

ALL THE
BRIGHT
COMPANY
OF HEAVEN

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Renny Richardson



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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the memory of all those men, known and unknown, of the Crawley & Ifield district who fought but in particular to the memories of:-

Lieutenant (Acting Captain) Alfred Edward Cook
September 29th 1867-August 11th 1938

Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook
January 9th 1898-April 13th 1918

Private Donald Herbert Cook
July 31st 1899-December 29th 1962

with love and admiration.

All the bright company of Heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

– taken from *Into Battle (Flanders, April 1915)* by Julian Grenfell

Not even a sparrow falls to the earth without God's knowing of it.

– *Matthew 10:29-31*

What we do in life echoes in eternity

– *Ridley Scott, Gladiator.*

There is a rose that I want to live for
Although God knows I may not have met her
There is a dance and I should be with her....
There is a town unlike any other

– *The Clash*

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PREFACE: REASONS

THIS book came about for a variety of reasons but primarily because of the feeling that I had of ‘rescuing’ the story from the clutches of the past and my determination that it would not be lost again. My parents and I wanted to have all the newspaper reports, the war diaries and the service records all as part of one manuscript so that it could be read in a linear fashion.

The story of the Cook family, Crawley and the Great War had been lost for over forty years and I wanted to ensure that it would survive for my daughters to read one day and for them to be able to pass it on to future generations.

So in a way, this is the early 21st Century equivalent of the ‘message in a bottle.’

It is a message about the past, from my present, to an unknown future.

At the centre of what follows is the story of a young boy who, following his father and his heart, went to fight for King and Country in the Great War nearly a hundred years ago. It was suggested to me early on that I could perhaps ‘fictionalise’ the story but that would have been to put words in people’s mouths and I found that idea quite wrong. I wanted the facts to speak for themselves.

There comes a time in life when you want to know more about those of your relatives who came before you. With the advent of the internet and programmes like ‘Who Do You Think You Are?’, interest in family history and genealogy is at an all-time high. That time came for me in March 2007 when, following my brother’s trip to Flanders, my mother sent me a picture of a headstone with the name of a young relative of ours who had died during the Great War. Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook was my Great-grandfather’s elder brother’s only son. I think that makes him a third cousin.

When I noticed that, contrary to the sparse information I had had before, (his date of death was 13th April 1918 and not, as I had originally thought, 13th November 1918), this discrepancy really piqued my interest.

What had happened to Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook? His remains are buried at Mendinghem Military Cemetery near a small Belgian village called Proven, about 15 km from Ypres.

How did he get there? With virtually no trace of him amongst the family documents, no letters, no diaries and just two photographs – how much could I find out about him and his life and death?

Two hours later I had booked myself a trip to the Ypres area. I did not know it at the time but this journey was to be just the start of my enquiries.

Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook's part in the First World War is one of a typical everyday officer. He never gets mentioned in dispatches, he doesn't win a medal and is only mentioned in the Battalion War Diaries in passing.

He did, however, take part in three of the greatest battles the world has ever seen, and by his actions, and by his sacrifice, in some small way, helped determine the outcome of the 'War to End All Wars'.

His story has proved to be the easier to follow, as a war record also exists for Second Lieutenant Alfred Edward Cook, his father, but sadly none exists for his cousin, Private Donald Herbert Cook – I have had to take a certain amount of guesses at their stories.

Like Tolkien, the tale grew in the telling, as I found that to understand what had happened and what the world was like a hundred years ago, I had to be able to put the Cook family story into context – in other words, I had to understand not just the Great War itself, but also what England and Crawley were like then.

When I first started to visit Crawley again (we had moved in 1971), I saw the area completely differently as many of the buildings the Cooks built are still standing and many of the places that are mentioned here are still there.

It is obvious that what the Cook family did during the Great War was just a small part of what Crawley experienced, just as what Crawley experienced was a microcosm of what England and her empire endured during those bleak years.

One of my abiding memories of growing up in Crawley is of playing on the swings at the Memorial Park, which was on the old Three Bridges Road. On the gates of the park are mounted three plaques which list over a hundred names of men from Crawley, including R. E. Cook, who never came home.

Those plaques, and those names, are still there, and thousands of people walk past them everyday while visiting the huge County Mall shopping centre.

As my research continued I found that I was beginning to come across newspaper reports that detailed what had happened to virtually every one of the men listed on the plaques at the Memorial Park.

Gradually the whole of the story of Crawley's Great War was revealed in all its suffering and heartbreak and I realised that I was no longer just writing the story of the Cooks – I was writing the story of Crawley as well.

It is all here – the newspaper articles, the endless casualty reports, the letters home and the public meetings tell the story of a small Sussex town struggling with the impact of a global conflict.

What follows, then, are fragments of peoples' lives.

I can make no guess as to their actual personalities – how they felt, their hopes, their joys, their failings and their despairs can only be imagined.

FOREWORD

AS the President of the Erquinghem-Lys Historical Association and Curator of our local museum, I am delighted that Renny Richardson has given me the opportunity of writing this foreword. In this book, the author records the life of his family in the town of Crawley and the life and times of his relative, Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook.

Second Lieutenant Cook arrived in Erquinghem-Lys just before the great German Spring Offensive in April 1918 which came to be called the Georgette Offensive or the Battle of the Lys and it was here, somewhere in the area of the town, he was to meet his fate.

With the aid of war diaries and eye-witness accounts, Renny describes his relative's time and his sacrifice on the Western Front, while keeping an eye fixed firmly on events at home in Crawley. Although this is the story of Cook, and of Crawley's Great War, it is also a small part of the story of Erquinghem-Lys.

Even now, nearly 100 years after the end of the war, people from all parts of the world still come to visit the battlefields and to find the grave of a relative. As my father worked for over 30 years for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, he picked up a lot of stories from visitors about the many soldiers of the two cemeteries in Erquinghem-Lys, the Churchyard Extension Cemetery and the Suffolk Cemetery. I was fortunate enough that he passed them onto me and now I, in turn, pass them on to curious visitors.

These stories are all we have left of these soldiers for they did not grow old, and telling their stories is the only way to make them live again.

In November 1998, the people of Erquinghem-Lys unveiled a memorial to Arthur Poulter, a stretcher bearer in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment who won his Victoria Cross in Erquinghem-Lys during the Battle of the Lys. In June 2005, the Local History Association with the help of the town of Bois Grenier unveiled a memorial in Bois Grenier (300 meters from the front line in Le Bridoux), for the Liverpool Scottish Regiment.

In May 2010, a memorial was unveiled next to a new roundabout which was named after the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and the twinning of Erquinghem-Lys with Skipton in North Yorkshire was signed in the town hall.

All this is proof that Erquinghem-Lys has strong links with England. We have not forgotten.

I highly recommend this book to every local historian, to every 14/18 historian and also to the inhabitants of Crawley, who I am sure will appreciate this book.

Jack Thorpe

*Curator of Musée de la Cité d'Ercan
Président of the Twinning Association
Erquinghem-Lys, August 2010*

INTRODUCTION

ANY book, no matter the subject, is a labour of love for the author. When the story relates to one's own family, the love involved multiplies ten-fold.

I first spoke to Renny Richardson in 2007 when he submitted an article to the Crawley Observer for inclusion in the paper's nostalgia section.

It centred around Alfred and Richard Cook – 2nd Lieutenant AE Cook and 2nd Lieutenant RE Cook – and Renny's enthusiasm for his project shone through in every word.

He was determined to learn as much as he could, not only about the men of his family who fell in battle but the men of Crawley who met their end in some foreign field a lifetime ago.

Public interest in genealogy has never been higher – and this is wonderful news for the storytellers.

Too often, we lose the tales and experiences of the old ones because no one bothers to write them down – and before we know it, it's too late and the stories are gone forever.

For decades the fallen heroes of Crawley have been nothing more than a list of names carved on a memorial in a town they would no longer recognise as home.

Renny's work has given a voice to those men and means their grandchildren's grandchildren can look back on the Great War as more than just a nightmare tale in a history book. It was about the people – and that's something we should never forget.

Karen Dunn
August 2010

PART ONE

BUILDERS

1834-1913

IN order to give the story which follows perspective, it is necessary to explain more about the 'back story' of the Cook family and Crawley.

Crawley is to be found in the county of Sussex roughly 18 miles north of Brighton and 28 miles south of London. Research has shown that the area has been inhabited for thousands of years, possibly since the Stone Age. In the 5th century, newly-arrived Saxon settlers called the area 'Crow's Leah' – meaning a crow-infested clearing, or Crow's Wood. By the 13th century, Crawley had developed into a small market town with a weekly market on Wednesdays.

The building of a main road in the 18th century, connecting London and Brighton through the centre of the town, proved to be a major boost to the local economy. The road was finished in 1770 and, because Crawley is approximately half way between the capital and the newly fashionable seaside resort, the town became newly prosperous with numerous coaching inns and hotels springing up as well as other coach travel-afflicted businesses. By 1839, there was an hourly service to both destinations.

Then in 1841, Crawley was connected to the railway network. The station at Three Bridges, which was originally known as East Crawley, was opened in the summer of that year, serving the main line to Brighton. The original Crawley railway station, at the southern end of the High Street, was built and opened in 1848, when the Horsham line was opened from Three Bridges to Horsham.

The Cook family first came to Crawley sometime in the late 1840's. My great-great grandfather Richard Cook was born on August 2nd, 1834 in Cuckfield, the youngest of nine children. The family lived by the crossroads in Plummer's Plain virtually opposite the Wheatsheaf pub in a house which is still called 'Cook's Cottage' today. The 1841 census shows that family members living there at the time are Richard Snr (employed as a currier) and Mary, both 50, Elizabeth, 25, Edward, 10, and Richard, 8. Also living in the area in 1841, about a mile along the road, was Emma Archer, who was born in the old Post Office building at Lower Beeding in 1840. It is highly likely that Richard and Emma had known each other all of their lives. The 1851 census then shows the family living in the West Green area of Crawley with mother Mary, 60, now described as the wife of an agricultural labourer but also as the head of the household. This adds credence to the family legend that Mary, daughter Elizabeth, and sons Edward and Richard ran away from their husband and father. Richard Cook founded the building company that would come to be known as R. Cook & Sons in 1859. The year 1861 finds Mary, daughter Sophia-Ann, 38, and Edward now living in Crawley proper. Edward's occupation is listed as a bricklayer. Richard, meanwhile, is to be found in Billingshurst where he is lodging. His occupation is also shown as a bricklayer.

Edward married his wife Frances around 1863, and the whole family were soon to celebrate the arrival of the first 'Crawley' Cook baby, Mary, born on October 11th 1863 followed by Adelaide (14th May 1865), Minnie (9th June 1867), Mabel (1869), Elizabeth (12th October 1872) and Kate Lillian (1874).

Richard Cook and Emma Archer were married on 23rd January 1864 at St. Mary's Church in Horsham. Exactly one year and one day after they had married, on the 24th January 1865, Emma gave birth to Harry Richard Cook. He was followed by Emma Elizabeth (25th March 1866), Alfred Edward (29th September 1867), Herbert (my great-grandfather, 1870) and finally Christopher (1873).

Towards the end of the 19th century there was a major expansion in house building in Crawley. The area known as 'New Town' (completely unrelated to the post World War Two developments) was built by the railway level crossing and the West Green area, on the way to Ifield, was also built up. The 1881 census has Richard, 46, shown as a builder and contractor, employing 10 men and 3 boys, wife Emma, 40, Harry Richard, 16, shown as a carpenter, Emma Elizabeth, 15, Alfred Edward, 13, Herbert, 10, and Christopher, 7. Within a month of the 1881 census taking place there occurred an event which changed the Cook household, and the business, forever.

On May 4th, 16 year old Harry Richard was mortally wounded at Cooks building works by a chisel thrown by 15 year old apprentice Harry Arthur Marks. The story was carried in the *Sussex Daily News*:

COMMITTAL OF A YOUTH FOR WOUNDING AT HORSHAM

On Saturday before R. H. Hurst Esq. (in the chair), W. Boorer, and E. Hubbard jun., Esqrs., Harry Arthur Marks, 15, was charged on remand with feloniously wounding a boy named Cook, with the intent to do him grievous bodily harm, on the 4th inst., at Crawley.

John Budgen, in the employ of Mr. Richard Cook, builder, said that on the 4th inst., the prisoner and Mr. Cook's son were in the shop together, larking and throwing blocks of wood about. Witness saw Marks with a chisel in his hand, and told him to put it down. He was then about three or four feet from Cook. Witness saw prisoner throw a chisel at Cook; it struck him in the abdomen. Witness turned round and went towards Cook, who said " Oh, John, he has thrown it into me." He (witness) went up to Cook, and pulling his apron aside, saw some blood, and told him to go indoors at once, and he did so, and witness followed him, and afterwards went for a doctor...

Cross-examined – I did not see Thornton push Cook down. Marks did not come behind to take refuge from the rough play that was going on. Cook did not strike Marks with the saw. Marks had hold of the handle of the chisel when he raised his arm to throw it. I can't say whether Thornton aggravated the boy Marks or not.

Arthur Thornton said he saw Marks with the chisel in his hand, and saw him throw it at Cook, who was at the time but a few feet away from Marks. The chisel struck Cook in the abdomen. Cook said, " He has been and shoved the chisel into me."

Cross-examined – I was in the adjoining shop when the affair took place.

Dr. Bishop said he saw Cook on Friday afternoon. He had an incised wound about two and a half inches in length in the lower part of the left side of the abdomen. It was a dangerous wound. It might possibly have been caused by the chisel produced. The lad was now in a very fair way of recovery. Peritonitis was the great danger from a wound of that kind, but he saw no symptom of that at present. It was very easy to imagine the wound to have been caused by a thrust with the chisel, but it was not so easy to imagine it to have been caused by throwing it. He did not see the case until nine or ten days after the wound had been caused.

Mr. R. Simple, assistant to Dr. Martin, surgeon, said that on the 4th May he was called to see Mr. Cook's son shortly after five o' clock. He found him suffering from an incised wound on the left side of the abdomen. The boy was lying on the sofa on his back. The wound which was about two inches long, did not penetrate the abdomen at the top, at the bottom the internals were cut. He sewed it up. He called again in the evening with Dr. Martin, and found a deal of inflammation. The lad was in danger, and he did not consider him out of danger yet. He was better that day than he had been all through, but he was not in a fit condition to attend there.

P.C. Martin deposed to taking Marks into custody on Thursday.

Mr. Bedford addressed the Bench, and said he had been instructed that Marks had been very much provoked by Thornton and others. However, he could not see how he could break down the evidence, but he should ask the Magistrates to believe that the wounding was not malicious.

Tom Sayers said he was working with Thornton, and prisoner came into their shop playing, and was struck with a lath and told to go into his own shop. Thornton did not play with the prisoner. Witness did not see anything of the chisel. He did not see Cook strike prisoner with the saw.

Prisoner was committed to the Assizes for trial, and was admitted to bail in one surety (Mr. Simmins, of Crawley) of £50.

Then, in the June 4th edition, the following:-

A YOUTH COMMITTED FOR MURDER

- Henry Arthur Marks, recently committed for trial for feloniously wounding Richard Henry Cook, on the 4th May, and admitted to bail, has now been re-arrested and committed for willful murder, the boy Cook having died from the wound on Tuesday.

The inquest was held on Thursday afternoon, before Mr. Bostock, at the Station Inn. There was little fresh evidence. – James Robert Semple said he was a legally qualified medical practitioner, living at Crawley. On the 4th May he was called to see the deceased, and found him suffering from an incised wound on

the left side of the abdomen, from which a portion of the bowels was protruding, and he replaced it. The portion alluded to was about 15 inches in length. He had attended the deceased from that time until he died on Tuesday last. Death was caused by the obtrusion and obstruction of the bowels, peritonitis and inflammatory adhesions. The wound was caused by some sharp instrument. It might have been the chisel produced.

If the deceased had fallen at the time the wound was received no portion of the bowels would probably have come out, the portion that did protrude was probably forced out by muscular exertion.

The Coroner produced a statement made by the deceased on the 31st May, before Major Pipon, J.P., at Crawley, as follows:- " On the 4th May, Henry Arthur Marks threw some blocks of wood at me while I was sharpening a plane, and he then threw a chisel at me, which stuck me in the stomach. I was very frightened, and ran away from him and went indoors. He was constantly saying to me, ' I will kill you.' I never said or did anything to cause him to quarrel with me."

The above was signed by the deceased, Richard Cook, by Maniton Pipon J.P., and by P.C. Martin. — Richard Cook, father of the deceased, said the deceased was 16 years of age. He was aware that the deceased had made a declaration before Major Pipon.

He was also aware that his son was dying at the time. His son also knew that he was dying, and pointed out the spot where he should like to be buried.

He was perfectly conscious at the time he made the statement, and knew very well what he was talking about. — Dr. Semple also made a similar statement with regards to the condition of the deceased at the time he made the statement, and P.C. Martin deposed to being present and seeing deceased sign it. — The jury, after considering their verdict for nearly half an hour, stated to the Coroner the points on which they were agreed, viz., that the wound given by the chisel was the cause of death, that it was not thrown accidentally, that the boy Marks was in a temper at the moment he threw it, that he had no intention of killing the deceased, neither was the act premeditated, and they wished to know whether under the circumstances they could find a verdict of manslaughter. — The Coroner said that such a verdict would not be legally consistent with the points upon which they were agreed, and that the verdict must be 'Willful Murder.' The jury assented.

Later editions of the *Sussex Daily News* go on to record that Harry Arthur Marks was sentenced to life for manslaughter but that was eventually reduced to six months hard labour. The effect on the family and the business must have been catastrophic. The death of Harry would have been a blow to all concerned but nobody had their life changed as much as the thirteen year old Alfred Edward (who was already being called Ted). In one quick and cruel moment, he had lost his big brother and had gone

from being the 'spare' to becoming the 'heir' of R. Cook & Sons. Gradually the family came to terms with their loss and the local papers carry reports of the business being awarded many new contracts most notably for the ever expanding railway.

The 1891 census shows Edward and Frances now living on their own as all of their girls are scattered around the south east of England in service but there is a houseful at the Richard Cook household. The 1891 census also shows the presence of a Laura Petts, aged 24 from Newport in Buckinghamshire, working as a maid / servant in the Henty household at Goffs Hill. On the 18th March 1891, Ted officially joined the Royal Sussex Volunteer movement which was being part organised by Mr. Henty.

At the end of September that year the local papers report that R. Cook & Sons have completed the building of the new Petworth railway station. It also goes on to say:

We are glad to learn Mr. Cook's son, who was injured by a rather serious fall on the platform during the building operations, is progressing quickly towards recovery. Which of the three sons suffered the injury we shall never know but this was a very happy project as this is where Herbert first met his wife to be, Ellen Chapman, the daughter of the Station Master of Petworth railway station. Herbert and Ellen were my Great-grandparents.

In early May of 1892, R. Cook & Sons were awarded the contract to build a new church in the West Green area of town, at a cost of £2,159. This would be named St. Peter's. Work commenced straightaway and June 29th saw a ceremony to celebrate the laying of the foundation stone. Flags and flowers had been liberally bestowed on the scaffolding '*amidst every rejoicing.*' The stone bore this inscription: St. Peter's Day, 1892. Rev. W. Loveband, M. A., Vicar; William Wood and George Arthur Trist, churchwardens; R. Cook & Sons, builders; W. Hilton Nash, A. N. I. B.A., architect.

At a huge celebratory lunch to mark the dedication of St. Peter's at the George Assembly rooms in May 1893, the Rev. W. Loveband said, that "*the building was entirely Ifield work, the bricks were made in the parish and the stone came from the neighbourhood; the seating was also put in by an Ifield contractor (hear, hear). This was the first church Messrs. Cook and Sons had built, and he felt sure it would not be the last (hear, hear)*".

Little did Ted know then, with the company having just completed one of the most prestigious projects they had yet undertaken, that inside St. Peter's Church there would one day be placed a vast stained glass window and a memorial plaque with the names of those who were to fall in the biggest cataclysm the world had ever seen, among them his as yet unborn and un-imagined only son.

A month before this, Ted had married Laura Petts. The local papers reported:

On Thursday, April 20, a very pretty wedding was solemnised in S S. Peter and Paul's Church, Newport Pagnell, in the presence of a large assembly. It was the marriage of Laura, only daughter of Mr. John Petts, of Newport Pagnell, with Mr. Alfred Edward Cook, eldest son of Mr. Richard Cook, of Crawley. The

bride, who was attired in a cream cashmere dress, and carried a lovely bouquet of narcissus, white azaleas, spirea, white geraniums, maidenhair ferns &c., entered the church leaning on the arm of her father, by whom she was given away. She was attended by four bridesmaids, Miss E. E. Cook (sister of the bridegroom), Miss M. Cook (cousin of the bridegroom) and Beatrice and Gertrude Mitchell, who wore dresses, the first two, fawn coloured, trimmed with green velvet, and hats to match, and the children in pure white dresses, with hats to correspond. The bridegroom's best man was Mr. A. Petts (brother of the bride). The ceremony was performed by the Vicar, the Rev. C. M. Ottley, and at its conclusion Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March' was played on the organ by Mr. H. Petts (brother of the bride). On leaving the Church the happy couple were greeted with showers of rice. The wedding breakfast was served at the residence of the bride's father. In the evening, shortly before 5 o' clock, Mr. and Mrs. Cook left for Bletchley, en route for Hastings, carrying with them the best wishes of their friends. The presents were handsome and useful.

Ted and Laura's first child, Dorothy Laura was born in 1894. By this time, the whole town was a hive of industry, and the Cook family were right in the middle of it. Richard Cook's building company, R. Cook & Sons, had built the houses in West Street and Springfield Road where the company kept an office and a yard.

The Longley building company, which was one of the South East's largest building firms in the late 19th century, moved to a site next to Crawley station – East Park – in 1881, but there seems to have been more than enough work for both Cooks and Longleys, as well as other building companies, to flourish. There are reports of both firms enjoying works outings to the coast together. In 1898, the year Richard Edward Cook was born, the Longley Company alone is recorded as having more than 700 people employed at their site.

A year later, on October 8th 1895, it was the turn of Herbert Cook and Ellen Harriet Chapman, my great-grandparents, to get married:

On Tuesday Mr. Herbert Cook, of Messrs. Cook & Sons, the well-known builders of Crawley, was married at Petworth Church to Miss Ellen Chapman, youngest daughter of Mr. Alfred Chapman, stationmaster at Petworth Station. The officiating clergy were Rev. Prebendary Holland (rector) and Rev. G. R. Leefe. The bride, who was given away by her father, was attired in a dress of white crepon, trimmed with lace and white satin ribbon, and wore a tulle veil with a wreath of real orange blossoms. She carried a bouquet of choice white flowers. Her maids were Miss Edith Phillips (cousin), Miss Edith Whittington and Miss Minnie Whittington. Each wore a dress of white nun's veiling, trimmed with cream satin and white yokes, with cream picture hats and carried bouquets. The bride also wore a gold bracelet and the bridesmaid brooches, the gifts of the

bridegroom. Mr. C. Cook was the best man. The bride's family being very old residents, there was a large number of friends at the church, her father having spent thirty-three years as stationmaster at Petworth out of his career of forty-two years on the railway. At three o'clock Mr. and Mrs. Cook left Petworth for Southsea for their honeymoon.

Richard Cook attended a meeting at the George called by the Rev. J. B. Lennard, rector of St. John's, in January 1896, with a view to opening up the parish church to the High Street. At that time the church was completely hidden by a row of cottages and the only approach was by means of a narrow passage, nearly a hundred yards in length, from the back of the church. The plan was to demolish the two or three cottages between the Albany Café and Mr. Court's shop. In their place would appear a handsome gate with a wide road to the church, through a spacious churchyard. Richard was elected on to the sub-committee for the proposal. He obviously had a vested interest because his mother and his beloved son Harry were buried at St. John's mere feet away from the end of the passageway. The proposal was estimated to cost £1,750 of which £511 was raised at the meeting from the 30 or so attendees. The picture of Ted opening the new gate for a rather blurred looking lady (who may be Laura) is the earliest picture we have of him and clearly shows just how different St. John's looked all those years ago.

