

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO
THE
MEN OF HORLEY
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES
DURING
WORLD WAR ONE
1914-1918
AND WHO ARE LISTED ON THE
HORLEY WAR MEMORIAL

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning...
We Will Remember Them.*

This book was commissioned by Horley Town Council
to commemorate the
Centenary of the Commencement of the First World War.

Research was carried out by Doug Cox,
a resident of Meath Green, and all errors and omissions are his alone.

If you know or suspect that any of the information, factual or personal,
contained herein is inaccurate or incorrect, please inform the Town Clerk,
Horley Town Council, 92 Albert Road, Horley.
He will willingly arrange for corrections to be made.

FOREWORD

On the hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War, it is very appropriate that we remember those Men of Horley that gave their lives in that conflict so that future residents could live in freedom.

This book gives us a focus on these brave men. It is only right that we honour them at this time.

Our peace and freedom continues to be upheld by their successors, the current members of our armed services. We owe so much to present and past fighting men and women of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

It is a great honour to be asked to write the introduction to this very special book.

Cllr Dr Richard Olliver



Chairman and Town Mayor of Horley Town Council 2014

INTRODUCTION

When the First World War broke out in 1914, the population of Horley was about 5,800.

The War Memorial, erected in 1922, lists 122 men, all, in some way, related to Horley. They are the men whose names were inscribed on the Memorial after consideration by a War Memorial Committee. Not all of the listed men were born here or lived here but certainly most of them grew up here. Many were baptised and married in St. Bartholomew's Church....some are buried there.

An examination of all information sources suggests that about 100 more men from the town or its close environs may also have been listed but, for a variety of reasons, they were not.

These men were not all young when they died. Their average age was about 26, even when the two oldest men, at 52 and 67 years old, are excluded. Many were married and had children. There were nine pairs of brothers.

They were from vastly differing backgrounds. Many were agricultural or common labourers including: blacksmiths; milkmen; butchers; bakers; cowmen; hay trussers and a good few regular servicemen or recalled reservists. At the wealthier end of the spectrum are stockbrokers, surveyors and Naval Officers.

At least two Horley men were killed whilst serving in the Australian Infantry and three more enlisted in Canada.

They were surely not all heroic in the military sense but the privations, dangers and hardships they suffered meant that they all merit our admiration, remembrance and thanks.

Amongst them are winners of Military Medals, Military Crosses and, uniquely, a Victoria Cross.

Their deaths were spread across the battlefields of the world. Some died at home and are buried locally. Most of them are resting in France and Belgium, with the Somme battlefields alone claiming 35 men and the Ypres area at least 26 men. South Russia, Jerusalem, Gallipoli and Salonika (Greece) are among their last resting places, as well as the cruel seas as far away as the South Atlantic.

Their stories are written as well as we can piece them together.

So next time you pass Horley's War Memorial Park, please step through the gates and spare a moment to read their names... give thanks for their courage... and reflect on their sacrifice.

SOME BRITISH ARMY STATISTICS OF THE GREAT WAR

The British Army of 1914 was very small in comparison with the mighty armies of continental neighbours, France and Germany. It was considered “contemptibly small” by Kaiser Wilhelm II. Rapid expansion ensured that, from mid-1916, it faced the main body of the enemy on equal, or better, terms and, in addition, fielded winning forces in many other theatres. By 1918 the scale, firepower and tactical sophistication of the Army were all very much greater than in the early days. The statistics of it all would fill a very large book: here are a few key facts.

How big was the British Army of 1914-1918?

8.7 million men served at some time.

Men from the UK in army in 1914:	733,514
plus recruited from England :	4,006,158
plus recruited from Scotland:	557,618
plus recruited from Wales and Monmouth:	272,924
plus recruited from Ireland:	134,202
plus Empire contingents sent to serve overseas:	
From Canada:	418,035 of total 628,964 in arms
From Australia and Tasmania:	330,000 of total 416,809 in arms
From New Zealand:	100,471 of total 220,099 in arms
From South Africa:	74,196 of total 136,070 in arms
From Newfoundland:	10,610 of total 11,922 in arms
From the West Indies:	16,000 this total to the end of 1917
From other Dominions:	31,000
Total British Army servicemen available for deployment:	7,165,280
From the Indian Army and other ‘coloured troops’:	1,524,187
Total force available for deployment:	8,689,467

Where did these men serve?

5.4 million men served in France and Flanders and this became known as the Western Front.

Theatre of War:	Peak Strength	Total Employed
France and Flanders:	2,046,901	5,399,563
Mesopotamia:	447,531	889,702
Egypt and Palestine:	432,857	1,192,511
Salonika:	285,021	404,207
Italy:	132,667	145,764
Gallipoli:	127,737	468,987
Other theatres:	293,095	475,210

How many soldiers of the British Army died in the Great War?

According to figures produced in the 1920s by the Central Statistical Office, total British Army casualties were as follows:

Total killed in action, plus died of wounds, disease or injury, plus missing, presumed dead:	956,703	of which Royal Navy and RFC/RAF casualties were 39,527
of which, from the British Isles were:	704,803	
and from Canada, Australia, India and other places:	251,900	
Total British Army deaths in France and Flanders:	564,715	of which 32,098 died of disease or injury
Total British Army deaths on the Gallipoli front:	26,213	
Total British Army deaths on all other fronts:	365,375	

How many soldiers of the British Army do not have a known grave?

In March 2009, the totals from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for the First World War were as follows.

These figures include all three services:

Buried in named graves: 587,989

No known graves, but listed on a memorial to the missing: 526,816

of which - buried but not identifiable by name: 187,861

- therefore not buried at all: 338,955

The last figure includes those lost at sea.

So it is fair to say that about half are buried as known soldiers, with the rest either buried but unidentifiable or lost.

How many soldiers of the British Army were wounded in the Great War?

The enormous firepower of the armies of 1914-1918 guaranteed a high proportion of men wounded in action. According to figures produced in the 1920s, in the Official History of the Medical Services, total British Army wounded were as follows:

Total British Army wounded in action, plus other casualties (e.g. accidental): if a man was wounded twice he appears here twice:	2,272,998	Royal Navy and RFC/RAF casualties were 16,862
Proportion returned to duty:	64%	
Proportion returned to duty but only for lines of communication, garrison or sedentary work:	18%	
Proportion discharged as invalids:	8%	i.e. approximately 182,000
Proportion died of wounds received:	7%	

How many soldiers of the British Army were sick in the Great War?

In every previous war, deaths and casualties to sickness far outstripped those from military action. By 1914 and beyond, medical advances and an increasingly well-organised medical chain of evacuation made sure this was not the case. The number of men evacuated to England from France and Flanders, who were suffering from an illness was:

Year	Officers	Other Ranks
1914	892	25,013
1915	5,558	121,006
1916	12,818	219,539
1917	15,311	321,628
1918	15,311	265,735

The number of men suffering from illnesses was much higher in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Gallipoli and East Africa.

**These statistics and much of the information used here was taken from
‘The Long, Long, Trail’ website at
www.1914-1918.net
by kind permission of the owner, Mr Chris Baker.**

*This website will greatly assist researchers
as it contains a mass of information about World War One.*

MEN OF HORLEY 1914-1918

Surname	Christian Names	Rank	Date of Death	Page
APPS	Thomas	Private	11 November 1918	10
ATKINS	Charles	Able-Seaman	7 November 1917	11
BAILEY	Charles Henry	Guardsman	3 October 1915	12
BANKS	George	Gunner	20 January 1919	13
BARTON	George William	Private	29 June 1915	14
BINGHAM	Charles Sydney	Private	26 April 1917	15
BORER	Frederick Ernest	Private	4 April 1918	16
BORER	Norman Jonathan	Ordinary Seaman	26 November 1914	17
BOURNE	Sidney	Private	3 July 1916	18
BOWEN	Thomas	Private	3 April 1916	29
BOX	John	Private	28 July 1919	20
BOYES	Reginald John	Lance Corporal	3 October 1917	21
BRADLEY	Thomas McKenzie	Gunner	21 March 1918	22
BROCKLEHURST	Thomas Pownall	Captain	1 July 1916	23
BROOKER	George McFarlane	Private	8 March 1918	24
BROTHERTON	Esme	Sergeant	16 August 1917	25
BUCKELL	Harry Thomas	Actg Bombardier	1 September 1915	26
BUDGEN	William	Private	2 September 1916	27
BUGDEN	Harry Robert	Gunner	8 November 1917	28
BURBRIDGE	Arthur Allen	Private	19 September 1918	29
BURDEN	Edgar	Private	25 September 1915	30
CHARLWOOD	Albert	Lance Corporal	16 July 1916	31
CHEESMAN	Arthur Edwin	Captain	26 September 1916	32
CHESSALL	Arthur Rowland Holmes	Private	7 October 1916	33
COBURN	Harry George	Lance Corporal	7 January 1919	34
COMBER	Frank	Private	27 December 1917	35
COOMBER	Charles	Coy Serg Major	28 March 1915	36
COOPER	Francis Hezekiah	Private	16 August 1916	37
COOPER	Frank			38
CORNFORD	James Edward	Private	29 September 1915	39
COUTTS	Albert Edward	Private	26 October 1917	40
CROXFORD	William Charles	Private	15 October 1918	41
DAY	Charles Robert	Corporal	22 July 1917	42
DREWELL	Robert John	Sapper	22 March 1918	43

Surname	Christian Names	Rank	Date of Death	Page
ELSON	Charles	Sergeant	1 July 1916	44
ETHERIDGE	George Alfred	Private	25 March 1918	45
FISH	Harry Edward	Stoker 1st Class	27 April 1916	46
FLOWERS	George	Joiner	1 November 1914	47
FREEMAN	George Cyril	Captain	1 October 1916	48
GRAHAME	John Gordon	Lance Corporal	24 April 1915	49
HANSEN	Carl Frederick	Lieutenant	31 July 1917	50
HANSEN	William George	2nd Lieutenant	25 September 1916	51
HARDS	William Walter Jordan	Leading Stoker	31 January 1918	52
HARMES	Richard	Gunner	23 June 1916	53
HENNING	John Sidney	Private	2 October 1916	54
HOARE	William	Private	28 December 1914	55
HOLMES	Thomas George	Lieutenant	5 May 1917	56
HUGHES	Wilfred Sydney	Ldng Telegraphist	19 January 1918	57
HUMPHREY	John	Private	1 June 1916	58
HUMPHREY	Michael James	Rifleman	30 November 1917	59
KENWARD	Charlie	Corporal	14 July 1916	60
KILLICK	Benjamin Harvey	Private	1 July 1916	61
KILLICK	Sidney	Private	1 May 1916	62
KNOWLES	Harry	Private	25 September 1915	63
LAMBERT	Edward Albert	Private	30 March 1918	64
LEACH	Ernest Cecil	Lance Corporal	8 August 1916	65
LEDGER	Thomas	Private	30 January 1916	66
LISLES	Henry Walker	Private	11 June 1917	67
LOCKYER	Edward John	Private	19 April 1916	68
LUCAS	Edward George	Rifleman	17 September 1918	69
LUSCOMBE	Alfred Geoffrey	Lieut Commander	1 May 1918	70
MANNERS	Douglas William	Private	27 November 1916	71
MARCHANT	Frederick George	Sergeant	25 April 1915	72
MARCHANT	Henry	Gunner	10 September 1917	73
MARTIN	John James	Lance Corporal	11 August 1917	74
MAYNARD	William	Private	15 October 1916	75
MILLS	Frank			76
MORGAN	George Alfred	Bombardier	17 May 1916	77
MOTT	Francis Stanley	2nd Lieutenant	23 July 1916	78
MUNN	Horace Frank	Acting Corporal	21 December 1916	79

Surname	Christian Names	Rank	Date of Death	Page
NIXON	Robert William	Private	14 July 1918	80
PARSONS	Thomas	Private	25 October 1917	81
PAYNE	Edwin	Private	18 June 1917	82
PEACH	Ernest Alfred	Gunner	12 June 1918	83
PEPPIATT	George William	Rifleman	19 May 1917	84
PERRY	Kenneth George	2nd Lieutenant	1 November 1916	85
PESCU	Alec Joseph	Private	11 February 1916	86
PESCU	Percy Robert	Private	26 September 1915	87
REEVES	Joseph Basil	Private	13 November 1916	88
REMNANT	Archibald	Driver	30 April 1917	89
RICHARDS	Henry George	Private	6 October 1917	90
ROFFEY	Frank	Private	27 December 1917	91
ROSER	Alfred	Private	27 September 1918	92
RUSSELL	Donald	Guardsman	14 September 1916	93
SCOLLICK	Alban Vincent	Driver	28 October 1915	94
SHOUBRIDGE	Alec John	Private	24 April 1915	95
SMITH	Ernest Cecil Peirson	Midshipman	31 May 1916	96
SOTHAM	Ralph Clifford	Lieutenant	9 January 1918	97
SOUTHGATE	Sydney George	Private	22 November 1918	98
STANDING	Charles William	Private	16 August 1918	99
STEER	Christopher	Private	18 April 1918	100
STEER	George Walter	Private	28 June 1918	101
STEVENSON	Albert Frederick	Able Seaman	20 September 1918	102
STILL	William Alfred	Private	22 September 1918	103
STRINGER	Bertie	Private	3 May 1917	104
STRUDWICK	Albert Daniel	Lance Corporal	5 July 1918	105
SWAIN	Thomas Arthur	Private	23 October 1916	106
SWINDEN	James Sidney	Private	15 April 1918	107
TAYLOR	Frank Lennox	Sergeant	24 November 1915	108
TERRY	George	Stoker 1st Class	26 November 1914	109
THEWLESS	James	Private	7 October 1916	110
TODD	Herbert Stanley	Captain	18 September 1918	111
TOMSETT	Charlie	Private	3 October 1918	112
TRIBE	Charles	Private	9 August 1917	113
TURNER	Arthur Bert	Gunner	21 March 1918	114
VALLANCE	Ernest Arthur	Private	3 May 1917	115
VOICE	Arthur Edward	Painter	3 September 1917	116

Surname	Christian Names	Rank	Date of Death	Page
WARNER	William Joshua	Private	9 April 1917	117
WEBBER	Henry	Lieutenant	21 July 1916	118
WELLER	Joseph Albert	Leading Stoker	1 January 1915	120
WELLER	William John	Private	3 May 1917	121
WHITE	Albert James	Private	25 August 1918	122
WHITE	Charles	Lance Corporal	2 November 1917	123
WHITE	Geoffrey Saxton	Lieut Commander	28 January 1918	124
WHITE	Ronald John Saxton	Lieutenant	27 October 1917	126
WHITE	George Garrett William	Private	21 March 1918	127
WILSON	Richard John	Private	1918	128
WILSON	Thomas William	Private	5 December 1914	129
WILTSHIRE	James Albert	Private	5 September 1916	130
WOODS	Arthur John	Private	31 October 1914	131
WOOLLHEAD	William Hugh	CPO Mechanic	27 May 1917	132
YARDLEY	Leslie Alfred	Private	9 September 1916	133

These men were named on the 'Parsons' memorial plaque
in St. Bartholomew's Church but were not selected for inclusion on the
Horley War Memorial

BAGG	Edwin
DANN	Frederick Thomas
DOWLEN	Mark
DOWLEN	William
EAMES	Albert Edward
EAMES	William C
HONOUR	Francis George
LINDLEY	Ernest William
LOVELL	F. W.
LUCAS	Henry
McMURRAY	Stuart
MILLER	Frank
ROBERTS	Donald Farquaharson
SANGSTER	Edward
SANGSTER	Hugh Alec
SARGENT	Edward
SIRED	Frederick
TYRELL	Alfred
WELLER	William Henry Frederick

Thomas Apps

Private G/21577, 10th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Thomas Apps was born in 1895 and was the third son of George and Alice Apps of Ringly Oak Farm, Brighton Road, Horley. He worked as a carman or driver and had a younger brother and sister.

His service record is not traceable but we know that Thomas first served with the Sussex Yeomanry and that he enlisted in Brighton.

The 10th Queen's (Service Battalion) was formed in Battersea on 3rd June 1915 by the Mayor and Borough of Battersea and came under the command of the 124th Brigade, 41st Division. It fought in many of the major actions on the Western Front, including the 3rd Battle of Ypres and various actions around the Menin Road in September 1917. In October, with a full strength of 962, all ranks of the Battalion moved to Italy and, after a 120 mile march, they arrived at Volpago.

In February 1918 they moved to Monte Grappa before returning to France in time to help counter the German 'Operation Michael' attacks wherein they sustained 350 casualties. After a period in a quieter section of the line they were able to join in the final advance and, by the time of the Armistice, they had arrived at Tenbosch, Belgium.

Thomas's medal records show no trace of his ever being posted overseas.

No firm details of his cause of death are known but he may have been a victim of the influenza epidemic which swept through the country in 1918. He died in the Military Hospital at Shoreham on Armistice Day, 11th November 1918, aged 23, and is buried in the churchyard at St. Bartholomew's Church, Horley.

Charles Atkins

Able Seaman Z/2660, Anson Battalion, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve

Charles Atkins was born in 1892 in Witham, Sussex. In 1911 he lived with his parents, Charles and Alice Atkins at 2 Bridge Cottages, Salfords. He was employed as a milkman and was the eldest of six brothers and two sisters.

Charles enlisted in the Royal Naval Voluntary Reserve (RNVR) in July 1915 and was trained as an infantryman, joining the Anson Battalion at Mudros, on the Greek island of Lemnos, in February 1916. In June 1916 he was sent home to England and hospitalised with a septic left foot.

This Naval force was formed from an idea by Winston Churchill and was to be used to seize and protect any ports or naval air stations abroad that the Royal Navy thought it needed in order to prosecute the war effectively. It was expanded to divisional size in 1914 with the addition of 8 battalions of naval infantry formed of a mix of Royal Navy reservists. The formation was titled the 'Royal Naval Division' (RND) and fought at Antwerp in 1914 and then at Gallipoli in 1915. In 1916 it was re-deployed to France and Flanders and came under the command of the War Office, where it was re-named the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division.

On 26th October 1917 at 5:40am, the Canadian divisions launched the attack for Passchendaele. The first battalion of marines and the Anson Battalion of the 188th Brigade attacked at the same time. As during previous days, it was raining. A few hours later, Anson Battalion took Varlet Farm, a reinforced German position midway between Poelkapelle and Passchendaele.

Less than 1 kilometre of territory was gained in the days that the Royal Naval Division fought at Passchendaele, at a cost of 2,000 casualties.

It was in this action that Charles received a shrapnel wound to the head and was evacuated to the 12th Casualty Clearing Station.

He died of his wounds, aged 23, on 7th November 1917 and is buried in Mendinghem Military Cemetery, near Poperinge, Belgium.

Charles Bailey

Guardsman 20816, 4th Battalion, Grenadier Guards

Charles Bailey was born in 1895 in Sutton the eldest of the two sons of Henry and Ellen Bailey. He lived at 3 Brighton Terrace, Horley, near the Kings Head public house.

He enlisted in Guildford and served with 4th Battalion, Grenadier Guards which was formed in Marlow in 1915.

They proceeded to France on 14th July 1915 and joined 3rd Guards Brigade, Guards Division on 19th August.

In September 1915 the Battalion was at the Battle of Loos where the attack was preceded by a four-day bombardment and would see the first use of poisoned gas by British troops. The chlorine gas was a great disappointment. It was released at 5:50am, giving it forty minutes to do its work before the infantry attacked at 6:30. However, much of the gas either lingered in 'no man's land' or drifted back over the British lines.

North of Loos the strong Hohenzollern Redoubt fell while further south the village of Loos was captured.

By the end of 25th September the British had advanced to within a thousand yards of the German second line to the north of Loos. The next afternoon the 21st and 24th Divisions launched an attack in ten columns across the open ground taking horrific casualties all the time and were then forced to retreat. The battle had been so one-sided that many Germans stopped firing during the British retreat.

When the fighting finally died down, the British front line stood close to the line reached at the end of the first day, although the Germans had recaptured the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

British losses at Loos were close to 50,000, with 16,000 dead and 25,000 wounded.

It seems likely that Charles was wounded during this action and was evacuated to hospital in Rouen. Charles Bailey died, aged 21, on 3rd October 1915 and is buried in St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen.

George Banks

Gunner 276764, 34th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

George Banks was born in 1881 in Ringmer, Sussex to William and Elizabeth Banks. In 1901 his family lived in Ironsbottom but by 1911 had moved to 3 Grove Cottages, Lee Street, Horley.

George enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) and the 34th Siege Battery moved to France in August 1915. It was in action continuously during the fighting in France and Flanders.

The whole of 34th Siege Battery, RGA went out to the Western Front in September 1915 and joined 26th Heavy Artillery Brigade, RGA. The Battery was continuously in action throughout the war and fought in many of the major strategic battles. On 15th November 1917 it joined 85th Heavy Artillery Group and remained with it for the rest of the war.

Siege Batteries RGA were equipped with heavy howitzers, sending 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, stores, roads and railways behind enemy lines.

The circumstances leading to his death are not recorded but George Banks died, aged 38, on 20th January 1919 and is buried in Belgrade Cemetery near Namur in Belgium. This was a large Casualty Clearing Station for some months after the Armistice and many men buried there died after the war ended.

George Barton

Private 9339, 1st Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers

George William Barton was the eldest child born to George and Susannah Barton in 1887 in Norwood near Croydon. The family later moved to Hadlow House, Parkhurst Road, Horley.

He was a Regular Army soldier, having enlisted in Woolwich into the Royal Dublin Fusiliers before 1911.

He was serving in Madras in India before the outbreak of the First World War and his unit arrived back home on 21st December 1914. They moved to billets in Torquay but early in 1915 came under orders of 86th Brigade, 29th Division. On 16th March 1915 they sailed from Avonmouth for Gallipoli, going via Alexandria and Mudros, where they arrived on 9th April and finally landed at Cape Helles on 25th April 1915.

The landing at “V” Beach, in the early morning of 25th April 1915, was to be made by boats containing three companies of the 1st Royal Dublin Fusiliers, followed by the collier “River Clyde” with the rest of the Dublins, the 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers, half the 2nd Hampshire Regiment and other troops.

Out of the first 200 men down the gangway, 149 were killed outright and 30 were wounded. The packs the men were carrying weighed some sixty pounds and it was because of this that many of the Irish were drowned when they jumped into the water to get ashore. The place was very strongly fortified and during the 25th the landing was partially secured at the cost of very heavy casualties.

Between 30th April and 19th May 1915, following heavy casualties, the 1st Dublins and 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers formed one composite unit, called the ‘Dubsters’.

Throughout the next weeks the Battalion suffered heavy casualties and, following reinforcements, mounted a major action at Gully Ravine on 28th June. During this action the Battalion lost another 236 officers and men, including George.

George Barton was killed in action on 29th June 1915, aged 28, and is commemorated on the Helles memorial.

Charles Sydney Bingham

Private 82606, 88th Company, Machine Gun Corps

Charles, known as Sydney, Bingham was born in 1881 in Pelsall, near Worcester to John and Lucy Bingham. He had a brother and two sisters. The family later moved to Rotherfield in Sussex but by 1901 Sydney was working as an ironmonger's assistant and living in Lumley Road, Horley.

In 1906 he married Mary Hughes in Reigate and they later moved into a house in Station Road, Horley with their daughter, Theodora. Finally, they moved to Oakdene, Church Road, Horley.

Sydney, by this time an Insurance Agent, enlisted on 18th October 1916 into 14th Battalion, London Regiment (London Scottish) and sailed for France in March 1917.

Originally, each infantry battalion maintained its own Machine Gun Section but these were later gathered together by Brigades to form Machine Gun Companies under a separate Corps. 88th Machine-Gun Company was formed on February 21st 1916, attached to 88th Brigade, 29th Division. In 1917 they were in action in the First and Second Battles of the Scarpe during the Arras Offensive.

The Vickers machine gun was fired from a tripod and was cooled by water held in a jacket around the barrel. The gun weighed 28.5lbs, the water another 10lbs and the tripod weighed 20lbs. Bullets were assembled into a canvas belt, which held 250 rounds and would last 30 seconds at the maximum rate of fire of 500 rounds per minute. No.1, a Corporal, fired the gun, decided where to locate it and, when on the move, carried the tripod. No.2 carried the gun and 4 litres of water for the cooling system. Nos.3 and 4 carried and fed the ammunition, No.5 was the scout spotting targets and No.6 was the range finder.

Sydney was wounded on 24th April, probably during the 2nd Battle of the Scarpe, and he died of his wounds, aged 36, on 26th April 1917. He is buried in Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun, near Arras, France.

Frederick Borer

Private 130624, 16th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Frederick Ernest James Borer was born in 1899, the third of three sons and a daughter, to Jonathan and Kate Borer of Albert Road, Horley. The family later moved to Lingfield Cottage, Church Road, Horley. His brother, Norman, also died in the war.

Frederick enlisted in Redhill into The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment but trained as a machine gunner and was later posted to The Machine Gun Corps. The 16th Company was formed in February 1916 and were in action in the Battles of the Somme, Morval and Le Transloy. In 1917 they fought at Hill 70 and Cambrai.

On 1st March 1918 they joined with other MG companies of the Division to become 16th Machine Gun Battalion.

By March 1918, a large scale German attack towards Arras had been widely expected for some time. When under attack, the Battalion had a specific defensive role. Assuming it was at full strength (and the indications are that the 16th wasn't) then it would deploy all of its 64 heavy Vickers guns along the line held by the Division with their fields of fire carefully inter-locked. They would then pour fire into any advancing infantry. Used like this, machine guns were a devastating weapon, capable of firing off a belt of 250 bullets in 30 seconds.

