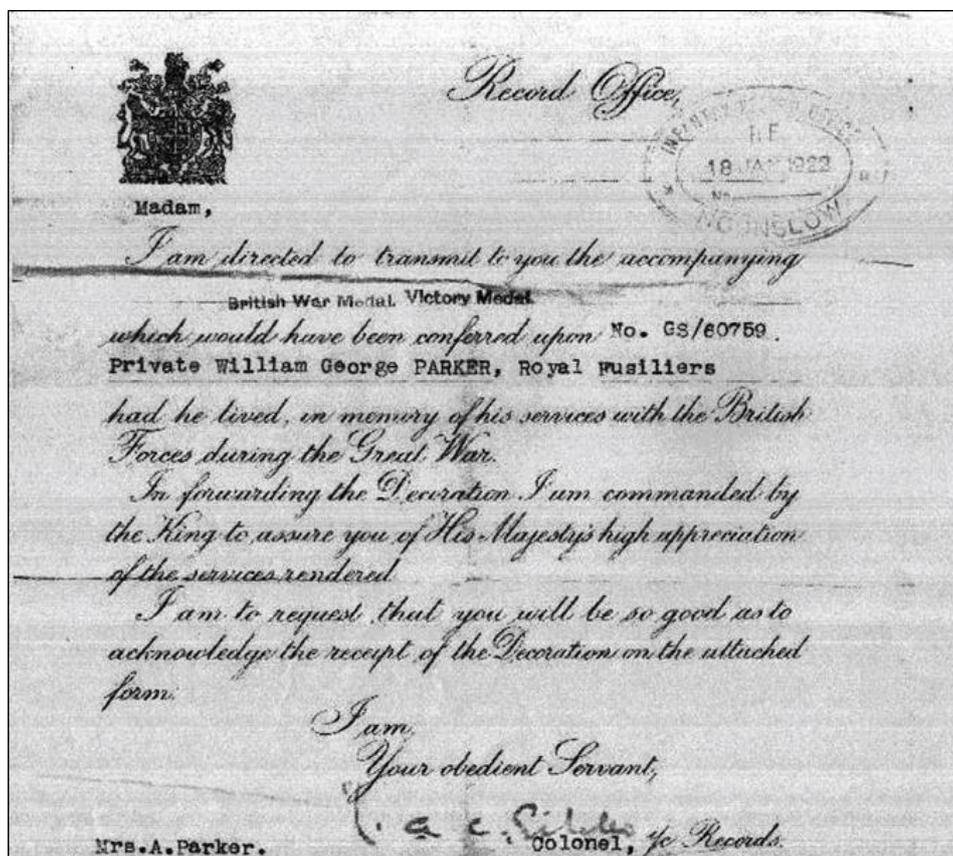
Tonbridge, probably at Riding Close in Hildenborough, which is the address on one of the postcards he sent to his son William John, known as Jack.



William enlisted at Tonbridge initially as Private 15604 in the Royal West Kent Regiment but, according to *Soldiers who died in the Great War*, was later transferred to the 8th Battalion London Regiment, also known as the Royal Fusiliers; neither the date of his first enlistment or transfer are known, but given that he had four children by November 1914, he may well have been a 1916 conscript rather than an early volunteer. A second Military Service Act in May that year made even married men between the ages of 18 and 41 liable for service.

The 8th Battalion Royal Fusiliers was part of the New Armies, and saw action on the Western Front, landing first in France in May 1915. In 1917 they were part of the Arras offensive in the 1st Battle of the Scarpe. William's battalion stayed in the Arras area until the end of October that year. Between May and October they were based near Monchy-le-Preux, mounting a number of small scale attacks and raids. In between, they repaired trenches and cleared shell damage. It was probably during these more relaxed periods that William found time to write home. There don't seem to have been any major battles for his battalion at the time of William's death in August 1917, so presumably he was killed in one of the minor skirmishes which took place.

He was buried at the British Cemetery at Monchy-le Preux in Pas de Calais, a relatively small site (with 523 casualties interred there) a short distance east of Arras. William George Parker was 36 when he died. His wife was left with four children under the age of five. In 1924 she married Ernest T. Wingrove, but she clearly kept much memorabilia which has been passed down the family. I am indebted to his descendant for allowing me to publish the following.





William George Parker is commemorated on the war memorials at Forest Row and Hildenborough.

Pam Griffiths

ALBERT EDWARD RICHARDSON

Private, 6642, 26th Middlesex Regiment

Killed in Action, Salonica, Greece, 27 February 1917

**Commemorated at the Anglo-French Military Cemetery,
Lembet Road, Salonika, Grave 828**

Born in Brighton in 1884, Albert Edward Richardson was the son of Charles James Richardson, a hotel waiter from Alfriston, and his wife Rose née Patching, a Brighton girl whom he had married in 1872. Albert was the penultimate child of a family of eight. In 1891 the family was living at Ashton Street in Brighton, but by 1901, Albert had followed his father into the 'hospitality' business and was working as a porter in the Grand Hotel in Brighton.



The Grand Hotel, Brighton

By 1907 he had left his home town, as in this year he married Clara Martin, somewhere in the East Grinstead Registration District. He had also changed his trade, as the 1911 census records him as a house painter, but also as a patient in Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead. Clara was at home in Forest Row with their two children, Albert Thomas Charles and Clara Bessie, born 1907 and 1909 respectively. Another son, Albert, was born in 1915.

Presumably Albert senior had fully recovered by the time he enlisted in the Middlesex Regiment, although there is no record of where or when he did this. This regiment is also known as the Duke of Cambridge's Own Regiment, and the 26th battalion (a service battalion) was also known as the 3rd Public Works Pioneers. It was formed in 1915 but when it landed in Salonika on 24 August 1916 it came under the command of the 27th Division as Pioneer Battalion.

The Long Long Trail website suggests there was little activity on the Salonika front in 1917, because of political changes in Greece. It names the Battle of Doiran in April as the first of the year, so presumably Albert Edward was killed in a more minor skirmish.



The Anglo-French Military Cemetery, Salonika

When Clara Richardson signed the Forest Row memorial book, she gave her address as 5, Castle Cottages. She was still living in Forest Row in 1939, but now at 2 Wood View, where her two adult sons – both plumbers – and her daughter (now Clara B. Conley) made up the rest of the household.

Pam Griffiths

CYRIL CHARLES ROBINSON

Lieutenant, 59th Squadron, Royal Air Force

Killed in Action, Doullens, France, 28 April 1918, aged 22

Buried in Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No. 2, Somme, France

Grave Reference: 1. A 32



Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No. 2

Cyril Robinson was born in Forest Row at Ashdown Park in 1896 and was the son of William Charles and Charlotte Emily Robinson. The family address, Upper Lodge, Ashdown Park, is still given in the 1901 census but by 1911 Cyril is living in Brondesbury, NW6, a clerk in the Magnet works.

At the beginning of the war aeroplanes were used for photographic reconnaissance work, a camera often mounted at the rear. Defensive manoeuvres by the opposing sides led to dogfights and bombing of ground positions. With solo reconnaissance the pilot had to fly, navigate, observe and transmit observations to ground base by wireless morse. When there was a pilot and observer the latter was at first senior, the pilot just the “driver” but gradually the roles were reversed as pilots often needed to take immediate evasive action. Parachutes, just being developed, were not used: senior staff felt that there would be a temptation to abandon the machine and many pilots felt their drag reduced the plane's effectiveness. Some parachutes were available to observers in tethered balloons.

The Royal Flying Corps merged with the Royal Naval Air Service on 1 April 1918 to become the Royal Air Force. Pre-RAF ranks continued to be used for serving men, the new RAF ranks gradually replacing them. Cyril Robinson did not survive long enough to take on a new rank.

His entry in the Forest Row memorial book was signed by his father, by then living in Hounslow, Middlesex.

Vivien Hill

ROBERT CHARLES ROBSON

Private, 28038 15th/48th Royal Highlanders of Canada

Died in hospital at Aubigny, France, 15 May 1918, aged 29

Buried in the Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension,
near the village of Aubigny-en-Artois, Pas de Calais

Grave Record IV.K.10



*(above left) The regimental badge of the 48th Highlanders of Canada
(above right) the regimental memorial in Queen's Park, Toronto*

The son of Joseph and Marian Robson, Robert Charles Robson was born at Wych Cross in 1889. The family were living in East Grinstead by the time of the 1891 census with Robert employed at Wych Cross Post Office. In 1901 the family were living at 1 Alpha Cottages, Golf Road, now Chapel Lane.

It would seem that Robert later emigrated to Canada. There was encouragement from both the British and Canadian governments for qualified men, labouring men and potential wives to emigrate. The Dominion of Canada, self-governing since 1867, was seen as a land of opportunity with markets for its products such as grain and furs back in industrialised Britain and elsewhere.

At the outbreak of war many men born in Britain as well as thousands of Canadians joined up to fight for the "mother country" and Empire. Many Canadians were of Scottish descent, the 15th/48th Highlanders had and still has links with Scots regiments as do many others. The cap badge has the

Gaelic motto “Dileas Cubrath”, "forever faithful". During the war the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) was authorised to embark on 1 September 1914, embarking on 26 September, and arriving in France on 15 February 1915. The battalion fought as part of the 3rd Infantry Brigade, 1st Canadian Division throughout the war.

There is a memorial to the fallen in Queen's Park, Toronto, the regiment's home town.

The entry in the Forest Row memorial book was signed by his father, Joseph, still living at Alpha Cottages.

Vivien Hill

WILLIAM THOMAS SANDS

**Private, 241867, 2/6th Royal Warwickshire Regiment
(formerly 2290, Royal Sussex Regiment)**

Killed in Action north-east of Ypres, Belgium, 31 August 1917, aged 23

Buried in Oxford Road Cemetery, Ypres, Belgium

Grave Reference I.B.3



(above) The grave of WT Sands, Ypres

(above) Oxford Road Cemetery, Ypres

William Thomas Sands was born in Forest Row in 1894, the elder son of Thomas and Mary Sands. His younger brother Alfred was also killed in the First World War. In 1901 he was living at Alpha Cottage, Forest Row. [This is in Chapel Lane, but the next houses on the schedule are Stone House Lodge, followed by Stone House - which is on Hartfield Road, so Alpha Cottage may have been at the bottom of Chapel Lane. Tudor Cottage – see below - is close by].

In the 1911 census he was enumerated as an apprentice draper, living with his parents, brother and two sisters at Sands Cottage, Forest Row. His father was a carpenter, born in Hartfield.

William enlisted at Horsham, Sussex. He served as a private in the 2/6th Royal Warwickshire Regiment (formerly 2290, Royal Sussex Regiment). The 2/6 Royal Warwickshire Regiment was formed in Birmingham in 1914 as a second line battalion, but seems to have been incorporated into the 2nd Warwickshire Brigade, 2nd South Midland Division before being redesignated as 182nd Brigade, 61st (2nd South Midland) Division. It arrived in France on 21 May 1916.

William was killed in action north-east of Ypres on 31 August 1917. He was 23. The entry in the Remembrance Book in Holy Trinity Church, Forest Row states that he was killed north-east of Ypres and it is signed by his mother as M Sands of Tudor Cottage [Hartfield Rd] Forest Row.