Later that year, on August 19th, a Cook wedding took place at the new St. Peter's Church. Both sides of the family were in attendance. The marriage of Mr. Thomas Henry Freke, of Streatham, and Miss Mary Cook, eldest daughter of Mr. Edward Cook, of New Town, was duly solemnised and shortly afterwards, on the 22nd September, the whole country celebrated Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

This was the world that Richard Edward Cook (to be known as Eddie) was born into on January 9th, 1898. Now the family and the business had an heir for the next generation and the new century. Just before the 20th century arrived, on July 31st, 1899, Herbert and Ellen (Bert and Nell) were able to announce the birth of Donald Herbert Cook. These two boys would be 16 and 14 in the early summer of 1914.

The early 1900's were a time of great change for the British Empire, for Crawley and for the Cook family with the passing of Queen Victoria and of the elder Cook generation. The local population of the town had trebled in size in the previous hundred years. In 1801, the head count for Crawley was 1,357. By 1901, the count was 4,433. The company continued to win contracts, building new schools and renovating railway stations and in early 1900, building the water tower at Balcombe which is still standing today.

Queen Victoria passed away on 22 January 1901 after a reign of 63 years and 7 months having overseen massive changes in the way her subjects lived their lives, carving out the greatest empire the world had ever seen and giving her name to the Victorian age. On April 13th 1902 my grandfather Alfred Leslie was born to Bert and

Nell and the 9th August 1902 saw the succession of Edward VII.

Then, in July 1905, the local newspapers report on:-

DEATH OF MR. R. COOK

– The death of Mr. Richard Cook, the head of the firm of Messrs. Cook & Sons, builders and contractors, of Crawley, came as a painful surprise to most people, it not being known by many that he was suffering any serious illness, and, moreover, he had up till a fortnight since been seen about in his usual apparently strong and robust state of health. The end came on Friday afternoon and the sad news was received with sincere regret throughout the entire district.

The deceased, who would have been 71 in August next, had lived here practically all his life and founded the large and prosperous business that now exists. It is true that he had not been in the best of health for some little time past, but he was of an uncomplaining nature, and it was not till a fortnight before his death that he took to his bed. Then it was discovered that he was suffering from abscess near the thigh, for which an external operation was performed by Dr. Verrall, the chief surgeon at the Sussex County Hospital, Brighton, assisted by Drs. Martin and Burn. The operation was successfully made at the deceased's residence on Tuesday in last week, but though the patient received the best of attention from doctors and nurses, he succumbed on the following Friday afternoon, the secondary cause of death being septicaemia.

The deceased was known throughout Sussex and the adjoining counties, where he had executed large contracts, and one of the jobs at present in hand is the building of Portsmouth Town Railway Station. Thoroughly conscientious and upright in character and in business, he had gained the respect and friendship of a large number of persons and his unexpected death has given rise to very genuine sympathy and regret. Though he had resided in this district for so many years he never took any particularly active part in local governing matters, devoting practically the whole of his time to the conduct of his business, but he for some years was an overseer of the parish and greatly interested in the lighting of the place.

It was the deceased, too, who was the first to commence boring operations for water in Crawley, a hole being sunk in one of his own fields near to the site of the existing waterworks, but for certain reasons he never carried his project to completion, and for some time afterwards the present company was formed.

The funeral of the deceased took place in the burial ground attached to the Crawley Parish Church (St. John's) on Wednesday afternoon, all blinds being drawn along the line of route and other tokens of sympathy shown. The body was enclosed in three covers, the first being of metal, the second a shell, and the third of polished oak, the inscription on the breastplate being: 'Richard Cook, born August 2nd, 1834, died July 7th, 1905, in his 71st year.' The funeral cortege was a

lengthy one. Immediately after the car containing the remains came the carriages, in which were seated the family mourners, as follows:

Mrs. Cook (widow), Miss Cook (daughter), Mr. A. E. Cook, Mr. H. Cook and Mr. C. Cook (sons), Mrs. A. E. Cook and Mrs. H. Cook (daughters-in-law), Mr. E. Cook (brother) and Mrs. E. Cook ; Mrs. Freke, Mrs. Bottrill, Mrs. Charman and Mrs. Le Pelley and the Misses B. and K. Cook, nieces; Mr. H. Mills (brother-in-law) and Mr. Chapman. Mr. and Mrs. Finch very kindly sent their carriage and in the rear were the whole of the deceased's employees, followed by nearly 50 other people wishing to pay their respects.

The deceased was interred in a grave adjoining that in which lie the remains of his son, who was accidentally killed some twenty-four years ago, and the bearers were Messrs. A. E. Mitchell, G. Penfold, R. Smith, and H. Francis (employees) and J. Sayers and Arthur Thornton (old apprentices who are now working elsewhere). The solemn service was conducted by the Rector (the Rev. H. L. Barratt-Lennard) and a contingent of the choir was also present, the hymn, 'Now the labourer's task is o'er,' being impressively sung.

As the cortège entered the Church the organist effectively played Chopin's 'Funeral March,' and at the conclusion of the service in the church the 'Dead March' in Saul was beautifully rendered. Subsequently a muffled peal was rung on the church bells. A large number of splendid floral tributes were sent from family, friends and employees.

The following year saw the passing of Richard's brother Edward and his wife Frances within a couple of months of each other – Edward in February 1906 and then Frances in April. Shortly afterwards, Herbert and Ellen announced the birth of Phyllis Noreen Emma, the last of the second generation of the Cooks of Crawley.

October 10th 1906 saw the opening of the Crawley Rifle Range with the first competitions beginning on the 3rd of November. Ted and youngest brother Chris were very much a part of the Crawley Rifle Club, with both brothers sitting on the club committee. One of the very first competitions held was the Rifle Club versus the Volunteers & Yeomanry – Chris shooting seven shots at a target of 500 yards and scoring 30 out of a possible 35 for the Club with Ted shooting 30 out of 35 for the Volunteers. The Rifle Club were the overall winners.

The December 8th 1906 edition of *The Courier* contains a large article under the heading of Crawley Volunteers:- There was a large gathering in the Railway Hotel Assembly Hall, Crawley, on Wednesday evening on the occasion of the annual smoking concert and distribution of prizes to the Crawley men connected with the 'C' Company of the 2nd Vol. Batt. Royal Sussex Regiment. Capt. S. W. P. Beale is in the chair and amongst the many dignitaries present is the prize-giver, Mr. T. H. Martin, who would one day provide a reference for young Eddie Cook's Officer Cadet Training application. Sergt. E. Cook is reported as winning one of the prizes

donated by local tradesmen in the shooting competition and is the winner of the Best All-round Man:-

The challenge cup for the best all-round man in the company, presented by the ladies of East Grinstead and district, was awarded to Sergt. Cook. Sergt. Cook also received the gold medal presented by Mr. T. Baker (Crawley) to the best shot in the Crawley section. Mr. T. H. Martin congratulated all the winners, with a few words of encouragement to those who had not been successful. He then submitted the toast of the evening to "The healths of the Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and the Men of the 'C' Company of the Second Vol. Batt. Royal Sussex Regiment."

That was a great mouthful (laughter). They would echo what he was about to say, namely, that all were delighted to see them present that evening (hear, hear). He trusted that their presence would give a stimulus and an impulse to the volunteer movement, because he thought it was one that deserved every support. He could strongly recommend it to all young men who wanted to be well set-up and smart; and it also afforded excellent training, both moral and physical. It trained the eye and it afforded exercise, without which nobody could be well and healthy. As for the moral training, it made them cool and self-collected under all emergencies; on fact, it tended to promote a sound mind in a sound body, which was what every young man and every old man ought to try and attain (applause).

The volunteer movement also fostered patriotism, and not only so, it enabled them to translate the sentiment of patriotism into acts. It was all very well to say, 'I love my Country' and 'I pity my Country' when it is in danger; it was their duty to do something (applause). The volunteer movement enabled them to do that. He strongly urged all young men to join the volunteers. There was another aspect in which they could look at it. He believed it was only the volunteers and the kindred movement which was now so popular (miniature rifle ranges) that had solved the difficulty of conscription. That was the opinion of Lord Roberts, and if anybody knew the needs of the country it was he. At Crawley they were very proud of their Miniature Rifle Club; they had good reason to be, for one of the members carried a first prize at the competition in London last week, and he would like to take that opportunity of publicly congratulating Mr. and Mrs. Taylor on the success achieved (applause).

He sincerely trusted that the volunteer movement in Crawley would get an impulse from the presence of the officers that evening. He could remember 40 years ago when there was a very good company of volunteers in Crawley. It was under the auspices of the late Mr. John Broadwood, of Buchan Hill, and for a long time it went on very merrily, but it eventually dwindled down and became almost extinct. Then, about 16 years ago, Mr. Henty and Major Oxley set the thing going again and attained a good deal of success, but after a time it again

dwindled; now, again, it was coming to the fore, and he thought he might say this was very much indeed due to the efforts of Sergt. Cook (applause).

After that gathering and the observations they would hear, he hoped that the Crawley section would go merrily on, that new recruits would be obtained and that it would be even better than 40 years ago (applause).

“Now,” concluded the Chairman, “the toast. Let it be a hearty one. Let there be hearty drinking and rousing cheers” (applause).

The toast having been enthusiastically honoured, Capt. Beale replied. Referring to the cup won by Sergt. Cook, he said it was his (the speaker's) duty to decide who was the best man in the company. There were 88 men, all good, and the task of deciding upon one was enough to turn one's hair grey (laughter). The prize applied to the previous year's work only, and the chief thing that had happened was the progress made by the Crawley Section during that time, and this was due to Sergt. Cook (applause). The medal kindly given by Mr. T. Baker, of Crawley, also won by Sergt. Cook, was a great encouragement, and he hoped that someone would give a similar prize for the competition among the East Grinstead men.

Major Oxley gave ‘The Visitors.’ When he first knew Crawley, he said, he was told that nothing lasted here for more than two years (laughter), but that was 16 years ago and he could say that the volunteer movement was as strong today as it was then. He well remembered when the recruits attended to be sworn in one slim youth who first came forward was Sergt. Cook (laughter); another who advanced with a shy face was Sergt. Thornton; and yet another, who just passed the standard for height was Corpl. Quickenden (laughter). These had done yeoman service for 16 years and he hoped he they and others would continue to render that service; also that more recruits would be obtained as a result of that gathering. The regiment was a good one and they were all proud of it (applause).

After a vote of thanks to the Chairman, the evening ended with the National Anthem.

The same edition reports that a shooting match took place on Saturday between two teams selected from Class ‘B’ shots. The teams were headed by Mr. A. E. Cook and Mr. A. Thornton – this seems to be a match between the two Sergeants of the Crawley Volunteers. Among the list of the teams are the names of Bartley, Charman, Hilder, Martin and Soan – all names which appear on memorials in Crawley.

At the end of July 1908 the Crawley and District Rifle Club upheld their reputation in shooting for the National Championship (low power) Trophy at Bisley, finishing a creditable third, with Ted scoring 91 out of a possible 100 and Chris just one point behind.

There was more joy for the Rifle Club in October 1908 with a lengthy article about the presentation of the Winterton Cup named for, and presented by, Earl Winterton,

M.P. for the Horsham Division. The speakers all bemoan the fact the Club is being run at a loss, while being such a success at the actual shooting itself. The point is made again that those who had no time to join the Territorial Forces should consider it their duty to join a rifle club. After the speeches His Lordship then handed the cup to the winning team, heartily shaking hands with each of the shots that composed it – among them Ted and Chris.

1908 was a year of upheaval for the Volunteer movement as it was re-branded as the Territorial Force and this was much discussed on the evening of December 9th as the annual smoking concert and prize-giving in connection with the 'C' Company of the now 4th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment was held at the Railway Hotel Assembly Hall. The prizes were again distributed by Mr. T. H. Martin and the Chair was, as usual, Capt. Beale. After a half hour delay due to not many people being present, the Town Band woke up the audience with a rousing selection, excellently rendered, and from this point the proceedings were lively enough. The band subsequently played again and were followed by many comic singers.

In replying to the toast of his health, submitted by Mr. Martin, Capt. Beale, after thanking those present for the compliment paid him, dealt with several matters connected with the company.

Under the new scheme they had dropped from 111 to 50. That had got to be cured and he appealed for more recruits. He could not help noticing how very few there were there that night who had a uniform. He spoke of the duty in helping the country in time of need and also of the many privileges there were in joining the Territorial Army, not forgetting the camp, which was most enjoyable. He sincerely trusted more would join. Employers could do a great deal by letting their men off for the little time that was necessary; they could do still more by joining themselves (applause). The Crawley contingent was not so large as that at East Grinstead, but there was no reason why it should not be. The district extended from Hartfield to Ifield, and surely they should have more than 50 men. He again appealed to them earnestly to join the company and was sure none would regret it (applause).

Mr. T. H. Martin said he supposed he was addressing the Territorial Army, and yet when he was honoured by Mr. Cook with a request to distribute the prizes he was invited to attend a Volunteer smoking concert. Well, he thought Mr. Cook was quite right in the words he used. He could have been invited to a Territorial smoker, but that sounded awful – something volcanic. Besides, in the words Mr. Cook used, it showed how hard old associations and old words died, and he thought it was a pity that the term 'volunteer' was abandoned, for, after all, the volunteer principle lay at the base of the Territorial Army just as much as it did to the other.

But to return to the Territorial Army. It was now on its trial and he was one of those who would like to see it succeed for many reasons; firstly, on the score of patriotism. Mr. Haldane depended for the success of his scheme upon the patriotism of his countrymen and he thought it would be a great pity that he should be disappointed. Might he ask, in the words of Scott, "Lives there the man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, 'This is my own, my native land.'" He supposed that in that assembly the answer would be from every man, "No," a thousand times "No" (applause). They all felt and all knew that it was their native land, that they loved it and were prepared to sacrifice something for its security and safety (applause). Don't let the scheme fail for lack of patriotism. There was another reason why he should like to have a fair test and succeed. He thought this alone stood between them and conscription. He knew there were others who did not agree with him and there were others who thought conscription would be a good thing. For his part, he should like to see this scheme have a fair trial first of all. There was another reason why he would like to see it succeed, and it was perhaps a selfish and personal one. It was for the sake of the benefits that afforded. The physical culture they obtained, the discipline and the training would do them good. It would do much to produce a sound mind in a sound body, which was the ideal of a perfect man (applause).

He hoped the words they had heard from Capt. Beale would induce them to flock into this Territorial Army. If they could not do that, might he advise them to join the local Rifle Club? There was no lack of spirit or enterprise in Crawley. Let him remind them of the bazaar they held the other day; it was the envy of the whole county. Look at the devotion to music. The local bands spared no trouble. They went about and won prizes and when they returned they received the honour they were entitled to. But the defence of the country was the question at issue. Would they show lack of enterprise, lack of spirit? He sincerely hoped not and that what they had heard would serve as a great impetus to the Territorial Army and also to the Rifle Club. If that meeting had that effect he, for one, should not regret being asked to take part in those proceedings (applause). He strongly urged the people of Crawley to show the same spirit in this instance as they had done in others and hurry to the ranks and fill up the gaps that Capt. Beale had so lamentably pointed out to them.

The prizes were then distributed by Mr. Martin with Sergt. Cook winning the top money prize of 12s.6d. and also collecting a prize donated by one of the Crawley tradesmen, Mr. E. S. Hibbs.

After a couple more speeches the proceedings ended with the National Anthem.

On March 29th 1909, Emma died. The papers report:-

Death of Mrs. Richard Cook – the death occurred rather suddenly on Monday night of Mrs. Cook, widow of the late Mr. Richard Cook, of Springfield Road,

Crawley. The deceased lady had complained of feeling giddy for several months past, but nothing serious was apprehended. Early on Sunday morning, however, she was stricken with haemorrhage of the brain and immediately became unconscious, remaining in this condition until the end, which came very peacefully at 9.20 on the following night.

The bereaved family is known throughout the entire district, the late Mr. Cook, who died in July 1905, being head of the building firm of Messrs. R. Cook & Sons. The utmost sympathy will be felt for the relatives. The deceased lady was 68 years of age.

The funeral took place the following Saturday, the 3rd of April.

The mortal remains of this lady, whose death we recorded in our last issue, were interred in Crawley churchyard on Saturday afternoon, when, in addition to the family mourners, there were many present to show their respects. The service was conducted by the Rector (the Rev. H. L. B. Lennard) and the choir, with Mr. A. T. Harms at the organ, led the singing in the Psalms and the hymns, 'Peace, perfect Peace,' and 'Now the labourer's task is o'er.' As the cortege entered the church 'O rest in the Lord' was impressively played and at the close of the service the 'Dead march' from Saul was rendered. The coffin, of polished oak, with brass furniture, bore the inscription:

'Emma Cook, born October 11th, 1840; died March 29th, 1909, in her 68th year.'

The family mourners were Miss Cook (daughter), Mr. A. E. Cook, Mr. Herbert Cook and Mr. Christopher Cook (sons), Mrs. A. E. Cook and Mrs. H. Cook (daughters-in-law), and Mrs. Freke, Mrs. Bottrill, Mrs. Charman, Miss Betty Cook and Miss Kate Cook (nieces). Among the many others present were Mr. T. H. Martin, Mr. A. E. Taylor and men from the firm. The floral tributes were a beautiful collection. In the evening a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples, 1,260 changes was rung with the bells deeply muffled, as a last token of respect to the deceased lady.

Meanwhile Eddie and Don were attending North House School in the High Street. A newspaper from June 1909 reports that a cricket match was played at Crawley on Wednesday between North House School and Mr. C. A. Wilson's XI which resulted in a very easy victory for the School who batted first making 228 with the visitors all out for 60. Playing for the School are E. Cook, caught out for 6, and D. Cook, caught out for 0. D. Cook is also recorded as taking a catch.

On Sunday September 12th 1909, the day after a violent storm hit the town, a Territorial's Church Parade took place in the afternoon – the local Territorials, together with a number from East Grinstead, attended Divine service at the Crawley Parish Church, the Rector (the Rev. H. L. Barratt- Lennard) preaching

an appropriate sermon, and the service, which was largely attended, was very bright and enjoyable. The East Grinstead men were met at Three Bridges by the Crawley contingent, and the bands of both enlivened the march to and fro. After the service the 'Terriers' had refreshments at the Railway Hotel, and subsequently they marched back to Three Bridges, the East Grinstead men completing their journey from this point in Brakes. In their new uniform the men looked extremely smart, and quite a crowd gathered to watch their arrival and departure. Capt. Beale was in command and Lieut. Hankey was also present. The N.C.O.'s on parade were Sergt-Inst. Nye and Sergts. Cook, Thornton, Smeed, Warner, Cullen and Grayling.

King Edward VII died on May 6th 1910. Amongst other things, Edward VII was responsible for the 'entente cordiale' which saw Britain move into an alliance with France. This was the final power block in a very complicated jigsaw puzzle of European alliances and was to become one of the major reasons for Great Britain entering the Great War.

The 4th annual report of the Rifle Club from August 1910, while complaining that the club shows an increased deficit, also records that the club enjoyed great success that year with Christopher Cook winning the Men's Club Championship with a score of 195.5 from a possible highest score of 200. The club also retained the Winterton Cup for another year and the Bell medal was won by Mr. A. E. Cook. The report notes that Messrs. C. Cook and A. E. Taylor shot for Great Britain in the International Match with America and Australia. This match was the second annual competition of its kind for the Sir Thomas Dewar Trophy. The Great Britain team lost by a score of 24,539 to 24,439 with Chris shooting a creditable 492/500 – the 16th highest score out of 50 men.

The 1911 census shows most of the family still living in and around the New Town area. Chris, 37 and Emma, 45, along with domestic servant Mabel Francis, 20, are living at 20 Springfield Road. Chris is listed as a builder and employer while Emma is shown as living on private means. Herbert and his family are along the road at no. 44. Herbert, now 40, is listed as a building contractor and employer along with Ellen Harriet 41, Donald Herbert, 11, Alfred Leslie, 8 and Phyllis Noreen Emma, 4. Also shown living at No. 44 as a domestic servant is Olive Fuller (21). Kate Lillian, 37, and Constance, 15, are living at no. 28 West Street, with Kate listed as having no occupation while Constance is shown as being an assistant of some kind. Across the road at no. 32 are Mabel, 42 and George Charman, 39 with sons Edward, 8, Kenneth, 6 and daughter Norah, 1. George is shown as a bricklayer. Ted, 43, Laura, 44, and Eddie, 13, are all shown to be living at no. 18 Perryfield Road along with domestic servant Laura Mabel Oak, 16. Notable for her absence is Dorothy Laura, 17. In fact, I could not find a record for Dorothy anywhere in the country. According to the 1911 census web site, the most likely explanation for this is that the suffragette movement

had decided to boycott the 1911 census and over 30,000 women stayed out all night to avoid being counted and recorded. The local suffragette movement was based in East Grinstead and the local papers regularly printed letters from them.

King George V was crowned on June 22nd 1911 and the coronation was duly celebrated by the people of Crawley with special services at the Crawley and Ifield churches, the planting of an oak tree to mark the occasion and a sports day for all ages. A committee had been put together to raise nearly £100 for the celebrations and the main street and branch roads had been gaily decorated, flags and bunting being extensively used. Practically every house displayed some sort of decoration, and in several instances coloured fairy lights were used to much advantage. At 1.30 p.m. the Crawley Town Band commenced a brief programme of selections in the Square, and half an hour later the crowd which had assembled proceeded to the Green, where the commemoration tree was planted. By this time, unfortunately, rain began to fall somewhat heavily, and had the effect of keeping many away or driving home many who were present. The tree, a small oak, the gift of J. Cheal & Sons, was planted in front of the Brewery in the course of a short ceremony. The National Anthem brought this part of the proceedings to a close and a procession was formed to the cricket ground where the sports events took place where Ted served as one of the judges. There was also much singing and dancing at the George hotel.

This article from the local papers of February 1913 shows that the local recruitment drive for the Territorial Force had been a success:

TERRITORIAL SMOKING CONCERT AT CRAWLEY

The smoking concert annually held at Crawley in connection with the local Company of Territorials took place in the Railway Hotel Assembly Hall on Wednesday night, Capt. Beale presiding over a good attendance. The Territorials were present in uniform, the local non-com.'s being Sergts. Cook and Thornton, and Corpl. Skinner; and the Crawley Town Band, under Mr. G. Melville, was also in attendance, and excellently played an opening selection. The musical programme, arranged by Sergt. Cook and Geo. Farrow, was of a very pleasing and entertaining kind.

During the evening Sir John Luscombe gave the toast of "Success to the 'C' Company, 4th Batt. Royal Sussex Regiment," and congratulated most heartily and sincerely the officers and men on the fact that the Company was now at full strength. Just now they heard a good deal of criticism of the Territorial Force, but even the severest critic had not said one word of disparagement concerning the men who so nobly and so patriotically came forward and joined the movement (applause). It was his privilege a few nights ago to preside over a dinner in London

to the various London regiments, on which occasion they were honoured by the presence of very distinguished soldiers, and it was a source of great pleasure to hear the complimentary things said about the men of the Territorial Force; and he (Sir John) reminded those present that night that Lord Roberts, in his recent notable speeches, although he had expressed his views very clearly on the military situation, had not in any way disparaged the Territorial Force, his great point being that the numbers were insufficient and that it was not fair that those who had loyally responded to the call should have to do the work in which all should take a part (applause). As a matter of fact the Territorial Force was really a part of the scheme which Lord Roberts had proposed. Sir John, in conclusion, again congratulated the 'C' Company on its full strength and wished it continued prosperity.

Mr. T. H. Martin also spoke to the toast, and said that Capt. Beale was entitled to double congratulation, for not only was the Company at full strength, but since they last met in Crawley the Captain had got married. He offered him sincere congratulation on those two facts (applause). Referring to the subject touched upon by Sir John Luscombe, Mr. Martin said it was correct that in all the criticisms recently made nothing had been said against the Territorials; what had been said was in the nature of praise and commendation so far as the Territorials were concerned, but there had also been a good deal of sentimental nonsense and talk about militarism. The idea of compulsory military service was not new. Of old it was expected of every able-bodied citizen that he should take up arms in defence of his country in times of need, the bow and arrow being the weapon in Tudor times. The bow and arrow had long been extinct as a defensive weapon, but that was no reason why the lads of the present day should not be trained in the use of the rifle. He quite believed there should be compulsory training and that it should form part of the school curriculum. Education cost enough, they all knew, and why should not the children be taught in school to do something for their country? (applause). He strongly advocated, too, the acquirement of knowledge at the rifle range, and quoted the following note he had culled from the Press: "Miniature shooting is seriously taken up in the great Scottish schools. A new range has just been opened at the Royal High School, Edinburgh, in an outbuilding in the playground, and some eighty boys shoot there regularly. Watsons School, Fettes, and Merchiston all have ranges of their own, and Stewarts possesses a 100 yards range. There can be no doubt that every school of any size in the United Kingdom should possess its range and that shooting should be obligatory. Probably in no country in the Empire is shooting amongst schoolboys so successfully carried out as in Natal, where practically every boy is taught to shoot." They were not gathered together that night to criticise the Territorial Army, but to encourage it, and if some such compulsory training as he had referred to were adopted there would never be lack of numbers, but always a sufficient number of partially talented men to be drafted into it (hear, hear).