The strength and ferocity of the German assault was greater than expected and the Allies were forced back over the next days towards the village of Vaux. A further, even stronger, attack was made by the Germans and this succeeded in forcing another British retreat.

It was several days after this action that Fred lost his life. Frederick Borer was killed on 4th April 1918, aged 19. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial.

Norman Borer

Ordinary Seaman J/21973, HMS *Bulwark*, Royal Navy

Norman Jonathan Henry Borer was born in 1897, the second of three sons and a daughter, to Jonathan and Kate Borer of Albert Road, Horley. The family later moved to Lingfield Cottage, Church Road, Horley. His brother, Fred, also died in the war.

At the outbreak of war, Norman left his job as a dairyman's assistant and joined the Royal Navy.

After his basic training, he was posted to HMS *Bulwark*. HMS *Bulwark* belonged to a sub-class of the Formidable-class of pre-dreadnought battleships of the Royal Navy known as the London-class.

Entering service with the Royal Navy in 1902, *Bulwark* sailed with the Mediterranean Fleet until 1907. She then served with the Home Fleet, for a time under Captain Robert Falcon Scott. After a refit in 1912, she was assigned to the 5th Battle Squadron.

Following the outbreak of the First World War, *Bulwark*, along with the rest of the squadron was attached to the Channel Fleet, conducting patrols in the English Channel.

On 26th November 1914, while anchored near Sheerness, she was destroyed by a large internal explosion with the loss of 736 men. 14 men survived of whom 2 died later in hospital.

Witnesses on the battleship *Implacable*, the next ship in line at the mooring, reported that "a huge pillar of black cloud belched upwards... From the depths of this writhing column, flames appeared running down to sea level. The appearance of this dreadful phenomenon was followed by a thunderous roar. Then came a series of lesser detonations, and finally one vast explosion that shook the *Implacable* from mastheads to keel."

The explosion was likely to have been caused by the overheating of cordite charges that had been placed adjacent to a boiler room bulkhead.

Norman Borer died in this disaster on 26th November 1914, aged 18. His body was never recovered for burial and he is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

Sidney Bourne

Private G/6308, 6th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Sidney Bourne was born in 1895, one of the five children of George and Alice Bourne, and he lived in Albert Road, Horley.

In 1911 he was a 'wash house' boy and living with relatives at Hope Cottage, Charlesfield Road, Horley. He worshiped at Horley Baptist Church and is commemorated on a plaque inside the church.

He enlisted into 6th Battalion, The Queen's Regiment in Guildford on 27th July 1915 and gave his address as Lonesome Lane and his sister Emily as next of kin. This was a 'New Army' unit formed in response to Kitchener's famous appeal.

6th Battalion were in actions throughout 1915 and 1916 as part of 12th Division.

When the Battle of the Somme commenced on 1st July 1916 they were in the second wave and due to attack on 2nd July but this attack was cancelled. Forward assembly trenches had been dug to narrow the strip of no man's land that they would have to cross to 500 yards. They attacked the following day at 3:15am towards Ovillers-la-Boiselle but were met with heavy machine gun and rifle fire. Some men gained the enemy trench but supporting platoons were caught by heavy fire and impeded by the enemy wire which remained uncut by the artillery.

Having been beaten back, the Brigade was again ordered forward at 4:35am but they did not manage to gain any ground in the face of heavy machine gun fire and, by 9:00am, the Division reported total failure.

On this day alone, the Battalion lost 9 officers dead or missing, 23 other ranks killed, 154 wounded and 117 missing.

Sidney Bourne died in this action on 3rd July 1916, aged 20, and he has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Thomas Bowen

Private 18798, 7th Battalion, King's Shropshire Light Infantry

Thomas Bowen was born in 1882 in Coalport, Shropshire to Andrew and Susannah Bowen. He had four brothers and two sisters and by 1901 was working in the local mill.

In 1907 Thomas married Beatrice Bowles and they lived in Burgess Hill, where Thomas worked as a bricklayer, probably with his father-in-law. They had two daughters and, after Thomas died, Beatrice married a man named Arthur Stoner at St Bartholomew's Church in Horley (May 1921) and that is probably why Thomas appears on our Memorial.

He enlisted in Guildford into the King's (SLI) Regiment which recruited heavily from Shropshire where he was born. His service record has been destroyed and his medal card gives no useful information so we do not know when he was posted overseas.

7th Battalion was a service battalion raised in Shrewsbury in September 1914. They landed at Boulogne on 28th September 1915 and became part of 8th Brigade, 3rd Division.

They would have arrived too late for the disastrous battle of Loos and were directed to the Ypres sector where they took their turns in and out of the line.

In mid-February 1916 Thomas would have fought in the fierce actions around The Bluff, close by the Ypres-Comines canal.

As spring approached, the British decided that it was essential for an enemy salient near the village of St. Eloi to be eliminated. A determined assault was made, beginning on 27th March, to clear the enemy from a series of craters close to the village.

Thomas Bowen was killed in this action. He died, aged 34, on 3rd April 1916. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Menin Gate memorial at Ypres.

John Box

Private M/352155, Royal Army Service Corps

John Box was born in 1887 in Cuckfield, Sussex. He was the son of James and Charity Box and was one of six children.

In 1908 he married Alice Partridge and they moved to Buxton Villas, Smallfield. They had a son, Arthur, in 1910 and John earned his living as a general labourer. At the time of his death his address was listed as 5 Lumley Road, Horley.

John Box's service records are not available at present. He enlisted into the Army Service Corps which later became the Royal Army Service Corps.

The RASC was known amongst soldiers as Ally Sloper's Cavalry. Alexander "Ally" Sloper was a madcap fictional character who appeared in British serialized comics between 1867 and 1916. His name was derived from the term "alley sloper", which was Victorian vernacular referring to people who dodged the rent collector by sloping in the alley ("to slope off" was British slang for moving away slowly).

Despite this reputation, the RASC were the unsung heroes of the British army in the Great War. Soldiers cannot fight without food, equipment and ammunition. In the Great War the vast majority of this tonnage, supplying a vast army on many fronts, was supplied from Britain. Using horses and motor vehicles, railways and waterways, the RASC performed prodigious feats of logistics and were one of the great strengths of organisation by which the war was won.

John was awaiting a posting or possibly his discharge at the Clearing Office in Blackheath at the time of his death, aged 32, on 28th July 1919. He may have been a victim of the influenza epidemic which swept Europe after the war.

On 11th August 1919 he was buried in St Bartholomew's Churchyard, Horley.

Reginald Boyes

Lance Corporal G/16616, 1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment

Reginald John Boyes was born in 1889 in Redhill to Alfred and Annie Boyes who also had seven daughters and three other sons. They lived at 1 Asylum Cottages, presumably on the Earlswood Hospital site, but the family later moved to 3 Island Villas, Earlswood.

In 1910 he married Minnie West in Maidstone and they lodged at 97 Earlsbrook Road, Redhill where Reginald was employed as a domestic gardener.

Reginald enlisted on 3rd June 1916 at the Maidstone recruiting office of the Royal West Kents. He gave his address then as Springhead Cottages, West Street, East Malling, Kent and his enlistment documents show that he had a son, Cyril Reginald Boyes, born in 1916 in East Malling.

He was posted to serve in France on 1st December 1916 and promoted to Lance Corporal in March 1917. Throughout October 1917, 1st Battalion were involved in actions at Polygon Wood, Broodseinde and Passchendaele in the Ypres Salient.

3rd October 1917 was a pleasant autumn day, though overcast, and the Battalion was preparing itself for an attack along the Menin Road the following day. In the midst of their preparations they suddenly found themselves having to beat off a heavy German attack on their own positions.

Reginald Boyes was killed in this action. He died on 3rd October 1917, aged 29, and is buried at Poelcapelle British Cemetery, which is about half a mile east of the town of Poelcapelle, Belgium.

Thomas Bradley

Gunner 74111, 110th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

Thomas William McKenzie Bradley was born in 1897 in Meopham, Kent into a fairly affluent family. His father William, is shown in the 1901 census as living on his own means and he and his wife Augusta also had a daughter, Mary, born in 1895. William and Augusta later moved to South Norwood and, later still, to Horley.

By 1911 Thomas was a pupil at Charterhouse School, near Godalming.

He enlisted in Horley on 19th February 1916 and joined the RGA. He embarked for France from Dover in April 1916. It is recorded that he was given special leave in May - July 1917 because of his father's illness and to attend to urgent family affairs.

Siege Batteries RGA were equipped with heavy howitzers, sending 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, stores, roads and railways behind enemy lines.

110th Siege Battery gave supporting fire during the attempts to halt the German advances in the early stages of their Spring Offensive – Operation Michael - and Thomas was almost certainly killed during the exchanges of artillery fire in this action. He died, aged 21, on 21st March 1918.

He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial together with 34,717 other officers and men of the Allied Armies.

Tom Brocklehurst

Captain, 2nd Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Thomas Pownall Brocklehurst was born in 1887 in Horley, the son of Edward and Katharine Brocklehurst and lived at 48 Hans Mansions, Kinnersley Manor, Horley. He had two elder brothers and a sister. Edward Brocklehurst was one of the principal landowners around Horley.

Before the war Thomas studied law. His military enlistment details are not accessible at present.

He appears to have enlisted quite early in the war as he was already a Captain with the 2nd Queen's in September 1915 when he is recorded as having been wounded in action at Loos.

When the Battle of the Somme commenced on 1st July 1916 the 2nd Queen's were part of 91st Brigade, 7th Division tasked with attacking the enemy trenches surrounding the German strongpoint of Mametz. They suffered heavy casualties amongst both officers and men.

The job of 91st Brigade was to advance across the German front line (Bulgar Trench), past the second line (Cemetery Trench), then capture the strongpoints in Mametz itself and push on past the deep Dantzig Alley communication trench and take the third enemy line, Fritz Trench. 2nd Queen's were in close support behind the attacking battalions.

At 9:30am the support battalions were ordered up to reinforce - with little effect. The Germans tried to counter-attack from Mametz and Dantzig Alley but a heavy artillery bombardment by the British caused them to abandon their efforts.

Soon after 1:00pm 2nd Queen's took Dantzig Alley (East) and their bombers then moved along Fritz Trench and into Bright Alley which was taken at about 6:30pm.

Tom Brocklehurst was killed in this action and died, aged 29, on 1st July 1916. He is buried in Dantzig Alley British Cemetery, Mametz.

George Brooker

Private G/96186, 18th Battalion, Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment)

George Macfarlane Brooker was born in 1892, the son of George and Ann Brooker of Rectory Lane, Charlwood. He had five brothers and a sister.

He followed his father's occupation and became a carpenter.

George's service record is not available but we know he enlisted in Redhill and joined The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment.

He was later transferred to 18th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment which was a New Army Service (Pioneer) Battalion. The 18th (1st Public Works) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own) was raised in London on 19th January 1915 by Lt-Col. John Ward MP. Initially they trained at Alexandra Palace but moved to Rayleigh in May. They joined 33rd Division as a Pioneer Battalion at Clipstone Camp in July and moved to Salisbury Plain for final training in August. They proceeded to France on 15th November, landing at Le Havre.

33rd Division concentrated near Morbecque, being strengthened by the exchange of 98th Brigade for the experienced 19th Brigade from 2nd Division.

In 1916 they were in action in the Battles of the Somme. In 1917 they took part in the Arras Offensive, the actions on the Hindenburg Line, the operations on the Flanders coast and the Third Battles of Ypres.

In March 1918 they were preparing for the Battles of the Lys and it was during this period that George died.

George Brooker was killed in action, aged 26, on 8th March 1918 and is buried at Potijze Chateau Cemetery, which is a short distance north east of Ypres.

Esme Brotherton MM

Sergeant 203576, 1st Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)

Esme Brotherton was born in 1890 in Guildford to Francis and Hannah Brotherton. He was the fourth child of eleven and had six brothers and four sisters. The family owned the Bowling Green Restaurant in Castle Square, Guildford.

Before the war, Esme was employed as a clerk for the Inland Revenue and in 1915 he married Lilian Holdforth at St Bartholomew's Church and probably moved in with her at 112 Lumley Road, Horley.

He enlisted in Fulham as 2540 Private Brotherton in the 25th Cyclists' Battalion (The London Regiment) and later transferred to 1st Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers), part of 1st London Division.

In August 1914 they were fully mobilised and posted to guard the London-Newhaven railway but in mid-September they sailed for Malta where they stayed until February 1915.

By March they had landed at Le Havre and joined 25th Brigade, 8th Division. 25th Brigade were in action throughout 1915 and fought at Neuve Chapelle, Aubers and at Bois Grenier, which was a diversionary attack coinciding with the Battle of Loos.

In February 1916 the battalion was transferred to 167th Brigade, 56th (London) Division and were in action throughout the Somme campaign. Esme was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and, at some point in his service, he was awarded the Military Medal for bravery but it is not known when this occurred.

In mid-summer of 1917 the British Army embarked on the 3rd Battle of Ypres. Heavy rain soon made the ground impassable and it was not until 16th August that the attack could be renewed.

The village of Langemarck was attacked on that day and it seems likely that Esme died near there.

He was killed in action, aged 27, on 16th August 1917 and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres.

Harry Buckell

Acting Bombardier 75981, 130th Battery, Royal Field Artillery

Harry Thomas Buckell was born in 1897 in Redhill and lived at Somerset Road, Reigate, the second of five sons and a daughter, to William and Charlotte Buckell.

By 1911 the family had moved to 30 Clarence Walk, Meadvale, Redhill and Harry was employed as a stable lad. William and Charlotte later moved to 86 Cornfield Road, Reigate.

Harry enlisted into the Royal Field Artillery in Guildford fairly early in the war. 130th Battery was a heavy howitzer battery and was part of 3rd Division.

9.2 inch heavy howitzers sent large calibre high explosive shells in a high trajectory, plunging fire. As British artillery tactics developed, the heavy Batteries were most often employed in destroying or neutralising the enemy artillery, as well as putting destructive fire down on strong points, dumps, stores, roads and railways behind enemy lines.

In early 1915 the division fought in the Ypres salient and were in action at Messines Ridge, St Eloi, and the Bluff. They later moved up to the Menin Road sector at Hooze and Bellewarde.

On 21st February 1915 the Germans exploded the first mine beneath the trenches at Hooze and the British responded in a similar manner. On 19th July they exploded one and a half tons of ammonal beneath the German positions and consolidated the huge crater torn in the German lines. A few weeks later the Germans used flamethrowers to recapture the crater, only to lose it again to determined attacks from the British in August.

Harry Buckell was killed in action in this area, aged 19, on 1st September 1915 and is buried at Birr Crossroads Cemetery, just west of Hooze.

William Budgen

Private 2515, 9th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

William Budgen was born in 1890 in Horley, the son of William and Mary Budgen. He had two sisters and lived at Rose Cottage on the Balcombe Road, near Fernhill.

Before the war, William was employed on the railways as a platelayer and lodged at Dulwich.

William was a Territorial Army soldier and he was among the first men to enlist in Redhill in September 1914. He was enrolled into 9th (Service) Battalion of the East Surreys.

The Battalion embarked for France on 31st August 1915 and fought at the battle of Loos with heavy losses.

In 1916 they suffered in the German gas attack at Wulverghem, when a mixture of chlorine and phosgene was used, causing 338 casualties.

They took part in The Somme offensive which started on 1st July and were heavily involved in actions in and around Delville Wood throughout August.

Saturday 2nd September was a dry, warm summer's day and the 9th East Surreys were preparing for an attack south of Guillemont. The British artillery opened the barrage to soften up the enemy for the main attack on 3rd September. German artillery responded to this fire and a number of casualties were sustained.

William Budgen was killed in this action, aged 27, on 2nd September 1916. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Harry Bugden

Gunner 146317, A Battery, 86th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

Harry Robert Bugden was born in 1898 near Frimley, one of three sons, to Thomas and Emily Bugden and lived at Whitewood Lane, Horne. His father, Thomas, was a Police Constable.

In 1911 the family lived at Warwick Wold, Merstham but later moved to 25 Queens Road, Horley.

Harry enlisted in Guildford into the Royal Field Artillery. His service record is not available.

86th Brigade was originally attached to the 19th Division and entered active service in France in July 1915. They were in action at the battle of Loos which, compared with the small-scale British efforts of spring 1915, was a mighty offensive indeed - so much so that it was referred to at the time as 'The Big Push'. Taking place on ground not of their choosing and before stocks of ammunition and heavy artillery were sufficient, the opening of the battle was noteworthy for the first use of poison gas by the British Army.

The Brigade also took part in the battle of the Somme in July 1916. This battle was one of the largest of World War I, in which more than 1,000,000 men were wounded or killed, making it one of history's bloodiest battles.

Early in 1917 the Brigade was detached from 19th Division and was used as a mobile force to be sent wherever it was most needed.

During the autumn of 1917 the Second battle of Passchendaele was fought and it is possible that Harry was wounded during this action.

He died of his wounds, aged 20, on 8th November 1917 and is buried at Vlamertinghe New Military Cemetery, which is just west of Ypres.

Arthur Burbridge

Private TF/320195, 16th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment (Sussex Yeomanry)

Arthur Allen Burbridge was born in 1898 in Horley and was the third son of George and Mary Burbridge of Victoria Road, Horley. He had two older brothers and by 1911 they were all employed in the family bakery business. Arthur was a cheerful and popular boy with a wide circle of friends.

Arthur's formal service records are not available but we know he enlisted when aged only 16.

He served in the Balkan Theatre (Gallipoli) and he would have embarked at Liverpool and sailed on the "Olympic" landing on 8th October 1915. In December 1915 they were withdrawn from Gallipoli and between February and July 1916 were in Egypt on the Suez Canal defences.

In July 1916 the Brigade moved to join the Western Frontier Force and early in 1917 they came under the command of 230th Brigade (74th Yeomanry Division).

In May 1918 the 16th Sussex Yeomanry landed at Marseille and spent the remainder of the war on the Western Front.

As the war drew to a close the 16th Sussex was part of the attacking force at Epehy on 18th September 1918. 1,488 guns opened fire at 05:20am and supported the infantry with a creeping barrage. 300 machine guns were also made available. The objective consisted of a fortified zone roughly 3 miles (4.8 km) deep and 20 miles (32 km) long, supported by subsidiary trenches and strongpoints. The promised French assistance did not arrive, resulting in limited success on that flank. On the left flank troops also found difficulty when attacking the fortifications erected at "the Knoll", Quennemont and Guillemont farms, which were held determinedly by German troops.

Arthur Burbridge was killed in action by shellfire, aged 20, on the following day, 19th September 1918, within two months of the Armistice. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial, which is about midway between Arras and Cambrai.

Edgar Burden

Private 10335, 5th Battalion, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry

Edgar Burden was born in 1896 in Tenterden, Kent to Edward and Sophia Burden. He had three brothers and two sisters.

By 1911 the family had moved to a house opposite Myrtle Cottages in Charlesfield Road, Horley and Edgar was employed as a chemist's errand boy.

Already serving as a Territorial Army soldier, Edgar enlisted in Redhill in September 1914 into the 5th Oxford and Bucks which was raised as part of Kitchener's First New Army and were part of 42nd Brigade, 14th (Light) Division.

Edgar arrived in France in June 1915 and the battalion took part in the Battle of Hooge in July which was the first occasion that the Germans used flamethrowers against our troops. British troops lost ground in this action though some ground, up to the stables of Hooge Chateau, was regained in August.

The Division was in action again at the second battle of Bellewaarde, just east of Ypres, which commenced on 25th September. This attack, while subsidiary to the Loos offensive, was designed with limited goals; to recover the remainder of the lost ground, as well as to provide a diversion from the main attack and tie up German reserves. The attacking troops assembled in a steady downpour on the night of 24th and spent a miserable few hours waiting for their barrage to start at 03:50am. Zero hour was fixed for 04:20am. Though not for want of bravery and effort, neither objective was achieved. German losses were comparatively light

Edgar was killed, aged 19, on this day, 25th September 1915.

He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres.

Bertie Charlwood

Lance Corporal G/2016, 7th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Albert (Bertie) Charlwood was born in 1892 in Redhill to Robert and Sarah Charlwood. He had five brothers and a sister and the family lived at 58 Broadfield Villas, Lower St Johns Road, Earlswood.

In 1913 Bertie married Harriett Earle and was earning his living as a general labourer. Harriett later moved to live at Horne near Horley.

Bertie was a typical 'Kitchener Volunteer' and enlisted in Redhill early in the war.

The 7th (Service) Battalion Queen's were sent to France and Bertie landed there on 27th July 1915. They became part of 55th Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division. Through the autumn of 1915 the Battalion was engaged on several fronts and carried out the usual activities of trench warfare.

At the Battle of The Somme, the Division was placed on the extreme right of the British attack. On 1st July 1916 they were to assault the trenches south and west of the village of Montauban and this became the first village to be captured on the first day of the Somme campaign. The pre-attack barrage lasted almost a week and during the final hours before the infantry attack was due to start, the troops, packed together in the forward trenches, sat through a deafening roar of British and French guns. At 7:30am the 7th Queen's assaulted the German trenches on a front of about 400 yards.

After 12 hours of fighting the final objective west of Montauban was reached and consolidated on a front of about 260 yards. The Battalion sustained dreadful casualties during this attack, losing 174 other ranks killed, 284 wounded and 56 missing. The British Army suffered 60,000 casualties on this day.

It was almost certainly here that Bertie suffered the wounds that caused his death, aged 25, on 16th July 1916. He is buried at La Neuville British Cemetery, which is west of Corbie.

Arthur Cheesman

Captain, 1st/5th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

Arthur Edwin Cheesman was born in 1877 in Newbridge, Co Kildare, Ireland, to Captain Edwin Cheesman (RAVC) and Mrs. Anna Cheesman of Sissinghurst Castle, Cranbrook, Kent.

Sometime before 1911, Anna, now widowed, came to live at Victoria Lodge, Victoria Road, Horley with another son, the Rev. Reginald Cheesman, who was the assistant Curate of Horley and, later, vicar of Salfords Church. Arthur was a witness when Reginald married at St Bartholomew's, Horley in July 1915.

The 1911 census shows Arthur describing himself as a Farmer so he probably joined the army soon after the outbreak of war. 1st/5th was a Territorial Battalion so it is possible that he was a TA soldier when the war started.

Known as the 'Weald of Kent' battalion, the 1st/5th were at Ashford in August 1914 as part of the Home Counties Division but were soon despatched to India. Their stay was only to last about a year because, by November 1915, they moved to Mesopotamia (now known to us as Iraq) and landed at Basra as part of 35th Indian Brigade. The enemy here was the Turkish army, which was frequently led by German officers.

The British forces suffered a huge setback at Kut-al-Amara when, after a siege lasting 147 days, 11,800 British and Indian troops inside the garrison town finally surrendered on 29th April 1916.

Throughout the remainder of 1916 the British Army struggled to recover from this disaster. 1st/5th Buffs suffered a steady stream of casualties during the early part of 1916 and so formed a composite battalion with 1st/4th Hampshires until May when they were sent to 14th Indian Division.

Arthur Cheesman was killed on 26th September 1916, aged 39. He is buried in Amara War Cemetery, which is a little east of the town between the left bank of the river Tigris and the Chahaila Canal.

Although his middle name is inscribed as Edward rather than Edwin on both Horley War Memorial and Salford's Church, it is possible that this is an error caused by use of the abbreviation Edw. for either name.

Arthur Chessall

Private 6568, 15th County of London Battalion (Civil Service Rifles)

Arthur Roland Holmes Chessall was born in 1878, the second of three sons to William (MD, MRCS) and Adelaide Chessall. William was a doctor and they lived in Station Road, Horley between Albert Villas and Horley Brewery.

By 1911 William had died and Arthur was living with his mother at 64 Home Park Road, Wimbledon. He was a clerk in the civil service.

He enlisted in Kensington and may have been with the Battalion when they landed at Le Havre on 18th March 1915. They fought in many actions throughout 1915, including the battle of Loos, and in 1916 resisted the German attack at Vimy Ridge. In 1916 they were at the Somme and took part in the capture of High Wood.

On 1st October the Battalion was part of the 44th Division attack on a line between Eaucourt and Le Sars (on the Albert-Bapaume road) on a front of 3,000 yards. This became known as the Battle for the Transloy Ridges, lasting for three weeks and it included the capture of the Butte de Warlencourt, a heavily defended German strongpoint. This hillock looks little more than a pimple today but in 1916 it was somewhat higher and connected to the German lines by part of the Gird Trench system.

7th October was a fine warm autumnal day. The 8th Londons led the attack but were beaten back by machine gun fire. The 15th Londons, with the 7th in support, met a similar fate and all that was achieved was the capture of some enemy positions near the road to Le Barque.

Arthur Chessall was killed in this attack on 7th October 1916, aged 38, and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Harry Coburn

L/Cpl G/9952, 26th (Pioneer) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment

It has proved difficult to identify Harry George Coburn. We know he was a Lance Corporal in the Middlesex Regiment because it is noted on the 1922 Roll of Honour and the soldier above is the only one listed by the CWGC that fits.

This soldier made a will leaving over £1000 and the probate announcement gives his address as 98 Albert Road, Horley. We know little more about him, except that his medal card suggests he was posted to France in August 1915.

A soldier of this name served with the Royal Artillery from 1909 until he bought himself out in Gibraltar in 1914. He re-joined the army in mid 1915 and this may be the same man. If so, he came from Penge in south-east London, as did the man to whom he bequeathed his money. Harry Coburn almost certainly served in a different unit before being transferred to 26th Middlesex.