William was the only person listed in the Remembrance Book as having been part of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment; he was one of five killed at Ypres, although the only one buried at Oxford Road.

William's father Thomas was buried on 3 December 1926 from an address in Chapel Lane, Forest Row. Mary Sands was buried on 6 February 1965 from Upper Close, also Forest Row [this was one of a group of houses built as council houses between the wars, but now largely privately owned]. She was 92 and had outlived her son by 48 years.

Pam Griffiths

JACK FREDERICK SIPPETTS

Sergeant, 200777, 1/4th (T.F) Battalion (Royal) Hampshire Regiment

Died in hospital at Kasvin, Mesopotamia, 5 October 1918, aged 27

Buried in Kasvin Russian Cemetery*, Persia

Grave Reference: Row 4 Grave 4



Tehran War Cemetery

Jack Frederick Sippetts was christened at Forest Row on 30 October 1892, the son of Richard and Jemima Sippetts. In 1901 he was living at Queensborough Cottage with his parents; he seems to have been the only child. His father was enumerated in the census as a bricklayer's labourer and his mother as a laundress. He has not been found in the 1911 census, though his father – a general labourer – and mother were living at 5, Castle Cottages in Forest Row.

Jack enlisted at Hamilton Camp, Hampshire, and was 27 when he died. The entry in the Remembrance Book in Holy Trinity Church, signed by his mother, Jemima Sippetts, of 3, Castle Cottages, Forest Row, states that he was born on Tompsetts Bank (which places him in the heart of Ashdown Forest) and died in hospital in Kasvin, Mesopotamia (presumably Qazvin in modern Iran, about 150 km north-west of Tehran). However, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website places him in Tehran Cemetery.

Jack was the only person listed in the Remembrance Book as having been part of the 1/4th Hampshire Regiment, and the only person to have died and be buried at Kasvin. The 1/4th Battalion Hampshire Regiment was formed as part of the Territorial Force at Winchester in 1914 as part of the Hampshire Brigade in Wessex Division. If Jack joined up at the outbreak of war he would have sailed with them to India in August 1914. By March 1915, though, the battalion was in Basra and remained in Mesopotamia and Persia for the rest of the war.

Queensborough Cottage was an adapted, timber-framed Wealden house, and stood across the present Forresters Green from the pub. It was also known, presumably ironically, as Queensborough Castle. It was demolished in the 1930s, but there is a picture in the Peter Kirby photographic collection. Castle Cottages were situated near the Brambletye Castle pub.

Pam Griffiths

**The CWGC site refers to this as Kasvin British War Cemetery; there is no reference to a Kasvin Russian Cemetery.*

FREDERICK CHARLES SOUTHEY

Driver, 212962, 97th Labour Corps, Royal Army Service Corps

Died in hospital, Salonika, Greece, 2 January 1919

Buried Mikra British Cemetery, near Salonika, Grave 1123

Frederick Charles Southey was baptised at Figheldean near Amesbury in Wiltshire on 9 December 1888. According to the transcript, he was named Charles Frederick, but either this is an error or the names were quickly reversed in everyday use as he appears as Frederick Charles on the census returns and in the Forest Row Memorial Book. However, he enlisted simply as Charles Southey, so maybe this was the name he was known by. His parents were Francis Henry Southey, labourer, and his wife Lucy, née Canning, whom he had married in 1882. Frederick was the third child in the family, following older siblings Mary and Francis. Later, Louis, Amy, Alfred, Percy and Hedley joined the household.

The 1891 census, which records Francis senior as a carter, doesn't give a full address, but the surrounding entries are all for cottages in Figheldean. It seems likely that they were still in the same house in 1901, when the word 'Cottage' appears in the first column; Francis is still a 'carter on farm' and Frederick and his older brother are listed as 'ploughboys on farm'.

In 1911 the family is to be found at Countess Amesbury, in a household of nine in three rooms. Francis senior and Francis junior and Louis are all carters, but Frederick is simply recorded as a farm labourer, aged 22. However, he had already enlisted for four years' service in the 1st S.W.M. Brigade of the Territorial Force on 18 February, at Amesbury. He gave his age as 21, a little lower than his actual 22 years, but as he made his mark rather than signing the papers, perhaps his arithmetic was as lacking as his writing. He gave his place of birth as Amesbury, and described himself as a labourer in the employ of a Mr Blake.

The medical inspection pronounced him fit, with good vision and physical development, measuring him at 5' 6" and 37 1/2" in girth with an expansion of 3 1/2". However, despite his apparent willingness to 'go for a soldier' the record shows him to have been at home until 4 March 1916, a period of 5 years and 16 days. On 15 March a memorandum was sent from Exeter to Eastbourne requesting that attestation papers be completed for 'No T158. Dr Southey C., and as this was accompanied by a typed section stating:

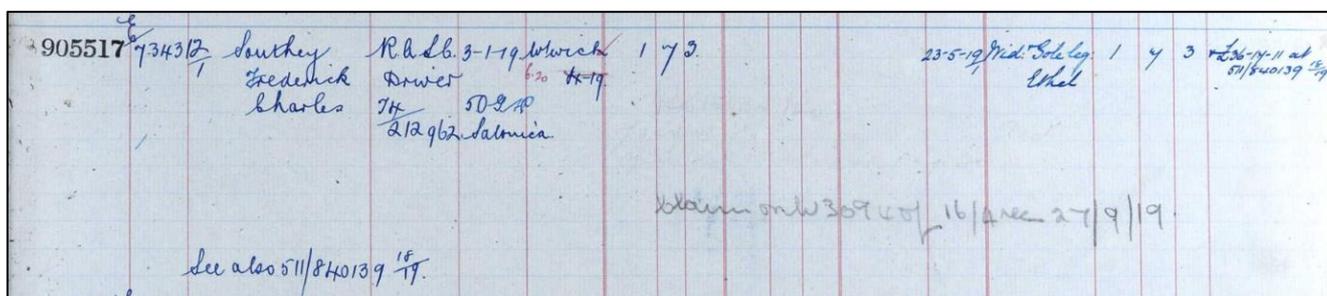
Herewith attestation papers of Driver C Southey completed and returned please

I assume that Dr stands for driver in this instance and that he had already undertaken some training in this skill. The next page is an affirmation that Southey is willing to serve in the T A 8 Column 1st S W M Brigade outside the UK if need be, and was taken at Forest Row in October 1914. There was

apparently some delay in the paperwork as Charles was on leave at this point. A further medical examination put his weight at 140 lbs, and recorded that he had been vaccinated as an infant and been inoculated in 1915. Vision was still good. His discharge from his earlier Territorial service, dated 4 February 1916, at Eastbourne, describes him as fair of complexion and hair – though inclined to baldness – to have grey eyes and be clean-shaven. He was of good character and intending to live at Forest Row. His rank was 1st class driver, receiving the 7th rate of corp pay.

His brother Francis also joined the Territorial Army on the same February day in 1911. Like Frederick, he gave his age as slightly less than it was. He was an inch taller than his brother, but capable of slightly less expansion. He was also employed by Mr Blake, but as a carter, which may explain why he served as a driver, apparently of ambulances in the Army Service Corps. He survived the war and was demobbed in May 1919 from Salonika and returned to Countess, where he was living in 1923. Maybe the brothers served together, for at least part of the time.

While in the T A, Frederick left Wiltshire, as when he married, in 1915, it was in East Grinstead Registration District. His bride was Ethel Martin, eight years his senior, and daughter of Forest Row blacksmith George Martin. His family lived at 5 Rose Cottages in Forest Row from at least 1881 until 1911 and possibly beyond. Ethel gave no. 4 Rose Cottages as her address when she submitted her husband's details for the Forest Row Memorial Book, so presumably she was living next door to her parents. The row of five cottages known as Rose Cottages was built on the London Road in Forest Row, not far from the bridge over the Medway. They date from the 18th century, and are currently listed as Grade II. They are of two storeys, with attics, and have attractive red brickwork mixed with grey.



The Register of Soldiers' Effects shows Ethel to have been the sole legatee, receiving £36 17/11. It also shows that Frederick died at the 50th General Hospital in Salonika, although the cause is unknown. The Salonika (Thessalonika) campaign was notorious for the harshness of the terrain the men were fighting in, the extremities of the climate and the toll taken by disease. Malaria was the chief risk to health, and there were some 160,000 hospital admissions in three years. Given that this was almost as many men as were fighting there at any one time, this is an incredible statistic. It seems likely that malaria may well have been the cause of Frederick Charles' death. Alternatively, if he was an ambulance driver like his brother, he may have picked up some other infectious disease from one of the soldiers he transported. Hostilities in this area had ceased on 30 September 1918,

after Bulgaria signed an armistice the day before. So Frederick did not die until fully three months after 'his' war ended.

The artist Stanley Spencer, who served on this front, created a series of moving paintings showing soldiers' lives in Salonika.

Southey's widow Ethel lived on as a widow for many years at 4 Rose Cottages, dying on 15 April 1951 at the Kent and Sussex Hospital in Tunbridge Wells.



War Memorial - Amesbury

Frederick Charles Southey also appears on the War Memorial in his home area at Amesbury. The Gravestone Photographic Resource notes the following details:

Driver Frederick Charles Southey T4/212962 Royal Army Service Corps
Horse Transport. He was the elder brother of Lewis V Southey; son of
Francis Henry and Lucy Southey of Countess Road; Amesbury.



His brother Lewis Victor Southey had joined the Wiltshire Regiment; he died of dysentery on 10 November 1918 and was buried at the Hadra Cemetery in Alexandria. The family was very unlucky to have two sons die of illness right at the end of hostilities.

Pam Griffiths

27 August 2018

CHARLES EDWARD STEVENS

Private, G/19177, 7th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)