Capt. Beale, in responding, said it was really quite refreshing to know he was not there for the purpose of begging for recruits, as was usual, but he warned those present that next year he probably should be asking for some. They had rattled round East Grinstead district this year and got all the recruits needed, and next year in might be necessary to do the same thing in the Crawley district. As to the criticisms to which reference had been made, he was of the opinion that a good many of the critics did not know what they were talking about. He (Capt. Beale) claimed that his men could shoot and they could march, and he thought they would be able to fight, too, if the need ever arose (applause). They must have an army for home defence, and until our politicians agreed the Territorial Force was all they had, and therefore it must be ready and prepared for any emergency that might arise (applause).

Mr. W. J. Chalk sincerely trusted they would never have to fight in their own country, but of course they must be prepared, and he was strongly in favour of universal training. They had heard from Capt. Beale that the men of this Company were well trained and at full strength, and as the Territorial Army was dependent on the willingness of young fellows it did the men who composed it very great credit. Employers should give their employees every opportunity to join and for training, and in this way make us safe against foreign invasion (applause).

Capt. Beale expressed the Company's gratitude to Mr. John Penfold for kindly lending his field for drilling. It was a great advantage to have a field so near and so accessible, and they were deeply indebted to Mr. Penfold for this privilege (hear, hear). He also thanked those who had contributed to the harmony that night.

Mr. S P. Matthews responded for the band and Mr. E. C. Titcomb responded for the singers. Mr. J. Penfold then expressed his thanks for the kind observations made in reference to himself. He was glad to lend his field for the Territorials. He worked with all others for the good of the town, and as long as he lived he should continue to uphold the honour of Crawley (applause).

The National Anthem brought the very pleasant proceedings to an end.

In the meantime, it had been decided to send Eddie to Brighton Grammar School for his further education. He was assigned to Marshall House and proceeded to make his debut for the School 1st XI cricket team still under the age of 16, on June 7th 1913, a windswept sunny day, away v Brighton College 'A' team where he managed to take two wickets.

During that year's cricket season he became an established 1st XI regular. One of the match reports says that '*Cook, having once found his length, was almost unplayable. He bowled remarkably well throughout, taking four wickets for 21 runs.*' Although Eddie did play football in the winter months and did turn out once for the School 1st XI in a 4-2 defeat v. Skinners' School at Tunbridge Wells on October 8th it would appear that his first love was cricket.

This was the Cooks' world as 1913 came to a close. A successful business had been passed from one generation to another with a heir from the next generation poised to take the business on into the middle of the still-new 20th century. No one at that time could have foreseen the impending catastrophe that was about to engulf them all.



Richard and Emma Cook nee Archer.



The firm approx. 1880. Richard Cook looks anxious to be getting on with the job. Harry Richard Cook is listed as a carpenter in the 1881 census and he is seen here on the right displaying a plane. The boy next to him with the hammer could well be Harry Arthur Marks.



Outside the yard approx. 1890. Both the building and the cart bear the legend R. Cook & Sons. Richard Cook again looks impatient while Chris, immediately to his left, looks quite relaxed about things.



Laura Cook nee Petts. Laura came to work in Crawley as a domestic at Goffs Manor for the Hentys from Newport Pagnell. Major Henty was partially responsible for rejuvenating the Sussex Volunteers. This may be where Ted and Laura met.

Herbert Cook (Bert). My great grandfather and the rock upon which the early 20th century success of the company was built.



St. Peter's from the west, 1903





The dedication stone, St. Peter's.



The opening of the gates providing St. John's with a new entrance, 1896. Here, Ted is opening the gate for Laura while the townspeople look on.



The family approx. 1908. Annoyingly, the heads of the two couples, Ted and Laura and Bert and Nell, have been cut off by the photographer. Thus we have Chris and his mother Emma sitting down with Dorothy standing to her left. In front we have daughter Emma Elizabeth, my grandfather Les, Don, Phyllis and, wearing what appears to be school uniform, Eddie, who seems to be laughing at something that Don has just said.



Ted and Bert at work at the office in Springfield Road.



The Rifle Club approx. 1910. Chris and Ted are standing, first and second from the left.

Men of the Royal Sussex, 4th Battalion, marching through East Grinstead.



*Doomed generation.
The boys and girls of the
British School, Crawley,
1908.*

PART TWO

SOLDIERS

1914

Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,
With handmade sure, clear eye, and sharpened power,
 To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,
Leave the sick hearts that honour could not move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
 And all the little emptiness of love!
Oh! we who have known shame, we have found release there,
Where there's no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending,
 Nought broken save this body, lost but breath;
Nothing to shake the laughing heart's long peace there
 But only agony, and that has ending;
And the worst friend and enemy is but Death.

– Rupert Brooke

FOR MANY years the boiling pot of European politics had simmered away in the background of people's everyday lives. Militarism was rife throughout Europe and the British Empire was involved in a naval arms race with Germany, the Kaiser having pursued a policy of 'Weltpolitik' since the late 19th Century. The most visible signs of this departure from Germany's traditional Eurocentric foreign policy formulated by Bismarck in 1871 were the creation of an overseas colonial empire and powerful fleet of warships. These the German leadership declared would ensure the nation had its 'place in the sun.' However, such an aggressive foreign policy, upsetting the European balance of power, put Germany on a collision course with Great Britain. The seriousness with which the British government viewed this issue is illustrated by the abandonment of the age-old policy of 'Splendid Isolation' where Britain remained aloof from conflicting European alliances. In 1904 Britain put aside her colonial differences with France and entered into an alliance known as the Entente Cordiale. She followed this in 1907 with a similar agreement with Russia. Opposing the Entente was the German-led Triple Alliance that tied her to the decaying Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy. However, as war approached in 1914 the chances of Italy honoring the alliance fell away as a chance to improve her position at the expense of her traditional enemy, Austria-Hungary, proved too strong to resist. Thus Germany found itself potentially surrounded and facing the possibility of a war on two fronts. There were several international flashpoints in the early years of the new century but mutual common sense and a feeling of being not quite ready for war pervaded, allowing the European 'status quo' to carry on. In the summer of 1914 it was to explode in the most cataclysmic fashion imaginable and destroy millions of people's lives forever.

The early summer of 1914 was a spectacularly warm one. The Cook family business continued as normal with all three brothers now having settled in to running the company. Down in Brighton at the school, Eddie Cook was busy with his studies and also making a name for himself on the cricket pitch. Throughout June and July that year, despite the School still being on the wrong end of some results he was excelling personally as the team's all-rounder. The Brighton School Past & Present magazine reflects on the 1914 season and Eddie is mentioned a couple of times: '*Warren and Cleverly have done consistently well with the bat, and Wade and Cook have often given them most useful assistance*' and also '*The bowling has been shared almost entirely by Taylor and Cook; both have done excellent work, and have amply justified their promise of last year.*' In the Notes on the First Eleven section he is described thus: *R. E. Cook. – Bowls at a good pace and keeps a splendid length; his batting shows a marked improvement; he hits well and with great power.* It was not all plain sailing for him though, as on June 27th the First Eleven slipped to a defeat v. All Saints' Peckham at Withdean, Eddie having a miserable time being caught out for 0 and failing to take any wickets.

The very next day the event that would change his and millions of other people's lives forever took place hundreds of miles away in distant Sarajevo. At approximately

11.15 a.m., June 28th, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie were assassinated by Gavrillo Princip, a member of 'Young Bosnia' and part of a group of assassins organised by the 'Black Hand' a Serbian military secret society intent on creating Greater Serbia through the annexation of south Slav populated territory held by Austria-Hungary. The group had already tried to attack the Archduke and his wife by throwing a grenade at their passing car, which had hit the hood and detonated far behind them. Whilst the Royal couple was travelling to the hospital to see those who had been injured by the blast, Princip, who had given up the task, was eating a sandwich when he spotted the Archduke's car backing up after taking a wrong turning. He simply walked up to the car and shot them both. Sophie died almost instantly and the Archduke was dead by the time the car arrived at the hospital.

Known to posterity as 'the shot that killed millions' this single event cannot simply be called the cause of the Great War – it was merely the spark. A Europe wide culture of imperialism and nationalism, the complicated system of alliances that existed between empires and an arms race that was common knowledge would almost certainly have tipped the world in to war eventually.

In Germany for example, the fears of a war on two fronts had resulted in the creation of the Schlieffen Plan. Originally devised in 1904 by Field Marshal Alfred Graf von Schlieffen and revised in 1906 by his successor as German Chief of General Staff, Helmuth von Moltke the Younger, the plan was brought in to being in response to the signing of the Entente Cordiale and France's long-avowed intent to reclaim the lost province of Alsace-Lorraine, which had become part of Germany since the end of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870. Faced with the possibility of fighting a war on two fronts against France and Russia, von Schlieffen formulated the strategic concept aimed at knocking France out of the war quickly by encircling Paris, encircling and destroying the French field army before the Russians could mobilise their vast resources. No alternative strategy was drafted, locking Germany into rapid mobilization and invasion of France should a major European war appear inevitable.

On the 23rd of July, Vienna, supported by Germany, delivered an ultimatum to the Serbian government in Belgrade. The list of ten demands was intended to be unacceptable to Serbia and to force war. The other Great Powers agreed that Vienna had to deal robustly with Serbia and her involvement in the Archduke's assassination. The ultimatum appeared to be the diplomatic way forward and a start for negotiations. However, Field Marshal Franz Graf Conrad von Hötzendorff, Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff and a well known hardliner, chose war. Conrad had for a number of years advocated preventative war against both Serbia and Italy, despite the latter being an official ally. He saw these two nations as the main threat to the survival of the multi-national Austro-Hungarian Empire as both the Serbian and Italian governments had territorial claims on Habsburg territory and encouraged nationalist groups to agitate against Austro-Hungarian rule. Unfortunately, Vienna was to lose the moral high ground as the Serbian government acceded to all but one of

the demands (that Austro-Hungarian police be allowed to conduct their inquiries on Serbian territory in order to find conspirators). However, Vienna was not interested in any sort of compromise and relations between the two countries deteriorated even further. With full German support the Habsburg government prepared for a local war against her neighbour. On July 28th, a month after the assassination and five days after sending the ultimatum, the Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on Serbia. In response, Russia, ever supportive of her brother Slavs, ordered partial mobilization as a deterrent. But on July 31st Tsar Nicholas II was informed by his military high command partial mobilisation was logistically impossible. Reluctantly the Tsar ordered full mobilization of his huge army. Thus started the chain of events that led to the First World War.

Germany could not afford to stand idly by while Russia geared up to full mobilization. On August 1st the Kaiser's government declared war on Russia and sent an ultimatum to France asking that she refrain from any mobilization in support of her ally. Knowing full well that France would not desert the Russians, Germany paved the way for the implementation of the Schlieffen Plan. On 2 August an ultimatum was sent to Belgium ordering free passage to German troops as an initial stage to an invasion of France. On rejection of this demand and with French mobilization having begun the previous day, Germany declared war on France on August 3rd and the following day German troops entered Belgium. The Schlieffen Plan was activated. Thirty-nine days were scheduled for the fall of Paris with forty-two days allowed for the capitulation of France as a whole. This timescale would end the war in the west before the much feared Russian 'steamroller' could get up to speed. Under von Schlieffen's original plan, disregarding the neutrality of Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Belgium, a vast part of the German army would sweep south-westwards through Belgium and the North of France to encircle Paris from the North. Meanwhile, in Alsace and Lorraine, the Germans would stand on the defence and soak up attacks by the French. However, both von Moltke the Younger and Schlieffen himself toyed with the plan in the years before 1914, developing an idea to envelop Paris from both the North-West and the South-East thus forcing the main French Army into a decisive envelopment battle. Major changes implemented by von Moltke changed the balance of the plan, pulling a large number of forces away from the main thrust in the North to reinforce his forces in Alsace-Lorraine and also those facing Russia. He also decided not to go through the Netherlands, sending his forces just through Belgium and Luxembourg.

Now Europe's spiraling descent into conflict could not be halted.

AUGUST 1914

It was a beautiful Bank Holiday weekend in England but rumours of impending war were the only topic of conversation and it seemed the whole country was holding its breath.

The British Government sent the German government a note demanding that they respect Belgium's neutrality on August 4th. The note contained an ultimatum which said that the British would have to receive an undertaking from the Germans by 11 p.m. that evening that they would indeed respect Belgian neutrality. Some seven hours before the deadline expired, the German Army crossed the Belgian border. At 11 p.m., Britain declared war on Germany. The British Foreign Minister, Edward Grey famously said at the time "the lights are going out all over Europe, we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."

On the downs above Newhaven, Ted and the 4th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment were enjoying their annual summer camp when war was declared. The very next day, August 5th, Ted's Army Service record shows that he is now on full embodied service as a Sergeant with the 1/4th Royal Sussex Regiment. The local papers for Saturday August 8th 1914 were, as you would expect, full of war. These huge notices appeared in the advertising section:-

HOW TO BE USEFUL IN WAR TIME. ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS.

The Times published on Thursday included the following excellent suggestions for personal conduct and useful action in the national emergency:-

First and foremost. – Keep your heads. Be calm. Go about your ordinary business quietly and soberly. Do not indulge in excitement or foolish demonstrations.

Secondly. – Think of others more than you are wont to do. Think of your duty to your neighbour. Think of the common weal.

Try to contribute your share by doing your duty in your own place and your own sphere. Be abstemious and economical. Avoid waste.

Do not store goods and create an artificial scarcity to the hurt of others. Remember that it is an act of mean and selfish cowardice.

Do not hoard gold. Let it circulate. Try to make things easier, not more difficult.

Remember those who are worse off than yourself. Pay punctually what you owe, especially to your poorest creditors, such as washerwomen and charwomen.

If you are an employer think of your employed. Give them work and wages as long as you can, and work short time rather than close down.

If you are employed remember the difficulties of your employer. Instead of dwelling on your own privations think of the infinitely worse state of those who live at the seat of war and are not only thrown out of work but deprived of all they possess.

Do what you can to cheer and encourage our soldiers. Gladly help any organisation for their comfort and welfare.

Explain to the young and the ignorant what war is, and why we have been forced to wage it.

THE WAR AND FOOD SUPPLIES

The Urban District Council of East Grinstead earnestly urge the Public, in view of a shortage of supplies, to use every possible economy in the consumption of food of every character.

They also warn people against the great harm they are doing by laying in large stocks of consumable goods, as such action can only have the effect of unduly increasing the price of food to those ill able to afford such extra payments. Dated this 5th day of August, 1914. E. P. Whitley Hughes, Clerk to the Council.

TO THE PUBLIC

Owing to the exceptional Crisis, and its effect on the Provision Trade generally, the wholesale PRICES OF MEAT, both in the Live and Dead Markets, have risen to a serious extent – in some cases as much as 30 per cent above normal – and Retail Butchers have practically to make Cash Payments for stock purchased.

The Butchers of East Grinstead and the surrounding districts have therefore met together to deal with the position that has arisen, and so seriously do they view the situation that they feel it necessary to ask the Public to co-operate with them to their mutual advantage.

In order, therefore, to ensure a continuous supply of meat with which to meet the demands of the public, they felt it necessary to notify that they will be unable to give the extended credit they have done hitherto.

Realizing, however, as they do, that everyone is affected in a greater or less degree by the present crisis, they do not feel justified in fixing a maximum limit to the time they are prepared to allow credit, but they respectfully ask the public that all accounts may be met promptly when due.

The Crawley column carries the news that from Crawley, Three Bridges and district about 60 Reservists, Territorials and Yeomanry have been called up for duty (this includes Ted) ; and the Boy Scouts have also been mobilised and are doing excellent service in assisting in the protection of railway bridges, telegraph, &c. It is understood that proper provision is being made for the wives and families of those being called away. The military authorities have also been busy securing horses in this locality, a veterinary surgeon deciding the value, and the animals being sent on to Dorking.

The British Red Cross Society reports that the work of the Voluntary Aid Detachment has recommenced. In view of the present situation, it is requested that all willing to help in any way should send their names by Monday, August 10th, at latest, adding special qualifications if any, with their addresses to the Commandant at the Cottage Hospital, Crawley. Subscriptions would be gratefully accepted for equipment, &c, by Mrs. Courage, The Mount, Crawley.

There is also an announcement that the Crawley Town Band will be playing in the Middle and Lower Squares on Saturday and Sunday evenings respectively

at 7.45 p.m. (weather permitting). Among the many patriotic songs that were played were renditions of the Russian, French and English National Anthems.

The August issue of the West Crawley Parish Magazine says that '*the tragedy of war lies heavy upon all our hearts: not the penalty of blood and treasure only or chiefly, but the failure of Christian civilisation to avert war. It is a call to prayer ; a signal opportunity for the forces of Christ's Church to prevail at the Throne of Grace. Human Statesmanship has erred or failed, whether in provoking or averting war and the issues are in the hands of God. Whatever part our own country has to take the first real work of assistance which lies waiting to be done is the work of intercession. The true patriot now is the man of prayer.*'

The following week's edition, August 15, carries an announcement that would come to directly affect Chris:

THE WAR

A LOCAL DEFENCE FORCE is being formed.

Training in Drill and Shooting for all men over 30 and those who are not eligible for the Army or Territorials.

Names to be given in.

A. Johnson, Greenstede House, Hon. Sec. of Emergency Recruiting Committee.

Countersigned, E. P. Whitley Hughes, Hon. Sec. to the General Emergency Committee for the Petty Sessional Division of East Grinstead.

The biggest article of that week's editions is titled CRAWLEY AND THE WAR.

Probably the largest meeting ever held in Crawley took place on Wednesday night in the George Hotel Assembly Hall 'to consider the needs and duties of the people' in connection with the war. After much debate a committee was elected to oversee local relief efforts and the meeting ended with a ringing endorsement that people should learn to shoot and the singing of the National Anthem.

A local resident had his recent adventures reported in the same editions under the headline:

COLONEL AND LADY BEATRICE RAWSON'S THRILLING EXPERIENCE

Colonel R. H. Rawson, until recently the Commanding Officer of the Sussex Yeomanry, had a thrilling experience during his struggle to reach England from Germany with his wife, Lady Beatrice Rawson, who was dangerously ill. Col. Rawson decided on the 1st inst. to leave Freiburg, notwithstanding that the doctors ordered that Lady Beatrice should not be moved. With the assistance of Earl Winterton, M. P., a stretcher was obtained, and Lady Beatrice was placed on it.

“The only route was through Cologne,” said Colonel Rawson on Friday last to a representative of the Morning Post. “There were nothing but third-class carriages with wooden seats, and the people were packed like herrings in a box. The train stopped a short distance from the Dutch frontier. German officials turned everybody out, and we were told to go into a Dutch train. We had to go a distance of about two hundred yards from one train to another. I was last, as I was carrying Lady Beatrice. When within fifty yards of the other train it went off, and I was left stranded, with my wife lying prostrate on the stretcher. Lord Winterton had entered the train with the luggage, and he was taken away. We waited for two hours and entered another train. We were turned out of it, and German officials wanted to take Lady Beatrice to a local hospital, but she refused to go. We were told no one was allowed over the frontier. The rumour was that an attempt had been made on the life of the German Crown Prince, and this order had come after Lord Winterton had crossed over. Then there were four hours of great suspense.

A German officer said if we would submit to have everything searched he would let us proceed. Our pockets were ransacked and we were then allowed to go on, and at last we were on neutral territory. At Rotterdam we carried Lady Beatrice to the Hook of Holland, and got into the last boat, I believe, which left the Hook, and arrived at Harwich.”

Colonel Rawson pays a warm tribute to German Reservists, who helped him carry Lady Beatrice to the train at Freiburg. They turned out of their seats in order that she could lie down and stopped their friends from smoking.

Amidst all this chaos and uncertainty, everyday life did have some semblance of normality. The local cricket scores show that Crawley played at home versus The Pirates on Wednesday ‘time’ preventing a definite result. The game was well contested, and some hard hitting was seen. The fielding and bowling was very keen. E. Cook made 17 with the bat and took six Pirates wickets that day.

The third week of August saw the publishing of the Crawley & District Rifle Club Annual Report. The report expresses its satisfaction on winning the Loder Shield and the Winterton Cup and various individual prizes, but in a notice issued subsequently Hon. Secretary A. E. Taylor states:

“Since the report and balance sheet was printed the Crawley Rifle Club has been called upon to act as Volunteer Civil Guard, and a watch has been organised and is now acting by night at the culvert under the railway line at Ifield. This will entail some considerable expense, and as far as can be ascertained no grant will be available to defray the same. The club funds are not sufficient to bear the burden, and donations are invited. The committee are also opening the range free of membership subscription, and the opportunity has been largely responded

to; many are now learning to shoot and fitting themselves for useful work if their services are required. Regular subscribers will greatly help on the work by remitting their subscriptions now, so that available funds may not fail. The loan of a bell tent will be appreciated."

Having published its Annual Report, the Rifle Club annual meeting took place on Friday of the following week. The Hon. Secretary explained the formation of a civil guard and read the correspondence dealing with the subject. The members of the club are nightly guarding the culvert which passes under the railway line near Ifield Mill. It was decided that the Secretary should have an interview with the Chief Constable, who gave the instructions, with a view to certain enlightenment on the subject, the nightly guard to be continued in the meantime. When it came to election of officials, Mr. A. E. Cook was again chosen as Hon. Treasurer, his brother (Mr. C. Cook) to act as his deputy in his absence on military duty. Ted was also selected again as Club Captain and Chris re-elected to the committee. Amongst all the other people present it is noted that Herbert Cook was also in attendance.

The papers also report that week that:-

Mounted troops to the number of nearly two thousand arrived at Crawley on Wednesday and were billeted in the town for two nights. The local licensed houses, the public schools, the Y. M. C. A., stables and other buildings were requisitioned for the men, and the horses were located in various fields and meadows in the vicinity. The arrival of so many troops and horses occasioned much pleasurable excitement, and in the evenings of both days great crowds were about the streets. The Crawley Town Band kindly and thoughtfully turned out and rendered excellent music, and the enthusiasm of the large concourse of people was such as has never been equaled in this district. The West Crawley Brass Band also came out on Thursday night and added much to the enlivenment of the town. The soldiers left the town with happy memories of their stay at Crawley. Full details of the troops' movements are withheld in deference to the expressed wishes of the authorities.

There was also an 'unseemly' meeting:- On Sunday afternoon Mr. W. Kensett, so well-known at Horsham for his peculiarities, attempted to address a gathering in Middle Square, Crawley, on the subject of 'Peace.' He had himself advertised the meeting some days before, and at the appointed time Mr. Kensett appeared and, mounted upon a box, commenced his speech. A numerous gathering had assembled and frequently interrupted Mr. Kensett's remarks, which were soon brought to an abrupt conclusion by some ladies present singing the National Anthem. For his own safety Mr. Kensett was escorted to the Temperance Hotel, where he remained till the crowd had cleared away. The whole proceedings were of an unseemly character, especially on the Sabbath, and it was fortunate that those present did not show more resentment.

Great Britain had sent an army of approximately 125,000 men titled the British Expeditionary Force to France in August, where, after linking up with the French forces, they encountered the Germans in the latter half of the month. A series of engagements followed, including the BEF's actions at Mons and Le Cateau, with the German Army quickly forcing the Allies in to retreat. The German Army came to within 43 miles (70km) of Paris but the Allies were able to turn the tables and force the Germans into a retreat during the Battle of the Marne (September 5th – 12th 1914).