The 26th Middlesex was a Pioneer (service) battalion. They worked behind the front line troops making and repairing roads and railways, digging trenches, and making corduroy roads, from logs, to haul guns out of mud.

Following the armistice with the Ottoman Empire, Britain sent troops from Macedonia to secure Constantinople and the Straits. In addition, troops were sent eastwards to Turkish ports on the Black Sea and into the Caucasus region of Russia to influence the outcome of the struggle against the Bolsheviks. Many of these soldiers died from disease and hardship within a few weeks of their arrival.

Harry Coburn died of pneumonia on 7th January 1919, aged 30. He was buried in Batoum British Cemetery but the grave has since been lost.

He is commemorated on the Haidar Pasha Memorial which stands within the war graves plot of Haidar Pasha Cemetery near Istanbul. It commemorates more than 30 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War who died fighting in South Russia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, and in post Armistice operations in Russia and Transcaucasia, whose graves have been lost.

An Addenda panel was later added to commemorate over 170 Commonwealth casualties who are buried in cemeteries in South Russia and Transcaucasia whose graves can longer be maintained.

Frank Comber

Private 206734, 2nd/4th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

The inscription on the War Memorial to Frank Coomber is thought to refer to the soldier named above, Frank Comber. The name is given as Comber on the plaque in St Bartholomew's church. A Frank Coomber lived in Church Road and served in the RAMC but, despite being gassed, he survived the war.

Frank was born in 1892 in Horley to William and Mary Comber and was one of seven children. The family lived in Charlesfield Road before moving to 65 Lumley Road, Horley.

Frank enlisted in Reigate and his medal record card suggests that he may have joined up in about 1915 or 1916.

2nd/4th Battalion, The Queen's, was formed in Croydon in August 1914 and in April 1915 became part of 160th Brigade, 53rd Division.

The Division was in action at Gallipoli and the effects of fighting, few reinforcements and the dreadful blizzard of November 1915, reduced it to just 162 officers and 2428 men - about 15% of full strength.

The Queen's were then sent with the rest of 53rd Division to fight in Palestine. They were heavily engaged at the Battles for Gaza (where the Division suffered 600 casualties) and Beersheeba and the capture of Tell Khuweilfe. The British launched their assault on Jerusalem early in December 1917 and Turkish resistance was much less stubborn than expected. The last Turkish troops left Jerusalem early on the morning of 9th December and on 11th December General Allenby made his formal entry into the city.

On the morning of 27th December the enemy launched heavy attacks preceded by accurate artillery bombardments against the defenders. Although they inflicted heavy casualties on the Turkish forces the 2nd/4th Queen's also suffered and were withdrawn from the line at about midday.

Frank Comber was killed in this action as well as 34 other soldiers. He died on 27th December 1917, aged 25, and is buried in the Jerusalem Military Cemetery, which is just north of the walled city near the Mount of Olives.

Charles Coomber

CSM 5608, 2nd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

Charles Coomber was born in 1882 in Horley, the youngest child of George and Esther Coomber who lived in Ironsbottom, near Horley. He had four brothers and older sisters.

Charles enlisted into the Regular Army in Kingston and, by 1901, was a Lance Corporal. He may well have caught the tail end of the Boer War, certainly saw service in India and returned to England in 1914 when the East Surreys became part of 85th Brigade, 28th Division.

The Battalion landed at Le Havre on 19th January 1915 and, with the rest of the Division, concentrated in the area between Bailleul and Hazebrouk. By this time Charles was acting Company Sergeant Major (WO2) and so had made a significant military career for himself.

The rate of attrition suffered by the 2nd East Surreys is typical of an infantry battalion in an active area of the trenches and is clearly illustrated by entries in the war diary. In March they received replacements as follows: 4th March – 46 men arrived, mainly sick and wounded returning from base, 10th March – 125 men arrived, 16th March – 117 men arrived, 20th March – 50 men arrived.

Death was a constant companion to those serving in the line, even when no raid or attack was launched or defended against. In busy sectors the constant shellfire directed by the enemy brought random death, whether the victims were standing to in a trench or resting in a dugout.

It has been estimated that up to one third of Allied casualties on the Western Front were actually sustained in the trenches. Aside from enemy injuries, disease also wrought a heavy toll.

The circumstances of Charles's death are not known but the Battalion war diary records that the battalion was in trenches east of St Eloi on 28th March 1915. Only one casualty is recorded on this day and it appears to have been Charles Coomber.

He is recorded as having been killed in action, aged 33, on 28th March 1915 and is buried at Voormezele Cemetery Enclosure No 3, which is a few miles south west of Ypres.

Francis Cooper

Private 24419, 1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment

Francis Hezekiah Cooper was born in 1885 in Battersea to Edward and Elizabeth Cooper, the eldest of two sons and three daughters.

By 1901 they had moved to Yattenden Road, Horley and Francis was employed as a Telegraph Messenger boy. The 1911 census shows that the family had moved again to 3 Kings Terrace, Balcombe Road, Horley and Francis was a house painter.

He worshiped at Horley Baptist Church and is commemorated on a plaque inside the church and also at Horley Infant School.

It is not known exactly when Francis enlisted but, for some reason, it was in Harlesden, Middlesex. It is likely that he was in a reinforcement draft to replace men killed in the 1914-1915 battles but he may have taken part when the Battalion fought at the Battles of Aubers and Loos in 1915.

In early August 1916, during the Battle of the Somme, 1st Northampton were in reserve at Helencourt Wood, behind the lines in the Albert Sector. They were part of 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, Fourth Army.

On 13th August 1916, the battalion began its move up to the front line at Bazentin-le-Petit where the southern slope of the ridge was capped by the German fortress in High Wood. This was an extremely active area of the Somme offensive and both Bazentin and High Wood appear among the 16 battle honours on the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing. The various companies of the battalion were involved in operations in and around High Wood and the Elgin Trench system suffering, according to the War Diary of the 1st Battalion, more than 140 casualties, mainly killed, in only one action inside High Wood.

Wednesday 16th August 1916 was a warm day but with a steady drizzle. Francis Cooper died this day, aged 31, and his body was never identified for burial. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Frank Cooper

This man has proved impossible to identify.

The name appears on the 1918 'Appeal' list immediately above that of Francis Hezekiah Cooper and both names appear on the 'Parsons plaque' in St. Bartholomew's Church, for which these names were collected.

The names to be inscribed on Horley War Memorial were fixed in August 1921 and, again, both names are included. However, when the Dedication Roll of Honour was prepared in February 1922, the name of Frank Cooper was left off. This may be because Regiments were included on the Roll of Honour and, for the first time, someone realised the duplication.

In the event that this conclusion is incorrect there were several other Frank Coopers who were killed, though only two local men are real possibilities.

Frank Cooper, born 1871, was a gardener at Earlswood and he had a son, also Frank, born in 1900. Neither of these men, if they served, can be identified militarily and neither is listed at either Salfords Church or St. John's, Redhill. They appear on the 1911 census.

It seems most probable that Frank Cooper and Francis Cooper are one and the same and that the duplication arose because Francis was known as Frank to some people.

John Cornford

Private G/4074, 2nd Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

The name **John Edward Cornford** appears on Horley War Memorial but on the 1922 Roll of Honour the name is given as James.

James Edward Cornford (who had an older brother named John) is listed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and this inscription is presumed to apply to him.

James was born in 1891 in Salfords, the second son of Edmund and Hannah Cornford, and they lived at Rose Cottage, Masons Bridge, Salfords.

Before the war, James was employed at Horse Hills, near Horley as a gardener. He enlisted in Guildford fairly early in the war and joined the 2nd Battalion, Queen's. This unit had suffered severe casualties in 1914 and James was amongst the first batch of reinforcements. The battalion became part of the 7th Division and were amongst the first troops to entrench in front of Ypres. They were in action at Neuve Chapelle, Aubers, Festubert and Givenchy.

At Loos on 24th September 1915 the battalion arrived at Verquigneul and dumped their surplus gear before marching until 03:30am when they reached the reserve lines. At 05:50am on the 25th, the artillery barrage opened up and continued for nearly an hour. The battalion was at full strength – 29 officers and 995 men.

They attacked in extended order by companies with the machine gun company in an advanced position to harass the German defenders. Having taken their first objectives, part of the battalion was directed to occupy the Quarries and also the Cite St Elie area. At around 11:15pm a determined German counter attack was resisted but the battalion pulled back to the original German support trenches. 10 officers and 271 other ranks became casualties in this attack and James was one of them.

James Cornford died, aged 24, on 25th September 1915 and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

Albert Coutts

Private G/16630, 1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment

Albert Edward Coutts was born in 1891 in Horley, to Alexander and Frances Coutts, the younger of their two sons and lived at Poplar Terrace, Massetts Road, Horley. Alexander and Frances later moved to Roseberry Cottage, Church Road, Horley.

Albert attended Horley Infant School and later became a clothier's assistant and lived at Anerley, near Crystal Palace. In 1915 he married Elsie Spashett in West Ham and they had a son, Albert Francis Barnett Coutts, in March 1916. They later moved to Slade Green, Kent.

Albert appears to have been a rather sickly man and had a deformed chest. He enlisted into the Royal West Kents on 19th July 1916 in Maidstone and, when medically inspected in Bromley, was passed fit only for Home Base duty. Nevertheless, he was posted to France in February 1917 and by May was in hospital at Rouen.

Elsie wrote to the Army to enquire whether he could be sent home and assigned to lighter duties and even offered her own services in place of his as she was "young, strong and in far better health" than Albert. This appeal was rejected and Albert recovered sufficiently to rejoin the 1st Battalion on 11th August 1917. He returned just in time to take part in the Second Battle of Passchendaele.

On 26th October 1917 1st Queen's, as part of 13th Brigade, 5th Division attacked at 5:40am. Together with 15th Royal Warwicks and the 14th Warwicks in line they attacked down the Scherriabeek and found it an impassible morass. They attempted to push on under heavy fire from Gheluvelt. Although the Warwicks managed to occupy the Polderhoek Chateau for a short while they were forced to pull back and the Germans reoccupied it.

Albert Coutts was posted as missing, presumed killed, aged 26, on 26th October 1917.

He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, near Zonnebeek, just north east of Ypres.

William Croxford MM

Private 47472, 9th Battalion, Welsh Regiment

William Charles Croxford was born in 1885 in Hanworth, Middlesex to John and Mary Croxford. He was one of fourteen children.

William became a seedsman, perhaps one step up from an agricultural labourer, and in 1907 married Mary McArdle. They remained living in Middlesex but his parents moved to Gatwick Cottages, Horley.

William's service record no longer exists but we know he enlisted in Hounslow and first served in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, though his exact unit cannot be ascertained.

He is known to have won the Military Medal for bravery and this was probably during his time with the Welsh Regiment

The 9th Battalion, Welsh Regiment was formed in Cardiff in September 1914 as part Kitchener's New Army. They came under orders of 58th Brigade, 19th (Western) Division. In mid July 1915 they were despatched to France.

The exact date of William's arrival in France is not known but the notice of his death in St. Bartholomew's parish magazine suggests that he had been there for about eighteen months before his death, so he may have been in a draft of replacements in early 1917.

In 1917 9th WR were in action in The Battle of Messines and the Third Battle of Ypres where they fought through the horrors of Passchendaele. In May 1918 they fought in the Battle of the Aisne when the German army threatened to drive a deep wedge into the allied lines and were in action through the old Somme battlefields during the Battles of St Quentin and Bapaume.

William's life came to an end in October as the battalion prepared to join the British advance across Picardy at the battle of the Selle.

William Croxford died in action on 15th October 1918, aged 33. He is buried in Hermies Hill British Cemetery, which is in the village of Hermies about 8 miles east of Bapaume.

Charles Day

Corporal 76245, 'C' Battery, 189th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

Charles Robert Day was born in 1894 in Horley to John and Alice Day. He had two older brothers and a younger sister and they lived at 94 Albert Road, Horley. He attended Horley Infant School.

Before the outbreak of the war, Charles was a baker's assistant in Horley. No service record survives for Charles but we know he enlisted in Guildford, giving his place of birth as Redhill and joined the Royal Field Artillery.

Many RFA brigades started the war with 15 pounder field guns, ironically a development of an original Krupps design from Germany. In 1916, batteries started being issued with the improved 18 pounder field gun. A field gun fired its shells on a low trajectory - generally the target was in sight. Shells were usually high explosive or shrapnel, as required. By 1916, an artillery brigade consisted of four batteries, each of six guns. The first three, A B and C, were field guns and the fourth, D battery, had 4.5inch howitzers at their disposal. The howitzer lobbed its shell high into the air so that it dropped more directly down onto its target. This meant that the target could be behind obstacles, perhaps a wood or a hill.

189th Brigade was a siege artillery unit and, as part of 41st Division, they were engaged through the Somme battles of 1916 and also at the Battles of Menin Road and Pilkem Ridge (3rd Battle of Ypres) through the summer of 1917.

It is thought that Charles was killed just before the 3rd Battle of Ypres began and he died, aged 23, on 22nd July 1917.

He is buried in Chester Farm Cemetery, which is about 3 miles south of Ypres.

Robert Drewell

Sapper 134792, 97th Field Company, Royal Engineers

Robert John Drewell was born in 1895 in Harlesden, London, the elder of two sons, to Robert and Margaret Drewell. By 1911 the family lived in Newbury, Berkshire and Robert was apprenticed to a carpenter. Robert and Margaret later moved to West Villa, Brighton Road, Horley.

Robert's service records are not available so we know no details of his enlistment or service dates.

The Royal Engineers carried out a number of different roles for the army, both in the battlefield and along the lines of communication. They were organised into different types of units, none of which was bigger than a Company in size. These units were attached to Divisions or to larger formations as Corps, Army or even GHQ. The main ones, of which there were many, were the Field Companies and the Signals Companies. As they were attached to the fighting portions of the Divisions, these Companies often saw action and took part in the fighting.

97th Field Company RE arrived in France in September 1915 and suffered heavy casualties at the Battle of Loos.

In 1916 they were in action during the Somme offensive and in 1917 they were at the Hindenburg Line, the Arras offensive and 3rd Ypres.

In 1918 they were again in the Somme area at what became known as the Battle of St Quentin which straddled a line between Arras and Chauny and it was in this action that Robert was killed.

On 21st March 1918 the Germans launched a ferocious assault on the British lines. At 4:40am a terrific German bombardment began. British communications were shattered and many of our guns were neutralised or destroyed over the next few hours of shelling. The Germans made substantial advances over the next few days and Robert was killed during this battle.

He died on 23rd March 1918, aged 23, and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, which lies on the north side of the Albert-Pozieres road just south west of Pozieres.

Charles Elson

Sergeant S/721, 7th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Charles Elson was born in 1877 in Cobham, Surrey, and was one of 12 children born to Charles and Sarah Elson.

By 1911 Charles had left his labouring job and enlisted into the West Surreys as a Regular Army Soldier. He joined up in Redhill and gave an address in Horley.

Charles' service record is not available but we know that he was serving before 1911 so it is likely that he was transferred into the 7th Battalion.

The 7th (Service) Battalion Queen's were sent to France and landed there on 27th July 1915. They became part of 55th Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division.

On 1st July 1916 the Battle of the Somme commenced and at 7:30am the Battalion assaulted the German trenches on a front of about 400 yards. Under a cloudless blue sky which gave full promise of the hot mid-summer day which was ahead, wave after wave of British infantry rose and, with bayonets glistening, moved forward into a blanket of smoke and mist as the barrage lifted from the enemy's front trench. Almost simultaneously the German gunners ceased their counter-battery work and concentrated their fire upon the assault.

After 12 hours fighting, the final objective west of Montauban was reached and consolidated on a front of about 260 yards. Casualties in this action were: other ranks killed 174, wounded 284 and missing 56.

One of the dead was Charles Elson. He died on 1st July 1916, aged 39, and is buried in Dantzig Alley Cemetery, which is just east of Mametz and about a mile from Montauban where he was killed.

George Etheridge

Private 103463, 8th Battalion, The Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

George Alfred Etheridge was born in 1896 in Horley to George and Sarah Etheridge. He had five brothers and three sisters and the family lived at 113 Albert Road, Horley.

By 1911 George was employed by Crawfords in Station Road as a chemist's errand boy and later worked for George Burbridge, the baker.

His service record is not available but we know he enlisted in Guildford, into the Army Service Corps, fairly early in the war.

George's medal card makes neither mention of the ASC nor the award of a 1914-1915 Star, which suggests that he did not serve overseas before 1916.

In 1917 he transferred (or was posted) into the Machine Gun Corps and joined its 8th Battalion on its formation in January 1918 after which it became part of 8th Division, 5th Army.

On 21st March 1918 the Germans launched Operation Michael. Around 10,000 guns fired over a million shells in five hours against Lieutenant General Byng's Third and General Gough's Fifth Armies before 47 German divisions attacked. Using infiltration tactics the German storm troopers by-passed pockets of resistance and broke through the British trench system, leaving the following waves of troops to 'mop up' any resistance. Lacking reserves, Gough's line soon gave way and, by the evening of 23rd March, the Germans had advanced 12 miles.

The British line was forced to withdraw in the face of the German advance. Bapaume (or what remained of it) was abandoned and it was in this action that George Etheridge was killed.

He died on 25th March 1918, aged 22, and has no known grave.

He is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, which lies on the north side of the Albert-Pozieres road just south west of Pozieres.

Harry Fish

Stoker 1st Class K/14099, HMS *Russell*, Royal Navy

Harry Edward Fish was born in 1894 to Harry and Jane Fish. He had a younger brother and five sisters and the family lived at 13 Charlesfield Road, Horley. Harry attended Horley Infant School.

Before the war, Harry worked as a gardener and it is not known when he enlisted into the Navy, or what other ships he served on but, at some point, following his basic training, he was posted to the battleship HMS *Russell*. It is worth noting that any man who, on call-up, expressed a preference for the Royal Navy, could not be drafted into any other service.

HMS *Russell* joined the Channel Fleet in November 1914 when at Portland and, after bombarding the coast of Belgium, was sent to the Dardanelles. She stayed at Mudros as support alongside HMS *Hibernia* in November 1915 and eventually took part in the evacuation on 7th January 1916.

HMS *Russell* arrived in Malta on the night of 26th April 1916. As Grand Harbour was closed due to the boom defence, she had to wait until morning before entering. While manoeuvring outside the harbour, she struck a mine and became one of the first victims of the German mine laying submarines, one of which, U-73, had voyaged from Kiel to Malta under the command of Captain Gustav Siess. On 23rd April U-73 laid several mines at about 50m in front of Grand Harbour before proceeding to Cattaro.

HMS *Russell* was mined on 27th April 1916 just over 4 miles off the coast of Malta. She floated for 20 minutes before capsizing, her huge hull showing above the water before being engulfed by waves. 126 sailors died but 625 were saved, including the Captain.

Harry Fish was killed in this disaster, aged 21. His body was not recovered and he is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. The Memorial overlooks the town of Chatham and is approached by a steep path from the Town Hall Gardens.

George Flowers

Joiner 341781, HMS *Good Hope*, Royal Navy

George Flowers was born in 1873 in Sutton St Edmunds, Lincolnshire. His parents were John and Ann Flowers and he had a younger brother and three sisters.

He cannot be traced on the census of 1891 but a RN entry in 1901 could be George on a ship at Sheerness. George married Sarah Taylor at Horley in 1901 and they moved to Portsmouth but it is probable that Sarah came back to Horley following his death. They had two children, a boy and a girl. He joined the Navy as a carpenter well before the outbreak of war and probably as early as the 1890s.

HMS *Good Hope* was launched on 21st February 1901, with her heaviest gun being of 9.2 inch (234mm) calibre. She became the flagship of the 1st Cruiser Squadron, Atlantic Fleet in 1906 and, in 1908, became the flagship of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron. She went into the Reserve Fleet in 1913 but, just before the outbreak of the war, she joined the 6th Cruiser Squadron.

The Admiralty thought it likely that German liners in New York and other ports on the United States Atlantic seaboard could convert themselves to armed merchant cruisers by installing guns which the Admiralty believed they carried in their holds. HMS *Good Hope* left Portsmouth on 2nd August 1914 under the command of Captain Philip Franklin to guard against such vessels. After a few days in the Falkland Islands she left Port Stanley on 22nd October and embarked on the search for the German East Asiatic Squadron.

When they met in the late afternoon of 1st November 1914 the Germans, with their newer, lighter ships, took quick advantage. They opened fire at 7:00pm and HMS *Good Hope* was hit before its crew could return fire; it sank within half an hour. She was sunk by the German armoured cruisers 'Scharnhorst' and 'Gneisanau', with the loss of her entire crew of 900 hands, in what became known as the Battle of Coronel off the Chilean coast.

George Flowers died in this action on 1st November 1914, aged 40, and is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

George Freeman

Captain, 6th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment

George Cyril Freeman was born in 1890 in West Norwood to George and Charlotte Freeman – he was one of seven children.

In 1895 George Freeman bought Picketts Farm and had “Picketts” in Picketts Lane, Horley built nearby. This is still a substantial family home and reflects the fact that George senior was a stockbroker. The family were wealthy enough to employ a kitchen maid, housemaid, cook and footman.

George’s service record does not survive but, by comparing death dates and Probate records, we can identify him as serving in the 6th Berks and his medal index card shows that he may have been in the Army soon after the Battalion was formed in September 1914.

As part of 53rd Brigade in 18th (Eastern) Division they landed in France on 26th July 1915. They took part in several actions in 1915 and in 1916 were engaged in various parts of the Somme campaign.

In the autumn of 1916 the 6th Berks were part of an attacking force attempting to gain possession of The Ancre Heights. This would deprive the German army of observation towards Albert to the south-west and allow the British to observe north over the Ancre valley to the German positions around Beaumont Hamel, Serre and Beaucourt.

Towards the end of September, 53rd Brigade were tasked with an assault on a heavily defended German strongpoint called the Schwaben Redoubt. During this period, from 26th September until 5th October, the 18th Division lost 3,344 casualties.

At 5:30am on 1st October 1916 the Germans launched a major counter attack to dislodge the British troops from the ground they had gained over the previous few days and it was on this day that George Freeman was killed, aged 25.

George is buried in Blighty Valley Cemetery, which is near Authuille, a short way north east of Albert.

John Grahame

Lance Corporal 1894, Honourable Artillery Company

John Gordon Grahame was born in 1885 in Glasgow to Thomas and Margaret Grahame. His father was the Canadian Government Agent for Scotland and John was one of 13 children born to this couple.

John attended Glasgow High School and Dulwich College and, by 1911, was living in Thurleigh Road, Balham and working as a shipping clerk. Sometime after 1911 his mother, Margaret, moved to Cumberland House, Horley.

John volunteered immediately war broke out and enlisted in the HAC in September 1914 in Finsbury and was sent to France on 23rd January 1915.

The Honourable Artillery Company was one of the oldest units in the British Army and, despite its title, also maintained an Infantry Battalion. John served as an infantryman.

In early 1915 1st HAC were in action as part of 3rd Division in the area of St Eloi, south of Ypres. Late in March the British exploded six huge mines in an effort to drive German troops from a commanding position on Wytschaete Ridge. The explosions made huge craters and these, together with the effects of shellfire, turned the whole area into a quagmire.

In their attempts to secure the craters the British made a series of assaults and it was almost certainly whilst attacking these positions that John died.

John Grahame was killed in action on 24th April 1915, aged 29, and was buried behind the trenches near St Eloi in the grounds of the Chateau of Elsinvelles.

In 1920 his body was exhumed and reburied at Voormezele Cemetery, which is a short distance south west of Ypres.

His commanding officer wrote that “he was much loved and respected by all his platoon and he, as well as others, would miss him, both as a friend and a soldier”.

Carl Hansen

Lieutenant, 165th Coy Machine Gun Corps (attached 9th Bn, The King's Liverpool Regiment)

Carl Frederick Hansen (not Hanson as on our Memorial) was born in 1893 in Liverpool to Charles Lauritz and Mary Hansen. He had a younger brother, William, who also died in the war. The family lived in north west London. It is not known how the family are connected to Horley. Charles and Mary later lived at Hansen's Farm, Cholsey, Berks.

Details of Carl's military career are difficult to ascertain. He appears to have been posted to France in 1916, probably with 9th King's. The Machine Gun Corps was formed at the end of 1915 and a specialist Company was allocated to each infantry brigade taking its number.

The 9th King's were in 165th Brigade, 55th Division and, in February 1916, were in action south of Arras before moving south where they were in and out of the line throughout the Battle of the Somme until October 1916 (during which time William Hansen was killed) when they were moved north again to the Ypres Salient.

The first half of 1917 was a comparatively quiet time, if being surrounded by enemy on three sides and under constant artillery fire could be described as quiet.

By June 1917 machine gunners were employing creeping barrages, with fire falling ahead of the artillery barrage to catch enemy troops moving to the rear. They would concentrate fire on specific targets or sweep the enemy ground behind his front and support positions. Machine guns for these tasks were generally placed about 1000 yards behind the advancing infantry and were moved up as soon as the enemy positions were captured.

When the Battle of Passchendaele commenced on 31st July, the Division attacked near Wieltje and, in the course of the next few days, no fewer than 168 officers and 3384 men were killed, or missing.

Carl Hansen was killed in this action on 31st July 1917, aged 24. He is buried in Potijze Chateau Lawn Cemetery, which is about a mile north east of Ypres.