Killed in Action, 21 March 1918, near Chauny, France, aged 29

Buried in Chauny Communal Cemetery British Extension: Grave 1. J. 12

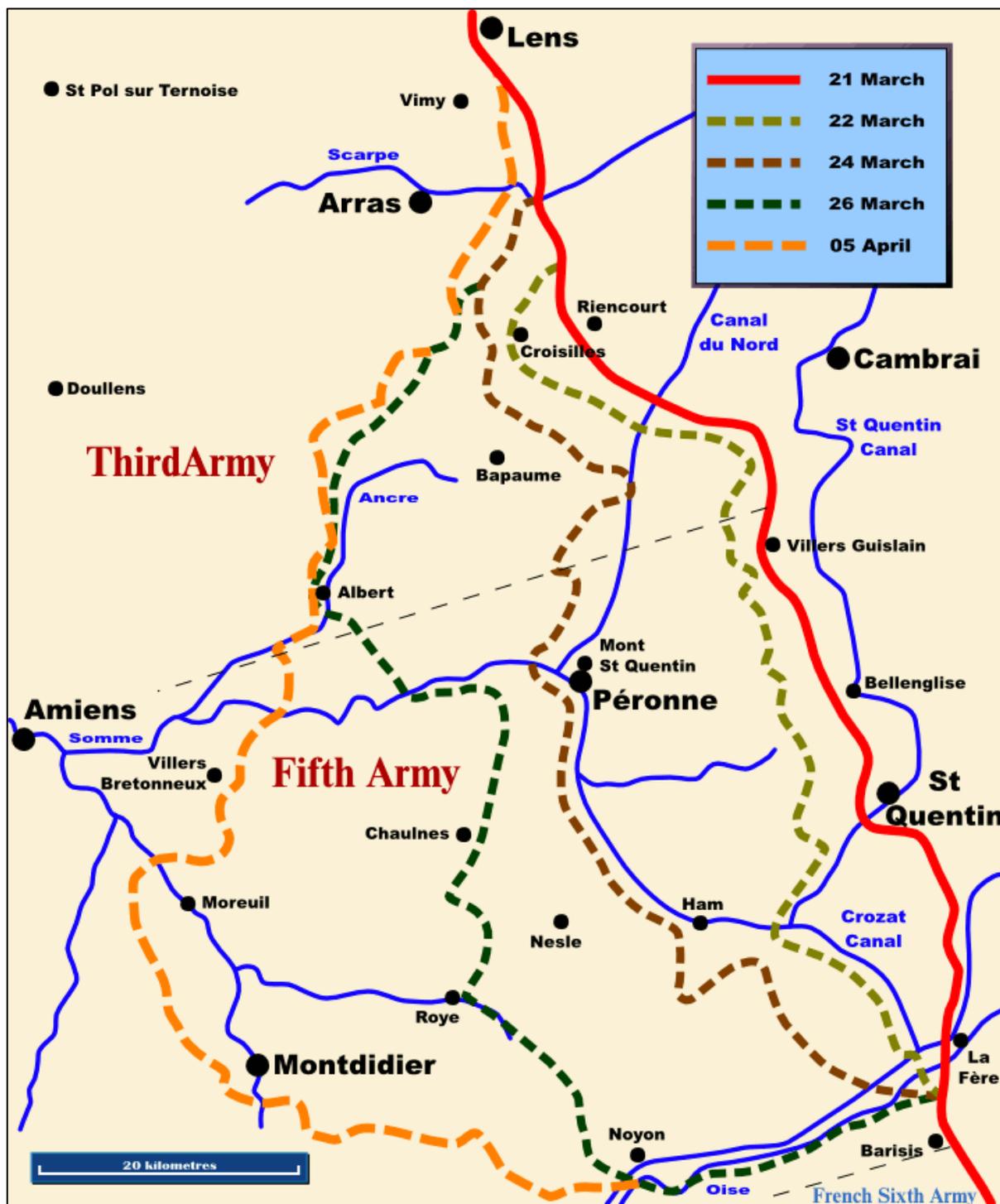


Private Charles Edward Stevens, G/19177, 7th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), was born in Barming, East Farleigh, Kent in 1888. He lived at White House Farm, Coleman's Hatch and 38 Granville Road, Tunbridge Wells. He was killed in action on 21 March 1918 near Chauny, France, aged 29, and is buried in Chauny Communal Cemetery British Extension: Grave 1. J. 12.

According to the British Army First World War Service Records Charles Stevens served at "Home" from 29 December 1914 to 3 January 1917. He then served with the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) from 4 January 1917 to 30 July 1917. He was then serving at "Home" from 31 July to 11 March 1918. He was then listed as back with the BEF from 12 March 1918 until his death on 21 March.

Charles Edward Stevens was killed in one of the first battles of the German 1918 offensive. It took place on the Somme battlefield of 1916. The British suffered from possessing incomplete trench lines as a result of an advance after the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line the previous year. In the days prior to the assault, numerous German prisoners alerted the British to an impending attack. While some preparations were made, the BEF was unready for an offensive of the size and scope unleashed by the German Army.

Charles Edward Stevens was killed during the Battle of Saint Quentin on the Western Front, part of “Operation Michael” which took place between 21 March and 5 April 1918. By mid-February 1918, the Germans had moved many divisions from the now collapsed Eastern Front to the West. The BEF had to undertake a fighting retreat. The German Army pummelled the British lines, the barrage causing 7,500 casualties.



Charles Stevens was the son of F. Edward and Rosaline Stevens. In the 1891 census he was recorded as living, aged 2, at Markshouse Lane, Rusthall (near Tunbridge Wells) with his family. The 1911

census lists his occupation as a bill poster. The Hartfield History Group website lists his pre-war occupation as an employee of Rickwood & Co, Vale House for 15 years.

On 29 February 1908 Charles married Alice Wheatley. They had three children: Alice Cecilia Stevens, born 11 November 1908 (she lived until 1987), Emily Rose Stevens, born 15 November 1910, and Caroline Annie Stevens born 13 January 1914. In 1911 the family lived at 38 Granville Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. In 1914 they had moved to 23 Upper Street, Denny Bottom, Tunbridge Wells.

Alice Wheatley's father and mother died within a few days of each other early in February 1927. Her brother Jesse died on 18 April 1917.



Chauny Communal Cemetery British Extension

Charles Edward Stevens is commemorated on the Hartfield War Memorial and on the St. James Church Memorial, Tunbridge Wells.



Also commemorated on Tunbridge Wells War Memorial (above)

Carol O'Driscoll

WILLIAM JOSEPH STYLES

Private, TF/200168, 'C' Company, 1st /4th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action, Monday, 29 July 1918, at Soissons, Aisne, France, aged 22

Buried at Raperie British Cemetery, Villemontoire, Aisne, Grave 6, Row E, Plot 9



William Joseph Styles was born at the Lower Green, Forest Row, in 1896 to parents Joseph and Annie Styles, who were married in 1888.

In the 1901 census William, aged 5, lived with his father Joseph, a 34-year-old platelayer for the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway, and mother Annie, aged 38, who was born in Ifield, Sussex. They resided at Lower Green in Forest Row with Annie aged 13, Rose aged 10, and Albert aged 3. Annie's mother, Mary Ann Tester, aged 71, also lived with them.

In the 1911 census, William, now 15, was recorded as a carter boy on a farm. Also present were Joseph and Annie, Albert, now 13 and at school, and Charley aged 8. Mary Ann Tester aged 81 was also present.

William first served in the Balkans from 8 August 1915. The regiment was active at Gallipoli, Alexandria, Gaza and Jerusalem. In mid-1918 the regiment moved to France, rejoining the 34th Division on 30 June, preparing for the Battle of Soissons. On 28 July at 9.30pm the battalion was led to a point of assembly ready for an advance under a creeping barrage at 4.10am on Monday 29 July. The objective was to take the Grand Rozoy to Beugnaux Road. Unfortunately the French guide lost his way. But by 2.45am on the 29th the battalion was at the right assembly point and were already under attack. Two captains were killed at 3.00am. At 4.00am the battalion advanced on a two-platoon front and were soon within 100 yards of the objective. A temporary halt was called to consolidate and at 6.00am the advance continued but was held up by enemy machine gun fire from the woods. No artillery support could be called up because of a lack of communications so the line

was pulled back. However by 7.00am the edge of the woods were successfully rushed with bayonets, many enemy were killed and machine guns captured. No further advance was possible. As the men entered the wood they were now faced with deadly machine gun fire from all sides. Up to 8.00am they were pinned down by machine-gun fire and point blank artillery salvos. At 8.45am the line was withdrawn to consolidate. Casualties on Monday the 29th amounted to 3 officers and 42 other ranks killed, 4 officers and 125 other ranks wounded, and 29 other ranks missing. This was the day William Styles was killed.



On 31 July the objective of the 29th was attacked again and by 2 August the enemy had withdrawn.

Private Styles was originally buried at Grave 5 on the right hand side of the road from Grand Rozoy to Qulchy-le-Chateau. He was later reburied at Grave 6, Row E, Plot 9 at Raperie British Cemetery, Villemontoire, in the Aisne department of north-eastern France. The grave inscription reads: "He was loved by all. Rest in Peace."

The cemetery at Villemontoire lies about 10 kilometres from Soissons. It holds 612 casualties, of whom 498 are identified, mainly relating to the victorious advance of of the 15th Scottish and 34th Division soldiers under French leadership from 23 July to 2 August 1918. The cemetery was completed after the Armistice by gathering together various battlefield graves and several smaller burial grounds.

The Book of Remembrance in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by William Styles' mother, Annie, of Tugela Cottage, Forest Row.

Kevin Tillet

26 August 2018

CHARLES SYMS

Private 892, 7th East Surrey Regiment

Killed in Action near Amiens, France, 4 April 1918

Buried at Viller-Bretonneux Military Cemetery, France

Plot 15, Row E, Grave 3

Charles Syms was born in Bromley by Bow in London in 1892, the second child of Montagu and Mary Ann Syms (née Campin). The family had moved around a fair bit; the parents came from London and Buckinghamshire, but had married at Holmwood in Surrey. Montagu gave his occupation as dairy man, but his father was a solicitor's clerk. Older daughter Emily was born in Sutton and younger daughter Doris at Paddock Wood. In 1891 they were all living at Sea View Cottages in Capel le Ferne near Folkestone, where Montagu was a dairy foreman. By 1911 they had moved to Trimmers Pond in Forest Row, and Montagu was now a milkman. Charles, aged 19, was working as a gardener.

Charles Syms enlisted in the army at Weybridge, and although there is no record as to when, his medal card shows that he was sent to the Western Front on 1 June 1915. To begin with, he was part of the 7th Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment, but was later moved to the 8th, presumably when the 7th was disbanded. A letter to Lieutenant-Colonel L D Scott of the 7th Battalion dated 4 February 1918 at the end of the War Diary gives some flavour of the action Syms may have seen:

During my command of the Division, the 7th Battn. East Surrey Regiment has always distinguished itself by its fine fighting qualities, and by its smartness and excellent discipline. From the fighting at THE QUARRIES in October, 1915, to that at CAMBRAI in November 1917, the Battalion has invariably done well, and I have at all times felt the greatest confidence that it would carry out its task with dash and gallantry.

On the day of Charles Syms' death, the entry in the 8th Battalion war diary is long and detailed. It begins at 5 a.m. with heavy shelling including gas and smoke shells, which stopped after half an hour and then recommenced at 6 o'clock. The weather was poor, with rain falling incessantly all morning, which made it hard for the men to keep rifles in good working order, and at 6.30 they suffered an infantry attack. By mid-morning:

The men's clothes and hands were covered with liquid mud and the mere action of inserting afresh clip in the magazine entailed a certain amount of mud being inserted with it. Lewis guns, in particular, presented an almost impossible task, although the gunners did their best to keep them clean... one man even tore up the tail of his shirt in order to clean his gun.

Fighting continued all day, and casualties were heavy. One of the many killed in the chaos was Charles Syms, and given the description of the day's action, it is not surprising that his medal card notes that he was 'presumed dead'. Although he has a marked grave, with the inscription:

He has fought the good fight

it seems probable that his body was lost in the mud and was unidentifiable.

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
SYMS.		E SURR R	Pte	892
Charles		— " —	— " —	— " —
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.	
VICTORY	E/1103 B	50	Pres. dead: 4/4/18.	
BRITISH	Do	Do		
15 STAR	E/114 B 1	49.		
Theatre of War first served in		(1) France		
Date of entry therein		1/6/15.		

K. 1380.

Charles Syms' medal card

The Viller-Bretonneux Cemetery, designed by Lutyens, is the resting place for over 1500 identified casualties of the First World War, many of them belonging to Commonwealth forces, but also to another 600 who were never identified.