SEPTEMBER 1914

Following defeat on the Marne, the Germans dug in north of the River Aisne. There then followed a series of outflanking manoeuvres and skirmishes that collectively became known as the 'Race to the Sea' – which eventually culminated in the formation of the static trench systems that quickly came to dominate the Western Front.

The September 5th papers report that about 300 wounded soldiers arrived at Brighton by train on the Tuesday previous and were conveyed by motor car and the Fire Brigade's new motor ambulances to the newly designated 2nd Eastern General Hospital in Dyke Road. The great majority of men were only slightly wounded and the number of stretcher cases did not exceed twenty-five. Proceedings at Brighton Grammar School, which was also in Dyke Road, must have come to a standstill as the entire school, including Eddie and Don (who was just starting his first year at the School), turned out to watch.

Amongst the letters received by the local press are the following:

A TURNERS HILL RECORD

Sir ; I find that we have had 24 of our boys join the colours from this village. How do the surrounding villages compare with this?

Yours faithfully,

Noah Whitman

Late 4th Royal Sussex Regt. Turner's Hill, September 2nd.

CRAWLEY PARISH CHURCH

Sir ; Arrangements are being made to chime one or more of the bells daily, at noon, during the war, in order that all who hear them may remember the brave men who are fighting for our Country and Empire in this great and terrible struggle. May I beg all who hear the bells to say a silent prayer to Almighty God and ask Him to bless our naval and Military forces, and to crown their arms with victory and to restore peace among the nations of the world.

I remain, yours truly,

H. L. B. Lennard.

The Rectory, Crawley, Sussex,

September 1st, 1914.

RECRUITS AT CRAWLEY

Sir ; Lord Kitchener has got his first 100,000 men: the second 100,000 is now being enrolled. What are we going to do? Crawley and Ifield are remarkable for their devotion to athletic sports and games. They should therefore have number of young athletic and healthy men, the very sort that are wanted.

Within the last few days I hear of a number of our playing members of the Cricket Club, who have joined. J. A. D. Dempsey was gazetted to a commission in the Army and is now at the Front. Several others who have kept wicket, batted or bowled for Crawley will keep their honour bright and be bold to battle for their King and country. I hope that the club may soon see its way to publish its 'Roll of Honour' – the names of its members who would serve the King and save their homes and ours. I hope also that the Football Clubs and the Harriers may set up a similar roll ; a wholesome emulation will ensue.

I most seriously deprecate hasty condemnation of those who do not immediately join. No one but the man himself knows his circumstances, his duties and the calls upon him which constitute his duty. As time goes on we shall become aware of those who can and those who won't go. Again, all men are not alike, as there are many weak in body, so there are some who are so mentally constituted that they are weak in spirit. Let us not be too hasty to condemn, but rather pity those whose spirit is in their stomachs or their courage in their boots. And such pity will be hard enough to bear.

The better educated and richer in this world's goods are setting a splendid example. I have no doubt it will be followed. Courage and energy are the property of no class and of no family alone. But time presses. The sooner men join the sooner they will be trained and the sooner will they have the honour and credit of fighting and of striking that blow for England and freedom which must in the end prevail. As Mr. Kipling has just written –

"Who stands – if freedom fall? Who dies – if England live?"

Your obedient Servant,

W. J. Chalk.

Crawley, Sept.2nd,1914.

LETTER FROM THE WAR:- Writing to his mother at Tinsley, Mr. Tom Thorns says: " Before we started fighting we were all very nervous, but after we joined in we were all happy, and most of us laughing till it was finished. Then we all sobbed and cried. Even if I never come back, don't think I've died a painful death. Everything yesterday was as quick as lightning. We were in action on Friday morning off Heligoland. I had a piece of shell as big as the palm of my hand go through my trousers, and as my trouser legs were blowing in the breeze I think I was very lucky."

RECRUITING AT CRAWLEY:-Mr. E. C. Titcomb, who has been appointed recruiting officer for this district, convened an informal meeting at the George Hotel on Tuesday night to consider the question of recruiting, Major Messel being present to explain the objects of the gathering. It was decided to hold an open air meeting in the Square tonight (Saturday), when it is hoped the young men of Crawley will give a good account of themselves.

The recruitment meeting was deemed a success as recorded by the Sussex & Surrey Courier:- With the view to obtaining recruits for Lord Kitchener's Army an open-air meeting was held in the Lower Square on Saturday evening, when there assembled probably the largest crowd ever seen at Crawley. The Town Band first played selections, under Mr. Melville, and also discoursed suitable music at the close of the meeting, the programme including the Russian, French, Belgium and English National Anthems.

Earnest appeals were made to the young men of Crawley to volunteer their services at this hour of country's need, and referred to the war as a righteous war, not of our seeking, but one which must be fought to a finish for the honour and liberty of the people. Employers were urged to keep open the positions of those who had joined the ranks, and all were urged to do their part in seeing that the dependents of the men were well looked after.

Mr. E. C. Titcomb also addressed the meeting, and read out a list of those who had already entered their names from Crawley and district. – In response to his request for more recruits to come forward, nine young men stepped forward amid loud applause and added their names to the list. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed throughout, and it is hoped that other eligible young men will follow the example of their comrades.

Among the list of Crawley volunteers are the names W. Cheeseman, W. Scutt, G. Wilson and a chap simply noted as Franks from Ifield. These names all appear on memorials at Crawley.

His Majesty King George V is reported to have motored through the area on two occasions on Thursday, says the Sept. 12th editions of the local press. At Shipley Bridge Mill he alighted from his car to watch 5,000 men of the 2nd London Brigade of Territorials march past and then afterwards spent the remainder of his day visiting several temporary Military schools in the area.

In the third week of September, approval was given for a Reserve Battalion to be raised, to become part of the 4th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment. A meeting was therefore called at the end of the month at the George Hotel in Crawley, with the object of obtaining recruits for the home service battalion. At the commencement the attendance was very sparse, but the numbers increased as the meeting progressed, Mr. E. B. Lehmann occupied the chair, and addresses were delivered by him, Capt. H. E. Matthews and Mr. T. H. Martin, whilst a vote of thanks was accorded to these

gentlemen at the close, on the motion of Mr. E. C. Titcomb (local recruiting officer) – Capt. Matthews explained the terms of service, &c., emphasizing the following points: Age, from 17 to 35; height, 5ft, 2ins ; chest measurement, thirty-three and a half inches; pay, 8s. 2d per week, with uniform, rations, &c.: allowance to wife 12s. 6d per week, with extras for children, up to £1. 2s for wife and four children.

There are 365 vacancies in the battalion, said Capt. Matthew, and it was hoped to recruit that number at the earliest possible moment. Recruits can make their own choice on enrolling as to whether they prefer home or foreign service, or whether they desire to serve for the full period of four years, or for the duration of the war only. All the speakers pleaded for recruits, pointing out the duty of all men who are eligible, and hoped Crawley would not be behind in displaying its patriotism. – Two recruits offered themselves for enrolment at the close of the meeting, and Mr. E. C. Titcomb will be glad to hear of others who are willing to serve King and country.

OCTOBER 1914

The October edition of *The Rifleman* carries an article headlined:-

The Society of Miniature Rifle Clubs 'ROLL OF HONOUR.'

The S. M. R. C. 'Roll of Honour' will contain the names of all members of clubs affiliated to the Society who, at this time of national emergency, have patriotically responded to their country's call and have joined or re-joined some branch of His Majesty's Forces.

October's Roll of Honour includes an entry for Crawley. The names listed are:

Cook, A. E.	Sergeant	Territorial	4th Batt. Royal Sussex
Goring, A.	Private	Territorial	4th Batt. Royal Sussex
Winterton, Earl	Captain	Territorial	Sussex I. Y.
Caffyn, L. J.	Trooper	Territorial	Sussex I. Y.
White, E. W.	Trooper	Territorial	Sussex I. Y.
Garrett, H.	Trooper	Territorial	Sussex I. Y.
Wilson, G. S.	Trooper	Territorial	Sussex I. Y.
Stanford, S. F.	Private	New Army	General Service
Draeger, D. G.	Private	New Army	General Service

Of those nine men, two of them, Garrett and Goring, would not come home.

The October 10th papers report news of a deserter, George Turnbull of Colchester, being arrested in Crawley. The arresting officer, Police Sergeant Capelin, was awarded 10 shillings as a result.

The following week's edition carries a report on Crawley Cricket Club's season:

The past season has not been so successful as usual as far as winning games is concerned, but the recreation provided has proved most enjoyable. The club lost some of their strongest players, who transferred their services elsewhere, while others left ere the season closed. A pleasing feature is the good form shown by some of the younger players, especially E. Cook and S. Brooks.

E. Cook is mentioned in the batting averages as having batted five times, being not out once, with a best of 39 not out and a total of 80 runs in his five innings. His average is recorded as 20. The bowling figures are for those bowlers who have bowled in four or more innings, with E. Cook's figures being: Overs 21, Maidens 7, Runs 89, Wickets 10. His average is shown as 8.9.

The Crawley & Ifield column has news on:

TWO SONS AT THE FRONT – Mrs. Constable, of East Park, has two of her sons at the war, namely Bert and Charlie, the former in the R. A. M. C. and the latter in the Royal Engineers. Both had recently written home, and are, happily, quite well, Charlie, in the course of an interesting epistle, says:

“I have been in charge of a pontoon bridge over the river to-day, so I have had leisure. I have been washing clothes, boiling them in a biscuit tin, and got them fairly clean.” Bert is on an ambulance train, and he says: “In the earlier part of the war I had shells burst within 20 or 30 yards, and then escaped without a scratch. Once my chum and I had a chap on the stretcher struck by a piece of shell while we were carrying him; that is near enough if you like.”

In another letter to his mother Bert says:

“We have just come from where the big fight is going on, and we saw a German airship being shelled, but they didn't hit it, worse luck. The Germans are still holding their position, but by the way our boys are going on something will have to shift soon. The noise of the big guns is deafening, and they keep it up all day without a break.” Writing on the 9th inst. Bert says: “Just a hurried line to let you know I am well, and that I have been promoted to lance-corporal. I thought you would be pleased to hear it. We have made a move at last, and we are very busy. I find I have plenty to do now, especially when we are loaded. I have to be responsible for three carriages; that means about fifty or sixty patients. I have to see that they are all attended to and get their food, and kept clean, and lots of other little things, but still it makes the time pass much quicker, especially with a few shells to liven things up as well.”

The column also carries news on the district's first fatality:-

AN IFIELD MAN'S DEATH AT THE WAR. – With much regret we record the death of Mr. Francis Franks, third son of Mrs. Franks and the late Mr. William Franks, of Ifield Village. He was a lance -corporal in the Durham Light Infantry, and was seriously wounded in a recent engagement. He received the best possible treatment in a hospital in Paris, but succumbed to gangrene on Thursday (October 8th) in last week, and his funeral took place on the following day with military honours. The deceased soldier was 24 years of age. In a communication with his mother, the Matron at the Paris Hospital refers to the brave way he fought for his country and to the brave manner in which he bore his suffering. This is the family's great consolation. He was buried in the City of Paris Cemetery, Bagneux.

Following the Battle of the Yser in October the Belgian Army now controlled a line of approx. 35km along the coast down to Boesinghe. The B. E. F. held the line South of here and from October 19th to November 22nd faced the Germans last attempt of 1914 to break through Allied lines. The line was held despite enormous casualties. This came to be known as the First Battle of Ypres.

NOVEMBER 1914

In November, local casualties began returning home, as the Courier records, Pte. Eggleton of Albany Road was at home after being shot through the finger, and Pte. Gravely of Malthouse Road at home with a poisoned foot after an encounter with barbed wire entanglements. Gravely was expected to be back with his regiment the following Friday.

The Civil Guard for Crawley & Ifield, formed from the Crawley Rifle Club, was being re-branded as part of the West Sussex Civil Guard and had set up their headquarters at the Picture Hall at East Park. Appeals were made for suitable recruits aged 16 to 60, unless eligible for the army.

Ted Cook was promoted from Sergeant to Colour Sergeant on the 28th November. His Service Record shows that he is now with the 2/4th Royal Sussex Regiment.

November saw a new addition to the columns of the papers. Each week a Roll of Honour for the local regions would be published, with a different region being printed every edition. The war had now become a fact of everyday life and an integral part of each region's local columns every week:-

LOCAL WAR ITEMS. – The parents of Corpl. Ralph Charman, of the 1st Life Guards, who live at Spencer's Road, Crawley, have received intimation that he is a prisoner of war in Germany. Fortunately, he is quite well. – Prvt. Ben Eggleton, 2nd Sussex, whose home is at Crawley, was wounded at the Battle of the Aisne,

getting shot through the forefinger of the right hand. The bone was shattered, and the digit has had to be amputated, the operation being performed by Mr. F. Wood in the Crawley Cottage Hospital. He is, happily, going on all right. — Prvt. Parker, of Ifield, was badly wounded in the arm last week, and is now in Chelsea Hospital. — Private Pullinger, previously wounded, is now, we are glad to say, well on the way to recovery.

DEATH AT THE FRONT. — This week the war has cast a deep shadow on Mrs. Masson and her many friends in Crawley, by the death, in action, of Lieut.-Col. Kelly, to whom Mrs. Masson was engaged, and would, had not fate interposed, have been married on the very day upon which the sad news of his death reached her.

The gallant officer fell in North France, during the 24 hours' fight for the trenches on November 23rd. The action had been raging furiously all day with uncertain results, when about 10.30 p.m. the Army Corps reserve arrived on the scene, and British and Indian regiments side by side, wholly undeterred by two unsuccessful assaults, renewed the attack. For a long time the issue was in the balance, but about 6 a.m. on the morning of the 24th it became evident that the assailants could no longer be denied, and by 6.15 they were once more masters of the trenches, for the possession of which such bloody controversy had been waging for nearly 24 hours.

Col. Kelly was shot on the very verge of the trenches, but he lived long enough to have the happiness of knowing that the brave Indians who he led so valiantly had once again proved their worth in this kind of work. His loss is deeply felt and deplored by the whole regiment, to which he had greatly endeared himself.

Lieutenant Colonel George Henry Fitzmaurice Kelly was commanding the 34th Sikh Pioneers when he was killed. Kelly was 44 years of age. He is buried in Beuvry Communal Cemetery.

DECEMBER 1914

FOOTBALL AND THE WAR. — Says the Ifield Parish Magazine for December: All over the world men and women have been reading with something approaching disgust the account of thousands of young men who are spectators of football matches, and who are declining to serve their country in this most fateful hour of her destiny. We wonder how these young men would feel if they were serving their country, and the sons of gentlemen from our Public Schools and Universities were watching football matches with the everlasting cigarette hanging between their lips. Public opinion must shame these young men out of their present attitude. How will they feel when their braver and more patriotic friends return from the war crowned with victory and welcomed with the applause of their fellow countrymen?

For the first time, the Roll of Honour lists the men of Crawley and District who are serving their King and Country, Sergeant Ted Cook among them.

AN ABSENTEE. – Absent without leave from the Royal Garrison Artillery, now stationed at Newhaven, Michael Butler gave himself up to P. S. Capelin, at Crawley, this week, and the Horsham Magistrates on Wednesday ordered him to be remanded to await the arrival of a military escort.

PRVT. W. WRIGHT, of the County of London Rifles, son of Mrs. Wright, of Victoria Road, Crawley, has been wounded at the Front, though happily not dangerously. – Prvt. Hibberd, who returned to Crawley wounded a short time since, is mending splendidly; but Prvt. Allen, of Ifield, is, we regret to hear, in a serious condition.

THE DANCE AND SOCIAL held at the Railway Hotel last week resulted in upwards of £5 being sent to the fund to form a Christmas present for the King of the Belgians.

DEATH AT THE FRONT. – It is with much regret that we announce the deaths at the Front of two Crawley men in the persons of Corpl. Edgar Gorringe, who lived in Ifield Road, and Prvt. Edward Gregory Sangster, whose parents, formerly of Crawley, now live at Povey Cross. Both belonged to the Royal Sussex Regiment, and were killed in action, the former being 30 years of age and the latter 19. The sympathy of many friends will be extended to the bereaved relatives, who are widely known and greatly respected in this district. Corpl. Gorringe was killed on October 31st and Prvt. Sangster fell on the 6th November, but the news was not officially communicated to the parents until this week. Fortunately both were single men.

Private Sangster is not recorded on the British Legion Crawley Roll of Honour and the C. W. G. C. web site tells us that his parents were living at Lumley Road in Horley so it is likely his name appears on the memorial in Horley. The Roll of Honour says Corporal Gorringe was killed in action near Shrewsbury Forest near Ypres, on the 30th October 1914 possibly during the Battle of Gheluvelt, which was itself part of the First Battle of Ypres. He was the son of John and Elizabeth Gorringe of 102 Ifield Road, Crawley and was a regular soldier. He was born in Marsh Green, Kent and had enlisted in East Grinstead. His body was never found and so he is commemorated on the Menin Gate in Ypres on panel 20.

Another recruiting meeting was held at the George Hotel Hall on Saturday December 12, when an appeal was made for recruits for the Southdown Battalion

of the Royal Sussex Regiment, but there was an extremely disappointing response, only two young fellows giving in their names at the meeting, one of whom subsequently failed the medical examination. After various patriotic songs, the chairman, Mr. Lehmann, received a resounding "No" to his question, "Are we downhearted?" and he justified the negative reply by a brief recital of the gratifying doings of the Allies at the Front, and the splendid achievement of Vice-Admiral Sturdee in sinking four of the enemy's battleships.

In appealing for young men to come forward and join the ranks, Mr. Lehmann wished that he possessed the glorious gift of youth, so that he could set a good example in that direction. Volunteers were badly needed, and if a sufficient number of troops could be in reserve he believed that it would not be long before the Germans were on the other side of the Rhine (applause). They had to push on, sword in hand, in this great battle, and more help was needed to prevent the possible devastation of our sacred buildings, the violation of our women and the mutilation of our children. Now was the time for the eligible young men to come forward in defence of their country, and so maintain the voluntary system of enlistment, which was far superior to any form of conscription which the authorities might otherwise feel compelled to inflict.

Mr. Lehmann expressed the sorrow of the meeting with the relatives of Corpl. Franks and Privts. Gorringe and Sangster, who had laid down their lives in that sacred and noblest of all causes – the defence of their country ; and he assured the relatives they had the profound sympathy of the whole neighbourhood.

The Rev. E. D. L. Harvey followed with a stirring appeal for volunteers. He, like the Chairman, had not the blessing of youth, but he thought all who were too old for active service should do all they could to arouse their countrymen to a sense of their duty in this time of crisis. England had been living in a fool's paradise. The late Lord Roberts had gone up and down the country warning the people of this day, but he was as one in the wilderness, the false prophet crying all is well. And the result was that we were not so prepared for this war as we could have been.

The German song of hate, from which he quoted, showed how this war had been carefully planned and eagerly awaited by our enemies. Germany's one objective had been this country, and if she could she would inflict upon England the fate which had befallen Belgium. He therefore appealed to the young men to join the Colours in defence of our country, impressing upon them the words of Nelson's glorious message.

There were other speakers that night who made the same appeals but the meeting ended with the singing of the National Anthem and the disappointing result already mentioned.

The final edition of the papers for 1914, dated the 26th of December has an update on the CRAWLEY CIVIL GUARD. –

There are now exactly 60 on the roll of the Crawley Branch of the West Sussex Civil Guard, of which Mr. A. Rossi-Ashton is the commandant, Mr. E. B. Lehmann assistant commandant and Messrs. A. E. Taylor and T. Bartley section commanders. As more members join – and more are needed – further section commanders will be appointed. Started on November 19th, much useful work has been done and great progress made, 18 drills having already been put in, as well as a couple of route marches, the first to Pease Pottage and back and the second – round Ifield to Lowfield Heath and back to Crawley.

Mr. Lehmann has kindly placed a field at the disposal of the members, and there were 42 present at the first open air drill on Sunday last. Sergeant Thornton is the drill instructor. Musketry drill has already been commenced, and the loan of more rifles would be much esteemed. After the holiday it is hoped to take up physical training and first aid work, and a little night patrolling will be commenced. Commandant Rossi-Ashton will be glad to see more men joining, and impresses the fact that, apart from any use the guard may or may not be, the training and discipline cannot fail to be of benefit. There is every reason to believe that in the near future the Civil Guard will be recognised by the authorities as a force for home defence.

A list of members is included in the article – among them Christopher Cook.

The following is a local appreciation of the Civil Guard: *A bright December night – a silent country road, suddenly in the distance a sound of tramping feet. On they come, and into sight a band of men, all ages, marching steadily along, heads up, shoulders squared. A quiet word of command now and again, and they pass by, leaving a comfortable feeling that in case of a very present danger there are men who will 'Be strong' and 'Quit (themselves) like men.' 'God save the King' and bless our Civic Guard.*

After the First Battle of Ypres (October 19th – 22nd November 1914), the original British Expeditionary Force had been all but destroyed but Kitchener's appeal in the summer for 100,000 men had been, and still was being, answered by thousands. Both sides had by now dug in to form a meandering line of fortified trenches which stretched from the North Sea to the Swiss frontier. This line was to be virtually unchanged for the next three years.

In Crawley, the War had become a part of daily life. The town had geared up to 'do its bit' and had suffered its first casualties. Eddie is in to his second year at Brighton Grammar School, with Don just having completed his first term. R. Cook & Sons continued with its business, presumably being run by Herbert and Chris as Ted is away on military service. Chris is a member of the Crawley Civil Guard. Sergeant Ted Cook spent Christmas Day 1914 away from home on guard duty at Newhaven.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES AT NEWHAVEN

In many hundreds of Sussex homes families were thinking on Christmas Day of their loved ones in the 4th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment (T) and wondering

whether they were having a good time. No great anxiety need to have been felt, for 'Tommy Atkins' has the happy ability to adapt himself to almost every sort of circumstance. Had his Christmas dinner been of dry brown bread and water he would still have shown a happy resignation. But such a contingency did not arise. Instead, generous friends and well-wishers in his own town or village sent him plenty of seasonable fare that he might once again enjoy himself in the old-fashioned way. His own relatives, of course, forwarded him presents, Christmas cards and affectionate letters, and the officers of his Company and their friends also made a liberal provision of good things for him. In such circumstances even a pessimist would have been jolly, much more our light-hearted, happy-go-lucky Territorial of whom we are all so proud.

There then follows a lengthy description of the ensuing festivities with no mention of 'C' Company until the end of the article:-

'C' COMPANY ON GUARD

Most of the men belonging to 'C' Company (East Grinstead and Crawley) were on guard from 10 a.m. on Christmas Day until the same hour on Boxing Day. The nature of their thoughts during those 24 hours may be left to the imagination. However, the Christmas dinner lost none of its attractiveness by being postponed for a day. The menu was a sumptuous one, comprising turkey, goose, pork, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, potatoes and plum pudding. The toast of 'Colonel Mostyn', who attended was heartily honoured, and other officers were also toasted. Plenty of dessert, tobacco and chocolate was provided and the Company passed the afternoon in a jovial manner. After tea a concert took place.

Mrs. Beale (wife of Major S. W. P. Beale, who formerly commanded the Company) visited the camp on December 23rd and presented each man with a pipe, gloves, socks and either a cardigan or a slip-on, given by friends at East Grinstead. Tobacco was sent by the 'Buffs' of the same town. The 'Boys' were very grateful for all the kindness shown to them. The hut in which they dined was lavishly decorated, various mottoes and greetings being worked out in cotton wool on the Company's blankets, which were hung around the building. The Sergeants of the entire Battalion also dined together on the night of the 28th.

In France at Christmas 1914, the British Expeditionary Force held the line from the La Basse canal to south of St. Eloi in the Somme valley. The line south of here was held by French forces. On Christmas day itself, a series of unofficial truces broke out with British and German soldiers meeting each other in No-Man's-Land and exchanging presents and greetings, even playing football. How the world would have been a different place if both sets of soldiers had simply decided not to carry on fighting. Army discipline intervened and re-asserted itself and so it was that the war that would be 'over by Christmas' went on in to 1915.

January 1915

War broke : and now the Winter of the world
With perishing great darkness closes in.
The foul tornado, centred at Berlin,
Is all over all the width of Europe whirled,
Rending the sails of progress. Rent or furled
Are all Art's ensigns. Verse wails. Now begin
Famines of thought and feeling. Love's wine's thin.
The grain of human Autumn rots, down-hurled.