William Hansen

2nd Lieutenant, 9th Battalion, The King's Liverpool Regiment

William George Hansen (not Hanson as on the memorial) was born in 1894 in Didsbury, near Chester, to Charles Lauritz and Mary Hansen. Known as George, he had an older brother, Carl, who also died in the war. The family lived in north west London. It is not known how the family are connected to Horley. Charles and Mary later lived at Hansen's Farm, Cholsey, Berks.

William was educated at Steyning School and then went to Denmark for two years to learn farming. When he returned, he entered Harper Adams Agricultural College in Shropshire.

He joined the Inns of Court officer training corps in 1915 and was gazetted 2nd Lieutenant in January 1916. William was sent to France in June and joined the Battalion as they were preparing to move to The Somme.

On 5th August they were in the front line near to the German-held village of Guillemont. The fighting that followed is often referred to as some of the hardest of the whole battle - for both sides. In less than 24 hours the battalion suffered over 100 casualties, a terrible toll when they weren't even attacking. They attacked the village on 12th August and made no ground at a cost of over 200 men. The battle went on, and a month later, they found themselves in the line once more, a short distance away near to the village of Longueval.

25th September 1916 was a warm autumnal day with temperature into the 70s as the battle of Morval got under way. The 9th King's attacked with the rest of 165th Brigade and by 1:00pm had captured Gird Trench and cleared Grove Alley to leave the way clear through to Gueudecourt, having achieved all of their objectives.

William was killed in this action on 25th September 1916, aged 22.

His commanding Officer said "He was loved by everyone in the Company".

He was buried locally but the grave was subsequently lost, and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

William Hards

Leading Stoker K/11357, HM Submarine E50, Royal Navy

William Walter Jordan Hards was born in 1892 in Redhill to John Jordan and Mary Hards but appears to have been raised by his mother's parents, John and Emily Hards, at Poplar Terrace, Horley and later in Church Road, Horley.

By 1911 the census shows that he was a tool grinder and worked at Monotype in Salfords. In 1915 William married Florence Mary Smith in Reigate.

No service record survives for William but it is likely that he enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1916. At some point, following his basic training, he volunteered for service in Submarines and was ultimately posted to E50.

The 'E' class were the backbone of the submarine fleet during WWI and bore the brunt of its contribution to the war effort. Various experiments were carried out with the 'E' class including trials to see if they were suitable for the carrying of seaplanes.

The 8th and 9th submarine flotillas of the Royal Navy were based at Parkeston Quay, including all of the E-Class submarines. E50 was 181 feet long and displaced 807 tons submerged. She was capable of about 14.5 knots on the surface, 9.5 knots submerged and carried 10 torpedoes. E50 entered service late in January 1917 and William may well have been included in the first crew, which was 30 strong.

A few weeks later, E50 was damaged in a collision while submerged on 19th March 1917 off the North Hinder Light Vessel.

Whilst submerged at about 30ft below the north sea and heading towards Germany, E50 was suddenly subjected to a violent shock. At first the crew thought they were under attack from a Zeppelin but, after finally rising to periscope depth, the captain saw the enemy submarine, UC-62, that they had hit. E50 was badly damaged and limped home.

William Hards survived this collision but finally lost his life, aged 25, when E50 was mined off the South Dogger Light Vessel on 31st January 1918.

All of the crew were lost and William is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial.

Richard Harmes

Gunner 94395, 127th Battery, Royal Field Artillery

Richard Harmes was born in 1897 in Horley and was the third child of Edward and Sarah Harmes. He had two older sisters and they lived in Poplar Terrace, Horley. He attended Horley Infant School. In 1911 Richard was still at school and the family had moved to 26, Lumley Road, Horley. Richard enlisted in Guildford and, after his basic training, was sent to France on 29th July 1915.

Richard's service record is not available but, at about the time of his arrival, the 4th Division, of which 127th Battery were part, moved down from the Ypres sector to the Somme area.

This was a very much quieter sector compared to the Salient and the division stayed here until just prior to the Battle of the Somme when it took up positions on the Redan Ridge.

The horse-drawn Royal Field Artillery was the most numerous arm of the artillery, being responsible for the medium calibre guns and howitzers deployed close to the front line, and was reasonably mobile. It was organised into brigades.

Richard may well have crewed an 18-Pounder gun. These fired 3.3inch (84mm) calibre shells each weighing 18.5lb (8.4kg). A well-trained crew could fire 30 rounds a minute, up to a range of 3 miles or more. 4 types of shell were fired: High explosiv; Shrapnel (375 lead balls with an explosive charge); Smoke and Gas. About 176 rounds would be held at each battery position. 1000 rounds would be available for each gunpit and held in various locations.

In the event of a retreat, field guns could not be abandoned to the enemy since they were the equivalent of an Infantry Regiment's 'Colours'. Regimental Colours, of course, were no longer carried into battle. If possible, guns would almost always be destroyed by removing the gun sights or exploding a charge in the barrel or breech.

Richard was killed during the opening artillery exchanges for the Battle of The Somme on 23rd June 1916, aged 19, and he is buried at the Sucrerie Military Cemetery, which lies in open countryside midway between Colincamps and Beaumont Hamel.

John Henning

Private 110234, 5th Battalion, Canadian Mounted Rifles

John Sidney (not Sydney as on our memorial) Henning was born in 1893 in Norwood to Arthur and Lucy Henning. He was one of eight children and sometime between 1901 and 1911 the family moved to The Brambles in Massetts Road, Horley.

On 22nd April 1909, three days before his 16th birthday and giving his occupation as 'Farmer', John sailed from Liverpool on board the White Star Liner 'Canada' bound for Ontario and Montreal. He appears to have settled in Sweetsbury, a small town near Cowansville, on the edge of Lac Davignon some 45 miles south east of Montreal, and it was here that he volunteered for service with the Canadian Army six years later on 16th March 1915.

The regiment embarked from Quebec on 18th July 1915 aboard *Hesperian*, disembarking in England on 27th July 1915. Its strength was 35 officers and 601 other ranks. They arrived in France on 24th October 1915, becoming part of 2nd Brigade, Canadian Mounted Rifles.

John would certainly have been present at the Battle of Mount Sorrel which took place on 2nd June 1916 between Zwarteleen and Hooge. Between 2nd June and 14th June 1916, the Canadian Corps lost a total of 73 officers and 1053 other ranks killed; 257 officers and 5010 other ranks wounded; 57 officers and 1980 other ranks missing - a total of 8430.

When the Battle of The Somme began in July 1916 the Canadian Divisions were soon engaged.

In late September the 5th CMR were in action to the east of Thiepval and a few days later, on 1st October, were tasked with the capture of Regina Trench beyond the village of Courcellette. They carried out a sustained attack through heavily wired defences and, despite heavy enemy machine gun fire, finally achieved their objectives.

John was killed in this action. He is listed as being killed on 2nd October 1916, aged 23. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial on Vimy Ridge.

William Hoare

Private 12881, 1st Battalion, Lincolnshire Regiment

It is thought that William Hoare was born in about 1882 in Maesteg, Wales but his family is not traceable with any certainty nor can he be identified on the 1911 census or an earlier one.

William joined up in London, probably as soon as war was declared in August 1914, along with 51,646 others.

He landed in France on 12th November 1914 and would have been a welcome replacement for the many casualties taken by 1st Lincs since their arrival on 14th August.

The 1st Battalion had been in the thick of the fighting and seen action at Mons, the rearguard action at Solesmes, the Battle of Le Cateau, The Battle of the Marne, The Battle of the Aisne, at La Bassee and Messines and William arrived towards the end of the First Battle of Ypres.

He must have been wounded almost as soon as he arrived at the front. He was moved, probably by wagon and train, to The Duchess of Westminster's Hospital (No.1 B.R.C.S) at Le Touquet.

The Base Hospital was part of the casualty evacuation chain, further back from the front line than the Casualty Clearing Stations. They were manned by troops of the Royal Army Medical Corps, with attached Royal Engineers and men of the Army Service Corps. In France and Flanders, the British hospitals were generally located near the coast. They needed to be close to a railway line, in order for casualties to arrive by train (although some also came by canal barge), they also needed to be near a port where men could be evacuated for longer-term treatment in Britain.

William Hoare died from his wounds on 28th December 1914. He is buried in Le Touquet Paris-Plage Communal Cemetery, which is on the Avenue du 18 Juin, Le Touquet.

Thomas Holmes

Lieutenant, 100 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps

Thomas George Holmes was born in 1893 in Whetstone and lived with his parents, Thomas and Mary Holmes. By 1911 he had two younger brothers and the family had moved to “The Croft”, 18 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge near The Manor House school which Thomas attended. His parents later moved to Pettridge Wood near Redhill.

It is not known when Thomas joined the RFC but, given the life expectancy of pilots at this time, it is likely to have been sometime in 1916.

100 Squadron was a bomber squadron flying FE2bs and went into action for the first time on 5th/6th April 1917 when they attacked the German airfield at Douai, the base of the famous Richthofen circus.

Thomas took part in this attack which was a great success. Indeed, Manfred von Richthofen himself wrote a report which praised the individual bravery of the British pilots.

The FE2b was a pusher aeroplane, with the gunner seated in front of the pilot, far forward in the nacelle. The FE2 was one of the first aircraft to fly with a machine gun, on 24th July 1912. From 1917 onwards it was used as a bomber. Around 1000 were built.

F.E. stands for ‘Farman Experimental’, ‘Farman’ being used as a generic name for pusher biplanes as they looked vaguely like those designed by the Farman brothers. The advantages of this arrangement were primarily in the lack of a propeller to fire through and a gunner to take a lot of work off the pilot, as in the related FE8. While the engine protected the pilot somewhat from bullets fired from behind, it was easier to destroy the engine. Also, in the event of a nose-down crash, the engine and fuel tended to land on top of the crew, usually killing them.

Thomas flew on several more bombing raids over the next few weeks but, on the night of 5th/6th May 1917, he was killed, aged 23, whilst attacking the aerodrome at Dorignees. His observer, Air Mechanic Ekins, was also killed. He is buried in Douai British Cemetery, near Cuincy, a short distance north west of Douai.

Wilfred Hughes

Leading Telegraphist J/4083, HMS *Racoon*, Royal Navy

Wilfred Sydney Hughes was born in 1893 in Islington to John and Annie Hughes. He was one of eleven children of which five brothers and four sisters survived.

Wilfred joined the Royal Navy prior to 1911 but his service record is not available.

In late 1916, whilst serving in HMS *Campania*, he married Constance Wood at St. Bartholomew's Church and after the war she gave her address as The Fire Station, Horley.

It is not known what other ships he served in during the war but he was serving in HMS *Racoon* at the time of his death.

HMS *Racoon* was a Beagle class, three funnelled, coal-burning destroyer displacing some 950 tons - she was built and launched from the Cammell Laird shipyard in 1910. Her official crew compliment was 96 but at the time of her loss she was carrying 91 seamen under the command of Lt. George Napier.

During the early hours of January 9th 1918 she was en route from Liverpool to Lough Swilly to take up anti-submarine and convoy duties in the Northern Approaches. In heavy seas and poor visibility, including snow blizzards, she struck rocks at the Garvan Isles off Malin Head on the northwest coast of Ireland and sank with the loss of all hands.

Wilfred died in this disaster on 9th January 1918, aged 25, and his body was never recovered.

He is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial.

John Humphrey

Private 1450, 22nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

John Humphrey was born in 1896 in Felbridge to William and Clara Humphrey. He was the sixth of seven children. William was a blacksmith and seems to have moved around frequently, possibly following any available work, but in 1901 was settled at 2 Clara Villas, Tismans Common, Rudgwick, Sussex. After William died, Clara moved to Crawley and later to Horley.

By 1911 John was employed as a shop assistant to an upholsterer and lived with his widowed mother, Clara, at 13 High Street, Crawley.

John's service record is not available so it is not known when he enlisted. He certainly enlisted in Shepherds Bush and gave his place of residence as Hove, Sussex.

22nd Battalion (The Kensingtons) were raised by the Mayor and Borough of Kensington in 1914. After training, they landed at Boulogne in November 1915 as part of 99th Brigade, 3rd Division.

Early in 1916 they saw action south of Ypres, around the St Eloi craters, and later at the battle for Vimy Ridge.

Early in May 1916, the Germans began to intensify their artillery and mortar activity from Vimy Ridge. Having observed intense Allied troop movements around Arras, in preparation for the Somme assault, their offensive began on 21st May with a powerful bombardment lasting several hours. In relative terms, the bombardment was one of the heaviest of the Great War with 70,000 shells fired in four hours. The Germans exploded a mine and then sent in their infantry which easily took the British front line, capturing numerous soldiers in their shelters and "turning" the trenches in on their makers. A British counter-attack on 23rd May was nipped in the bud by German shelling and machine gun fire. It is likely that John was wounded in this action and removed to 6th Casualty Clearing Station at Barlin.

It was here that he died on 1st June 1916, aged 20.

The graves surrounding the hospital were eventually gathered together and became the Barlin Communal Cemetery, which lies about 10 miles north west of Vimy and 5 miles south of Bethune.

His older brother, Michael, also died in France on 30th November 1917.

Michael Humphrey

Rifleman 553742, 16th Battalion, The London Regiment (Queen's Westminster Rifles)

Michael James Humphrey was born in 1892 in Horley to William and Clara Humphrey. He was the third of seven children. William was a blacksmith and seems to have moved around frequently, possibly following any available work, but in 1901 was settled at 2 Clara Villas, Tismans Common, Rudgwick, Sussex. After William died, Clara moved to Crawley and later to Horley.

By 1911 Michael was employed as a footman, one of seven servants, by the Pawle family at Wray Common, Reigate.

He married Emily Easton in 1914 in Kensington. After Michael's death, Emily remarried and, as Emily Underdown, lived at 34 Redstone Road, Redhill.

Michael's service record is not available but we know he enlisted, probably in 1916 or 1917, in Piccadilly into 16th Battalion, The London Regiment which became part of 169th Brigade, 56th London Division.

In July 1917 the division moved to Ypres, and fought in the Battle of Langemarck at Inverness Copse and Glencourse Wood on 16th/17th August. Following these operations the division withdrew from the line and moved south to the Cambrai area, taking over trenches at Lagnicourt in early September.

On the opening day of the Battle of Cambrai, 20th November 1917, the division was involved in diversionary operations opposite Moeuvres and two days later attacked and captured Tadpole Copse and the Hindenburg Line near Moeuvres itself. During the German counter-attack on 30th November, the positions held near Tadpole Copse were overrun and the division was forced back towards the old British front line.

It was on this day, 30th November 1917, that Michael was killed in action, aged 26. He is buried in Moeuvres Cemetery, which is about 8 miles west of Cambrai.

His younger brother, John, also died in France on 1st June 1916.

Charles Kenward

Corporal G1843, 7th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Charles Kenward (his birth was registered as Charlie) was born in 1896 in Horley, one of six children, to Stephen and Harriett Kenward. The family lived in Albert Road, Horley and later moved to 72 Lumley Road, Horley.

Before the war, Charlie was a general labourer but he soon answered Kitchener's call and enlisted in Redhill.

The 7th (Service) Battalion, Queen's were sent to France and Charlie landed there on 27th July 1915. They became part of 55th Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division.

This Division was placed on the extreme right of the British attack on the first day of the Battle of The Somme. On 1st July they were to assault the trenches south and west of the village of Montauban. This became the first village to be captured on that day when the British Army suffered some 60,000 casualties.

On 12th July 55th Brigade was once again moved into the front line near Trônes Wood and was detailed to capture the wood on the night of the 13th July. Having had their numbers reduced from 300 strong to 280 in the afternoon by German shelling, the Queen's were ordered to attack Trônes Wood at 7:00pm. Their attack was repulsed by heavy machine gun fire and fire from unsuppressed German 150mm and 105mm howitzers and 77mm guns. The battalion could not close within 100 yards of the wood and withdrew under the cover of darkness.

Charlie was missing, presumed killed, during this attack on the night of 13th /14th July 1916, aged 19. His body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Harvey Killick

Private G/1960, 7th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Benjamin Harvey Killick (always known as Harvey) was born in 1896 in Horley, one of eight children, to Albert and Esther Killick. The family first lived in Vicarage Road then in Charlesfield Road, Horley but in 1911 were living at The Duxhurst Home for Lady Inebriates, just south of Reigate, where Albert was a driver. Albert and Esther later moved to Victoria Road, Horley.

Harvey enlisted in Reigate in answer to Kitchener's call for volunteers and joined 7th Queen's.

The 7th (Service) Battalion of The Queen's were sent to France and Harvey landed there on 27th July 1915. They became part of 55th Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division.

Through the autumn of 1915 the Battalion was engaged on several fronts and carried out all the usual activities of trench warfare.

At the Battle of The Somme on 1st July 1916 this Division was placed on the extreme right of the British attack. At 7:30am the 7th Queen's assaulted the German trenches on a front of about 400 yards and, after 12 hours fighting, the final objective west of Montauban was reached and consolidated on a front of about 260 yards.

The Battalion sustained dreadful casualties during this attack, losing 174 other ranks killed, 284 wounded and 56 missing. Montauban became the first village to be captured on this day, during which the British Army suffered 60,000 casualties.

It was in this assault that Harvey died, aged 19, on 1st July 1916. He is buried in Dantzig Alley Cemetery, which is a short distance north east of Mametz.

Harvey's older brother, Sidney, was killed exactly two months earlier.

Sidney Killick

Private G/2875, 8th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment
Formerly of the East Kent Regiment

Sidney Killick was born in 1889 in Horley, one of eight children, to Albert and Esther Killick. The family lived first in Vicarage Road, Horley and later in Charlesfield Road. In 1911 they were living at The Duxhurst Home for Lady Inebriates, just south of Reigate, where Albert was a driver. Albert and Esther later moved to Victoria Road, Horley.

Sidney's service record is not available but we know that 8th Battalion, The Queen's was raised in Guildford in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Third New Army and joined 72nd Brigade, 24th Division.

They proceeded to France at the end of August 1915. The Division was in reserve for the main British assault at Loos, going into action on 26th September and suffering heavy losses.

On the night of 29th/30th April 1916 8th Queen's were in the line near Wulverghem when the enemy carried out a gas attack on a front of 3,500 yards held by the 3rd and 24th Divisions. The operation was opened by heavy rifle and machine-gun fire under cover of which the gas was released. Immediately afterwards a heavy "barrage", or curtain of artillery fire, was placed on this area and eight infantry attacks were launched. Of these attacks only two penetrated the British trenches; one was immediately repelled, while the other was driven out by a counter-attack after about 40 minutes occupation.

It was in this action that Sidney was wounded and he died on 1st May 1916, aged 27, and is buried at Bailleul Communal Cemetery, which is just on the eastern edge of the town of Bailleul.

His younger brother, Harvey, was killed exactly two months later.

Harry Knowles

Private L/7316, 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Harry Knowles was born in 1884 in Billingshurst to Alfred and Mary Knowles and lived at 2 West Park, Ifield, near Crawley. He had two brothers and three sisters.

In 1907 Harry married Elsie May Baldwin and they had two children, Frederick and Florence. He worked as a general labourer and they lived at 131 Albert Road, Horley.

Harry's service record is not available but it is known that he enlisted in East Grinstead into the East Kents but was later transferred to 2nd Royal Sussex. He was posted abroad on 31st August 1914. This means that he probably enlisted as a regular soldier and may have joined up before 1914.

2nd Royal Sussex were part of 2nd Brigade, 1st Division and were involved in The Battle of Mons and the subsequent retreat, the Battle of the Marne, the Battle of the Aisne, the First Battle of Ypres and the Winter Operations of 1914-15. In 1915 they were in action during the Battle of Aubers.

At the Battle of Loos on 25th September 1915, the Division attacked along both banks of the La Basse canal but met with no success at all. It was discovered that the enemy wire was undamaged, having been out of direct observation over a crest line, and two German machine guns and heavy rifle fire played across the lines of advancing troops as desperate efforts were made to cut the wire. Further attacks by 2nd Brigade were met with the same devastating fire as the first and were held up, with a large number of men lying out in the open, close under the German wire.

2nd Royal Sussex lost 481 men on this day and Harry was one of them.

He was killed on 29th September 1915, aged 29. His body was never found and he is commemorated on the Loos Memorial which is part of Dud Corner Cemetery, just north west of Lens.

Edward Lambert

Private 26688, 1st /4th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)

Edward Albert Lambert, one of nine children, was born in 1886 to Edward and Maria Lambert and the family lived at Little Lake Farm, Horley.

Edward, sometimes known as Albert, was a cowman on the farm before enlisting into The Royal Fusiliers on 7th February 1916. Despite his outdoor occupation, the doctor who examined him described his physical condition as “poor” and in May 1917 he was transferred to 102 Labour Company and a few months later transferred again into the 1st/4th Battalion, West Riding Regiment.

Late in 1917 the Battalion took part in the 3rd Battle of Ypres and remained in and around the Salient for the next few months. The battle comprised of a series of limited and costly offensives, often undertaken in the most difficult of waterlogged conditions - a consequence of frequent periods of rain and the destruction of the Flanders' lowlands drainage systems by intense artillery bombardment. The cost to both sides in human casualties was immense at between 200,000 and 400,000, although exact figures will never be known. The greatest tragedy is that the few miles of shell churned mud from Ypres to the Passchendaele Ridge was recaptured by the German Army during its April offensive in 1918.

Edward was lucky to survive this period in the Ypres Salient but his luck did not last much longer.

Sometime in March 1918, Edward was wounded in action and died of his wounds whilst in the care of the West Riding Field Ambulance Unit, aged 32, on 30th March 1918.

He is buried in the Menin Road South Military Cemetery, which is on the eastern edge of Ypres.

Ernest Leach

Lance Corporal F/428, 17th Battalion, The Middlesex Regiment

Ernest Cecil Leach was born in 1891, one of four sons and two daughters, to Frank and Olive Leach. He was born in Chelsea, but grew up in Dorset, not far from Yeovil.

By 1911 his family were farming near Alton in Hampshire and later moved to farm at Burgess Hill. By the time Ernest enlisted in 1915, they had moved to Meath Green Farm, Meath Green Lane, Horley, where he worked on the farm.

Ernest joined up in Kingsway, London, together with his brother, Wilfred. They had both played football for Crystal Palace and were accepted into the 17th Middlesex (Footballers) Battalion, so called because of the large number of well-known footballers in their ranks. He had already seen some service as a Territorial soldier with the Dorset Yeomanry.

The 17th was raised in London on 12th December 1914 by W. Joynson Hicks MP. They proceeded to France on 18th November 1915, landing at Boulogne, and on 8th December transferred to 6th Brigade, 2nd Division.

Although not in action during the opening stage of the Battle of the Somme, 17th Middlesex were brought into the line in mid-July 1916 and were part of the attacking force at Delville Wood which was a dominating feature, enabling the holders to direct artillery fire onto the other side. It was on the right flank of the British advance and proved to be one of the bloodiest confrontations of the Somme Battles.

During this assault on 8th August 1916, Ernest was known to have been wounded and was posted as missing and later confirmed as dead, aged 25. His brother, Wilfred, searched for his body without success. Wilfred survived the war.

Ernest was buried close to where he fell but in 1920 his body was recovered and reburied at Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval.

Thomas Ledger

Private T/4245, 3rd/4th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Thomas Ledger was one of four children and was born in 1882 to Benjamin and Eliza Ledger, in Clayton, near Pycombe in Sussex.

By 1901 the family were living in Queens Road, Horley just a few doors from Alec and Percy Pescud, who were also to die in the war. Thomas was working as a house boy for a family in Hookwood.

By 1911 Benjamin and Eliza had moved to Plaistow Cottage, Lee Street, Horley, but Thomas is not traceable.

His service record is not available but he enlisted in Guildford in 1915 into the 3rd/4th Battalion of The Queen's which was a territorial unit raised in answer to Kitchener's appeal. It was formed in Windsor in June 1915 and initially attached to 200th Brigade, 67th (2nd Home Counties) Division. It remained at home throughout the war. Along with other 'second line' Divisions, it suffered greatly from lack of equipment of all sorts, and training was inevitably affected. Some units of infantry received Japanese rifles, quite different to the Lee-Enfields that equipped the British armies in the field, and most only received modern rifles and ammunition in late November 1915. The artillery were initially given some French guns and some 15-pounders for which there was no ammunition, and the gunners were not fully equipped until well into 1916.

Thomas must have been taken ill during late 1915 and he was moved to the 1st Eastern General Hospital at Cambridge which had 1,173 beds and was located in the Leys School and Trinity College.

Thomas Ledger died from natural causes on 30th January 1916, aged 34, in Cambridge, without seeing active service.

He is buried in Cambridge City Cemetery.

Henry Liles

Private 35046, 23rd Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers (4th Tyneside Scottish Battalion)

Henry Walker Liles was born in 1882 in Paddington, London, to Frederick and Caroline Liles. He had two younger sisters and grew up in a succession of Public Houses as his father was a publican.

By 1911 Henry had married Lilian and was a licensed victualler....a publican, like his father, and they lived at 62, Akerman Street, Brixton. Later on Caroline, now widowed, and Lilian lived at The Nags Head, near Earlswood Common and this was probably Henry's last address.

Henry enlisted in Acton and it is not known how he came to join a northern based Regiment. The 4th Tyneside Scottish came under orders of 102nd Brigade, 34th Division and landed in France in January 1916.

The Tyneside Scottish first saw action in the Battle of the Somme when, on 1st July 1916, they lost 629 men (19 officers and 610 other ranks), the third worst battalion loss of the day. It is unlikely that Henry had joined the battalion by this time and he was probably in the draft that supplied replacements for men killed in this action.

In April and May 1917 the battalion was in action at the Battle of Arras where they sustained 275 casualties and it seems certain that Henry received the wounds from which he died in this battle. In the thirty-nine days that the battle lasted, the average casualty rate was far higher than at either the Somme or Passchendaele.