By the time his mother submitted his details for the Forest Row Memorial Book, his parents were living at 3, Carlton Terrace in Forest Row. The Commonwealth War Graves site has the couple living at 99 Queen's Road East Grinstead, which is possibly a later address.

Charles' father Montagu died in 1931, in the East Grinstead registration district; his mother's death has not been found.

Pam Griffiths

WILLIAM EDGAR TESTER

Private, G/4534, 12th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

**Killed in Action on 24 September 1917 during the Battle of the Menin Road,
Third Battle of Ypres, near Ypres, Belgium**

He has no known grave and is listed on the Tyne Cot Memorial: Panel 86 to 88



The 12th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment 1915 (©Paul Reed)

Private William Edgar Tester, G/4534, 12th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, was born in Forest Row. He enlisted at East Grinstead. He was killed in action during the Battle of the Menin Road, Third Battle of Ypres, on 24 September 1917 near Ypres, Belgium. He has no known grave and is listed on the Tyne Cot Memorial: Panel 86 to 88.

In 1911 William Tester was 22 and living in Nutley Road, Forest Row, with his father, William, aged 50, who was a painter's labourer, and his mother, Fanny, aged 52. He was a gardener. His brother, Gilbert, lived at the same address, aged 20 and was a groom. Gilbert died in 1977 aged 86 in Crawley.

The 12th battalion was formed on 3 November 1914 by Lieutenant-Colonel Claude Lowther M.P. and Committee. It was known as "Lowther's Lambs".

The "Battle of the Menin Road" was the third British general attack of the Third Battle of Ypres. The battle took place from 20-25 September 1917 in the Ypres Salient in Flanders on the Western Front.

On 23 and 24 September 1917 the Battalion was active in an area known as Tower Hamlets. They were relieving the 13th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment and the 14th Hampshire. They experienced very heavy shelling: 2 officers were wounded; of the other ranks 48 were killed, 117 wounded and 26 listed as missing. It is likely that William Tester was one of these men.

Tower Hamlets remained in German hands after the battle.



The British Army at the Battle of the Menin Road Ridge, 24 September 1917.

(Source:www.warhistoryonline.com)

Listed on the War Memorials in Coleman's Hatch and Hartfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

ARTHUR WILLIAM TITCOMB

Private, 40983, Depot, Royal Fusiliers (37th)

Died 29 January 1917 at Lewisham Hospital aged 40

Buried in St Mary's Hartfield Churchyard: Grave H 23



Private Arthur William Titcomb, 40983, Depot, Royal Fusiliers (37th) was born in South Marston, near Swindon, Wiltshire in 1877, the son of Ralph and Alice Titcomb. He enlisted in June 1916 and died from the effects of shell shock on 29 January 1917 at Lewisham Hospital, London, aged 40. He is buried in the churchyard of St Mary's, Hartfield (grave H 23), and is listed on the war memorial in Hartfield.

Arthur's father, Ralph, was listed in the 1871 census as a publican in South Marston, Wiltshire. By the 1881 census he was listed as a farmer aged 48 at Manor Farm in Woolstone, Berkshire and his mother, Alice, was listed as a farmer's wife. Arthur had eight siblings at that time. By 1901 his father had been widowed and was listed as a general labourer aged 67.

In 1911 Arthur's address was Furzedown, Kings Somborne, Hampshire and his occupation is listed as a groom. His pre-war occupation was coachman, and he was living at the Coach House, Bolebroke Castle, Hartfield.

It is believed that Arthur married Jane Eliza (née Kemm) Titcomb in 1910 and it appears that they moved to Hartfield between 1911 and 1916. They had the following children: Ernest Arthur Robert

(1911-45), William J. (b.1912), Sydney R. (b.1913), Cecil J. (1916-1923), Margaret (b.1919). (It is likely that Margaret took her late father's surname although we are unsure of the identity of her father.)

Jane Eliza was living at 30, Drew St., Rodbourne, Swindon, Wiltshire in 1917.

Arthur's first-born son, Ernest, served with the Royal Navy in the Second World War and was killed in January 1945 aged 34 while serving on *HMS Searcher*. He was buried in Glasgow, where his wife, Margaret, came from. He had been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) and is commemorated on the Wroughton War Memorial in Wiltshire.

The birth of his fourth son, Cecil, was registered in East Grinstead in 1916. He died aged 7 in 1923 and his death was registered in Swindon, Wiltshire.

Arthur's sister Emily was listed as a widowed nurse, living in Swindon, in 1911. Her married name was Godwin. Emily and mother Alice were living with Emily's brother Ernest, who was listed as a general labourer aged 33 in 1911. His sister Sarah was a servant for a solicitor, Alfred Vacek, and his mother Caroline Vacek in Merton, south London in 1901. His younger sister Beatrice's husband, Sydney, also served in the First World War, having signed up as a Territorial in 1913.

Before enlisting in June 1916 Arthur worked as a coachman for Percival Ramsay Mann, who owned Bolebroke, near Hartfield, a castle that is a former hunting lodge of Henry VIII. Percival Mann (1882-1942), a member of the Mann brewery family, served in the First World War as a captain in the Royal Artillery, and was awarded the OBE for services in France in 1919.

Percival's son also served with the Royal Artillery in the Second World War. He died from a ruptured appendix in hospital on 7 January 1941 in Khartoum, Sudan, aged 21, and is buried in Khartoum War Cemetery: Grave 9. B. 7. He is also listed on the war memorial in Hartfield, and there is also a memorial plaque on the north wall of St Mary's Church, Hartfield in his memory.

Percival Mann had a cricket ground built at Bolebroke and occasionally fielded his own team which included a visit from his cousin F J Mann, the England and Middlesex cricketer.

Carol O'Driscoll



The grave of Arthur William Titcomb in Hartfield churchyard

ALBERT ERNEST STANDEN TOMSETT

Private, 4th Royal Sussex Regiment; attached 4th Tank Corps

Died of Wounds on 26 March 1918 at Etaples, France, aged 24

Buried at Etaples Military Cemetery

Grave Reference: Plot XXX.J.24A



Albert Ernest Standen Tomsett was born in 1893 at Forest Row. His parents were Albert and Bertha Tomsett née Weller, who had married in 1891. Albert's namesake, Albert senior's brother Ernest Standen Tomsett, had joined the Rifle Brigade in 1887, which may have influenced his nephew's decision to join up (both Standen names commemorate Albert senior's father, who is recorded as Standing Tomsett). By contrast, Albert senior was a house painter. The census returns show the family, including a younger sister Dora, living in Hartfield Road, Forest Row in 1901 and at Clyde Cottage, Highgate, in 1911, when Albert junior was recorded as an apprentice at the cycle works. His father also gave Clyde Cottage as his address when he signed the Memorial Book.

Both the names Tomsett and Standen would suggest long-standing roots in the area: Forest Row has a road named Tompsets Bank, named for one Widow Tompset who was granted land there at the time of the 17th century enclosures, while Standen was a farm in East Grinstead, developed by the Beale family in the late 19th century into an Arts and Crafts house and garden.

Albert is one of five men commemorated on the Forest Row Memorial who were members of the 4th Royal Sussex Regiment. This was formed in 1908, and became part of the Territorial Force, with C company being recruited from East Grinstead and Crawley. In 1914 the companies were

rationalised, with C joining with E which recruited from Horsham, and the 4th became the 1/4th Battalion which served in Gallipoli between August and December 1915. The battalion then moved to Egypt before taking part in operations in Palestine in 1917 – notably the three Battles of Gaza and the Capture of Jerusalem. 1918 found the battalion on the Western Front in France where it fought in the Battles of the Marne and at Ypres, but by this time Albert was already dead.

Pam Griffiths

ALGERNON HYDE VILLIERS

Lieutenant, Lothians and Border, Horse, Att'd 121st Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Killed in Action, Battle of Cambrai, Bourlon Hill. France, 23 November 1917

Commemorated at Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, Nord Pas-de-Calais, Panel 1



Cambrai Memorial

At first glance, there seems to be no good reason why the name Algernon Hyde Villiers should appear on the Forest Row War Memorial. Neither he nor any of his immediate birth family had ever lived in the area. However, I suspect it was to her parents' home at Cherry Orchard in Forest Row that his widow returned after his death, and it was she who put his name forward for the memorial book there.

Algernon Hyde Villiers had a distinguished ancestry. His grandfather, George Villiers, was 4th Earl of Clarendon, and owed his title to the first earl, Edward Hyde, who in turn was grandfather to two Queens of England – Mary II and Anne. After the male Hyde line failed, a granddaughter of the last Earl married a member of the Villiers family – a man whose ancestor was brother to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, favourite of James I – and the earldom was created anew. In addition, Algernon Villiers could claim descent from the Howard Dukes of Norfolk.

To come back up to date, Villiers was the son of the Right Honourable Sir Francis Hyde Villiers and his wife Virginia Katharine Smith (whom he had married in 1876.) *The Times* announced his birth on 1 February 1886 at 55 Cadogan Place, although his wife placed the birth at 103 Sloane Street, which lies opposite Cadogan Place, just across a private park. Both addresses lie between Sloane

Square and Knightsbridge. There were three older siblings, Dorothy, Eric and Gerald, and a sister Marjory was born a few years later. Like two of his elder siblings, he was baptised at Chelsea Holy Trinity Church, on 15 March 1886 in his case. (The other two were christened at Slaugham in Sussex.)

The father boasted a distinguished career in the Foreign Office and was appointed Private Secretary to Lord Rosebery (later Prime Minister) three days after Algernon's birth. He held several posts at different times as a Private Secretary as well as being a Privy Counsellor. Between 1906 and 1911 he was Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Portugal, a role he repeated in Belgium before becoming Ambassador to that country after the War. He was awarded numerous decorations, including the Order of the Bath. It is probably because of his father's role in Portugal that Algernon Hyde Villiers' name appears on the first class passenger list of the SS Thames, arriving at Southampton from Lisbon in 1906. He returned to Lisbon on the SS Aragnaya in 1907.

In 1891 the family was living at 103 Sloane Street, Chelsea, being cared for by a live-in staff of eight. Francis was described as a clerk at the Foreign Office. Ten years later, Algernon was at Wellington College in Berkshire as a pupil. Interestingly, he gave his place of birth as Sloane Street, so maybe the family moved 'across the road' shortly after his birth.

According to the *London Stock Exchange Memorial Roll* he won a scholarship at Wellington, and:

When only sixteen gained a Demyship at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he graduated with double honours.

A demyship is a form of scholarship; he matriculated in 1903. The same source has him travelling to America with the Head of Ruskin College before entering the office of James Capel and Co., a stockbroker's company in London. In 1911 the electoral roll shows him living at 5 Tedworth Square, Chelsea although the census places him at Oakley Square in north-west London and describes him as a Clerk at the Stock Exchange. The following year he was made partner in another stockbroking firm – Govett, Sons and co.

In the interim he had married Beatrice Elinor Paul at St Margaret's, Westminster (the church of the Houses of Parliament) on 4 October 1911. She had been born in Chelsea but was living with her mother and siblings in Forest Row in 1911. Her parents were Herbert Woodfield Paul, variously a journalist, barrister and MP, and his wife Elinor (née Budworth). This was very much a society wedding, and as such was extensively reported. On 6 October 1911 the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* published a long piece describing Francis Villiers as British minister at Brussels and Henry Paul as a well-known historian and late MP for Northampton:

The bride... wore a dress of soft white satin, the corsage being covered with pearl-embroidered tulle, while she also wore a veil of gossamer tulle over a wreath of orange flowers and myrtle, and carried a bouquet of white roses.