– 1914, *Wilfred Owen*

HISTORIAN and author Lyn Macdonald's splendid book about the year 1915 is called '1915 – *The Death of Innocence*'. While innocence certainly died that year at Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, Gallipoli, Ypres and Loos, and while no one in the civilised world could fail to take note of the unfolding catastrophe, for the two boys at the heart of this story, the summer of 1915 was almost a golden one.

With the Western Front in virtual deadlock, politicians had begun looking at alternative plans to force the issue. Two camps were beginning to form within the government, those who thought the war could only be won on the Western Front and those who thought that action was needed in another theatre to perhaps take the Central Powers by surprise and win a quick victory. Churchill, who was First Lord of the Admiralty, had come up with a bold plan using naval reserves to create a new supply route to Russia in the Mediterranean, which might also knock Germany's latest ally Turkey out of the war, and might possibly bring both Greece and Bulgaria into the war on the Allies' side. Churchill's plan, which, at the beginning, was for the Royal Navy (with only a small force of infantry for purposes of occupation), to attack Turkey at the Dardanelles.

In Crawley, 1914 blew away during a great storm on the 28th December. While Sergt. Ted Cook was celebrating the season down at Newhaven with fifty or so of his fellow Sergeants, Crawley was hit by a violent gale. The January 2nd 1915 Courier records that:- *The great gale of Monday evening visited Crawley with much severity. Throughout the district much damage was done. In the High Street several of the old houses lost many tiles and slates, whilst in the Brighton road the trees suffered severely. At Crawley Lodge a huge fir tree was cut clean down within 5 ft. of its base, whilst a little further along the huge tree which stands beside the roadway lost many branches. The terrific rain caused many houses to be flooded. Although many tiles were dislodged no injuries are reported, though narrow escapes were plentiful. The gale proved an extremely lively winding up to a quiet Christmas.*

The Crawley columns go on to report:-

A CRAWLEY MAN WOUNDED. – Bomb. George Miller, 58th Battery R. F. A., has been unfortunate enough to sustain a very severe wound. On 7th December Bomb. Miller was in a house which came under shell fire, with the result that a piece of shell stripped the tips of his fingers, and, travelling upwards, ripped open his arm and finally lodged in the muscle. The wounded man is hoping to shortly arrive in England.

A LOCAL SOLDIER KILLED.- We regret to announce the death of Private W. G. Wright, of the County of London Rifles, who was wounded some time since during action. The sad news has just been officially conveyed to his mother; and for her the utmost sympathy will be felt in the loss of her only son. Private Wright was an old Blue Coat Boy, but his home was at Waverley, Crawley.

William Gregory Wright was a Rifleman in the 1/16th Battalion, London Regiment (Queens Westminsters). He died of wounds on the 14th December 1914 at the age of 25.

He was the son of John and Mary Wright of Victoria Road, Crawley and was born in Horley. He had enlisted in Tottenham and was buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery and has his name recorded on the Memorial Gates.

Alongside the Crawley & Ifield column, under the heading of Letters to the Editor appears another letter from Mr. W. J. Chalk an excerpt of which follows:-

Sir: Your issue reaches us on New Year's Day. That we may all individually, and as a nation, have a Happy New Year will be the wish of all, and of no one more than myself. And not merely for ourselves, but that Belgium's year of trial and suffering, and that all nations who are our gallant and worthy Allies, may have a happy year of success and triumph, chastened though that triumph must surely be by the thought of those whose memories will ever be consecrated by the glory of their ready martyrdom, is a heartfelt desire that is common to us all. And we may hope that those who are our enemies now, may gain in perspective and ultimate happiness, by learning that no man and no nation has a right to shove their 'Kultur' down others' throats by force.

1915 would be an important year for Mr. W. J. Chalk as his constant letters to the papers and his appearances at recruitment meetings would lead him to become involved officially in the local recruitment drive. Elsewhere in the same edition appear two articles that neatly sum up people's attitudes to both the futures of their country and the outcome of the war:-

THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY

The children are home for the holidays and the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, who have done their best in new and strange conditions, have handed over their task to the parents of their pupils. It is questionable whether many of these realise that the home education of the time of recreation – in the right sense of a rather misused word – is the time of their supreme opportunity. It is always important for fathers as well as mothers to do their share in the training of their sons and daughters. This year, owing to the terrible loss of life inevitable in the course of a world war, the rising generation acquires a fresh value. To every lad, from the child in the nursery smiling at that glittering wonder, the Christmas tree, to his big brother coming from school to track the war maps with the flags of the Allies, there is the possibility of being called later to fill one of the vacant places of the honoured dead.

This year in many a household the sole burden of responsibility for making the holidays worthwhile will seem to lie with the mother. Many a woman will

feel helpless and lonely without the strong, cheerful husband who has gone a long way, but not to Tipperary. Yet, if she pauses to reflect, she may well decide that the holiday task he is doing for his family will make his absence more potent than his presence. England has not vainly expected of him that he will do his duty. He has not let the tenderest bonds, the anxious thought for the morrow as to material welfare, stand in the way of helping his country. Patriotism will be a lesson far more easily learnt by the children of the men who did not hesitate in the difficult hour of self-sacrifice. It is a much harder task to instill it into those whom the war does not touch closely.

In an English country village not many days since a passer-by heard two neighbours discussing current events. "Well, I've got nobody belonging to me out there, so I don't worry myself about it" said a comfortable looking housewife, whose ample figure did not suggest privation as a result of rising prices. It is to be hoped she had no children to be affected by her own blameworthy indifference.

Children, when quite young, are as imitative as kittens copying the old cat when they are mere balls of fluff. If mother cares nothing for other folks, they will assuredly follow her lead; and it may be noted that these callous indifferents are the first to lose their empty heads when danger really comes. Put them in the position of the plucky Yorkshire people last week, and watch for results. They can go on smiling and complacent until their own pockets or their own interests become affected. Then they change promptly into grumbling pessimists, and become a thorough nuisance to all the better balanced in their vicinity. The amount of harm they do to the character of their offspring is deplorable to contemplate. The boys and girls have shut their lesson books in appearance only. The holidays have their lesson to teach now – a sterner one than ever before. We still need to underline the note of patriotism to the utmost.

Real patriotism includes loyal affection to those who are our Allies. If it be possible, every parent should endeavour to associate the family in some way with our Belgian guests. We might drop the use of the word refugee. It cannot be repeated too often that we are under an immeasurable obligation to the little country of the great deeds. We have no claim to be exercising charity in what we do to make their lot less harsh. The small damsel who is sweetly ready to give her doll to a new made Belgian friend can easily be made to comprehend that she has really received something for it. Not an exchange, but a freewill offering. Those who expect all Belgians to be perfection are naturally liable to disappointment. They are human, and sometimes we hurt the pride to which they have such ample right.

Meanwhile, to shadow the natural light-heartedness of youth because there have been no holidays as these for a century and more would be a dreary mistake. Let the children, as far as they may be, keep merry. They will be our best comforters in the hour dim with sorrow, dark with anxiety, yet touched with the

golden sunbeam of hope. The holidays are a great opportunity. Now or never is the time for the children to learn to be patriots.

PEACE PARLEY

Already we have heard discussed in the United States by the German-Americans, or by the German agents who have for months conducted an unsuccessful campaign to poison public opinion against ourselves. We need not expect much to result from these alleged overtures on the part of the enemy; but they are in themselves evidence of a very different frame of mind behind the great war machine at Berlin from that which existed when the Kaiser let loose the dogs of war.

We remember now that the German people, as well as their rulers and misleaders, expressed themselves as cocksure of immediate victory in the west as four-and- forty years ago the deluded Parisians professed themselves confident of an easy march to Berlin. Now, after more than four month's incessant battling on both fronts, instead of achievement, all that the German army can claim is an obvious checkmate. The agony may be prolonged, for the Germans are a brave people, faultlessly organised for war, and they are now fighting with their backs to the wall of their own frontiers, instead of triumphantly rough riding the people they attacked. Of course, there is Belgium with its Prussian provincial military governors, and the German eagle flying over the Hotel de Ville and the King's Palace at Brussels. That is the trophy of these several million men launched upon a mere handful of untrained troops.

But against Belgium and the meagre French territories still in occupation of the enemy may be placed the invasion of East Prussia, the total and effective occupation of Galicia by the Russians, and the loss of practically the whole German colonial empire, from Tsingtau in the Far East to Togoland in the African West. One after the other, the Kaiser's own particular places in the sun have fallen before the combined assault of the French, British and Japanese Allies. The Polish provinces of Austria, as far as it is possible to foresee, and in view of the Czar's famous proclamation of Polish unity, have passed forever from beneath the sceptre of the Hapsburgs, as surely as Prussian Poland is destined to pass from beneath the sway of the Hohenzollerns.

That is a fair audit of the account as it stands to-day, without considering the mortal blow dealt German trade from one end of the universe to the other, without pre-ponderating loss to the British, French, and Russian sea power. We can understand, therefore the chastened tone of Berlin.

The truth is dawning upon the German people: not, perhaps, yet the realisation that the game is up, but the fact that, come what come will, and however many the isolated successes of the Austro-German arms, the end is inevitable – the end of the hideous machine which has been built up for its own utter destruction. As

an American correspondent in Berlin informs New York, the phrase 'if Germany does not win' – a phrase which would have sent offending editors three months ago to certain prison – is finding expression in the Press. And, simultaneously with its employment, once more there are whispers of peace-parleying across the Atlantic.

This sudden descent from the high horse, however, will not deceive Americans any more than it is likely to impress ourselves, upon whom such hatred of a disillusioned Germany is focused because it is now patent to Berlin that 'French's contemptible little army,' in offence and defence alike, has proved more than a match for the flower of the Kaiser's horse, foot, and even artillery.

Rightly or wrongly – we think, wrongly – the Germans are obsessed with the idea that because of the intervention of England they are still engaged in futile attempts to hack their way, not to Paris, but to Calais. But the German people may be sure of this, and their spokesmen in New York as well, that, in the words of the Premier at the outset of the war, there will be no peace until Belgium has recovered all, and more than all, that she has sacrificed, until France is adequately secured against the menace of aggression, until the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe are placed on an unassailable foundation, and – last, but not least – until the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed.

These principles, which are common to the Allies, are known and approved by the neutral free nations of the world. Until they have been asserted to the full by each one of the Allied Powers, the German-Americans and the German official 'kite-fliers' will find their labour lost. Peace is not to be made on German terms, with Belgium at barter: it will be made by the Allies whenever and wherever occasion offers, whether the war lasts one year or two, or longer.

A huge advertisement appeared in the January 16th issues:

THE TOWN OF EAST GRINSTEAD IS ARRANGING
A TRIP TO GERMANY IN THE SPRING FOR A FEW SPORTSMEN
ALL HOTEL EXPENSES AND RAILWAY FARES PAID.
GOOD SHOOTING AND HUNTING, RIFLES AND AMMUNITION
FREE.
CHEAP TRIPS UP THE RHINE.
APPLY AT ONCE, AS ONLY A LIMITED NUMBER (1,000,000)
REQUIRED.

*For Full Particulars of this most advantageous offer apply to
Mr. A. H. JOHNSON, Middle Row, East Grinstead; or
Sergt. W. R. GRAYLING, De la Warr Road, East Grinstead,
The Authorised Tourist Agents.*

Also reported in the same edition is the news that Pte. Charles Gravely of the King's Own Lancashire Regiment is on his way home to Crawley suffering from frostbitten feet.

The Crawley Civil Guard held a meeting on Wednesday the 20th of January to discuss the practicalities of affiliation with the newly formed Central Volunteer Training Corps. Commandant Rossi-Ashton announces the formation of a committee to raise funds.

Another Crawley fatality is reported on January 30th: -

DEATH AT THE FRONT. – News has reached Crawley last Saturday – exactly a month after it happened of the death of Prvt. R. Hilder, of the 2nd Royal Sussex, who was killed in action. The deceased soldier formerly lived at Crawley, and with the relatives, who still reside in Malthouse Road, much sympathy will be felt in their bereavement.

Roland Edward Hilder was a regular soldier who was killed in action near Epinette on the 23rd December 1914. He was the son of John and Maria of Crawley and was born in Brighton and had enlisted in Horsham. He is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial and at Crawley.

Colour Sergeant A. E. Cook was promoted to Company Sergeant Major on 30th January 1915.

FEBRUARY 1915

February 6th:- *CORPL. KENNETH MITCHELL, of the Southdowns, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Mitchell, Crawley, is, we regret to say, lying seriously ill in a Bexhill hospital, suffering from spotted fever. Last Sunday was the most critical time of the trouble, and, as he has successfully passed that, it is hoped by his medical attendants he may pull through. All in this district where Ken is so popular will sincerely share in that hope.*

Lance Corporal C. Kenneth Mitchell died on the 5th February. The news of his death, and of his funeral, was reported in the following week's editions:-

DEATH OF MR. C. KENNETH MITCHELL.

IMPRESSIVE MILITARY FUNERAL AT CRAWLEY.

Not for years has the death of a local person occasioned so much sorrow, and drawn forth such profound sympathy, as has characterised the passing away of Charles Kenneth Mitchell, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Mitchell, of Post Office road, Crawley. The deceased was the popular son of a popular family, was known by everybody and loved by all, and the news of his death came as a great shock.

Soon after the formation of the Southdown Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, Kenneth joined that body with other Crawley friends and had been spending a happy time at Cooden Camp, near Bexhill, and only a few weeks ago he secured his first stripe, giving him the rank of Lance-Corporal.

Suddenly he was stricken with an illness which developed into cerebro-spinal meningitis, and, despite the best medical attention and nursing, he breathed his last on Friday in a hospital near the camp. Naturally his parents, who were with him to the last, were broken-hearted and in their great and unexpected bereavement they have received the heartfelt sympathy of all their friends. This, to some extent, has lightened the burden, but the blow has indeed been a terrible one and Mr. Mitchell was so ill that he could not attend the funeral.

Kenneth Mitchell was a thorough sportsman and he was a member of all the local cricket and football clubs, both at Crawley and Three Bridges. He was an active member, too, and one whose play, whether at football or cricket, was watched by many enthusiasts. It was his close association with all the sporting clubs of the district that made Ken, so well known and popular, and that popularity had spread far beyond the immediate district of Crawley. He was equally enthusiastic as a soldier and was keen at having a pop at the Germans. This opportunity to do still greater service for his country has been nipped in the bud by his untimely death, but his life has nevertheless been sacrificed in his country's cause.

The body was brought home to Crawley in a motor hearse on Monday and the funeral took place on Wednesday afternoon in the Crawley Parish Churchyard. There was a very large and sympathetic crowd, the largest seen for many years at a local funeral. Military honours were accorded and the ceremony was of the most impressive character. The polished oak coffin was practically covered with a Union Jack and was borne from the house to the church on the shoulders of uniformed comrades, preceded by a firing party with arms reversed.

Following the coffin walked N. C. O.'s carrying beautiful floral tributes, and behind them four of the deceased's comrades carried a bier, which was completely covered with wreaths and other lovely floral tokens of sympathy and sorrow. Major the Hon. Neville Lytton and Lieut. Page walked next and behind them marched the Crawley Boy Scouts, under Mr. E. Dennett; these being followed by the family mourners. The rear was brought by a contingent of the Manchester Regiment (now stationed at Three Bridges), under Sergt. Gale, these being followed by the general body of mourners. On the coffin was the inscription, 'Charles Kenneth Mitchell, born 1st Oct., 1889, died 5th February, 1915.'

The sad service was largely attended, and as voluntaries, the organist effectively played selections from Chopin and 'O rest in the Lord.' The deceased was a member of the choir, and as a tribute to his memory they attended and led the singing in the Psalm and the beautiful hymns, 'Ten thousand times, ten thousand,' and 'On the Resurrection morning,' the latter being sung at the

graveside. The service in the church was shared by the Rector (Mr. H. L. Barrett-Lennard) and the Curate (the Rev. E. J. Fenn), and at the graveside the former officiated. After the rendering of the final hymn the usual three volleys were fired over the grave and the Last Post was sounded by the buglers, this ending a ceremony which was extremely impressive and full of sadness. Among the general mourners that day was my great-grandfather, Herbert Cook.

The February 6 editions also carry the following letter addressed to the editor:

Sir: I have just returned to the Front, having spent six days on leave in England after four months of active service in the field, and I feel impelled to try to let your readers know what impressions one receives from such a visit.

One day of my leave I spent in London, the remainder in East Grinstead. I left my home yesterday with the sickening feeling that the people of England generally regard this war as an interesting event in which Great Britain is in some way mixed up, but that it is an event in which the individual Englishman feels neither desire or obligation to take a personal part.

I feel that my fellow countrymen at home, whilst fully alive to the need that their country should be defended (by somebody else – the Navy, let us say), are yet fully content to leave those who are now at the Front to rot there in the trenches whilst they themselves continue to sell ribbons over a counter and to pay their shillings like men to watch a football match.

Wherever I went I asked such questions as, 'When shall we see you in khaki?' or 'Why haven't you enlisted?' In substance the answer was always the same, viz., 'I prefer that someone else should do the job.' In form, the answers showed more variety. The following are typical examples. –

(1) I am married (and prefer to stay and cuddle my wife while you go and fight for her).

(2) I have a mole on my right arm (so, of course, I couldn't handle a rifle, though, to see me handle a cue, you would never have guessed it).

(3) I'll go when it's necessary (of course I know it's necessary for someone to go at once – now Jones should go for one – but the necessity for my going has yet to be proved).

(4) Someone has got to keep the country going at home (I'm doing such a grand work for my country in growing rich at home, it would be a thousand pities to interrupt it!)

Now, the first of these pleas expresses a widespread idea, and possibly the earlier recruiting advertisements may have lent it some countenance. When it is made to me I think of the lines, 'I could not love thee, dear, so much, loved I not honour more.' And I know what I should think if I was a wife and had a husband who sheltered himself behind my petticoats.

The second is the plea of the shirker pure and simple. His health deteriorates in the presence of the recruiting agent as rapidly as it improves in that of the life insurance agent.

The third is the reply of the more ingenious shirker. Ask him why he thinks Jones ought to go. The reasons are most entertaining. Jones, you will learn, is younger – or, maybe, he is not so young: or he hasn't got a wife to support, or he has a wife who can look after the business for him, or Jones has got more children, or less children, or the more children he has the less he wants – anyway, Jones is different, that's the main point.

And the fourth plea is the one born of that odious phrase, 'Business as usual.' Business as usual while the Belgian women are violated; business as usual while the French villages are blazing; business as usual while our little Expeditionary Force is borne down by weight of overwhelming numbers! But, if we must have business, anyway, then what about the older men, and what about the women? Can't they carry on the business well enough for at least a while? They are doing it in France, and they're doing it in Germany; it is only in England that full blooded young men are needed to sell knitting needles or to serve sausage and mash.

The fact is the people of England don't at all realise what it is we are up against. They don't understand that we are at death grips with a nation of some 70 million Germans, each man, woman and child of whom is straining every nerve to crush us. And these 70 millions are strong, and well fed, and well educated, and intelligent, and have been methodically preparing for war for years.

We can't beat a nation like that without effort. And unless we beat them, they will beat us – if not now, then in a year or two: there can be no drawn game here. Sacrifice on sacrifice; effort on effort; energy, energy, unstinted prodigality of energy, are needed to win this war. This is no time for nice calculations of just what amount of effort is necessary, to win, nor of just how much of the work should be done by our Allies and how much by ourselves. The efforts which are necessary are simply all which it is possible to make, and nothing less will do. This is no time for mothers to say, 'If Dick goes that's enough. Tom and Jack can stay at home.' No, madam, their country needs all three of them: more shame to them and to East Grinstead, and to you, madam, too, if they do not go.

That, Sir, is what is felt by one who has just returned to continue his little bit of the gigantic task, and, as I prefer to leave my name out, I will sign myself simply SOLDIER, In the Field, January 28th, 1915.

On the 19th of February, the attack on the Dardanelles began.

February 20:

INSPECTED BY THE DUKE OF NORFOLK AT NEWHAVEN

The Duke of Norfolk (Lord Lieutenant of the county) visited Newhaven yesterday

(Thursday) morning and inspected the 4th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment. The interesting proceedings took place on the land situated between Fort Road and the Harbour. The Battalion, which comprised about 900 officers, N. C. O.'s and men, were in full war-kit. His Grace, who was accompanied by the Duchess of Norfolk, was met by Colonel Head (garrison commander), Colonel E. J. Mostyn (officer commanding 4th Sussex regiment), Colonel W. H. Champion, V. D. (hon. Colonel of the regiment), Major W. R. Champion, M. P., Colonel Arthur Henty, V. D., Major Hodgson, Major Gorringe, Capt. Holton (adjutant), Capt. Constable, Capt. Sim and other officers.

The general salute was given by the battalion in smart fashion, and the Duke of Norfolk, after a thorough inspection, made an interesting speech. He complimented Colonel Mostyn on the efficiency of the battalion and expressed his pleasure at being privileged to come and inspect such a fine body of men. He announced that Major Champion was to be in command of the battalion if it went on active service, and sympathised with Colonel Mostyn in that he would be unable to accompany the battalion.

Colonel Champion also spoke, remarking that if the men were loyal to his son he was sure the latter would be loyal to them.

Colonel Mostyn gratefully acknowledged the kind sentiments that had fallen from the Duke and Colonel Champion, and called for three cheers for His Grace and three more for the honorary Colonel. These acclamations were lustily accorded.

The Duke of Norfolk afterwards inspected the men's quarters and cookhouses, and expressed his satisfaction at all that he had seen.

In the Crawley & Ifield column of the same edition:- *TOMMY'S TOBACCO FUND.*
– Another smoking concert, arranged with the object of raising funds with which to purchase tobacco and cigarettes for the men of the Sussex Regiment serving at the Front, was held in the George Hotel on Saturday night, and, though the attendance of the general public was small, the collection which was taken realised the gratifying sum of £5. 10s. 1d. It was a wretchedly wet night, and this probably accounted for the meagre company. Mr. E. B. Lehmann occupied the chair and among the list of those also present is Chris Cook.

The programme was entirely sustained by military friends – members of the 8th reserve Battalion City of London Regiment (stationed at Cuckfield) and the Manchester Regiment (stationed at Three Bridges) – and there was enough talent for a concert double the length. Encores were the order of the evening, thus testifying to the excellence of the soldiers' contributions. – In appealing for a generous collection to provide the gallant men of the Sussex Regiment with the comfort of tobacco, Mr. Lehmann made a feeling reference to the recent death of Lance – Corpl. Kenneth Mitchell, which had cast a gloom over the Crawley district. He felt that Mr. Mitchell had died for his country just as surely as if a bullet from the Germans had brought

him down in the trenches. If the sympathy of the people could soften the blow to the relatives they could rest assured that sympathy had gone out in unfailing quantity, and when the time came to erect a Roll of Honour for those in that district who had died in their country's cause the name of Kenneth Mitchell would not be absent (applause). The military present kindly contributed a guinea towards the collection total. The enjoyable proceedings closed with patriotic selections and Auld Lang Syne.

DEATH AT THE FRONT.- News has come to hand, though not officially, of the death in action of Mr. Hedger, of Albany road, Crawley, a reservist, who was called up at the commencement of the war. The deceased was a baker in the employ of Messrs. Newport, and he leaves a widow and two children. A soldier friend has communicated the sad news, he having attended Prvt. Hedger's funeral in France. Much sympathy will be expressed for the bereaved.

On the 16th February, Private Frederick Hedger, a regular soldier, of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, was killed in action near Cuinchy. He was 25. He is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial as well as on the Memorial Gates in Crawley. Also included in the February 20th papers is the following letter which has implications for the Crawley Civil Guard / Volunteer Corps:-

TO THE EDITOR

ARUNDEL CASTLE, ARUNDEL, 3rd February, 1915.

A Volunteer Training Corps for the county of Sussex is now being formed for the defence of our shores, should any hostile landing be attempted.

I hope I may call upon all those who can do so to contribute to the fund I have set on foot, to be called the Sussex Volunteer Training Fund.

The principal expenditure to be met will be that of the purchase of rifles, and there will be other matters requiring outlay. The cost of uniforms will be met by each Corps or by the individual members composing them.

I am fully aware that a hostile landing is an improbable event, but the country has properly made up its mind to make ready for it should it be attempted, and I know I can trust to the patriotism of all whom I now address to ensure that our historic county shall be prominent in the cause of national defence.