Henry was taken to the 8th Casualty Clearing Station where he died from his wounds on 11th June 1917, aged 35.

Henry Liles is buried at Duisans British Cemetery, near Etrun, about 2 miles north west of Arras.

Edward Lockyer

Private G/766, 6th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Edward John Lockyer was born in 1894 in Sutton to John and Emily Lockyer. The family moved to Shirley Cottage, 17 Chestnut Road, Horley, sometime before 1901 and, by 1911, Edward was apprenticed to a local barber.

He enlisted in Guildford fairly soon after the outbreak of war and was with 6th Queen's when they embarked for France on 1st June 1915. They were part of 37th Brigade, 12th (Eastern) Division.

On 23rd June 1915 the Division took over a sector of the front line for the first time, at Ploegsteert Wood. By 15th July the Divisional front had extended south to reach east of Armentieres. In July alone, the Division suffered the loss of 7 officers and 64 men killed, 18 officers and 413 men wounded.

They were in action in September at The Battle of Loos and relieved outgoing units in the Gun Trench - Hulluch Quarries sector on the night of 30th September and 1st October - whereupon the Division began to consolidate the position under heavy artillery fire. The officer commanding, Major-General Frederick Wing CB, was killed in action on 2nd October 1915 and his ADC, Lieutenant Christopher Tower DSO, was killed by the same shell. The Division succeeded in capturing Gun Trench and the south western face of the Hulluch Quarries but, during this period at Loos, 117 officers and 3237 men were killed or wounded.

This whole area had become one where underground mine warfare was very active. Following the detonation of 4 mines on 2nd March the craters were captured and British troops gained important observation positions over enemy lines.

The 6th Queen's enjoyed a relatively quiet period for the next few weeks but on 19th April 1916 the enemy sent over a few trench mortars and rifle grenades, killing 5 men and wounding 10.

Edward Lockyer was one of the men killed on 19th April 1916, aged 21. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

Edward Lucas

Rifleman R/16533, 13th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps

Edward George Lucas (always known as George) was born in 1895 in Worth and was the son of Edmund and Annie Lucas. He had four sisters and the family lived at Keepers Cottage, Fen Place, Worth.

By 1911 George was working as a farm labourer and living with his married sister, Lilian, and his widowed mother at Fir Tree Cottage, Langshott, Horley.

He enlisted into the King's Royal Rifle Corps in November 1915 and his attestation papers were certified correct by Henry Webber, a local JP, who was, himself, to die in the war.

He was posted to France in March 1916 and almost immediately contracted a bacterial skin disease as a result of the awful conditions there. He appears to have had either scabies or impetigo and was hospitalised for a good deal of time but was finally back with his unit in May and took part in several actions throughout 1917.

At some point George was wounded badly enough to be brought home for hospitalisation in Manchester but he recovered sufficiently to rejoin his unit again.

He was home on leave for a few short days in August 1918 and, when he returned, 13th KRRC were again brought into action just north of Bapaume.

George was wounded again in this assault and evacuated via a casualty clearing station to a main hospital near Rouen where he died from his wounds, aged 23, on 17th September 1918.

He is buried near the base hospital at St Sever Cemetery, which lies south of the River Seine in Rouen.

Geoffrey Luscombe

Lieutenant Commander, HMS *Blackmorevale*, Royal Navy

Geoffrey Alfred Luscombe (his birth was registered as Alfred Geoffrey) was born in 1885 in Norwood, South London, to Alfred and Kate Luscombe. He had three brothers and a sister and his parents were wealthy enough to employ several servants.

By 1901 Geoffrey was serving as a Naval Cadet at HMS *Brittania*, Dartford and, following his training, became a Midshipman in 1902. Early in 1905 he was promoted to Sub Lieutenant and by 1908 was a full Lieutenant serving on the cruiser HMS *Juno* in the channel fleet.

At the outbreak of the war Geoffrey was serving in the battleship HMS *Dominion* in the 3rd Cruiser Squadron and in June 1915 he was promoted to Lieutenant Commander.

Dominion served in the Grand Fleet until April 1916, serving temporarily as flagship of the Vice Admiral, 3rd Battle Squadron. During sweeps by the fleet, she and her sister ships often steamed at the heads of divisions of the far more valuable dreadnoughts, where they could protect the dreadnoughts by watching for mines or by being the first to strike them. On 29th April 1916 the 3rd Battle Squadron was rebased at Sheerness and, on 3rd May 1916, it was separated from the Grand Fleet, being transferred to the Nore Command.

When *Dominion* was refitted in early 1918, Geoffrey was posted to HMS *Blackmorevale*, a Hunt class minesweeper. On 1st May she struck a mine off Tod Head, Aberdeenshire and sank with the loss of 26 of her 74 crew.

Geoffrey was killed in this incident and died on 1st May 1918, aged 33. He is commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial which overlooks Plymouth Hoe.

His connection with Horley is not known.

Douglas Manners

Private G/6319, 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Douglas William Manners was born in 1896 in Lincolnshire, one of four boys and four girls to Frederick and Gertrude Manners.

The family later moved to Victoria Terrace, Hove but by 1911 were living in Victoria Road, Horley. In October 1912 Douglas was a witness at his sister's wedding when she married at St. Bartholomew's Church, Horley.

Although his service record is not available it is known that Douglas enlisted in Hove, probably in 1916.

In the spring of 1916 the 2nd Royal Sussex moved, with the rest of the 1st Division, from the Loos sector south to the Somme. The battle of the Somme was a large-scale offensive launched on 1st July against the German Front Line on both sides of the Somme River. The British Army attacked north of the river and the French Army attacked south of the river.

The 2nd Royal Sussex were engaged in many of the decisive actions, from the attacks around Albert, including the capture of Montauban, Mametz, Fricourt, Contalmaison and La Boisselle in early July, to the capture of Combles, Lesboeufs and Gueudecourt in September. The battle lasted for a gruelling four months and was carried out in several phases with many thousands of casualties on both sides. The 2nd Royal Sussex lost 1723 men during the war, the highest losses of any of the Regiment's battalions.

The first battle of the Somme officially ended on 18th November and at some point in the immediate aftermath Douglas was killed.

He died, aged 20, on 27th November 1916. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Frederick Marchant

Sergeant 6159, 2nd Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders

Frederick George Marchant was born in 1877 in Shipley, Sussex to Thomas and Ann Marchant. He had three older sisters and three brothers. By 1911 Thomas and Ann had moved to Station Road, Horley and, later, they moved again to 37 Lumley Road.

Frederick's service record is not available but his medal entitlement card shows that he was sent to France on 23rd August 1914. This was the day that the British Army was first in action near Mons and his early arrival proves that Fred was a regular soldier before the war and one of the "Old Contemptibles", so called because the German Kaiser referred to them as "that contemptible little army".

As part of 4th Division, 2nd Seaforths were assembled in France by 23rd August and moved quickly up to the front to take part in the Battle of Le Cateau on 26th August where the Division lost some 3,000 men. Following service on the Aisne in September, they moved to Flanders, north-east of Armentières. Some units of the Division took part in the Christmas Truce and they stayed in this area until the Spring of 1915.

On 23rd April 1915 the 2nd Seaforths were moved to Dranoutre and placed on readiness for the start of the 2nd Battle of Ypres, which was to run on into May and would claim 70,000 Allied and 35,000 German casualties. It was also to see the first deployment of poison gas on the Western Front.

Two days later they came under heavy fire whilst preparing for the assault near Wieltje and attacked in heavy rain at 5.30am. Although successful, this action cost the lives of 20 Officers and 61 Other Ranks as well as 239 wounded and 16 men missing. This fighting all but wiped out the division and many of those who had survived the battles of 1914 were killed or wounded here.

Frederick Marchant was killed in this action on 25th April 1915, aged 38. He is buried in Seaforth Cemetery, Cheddar Villa, just north east of Ypres.

Henry Marchant

Gunner 200202, 6th Reserve Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

There are at least five Henry or H Marchants on the Commonwealth War Graves list of soldiers who died in the 1914-18 war.

The name Marchant is quite uncommon and to have two unrelated soldiers from one town the size of Horley is most unlikely. Thus it is thought that the Henry Marchant named on Horley's War memorial is likely to be the younger brother of Frederick Marchant detailed on the previous page.

Henry Marchant was born in 1882 in Horsham, Sussex, to Thomas and Ann Marchant. He had three older sisters and three brothers. By 1911 Thomas and Ann had moved to Station Road, Horley and, later, they moved again to 37 Lumley Road.

In 1910 Henry married Ethel Rose and moved to Southend on Sea and the 1911 census shows his occupation as Dairy Manager.

His service record is not available and his medal entitlement card gives no useful information.

We cannot be sure of exactly when and where Henry received the wounds that led to his death but we do know that the 6th Reserve Brigade were in action in the summer of 1917 at the 3rd Battle of Ypres when the British Army launched a series of attacks towards Passchendaele. The Battle commenced in late July and was hampered by the heaviest rainfall in the area for thirty years. By mid-August the fighting had progressed to the village of Langemarck with heavy casualties on both sides.

It is probable that Henry Marchant received the wounds that led to his death in this action. He was evacuated to a base hospital at Rouen and died, aged 35, on 10th September 1917. He is buried in St Sever Cemetery Extension, which is south of the River Seine in that town.

John Martin

Lance Corporal 5304, 54th Company, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

John James Martin was born in 1897 in Falmer, Sussex, one of three children, to Simon and Ann Martin.

On the 1911 census the family is shown as living in Horsham and John's occupation is given as a farm labourer. By the time he enlisted into The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment in Guildford, John was living in Horley but his exact address is not known.

No service record survives for John but it is likely that he joined up as soon as he was 18. It is probable that John was part of the machine gun unit of the Queen's and transferred into the new Corps soon after its formation.

The Machine Gun Corps was created on 22nd October 1915. The companies formed in each brigade would transfer to the new Corps. The 54th Machine Gun Company joined 18th (Eastern) Division on 13th February 1916. They were in action on the Somme in the Battle of Albert capturing their objectives near Montauban and also at Bazentin Ridge, Delville Wood, Thiepval Ridge and the Ancre Heights where they played a part in the capture of the Schwaben Redoubt and Regina Trench. In 1917 they took part in the operations on the Ancre including Miraumont and the capture of Irlles. They fought during the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line and in the Third Battle of the Scarpe before moving to Flanders.

When 54th Brigade opposed the German advance near Glencourse Wood on 11th August, the 54th Machine Gun Company had two guns with each assaulting battalion, four to go forward to the strong points, and four in reserve. These guns did splendid work, especially those garrisoning the strong points, and there is no doubt that more of the enemy were killed this day by rifle and machine-gun fire than in any previous action by the Brigade.

John James Martin was killed in this defensive action at Sanctuary Wood on 11th August 1917, aged 20. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Menin Gate at Ypres.

William Maynard

Private G/4189, 1st Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

William Maynard was born in 1887 in Reigate to William and Elizabeth Maynard. The family lived in Lower Road and William was later joined by a younger brother and sister. He also had a half-sister, born after his father remarried in 1903.

By 1911 William was employed as a carpenter and joiner and was living with his family at 1 Lavender Cottages, Shocks Green, near Earlswood.

William enlisted in Guildford into The Queen's, the county Regiment of Surrey, and this was probably quite early in the war. Curiously, the only medal roll card in his name shows a service number of G/4190 and does not give a date for his arrival in France.

On 24th September 1915 1st Queen's, reinforced by a draft of 40 men, returned to a familiar part of the front line at Givenchy, near Loos. They were tasked for an attack early the next day. At 6:00am on 25th September the battalion advanced on a narrow front and moved slowly to keep behind the smokescreen put down by our artillery.

They met little opposition and reached the German third line with few casualties. The Support Company moved forward to join the advancing line but at about 8:30am the Germans mounted a fierce counter attack with bombers on both flanks. By 9:45am the Queen's were driven back to their start lines under heavy machine gun fire.

19 men were killed in this action as well as 21 missing, believed killed, and 180 wounded. William Maynard was one of the dead men. He died, aged 28, on 25th September 1915. William has no known grave and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

Frank Mills

This man has proved impossible to identify.

The only local man with this name would appear to be the Frank Mills who was born in 1881 at York Town, Camberley. By 1911 he was married and employed as head gardener at Earlswood Mount, a large house near the Earlswood hospital. This man would have been about 33 at the outbreak of war and would not have been called up. He may have volunteered, as many men of that age did, but he cannot be identified militarily.

Although not on the original 'appeal' list in 1918 when the 'Parsons plaque' was being prepared for St. Bartholomew's Church, the name of Frank Mills appears on the plaque near that of Frank Miller with whom he may have easily been confused.

Ultimately, Frank Miller, although living in Church Road, was commemorated on Charlwood War Memorial because he was born there.

The name of Frank Mills is not mentioned on the Salfords Church plaque or at St. John's Church, Earlswood.

George Morgan

Bombardier 50986, "D" Battery, 80th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

George Albert Morgan is difficult to positively identify. The entry on the CWGC list of war dead shows him as G.A.Morgan, born in 1896, and confirms that he was the son of William and Ray Morgan of "St Andrews", Masetts Road, Horley.

The official list of soldiers killed in the war shows the same soldier as George Alfred Morgan and adds the information that he was born in Glasgow. Both show the same regimental number and unit. Horley War Memorial shows him as George Albert Morgan. No firm trace can be found of this family in England or Scotland census records.

His service record is not available but his medal entitlement card survives and shows that he landed in France on 15th July 1915.

80th Brigade was part of 17th (Northern) Division and after their arrival in France the Brigade spent its first few months on trench familiarisation and then holding the front lines in the southern area of the Ypres salient. In the spring of 1916 the Division was involved in fighting at the Bluff (south east of Ypres on the Comines canal), part of a number of engagements officially known as the Actions of Spring 1916.

None of these actions were regarded as "major" by Sir Douglas Haig but he wrote that "The maintenance and repair of our defences alone, especially in winter, entails constant heavy work. Bad weather and the enemy combine to flood and destroy trenches, dug-outs and communications; all such damages must be repaired promptly, under fire, and almost entirely by night. Artillery and snipers are practically never silent, patrols are out in front of the lines every night, and heavy bombardments by the artillery of one or both sides take place daily in various parts of the line".

It was during this period of 'relative' inactivity that George Morgan died, aged 20, on 17th May 1916. He is buried in Cite Bonjean Military Cemetery, which is just south west of Armentieres.

Francis Mott

2nd Lieutenant, 24th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Francis Stanley Mott was born in 1896 in Brixton, South London, to Francis and Alice Mott and in 1901 they lived in Streatham. He had one younger sister and, at some time before 1911, the family moved to Vulcan Lodge in Massetts Road, Horley.

Francis enlisted in 1914 and was sent to France on 29th August. He served as a private soldier attached to the Australian Voluntary Hospital which later became the 32nd Stationary Hospital based at Wimereux. The military unit with which Francis served at this time is not known. The 24th (Sportsmans Battalion) Royal Fusiliers was not raised until the autumn of 1914.

The 23rd and 24th RF were raised in autumn 1914 by a Mrs Cunliffe-Owen and were specially selected from upper class men who were physically fit and proficient in shooting and riding and who “walked well”. After full training they arrived in France in November 1915.

The character of Francis Mott seems to indicate that he would have taken an early opportunity to transfer to a fighting unit and, after he did so, he clearly made a speedy advance through the ranks.

When the news of Francis’s death reached Horley he received a fulsome tribute in the Parish Magazine:

“He enlisted....and by ability and force of character he soon gained his Commission....he carried about him the white flower of a stainless life and it was this that made his personality so loveable and his influence so strong. There lay the secret, all knew this and all loved him in consequence.”

Francis was wounded during the summer of 1916 as the 24th were preparing to move south for action at the Battle of The Somme.

Francis Mott died of his wounds on 23rd July 1916, aged 20, and is buried at Lapugnoy Military Cemetery, which is about 5 miles west of Bethune.

An authority was given for the award of the 1914 star in response to a request by his father in January 1918 sent in via the 32nd Stationary Hospital.

Horace Munn

Acting Corporal G/37010, 1st Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Horace Frank Munn was born in 1894 in Guildford to Horace and Ruth Munn and he had two sisters. By 1911 the family had moved to live at 50 Albert Road, Horley, and Horace was working as a tailor/improver. He worshiped at Horley Baptist Church and is commemorated on a plaque inside the church.

No service record survives for Horace and his medal card shows no useful information. He is recorded as having enlisted in Horley and, as the 1st Queen's were a regular army unit, he may have enlisted before the war began.

The 1st Queen's arrived in France in November 1915 as part of 100th Brigade, 33rd Division. They spent the first six months on the La Basse front, a period of mining, counter-mining and trench raids.

Sir Douglas Haig's report of May 1916 mentions 1st Queen's (amongst others) "as having been specially brought to my notice for good work in carrying out or repelling local attacks and raids."

In mid-summer 1916 1st Queen's were moved down to the Somme where, as part of 100th Brigade, they were engaged in heavy fighting on Bazentin Ridge, at High Wood and Delville Wood. In November 1916 1st Queen's were tasked as part of a Brigade assault on Boritska Trench near Lesboufs and pressed home their attack successfully.

Some weeks later the Battalion were in the line north east of Bouchesnes. It had been snowing but a thaw had started and the trenches were in a very poor condition. Most of 21st December was spent on trench maintenance and during this relatively quiet spell in the line Horace Munn was killed.

He died on 21st December 1916, aged 22, and is buried in Sailley-Sailliesel British Cemetery, which is midway between Bapaume and Perrone, near the village of Rancourt.

Robert Nixon

Private 200960, 3rd Battalion, South Lancs Regiment (later 359223 Labour Corps)

Robert William Nixon was born in 1866 in Preston, Lancashire to John and Elizabeth Nixon. He had a sister and two brothers. He became a cotton weaver when he started work.

Robert's marriage to Anna E South was his second marriage when it was registered at Reigate in 1915. In 1921, three years after his death, she married a Frank Parker and lived at 2 Brockley Cottages, Charlesfield Road, Horley.

The Commonwealth War Graves website shows that Robert enlisted in Warrington and served in the South Lancs Regiment but does not state which Battalion. He was later transferred to the Labour Corps.

The 1st Battalion of the South Lancs spent the war on garrison duty in Quetta, Baluchistan, on the North-West Frontier. The 2nd Battalion spent the entire war on the Western Front. The 3rd (Reserve) Battalion was a depot and training battalion stationed in Lancashire throughout the war. It seems possible that, because of his age, Robert may have been in the 3rd Battalion and stayed in the UK.

We do not know the circumstances of his transfer to a Labour Corps unit. Military labour units were the poor relations of the Army. In November 1918 there were 325 Labour Corps Companies in Britain - almost 173,000 men. None of the companies kept War Diaries and there are almost no other references to them in other Army records. Although the Labour Corps kept its own records, these were destroyed by German bombing in 1940.

Robert died in Birmingham on 14th July 1918, aged about 52 and is buried at Birmingham (Lodge Hill) Cemetery.

The cause of his death is not known but it is possible that he was a victim of the influenza epidemic which spread across the world in 1918, though this was mainly a 'young person's disease'.

Glasgow was the first British city to be affected, in May, and within weeks the illness had spread south, reaching London by June. During the next few months, 228,000 people died in Britain.

Thomas Parsons

Private M/225647, Army Service Corps
Attached 258th Siege Battery, Ammunition Column, Royal Garrison Artillery

Thomas Parsons was born in about 1885 near Storrington in Sussex. The 1891 census shows him as a boarder with Mark and Martha Harden at West Chiltington so his birth family cannot be traced, though it is likely that Martha Harden was his aunt. In 1901 he was still living at the same address and was employed as a market garden labourer.

Thomas married Ethel Wright in 1909 and two years later was working as a carman for a laundry. They had at least one child, a daughter named Gladys, and lived at 70 St Mary's Road, Reigate. By the time he enlisted in Guildford, Thomas and Ethel were living at "Buleigh", Lee Street, Horley.

No service record survives for Thomas and his medal index card contains no useful information.

Siege Batteries RGA were equipped with heavy howitzers, sending large calibre high explosive shells in high trajectory fire. 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, stores and roads and railways behind enemy lines. 258th Siege Battery were part of 64th Heavy Artillery Group (First Army) and supported 2nd Canadian Division at the battle for Vimy Ridge in April 1917.

As a member of the Army Service Corps, Thomas would have been involved in the movement of ammunition and supplies for the 258th Siege Battery.

The circumstances of Thomas' death cannot be ascertained but it may be that he was wounded and evacuated, as he died, probably in a base hospital, on 25th October 1917, aged 32, and is buried at Etaples Military Cemetery.

Edwin Payne

Private 727325, 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles

Edwin Payne was born in 1895 in Arundel, Sussex. He was one of six children born to Thomas and Alice Payne and grew up in Copthorne. By 1911 the family lived at 5 Kitsbridge Cottages, Copthorne but may have moved to Horley later.

In March 1914 Edwin sailed for Canada, possibly with the intention of emigrating permanently. He lived with his uncle, John Illman, in Ontario, where he worked as a farm labourer and learned to be a fireman.

Attesting into the 110th Battalion on 29th December 1915, in Stratford, Ontario, Edwin later found himself transferred into the 4th CMR on 22nd April 1917.

On 13th May 1917 the 4th CMR were at Villers-au-Bois, north west of Arras, as Divisional Reserve, spending the time through to 20th May on training in extended order and physical and arms drill, interspersed with concerts and sports. Later, they moved to Toronto Camp where they were harassed by hostile aircraft and had to mount Lewis guns for defence.

It was during a baseball game on May 26th 1917 that one of the soldiers, Private McCabe, sought to clear some military debris from their makeshift diamond. He picked up a “blind” (dud) shell, which subsequently went off, killing him instantly as well as 8 other men and wounding 10 more.

Edwin Payne, aged 22, who was initially wounded, died later on June 18th 1917, in hospital in Etaples.

Edwin is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, and is one of 14 men of the 4th CMR known to lie at rest there.

Ernest Peach

Gunner 68779, "A" Battery, 158th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

Ernest Alfred Peach was born in 1888 in Catsfield, Sussex, one of five children, to William and Mercy Peach. William was a gamekeeper and by 1901 had moved with the family to Keepers Cottage, Langshott, Horley. By the end of the war they had moved again to "Oakdene", Church Road, Horley.

On the 1911 census Ernest is shown as having followed his father's profession and he had become a gamekeeper at Faygate, near Horsham.

Ernest enlisted in Chichester, probably in answer to Lord Kitchener's famous appeal, and joined the Royal Field Artillery. His service record is not available but his medal card states that he was sent to France on 28th August 1915.

158th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery served as Divisional Artillery with 14th (Light) Division which was formed as part of Kitchener's First New Army. They fought in the Action of Hooze, being the first division to be attacked by flamethrowers and were also in action at the second attack on Bellewaarde.

In 1916 they were on the Somme seeing action in the Battle of Delville Wood and the Battle of Flers-Courcelette. They left 14th Division on 7th January 1917. A Battery then became part of XLVIII 158th Army Field Artillery Brigade where it became C Battery.

In early summer 1918 the battery was in action north of Bethune and by early June had moved to Givenchy where their time in action was interspersed with rest at Houchin.

Ernest was killed in that area on 12th June 1918, aged 30, and is buried at Houchin British Cemetery, which is about 3.5 miles south of Bethune.

George Peppiatt

Rifleman 372621, 8th (City of London) Battalion, London Regiment (Post Office Rifles)

George William Peppiatt was born in 1891 in Horley to George and Elizabeth Peppiatt.

The 1901 census shows George (described as nephew) living with his grandfather, John Peppiatt and his married aunt, Hannah, at 121 Cromwell Road, Redhill. Two more of John's daughters lived next door. By 1911 he was employed as a monumental mason and was still living in the same household, though they had moved along the road to number 174. In 1916 he married Clara Lewis and lived with her at 34 High Street, Redhill, which was the address given for Clara after the war.

No service record survives for George but it seems likely that he enlisted in Redhill late in 1916, though it may have been sooner.

The 8th Battalion, London Regiment, were sent to France in March 1915 as part of 140th Brigade, 47th Division. The Brigade was in action throughout the Battle of the Somme in 1916, notably at High Wood, the Transloy Ridges and the Butte de Warlencourt.

In 1917 the Division was part of the British assault at Arras. The Canadians captured Vimy Ridge and the British forces made significant gains astride the Scarpe river. Following these initial successes, British forces engaged in a series of small scale operations to consolidate the newly won positions. Although these battles were generally successful in achieving limited aims, they were gained at the price of a large number of casualties.

It seems that George was wounded near the village of Bullecourt during this series of actions.

He died of his wounds on 19th May 1917, aged 26, and is buried at Achiet-le-Grand Communal Cemetery Extension, which is about 10 miles south of Arras.

Kenneth Perry

2nd Lieutenant, 11th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Kenneth George Perry was born in 1883 in Croydon to Charles and Caroline Perry and attended Whitgift School. By 1901 the family had moved to Chipstead and Kenneth was training as a railway surveyor. Charles and Caroline later moved to “Hazelglen”, Russells Crescent, Horley.

The 1911 census shows Kenneth as a visitor with the Bruckshaw family at Exning, near Newmarket, and he married Dorothy Bruckshaw there in 1914. Dorothy returned there after his death.

No service record exists for Kenneth but his medal card shows that he enlisted as a Private in The London Regiment. It is possible that he rose through the ranks as NCOs were killed and was posted to the Royal Sussex when he was commissioned.