Small Talk – The Sketch, 23 August 1911

Algernon's brother Eric was best man; the reception was at 5 Buckingham Gate, and Sir Harry Verney lent the couple Claydon House in Buckinghamshire for the honeymoon. The marriage was also reported in the *Buckinghamshire Advertiser*, *The Scotsman*, *The Tatler*, *The Globe*, *The London Daily News*, and, of course, *The Times*.

A son Charles was born to the couple in 1912 and a daughter Mary followed in 1917, only two months before Algernon died. In the interim, the electoral register places him in Tedworth Street and Amphill Square, St Pancras (1913) and Draycott Place, Chelsea (1915). It was presumably while he was living at St Pancras that he helped run Boys' Clubs in the run-down area of Somerstown behind St Pancras railway station. It was at this time also that he applied to become a member of the Stock Exchange, for the year commencing 25 March 1912 (presumably he had to renew his membership each year). He stated himself to be 26 years of age and a British citizen, living at 21 Amphill Square Euston with offices at Basildon House in Moorgate and banking with London County and Westminster Bank, Euston Road branch. He proposed to act as a clerk; two signatures of referees also appear on the form.

Algernon Hyde Villiers was a prolific letter writer. After his death, these and other writings were collated into a volume entitled, *Letters and Papers of Algernon Hyde Villiers*. This begins with a memoir by Harry Graham, a writer and poet married to Algernon's sister Dorothy. In this, he explains that Villiers had always wanted to be a soldier, but was prevented by short sight, and was not even allowed to join the Officer Training Corps when he was at the Inns of Court. Consequently he was untrained in military matters when war broke out. Determined to serve, even when turned down by the Infantry, he joined the Hertfordshire Yeomanry as a trooper, i.e. a private, and embarked for Egypt in September 1914.

HERTS YEOMANRY, (DRAGOONS)														
ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Victory Medal and the British War Medal granted under														
On 11/11/18 or on becoming non-effective		NAME	Unit previously served with. Regtl. No. and Rank in same on entry into theatre of war	Theatres of war in which served										
Regtl. No.	Rank			From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To			
1719.	Pte.	VILLIERS, Algernon	1719. Herts Yeo. H. Dragoons. Pte.	X										

Part of Villiers' early army record

Graham declares that 'eight delightful months' followed; Villiers was promoted to Lance Corporal, and took part in defeating a Turkish attack on the Suez Canal. Beatrice joined him for a while in



Algernon Hyde Villiers in the Yeomanry

Port Said in January 1915. By this time he felt he had enough experience to become an officer, and, on 10 April accepted a commission as Second Lieutenant with the Lothians and Border Horse, a move which took him to Scotland in Spring 1915. Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on your

viewpoint, the effects of malaria, presumably contracted in Egypt, kept Villiers in England for the next two years.



Algernon Hyde Villiers, from the 'Stock Exchange War Memorial Book'

In winter 1916-17, Villiers had helped to run a machine gun school in East Lothian, and so, although in early 1917 he was promoted to Captain as part of the cavalry, he gave this up and transferred to the Machine Gun Corps in the hope of seeing active service again. He finally got to France in command of a section in July that year. Graham described his end simply as follows:

Four months later, on November 23rd, while taking part in the glorious capture of Bourlon Wood by the 40th British Infantry Division, he was killed.

His body was laid to rest in the little cemetery of Anneux.

The action at Bourlon Wood was part of the bigger battle of Cambrai, a British attack followed by a massive retaliation by the Germans, who were responding to the threat to their supply lines. Despite what Wikipedia calls 'reckless determination' with one group of eight British machine guns firing over 70,000 rounds in an effort to stop the German attack, the battle ended with over 47,000 British casualties.

Ironically, on the day he died, his mother-in-law's diary² records:

A letter was forwarded to Beatrix from Algy. All news excellent. We are strengthening our gain on the Somme – in one day we gained half as much ground as we won in all the autumn fighting on the Somme last year.



Algernon Hyde Villiers, from 'The Letters and Papers of Algernon Hyde Villiers'

A few days later, the diary makes reference to the 'cruel' telegram announcing his death.

As the Stock Exchange War Memorial Book records:

An officer on the Staff of his Division wrote: "The General has paid a particular tribute to the work done by the Machine Gunners, and that such praise is really deserved by Villiers' men is largely due to the infinite pains he took over their training, and to the inspiring example he set them to the very end. His brother officers cannot speak too highly of his capacity as a leader, of his charm as a companion, and of all those qualities of his which made him the leading spirit of his mess and the idol of his men. He loved his men and they

² http://www.hertsmemories.org.uk/content/herts-history/topics/world_war_one/casualty-passchendaele-1917

loved him, and his invincible optimism carried him safely through those dark days of danger and discomfort, which set weaker men grumbling and despairing. It is no exaggeration to say that officers and men adored him."

His obituary in *The Times* quotes a correspondent who had written:

No one more willingly gave up a life of noble promise to a call which he felt was sacred.... He was happy in the circumstances of his death. For he had a peculiar love of France, and the spirit of comradeship in the Army realised his ideal of the brotherhood of man.

A glance at his collected letters show a cultured man determined to be optimistic. In his penultimate letter home, on 18 November, he writes:

The weather is wonderful – rather misty in the mornings, but very dry for the season, and with gleams of sunlight now and then.

He also alludes to his strong Christian faith:

I want some way of saying that I believe in Christ without implying that I am like Him... Perhaps I shall find a way before long; one usually does by being patient..... It is in God's hands. I feel no fear of heavy trials, no doubt which is the rock on which to build a safe and happy house. I read glorious Joshua i 1-9 yesterday... It is a supreme passage, none finer in the Old Testament...

In 1919, his widow remarried, and became Mrs Walter D Gibbs although her husband later became 4th Baron Aldenham. She died in 1978. Villiers' son Charles was awarded the MC for his services to the Special Operations Executive in World War II and became chairman of British Steel in 1976.

As well as being named on the Forest Row memorial, Villiers is commemorated on the memorial at Wellington College, in the Oxford University Roll of Service and in the Stock Exchange Memorial Book.

Pam Griffiths

ERIC GORDON WATERS

Lieutenant, Hants Carabiniers and 6th Squadron, Royal Flying Corps

Killed in Action flying over Poperinge, West Flanders, Belgium,
24 January 1917, aged 30

Buried at Lijssenhoek Military Cemetery, Poperinghe

Grave Reference: Plot X, Row A, Grave 1



(above left) Gravestone of Eric Gordon Waters in Forest Row Cemetery
(above right) The grave of Eric Gordon Waters at Lijssenhoek Military Cemetery

Eric Gordon Waters was born in Forest Row in 1886, son of James and Elizabeth Ann Waters. James had married second wife Elizabeth Ann Woodhead in Kensington in 1871, and Eric was the ninth of their 12 children. The census returns show Eric living at Oakcroft, in Forest Row, a house situated where the present Christian Community Church now stands in Hartfield Road. James Waters was a builder and some of his brothers followed their father into the construction business, either as builders or carpenters; the family firm is still operating today. Eric, however, chose to follow a career as an electrical engineer, which is how he is recorded on the 1911 census, and he appears in a list of students in the *Journal of the Institution of Electrical Engineers* in 1903 (see http://www.archive.org/stream/journaloostatgoog/journaloostatgoog_djvu.txt).

A reference in the National Archives Catalogue suggests that 2nd Lieutenant Eric Gordon Waters was connected to the Royal Garrison artillery in 1914, although the London Gazette posted him as 2nd Lieutenant in the Hants Carabiniers as of 19 October 1914. It also notes that 'Second Lieutenant Eric Gordon Waters is appointed to command the 1st South Western Mounted Brigade, Signal Troop, and is seconded while so employed'. However, he was also still operating as an electrical engineer as on 31 August 1915 he was granted a patent on an electric protective system (which he filed in April that year) which related to the protection of electric systems formed in sections, for example, ring main systems (see <http://www.google.com/patents/US1152362>).

While stationed at B.E. Brightlingsea in 1915, he was summoned for 'driving a motor car in a manner dangerous to the public' at Chelmsford on 9 October. He apparently took a corner so fast that his vehicle ended up on the wrong side of the road, narrowly missing a cyclist, and skidding 10' when the brakes were applied. Waters denied the charge, but was fined 50/- and 10/- costs anyway. (see http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/?gclid=CPfCgevgs7kCFe_LtAodnSwASQ)

It is not known whether this took place before or after he transferred to No.6 Squadron Royal Flying Corps, but this was where he was serving when he was killed. He was apparently wounded escorting a photographic patrol. His plane was shot up; the observer Sgt Slingsby climbed into the pilot's cockpit and succeeded in landing between Vlamertinge and Ypres. He survived, but Eric, shot in the back and head, did not. He was 30 years old (see <http://www.lijssenthoek.be/en/adres/2570/-eric-gordon-waters.html>)

Probate of his estate was granted to his mother Elizabeth Ann Waters, with effects valued at £1,215 17/3.

Pam Griffiths

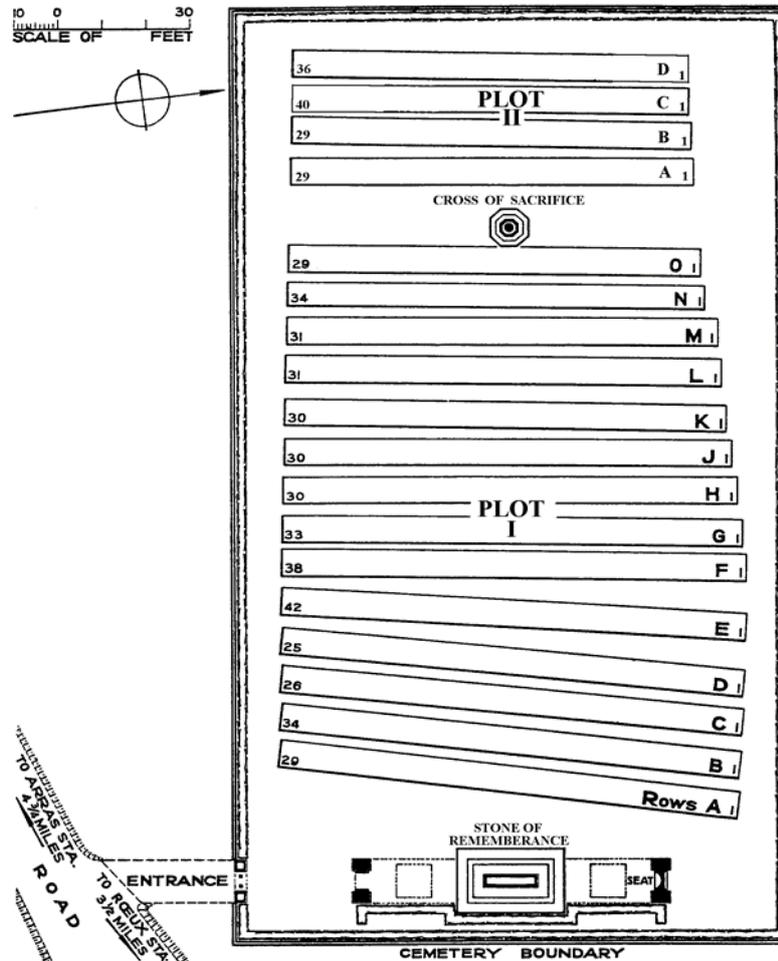
FREDERICK PERCY WEBBER

Private, G8448, 7th Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action, Monchy-la-Preux, 4 July 1917, aged 19

Buried at Monchy British Military cemetery, Plot 1, Row G Grave 20

The inscription reads “He was loved by all”



MONCHY BRITISH CEMETERY, MONCHY-LE-PREUX

Monchy cemetery is in the Pas de Calais region of France, on the road from Arras to Cambrai. It holds 523 identified and 58 unidentified casualties. Burials in the cemetery began in April 1917 when the village of Monchy was captured by Commonwealth forces. The cemetery was later designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Frederick Webber was born in East Grinstead in 1898 to parents Alfred and Florence Webber. The Book of Remembrance in Holy Trinity Church in Forest Row was signed by his mother Florence who was living at Queensborough Cottages in Forest Row.