I should explain that I do not intend this general appeal shall interfere with any appeal put out by any Corps for its own special needs.

NORFOLK,

Lord Lieutenant of Sussex.

At the end of February, the Courier reports:-

LORD KITCHENER AT CRAWLEY – Nearly six thousand troops, forming part of Lord Kitchener's army, passed through Crawley on Saturday on their march from East

Grinstead to Dorking, and an agreeable surprise was caused by an unexpected visit from Lord Kitchener, who arrived in the town in a motor car, accompanied by his staff, which included Sir Evelyn Wood. His Lordship took up a position opposite the entrance to the Crawley Monastery and witnessed the passing of nearly the whole of the large body of troops, the officers saluting and the soldiers being 'eyes right'. The news of his Lordship's presence soon spread and in a short while a large crowd assembled to get a glimpse of the gallant warrior.

WOUNDED AT THE FRONT. – A brother of Police Sergeant Capelin, of Crawley, has been wounded at the Front and is on his way home. He was struck in the neck by a piece of shell, which has been removed, and he is making good progress.

MARCH 1915

On the Western Front, the Allies first offensive of the year got underway on March the 10th. Four Divisions of the British and Canadian Armies attacked along a two mile front at Neuve Chapelle with the objective of capturing the high ground of Aubers Ridge. Despite great initial success, logistical and communication problems allowed the Germans to counter-attack, and the attempt to capture the ridge failed. It was discovered afterwards that the attack had used nearly a third of all the artillery shells available to the British Army at that time. Sir John French, commander of the British Expeditionary Force, blamed the outcome of the attack on the shortfall of shells and this led to a great crisis for the British government, when it was revealed to the public. This did not endear French to the politicians.

The middle of March sees a letter home addressed to the Courier:

LETTER FROM THE FRONT. – Prvt. Charlie Dumsday, of Crawley, sends us a letter from the Front, dated the 12 inst. After referring to his passage over, Prvt. Dumsday says: " We marched to a rest camp in Rouen, which we left in the following morning for the station, and where we entrained and travelled, via Amiens, to Valenciennes. We then marched through Baray to Mons, where we found the British troops in action. Our ambulance and bearers left us to collect the wounded, the remainder of us having to retire. We found the dressing station just cooking dinner. We were expecting a good meal, when, just as it was served up, the order came for us to retire, as the Germans were upon us, so we were done out of our dinner. You may be sure there were very nasty remarks made about the Germans for that.

We retired again through Baray and saw a German Taube brought down, after a good deal of Maxim and rifle fire at it. We still had to retire, marching day and night. We wondered why we were doing so at all, but the infantry could

tell a tale, as they lost heavily, according to the reports we heard ; but after the stragglers had been collected the losses were not so heavy as had first been the story. We halted for the night, but at dawn the next morning the Germans were on us again and we had to march off pretty quickly. Heavy firing was going on behind us. We saw a fight in the air that day, when one of our aviators brought down a Taube. The German Taube machine has curved back wings and looked exactly like a hawk after a swallow, but never really got above it. We heard a shot and the Taube staggered and glided down, when the wounded aviator was captured. It was a wonderful sight and looked like two great birds.

We marched on all day and about 4 p.m. heard heavy firing and saw shrapnel. We thought it was a small cavalry action, but it soon developed into something worse, for the cavalry began to come in. We were very near the end of the column which had just passed through. We rattled along and afterwards had a meal and slept the night on the pavement. It was only an hour's sleep, but the pavement was hard – like a feather bed, I don't think.

Next morning we were told the Germans were on us again. Their high explosive shells make a fearful noise; one cannot imagine what it is like, but their bark is worse than their bite, I think. I am quite well and all the boys with me. I am hoping to see some Crawley boys before long. We have a few prisoners at times and they say ' Why don't you give up? You know you are beat.' That is what they think, but I don't. We've got a few men this side yet and some more coming up. I am sorry I can't say no more about the war; I don't dare. The North of France is very cold yet. Well, I want to thank the ladies of Crawley for their parcel. It was indeed very nice of you. We all had a taste – the best cake out here yet from Crawley. So I must say good-bye to all at Crawley for this time. Hope to be home soon."

March 27:- KILLED AT THE FRONT. – The death of another Crawley man at the war has unfortunately to be announced. Mr and Mrs. J. Johnson, of Bellvue, Tilgate, have received intimation that their second son, Lance- Corpl. James Johnson, was killed at Ypres on February 27th. In the same battle another son, Mr. William Johnson, was wounded, the trench in which he was being blown up, and he lies in St. Thomas' Hospital, London. The deceased, who was aged 23, has been in the East Yorkshire Regiment for about six years.

James Johnson had enlisted in Kingston on Hull and was formerly with the East Surreys before joining the East Yorkshire Regiment. He was a resident of Pease Pottage. His body was never found and he is commemorated on Panel 21 of the Menin Gate at Ypres. His brother William, who was a Private, and was also in the East Yorkshire Regiment, obviously recovered from his wounds as he returned to the Front where he was to be killed in action at Arras two years later.

Ted's move to the 2/4th Battalion is confirmed by the papers at the end of March:-

CRAWLEY TERRITORIALS. – The under-mentioned, who are all stationed at Newhaven, have been transferred to the 2/4th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment: Sgt. A. E. Cook, Lance-Corpl. A. Goring, Prvt. H. Cooper, Prvt. R. Gravett and Prvt. A. Brazier.

The same edition also reports. – AN ABSENTEE. – P.C. Skinner saw Private William Thos. Quincey in the early hours of Monday morning at Crawley and ascertained that he had been an absentee without leave from the 24th Divisional Cyclist Company, now stationed at Henfield, since the evening of the 21st inst. He was taken to the police station. – Prisoner said he had been to see his mother and was returning to Henfield when the constable stopped him. – Prisoner was brought before a Magistrate at Horsham on Monday and was remanded to await a military escort.

APRIL 1915

Private Robert Henry George Butcher of the 12th Battalion, Royal Sussex, died of disease at home on the 10th April 1915 at the age of 44. He was the son of Mr and Mrs John Lennox Butcher of Burgess Hill and the husband of Mrs Catherine Emma Butcher of Cross Keys, Crawley. He was born in Portslade and had enlisted in Bexhill. As well as being listed on the Crawley Memorial Gates, his name is included on the Burgess Hill War Memorial. He was buried in St. Johns Churchyard, Burgess Hill.

The Germans were not being idle themselves on the Western Front. On Thursday, April 22nd, they launched what came to be known as the Second Battle of Ypres. A heavy two day bombardment preceded the attack which, on the 22nd and again on the 24th, saw the Germans use chlorine poison gas for the first time. Despite being banned by the 1889 Hague Convention, over 170 tonnes of gas was sent over to Allied trenches killing around 6,000 men in a truly horrifying fashion.

In Gallipoli, with the main Naval attack having failed because of highly mobile Turkish artillery keeping their minesweepers from clearing minefields, it had been decided that an all out invasion by an army was the way forward. Unfortunately, the six week delay in getting enough men and materiel to the Dardanelles played straight into Turkish hands as they were able to use the time allowed them to improve their defences. The Allied landings started on April 25th and walked straight into highly organised defences. It was the beginning of an eight month bloodbath.

MAY 1915

On May 3rd, the day after his friend, Lieutenant Alexis Kramer, 22, had been killed, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian doctor, wrote the now world famous war poem, 'In Flanders Fields'.

Consisting of four separate engagements, Second Ypres ground to a halt on the 25th May, with the salient at Ypres now pushed back to the very outskirts of the city itself.

A letter is printed in the papers bemoaning the lack of success of RECRUITING AT CRAWLEY. –

Sir: The war which brings so much sorrow and so much loss to us also brings the enormous advantage of clear distinction between that which is false and that which is true; between that which is unreal and that which is real. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent. Words coming from the humblest source, which are logically true, are worth infinitely more than the dicta of the most highly placed, which rest rather upon authority than upon argument.

Last Saturday an appeal was made for men to serve in our county regiment. The meeting was held in the Lower-square, Crawley. Those who should have listened were gathered together nearer the station and the Picture Theatre than to the point of real national importance. I looked into the faces of 51 men of apparent military age between the entrance of East Park and the George Hotel. I cannot, of course, say that they were all able to join the Army or that they were all medically fit. But the Recruiting Officer in attendance told me that one man had joined! One man! Oh, the pity of it! That one man is, I assert, a better man than I, for he goes to do his duty to his country and I, woe is me! – to talk about it!

'Man ought always to pray, and not to faint.' And yet what is the value of prayer of him who will not risk his all to gain that which he prays for? He but mocks Almighty God ; no less. Think of the poor lad sobbing out his gallant life, half choked with blood, yonder in Flanders, and note the strong, able young fellow who prefers to 'help his father' and cower behind the counter whereon the competence to give him a good time later on is amassed. There are so many who would not believe in the duty of self-sacrifice, though 'One rose from the dead'. If such will not hear the cry of their brethren, fighting, falling, fainting for England and outraged Belgium, it is not wonderful that they shirk coming to hear their plain duty told them at recruiting meetings, either in the hall or in the street.

'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it!' says Addison's Cato. Unless the nation rouses yet more, shall we even deserve the success for which Britain fights?

Should compulsion come, can the pressed man ever stand on the same level as the volunteer? Perhaps – but only by sacrifice and suffering. Every man who holds back is doing his best to lengthen the war, to defer the peace we fight for! See to it, men of Crawley and Ifield!

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

W. J. CHALK.

The Limes, Crawley. May 2nd, 1915.

Another letter from the Front is also featured:-

A CONCERT AT THE FRONT. – Below are extracts from a letter received from S. F. Stanford, transport driver, A. S. C., ammunition park: I am writing to let you know about a concert I went to a few nights ago. It was known as the 'A. S. C. Field Concert' for A. S. C. only. It was held at a farm about five miles from our lines. We had to be on parade at 6.30 p.m. and then we were allotted to lorries and were soon spinning along on our way to the concert, singing various songs. There were two lorries from our Company and six or seven from another Company, all packed full of the boys, and you can guess it was quite a bean feast. We arrived at the farm about 7.15 p.m., and you must picture our concert hall as follows: It was in the middle of a field with two horse transport wagons, standing some distance apart, with a tarpaulin from wagon to wagon to form the shelter. There was a piano in one corner and a gramophone in the other. Motor head lights provided the necessary illumination, and to keep us warm there was a large bonfire.

As luck would have it it turned out to be a beautiful night, the stars and moon shone bright, and there was a slight frost. The concert was a great success. We had various songs by officers, N. C. O.'s and men, and a duet by two privates from our Company with the mandolin and harp. One song that seemed to take well was 'Song of the sea', and as everything was quiet and the man singing softly, one could hear the distant booming of guns, and on the sky line one could see the flashes from the guns, so you can imagine he had a good accompaniment. After three cheers for the King and three for the officers we got back to our lorries and were soon on our way back to our little barn. We arrived back about 1 a.m.

May 7th saw an event that turned the entire world against Germany and would eventually help bring America into the war. The ocean liner RMS Lusitania was sunk by German torpedo just eight miles off the coast of Ireland. She sank in under 20 minutes, and of the 1,959 people aboard only 957 survived.

On Saturday May 8th, a meeting was held in the Lower-square with the object of obtaining recruits for the 3/4th (Territorial) Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, which is now being provided for the purpose of training and preparing drafts for the first 4th Battalion, who will soon be leaving for the Front.

Among the speakers was Mr. E. B. Lehmann who led off with a rousing speech, in which he did not forget to denounce in the strongest possible words the atrocious crime of the Germans in torpedoing and sinking the 'Lusitania' and thereby sacrificing the lives of hundreds of non-combatants, including many women and children. Mr. Lehmann also referred to the inhuman use of poison gas on the battlefields and said these things made one's blood boil with indignation and animated them all with a stronger desire than ever to crush the military

might of the red Kaiser and his hordes. After some more speeches, it was reported that there was not a very gratifying response, only two young fellows volunteering.

The very next day, the 9th of May, Frederick Soan, a Rifleman of the 4th Battalion, Rifle Brigade, 27th Division was killed in action near Ypres – probably at the Battle of Frezenberg, which had started on the 8th, and which was itself part of the larger Second Battle of Ypres. He was 26 and the son of Herbert and Minnie Soan of Rest Cottage, Albany Road Crawley. He was born in Crawley and had enlisted in East Grinstead. His body was never found but his name is commemorated on the Menin Gate at Ypres on panel 48 as well as at Crawley.

The following week there is news of *A MILITARY ABSENTEE*. – That he had been absent from Cooden Camp, Bexhill, since April 23rd was the charge preferred against Lance-Corpl. Charles Francis, whose home is at 100, West Street, Crawley. – *P. S. Capelin said prisoner's liberty pass expired on April 23rd. His reason for not returning was the expected (sic) sickness of his wife. – Prisoner, who admitted the facts, was remanded by the Horsham Bench to await an escort; and P. S. Capelin was awarded 5s. for effecting the man's arrest.*

WOUNDED AT THE WAR. – Mrs. Knowles, of Alpha road, Crawley, on Wednesday received information that her husband Mr. H. Knowles, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, had been wounded on Sunday. Mr. Knowles was a reservist, and has been at the Front practically since the war commenced. All will hope that his wounds are not of a serious nature.

May 22 – SLIGHTLY WOUNDED. – Writing to his relatives at Ifield, Sergt. C. Butcher, of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, states that he is going on well, and adds, "I stopped two bullets – one in my shoulder and one in my foot – but nothing serious." His friends at Ifield will be glad Sergt. Butcher has escaped so lightly and hope he will soon be able to leave the hospital at Malta, where he now is.

May 1915 saw the British Government facing a looming problem. After eight months of fighting, the number of soldiers volunteering was beginning to drop off. May saw just 70,000 volunteers and the government was beginning to think about conscription. It was also revealed that two out of every five volunteers up to that point had been refused for military service because of ill health. Having prided itself as being the only nation in the conflict with an all volunteer army, conscription did not sit comfortably with all members of the government. The National Registration Act was passed which meant that the name of every man who was available was revealed. These men then found themselves the target of a campaign which included even being buttonholed on their own doorstep to get them to enlist. Lord Edward Derby (who

opposed conscription himself) was given the job of Director General of Recruitment and was told in no uncertain terms that time was of essence. His solution, which came to be known as the Derby Scheme, encouraged men to register voluntarily on the grounds that they would only be called upon when necessary. If a man was married, he was assured that he would only be required when all the single men had gone.

May 29th – WOUNDED SOLDIERS AT THE COTTAGE HOSPITAL. – *The committee of the Crawley and Ifield Cottage Hospital having placed eight beds at the disposal of the authorities, the first batch of invalid soldiers arrived on Sunday, half-a-dozen being brought in a motor car from Brighton. Some had been badly wounded in battle, whilst others were cases of appendicitis and adenoids, for which operations had been performed prior to their arrival at Crawley.*

The two most serious cases are those of Prvt. Berry, of the King's Own Royal Lancashires, and Sgt. Glover, of the 2nd Cheshire Regiment, both of whom telling thrilling stories of their awful experiences at the Front. Sergt. Glover, who lives at Nantwich and is 35, has 17 years' service to his credit. He served throughout the South Africa campaign and was wounded. He went to France in August and after various engagements was wounded in the mouth by a bullet in September. He was invalided home and returned to the Front in December, being again wounded in the ankle by shrapnel shell. Subsequently Sergt. Glover received terrible injuries to the eye and face and a piece of shell, an inch square, is still embedded in his left cheek

Prvt. Berry has injuries to his legs, arms and chest, and most of his wounds were received while he was attending fallen comrades. He went to the Front early in August and took part in the battles of Mons, Marne, Aisne, Lys and other places, and was wounded at Le Touquet on December 26, receiving a bullet wound in each leg and bayonet scratches in the arm and left side. He returned to England and again went abroad in February. In May he was wounded again, receiving a bullet in the arm, which smashed the bone, and another bullet, which entered his chest, went right through one of his lungs and came out at the back. These terrible wounds were inflicted at a moment when he was dressing the wounds of others. Both men can tell vivid stories of the battles and they can confirm the atrocities alleged against the Germans, but space forbids their recapitulation here.

Despite the severity of their wounds the men are extremely cheerful and full of gratitude for the kindness and consideration shown them by the Matron and her willing staff at the Cottage Hospital. Occasional motor rides are being provided for them and these are, of course, much enjoyed; and the remainder of time is spent in the garden at the rear of the hospital, where they sit and smoke and recount to each other their individual experiences. More than one of the men whispered the wish to be allowed to have a walk out now and again.

HIGHLANDERS AT CRAWLEY. – About 200 members of Scottish Regiments arrived at Crawley on Wednesday afternoon and were billeted in the town. In the evening the Crawley Town Band rendered an appropriate programme of music in the Lower-square for the pleasure of the military friends. There was a good deal of dancing and it was evident that all present, military as well as civilians, much enjoyed themselves.

WOUNDED. – News has just been received that Prvt. George Tingley, of the West Surrey Regiment, has been wounded in the head, and he is now in a hospital in London. Tingley's home is Malthouse Road, Crawley. Another local man, Sergt. Boniface, who lives in Oak Road, has been wounded, being shot in the right eye and the right arm. He is in a hospital in Manchester.

There are several other War related events going on in the town, with the band due to play concerts on Saturday and Sunday evenings (weather permitting) and a social event for soldiers being held at the Railway Hotel Assembly Hall. The Crawley and Ifield detachment of the Volunteer Training Corps had a training camp and exercise against their Horsham counterparts.

On Monday May 24th, a cricket match took place at Crawley, when the visitors, Mr. Selby's X1, won an interesting game by a good margin on the first innings, thanks to the effective bowling of Cottle (five wickets for five runs, including the hat trick). One of the hat trick victims was D. Cook, E. Cook having been removed earlier. It is probable that the boys used this game as a warm up before the beginning of the school cricket season. W. Cottle, who also scored 24 with the bat, may well be Walter Edward Worsdale Cottle whose name appears on the Ifield War memorial, the Memorial gates in Crawley and the Menin Gate in Ypres. Cottle was a Lieutenant of the Grenadier Guards and was attached to the 1st. Guards Brigade Machine Gun Company. He was killed in action at Third Ypres on the 31st July 1917, perhaps during the Battle of Pilckem Ridge, where the Allies lost 32,000 killed, wounded or missing in just this one action. Pilckem Ridge was itself a part of what is technically known as the Third Battle of Ypres, but more commonly known as the Battle of Passchendaele. He was 22, the son of Walter Herbert and Agnes Muriel Cottle of Melton Hall, Newdigate, Surrey. As his body was never found he is one of the missing commemorated on the Menin Gate in Ypres. His name is on panel 9.

Later that same week, down in Brighton, the school cricket season got underway. The first round of the inter-house competition was played on Wednesday May 26th with Marshall House featuring for the first time both R. E. Cook and D. H. Cook. Marshall House played Chichester House in the first round, with Marshall batting first and making a decent total of 67. Don was caught and bowled for 6, while Eddie made 24 and was the team's top scorer before being bowled. Chichester House's response was just 16. For Marshall, R. E. Cook took four wickets for 11 runs and D.

H. Cook six for 4 runs. On their first game together at the school, the boys had bowled out an entire team. Don was put straight into the School Second Eleven for their game the following Saturday when, with figures of eight wickets for 30 runs, it seems he did enough to justify a place in the First Eleven starting line-up the following week.

JUNE 1915

Three First Eleven games are recorded in the Past & Present School magazine, June 1915 edition:

FIRST ELEVEN v. BRIGHTON CROCKS

Played at Withdean, Wednesday, June 2nd.

Our visitors won the toss and gave us first innings on a wicket that played well throughout the game, although the uncomfortable shooter was at times to be met with. Graves and Hawkins played very steadily for some time, although the moderate quality of the early bowling seemed to justify greater enterprise. Warren made one or two nice shots during his short innings, but his colleague in office fell a speedy victim to the shooter.

The most interesting cricket of the match was afforded by the partnership of the cousins Cook. Batting with great freedom they quickly added 18 valuable runs before R. E. hit right across a straight ball; his cousin got most of his runs by glancing to leg balls which seemed destined for his middle stump. The last four batsmen contributed three runs and the innings closed for the very modest total of 50.

Our opponents made the runs for the loss of only five batsmen. They were indebted for their success mainly to the efforts of Mr. Johnson, and to the sympathetic nature of our fieldsmen, who repeatedly refused to take advantage of his mistakes. R. E. Cook was the chief sufferer of these blunders, but, although he put down many fine balls, he was scarcely at his best. D. H. Cook shows great promise as a bowler; his action is good and he comes very quickly off the pitch.

In the field the team seemed very short of practice, the catching especially being very faulty. The first match is, perhaps, too early an occasion for much criticism; probably with more experience and plenty of enthusiasm the First Eleven should turn out a very useful side.

FIRST ELEVEN v. BRIGHTON COLLEGE SECOND ELEVEN

Played at the College on Thursday, the 3rd June, and resulting in a win for the College. Graves and Hawkins opened the innings for the School, who batted first, but the latter was soon bowled. This was not an encouraging beginning – one wicket for no runs – but we must expect such things in cricket. Play brightened up a little when Warren went in, but scoring was very slow, both batsmen showing a strange incapacity for hitting leg balls. When the score had reached 38, Warren

was snapped at the wicket, and Graves, who had been playing very steadily, was soon afterwards dismissed. The remainder were disappointing in that none of them succeeded in reaching double figures; and so the School innings came to a close for 73, a small total for so fast a scoring ground as that of the College.

During the whole of the time that the College batted it rained, but despite this fact the School fielding was on the whole very praiseworthy, and the bowlers bowled admirably under conditions by no means favourable. At six o' clock stumps were drawn, when the College total had reached 90 for the loss of only six wickets.

The next day, thousands of miles away in Gallipoli, Crawley lost another man. Private Roland (or Rowland) George Ewart Wright (his name is spelt Rowland by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission) of the 1st Battalion, Kings Own Scottish Borderers, part of the 29th Division was killed in action on Gallipoli on the 4th June at the age of 23. He was born in Hambledon, Hampshire. The 1901 Census places him in Crawley. He had enlisted in Pinner, Middlesex. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial in Gallipoli and the Memorial Gates in Crawley.

June 5 – *LETTER FROM THE TRENCHES.*- *Writing home this week to his mother, Mrs. Constable, her youngest son Frank says that although he has not been out long, he has seen a bit of the war. He says: "I left Chatham on April 22nd and on the 25th I was in the trenches with the rest of the regiment. We were in support of the French, and stayed there five nights. During that time shells were bursting every minute, both night and day. The Germans also sent over some of the gases, but we did not get enough of it to hurt anyone. From there we went back to a forest and stayed in reserve, being sent up near the fighting each night.*

On the evening of May 6th we were told that we had got to make a charge, so we were marched up close to the firing line, and at 10 o' clock we charged the German trenches. It was simply, I don't know what, these bombs, shells and bullets flying all around us. After staying there two days we went back to a once called town, but nearly every house has been shelled now. From there, directly it was dark, we marched off to the trenches digging. One night, whilst we were doing this, I and the chap next to me both had our rifles smashed by a piece of shell ; they were lying just above our heads, so you can guess it was a near thing. It was here that we received another lot of gas ; this time it affected our eyes, and we could not see for nearly five minutes. Since then we have had five day's rest, which we wanted very much. We have been hard at it again since Sunday, but hope to go back to finish our rest tomorrow. I have only an hour to spare and am writing this in a dug-out."

The next round of House Matches at Brighton Grammar School took place on Wednesday June 9th with Marshall House playing an under strength Willett House. Marshall, batting first, made 80. Willett's first innings was destroyed by the Cook boys' bowling and the ten man team was all out for just three runs. They were invited to bat again and this time managed to reach 19 for six. D. H. Cook and R. E. Cook each took four wickets for 1 run. On Saturday June the 12th Marshall House were up against Pelham. Marshall made 92, while Pelham were dismissed by the Cook boys for eight. R. E. Cook took five wickets for 3 runs, and D. H. Cook took four for 5 runs.