The 11th Royal Sussex was part of 116th Brigade, 39th Division and arrived in France in March 1916. On 30th June 1916 they were engaged in an attack to divert attention from the battle of the Somme due to start the next day. Over a period of less than five hours, three Battalions of The Royal Sussex lost 17 officers and 349 men killed. A further 1000 men were wounded or taken prisoner. In the regimental history this is known as “The Day Sussex Died”.

Following reinforcements, the Brigade fought in the Somme campaign, notably at Thiépval Ridge, and this led into the Battle of the Ancre which began early in October and lasted for six weeks. One of the strongest German positions was the Schwaben Redoubt which was attacked on 9th October. On 16th October 116th Brigade took over the Redoubt, which was heavily shelled.

It was in this period that Kenneth was wounded and evacuated to a Casualty Clearing Station.

He died of his wounds on 1st November 1916, aged 33, and is buried at Puchevillers Cemetery, which is about 12 miles north east of Amiens.

Alec Pescud

Private 1455, 22nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Alec Joseph Pescud (his birth was registered as Joseph Alec) was born in 1895 in Croydon, one of six children, to Joseph and Amelia Pescud. By 1901 the family were living in Queens Road, Horley and Alec and his brothers attended Horley Infant School.

Alec and his older brother, Percy (who was also to die in the war) were, by 1911, employed at the Monotype works in Salfords, where Alec operated a drilling machine, and the family had moved to 10 St Johns Terrace Road, Earlswood.

Alec enlisted in Shepherds Bush in 1915 and, after his basic training, was sent to France, landing at Boulogne on 16th November 1915.

22nd Royal Fusiliers were part of 99th Brigade, 2nd Division. This was an all Fusilier Brigade made up of the 17th, 22nd, 23rd and 24th Battalions.

Alec arrived too late to see action in the Battle of Loos but in the early part of 1916 the 22nd Royal Fusiliers were in and out of the line in that general area, to the east and south of Bethune.

In February they were in the line at this location and it seems likely that Alec was killed here during a relatively quiet period.

He was killed in action on 11th February 1916, aged 20, and is buried in Veille-Chappelle New Military Cemetery, which is about five miles north east of Bethune.

This cemetery contains graves from several other cemeteries that were gathered together after the Armistice and it is possible that Alec was originally interred elsewhere.

Percy Pescud

Private 1779, 9th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

Percy Robert Pescud was born in 1893 in Croydon, one of six children, to Joseph and Amelia Pescud. By 1901 the family were living in Queens Road, Horley.

Percy and his younger brother, Alec (who was also to die in the war), were, by 1911, employed at the Monotype works in Salfords where Percy operated a milling machine. By this time the family had moved to 10 St Johns Terrace Road, Earlswood.

Percy enlisted in Redhill in 1915 and, after his basic training, was posted to France.... just in time to take his place in the front line at The Battle of Loos.

9th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment was part of 72nd Brigade, 24th Division. They proceeded to France and landed at Boulogne on 1st September 1915. The Division concentrated in the area between Etaples and St Pol on 4th September and a few days later marched across France for the British assault at Loos, going into action on 26th September. Together with the 8th Royal West Kents they formed part of the firing line of 72nd Brigade.

The attack was launched at 11:00am and was carried right up to the enemy trenches. Because artillery bombardment had failed to cut the enemy barbed wire it was impossible to get through the enemy lines, although several fruitless attempts were made.

The casualties were very heavy at this point, chiefly owing to some machine guns which formed a heavy cross fire on our men. The Germans continued to shell very heavily until about 5:00pm in the afternoon and many of the slightly wounded were wounded again or killed. The battalion casualties numbered 14 officers and 438 other ranks.

Percy was killed in this action on 26th September 1915, aged 22. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial that forms part of Dud Corner Cemetery, which is 3 miles north west of Lens.

Joseph Reeves

Private G/24608, "B" Coy, 17th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Joseph Basil Reeves was born in 1892 in Weybridge to Joseph and Alice Reeves. A few years later Joseph senior died and Alice remarried. She became Alice Martin and later came to live at "Oakhurst", Lee Street, Horley. By 1911, Joseph was a salesman in a grocery business in Islington.

When he enlisted in Ealing, probably in 1915, Joseph gave a West Ealing address and joined the Royal Fusiliers.

No service record exists for Joseph and his medal card gives no useful information, though it does not mention the award of a 1915 star. This suggests that he did not arrive in France until 1916.

17th Royal Fusiliers were part of 5th Brigade, 2nd Division and were in action at Delville Wood in the battle of The Somme where they sustained heavy casualties. The British attempts to capture this vital feature began about the middle of July and continued until early September.

On 13th November 1916, as part of 5th Army, the 17th Royal Fusiliers were in action during a renewed attack on the slopes either side of the River Ancre. In wet and foggy weather 2nd Division advanced along Redan Ridge. The 5th Brigade on the right formed up in no man's land and two battalions reached Beaumont Trench on schedule. By 7:30am the 5th Brigade was ready to advance on the second objective but reached Frankfurt Trench so depleted that the troops fell back to Munich Trench, Wagon Road then Crater Lane in the German front line. The 17th Royal Fusiliers lost 187 men in this attack.

It was in this action that Joseph Reeves was killed. He died on 13th November 1916, aged 24, and he is buried in Munich Trench British Cemetery, Beaumont Hamel, which is just north east of the village.

Along with Arthur Turner, Joseph has the distinction of being named on both Horley and Charlwood War Memorials.

Archibald Remnant

Driver 20808, 9th Field Company, Royal Engineers

Archibald Remnant was born in 1893 in Petworth, Sussex to Charles and Sarah Remnant. He grew up at Piltown Lodge, Fletching, near Uckfield with an older brother and two older sisters.

Archibald's service record, although badly burned during the London Blitz, shows us that he enlisted as a reservist in Guildford on 26th November 1910. It confirms that he was a stableman at the Prince Albert Inn, Salfords and that his family home was at 4 Dunraven Avenue, Salfords. When his service expired, he immediately re-enlisted and was amongst the first troops to arrive in France with the BEF on 23rd August 1914.

9th Field Company were amongst the Divisional Troops of 4th Division and arrived in France in time to play a major role in the Battle of Le Cateau during the retreat from Mons.

They supported the front line troops during many of the major actions throughout the whole of the war including at Messines, Ypres, the Somme and the Scarpe. The Scarpe action began early in April 1917 and the Field Companies of the Royal Engineers were involved with tunnelling, entrenching and the preparation of defensive positions. As a driver, Archibald would have been tasked with the delivery of materials for all these activities.

It would seem that Archibald was seriously wounded at this time and evacuated to 42nd Casualty Clearing Station.

He died of his wounds on 30th April 1917, aged 23, and is buried at Aubigny Communal Cemetery, which is about 8 miles north west of Arras.

Henry Richards

Private 71932, 29th Battalion, The Middlesex Regiment

Henry George Richards was born in 1875 but neither his birthplace nor his early family details can be ascertained.

He married Sarah Mitchell in 1898 and they lived at 127 Albert Road, Horley with their three children, Albert, Ethel and Martha.

Although he was employed as a bricklayer, which implies a reasonable level of fitness, Henry was classified medically as B1, and had “a slight cough” when he joined up on 3rd November 1916.

The 29th Middlesex were raised in June 1916 as a “Works” Battalion and Henry may have been posted to this unit because of his age or generally poor fitness.

In April 1917 the 29th Middlesex were transferred to The Labour Corps as the 5th Labour Battalion. The Corps always suffered from its treatment as something of a second class organisation: for example the men who died are commemorated under their original regiment, with Labour Corps being secondary. Researching men of the Corps is made extra difficult by this process, as is the fact that few records remain of the daily activities and locations of Corps units.

Henry was hospitalised in the City of London Hospital at Victoria Park and was discharged from the army at Hounslow on 9th June 1917 as being unfit for further military duties. He appears to have returned to Horley. His discharge papers show him to have been of good character but suffering from tuberculosis.

Henry died on 6th October 1917, aged 42, and is buried in St. Bartholomew’s Churchyard, Horley.

His wife applied for an army pension and, early in 1918, was asked if he could attend for a medical. She replied that he was already dead and buried. A small pension was awarded for his children but was only payable from the date of his discharge until his death.

Frank Roffey

Private T/206700, 2nd/4th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Frank Roffey was born in 1895 in Redhill. He was the eldest of four children born to Albert and Fanny Roffey and lived at 51 St Johns Road, Earlswood. On the 1911 census Frank is recorded as having been employed as an errand boy.

He enlisted in Reigate as a Territorial (T prefix on number), though it is not known when. No service record survives for Frank and his medal card has little useful information. It does not, however, record the award of a 1914 or 1915 Star and this suggests that he did not see active service until at least 1916.

2nd/4th Queen's were part of General Allenby's Army fighting the Turkish Army in what was then Palestine. In 1917, as part of 160th Brigade, 53rd Division, they took part in actions against the Turkish forces through the areas of Gaza, Beersheeba and Tell Khuweilfe and the capture of Jerusalem.

Following the capture of Jerusalem early in December, 2nd/4th Queen's were heavily engaged in preventing the Turks from regaining the city and fought continuous defensive actions around its boundary for the next few weeks.

On the morning of 27th December the enemy launched heavy attacks preceded by accurate artillery bombardments against the defenders. Although they inflicted heavy casualties on the Turkish forces, the 2nd/4th Queen's also suffered badly and were withdrawn from the line at about midday.

Frank was killed in this action as well as 34 other soldiers. He died on 27th December 1917, aged 22, and is buried in the Jerusalem Military Cemetery, which is just north of the walled city, near the Mount of Olives.

Alfred Roser

Private 99735, 7th Battalion, The King's (Liverpool) Regiment

Alfred Roser, born in 1882 in Ewhurst, was the younger of the two sons of George and Ellen Roser. He married Emma Jane King in 1904 and, by early 1911, they were living at New Road, Ewhurst with their two children and Alfred earned his living as a hay trusser.

The family may have moved to Horley before the war began as this is where he enlisted, initially into the Royal Fusiliers, but later being transferred to 7th King's.

No service record survives for Alfred but it seems likely that he did not see service overseas before 1916.

7th King's were part of 165th Brigade, 55th Division and spent the early part of 1917 in the Ypres Salient where they took huge casualties. At the battle for Pilkem Ridge at the end of July the Division sustained around 3500 casualties and, after being reinforced at the Menin Road, another 2700 men became casualties.

Following a disastrous performance in the line in November 1917, the Division were withdrawn from the area for intensive reinforcement and training.

By February 1918 they were back in action at Festubert and Givenchy. In early April the defence of Givenchy was to become the single most famous action that the Division fought. Afterwards it was publicly stated by an officer of the German General Staff that the stand made by the Division on 9th April and the days which followed marked the final ruination of the supreme German effort of 1918.

By the end of September 1918, the Division were preparing to join in the final Allied advance and it was during this period that Alfred was killed.

He died on 27th September 1918, aged 36, and is buried at Queant Communal Cemetery Extension, which is in the village of that name about 8 miles north east of Bapaume.

Donald Russell

Guardsman 23700, 3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards

Donald Russell was born in 1892 in Horley to John and Alice Russell. He was one of three children and the family lived at 32 Lumley Road, Horley. By 1911 the family were still at the same address and Donald had followed his father's occupation and was working as a shoeing blacksmith.

Donald enlisted in Kingston, probably in 1915. His medal card shows that he did not serve overseas in 1914 or 1915.

3rd Grenadier Guards arrived in France in mid 1915 and came under the command of 2nd Guards Brigade, Guards Division.

The Battle of the Somme commenced on 1st July 1916 but the Grenadiers did not arrive until the middle of August and Donald would certainly have been with 3rd Grenadier Guards at this time. At the beginning of September they undertook a period of training at Morlancourt with the rest of the Brigade and marched to Happy Valley camp on 9th September. Three days later the Brigade marched to Carnoy before moving into the reserve front line positions ready to make an assault towards the village of Flers.

On the night of 13th September all surplus kit – packs, greatcoats etc – were sent to the divisional stores at Meaulte and bombs, sandbags, flares and tools were issued to the men for the coming attack. Movement began towards the assembly area, which was the best available though it had the disadvantage of causing the troops to line up at the wrong angle relative to their proposed line of advance.

It was on this day, 14th September 1916, whilst preparing for this attack, that Donald was killed, aged 23. He is buried in Guards Cemetery, Lesboeuufs, which is about half a mile south west of this village and about 4 miles dead south of Bapaume.

Alban Scollick

Driver T/2348, 1st /3rd Kent Field Company, Royal Engineers

Alban Vincent Scollick was born in 1889 in Denmark Hill, London to Joseph and Florence Scollick and was one of seven children.

Joseph was a railway signalman and the family moved regularly. By 1901 they were living in Railway Cottages, Warnham Station, near Horsham and in 1911 lived at Railway Cottages, Brook Road, Earlswood by which time Alban was a boot repairer. Sometime later the family moved again to 102 Earlsbrook Road, Redhill.

No information is available regarding Alban's enlistment but he was certainly a Territorial Army soldier.

The 1st/3rd Kent Field Company were founded by Sir David Lionel Salomons (1851-1925) of Tunbridge Wells, Kent. He was the Honorary Colonel of the Kent Royal Engineers.

Royal Engineers were required in the Dardanelles to fill vacancies no doubt caused by the appalling losses there. The company had a farewell dinner on 11th October 1915 and were cheered by crowds, including their relatives, as they left for Devonport dockyard.

They sailed to the Dardanelles via Malta where they were allocated two ships, HMS *Redbreast* and HMS *Hythe* for the final leg of their journey. The 1st/3rd were allocated to HMS *Hythe*. On 28th October 1915 the *Hythe* left Mudros at 4:00pm and had 50 miles to go to Cape Helles. The ship was travelling in a darkened state to avoid enemy bombardment. At about 8:00pm there was a warning that another ship was bearing down on them. This other ship was HMS *Sarnia*. She was much larger than *Hythe* and struck her almost head on. HMS *Hythe* sank into a cold sea in just 10 minutes.

129 members of 1st/3rd Company were lost in this disaster and Alban was amongst them.

Alban Scollick died on 28th October 1915, aged 27, and is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Cape Helles, Gallipoli.

Alec Shoubridge

Private D/5909, 4th Dragoon Guards (Royal Irish)

Alec John Shoubridge was born in 1894 in Horsham, one of five children, to William and Hannah Shoubridge. The family lived at Slaugham for some years but, by 1911, were at 1 Andrews Cottages, Southwater near Horsham. Alec was employed as a butcher's boy. He gave an unknown Horley address on enlistment.

Alec joined the army as a regular soldier because his medal card shows him as being sent to France on 16th August 1914 and he may well have been present when, at dawn on Saturday 22nd August 1914, C Squadron of the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards pushed out two patrols north from Mons towards Soignies and met the Germans for the first time. C Squadron commenced a reconnaissance along the road heading out from Maisières. Four enemy cavalymen of the 2nd Kuirassiers emerged from the direction of Casteau. They were spotted by the British and turned around, whereupon they were pursued and engaged. There were other cavalry encounters with the enemy in the areas of La Louvière and Binche and the 4th were also engaged at the Battle of Le Cateau and in subsequent rearguard actions.

4th Dragoon Guards were part of 1st Cavalry Division and, although trained as mounted troops, were frequently used as infantry. They were used in both roles and were engaged in trench warfare at the first Battle of Ypres and through the winter of 1914/15.

This was a relatively quiet period between the First and Second Battles of Ypres. The German Army mounted several determined assaults in early March and their artillery continued to bombard the allied lines and the city of Ypres.

It was during this period that Alec sustained the wounds that led to his death on 24th April 1915, aged 21, and he is buried in Duhallow Cemetery, which is on the site of an Advanced Dressing Station on the Diksmuidseweg in Ypres.

Ernest Smith

Midshipman, HMS *Queen Mary*, Royal Navy

Ernest Cecil Peirson Smith was born in 1897 in Wandsworth to Ernest and Maud Smith. They lived at 31 Spencer Park, Wandsworth.

By 1911 Ernest was a student at HMS *Worcester*, preparing for entry into the Royal Navy, and was commissioned as a midshipman on 7th August 1913.

He was posted to HMS *Queen Mary*, a newly built battlecruiser and part of the 1st Battle Cruiser Squadron. Ernest would have been present at the Battles of Heligoland Bight and Dogger Bank.

Off Jutland, Denmark on 31st May 1916, Admiral Beatty's battlecruisers, supported by battleships of the 5th Battle Squadron, encountered Admiral Hipper's German Fleet at 2:28pm. At 4:10pm Beatty's flagship, HMS *Lion*, came under fire from extreme range. At the same time HMS *Queen Mary* came under heavy fire from at least two German cruisers. For about five minutes she withstood it gallantly. Twice she had been straddled by shells from the 'Derfflinger' when, at 4:26pm a plunging salvo crashed upon her forward deck. In a moment there was a dazzling flash of red flame where the salvo fell and then a much heavier explosion rent her amidships. Her bows plunged down and she disappeared. There was nothing of her left but a vast, dark pillar of smoke. Beatty famously turned to his flag captain saying, "Chatfield, there seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today."

Both the Germans and the British claimed victory in this battle. The Germans claimed to have won because they sank more ships, (14 -11), and the British because the German High Seas Fleet would never again venture from their ports for the rest of the war.

British losses in this action were 6,784 men, including 57 officers and 1209 men of *Queen Mary*'s crew, Ernest being amongst them.

Ernest Cecil Peirson Smith died on 31st May 1916, aged 20. He is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

Ralph Sotham

Lieutenant, 1 Squadron RFC & 5th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment

Ralph Clifford Sotham was born in 1895 in Horley to George and Amelia Sotham. He was one of six children and the family lived at Hatchgates, Massetts Road, Horley. By 1911 he was a boarder at Tonbridge Grammar School.

No service record is available for Ralph and his medal card gives no useful information.

The 1st/5th Battalion of the Queen's Own were in India throughout the war and it is more likely that Ralph was in the 2nd/5th Battalion which was in reserve in Kent for much of the first half of the war.

The reason for, or the date of, Ralph's transfer to the RFC is not known but the glamour of the new service must have been attractive to young officers and far more appealing than a short life in the trenches on the Western Front.

1 Squadron crossed to France in March 1915 equipped with a mixture of Avro 504s and Royal Aircraft Factory B.E.8s and were based at Baillieul. It operated mainly in the reconnaissance role, with a few single seat fighters for escort purposes. By the time of the Battle of Arras in 1917 the squadron had amassed a total of 200 enemy aircraft claimed as destroyed.

By the beginning of 1918 aeroplanes had become a little more robust than those of 1914. Nevertheless, they were still held together by little more than wire and strong glue. Accidents were frequent, especially on take-off and landing. Anti-aircraft fire (known as Ack-Ack or Archie to the pilots) was a constant threat once they were airborne.

The exact circumstances of Ralph Sotham's death are not known. He died on 9th January 1918, aged 23, and is commemorated on the Arras Flying Services Memorial. This can be found in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery on the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras.

A memorial tablet is displayed in St. Bartholomew's Church, Horley and states that he was killed in action in Flanders.

Sydney Southgate

Private 59929, 3rd Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment

Sydney George Southgate was born in 1900 in Chesham, Buckinghamshire. By 1901 his parents, Alfred and Ellen Southgate, were living at Grange Lodge, a property which was a coachman's accommodation and part of The Oaks in Bonehurst Road, Horley.

On the 1911 census the family are shown at Brookside, Copthorne and Sydney, who was still at school, had a younger brother and sister. Later they moved again to Allingham Farm, Copthorne and this is the address given by Sydney when he enlisted.

Sydney joined the Northamptonshire Regiment in Brighton in July 1918. He had completed his basic training and had been posted to E Company, 3rd Battalion at Scrapsgate, Sheppey where they were part of the Thames and Medway Garrison.

Whilst providing a military presence close to the vital Naval dockyard at Sheerness, the garrison here also acted as an assembly point and training establishment for men who were being prepared for shipment to France. When the battalions had sufficient men to make up a draft to replace men killed at the front they shipped them out and started to train up the next intake.

Sydney may have been awaiting a posting to a front line battalion when he was struck down by the influenza epidemic which swept the world in 1918/19.

He was taken to Broadway Military Hospital at Sheerness and died there eight days later.

Sydney died of pneumonia caused by influenza on 22nd November 1918, aged 18. He is buried in St. Bartholomew's Churchyard, Horley.

Charles Standing

Private 204443, 12th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

Charles William Standing was born in 1899, one of three children, to Jesse and Emily Standing and lived at South Villa, Balcombe Road, Horley. He worshiped at Horley Baptist Church and is commemorated on a plaque inside the church.

Charles enlisted into the 5th Reserve East Surrey Regiment in Redhill in June 1917 and stated that he was employed as a grocer's assistant. After his basic training at Tonbridge, Charles was posted to 12th Battalion and joined them in France on 7th April 1918.

12th East Surreys had recently returned to the Western Front after a period of action in Italy and, as part of 122nd Brigade, 41st Division, were in the line around Ypres when Charles joined them. Although this was a generally quiet period it was punctuated by ferocious trench raids by both sides and continuous heavy artillery exchanges. It appears that Charles was wounded on 29th June. He was admitted to a Field Ambulance unit and then to 36 Casualty Clearing Station. He was not fit to return to his unit until 27th July.

The 12th Battalion were in the line at La Clytte and their war diary states for 16th August 1918:

“Situation normal during the day – active at night. During the night our front system of posts was attacked by raiding party but they were successfully driven off by machine gun fire and bombs. The attack was launched under heavy bombardment”.

It was on this day, 16th August 1918, that Charles Standing died, aged 19. His body was never identified so it is likely that he was killed by an artillery explosion. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, which is five miles north east of Ypres.

He is one of 35,000 unidentified soldiers commemorated on this memorial.

Christopher Steer

Private 42056, 2nd Battalion, Worcester Regiment

Christopher Steer was born in 1891 in Lower Beeding, Sussex to Albert and Edith Steer. He had five sisters and two brothers and they grew up on several farms where his father was a labourer. Later the family moved to Jobs Cottage in New House Lane, Horley.

Christopher enlisted in Guildford, probably on the outbreak of war, and was originally drafted into the Army Service Corps as a driver. He was posted to France in February 1915. The mere fact that he survived until 1918 suggests that he may have spent most of his service in the ASC. He was later transferred to 2nd Worcesters.

The 2nd Worcesters were part of 100th Brigade, 33rd Division and fought in several major actions throughout 1917 including the Battles of Menin Road and Polygon Wood.

On 10th April 1918, the German Fourth Army attacked north of Armentières with four divisions and broke through to capture Messines and, by 11th April, the British situation was desperate. It was on this day that Field Marshall Haig issued his famous “Backs to the wall” order forbidding further retreat.

As fighting moved towards Hazebrouck, the British 5th and 33rd Divisions were brought in to strengthen the line but, by 15th April, the Germans had taken Bailleul despite increased British resistance.

It seems likely that Christopher was wounded during these engagements. He was evacuated to a Casualty Clearing Station near Mendinghem. The next CCS was at Bandaghem and another was not far away at Dozinghem so these aid posts became known to soldiers as Dosing'em, Bandaging'em and Mending'em.

Christopher Steer died of his wounds on 18th April 1918, aged 26. He is buried in Mendinghem Military Cemetery, which is about four and a half miles north west of Poperinghe.

George Steer

Private 2523, 1st Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

George Walter Steer was born in 1898 in Merstham to Walter and Elizabeth Steer. His father re-married after Elizabeth died and, with his second wife Gertrude and George's two younger sisters, was living at 2 Masons Bridge Road, Salfords by the time of the 1911 census. At some later date the family moved to 71 Earlswood Road, Redhill.

George enlisted in Redhill, probably in early 1915 and was in a draft to France on 31st August. Although 1st East Surreys were a regular battalion many of the pre-war regulars had gone and the regular battalions themselves were often largely composed of new recruits. They were part of 95th Brigade, 5th Division and early in 1916 were in several actions around Vimy Ridge and Arras.

The Battalion saw action on the Somme at High Wood, Guillemont and the Transloy Ridges and were finally moved into a quieter position near Festubert in October. In 1917 the Division were engaged throughout the Battles of Arras and the Third Battle of Ypres.

Early in 1918 the 5th Division were moved to Italy in an effort to stiffen Italian resistance but were hurriedly recalled to France in April in time to take part in the Battles of the Lys. There followed a period of 'relatively quiet' trench warfare with the 1st East Surreys in the general area of Tannay, south west of Hazebrouck.

On 28th June 1918 1st East Surreys were tasked with an assault on enemy lines near Tannay which was carried out with no casualties except for two men killed whilst carrying ammunition for the 95th Trench Mortar Battery.

One of these men was George Steer. He was killed on 28th June 1918, aged 20. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial, which is situated about seven miles south of Ypres.

Albert Stevenson

Able Seaman J/43488(PO), HMS *Pembroke*, Royal Navy

Albert Frederick Stevenson was born in 1900 in Redhill to Frederick and Emily Stevenson. The family lived in Lingfield for some years and later on moved to 20 Chestnut Road, Horley where they were living when Albert enlisted.

The date of Albert's enlistment is not known and details of his service are not available although burial transcripts at St. Bartholomew's Church state that he served in HMS *Chester* alongside Boy Jack Cornwell V.C. at the Battle of Jutland in 1916.