In the 1901 census, Frederick was living at Imberhorne Lane Cottages in East Grinstead with his parents Alfred, a gardener aged 35, and Florence, also 35. Frederick had two older and two younger brothers.

By 1911 Frederick was living at Primrose Alley, Primrose Lane in Forest Row where he was listed as a scholar. Alfred was described as a jobbing gardener. Frederick's brother Stanley, aged 16, was also a gardener.

Frederick enlisted at East Grinstead in 1915. He was then residing at Queensborough Cottages in Forest Row and was described as a gardener. His Short Service Attestation, where Frederick signed up for the duration of the war, was dated 29 November 1915 and recorded that Frederick was Church of England and 5 feet 5¼ inches tall. He joined the Royal Sussex Regiment and after training he arrived at Étaples on 3 April 1916. He was wounded in October 1916.

Monchy was an important strategic position near Arras and was the scene of sustained bloody fighting. It was during the Battle of Arras, while the Germans held the area, that they bombarded Arras and destroyed the famous bell tower. During the Battle of Arras Private Webber was killed.

Frederick Webber was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal, automatically awarded in the event of death on active service.

War Credit of £5 13s. 11d. was authorised in October 1917 and War Gratuity of £7 os.od. was credited to Alfred on 22 November 1919.

Kevin Tillet

GEORGE WEEDING

Trooper, 1548, N^o.2 Company, The Household Battalion

Killed in Action, 3 May 1917, aged 32

Buried at Roeux British Cemetery (Sp. Mem. H. 7)



(above, left) George Weeding's gravestone

(above, right) Roeux British cemetery

George Weeding was born in 1885 at Coleman's Hatch, the son of George and Sarah Ann Weeding. In the 1911 census his occupation is given as labourer but at his death he is listed as a gardener.

In October 1912 he married Alice Wheatley at St. Mary's Church, Hartfield. Alice was born 1888 at Lowlands Farm, Hartfield, the daughter of Joseph Wheatley, a farmer, and Ellen Eliza Wheatley (née Welfare). At the time of her marriage she lived at 'Hillside', Coleman's Hatch. Alice, who died in 1974 at the age of 85, lost her brother, Harry Wheatley (also profiled in this document), on 26 March 1918; she was also the second cousin of Alice Stevens, wife of Charles Edward Stevens, who died five days earlier, on 21 March 1918 (also profiled in this document).

George and Alice Weeding had two children, Geoffrey Joseph (1913-1978) and Peter George, who was born and died as an infant in 1914.

George Weeding served as a trooper during the First World War in N^o 2 Company, the Household Battalion. The Household Battalion was formed in September 1916. It was an infantry battalion with Household Cavalry Officers and NCOs, with men who had volunteered for the duration of the war for the Household Cavalry. Three months after it was formed the battalion was in France, fighting in the trenches at Sailly-Saillisel, in the Somme valley, with the 4th Division. This first action cost them 300 casualties.

In 1917 the Household Battalion were at the Third Battle of the Scarpe River (May 1917). In a subsidiary action during the Battle of Arras (1917) the battalion fought for 14 days to capture Roeux village; it was during this action that George was killed.

He is Remembered with Honour in Roeux British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, Sp. Mem. H. 7.

Carol O'Driscoll

JOHN WEEDING

Private, G/13259, 'D' Company, 7th Battalion, East Kent Regiment (The Buffs)

Died of appendicitis, 20 August 1917, aged 20

Buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Poperinge, Belgium

Grave reference: XVII-K-4A



John J. Weeding was the son of George and Sarah Ann Weeding of Edgemount, Coleman's Hatch. A gardener, he first enlisted in 1915 at East Grinstead with the Lancers. He later transferred to the East Kent Regiment ('The Buffs'), where he served in 'D' company, 7th Battalion.

The 7th (Service) Battalion, the Royal East Kent Regiment (The Buffs), was raised at Canterbury in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Second New Army and joined 55th Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division. The Division initially concentrated in the Colchester area but moved to Salisbury Plain in May 1915. They proceeded to France in July and concentrated near Flesselles.

In 1916 they were in action on the Somme in the Battle of Albert, capturing their objectives near Montauban, the Battle of Bazentin Ridge, including the capture of Trones Wood, the Battle of Delville Wood, the Battle of Thiepval Ridge, the Battle of the Ancre Heights, playing a part in the capture of the Schwaben Redoubt and Regina Trench, and the Battle of the Ancre.

In 1917 they took part in the operations on the Ancre including Miraumont and the capture of Irles. They fought during the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line and in the Third Battle of the Scarpe before moving to Flanders. They were in action in the Battle of Pilkem Ridge, the Battle of Langemarck and the First and Second Battles of Passchendaele.

John Weeding died of appendicitis on 20 August 1917 at the age of 20 in N° 3 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station.

Carol O'Driscoll

DAVID WEEKES

Private David Weekes G/60598, 9th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Killed in Action, 9 April 1917, near Arras, Pas de Calais, France, aged about 37

Buried in Sainte Catherine British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France: Grave G 2



Private David Weekes

Private David Weekes, G/60598, 9th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, was born in Frant, East Sussex, in about 1880. He lived at No 1 Oak Cottage, Chuck Hatch and enlisted in East Grinstead. He was formerly No 23392, 6th Battalion Middlesex.



Sainte Catherine British Cemetery

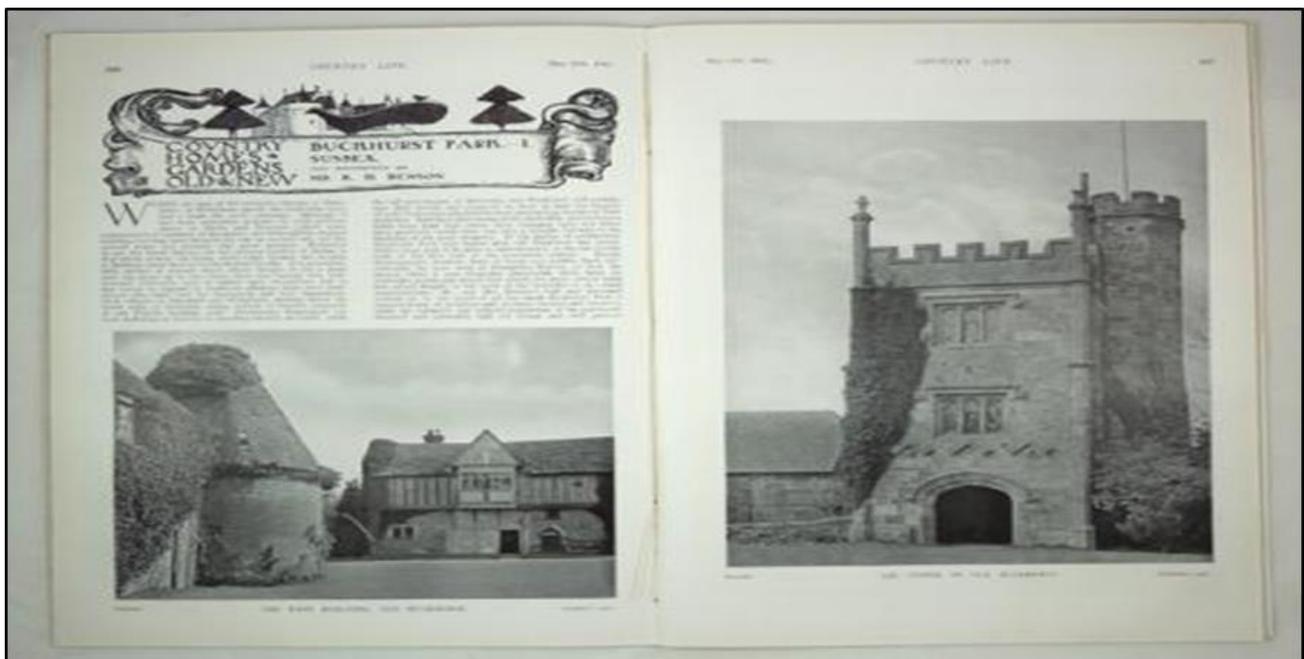
He was married to Naomi (née Divall) Weekes in Spring 1910. Naomi was born in 1886 in Hartfield. In the 1911 census the couple were living at Chuck Hatch, near Hartfield.

David's pre-war occupation was as a gardener in the employ of Robert Benson of Buckhurst Park, Withyham, Sussex.



Buckhurst Park c. 1900 when David Weekes was a gardener there

In the early twentieth century Buckhurst Park was leased from the De La Warr family by Mr and Mrs Robert Benson, for whom Sir Edwin Lutyens designed additions to the house and a new formal garden. Gertrude Jekyll provided planting plans. In May 1912 Buckhurst Park appeared in an early edition of *Country Life* magazine, “*The Residence of Mr. R. H. Benson*”, with a ten-page write-up with black and white illustrations of the Park.



Country Life magazine, May 1912

Robert Henry Benson (1850-1929), senior partner of Robert Benson & Co. Ltd., merchant bankers, London, was a trustee of the National Gallery from 1912 and a collector of paintings, mostly early Italian, early Chinese porcelain, and other works of art. His properties included Walpole House, Chiswick Mall, London, W4, though by 1924 he was living at 16 South Street, Park Lane. His country house was Buckhurst Park. Robert Benson & Co. later became part of Kleinwort Benson.

Benson married Evelyn Holford (1857-1943) in 1887 and who was herself a collector of Chinese porcelain and was joint owner of the Benson collection of Renaissance paintings, sold to Joseph Duveen in 1927 for US\$2.5 million and dispersed to collectors such as Kress, Frick and Rockefeller.

Benson was a member of the Burlington Fine Arts Club and lent generously to public museums, for instance to the City of Manchester Art Gallery 'Exhibition of Chinese Applied Art', 1913, to the V&A prior to his major Chinese ceramics sale in 1924, and the Benson Collection of paintings loaned to Manchester in 1927, which was subsequently purchased by Duveen.