FIRST ELEVEN v. XAVERIAN COLLEGE

Played at Withdean, June 16th. The School scarcely took full advantage of their good fortune in winning the toss. Graves, who opened the innings with Mr. Clements, was bowled by the second ball of the match, and the second wicket fell with only four runs on the board. This brought in the Captain, who settled down to pull the game round, though it was not till the arrival of Wade that he could get much support. Both played sound cricket at a very critical stage of the game; Warren brought off some beautifully timed strokes on the leg side, and, though one or two of his off shots were a bit uppish, his innings proved our salvation.

We eventually realized 59 runs, a dangerously small total, though at Withdean totals are usually on the small side. Tea somewhat revived the spirits of our ten men, who had failed to get into double figures; this enthusiasm was gradually dissipated as the score rose and no wicket fell. Mr. Mills and R. E. Cook were both bowling finely, and most of the runs were the result of some very smart running between the wickets.

It was not till the total was 21 that Mr. Mills got through the watchful defence of Brother Sylvester. A smart piece of work by Greenyer, who threw down the wicket from mid-on, caused the retirement of our next opponent. The next two wickets added 7 runs and then came an extraordinary collapse; the last five batsmen were dismissed for 2 runs. Mr. Mills was chiefly responsible for this happy result; keeping a splendid length he turned both ways enough to beat the bat, and his five wickets cost him only 14 runs. This by itself was apparently not enough, and he was greedy enough to include the hat-trick in his performance.

The fielding showed great improvement, and few runs were given away. A weakness which is still apparent is slow starting when the ball is coming in your direction. A batsman can often be frightened from attempting a run by a fieldsmen anticipating the direction of the stroke.

That same day, June 16th, Ted was promoted again, this time to Quarter-Master Sergeant but his time with the 2/4th Royal Sussex Regiment was about to come to an end.

Marshall House played Smith on Wednesday the 23rd. D. H. Cook made 36 with the bat and R. E. Cook contributed 25 not out of Marshall's total score of 113 for three. In reply, Smith were all out for 7 and batted again, this time all out for 19. In the first innings R. E. Cook took seven wickets for 1 run and D. H. Cook two for 5 runs.

Meanwhile in Crawley, the funeral of James Longley took place on Saturday June 26th. Among those attending are listed Regimental Quarter-Master Sergeant A. E. Cook and Messrs H. Cook and C. Cook.

Ireland House were now the only other unbeaten team in the School inter-house competition and the final fixture, played on Wednesday June 30th, Marshall v Ireland, would be the competition decider. Marshall made 66, with R. E. Cook making exactly half the teams total before Ireland were dismissed for 21 by the Cook cousins. For Marshall, R. E. Cook took four wickets for 14 runs, and D. H. Cook four wickets for 6 runs. Marshall House were the winners of the 1915 School Inter-House Competition with ten points out of a possible ten. Shortly after the inter-house cricket competition had ended, there was a House shooting competition which saw R. E. Cook hitting the target 47 times out of a possible 60.

JULY 1915

FIRST ELEVEN v SKINNER'S SCHOOL

Played at Withdean, Saturday, July 3rd. The School won the toss and decided to go in first on a good wicket. Their innings was opened by Graves and Hawkins. The latter's dismissal after he had scored a single brought in Wade, who, in Warren's absence, was captaining the team. Bourne, the captain of the opposing team, was bowling very well round the wicket and was responsible for a breakdown in the School team after the dismissal of Graves and Wade, the former being taken at square leg and the latter given out lbw. Of the remaining batsmen the only one to show any form was Pettyfer, who, unlike some of the others, stood up to the bowling well.

Our opponents were sent in to face the poor total of 52. The bowling of the two Cooks, however, was too good for them, both keeping an excellent length and beating the batsmen time and again. Their innings, which lasted under half-an-hour, came to a close for a total of 13 runs. The feature of this match was the good bowling on both sides.

Although I cannot be sure of this, the following Wednesday, July 7th, was the last time the boys would ever play cricket together.

FIRST ELEVEN v XAVERIAN COLLEGE

Played at Preston Park. The wicket proved a batsman's wicket, and it was due rather to superior batting than bowling that the Xaverian College let off in so favourable position. To have come so near to equalising our score in one-and-a-

half hours with the loss of only one wicket was a very creditable performance, and had it not been for the steadiness of the School fielding, the result would have been a defeat instead of a drawn match.

Warren played a capital innings for the highest score of the match, and Mr. Mills and Cook did well, but the rest of the batting was weak. For our opponents, De Lambeque and Jackson played pretty cricket, and ran very well. The bowling was for the most part straight and a good length; though unable to reach the stumps, it kept runs down. While all fielded well, Warren at point, and Powell at the wickets deserve special praise.

R. E. Cook made 26 but D. H. Cook made 0 and Xaverian College were in a very strong position at 116 for one when the game was forced to a close.

The final First Eleven fixture took place two weeks later without Eddie as it appears he was taking his exams.

FIRST ELEVEN v BRIGHTON CROCKS

Played at Withdean on Wednesday, July 21st.

Owing to the number of regular first team players being absent because of the Cambridge Examination, several Masters were played. It was our return match with the 'Cocks', and we were anxious to have our revenge for our defeat earlier in the season. The School batted first, Mr. Mills and Mr. Clements opening the innings. It was not long, however, before the latter was bowled, when he had only made 3, but the former was not dismissed until he had scored 20 – our highest score. Of the other batsmen, Mr. Larke and Saqui especially distinguished themselves, the former by his vigorous hitting, the latter, who was playing in the First Eleven for the first time, by his excellent driving.

Our total being the modest one of 58, we did not feel at all sure of victory when the 'Cocks' had only lost three wickets for 30. However, through the excellent bowling of D. H. Cook, who secured six wickets for 18 runs, thus amply making up for his failure with the bat, and Mr. Mills, we were able to bet our opponents out for 48, thereby winning the match by 10 runs. This total might have been less if Greenyer, in the long field, had shown a little more energy and got to several catches well within the range of an active fieldsman.

The end of the School cricket season saw the publishing of the First Eleven batting and bowling averages (I have only included the Cook cousins here):-

BATTING

	Innings	Runs	Most	Times not out	Average
R. E. Cook	5	48	26	0	9.6
D. H. Cook	6	13	7	0	2.16

BOWLING

	Overs	Maidens	Run	Wickets	Average
R. E. Cook	44.8	9	99	11	9
D. H. Cook	32	8	75	14	5.4

It is difficult to assess just how talented the 'Cook cousins' actually were at cricket. They were certainly better than their peers at the School, as winning the Inter-House competition in the convincing fashion they did clearly shows. They were also certainly on at least an equal level when it came to First Eleven matches. It is highly unlikely that either of them saw cricket as anything other than a game as both boys' futures would have been going into the family business – until the War started.

The Past & Present magazine carries an article titled *NOTES ON FIRST ELEVEN* and it provides an insight into the way the 'Cook cousins' played the game:-

R. E. Cook. – The all-rounder of the side. He is a most aggressive bat with a variety of strokes, in which are unfortunately found several with a cross bat. He has done many splendid pieces of bowling, but is sometimes inclined to sacrifice length for pace.

D. H. Cook.- An excellent bowler; he keeps a most accurate length, and the ball comes off the pitch at a great pace. His batting has very greatly improved, though he is apt to misjudge a ball on the leg stump.

The July 1915 Cambridge Examination Results record that R. E. Cook has passed in Arithmetic, Religious Knowledge (Gospel), English (Composition and Shakespeare), History, Geography, French, Book-Keeping and Drawing (Geometrical). His name appears in the Third Section of Senior Students. Now aged 17, he would have to wait until after his 18th birthday to join up.

In Crawley, the papers report of two military tragedies. A Prvt. Waring is reported to have dropped dead while marching, with his body being put on a train to Lancashire. There was also a fatal motor-car accident involving two Army men, one of whom, Prvt. Dickinson was killed and buried with full military honours at Slaugham. There is also news of some war relics being shown to the children of the Church of England School and the usual weekly entertainments for soldiers.

Lord Kitchener, on his return from Brighton on Tuesday, when he had inspected the Indian Hospital, pulled up at Crawley and visited the Old Prior's House, where he spent nearly an hour inspecting the many antiques, several of which he purchased. The proprietor, Mr. G. A. Parkhurst, was naturally much gratified at the distinguished soldier's visit.

News, as well, of an award:- *THE D.C.M. – Prvt. R. Slipper, who, it will be remembered, was married to Miss Maud Tweddill in November last, and went to France with the second Canadian contingent, has been awarded the D.C.M. He was wounded at La*

Bassee by a bursting shell, and is now in the Duchess of Connaught's Convalescent Hospital at Taplow. Prvt. Slipper is a crack shot and has been particularly brilliant as a sniper, and his Distinguished Conduct Medal was awarded for this, in conjunction with his meritorious services at the battle referred to.

AUGUST 1915

The anniversary of the declaration of War was marked in Crawley and Ifield by special intercession services. The Courier says:-

At Ifield Parish Church there are services at 11.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m., and the Vicar hopes all local people will make an effort to attend, especially those of them who have relatives serving in the King's Forces. At West Crawley Church (St. Peter's) there will be a celebration of Holy Communion at 8 a.m., Matins, with Litany and intercessions, at 11.30; a service for G. F. S. Members and Associates, with intercessions at 6.30; and a special service of intercession at 8 p.m., with an address. "Our spiritual leaders," says the Vicar of West Crawley, "have made a special appeal to Christian people to keep the day in this spirit. Let us then come to God's House to pray for the success of our arms and a speedy termination of the present warfare."

Private Nathaniel Rice of the 2nd Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, part of the 29th. Division was killed in action on Gallipoli on the 6th of August 1915 at the age of 20. He was actually listed as missing for over a year before the official announcement came. He was one of the sons of John and Eliza Rice of 80, Ifield Close, Crawley and was married. Three of the Rice brothers were to die in the Great War. Nathaniel Rice was the first. He was born in Crawley and had enlisted in Guildford. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial out in Gallipoli and on the Crawley Memorial Gates.

The August 28 Courier reports of the Ladies' Sandbag Working Party's successful fundraising concert which up to that point, had had a total of 2,540 sandbags cut out and made up, with 1,845 having already been sent to the Front. Enough funds are in place to carry on the work for another few weeks.

WOUNDED AT THE WAR.- Intimation has been received that Capt. Jack Dempsey and 2nd Lieut. Pat Dempsey, both of the 5th Royal Irish Fusiliers, have been wounded. Their many friends in the Crawley district will be glad to know that so far as can be gathered their injuries are not of a serious nature.

SEPTEMBER 1915

September 4 – WOUNDED AT THE WAR. – News has been received that Sergt. Harry Skinner, whose home is in Malthouse Road, has been wounded, but no details are as yet to hand. – It is unofficially mentioned that Corpl. Alfred

Soper, of Spencers Road, Crawley, who proceeded to the Dardanelles early in the last month, has been accidentally wounded.

There is also an update on the sandbags situation. – A further consignment of 666 sandbags have this week been sent to Miss Tyler for the soldiers at the Front, making the total 2,511 sent from Crawley and district. Monthly subscriptions, amounting to £2. 3s., have been promised, and an extract from Miss Tyler's letter reads: " In spite of the latest official announcement the Army is short of sandbags and desperately in need of them.....

If we are to believe the men under fire. Their urgent appeals for sandbags continue to reach us, several every day just now. We have sent out direct to the firing line just under one million sandbags (24,000 to-day) and we hope to send other millions, so long as the war lasts, and so long as our women 'do their bit' (as the soldiers style it in their letters of thanks) and open pitiful ears to the cry from the trenches. I cannot understand why each woman does not make one sandbag, and then we would have plenty.' Do get everyone possible to make all the sandbags they can, and when they have done that, then more, and more, and more." Donations or subscriptions will be thankfully received by Mrs. Martin, Miss Dallas and Mrs. Nightingale, Hazeldene, Crawley.

On 4th September Quarter-Master Sergeant A. E. Cook was posted to the 72nd Provisional Battalion.

September 18th – A SOLDIER'S DEATH.- Considerable sympathy is felt for Mr. and Mrs. C. Sayers, of 433, Malthouse Road, Crawley, in the sad news they have received concerning their eldest son, Charles, who has been killed in action at the Dardanelles. No official intimation of his death has yet been received, but there is, unfortunately, no doubt in the matter, for in a letter to his mother, Prvt. Frank Rice, of West Street, Crawley, says he was in the trenches by the side of Prvt. Sayers when the latter was shot through the head by a sniper. He died immediately.

Prvt. Sayers joined the 'C' Company of the 4th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment prior to the war, and on mobilisation, went with them to Newhaven. He was with the 4th at the landing of Suvla Bay. The deceased was a very popular young fellow, not only in Crawley, but also in the neighbouring towns, for he was well known as a footballer and as a member of the Crawley Harriers. By his many friends deep regret is expressed at his death, and to the bereaved family very heartfelt sympathy is extended.

The Royal British Legion Roll of Honour web page says that Prvt. Sayers was killed in action near Suvla Bay on the 28th August 1915. He was the son of Mr and Mrs Charles Sayers of 33, Malthouse Road, Crawley. He was born in Crawley and had

enlisted in Horsham. He was buried in Green Hill Cemetery at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli. His name can be found in Crawley on the Memorial Gates.

It is worth noting here that being shot 'straight through' the head or the heart was quite often used by surviving soldiers when informing comrades' bereaved loved ones to infer that their man had not suffered and that it was quick. The soldiers themselves used to insist that their loved ones were spared the gory details if at all possible. I have no especial reason to think that that is the case with Prvt. Sayers.

Meanwhile, over at the Western Front, on September 25th 1915, the major British offensive at Loos began. Even with a preceding four day bombardment of a quarter of a million shells, over five thousand chlorine gas shells and diversionary attacks at Ypres, the British Army still lost heavily to the pitiless German machine guns. Although some gains were made, the ongoing problem of a lack of artillery shells was continuing to hamper the British war effort.

September 25 – *LETTERS FROM CRAWLEY SOLDIERS.*- *A couple of letters have come to hand this week from Crawley boys who are at the Dardanelles, the first from Private 'Billy' Knight, whose father (Corporal Oscar Knight) and two brothers are in the Army, whilst two younger brothers are in the Crawley Boy Scouts. Writing to his mother, in Ifield Road, 'Billy' conveys the gratifying information that he is quite all right, following his turn in the trenches.*

He adds, " The first mail arrived here on August 23rd, and the boys were so pleased they didn't half rush for it, and you can bet the letters were welcome after a week in the firing line. We have just had our first issue of tobacco since being out here, but I have had some sent from London. I shall do all right for a time. I cannot think what part Bert (his brother) is in, for he says he can get plenty of fruit ; well, we cannot, but there are fig, walnut, olive trees and grape vines here, but the fruit is not yet ripe. Bert also says he can get a bathe every day. Well I haven't had a wash for 10 days, but it's all sandy here and that helps keep you clean. I suppose Crawley is looking about the same. It is getting very cold here of a night, but terribly hot in the daytime, and the least exertion makes one perspire terribly. We are just going to have breakfast – bully beef and biscuits ; we get that for every meal and have lived on biscuits since landing here. I could do with a bit of decent bread for a change. If you haven't sent those ' Woodbines' please send some hard sweets instead."

Lance-Corpl. T. Cooper, of the 4th Royal Sussex, writes to his mother, Mrs. Cooper of Ifield Road, saying he is quite well after "our first scrap, for no doubt you have seen before you read this that we have been 'in it.' It is pretty fun, but much too hot. The nights are very cold, but we are getting used to it. This game would be much better if we could get a smoke. There are plenty of smokes at the base, but they cannot get them up to us yet. We are doing fairly well as regards food. I haven't got much news this time; only cheer up, for the war will soon be over in this part of the country, perhaps before you get this."

In a subsequent letter Lance-Corpl. Cooper says, " I have just had two letters, so I expect we shall get our mails along all right now they have started. I don't think there will be much more of this out here, as the Turks have had enough of it, and so say all of us. There is strong talk of our going to where you heard we were going, but I don't know if it is true or not. No doubt you have heard that Charlie Sayers has gone under, and also that Harry Skinner has been wounded, and also young Holden. Please send me a few apples and save me some elderberry wine. A pint of beer would go down nice out here; we haven't had any since leaving England. Please don't send any money out here, as we cannot spend it. Cheer up, it's a long lane without a turning."

There is also a report that week of a KHAKI CONCERT.- The troops having left Pease Pottage Camp on Wednesday morning, the usual weekly social, arranged by a committee of the Crawley Congregational Church, was held this week on Tues day evening in the School Room, a very large muster attending this final concert. During the evening Mr. S. Montague addressed the men, wishing them Godspeed and hoping they would do their duty and return home safely. The audience sang 'Fight the good fight', this being followed by the Lord's Prayer. The remainder of the time was devoted to harmony with contributions from the soldiers.

Refreshments were served as usual and the men had a thoroughly enjoyable evening. At the conclusion of the social a hearty vote of thanks and a real Lancashire cheer were given for those who had in any way assisted at the weekly concerts, by services rendered or by gifts in money or in kind. Among the latter should be mentioned the following: (there follows a long list of townsfolk) Miss Cook (Kate Lillian?), Miss Connie Cook and Mr. Christopher Cook.

KILLED AT THE WAR. – This week two local deaths at the war have to be recorded. Mr. and Mrs. Brackpool, of West Street, Crawley, have just received intimation that their son, Prvt. Sidney Edward Brackpool, of the 2nd Royal Sussex, who has been posted as missing since May 9th, was killed during the action on that day. Prvt. Brackpool was 29 years of age, and leaves a widow and three children, who now live at Crawley Down. – The second death is that of Prvt. Cecil Denman, of the North Staffordshire Regiment, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Denman, now of Three Bridges and formerly of Crawley. He was in the service of Lord Atherton and joined the Army on the outbreak of the war. According to the intimation received by his parents he was killed on the 9th ult. Born in Malthouse Road, Crawley, Denman spent his boyhood days in the town. With the families of both men the deepest sympathy will be felt.

OCTOBER 1915

There were more letters received at the beginning of October:-

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CRAWLEY SOLDIERS

Several letters have come to hand this week from Crawley men serving their country either at the Dardanelles or in France.

Saddler-Corpl. H. E. Hearsey, whose home is at Malthouse Road, Crawley, and who prior to joining the Army served as an auxiliary postman from Crawley to Turners Hill, besides following his trade, writes to his wife as under: "We had great excitement here this morning. A German aeroplane came over our lines and, of course, was fired at. Then one of our aeroplanes went up after it and manoeuvred about until it got on top of the enemy. Of course, the planes were pouring machine gun fire at each other. All at once the German machine was seen to tilt up on one side and came planing down. It looked as though it was going to drop into our field, but it suddenly partly recovered itself so that it was just able to fly, though very low, only just above the tree tops.

Everybody started running, hoping to see it drop, but it went about a mile before it stopped. Before it was finally stopped several volleys were fired without effect, and then a company of infantrymen came along the road, and the officer in command, seeing the nearness of the machine, gave orders for the machine gun to be turned on, and this soon had the desired effect. Needless to say, both the German fliers were riddled with bullets, but except for a pierced petrol tank their machine was uninjured. It is a splendid machine. I suppose the men had done some noble deeds, as both were decorated with iron crosses. I am sorry to say one of our infantrymen was killed, having been shot right through the face."

Corpl. A. Soper, whose parents reside in Spencers Road, Crawley, writes stating that he is recovering from his wound in the foot, and hopes soon to be again among the 'boys.' It will be remembered that he was shot through the foot at the landing at Sulva Bay. He adds: "I cannot understand why it is I get no letters from you ; it would be so nice to sit down and answer a letter instead of writing to you about the place out here, because of course I must not say very much. We find the flies to be our chief trouble; there are millions of them swarming about, while the stones seem to grow about here. We are quite happy, but have had some hot times. Still, things won't always be the same. I should like to be home for Christmas, but we must 'wait and see.'

I have seen Bert Mills again and also Bert Knight. Young Knight doesn't half look well, and he is such a big chap." Later Corpl. Soper states: "There are several local fellows in hospital here, but none seriously wounded. I am still without a letter from you, and I don't like it, but suppose I shall get one some time. We are doing fairly well for tobacco, but should like some English cigarettes. Woodbines would do nicely. Our Chaplain brought us a supply of tobacco yesterday, so we shall do for a time. It gets a bit monotonous doing nothing but smoking and waiting about. The dust here is very troublesome: it comes up just like a fog, and now that it is getting windy it doesn't help matters much. We had a band come

and to us last Sunday just to liven us up. Put one in mind of Crawley Town. Cheer up and don't worry about me. I shall be all right."

Prvt. W. Cramp, whose home is in Station Road, Crawley, writing to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. Cramp, says: "I am pleased to say I am still quite well and feeling fit for anything. You have seen by the papers how well our regiment is doing out here, and I think it won't be long before the war out in this part of the world will be over. Our regiment must take a lot of the credit for the great advance made the other day, and no doubt you saw by the papers that they were praised for it in dispatches.

In front of us are a lot of Turks, but they are afraid of us, and our Navy is inflicting a lot of damage on them. When we get the hill for which we are fighting our worst job is over. You should have seen the landing we made (at Suvla Bay). Our lads had to wade through the sea nearly up to their necks in water. Then came a terrific rush on the Turks which drove them right back, and the hill (which they call Chocolate Hill) was won.

After that we had very little sleep until we came back to the 'rest' trenches. We were in the trenches two weeks before getting a rest. Since writing the above we have had another 'go,' and made a fine advance, which makes me think that soon the end will come, and it will be a really successful finish. We are well off for tobacco – they give us three packets of 10 cigarettes and about 1 oz. of tobacco, and, goodness, don't we want it. The flies are awful and we keep smoking so as to drive them away. One of our captains was killed in action, and I am sorry to say one Crawley man (C. Sayers) has been killed and one wounded – young Fox." – The last named is Prvt. Cecil Fox, whose home is in Albany Road, Crawley, and who was shot through the foot.

Another letter comes from Prvt. 'Billy' Knight, of the 4th Royal Sussex, who was a prominent member of the Crawley Athletic Football Club. He says: "At last I have got a piece of paper, so though I had better write you a letter. I am quite all right, but cannot get a letter from you. We have had three mails since we left Bedford, but I have not had a letter from you, and I have been looking forward so much to getting one. We are now at the base – came back last night for four day's rest – but I would just as soon be in the firing line, except you don't have to be awake so much.

With us we have men who have been out in France, and they say it's a lot better out there, for the enemy does give you a little peace at night time. I should like to get a paper every day to see what is going on. We get plenty of papers, but they are a month old by the time we get them. I receive a News of the World and a Sunday Pictorial each week. I should be so pleased if you would send me some toffee. You need not send any cigarettes, for I get some, and am expecting more.

It is bad about poor Charlie Sayers, isn't it. He was quite close to me, working with Frank Rice. He did not suffer, as I went to him at once, and he was quite

dead. We buried him the same night, and our Chaplain got permission for six of us to leave the first line trench and go to the funeral. He has a nice grave. We often get a few figs and boil them for dinner. I went out yesterday to get some and came across some melons. You ought to see some of the houses we have captured from the Turks. They are like huts, only very long and low, and each one has a well. I will give them their due ; the Turks do not poison the water as they retire; at least they have not done so up to now. It is because they think so much of the water we are told. It's a good thing for us they don't poison the water, or we should not get so much.

I ran across a chap named Sutley, from Woking, and he asked me to write and tell dad, because his (Sutley's) people supply the National Reserve, of which dad is a member, with milk and Sutley would like his people to know that he is in the 'Queen's' and quite all right.

I got a postcard from Bert, but it's rather old because it had been to England and back before I received it. We are going to have a bathe and change of clothing before we go back. The Turks are shelling us now, but the shells are dropping short. It's a tidy row after dark in the Turks' trenches, I can tell you. Talk about gabble, they don't half go it and it makes us laugh very much. The country just round here is very much like England, except you see fig, olive and walnut trees and grape vines instead of oak trees. The general opinion among our chaps is that the war here will be over by Christmas. I hope it is, so that we can get home for a decent dinner and a game of Football on Boxing Day. Remember me to all my friends. Tell them I am quite well and happy."

October 9 – LORD KITCHENER was in this locality last week, and took the opportunity of paying a visit to the Ancient Prior's House and inspecting the stock of antiques which Mr. G. A. Parkhurst has collected there. He was much pleased with all he saw and purchased several fine pieces. This is the second time he has visited Mr. Parkhurst's premises.