The *Chester* was nearest to the enemy and at 5.27 her commander, Captain R. N. Lawson, hearing the sound of guns to the south-westward, turned in that direction to investigate. Soon he could see a three-funnelled cruiser with some destroyers crossing ahead of him. In a minute or two the *Chester* was smothered in bursting shells. Within five minutes she had three of her guns disabled and the majority of the gun crews were lying dead or wounded. With only her after-gun in action she turned away north-eastward at utmost speed, dodging the salvos like a snipe. During this action, although mortally wounded, John Cornwell, aged 16, remained standing alone at a most exposed post, quietly awaiting orders, until the end of the action, with the gun crew dead and wounded around him. He was awarded the Victoria Cross.

At the time of his death, Albert was attached to HMS *Pembroke* which was the main Royal Naval Barracks at Chatham and it is possible that he was awaiting a posting when he died.

One source says that Albert's death was caused by something "other than disease, accident or enemy action" but the list of Royal Navy WW1 casualties states that he was drowned. If this is the case it was almost certainly an accident though influenza is also a possibility. The circumstances of his death are thus unclear.

What is certain is that he died on 20th September 1918, aged 19, and is buried in St. Bartholomew's Churchyard, Horley.

William Still

Private 103413, 10th Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby Regiment)

William Alfred Still was born in 1899 in Bristol to Edward and Minnie Still. He enlisted in Redhill in April 1917, giving his occupation as a stable lad and his address as 82 Albert Road, Horley, but he was not called up until October.

His basic training saw him pass through training camps at Clipstone and Brocton and he was posted to France in April 1918.

10th Sherwoods were part of 51st Brigade of the 17th (Northern) Division. They were heavily involved in many of the major actions throughout the spring and summer of 1918.

At about 2:15am on 15th August the enemy started a very heavy gas bombardment on the whole area occupied by the 17th Division; mustard gas predominated. The casualties from the gas poisoning steadily mounted up and long strings of men with their eyes bandaged, each holding the man in front, trailed slowly backwards down to the dressing station. The battalion sustained losses of 18 officers and 510 other ranks; a total which, for the moment, made it almost cease to exist as a fighting unit but the large majority of these casualties subsequently recovered. William was almost certainly amongst them.

The battalion recovered in time to mount an attack on Flers and Gueudecourt at the end of August. By 19th September the Division had advanced further eastwards and on this day William received shrapnel wounds to his back and abdomen. He was evacuated by 53rd Field Ambulance unit to No 3 Casualty Clearing Station but he died of his wound three days later.

William Still died of his wounds on 22nd September 1918, aged 19, and is buried at Thillooy Road Cemetery, Beaulencourt, which is about one and a half miles south of Bapaume.

Albert Stringer

Private G/13250, 7th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

Bert Stringer was born as Bertie Hawk in 1892. His mother, Emma Hawk, became the housekeeper to William Stringer at 3 Balcombe Road, Horley, and Bert, and his four sisters, took his name. It appears that William and Emma were later married.

Bert enlisted in Kenley into the 12th Lancers on 27th November 1915 and was mobilised in February 1916. His attestation papers give his occupation as a Gardener. He was posted to the Cavalry Reserve but in November 1916 was transferred into The Buffs, joining 7th Battalion on 2nd December.

The battalion alternated between being in the trenches, at Fransu St Pierre Divion and Acheux, and being in billets at the rear for training. When practice grenades were not available for training they used turnips, with nails stuck into them to represent the pin.

Early in 1917 the Battalion found itself back in the old Somme battle area and Bert would have fought in the actions at Miraumont in February and been involved in the capture of Irlles. The British captured Irlles on the morning of 10th March 1917. Previous to the attack their howitzers had deluged the place with shells. In a sunken ravine the British found a small garrison of old men with machine guns. Here thirty prisoners were taken and the rest killed. The British swept on over the German trenches, meeting with very little opposition.

Towards the end of April, British troops engaged upon the Third Battle of the Scarpe and Bert was killed during attempts to capture the village of Fresnoy.

Bert Stringer was posted as missing, presumed killed, on 3rd May 1917, aged 26. His body was never recovered for burial and he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, which is in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery in the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras.

Albert Strudwick

Lance Corporal 6672, 8th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Albert Daniel Strudwick was born in 1894 in Redhill to Henry and Jane Strudwick and was one of ten children. The family lived at 2 Prince Albert Cottages, Earlswood.

Albert left his employment as a farm labourer and enlisted in Guildford just at the outbreak of the war. After a spell of training and home duty he arrived in France in October 1915 in a draft to replace men lost at the Battle of Loos.

At the start of 1916 the 24th Division, including the 8th Queen's, moved north toward the Ypres area. On the night of 29th April 1916 the 8th Queen's were subjected to an intense German gas attack supported by infantry at Wulverghem.

Soon after the Battle of the Somme began in July 1916 they were moved south again. By 1st September the 8th were in positions consolidating possession of Delville Wood, the scene of bitter fighting from 15th July until its final capture on 25th August. They suffered 143 casualties before they were finally withdrawn from the line on the night of 5th/6th September 1916.

Early in 1917 Albert enjoyed two weeks home leave but was hospitalised with tonsillitis soon after he returned. In June he received a shrapnel wound to his right hand and returned to the 8th Queen's while they were engaged in the 3rd Battle of Ypres.

In May 1918 Albert was promoted to Lance Corporal. On 4th July 1918 the 8th Queen's were in a relatively quiet sector of the line just west of the old Loos battlefield. Shortly before midnight the enemy artillery bombarded their front positions with 4.2cms and 7.7cms shells as well as mortar fire. C Company was in the left front sector and it was here that one man was killed and another injured.

It seems as if Albert Strudwick was the man killed and his death is recorded as occurring on 5th July 1918, aged 23. He is buried at Bully-Grenay Communal Cemetery, which is about five miles west of Lens.

Thomas Swain

Private 10112, 2nd Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders

Thomas Arthur Swain was born in 1890 in Plumstead in south-east London. His parents were Thomas and Jane Swain and he had five brothers and two sisters. His father was a policeman and the family appears to have moved quite often. In 1911 they were living in Elmers End Road, Beckenham and Thomas worked as a greengrocer's assistant. The family moved to Horley after 1911 and Thomas's sister, Ethel, married there in 1916.

No service record survives for Thomas but his medal card shows that he arrived in France on 9th December 1915 suggesting that he joined up earlier that year. He originally joined the Royal Field Artillery and, whether he was simply posted to or applied for a transfer to, the Seaforths is not known.

2nd Seaforths arrived in France in August 1914 so, by the time Thomas joined them at the end of 1915, few of the 'old soldiers' remained.

In the early part of 1916 they were in and out of the line south west of Arras but in the summer they were at the Somme as part of 10th Brigade, in 4th Division. They attacked near Serre on 1st July and sustained around 350 casualties. Despite this, they were kept in action until reinforced sufficiently to attack again early in October at the Battle for the Transloy Ridges.

Following this engagement the 2nd Seaforths stayed in the field near Le Transloy. The trenches were in a very bad state with no cover of any kind for officers or men and had been very badly blown in. On 20th October it was bitterly cold. A large working party went out to fill in old trenches just east of Guillemont. The party had 14 casualties owing to some live rounds or a dud shell being struck by a pick or shovel.

Thomas was killed a few days later. He died on 23rd October 1916, aged 26, and is buried in the Guards Cemetery at Lesboeuufs, which is about half a mile south west of the town.

James Swinden

Private 315439, 2nd Battalion, Cheshire Regiment

James Sidney Swinden (not James Sydney Swindon as on the War Memorial) was born in 1896 in Charlwood to Francis and Fanny Swinden. He had four brothers and a sister and the family lived at 3 Derby Cottages, Lee Street, Horley.

On enlistment in Camberwell, James gave an address in Sydenham but no further information on his service is available.

2nd Cheshires were part of 84th Brigade, 28th Division and were engaged in many of the major actions through 1915, including the second Battle of Ypres and the Battle of Loos. In October 1915 they were ordered to prepare to move to the Balkan theatre and, after travelling via Egypt, arrived in Salonika early in January 1916.

The British Forces dug-in until the summer of 1916, by which time the international force had been reinforced and joined by Serbian, Russian and Italian units. The attempted invasion of Greece by the Bulgarian army in July was repulsed near Lake Doiran. At the beginning of October 1916 the British, in co-operation with her allies on other parts of the front, began operations on the River Struma towards Serres. The campaign was successful, with the capture of the Rupell Pass and advances to within a few miles of Serres.

During 1917 there was comparatively little activity on the British part of the front in Macedonia except around Lake Doiran until, eventually, a stable front was established, running from the Albanian Adriatic coast to the Struma River.

From October 1915 to the end of November 1918, the British Salonika Force suffered some 2,800 deaths in action, 1,400 from wounds and 4,200 from sickness.

The exact circumstances of James Swinden's death are not known but he died on 15th April 1918, aged 22. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Doiran Memorial, which is on the south east edge of Lake Doiran in northern Greece.

Frank Taylor

Sergeant L/9064, 2nd Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Frank Lennox Taylor was born in 1889 in Redhill to Robert and Emma Taylor and, with his three brothers and two sisters, lived at 10 Common Road, Earlswood. Before 1901 the family had moved to 52 Earlsbrook Road. By a strange coincidence, 10 Common Road was later to become the home of another casualty, William Warner.

Frank enlisted in Guildford as a regular soldier before the war, probably before 1911, and would have been with 2nd Queen's in South Africa when war broke out.

The Battalion was rushed home and shipped out to the BEF, arriving at Zeebrugge on 6th October 1914. They were part of 22nd Brigade, 7th Division and ordered to assist in the defence of Antwerp. However, by the time they arrived, the city was already falling and the 7th was instead ordered to hold certain important bridges and other places that would help the westward evacuation of the Belgian army. Once the Belgians were through, the Division was moved westwards, where they entrenched in front of Ypres, the first British troops to occupy that fateful place.

The Division fought the advancing German army to a standstill at Ypres. All units suffered grievous losses and it was not until the following January/February that it was once more in a complete enough condition to be considered at full fighting strength.

Throughout 1915 the Division was in action at many of the major engagements including Neuve Chappelle, Aubers, Festubert and the Battle of Loos.

On 24th November 1915, 2nd Queen's were out of the line and marched to rest billets at Le Hamel, near Bethune. It was a relatively 'quiet' day and they provided 200 men for a working party to reinforce trenches near Festubert.

Frank was killed on this day, 24th November 1915, aged 26. He was probably killed by an artillery shell and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

George Terry

Stoker 1st Class, SS/103854, HMS *Bulwark*, Royal Navy

George Terry was born 1882 in Earlswood in to Henry and Anne Terry and was one of eight children. In 1901 they lived at 4 Asylum Cottages, probably close to the old Royal Earlswood Hospital. Later the family moved to 6 Irrigation Road, Earlswood (now Maple Road).

George joined the Royal Navy before 1911 as he is to be found on the census as 'Sailor – home on leave'.

No details of his service before the war are available but, by the time war broke out, he was serving on HMS *Bulwark* attached to the Channel Fleet patrolling the English Channel. HMS *Bulwark* belonged to a sub-class of the Formidable-class of pre-dreadnought battleships of the Royal Navy known as the London-class.

On 26th November 1914, while anchored near Sheerness, she was destroyed by a large internal explosion with the loss of 736 men. Other crew were ashore at the time of the explosion. Two of the 14 survivors later died in hospital. The explosion was likely to have been caused by the overheating of cordite charges that had been placed adjacent to a boiler room bulkhead.

An inquiry investigated various theories, including the overheating of older cordite cartridges or their mishandling. Survivors reported some charges were out of the magazine and were being stored in a passageway that morning, under Royal Marine guard. The explosion occurred around breakfast time when smoking was normally allowed. As a stoker, it is likely that George was in the boiler room when this explosion occurred.

George Terry died on 26th November 1914, aged 32. His body was never recovered for burial and he is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

Norman Borer also died in this explosion.

James Thewless

Private L/10980, 8th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

James Thewless was born in 1898 in Norwood to Alfred and Sophie Thewless. He was one of nine children and, some years after his birth, the family moved to 3 Station Road, Horley.

No service record is available for James but his medal card suggests that he enlisted in Guildford, probably in answer to Kitchener's famous appeal early in 1915.

He was sent to France on 14th October 1915 where 8th Queen's were under the command of 72nd Brigade, 24th Division. They had just been engaged in the Battle of Loos and James was part of a much needed draft of reinforcements.

At the start of 1916 the 24th Division, including the 8th Queen's, moved north toward the Ypres area where, on the night of 29th April 1916, they were subjected to an intense German gas attack, supported by infantry, at Wulverghem.

On 24th July 1916 they were moved south again to the Battle of the Somme. By 1st September the 8th Queen's were in positions consolidating possession of Delville Wood, the scene of bitter fighting from 15th July until its final capture on 25th August. They suffered 143 casualties before they were finally withdrawn from the line on the night of 5th/6th September 1916.

By early October 8th Queen's were back in the line near Camblain-l'Abbe, north-west of Arras. They were well understrength and numbered just 437 men. The Battalion was spread across four trenches and it was a relatively 'quiet' time. Although the enemy artillery was generally silent, the German trench mortars were active most afternoons with Hartung Trench getting most of their attention.

It appears that James was wounded during this period and he died of his wounds on 7th October 1916, aged 18. He is buried in Quatre Vents Cemetery, Estree-Cauchy, which is about 10 miles north west of Arras.

Herbert Todd MC & Bar (Croix de Guerre)

Captain, 4th (attached 8th) Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

Herbert Stanley Todd was born on 1st April 1898 in Twickenham, to Herbert and Ellen Todd. He was educated at Wellesley House, in Broadstairs, and Westminster School. Ellen was the daughter of R.V. Evered of Oatlands, Horley.

Herbert joined the 16th (Public Schools) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment in September 1914 and the battalion joined the BEF in France in November 1915. He was commissioned with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant on 8th August 1916 and posted to the front again, this time with the East Surrey Regiment; promoted Lieutenant on 5th February 1917, then Acting Captain on 1st October 1917. He served in Italy from November 1917 to February 1918, at which time he was invalided home, returning to France in August 1918.

He was awarded his first Military Cross for an action in 1917: 'For conspicuous gallantry in sector south of Tower Hamlets, leading his men after all the other officers had become casualties, he advanced with great dash and gallantry; reaching his objective, he consolidated in depth. He reorganised his company, and all through showed an utter disregard for personal danger. This, combined with his personal cheeriness, had great effect on his men. During the whole of the operations this officer was suffering from fever.'

He won his second MC: 'For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty at St Pierre Vaast Wood on 1st September 1918. He was in command of one of two companies in the attack and, when the other Company Commander was wounded at the start, he supervised the advance of both for a distance of two miles, without any previous reconnaissance. He reached his objective up to time, reorganised and gained touch with the flanks, showing great resource against determined opposition.'

Herbert was also awarded the Belgian Croix de Guerre for gallantry at Ypres.

Captain Todd was killed in action leading D Company in an attack at Roussoy on 18th September 1918, aged 20, during which the Company lost all of its officers.

He was killed by a machine gun bullet to the head and was buried at Lieramont Cemetery. His Colonel wrote "He would undoubtedly have made a great name for himself as he had great personality and force of character".

He was later reburied at Peronne Communal Cemetery, Rue de Peupliers, Peronne.

Charles Tomsett

Private 279403, 11th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Charlie (not Charles) Tomsett was born in 1887 in Worth to John and Ellen Tomsett. He was one of eight sons and the family lived in Green Lane, Worth. By 1901 Ellen was widowed and had moved with the family to East Park, Ifield.

In 1908 Charlie married Clara Jane Cook. By 1911 Charlie was a gardener and they were living in Ifield with their daughter, Winifred, where they had three more children before he joined up. It is possible that they, or Clara when widowed, moved to Horley later but it is not known where they lived. On enlistment he gave his residence as Redhill.

Charlie's medal card suggests that he did not see active service before, at least, 1916. He was originally in the Royal Sussex Regiment and later transferred into the 3rd Battalion RF. 3rd RF spent a good part of the war in Egypt and Salonika and did not return to France until July 1918.

The 11th Battalion RF landed in France in July 1915 as part of 54th Brigade, 18th Division and fought in many of the major engagements throughout the remainder of the war.

As it cannot be established when Charlie was transferred from the 3rd to the 11th RF it is difficult to discover how and when he died but his CWGC record seems to place him with the 11th when he was killed.

At the end of September 1918 54th Brigade were pushing the Germans opposite them back and the German army was almost in a full retreat. The 11th Battalion RF, together with the rest of the Brigade, were in action at Vendhuile, north of St Quentin, and were pushed ahead to mop up the village and establish a line on the west bank of the canal. Snipers and machine guns prevented the crossing of the bridges.

It appears that Charlie was killed soon after this action was fought.

Charlie Tomsett died on 3rd October 1918, aged 31, and was buried nearby.

Some months later, graves from this area were brought together and reburials carried out at Grevillers British Cemetery, just west of Bapaume.

Charles Tribe

Private 32919, 7th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment

Charles Frederick Tribe was born in 1884 to William and Jane Tribe. He was one of nine children and the family lived at Blundells Cottages, Vicarage Road (now Vicarage Lane), Horley. William was a Police Constable. At the time of the 1901 census, Charles was living with his married brother in Eastbourne and was employed as a gardener.

In 1907, by now a dairyman, he married Clara Jane Kenward at St Bartholomew's Church and they settled, with their daughter Ethel, at 37 Queens Road, Horley. In 1911 Charles was employed as a milkman. Jane later lived at Hill View, Church Road, Horley and Charles may also have lived there.

No service record survives for Charles but his medal card suggests that he saw no active service before 1916.

The 7th East Surreys landed in France in June 1915 as part of 37th Brigade, 12th (Eastern) Division and fought in many major engagements before their disbandment in February 1918.

Between 17th May and 19th October 1917, the Division held positions east of Monchy le Preux, mounting several raids and small scale attacks and beating off some made against them, notably in the area of Hook Trench, Pick Avenue and Tites Copse. Much manual work took place, for the position held in May was of shell holes and disconnected parts of trenches, with few dugouts and no communications. When out of the line, they took part in training at Beaurains.

In August 1918 the Battalion was ordered to carry out a large scale raid on the enemy line on the night of 9th August. The raid went in at 7:45pm and was entirely successful. The raiding party returned at about 3:00am the following day. 2 officers were wounded, 9 other ranks were killed, 5 were missing and 21 were wounded.

It seems that Charles was one of the men killed in this raid.

Charles Tribe died on 9th August 1917, aged 33, and he is buried in Albuera Cemetery, Bailleul-Sire-Berthoult, which is about four miles north east of Arras.

Arthur Turner

Gunner 207748, 462nd Battery, Royal Field Artillery

Arthur Bert (not Burt) Turner was born in 1892 to Abraham and Philadelphia Turner who, by 1911, lived in Elm Cottage, Mill Lane, Horley. He was a farm labourer and enlisted in Horley.

No service record survives for Arthur and his medal card gives no useful information other than to omit any award of the 1914/15 star.

462nd Battery RFA were part of 179th Brigade, 39th Division. The 174th, 184th and 179th Field Gun Brigades were all raised by The Thames Iron Works. The 39th Division were ordered to France early in 1916. They crossed to Le Havre and, by 11th March, all units were concentrated near Blaringhem.

The Division was in action at many of the major battles throughout 1916 and 1917 including The Somme and the Third Battle of Ypres.

The colossal German offensive launched on 21st March 1918, following the largest bombardment ever seen on the Western Front, resulted in spectacular successes but failed to achieve an outright breakthrough for the German Army. Slowed by the innumerable defiant actions of outnumbered garrisons in isolated British redoubts, the end of the day, contrary to German expectations, saw the greatest gains achieved against Gough's Fifth Army on the front from St Quentin to the Oise. The night of 21st/22nd March was one of frenzied activity as near-reeling British Divisions readjusted to the incursions into their defensive zones and German forces were reinforced to inflict further damage.

It seems certain that Arthur Turner was killed in this action.

He died on 21st March 1918 and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, which is about five miles north east of Albert.

Along with Joseph Reeves, Arthur has the distinction of being named on both Horley and Charlwood War Memorials.

Ernest Vallance

Private 5904, 24th Battalion, Australian Infantry Force

Ernest Arthur Vallance was born in 1886 in Dorking to Peter and Harriett Vallance. He had two sisters and a brother and the family lived at 38 Orchard Road, Dorking.

At the time of the 1901 census, Ernest was to be found a prisoner in St David's Reformatory School at Mold in North Wales. He is not identifiable on the 1911 census and may already have emigrated to Australia, where he married an Australian girl named Mary.

The 24th Battalion was raised in May 1915 and assigned to 6th Brigade, 2nd Division. After arriving in Egypt, the battalion carried out its training before being sent to Gallipoli in early September as reinforcements for the forces that had landed there in April. The battalion remained in Gallipoli for three months, serving around the Lone Pine sector until December 1915. Following this they returned to Egypt where they took part in the defence of the Suez Canal until March 1916 when they returned to France.

In May 1917 they took part in the Second Battle of Bullecourt. At 3:34am on 3rd May, after sheltering in a sunken road whilst a preparatory barrage raked the German defences, the 5th and 6th Brigades 'went over the top' towards the eastern edge of what was left of Bullecourt village. The British 62nd Division advanced towards the village itself. A creeping barrage gave the advancing troops cover. The Australian 5th Brigade were soon halted by heavy machine gun fire but the 6th Brigade had more luck. The lie of the land gave them more cover and they were able to surprise the Germans in their trenches. Some progress was made and the second line of the German defences was reached in some places. By late morning, lacking support on their left or right, 6th Brigade was ultimately forced to pull back by vigorous German counter attacks. The Division suffered 80% casualties in this attack.

Ernest Vallance was killed in this action. He died on 3rd May 1917, aged 31.

He has no known grave and is commemorated, with 10,761 other Australian soldiers, on the Villers Bretonneux Memorial, just east of Amiens.

Arthur Voice

Painter M/22859, HMS *Pembroke*, Royal Navy

Arthur Edward Voice was born in 1895 in Horley to Albert and Jane Voice. He had two older brothers and two older sisters and the family lived at 25 Albert Road, Horley. Early in 1916 Arthur married Winifred Leppard and may have lived with her at Edmondbury, Meath Green, Horley.

No details of Arthur's enlistment are available and Royal Navy medal rolls give no useful information.

HMS *Pembroke* was the name of the Royal Naval barracks at Chatham. It seems likely that Arthur had been in the service for some time as he was already a classified tradesman - Painter 2nd Class - unsurprising as he had been a house painter before joining up. He is, therefore, likely to have been on the regular establishment at Chatham or awaiting a posting, rather than 'passing through' on training.

On the night of 3rd September 1917 the naval base at Chatham was targeted in a night attack by the Gotha bombers of Kagohl 3, the Englandgeschwader. Five Gothas set out on the raid but one had to return en route because of engine problems. The Gothas dropped 46 bombs, about half of which fell on or near the base. The Chatham attack commenced at 11:10pm but, due to a communications failure, Chatham received no warning of the raid which resulted in naval personnel being killed when a bomb hit the drill hall which was being used for accommodation purposes.

The RFC flew 16 defensive sorties against the raid, with aircraft from numbers 37, 39, 44 and 50 Squadrons involved, but without result.

131 men were killed and 90 injured in what was to be the worst single bomb incident of World War 1.

Arthur died in this bombing raid on 3rd September 1917, aged 22, and is buried in Gillingham Cemetery, which is in Woodlands Road. A memorial cross in the cemetery is dedicated to the men killed in this raid.

William Warner

Private 47967, 25th (Tyneside Irish) Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers

William Joshua Warner was born in 1882 in Greatford, Lincolnshire to John and Emma Warner and he had two older sisters. By 1901 he was living in Earlswood and earning his living as a carpenter. In 1903 he married Emily Sargent from Horley and they lodged at 10 Common Road, Earlswood.

William enlisted in Redhill, though we do not know when, and was initially Sapper 178021 in the Royal Engineers. At some stage he appears to have transferred to the Northumberland Fusiliers.

The 25th (2nd Tyneside Irish) Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers was a Pals Battalion, raised in Newcastle on 9th November 1914 by the Lord Mayor and City. In June 1915 the Battalion joined 103rd Brigade, 34th Division and proceeded to France in January 1916 where they concentrated at La Crosse, east of St Omer. They were in action during the Battles of the Somme, including the capture of Scots and Sausage Redoubts and The Battles of Bazentin Ridge and Pozieres Ridge. 103rd Brigade and the Divisional Pioneers also saw action in The Battle of Flers-Courcelette.

In 1917 34th Brigade, as part of the 3rd Army, were engaged at the Battle of the Scarpe. On Monday 9th April 1917 at 5.30a.m, Canadian Divisions opened their attack on Vimy Ridge. Wresting control of this height from the Germans would allow the 3rd Army, under General Edmund Allenby, to advance on Douai, an important road and rail junction. Allenby was also expected to take Monchy-le-Preux, a village lying a few kilometres to the east of Arras which gave a commanding view over the Scarpe Valley and, because of this, could hinder the second arm of the offensive directed at Cambrai, another vital base for the German military apparatus.

William Warner was killed in this action on 9th April 1917, aged 25. He is buried at Roclincourt Valley Cemetery, which is near the village of that name, about three miles north of Arras.

Henry Webber

Lieutenant, 7th Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment

Henry Webber was born in 1849 in Tonbridge, the youngest of eight children, to William and Eliza Webber. He was educated at Tonbridge School and Pembroke College, Oxford where he distinguished himself at rowing and cricket, representing the college at both.

In 1874 he married Emily Morris from Lingfield and they lived in Horley from 1875, firstly at Greenfields and then at The Elms in Horley Row.

Having established himself as a successful stockbroker, he soon became an influential figure in the affairs of Horley. He was one of the original members of the Surrey County Council when it was first formed in 1889, representing Horley, Charlwood, Burstow and Nutfield. He also became the first Chairman of Horley Parish Council when it came into being in 1894.