The Battle of Arras took place in the spring of 1917 and was one of the principal offensives undertaken by the British Army on the Western Front, similar in scale to the Battle of the Somme

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. 27-10-19. Army Form W. 3372.
GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.
 No. 1. District. REPORT No. 1. SCHEDULE No. B.C.
 Commune:- ST. CATHERINE.
 PLACE OF BURIAL ST. CATHERINE BRITISH CEMETERY.
 Map ref:- Sh. 51b.G.14.b.87.80. 30
 Map Reference
 The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd.	Plot, Row and Grave
PLOT 1.						
6th E.H.Buffs.	658	STREET	Pte.A.	9-4-17	All	F.25 ✓
6th Queens R.W.S.	22246	CATCOM	Pte.	9/4/17	crosses	F.26 ✓
7th E.Surreys	9911	COLLIP	Pte.A.	9/4/17	erected	F.27 ✓
5th C.M.R.	171403	YOUNG	Pte.J.W.	28/9/17		F.28 ✓
6th E.H.Buffs.	18993	CLUBB	Pte.H.	9/4/17		F.29 ✓
9th R.F.	3359	JONES	Pte.J.B.	9/4/17		F.30 ✓
9th R.F.	6250	SHEPPARD	Pte.W.A.	9/4/17		G.1 ✓
9th R. Beaks Fus	6/80598	WEEKES	Pte.D.	9/4/17	CREW/4974505	G.2 ✓
7th E.Surreys		UNKNOWN SOLDIER		9/4/17		G.3 ✓
do	5988	WOODHAM	Sgt.C.W.	9/4/17		G.4 ✓
do	9797	SHELVEY	Sgt.A.	9/4/17	H16/19/34616	G.5 ✓
do	270	ZANDER	L/Cpl.A.E.	"		G.6 ✓
do	11575	WILLMORE	Pte.R.J.	"		G.7 ✓
do	4978	CHALLIS	Pte.A.W.	"		G.8 ✓
6th Buffs	9307	BRADLEY	Pte.J.	"		G.9 ✓
6th Queens R.W.S.		STONESSTIUB	Pte.	"		G.10 ✓
7th E.Surreys	6879	REYNOLDS	Sgt.W.A.	"		G.11 ✓
do	7215	TAYLOR	Sgt.H.E.	"		G.12 ✓
do		McEVoy.	2/Lt.W.C.	"		G.13 ✓
7th East Surreys	8369	MARNEY	Sgt.G.	"		G.14 ✓
3rd R.Scots	38553	BRAIDWOOD	Pte.A.	"		G.15 ✓
do	34180	CLAGUE	Pte.W.	"		G.16 ✓

D. G. R. 2
 2 FEB 1920
 294.3.21
 28.10.23

ENTERED
 SLIPS CHECK

(6 31 5) W1168—P133 45,000 16/17 HWV(P117) Forms W3372/2
 144—1908 70,000 4/18

Source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.gwc.org)

and the Third Battle of Ypres. The battle began on Monday 9 April 1917 at 5.30 a.m., after an intensive bombardment lasting four days to preclude any retaliation from the enemy.

David Weekes was killed on the first day of the battle. The 9th of April 1917 was Easter Monday. Many of the troops had been quartered in the cellars of Arras prior to the battle – a welcome situation given that there had been snow fall on 2 April. The 9th Battalion gained all their objectives on the first day, capturing two machine guns and 220 prisoners.

At first glance the Battle of Arras could be considered a British success: 20,000 prisoners had been taken, a large quantity of munitions had been captured and much important ground had been won, pushing the combat zone back about ten kilometres and relieving the pressure on the town of Arras which had suffered incessant German shelling since October 1914. But these promising results were obtained at a great cost: more than 100,000 British soldiers were put out of action in the fighting at Arras between April and May 1917.



The Royal Fusiliers memorial at Holborn in London, commemorating the 22,000 men of the regiment who lost their lives in the Great War

Listed on the War Memorials in Hartfield and Withyham.

Carol O'Driscoll

CHARLIE WHEATLEY

Ordinary Seaman, Royal Navy, SS/9214

He died in a drowning accident in Portsmouth on 8 February 1921

while serving on HMS Shakespeare. He was aged 20.

He is commemorated on the war memorial in Coleman's Hatch



Charlie Wheatley was son of Jesse (born 1874) and Ada (née Divall, born 1874) Wheatley of Spring Cottage, Coleman's Hatch. He was the nephew of Doctor Wheatley, Harry Wheatley, George Wheatley and William James Wheatley, who all fell during the Great War and are also profiled here.

In the 1911 census Charlie was listed as age 10 and living with his family at Brickyard Cottage, Coleman's Hatch. His father, Jesse, was described as a tile maker in a brick works. Charlie was five feet three inches tall. His peacetime occupation was listed as a domestic gardener.

Charlie joined up in July 1918. He served on the *Victory I* until 14 March 1919, then the *Maidstone* until October 1920, on the *Victory I* again from 8-28 October 1920, and finally on the *Columbine (Shakespeare)* until his death on 8 February 1921.

HMS Shakespeare was a Thornycroft type leader, one of a class of a class of five destroyer leaders designed by John I. Thornycroft & Company and built by them at Woolston, Southampton for the Royal Navy towards the end of World War I. The function of a leader was to carry the flag staff of a destroyer flotilla, therefore they were enlarged to carry additional crew, offices and signalling equipment, allowing a fifth gun to be carried. Only *Shakespeare* and *Spenser* were completed in time for wartime service.

HMS Shakespeare was laid down on 2 October 1916, launched on 7 July 1917 and completed on 10 October 1917. She was badly damaged by a mine in June 1918. In 1921 *HMS Shakespeare* formed part of the 6th Destroyer Flotilla, Atlantic Fleet 5.39—renumbered 8DF. She was sold for breaking up and handed over on 2 September 1936.

The *Columbine* was a depot ship. In November 1919 she was at the Firth of Forth, Local Defence and Training, Establishments and a Patrol Flotilla at (Port Edgar); also Fourth Destroyer Flotilla.

Charlie Wheatley is listed as the only person drowned on *HMS Shakespeare* on 8 February 1921.



HMS Shakespeare

On 17 March, 1921, its commander, Edmond Julius Gordon Mackinnon, was subjected to a Court Martial for testing the engines of *HMS Shakespeare* in a tidal basin while men were painting her sides from a catamaran. A charge that he had endangered their lives was not proved and he was acquitted. It is not thought that this is related to Charlie's death by drowning a month earlier.

Charlie Wheatley is buried in Coleman's Hatch churchyard and commemorated on the memorial in the Vicarage Rooms for those who returned home safely.

Charlie Wheatley strictly speaking is not a casualty of the First World War, having died in an incident that occurred over two years after the war ended. He is included here because he enlisted during the war and is commemorated on the Coleman's Hatch war memorial.

Carol O'Driscoll

3 October 2018

GEORGE WHEATLEY

Lance Corporal, G/8, 6th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)

Killed in Action, 3 May 1917, near Arras, France, aged 32

No known grave. Listed on the Arras Memorial: Bay 7



Lance Corporal George Wheatley G/8, 6th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), was born in Hartfield in 1888. He lived in Hartfield and enlisted in Maidstone. He was the son of George (b.1856) and Ellen (née Everest) (b.1866) Wheatley. His pre-war occupation was in the employ of Nelson Miles as a farm labourer and he was listed as living at Stairs Farm, Hartfield in the 1911 census. The family lived at Newton's Hill in Hartfield. He had two sisters, Lizzie and Caroline. His father was a platelayer on the railway.

His brother, William James Wheatley, was born in Hartfield in 1893. He died of wounds to the head on 7 April 1915 while in hospital at Boulogne, Pas de Calais, France, age 23 and is buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery. He was previously a labourer on a farm.

The 6th Battalion of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) was formed at Maidstone on 14 August 1914 as part of K1 (Kitchener's Army) and came under command of 37th Brigade in 12th (Eastern) Division. The battalion moved initially to Colchester and on to Purfleet in September 1914 before going to billets in Hythe in December. It moved to Aldershot in February 1915. On 1 June 2015 they landed in Boulogne.

The battles George Wheatley may have been involved in included, during 1915, the Battle of Loos, during 1916, the battles of Albert, Pozières, and Le Transloy, and during 1917 the First Battle of the Scarpe, the Battle of Arleux, and the Third Battle of the Scarpe.

He is listed on the war memorial in Hartfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

HARRY WHEATLEY

Private, 11406, 'D' Squadron, 5th (Royal Irish) Lancers

Killed in Action on the Somme, 26 March 1918, aged 23

Commemorated at Holy Trinity Church, Colemans Hatch



Born in 1895, Harry Wheatley was the son of Joseph Wheatley, a farmer, and Ellen Eliza Wheatley, of Hillside Farm, Coleman's Hatch.

At the time of the 1911 census Harry was 16, his occupation listed as a “son working on the farm”.

Harry was the brother of Alice Wheatley. In 1912 Alice married George Weeding (also profiled in this document), who was also killed during the Great War.

Harry also had another sister, Ellen, and two brothers, Frederick and Sydney. Although Frederick was two years older there is no record of his First World War service.

Harry spent most of his First World War career on the Western Front. A private with the ‘D’ squadron of the 5th (Royal Irish) Lancers, he was reported missing near St. Quentin in March 1918 and later listed as killed in action on 26 March 1918, at the age of 23.

He is remembered with honour on the Pozières Memorial on the Somme and commemorated at Holy Trinity Church, Coleman’s Hatch.

Carol O’Driscoll

ALBERT HENRY WHITE

Private, M/2/102147, Royal Army Service Corps

Died at Warrington Hospital, 11 October 1919

Buried Forest Row Cemetery, Grave 931



Grave of Albert Henry White – Forest Row Cemetery

Albert Henry White died exactly 11 months after the Armistice, and in an English hospital, but is still considered a victim of World War I and is commemorated as such at Forest Row. He was born in Cricket St Thomas in Somerset on 23 January 1893 and baptised in the church there on Easter Day – 2 April. The register names his parents as Charles and Mary Ann White and gives the father's occupation as a whitesmith. However, the 1881 and 1891 census returns and several baptisms all call him a blacksmith.

Albert was part of a sizeable family: Frederick, Edith, and Sidney were all baptised at Cricket St Thomas before Albert, and William followed a year later. Maurice was born in Rousdon in Devon, where the family must have moved in the mid to late 1890s. This move was presumably a step up, as the family was enumerated in 1901 at the West Lodge Rousdon and Charles was now a mechanical engineer. The whole of this piece of the census is devoted to the workers on Rousdon estate. In 1911, still at West Lodge, he gave his occupation as estate engineer, but by then Albert Henry had left home and was boarding at 9 Belmont Road, Exeter, and working as a hot water fitter.

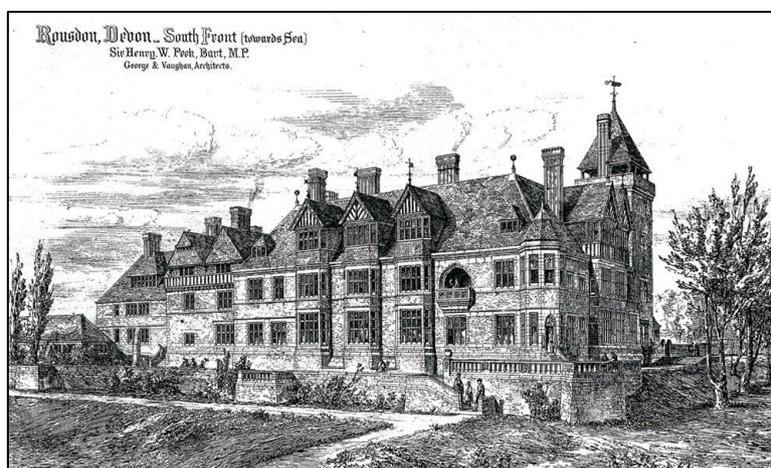
Albert made his oath and signed the declaration to the attesting officer at Exeter on 1 June 1915 but was home until 3 April 1916 when he seems to have been sent to France with 341 Company. He gave his address as 6 Jubilee Terrace, Sidmouth, and his age as 22 years 5 months. His occupation was recorded as Mechanical Driver. He signed the form in a clear hand. It seems he needed a reference, probably to confirm his value as a driver and mechanic. This was provided on notepaper headed:

The Old Lifeboat Garage, Sidmouth,
May 24th 1915
To E.C.DEAN
Motor Cars for hire
Repairs of all kinds --- Petrol and oils

and reads:

This is to certify that Albert White was in my service 2 years. I found him honest and sober. Good driver.

C Dean



Rousdon

His father also submitted a brief career resumé, although some of it is too faded to read. It begins:

On leaving school at 14 years of age worked with his father (estate engineer to Sir Wilfrid Peek Bart, Rousdon, Devon) as assistant in the estate workshops for 2 years then going as motor lad to Sir Wilfred P.....

Sir Wilfrid Peek was later High Sheriff of Devon. L Diment of Diment's Motor Garage, Station Road Seaton, official repairer to the R.A.C., also weighed in on Albert's behalf:

This is to certify that Albert White was taught to drive a car together with twelve months' tuition on car machinery. He proved himself a capable driver and I always found him very obliging, straightforward and honest.

Also amongst the papers is an 'Application for the special enlistment of a Recruit' with the request that he be enlisted in the R.A.S.C. Mechanical Transport Regiment, where his driving skills would be key. He is described as 22 years old, 5' 4" tall and weighing 9 stone. He had a 35" girth and expansion of 2". The 'reasons for recommendation' part of the form is damaged, but it is possible to read:

A respectable, intelligent....

He was presumably also both patriotic and financially astute, as he invested £3 2/- in War Savings Certificates. 15/6 would buy a £1 certificate, and the return was expected to be high.

The company conduct sheet records:

Certified no offence whilst serving in this unit.

However, on 23 July 1918 he was punished for speaking improperly to an NCO. This appears to be a lone offence, though.

Maybe he was ill for some time, as he was admitted to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley on 4 December 1918. However, on 11 November 1919 a telegram was sent to the Officer in Charge R.A.S.C. Woolwich Dockyard:

Regret to report death here today m/2/102147 Pte A H White R.A.S.C.
relatives advised. Warspital Warrington

With typical army efficiency, time of death was recorded – 8.30 a.m., and a long type-written form also had to be completed following a home death, and included tick boxes for next of kin to receive a telegram, a letter and 'their Majesties' message of sympathy'.

This Home Deaths form was sent to the authorities from the Lord Derby War Hospital in Warrington. Cause of death was recorded as Encephalitis and Epileptiform Convulsions. Encephalitis occurs when the brain becomes inflamed, often as a result of an infection, but can also be linked to immune system problems. One of the symptoms is seizures, and while today the illness can be treated with antibiotics, these were not available in 1919.

A statement listing his relatives had to be completed for army records in 1920 and shows that Albert had remained unmarried and had no children. By this time, his parents, Charles and Mary Ann, were living at Bower Hill, Plaw Hatch in Sharpthorne. Their four surviving sons were all living in

London, which may explain their move from Devon. Their daughter Edith, though, was a war widow, living at Charminster near Dorchester. Mary Ann had to sign a declaration to the effect that the information given was accurate, and it was countersigned by W G Newham, vicar of Forest Row, who had conducted the burial service on 16 October 1919.

The Register of Soldiers' Effects shows that Albert's possessions, which went to his father, amounted to £52 2/2. His father also signed the Forest Row Memorial Book.

Pam Griffiths

NIGEL BERNARD WHITFIELD

Captain, 2/1st Royal North Devon (Hussars) and Royal Flying Corps

**Died 7 July 1918 in the RFC hospital, Eaton Square, London SW1,
as a result of a flying accident. He was aged 27.**

Buried in Forest Row Cemetery



Nigel Bernard Whitfield's gravestone in Forest Row Cemetery

Nigel Bernard Whitfield was born in Eastbourne in 1891. In the 1911 census he was living at the Roebuck, Wych Cross, Forest Row and he was listed as a student. His father, Thomas Stanley Whitfield, was a banker with Barclays Bank. His mother's name was Jessie. The family were well off and had five servants.

He originally enlisted as a Private in the 2/1st Royal North Devon (Hussars), North Somerset Yeomanry, Regimental Number 680, and was promoted to Lieutenant. His medal record mentions that he was discharged to a commission on 17 April 1915. His cousin, Geo Grafton Currey, lived at the same address in 1911, aged 19, and his occupation was bank clerk. He was killed at Salt Lake, Gallipoli on 22 August 1915, and he was a Captain in the Yorkshire Regiment.

Nigel Bernard Whitfield died with the rank of Captain. In his will he left £331 2s to his father. His residence was listed as the Garden House in Forest Row.

The inscription on his gravestone in Forest Row Cemetery is:

“1918 Captain Nigel B Whitfield, son of the 1906 Captain, T Stanley Whitfield, of the Roebuck, Wych Cross. He played off 6 and won the Caterham Cup in 1913. He enlisted in the Somerset Yeomanry, part of the Royal North Devon Regiment, and was then attached to the RAF. Shortly after his engagement to Gladys Clark, of Queenborough Terrace, London was announced in Flight magazine on 11th June 1918, he was killed in a flying accident.”

Captain Whitfield died in the Royal Flying Corps Hospital in Eaton Square in London on 7 July 1918 after a flying accident. The third Royal Flying Corps Hospital opened at No. 82 Eaton Square in 1917. It had 30 beds and, like its sister hospital in Bryanston Square, was affiliated to Queen Alexandra's Military Hospital in Millbank. The types of injuries sustained by airmen could be serious and complex. Apart from gunshot wounds during aerial combat or from ground fire, they could suffer multiple fractures or burns on crash landing. The Royal Flying Corps Hospitals were supported by public subscription from around the Empire.



The building on the corner of Eaton Square and Lyall Street, London, once occupied by the Royal Flying Corps Hospital

Commemorated on the Forest Row War Memorial.

Carol O'Driscoll

THOMAS HENRY WOODHAMS

Sergeant, G/1307, 9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Killed in Action near Arras, Pas de Calais, France, 13 April 1917, aged 24

No known grave. Listed on the Arras Memorial: Bay 6



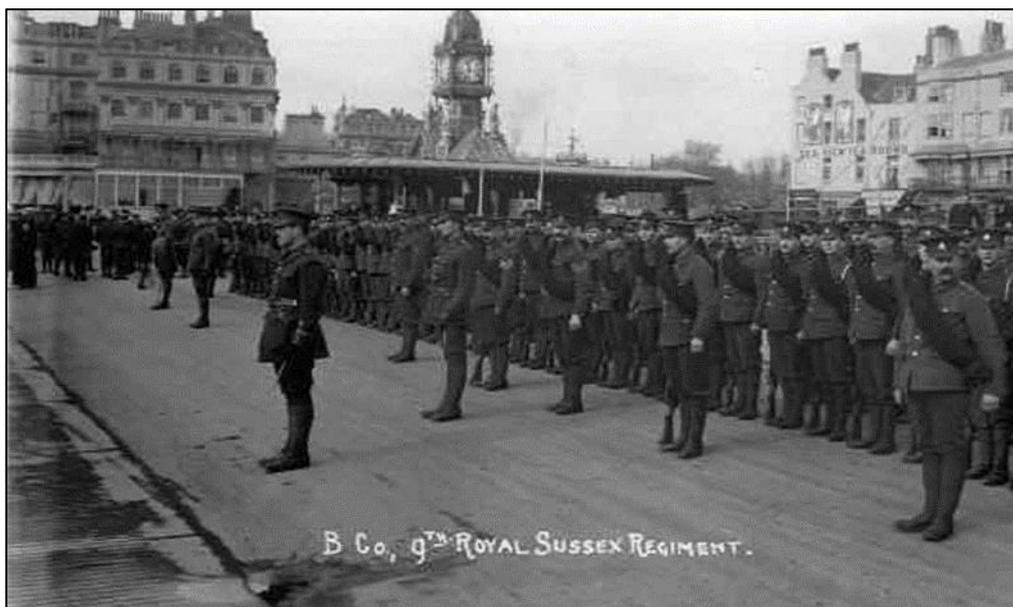
Sergeant Thomas Henry Woodhams, G/1307, 9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, was born in Hartfield in 1893. He lived at New Cottages, Cotchford Farm, Hartfield and at Beeches Farm, Butcherfield Lane, Hartfield. He enlisted in September 1914 in Tunbridge Wells. He was killed in action on 13 April 1917 near Arras, Pas de Calais, France, age 24 and has no known grave and is listed on the Arras Memorial: Bay 6.



He was the son of Henry Thomas (1865-1932) and Sophia Catherine (née Jenner) (1869-1947). His mother was born in Cowden, Kent, and his father in Withyham.

His parents married around 1891 and in the 1911 census were listed as living at Cotchford Hill, Hartfield. His father was a farm labourer as was his elder brother, Albert, aged 20 in 1911.

Thomas' pre-war occupation was as a cowman. In 1911 he was listed as working as a cowman for Harriet Taylor at Beeches Farm in Hartfield aged 18. His brother Thomas was also working as a horseman on the farm aged 16. They had five other siblings living with their parents in 1911.



The 9th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment in Brighton in 1914.

The 9th Battalion was formed at Chichester in September 1914 and was part of Kitchener's New Army. After formation the battalion went into camp on the South Downs around Brighton where it often took part in recruitment marches on the seafront. Here it became part of the 73rd Brigade of 24th Division. In December 1914 the battalion moved to Portslade, and in April 1915 to Shoreham. In June 1915 a further move was made to Woking, Surrey.

The 9th Battalion landed in France, at Boulogne, on 31 August 1915. Within a few weeks of arrival, the battalion was thrown into the Battle of Loos, suffering heavy losses.

13 April 1917 was the fourth day of the Battle of Arras. The 9th Battalion were involved in the attack on Vimy Ridge. Five officers were killed and four wounded on that date and of the other ranks 40 were killed in action and 63 died of wounds. Thomas Woodhams is likely to have been one of the other ranks' fatalities. The 9th Battalion had been in action the day before in the attack on Bois en Hache. They had gone over the top in blizzard conditions and had faced severe machine gun fire. They achieved their objective of capturing the German front line. However the attack had taken place, according to the Battalion diaries, "in a blinding snow storm and over ground full of large shell holes and churned into a sea of mud by bad weather and heavy shelling".

Listed on the War Memorial in Hartfield.

Carol O'Driscoll

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