He became involved in the administration of the Cottage Hospital, having suggested the purchase of the former Temperance Hotel to the Trustees in 1902, and maintained an interest in its welfare.

He was Chairman of the Directors of Horley Gas Company, formed in 1886, and was a County Magistrate as well as a Church Warden.

Henry was a keen sportsman. As well as being a good shot, he regularly rode to hounds with the Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt. He was an excellent cricketer, scoring 200 runs in a match when he was aged 59, having already played 18 holes of golf on the same day. He was a member of the MCC and the first Captain of Gatwick Golf Club, then situated within the horse racing track, besides being the first commissioner of Horley Scouts.

When WW1 started, he relentlessly tried to join up as three of his four sons had. Eventually, the South Lancashire Regiment accepted him as a junior Lieutenant.

In May 1916 he arrived in France to join his Battalion preparing for the Somme offensive. Late on 21st July he was in command of a party of troops who had brought up supplies to the 7th Lancs position in a wood near Mametz.

Henry Webber

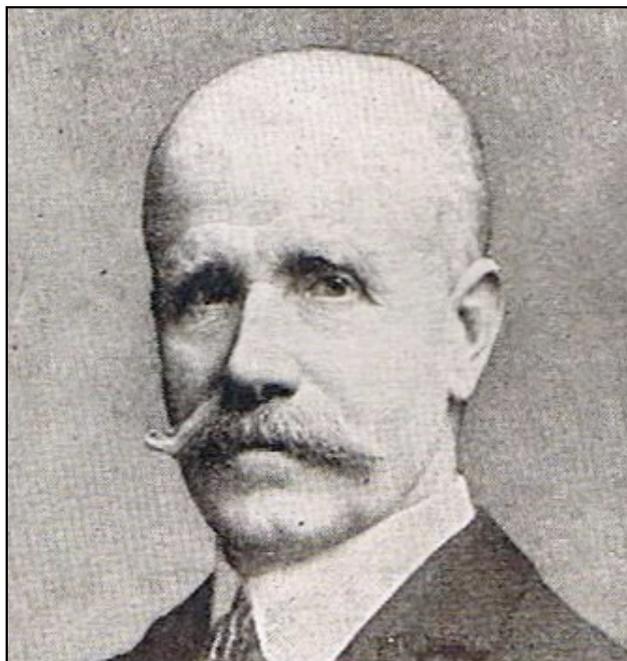
Leaving his men to unload the horses, he went over to where the C.O. was talking to a group of officers. Into this routine, peaceful scene there suddenly dropped a single, heavy German shell. When the smoke and dust had cleared it was found that twelve men and three horses had been hit. Henry Webber lay unconscious, badly wounded in the head. He and the other wounded were rushed to a Dressing Station but, for Webber, it was too late. He never regained consciousness and died that night.

The news of the death of this old warrior was noted in high places. His family received special messages of sympathy from the King and Queen and from the Army Council - unusual tributes to a dead lieutenant of infantry. Webber's devotion to duty was further honoured when he was mentioned in the C in C's Despatches. His wife never recovered from the shock of his death and died two years later but, ironically, his three sons all survived the war.

Henry Webber was killed on 21st July 1916, aged 67, and was, for 100 years, thought to be the oldest British serviceman to be killed in World War 1.

In 2014 it was established that an honorary Lt Colonel, Jasper Richardson, who was serving as a General Staff Officer (Agriculture) was killed by a shell near Bapaume in 1918, when he was 68. Richardson's duties did not normally bring him into a danger area and Henry Webber remains the oldest soldier to lose his life whilst on 'active' service.

Henry Webber is buried in Dartmoor Cemetery at Becordel-Becourt, which is about two miles south east of Albert.



Joseph Weller

Leading Stoker 312171, HMS *Formidable*, Royal Navy

Joseph Albert Weller (not Albert Joseph as on the Memorial) was born in 1886 in Horley and was one of the seven children of Joseph and Mary Weller. He was probably known as Albert to differentiate him from his father. The family lived at Hope Cottage, Charlesfield Road, Horley.

Joseph joined the Royal Navy in 1907, signing on for 12 years and, by 1911, was serving in the Mediterranean. On 21st October 1913 he was posted to HMS *Formidable* which was a pre-dreadnought battleship.

HMS *Formidable* was in the 5th Battle Squadron and spent 31st December 1914 participating in gunnery exercises off the Isle of Portland, supported by the light cruisers *Topaze* and *Diamond*. After the exercises that night the fleet remained at sea on patrol even though submarine activity had been reported in the area. *Formidable* was steaming at 10 knots at the rear of the squadron off Portland Bill when, at 2:20am on 1st January 1915, a torpedo from a German submarine, U-24, struck the number one boiler port side. By 2:40am she had taken a list of 20° to starboard and Captain Noel Loxley gave the order to abandon ship. At about 3:05am *Formidable* was struck by a second torpedo on the starboard side. Amidst a 30 foot swell the life boats were launched and the two light cruisers came alongside and managed to pick up 80 men in the deteriorating weather. By 4:45am the ship seemed in imminent danger of capsizing and a few minutes later she rolled over onto many of the men in the water and sank quickly. Captain Loxley remained on the bridge, along with his fox terrier, Bruce, calmly overseeing the evacuation of the ship.

Joseph Weller was killed in this incident and died on 1st January 1915, aged 28. His body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial.

Willam Weller

(Believed to be) Private 55307, 8th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

William John Weller was born in 1897 in Kingswood to Harry and Elizabeth Weller. He was one of eighteen children and the family lived at 11 Clears Cottages, Reigate. His connection to Horley is not known. On the 1911 census William's occupation is given as 'golf caddy'.

William enlisted in Reigate but we don't know exactly when. His medal card suggests that he did not see active service before 1916.

On 19th January 1916 the 8th Battalion began a period of training in open warfare at Busnes, then moved back into the front line at Loos on 12th February 1916. In June they moved to Flesselles and carried out a training exercise. They moved to Baizieux on 30th June and went into the reserve at Hencourt and Millencourt on 1st July. They relieved the 8th Division at Ovillers-la-Boisselle that night and attacked at 3:15am the following morning with mixed success. On 7th July they attacked again and, despite suffering heavy casualties in the area of Mash Valley, they succeeded in capturing and holding the first and second enemy lines close to Ovillers. They were withdrawn to Contay on 9th July but were back in action in The Battle of Pozieres on 3rd August, with a successful attack capturing 4th Avenue Trench, and were engaged in sustained heavy fighting until they were withdrawn on 9th August.

The Battalion was then moved north and, at the Third Battle of the Scarpe on 3rd May 1917, the British attacked on a 12 mile front towards the village of Fresnay. The attack in the small hours of the morning was beset by confusion caused by the darkness. The German artillery opened fire and concentrated upon the British infantry. The intensity of this fire, the heaviest that many an experienced soldier had ever witnessed, lasted, without slackening, for fifteen hours.

William Weller was killed in this action on 3rd May 1917, aged 20. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery, which is in the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras.

Albert White

Private 16630, 2/5th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)

Albert James White was born in 1893 in Horley to James and Hannah White and lived with several siblings in Charlesfield Road, Horley. He became a typesetter at Monotype, Salfords and later worked at Bayhorne Farm. His father, James, later moved to 32 Albert Road and Albert may have also lived there. His older brother, Charles, was also to die in the war.

He joined up as soon as war broke out and enlisted in the Royal Dragoons, though in June 1915 was transferred into the West Riding Regiment. Albert was not a model soldier and his rank varied from Private to Corporal over his time in the army, though he never committed more than minor military offences. He spent the early war years in England before being posted to France in December 1916.

Albert arrived in France just in time to take part in the battles around Arras which were to be a diversionary tactic to assist the French army which was attacking further south.

On 23rd April 1917 the second Battle of the Scarpe began and Albert was wounded the following day. He was fortunate enough to be passed down the casualty line very efficiently and arrived back in England four days later to be hospitalised in Newcastle. His wounds kept him in hospital until August when he was given leave before returning to the depot. He returned to France in November 1917.

In the summer of 1918, following the collapse of the Russian front, Albert was gassed whilst fighting in the actions to contain the German assault and in the allied advance that followed.

By August 1918 the fighting had moved steadily eastwards again and it seems that Albert may have been fighting at the 3rd Battle of the Scarpe when he was killed.

Albert White was killed in action on 25th August 1918, aged 25, and is buried in Gomiecourt South Cemetery, which is about four miles north west of Bapaume.

Charles White

Lance Corporal 1795, 28th Battalion, Australian Infantry Force

Charles White was born in 1889 in Horley to James and Hannah White and lived with several siblings in Charlesfield Road, Horley. His father, James, later moved to 32 Albert Road and Charles may have also lived there. His younger brother, Albert, was also to die in the war.

Before the 1911 census was taken, Charles had emigrated to Australia and, after war broke out in 1914, he joined the Australian Army.

The 28th Battalion was raised at Blackboy Camp in Western Australia on 16th April 1915. The battalion left Australia in June and, after two months spent training in Egypt, landed at Gallipoli on 10th September. The 28th had a relatively quiet time at Gallipoli and the battalion left in December, having suffered only light casualties.

After another stint in Egypt, 7th Brigade proceeded to France, as part of 2nd Australian Division. The 28th Battalion took part in its first major battle at Pozières between 28th July and 6th August 1916. Later that year Battalion took part in confused and costly fighting to the east of Flers, in the Somme Valley.

For many of the major battles of 1917, the 28th found itself in supporting roles. At the second battle of Bullecourt, the 28th provided reinforcements who were, nonetheless, involved in heavy fighting. The 28th went on to attack, as part of the third phase, at the battle of Menin Road, capturing its objectives in seven minutes, and was in reserve during the capture of Broodseinde Ridge. The Battalion was also in reserve for the battle of Poelcappelle on 9th October but, with the attack floundering in the mud, they soon became embroiled in the fighting.

Charles White died in action to the east of Ypres shortly after this battle. He was killed on 2nd November 1917, aged 28, and is buried in Menin Road South Cemetery, which is on the east side of Ypres.

Geoffrey White VC

Lieutenant Commander, HM Submarine E14, Royal Navy

Geoffrey Saxton White was born in 1886 in Bromley, to William and Alice White, but was living at Park House, Charlwood by 1901. The family were affluent and employed ten servants including maids, footmen and grooms.

He attended Parkfield, Haywards Heath and Bradfield College before joining HMS *Brittania*. He passed out in 1901 and was promoted midshipman in September 1902. During the next six years he served in the Channel Fleet and on the China Station on several ships including the cruisers *Amphitrite* and *Glory* and the battleship *Venerable*.

By 1909 Geoffrey was a Lieutenant and was posted to HMS *Forth*, a depot ship serving B and C class boats, where he trained for the submarine service before being given his first command, C27, in November that year.

In 1911 he married Sybil Thomas with whom he had two sons and a daughter.

Early in 1914 he was posted to a newly-commissioned battleship, HMS *Monarch*, wherein he served until returning to submarines in September 1915 when he took command of the submarine D6, in 11th Submarine Flotilla.

Later he took command of a more advanced submarine, E14, which was commissioned on 18th November 1914. Her hull cost £105,700. This submarine enjoyed a rare distinction in that she had two commanding officers, each of whom won the Victoria Cross in the same area but three years apart.



Geoffrey White VC

In 1915, following a successful action in the Sea of Marmara, her captain, Lieutenant Commander Edward Courtney Boyle, received the Victoria Cross.

Geoffrey White's award of this supreme recognition of bravery was for the incident recorded in the "London Gazette" dated 24th May, 1919:

"For most conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty as Commanding Officer of HM Submarine E14 on 28th January 1918. HM Submarine E14 left Mudros on 27th January, under instructions to force the Narrows and attack the German ship 'Goeben', which was reported aground off Nagara Point after being damaged during her sortie from the Dardanelles. The latter vessel was not found and E14 turned back.

At about 8:45am on 28th January a torpedo was fired from E14 at an enemy ship. 11 seconds after the torpedo left the tube a heavy explosion took place, caused all the lights to go out, and sprang the fore hatch.

(Author's note: Probably a premature explosion of their torpedo.)

Leaking badly, the boat was blown to 15 feet and at once a heavy fire came from the forts but the hull was not hit. E14 then dived and proceeded on her way out. Soon afterwards the boat became out of control and, as the air supply was nearly exhausted, Lieutenant Commander White decided to run the risk of proceeding on the surface. Heavy fire was immediately opened from both sides and, after running the gauntlet for half-an-hour, being steered from below, E14 was so badly damaged that Lieutenant Commander White turned towards the shore in order to give the crew a chance of being saved. He remained on deck the whole time himself until he was killed by a shell."

Geoffrey White died on 28th January 1918, aged 31, and his body was not recovered. He is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.



George White

Trumpeter/Private L7796, 16th (attached 9th) Queen's Lancers

George Garrett William White (registered at birth as Garrett George) was born in 1896 in Horley to George and Tamar White. He was baptised in St Bartholomew's Church in March 1900. George and Tamar also had four daughters and lived in Albert Road for some years during which time George attended Horley Infant School. By 1911 the family had moved to 8 Kings Terrace, Balcombe Road, Horley and George was employed as an errand boy.

George enlisted into 16th Lancers fairly soon after his 18th birthday. He may have enlisted as a Trumpeter but his medal card shows that he was later classified as a Private.

The 1914 British cavalry regiment was composed of twenty-six officers and 523 other ranks. The other ranks included: one warrant officer, 37 senior N.C.Os, 22 artificers, 6 trumpeters, and 457 privates. The last 'Lance on Lance' cavalry action took place in September 1914 and, as the machine gun began to dominate the battlefields of Flanders, cavalrymen were increasingly used as infantry and took their places in the line.

George arrived in France on 29th November 1915 and would have joined his unit as part of 2nd Cavalry Brigade. The 16th Lancers were in and out of the line throughout 1916 but were not engaged in any major actions.

In April 1917 they were in action during the battle of the Scarpe near Arras and later fought through the offensive around Cambrai.

On 21st March 1918 the Germans launched a ferocious assault on the British lines. At 4:40am a terrific German bombardment began. British communications were shattered and many of our guns were neutralised or destroyed over the next few hours of shelling.

George White was killed on this day, 21st March 1918, aged 22. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, which lies on the north side of the Albert - Pozieres road just south west of Pozieres.

Ronald White

Lieutenant 908066, 78th Battalion (Manitoba Regiment), Canadian Army
and 2 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps

Ronald John Saxton White was born in 1892 in Charlwood to William and Alice White, and lived at Park House, Charlwood. The family was affluent and employed ten servants including maids, footmen and grooms. He was the younger brother of Geoffrey White VC, who also died in the war.

Sometime before 1911, Ronald left England for the USA and settled in Omaha, Nebraska. He married Rose Catherine but no details exist to tell us what his occupation was.

It appears that, soon after war was declared, Ronald decided to enlist in the Canadian Army. He joined the 78th Battalion – The Manitoba Regiment.

The battalion embarked from Halifax on 22nd May 1916 aboard the *Empress of Britain*, disembarking in England a week later. Its strength was 37 officers and 1097 other ranks. After a period of training in England, the battalion arrived in France on 12th August 1916, becoming part of 12th Canadian Infantry Brigade, 4th Canadian Division. It is not known whether Ronald was actually in action in France with 78th Battalion but, if so, it was not for very long. By early 1917 he had transferred into the Royal Flying Corps and was learning to fly Caudron Biplanes at the Ruffy-Baumann Flying School at Acton, West London. He gained his Royal Aero Club Aviator's Certificate (No 4749) in May 1917 and probably went on to do his military flying training at the Central Flying School before being posted to 2 Squadron RFC.

The average life expectancy of a pilot on the Western Front in 1917 was about three weeks and it seems likely that Ronald's was an average span.

Ronald White died of wounds, received in action, on 27th October 1917, aged 26. He is buried at Saint Pol Communal Cemetery, which is on the east side of Saint Pol-sur-Ternoise.

Richard Wilson

Private G/4140, 2nd Battalion, The Queens' (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Richard John Wilson was born in 1895 in Horley and baptised in St. Bartholomew's Church. He was one of eight children born to Charles and Eliza Wilson and lived at 84 Albert Road. Richard attended Horley Infant School and is commemorated on the memorial plaque there. By 1911 he was an errand boy.

Richard, giving his occupation as a carman, joined up in January 1915 into the 3rd Queen's but was later transferred to the 2nd Battalion.

His medal card shows that he was in a draft to France on 5th July 1915 and may well have been in the 30 man draft of reinforcements which reached the battalion in the front line on 21st July. Through the next few months 2nd Queen's were in and out of the line and subject to a steady stream of casualties. On 5th November the battalion left their rest area billets near Essars and marched off to relieve troops of the South Staffordshire Regiment in the line near Givenchy where they found the trenches to be in a terrible state and the front line especially bad.

Richard was wounded the following day, probably by sniper fire. He received a severe gunshot wound to the right shoulder which caused a lasting loss of feeling in his arm. He was sent down the line to a Casualty Clearing Station and was judged to need hospitalisation. He was sent home to England and, after some time at the Regimental depot and following medical treatment and examinations at Shoreham and Croydon, he was discharged as medically unfit for further service in July 1917 and awarded a pension.

He married Carrie Brotherton (also known as Rose Ridley), who was also from Albert Road, in Lancashire late in 1917 and they had a daughter, Sadie.

Richard died, possibly as a result of his injury, in late 1918, aged 23. His death does not appear to have been treated as related to the war and he is not listed by CWGC. His exact place of burial is not known.

Rose remarried an Arthur Nicholson from Reigate in 1920. Charles and Eliza still lived in Albert Road and probably asked for Richard's name to be listed on Horley War Memorial as well as that of his brother, Thomas, who also died during the war.

Thomas Wilson

Private L/8927, 2nd Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Thomas William Wilson, born in 1889 in Ifield, was one of eight children of Charles and Eliza Wilson. By 1891 the family were living at 84 Albert Road, Horley where they seem to have stayed.

Thomas became a regular soldier sometime before 1911 as the census in that year lists him as serving overseas with 2nd Queen's. His service record does not survive but 2nd Queen's were in South Africa when war broke out. They were hurriedly shipped home, arriving at Southampton on the *Kenilworth Castle* on 17th September.

By mid-October they were equipped for war service and, as part of 22nd Brigade, 7th Division, were despatched to France and rushed into the line east of Ypres. They fought their first major action at Gheluvelt to stop the German advance. This was significant as it was the nearest that the German army would come to breaking through the Allied lines at Ypres until 1918.

Early on 29th October the battalion moved into action near Veldhoek but was caught by heavy shellfire before they could take cover and sustained many casualties. About 8:00am they were ordered to advance further along the Gheluvelt road to occupy another set of dugouts and from these they advanced in extended order to reinforce the Guards at Gheluvelt. They occupied a position facing the Gheluvelt – Menin road but the fire from the enemy trenches was so heavy that they were beaten back.

60 men were wounded on this day and it seems as though Thomas was amongst them. He was passed through the casualty lines and evacuated to England.

Thomas died of his wounds, aged 25, on 5th December 1914. He is buried in Manchester Southern Cemetery, which is about two miles south of the city centre.

His brother, Richard, also died in the war.

James Wiltshire

Private 23568, 5th Battalion, King's Shropshire Light Infantry

James Albert Wiltshire (usually known as Albert) was born in 1892 in Charlwood to James and Alice Wiltshire and lived with them and his two sisters at Pound House Lane, near Povey Cross. His parents later moved to Bonehurst Road, Horley. By 1911 Albert was employed at The Mill Shop, Lee Street as a delivery driver.

No service record survives for Albert and his medal card gives no useful information.

5th KSLI were part of 42nd Brigade in 14th (Light) Division and landed in France on 20th May 1915. On 30th July, at Hooze, the Division became the first British Army unit to be attacked with flamethrowers, although 42nd Brigade were not in the thick of it. The Division was still in the same area by late September and was part of the assault on the Bellewaarde Ridge at Hooze.

In the spring of 1916 the Division was moved south in preparation for the Battle of The Somme. On 24th August, in high summer temperatures, the Division was set the task of clearing Delville Wood. This was a strategic high point which, together with High Wood to the west, gave the holders a good view over the surrounding area. Assisted by a creeping barrage, they advanced through the remains of the wood and reached their objectives. Within three days the Division finally drove the Germans from their strong position in Edge Trench and established a barricade which left Delville Wood completely in British hands.

Casualties were high and it was almost certainly here that Albert received his fatal injuries. He was evacuated from the battlefield and died of his wounds at the hospital in Rouen on 5th September 1916, aged 24.

He is buried in St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, which is just south of the city centre.

Arthur Woods

Private 8114, 1st Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Arthur John Woods was born in 1886 in Farnborough, Kent, to John and Jane Woods but by 1901 they were all living at Broadstone Cottages, Cross Oak Lane and Arthur was employed at Monotype.

Arthur joined Queen's as a regular soldier in 1904. After his three years service, although still on reserve, he worked for some time as a sailor between England and Western Australia.

Arthur was either recalled to the colours or, more likely, volunteered for re-enlistment as he was with 1st Queen's in time to sail to France on board the SS *Braemar Castle* and land at Le Havre on 13th August 1914. Together with the rest of the "old contemptibles" they were rushed towards Mons and were in the thick of the fighting there and during the subsequent retreat. Having been constantly engaged throughout August and September, during which time they sustained a steady stream of casualties, the 1st Queen's were eventually sent north to the Ypres sector where they arrived on 17th October and they were then faced with yet another series of long and arduous marches to bring them into the line near Langemark. After beating off a series of German attacks the Battalion was ordered south to the vicinity of Hooze where they received a welcome draft of reinforcements.

On 29th October the battalion was ordered to move along the Menin Road to take up positions near Gheluvelt. Early on 31st October an attack was repulsed but the enemy dug in within 300 yards of the Queen's lines and at 7:00am they came under a very heavy bombardment. Soon after this the enemy advanced again to within 150 yards and 1st Queen's were forced to fall back and regroup.

624 men were killed, wounded or missing in this action and Arthur Woods was amongst them. Arthur died on 31st October 1914, aged 28, and his body was never recovered.

He is commemorated on the Menin Gate at Ypres.

William Woollhead

Chief Petty Officer, Mechanic 2nd Grade, F Squadron, 2nd Wing, Royal Naval Air Service

William Hugh Woollhead (spelled as Woolhead on the War Memorial) was born in 1893 in Hounslow, Middlesex, to Edwin and Laura Woollhead. One of six children, William, and his family, came to live at 4 Langshott Cottages, Horley and, by 1911, he was apprenticed to a boiler engineer.

No details survive of William's enlistment and we do not know when he joined up - though it may have been before war was declared. His training as a boiler engineer would have enabled him to learn the mechanics of aircraft engines quite easily and he seems to have made steady progress through the ranks.

The Naval Wing of the RFC became the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) in July 1914 under the control of the Admiralty and had ninety-three aircraft, six airships, two balloons and seven hundred and twenty-seven personnel. On 1st August 1915 the Royal Naval Air Service officially came under the control of the Royal Navy.

2nd Wing were sent to support the allied landings at Gallipoli and were based at RNAS Mudros on the island of Lemnos, just 60 miles west of the Dardanelles. When that campaign ended they were in a position to support Allied actions in Macedonia.

During 1917 the main fighting took place around Lake Doiran, where the line was adjusted several times by each side early in the year. In April 1917 the British attacked, gained a considerable amount of ground and resisted strong counter-attacks. In May the Bulgarians attacked the British positions but were firmly repulsed.

William's rank of CPO Mechanic could have meant that he served as ground crew or as an airborne observer.

The circumstances of William's death are not clear. The Royal Naval records show that he died "by means other than disease, accident or enemy action" which leaves little else but death from natural causes.

William died on 27th May 1917, aged 23, and he is buried in Struma Military Cemetery, which is near the town of Strimoniko, about 35 miles north-east of Thessalonika, Greece.

Leslie Yardley

Private 7560, 1st/13th Kensington Battalion, The London Regiment

Leslie Alfred Yardley was born in 1896 in Islington to Alfred and Clara Yardley. He was an only child and was still at school by the time of the 1911 census which shows the family living in the City of London. When his will was published, it gave Leslie's address as Fairlight, Woodham, Woking. His connection with Horley is not known.

Leslie enlisted at Somerset House in London and joined the 15th (County of London) Battalion (Prince of Wales's Own, Civil Service Rifles). This unit was raised in August 1914, so it seems as though Leslie was an early volunteer, and, after a period of training, they landed in France on 11th May 1915 as part of 140th Brigade, 47th (2nd London) Division.

It is not known when Leslie was transferred to 1st/13th Battalion but it was probably owing to reorganisation and reinforcement brought about by the huge casualties sustained in the trenches. The 1st/13th was forced to undergo a restructuring during May 1915 and did not resume its own identity until 11th August. In February 1916 they came under the command of 168th Brigade, 56th London Division.

At the Somme on 1st July 1916, in rising temperatures under a clear blue sky, the Division was tasked with an attack south of Gommecourt. At 7:20am their assault was pressed home with huge losses and, although early successes were secured, the day ended with little ground gained.

After being heavily reinforced, the Brigade was again in a major action on 9th September when tasked with an attack east of Guillemont, near Leuze Wood, towards a heavily defended German strongpoint known as the Quadrilateral.

Leslie Yardley was killed in this attack and died on 9th September 1916, aged 20. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

FOR THE FALLEN

*Poem by Robert Laurence Binyon (1869-1943),
published in The Times newspaper on 21st September 1914.*

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;
They fell with their faces to the foe.

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.