GIFTS TO PRISONERS OF WAR. – A Crawley lady writes: *Seeing the names of the two prisoners of war mentioned in your paper some weeks ago I sent a parcel to each of them. The enclosed are the acknowledgements I have had from them. I am sending again to them. The first acknowledgement is from Prvt. J. Bowyer, who writes: "I received the parcel quite safe and was very pleased with it, as it is so kind of you. I should like to have a few lines from you, as I should like to have a friend to write to, as since I have been a prisoner of war my home has broken up and my poor father has died, leaving me no one to write to."* The other letter was from Prvt. W. S. Smart, who, after expressing thanks for the parcel, added: *"It is very pleasing to know that we are not forgotten in the old country."* Both men are interned at Hameln.

LETTERS FROM CRAWLEY SOLDIERS

Private F. L. Sealey, of the 3rd Hampshires, son of Mr. F. Sealey of the High Street, Crawley, writes home as under, under date October 1st "We arrived back from the trenches last night after a wet and consequently muddy week of it. We are now in support in a village just behind the trenches. It has been fairly quiet on our immediate front, but to our left there has been heavy fighting and bombardment, and you have no doubt seen in the papers of big captures of men and guns by us and the French.

We saw a fine aeroplane fight yesterday between one of ours and a German machine. Ours swooped down on the German and opened fire with a machine gun the same time as the other; the German suddenly threw out a cloud of smoke and plunged down, and turned over and over, burning at the same time; she had been hit in the petrol tank. Didn't we all let up a shout. She came down some miles behind our line she was carrying three men, I believe.

I think there will be a move forward shortly if they advance in other parts of the Line. We expected it last week, but perhaps the weather stopped plans being carried out.. The weather has become quite wintry now; very cold at nights. We got swamped last time going up; caught a thunderstorm half-way; it was rotten slipping and sliding through wood paths in the pitch black of the night and then sleeping in wet clothes."

Corpl. A. Soper, son of Mr. and Mrs. Soper, of Spencers Road, surprised his relatives with a letter saying that he was in hospital in Graylingwell. He was recently shot through the foot at the Dardanelles and made good progress, and now comes the news that he has returned to England and been operated on for appendicitis. He is, his friends will be glad to know, making a good recovery.

The parents of the late Lance- Corpl. James Johnson, who live at Belle Vue, Tilgate, have received a letter from Sergt. Towe respecting their son. The writer, in a eulogy of the dead soldier, says he would work with the men night and day in the trenches and never seem to get tired, and when asked to do anything would always comply without a murmur. As his best non-com he gave him plenty to do. Sergt. Towe adds that he had personally seen the fellows who saw Johnson shot near Ypres and they told him they gave him a decent burial, digging a grave by the roadside and erecting a wooden cross, giving his name, regimental number and how he died. Private W. Johnson of the East Yorkshire Regiment was badly wounded in the battle in which his brother was killed.

As noted earlier, the body of James Johnson was never found. The intense fighting that took place at Ypres, even before the horrors of Passchendaele, would have meant that his body could have been blown to atoms as that part of the line was fought over time and time again. All that is left of him is his name, commemorated along with over 54,000 others, on the Menin Gate in Ypres.

October 16th – *WOUNDED AT THE FRONT.* – *Bomb. M. Duggan, of the Royal Field Artillery, whose home is at 69, Malthouse Road, Crawley, he being a son-in-law of Mrs. Ford, is in hospital at Leicester suffering from injuries sustained in action. He was in a dug out, when a shell blew it up and Duggan was buried in the debris. He was dug out by his comrades, who found he was badly bruised and knocked about and suffering greatly from shock. He is happily going on well in the Leicester Hospital. It is interesting to note that Duggan was among the first to leave England at the outbreak of hostilities, and he has escaped injury until now.*

Private Arthur Hedley Garrett of the 1/1st Sussex Yeomanry, attached to the 42nd Division, died of dysentery while on board H.M. Hospital Ship 'Rena' on the 21st October 1915, after serving at Gallipoli. He was 23 and the son of Hedley and Alberta Garrett of 12, Brighton Road, Crawley. He had been born in Crawley and had enlisted in Horsham. He is listed on both the St Peters and St Johns Memorials as well as the Memorial Gates. He was buried in Pieta Military Cemetery in Malta.

NOVEMBER 1915

The November 6 editions report that Mr. W. J. Chalk has been appointed as Recruiting Officer for Crawley and District and he is available every day 10.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.

Also recorded is news of another Crawley fatality:

A CRAWLEY SOLDIERS DEATH. –

Official news was received on Saturday of the death of Private H. Knowles, of the 2nd Royal Sussex, whose home is in Alpha Road, Crawley. Private Knowles, who was 29 years of age, was called up at the commencement of hostilities and had not since been home one time though he was wounded some months ago. He received fatal wounds on September 25th in the Battle of Loos. There is a widow and three young children, and with these much sympathy will be felt.

Private Harry Knowles was killed in action on the opening day at Loos. He was the son of Alfred and Mary Knowles and the husband of Mrs Elsie Knowles who later remarried. He was born in Billingshurst and had enlisted as a reservist at East Grinstead. He is commemorated on the Loos Memorial and the Memorial Gates.

Private John H. Stowe of the 7th Battalion, Royal West Surreys, died in France on the 24th November. He was the son of Mr and Mrs Samuel Stowe of Mayfield Terrace in Ifield. He had been born in St Albans and had enlisted in Redhill. His name is included on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial and on the Memorial Gates. He was buried in the Bur Corbie Communal Cemetery.

DECEMBER 1915

As December dawned, it was clear to the whole world that the fighting was going to drag on with no clear end in sight. The attacks in Gallipoli were floundering, with an appallingly high casualty list. On the Western Front, the stalemate continued with every advance of even a metre costing lives. Shortly before Christmas, it was announced that Sir John French had been replaced as Commander of the British Army by Sir Douglas Haig. All along the front orders were issued that this Christmas, there would be no repeat of the 'disgraceful' fraternisations that had occurred during 1914's Christmas 'truce.'

Another fatality is reported in early December: AN IFIELD SOLDIER'S DEATH. – Reference was made in this paper at the time to the death of John Hoy, at the Front, and in the December issue of the Ifield Parish Magazine is the following note: Ifield, I very much regret to say, has lost another soldier in John Hoy, killed in action a short time since. He joined the new Army early in the war, and made great efforts to render himself an efficient soldier, and his loss is all the more regretted. He was formerly a founding member of our choir, and lived here all his life. I also regret that E. Lowe, not so widely known as he is a newcomer here, has died of wounds. This is Ifield's third loss since the war began, though we have had several wounded.

Corporal Jack Hoy of the 9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, part of the 24th Division was also killed in action at Loos on the 28th September 1915 at the age of 19. He was the son of James and Mary Hoy of Ifield and had been born in Charlwood. He had enlisted in Horsham. His name is included on both the Ifield and Charlwood Parish War Memorials as well as the Memorial Gates. His body never having been found, he is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

In Crawley, the Courier published a letter just before Christmas:

TURKEY IN THETRENCHES. – Writing from France on the 29th ult. Prvt. L. Sealey, son of Mr. F. L. Sealey, of the High Street, Crawley, says: "Thanks very much for the parcel which arrived last night. We were greatly amused this morning when I opened it and found the turkey and pickled onions, but all the same it is very nice and also very kind of you to send such a champion lot of stuff. I was away when it came with our gun firing over a village occupied by the Germans; we are harassing them day and night. We came off about one o' clock this morning, and it was then freezing very hard, but now it is raining fast. They bombarded us pretty heavily this morning as well, but our guns have the upper hand now. Just at present we are in support just behind the trenches. As far as I can see we shall have Christmas Day here, going up to the trenches the same night."

The final edition of the Courier for 1915, December 25th, carries a routine match report for the Crawley and District Rifle Club. Shooting for the Club are Mr. C. Cook and a Mr. K. G. Perry. Also reported is another shooting competition:

VOLUNTEER TRAINING CORPS COMPETITION. – In the first round of the rifle shooting competition for Volunteer Training Corps the Crawley and Ifield detachment beat 'A' Company N. Staffs detachment by two points. The respective witnesses were Platoon-Commander A. E. Taylor (Crawley) and Company-Commander I. G. Taylor (N. Staffs).

Shooting the top score for Crawley and Ifield was a Prvt. E. Cook with 98 out of 100. Second top scorer was Sergt. K. G. Perry with 94 out of 100. Both of these men would be dead before the War was over.

January 1916

The air is loud with death,
The dark air spurts with fire
The explosions ceaseless are.
Timelessly now, some minutes past,
These dead strode time with vigorous life,
Till the shrapnel called 'An end !'
But not to all. In bleeding pangs
Some borne on stretchers dreamed of home,
Dear things, war-blotted from their hearts.

– *Dead Man's Dump, Isaac Rosenberg*

WITH the Derby Scheme not drumming up enough new recruits to satisfy the demands of the War, the Military Service Bill had been introduced to Parliament at the end of 1915, and in January 1916, the Bill was adopted and became the Military Service Act. Conscription had become a reality and would come into force on March 2nd 1916. The Act specified that men from the ages of 18 to 41 were liable to be called up for service in the army unless they were married (or widowed with children), or else served in one of a number of reserved professions (usually industrial but which also included clergymen and teachers). At the beginning of 1916, the ages of the male Cooks were as follows: Ted (48), Herbert (45), Chris (42), Eddie (18 on January 9th), Don (16) and Leslie (14).

Less than four months later the Act was revised and passed again. The revisions enabled the War Office to not only extend the service of time-expired servicemen but also brought within the terms of the Act all men – regardless of whether they were married or not – from the ages of 18 to 41. The government had also gained the right to re-examine men previously declared medically unfit for service.

I think it is safe to assume that both Herbert and Chris would be exempt not just because of age, but because the running of the company would be classed as a reserved occupation. There is a letter written by Ted in May 1918 with a stamp on it that reads:

R. COOK & SONS,
BUILDERS & CONTRACTORS.
CONTRACTORS TO
H. M. ADMIRALTY, WAR OFFICE
& OFFICE OF WORKS.
TELEPHONE No.16 P. O. CRAWLEY

January 1st – THE RECRUITING IN CRAWLEY AND IFIELD. – The figures of the late recruiting appeal, adding together direct enlistments into the Army and those enlisted in their groups under the Reserve scheme, are as follows since about October 20th: In all 290 in Crawley and Ifield. As against this 453 were canvassed in the two parishes, and 66.56 per cent of those canvassed have enlisted. It is agreed by the Military Authorities that 50 per cent is good and that 40 per cent is bad.

As regards the rest of Sussex, the complete figures are not yet known, but Crawley and Ifield have done extraordinarily well, and all concerned, from the Recruiting Officers up to the men who have done their duty in such splendid numbers, may walk erect to-day and feel that had England at large done as well no compulsion would be needed. And yet there are those in other places, who, being fit and able, have shirked the call of their King and country. We cannot but hope that the pledge to the married men may be carried out by deeds as well

as words, that all may do their duty in this great day, whether they be willing of whether they be unwilling. Crawley and Ifield have, broadly speaking, very clean hands in this matter.

MR. G. S. WILSON is the Crawley and Ifield representative on the tribunal for hearing appeals connected with Lord Derby's recruiting scheme.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SAPPER HARRY SOAN on his recent success. His many friends in Crawley will be interested to know that, in shooting his trained soldier's course in competition with his comrades in the Royal Engineers, he succeeded in scoring a total of 127 points out of a possible 142, coming out at the head of 120 men with a margin of 41 points over the competitor who obtained second place. This result is very creditable and the prizes won viz., a bronze medal and a wrist watch, will doubtless be much valued as mementos.

The scoring was particularly good owing to the fact that rain was falling most of the time and a strong wind blowing. It is worthy of mention that Harry attributes his success to the practice which he obtained while a member of the Crawley Rifle Club. Such successes with the Service rifle achieved by miniature rifle shots have been quite numerous in the New Armies, and the detractors of the Rifle Club movement (so strongly advocated by the late Lord Roberts), with their cheap sneers of 'pop guns' &c. must now realise their former attitude to have been an altogether unworthy one.

Many a brave lad might have been saved to his country had a more general knowledge of the rifle been imparted in times of peace. We wish Sapper Harry Soan and all the other boys further successes and a safe return home when the German bully has been brought to his knees and learnt that the boys of Old England may still be counted on to face long odds and come out on top.

In the Mediterranean, the situation had worsened to such a catastrophic degree that evacuation had been decided upon and, amongst fears of a 50% casualty rate, was successfully completed by January 9th with the loss of just two men. The appallingly high casualty list and the entrance of Bulgaria into the war on the side of the Central Powers, forcing the Allies to open another front at Salonika, meant that the whole campaign could only be viewed as a disaster.

The political repercussions had begun while the fighting was still going on. Churchill had been demoted from his post as First Lord of the Admiralty, and Prime Minister Asquith had been forced into a coalition government with the Conservative Party. Churchill was retained in the Cabinet but soon resigned to take up command of an infantry battalion on the Western Front.

January 8th – THE ARMLETS for the recruits under Lord Derby's scheme were to have been distributed at Crawley police station yesterday, and it is the keenest desire that all entitled to them should wear them. It should be mentioned that those rejected for medical reasons are equally entitled as those who have been attested to this distinction.

FEBRUARY 1916

On February 1st 1916, Private Richard Edward Cook travelled to Horsham to begin the process of officially joining up. This was the first of three visits to Horsham and began with his signing of the *IMPERIAL AND GENERAL SERVICE OBLIGATION*.

Agreement to be made by an officer or man of the Territorial Force to subject himself to liability to serve in any place outside the United Kingdom during the present period of embodiment.

I (No.) 4076 (Rank) Private (Name) Richard Edward Cook do hereby agree to accept liability, during present period of embodiment, to serve in any place outside the United Kingdom, in accordance with the provisions of section XIX. (2) (a) of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act, 1907, (and where, with a view to service overseas, my transfer to another corps is required, I hereby consent to such transfer notwithstanding that the corps to which I am transferred may be different from that in which I am serving). I understand that release from this obligation can during the present period of embodiment be granted only with the consent of the competent military authority.

This undertaking is given on the understanding that I shall not by reason of such transfer suffer any reduction of the pay and allowances of which I was in receipt immediately prior to transfer.

<i>R. E. Cook</i>	<i>(Signature of officer or man.)</i>
<i>Wm. Gorringe</i>	<i>(Signature of Commanding officer.)</i>
<i>(Station)</i>	<i>Horsham</i>
<i>(Date)</i>	<i>1 FEB 1916</i>

Private R. E. Cook returned to Horsham on the 5th February to take the oath of attestation.

ATTESTATION OF

No. 4076

Name Richard Edward Cook

Corps 4th Batt. Royal Sussex Regt.

Questions to be put to the Recruit before Enlistment.

1. *What is your name and address?*

1. *Richard Edward Cook, 18, Perryfield Road, Crawley*

2. *Are you willing to be attested for service in the Territorial Force for the term of 4 years (provided His Majesty should so long require your services) for the County of Sussex to serve in the 4th Royal Sussex Regt.*

2. *Yes*

3. *Have you received a notice stating the liabilities you are incurring by enlisting, and do you understand them?*

3. *Yes*

4. *Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in the Royal Navy, the Army, the Royal Marines, the Militia, the Special Reserve, the Territorial Force, the Imperial Yeomanry, the Volunteers, the Army Reserve, the Militia Reserve, or any Naval reserve Force? If so, state which unit, and, if discharged, cause of discharge.*

4. *No*

5. *Are you a British Subject?*

5. *Yes*

I, Richard Edward Cook do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfill the engagements made.

R. E. Cook SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.

J. G. Wrighton L/Col Signature of Witness.

OATH TO BE TAKEN ON ATTESTATION

I, Richard Edward Cook swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs, and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity against all enemies, according to the conditions of my service.

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.

I, William Gorringe do hereby certify, that, in my presence, all the foregoing Questions were put to the Recruit above named, that the Answers written opposite to them are those which he gave to me, and that he has made and signed the Declaration, and taken the oath at Horsham on this 5th Day of February 1916.

Wm. Gorringe, Major, 4th Royal Sussex Regt.

Signature of Justice of the Peace, Officer, or other person authorized to attest recruits.

The last stage of the enlistment process, the medical examination, took place on the 7th February, again at Horsham:

Description of Richard Edward Cook on Enlistment

MEDICAL INSPECTION REPORT

(Applicable to all Ranks.)

Name *Richard Edward Cook*

Apparent age *19 years – months*

Height *5 feet 9 inches*

Chest measurement *Girth when fully expanded 35 ½ inches.*

Range of expansion *4 inches.*

Vision *D6 D6*

Physical development *good*

Certificate of Medical Examination

I have examined the above named Recruit and find that he does not present any of the causes of rejection specified in the Regulations. He can see at the required distance with either eye; his heart and lungs are healthy; he has free use of his joints and limbs; he does not suffer from hernia; and declares that he is not subject to fits of any description.

I consider him fit for the Territorial Force

Date February 7th 1916

Place Horsham

Medical Officer

Certificate of Primary Military Examination.

I hereby certify that the above named Recruit was inspected by me, and I consider him fit for service in the 4th Batt. Royal Sussex Regiment and that due care has been exercised in his enlistment.

Date February 7th 1916

Place Horsham

Wm. Gorringe, Major, Commanding Administrative Centre, 4th Royal Sussex Regiment.

Recruiting Officer

Certificate of Approving officer.

I certify that this Attestation of the above named Recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required forms appear to have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the 4th BATT. ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT

If enlisted by special authority, Army Form B.203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original attestation.

Date February 7th 1916

Place Horsham

Wm. Gorringe, Major, Commanding Administrative Centre, 4th Royal Sussex Regiment.

Approving Officer

The signature of the Approving officer is to be affixed in the presence of the Recruit.

The main thing that stands out straightaway when looking at these forms is that Eddie Cook had just celebrated his *eighteenth* birthday on January 9th. Recruits were not allowed to serve overseas if they were under nineteen years of age.

News arrived that same week that Lance Corporal Henry John Funnell of the 9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment had been killed in action near Hooge at Ypres on the 14th February 1916 aged 26. He was the son of Harry and Louisa Funnell of Buchan Hill, Crawley. He was born in Slaugham and had enlisted in Brighton. Buchan Hill was a country house, which is now Cottesmore School. He was buried in the Menin Road (South) Military Cemetery in Ypres.

On the Western Front, von Falkenhayn, the German chief of staff, had decided on a change of tactics. With the stalemate seemingly unbreakable, he decided to attack the French at Verdun. This city was an important strategic stronghold, surrounded by a circle of forts, which stood on the road to Paris. Von Falkenhayn's goal was not to take the town as such but force the French Army into a battle of attrition and to 'bleed France white'. Operation Gericht (German for court or place of execution) began on February 21st along a four mile front. This was to be the bloodiest of all battles for the French and was to have serious consequences for the British and Allied hopes for a joint attack on the Somme in the summer.

February 19 – LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT.

Sir: The new regulations as to claims under the Military Service Act, now in force, have been issued. As they apply, in effect, to men under the Group system already enlisted and who may enlist before March 2nd they are worthy of immediate attention. I think those affected may be assisted, if you will allow me at once to call attention to certain questions which, I know, are perplexing the minds of men enlisted under the Group system, as well as others. Time is short. I have had an average of two men a day making enquires and suffering from difficulties. I had already pledged myself to assist any enlisted voluntarily in Crawley and Ifield, and I am glad to do so, as far as getting any claims they may wish to make fairly before the Tribunals.

The decision is entirely in the hands of the Tribunals and in no sense mine – which is perhaps just as well – as I, perhaps, know too much, and my information was committed to me confidentially – a confidence which I have never broken, nor shall I. Men who were not fit, by medical certificate, and who in some cases have been lately unable to get certificates, will now have to make claims of exemption on medical grounds and they will be well advised to specially ask that the Military Authorities may have notice to produce the medical history sheet attached to their enlistment papers. Those enlisting in future will be sworn before being examined.

The Advisory Committees deal first with all claims. If allowed by them, with the assent of the Military Authorities, they go no further. But they have no power to dismiss claims. This rests entirely with the Tribunal – a judicial body. The Courts are open to the public, as far as there is room, and to the Press, but a case can be heard in private if the claimant objects to a public discussion of his affairs. All claims should be in before March 2nd and earlier if possible. A claimant can have his case argued by anyone he chooses if he feels he cannot do justice himself.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. J. CHALK.

Crawley, February 17th, 1916.

MARCH 1916

March 4th – WOUNDED AT THE FRONT. Intimation has been received by Mrs. Jenner, of Alpha Road, Crawley, that her husband, Prvt. Wm. J. Jenner, of the 9th Royal Sussex Regiment, has been severely wounded in the left arm, and that the limb has had to be amputated. Prvt. Jenner went to France some six months ago, and has seen much active service. His many friends will sympathise with him in his great misfortune.

The March 18th local papers sees reports of the first Military Tribunal to be held at Horsham. CRAWLEY APPEALS TO MILITARY TRIBUNAL. – There were three appeals by Crawley men at the sitting of the Tribunal at Horsham this week, two being on conscientious grounds. – John D. Warren, of the High Street, Crawley, aged 32 years, applied for absolute exemption, stating that, as a Christian, he believed war was contrary to the will of God and therefore he could not join the Army or assist in the making of munitions, although he said he was willing to do other work in the national interest. Applicant said his mother and father were members of the Society of Friends and he also worshipped with them. – The Chairman (Mr. G. C. Barker): I suppose you have no objection to duties of a non-combatant nature? – Applicant: I object to taking any part in the war; I do not believe it is right. – The Chairman ; But everything of national importance is in connection with this war. – Applicant: If you thought I should be of more importance anywhere else I shall be willing to leave my work and

go into another trade. – The Tribunal exempted from non-combatant service, whereupon the applicant said: I am afraid that won't meet my case. I must appeal.

– Another conscientious objector was Amos Sargant, a nursery gardener, living at West Green, Crawley. He is 23 years of age. Applicant said he objected to serve, not only on conscientious grounds, but also because of serious hardship. He had three brothers already in the Army, also a brother-in-law, and he was the sole support of his mother and father, the latter being old and blind. He was willing to do any other work of national importance, but he firmly believed war was contrary to the will of God, for which reasons he objected to join the Army or make munitions. – Replying to the Chairman, Sargant said his reasons for not wishing to serve were mainly conscientious, but he put forward the ground of serious hardship to satisfy the wishes of his parents. – The Chairman asked the applicant to what denomination he belonged? – Applicant replied that he attended the Baptist Church and the Friend's Meeting House. – The Chairman: When did you begin to have a conscientious objection? – Applicant: Before the war. – The Chairman: Didn't you have very great opposition from your brothers? They all went? – Applicant: I cannot help about my brothers. They made up their minds and I made up mine. I think war is altogether wrong. – The Chairman considered the applicant's strongest ground was that his brothers had gone. – The Tribunal granted temporary exemption, conditional on the circumstances of hardship remaining the same.

Edwin J. Lee, single man, aged 23, carrying on business on his own account as a coal merchant at Crawley, claimed for exemption on grounds of serious hardship. He said he started his business only in October last, having left his father's business at Ifield for that purpose. A younger brother was working for his father. – The application was refused. – The local members of the Tribunal were Mr. G. S. Wilson and Mr. W. Gatland.

WOUNDED IN ACTION. – Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Izard, of 62, Ifield Road, Crawley, have just received the sad intelligence that their eldest son, Drummer Joseph Izard, of the Royal West Kent Regiment, has sustained serious injuries in a recent action. Izard, who joined the New Army shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, has been injured in the neck and spine, but hopes are entertained of his recovery. He was a most popular member of the West Crawley Brass Band, playing first the solo horn and afterwards the baritone, and all his friends will regret to hear of his ill luck. Drummer Izard has a brother in the 4th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment.

The Military Tribunals were to become a regular part of the Crawley & Ifield columns of the local papers from now on. In fact, the next one appeared just the next week, along with a report of a shooting match at Crawley & District Rifle Club.

Amongst those taking part is Christopher Cook who presumably is either kicking his heels in frustration at being just too old to be called up or jumping for joy with relief at his narrow escape.

March 25 – FATHER’S DESPAIR THROUGH THE WAR.

Very sad circumstances were brought to light at the inquest on Monday afternoon on the body of John Johnson, a stockman at Belle Vue Farm, Tilgate, Crawley, who shot himself on the previous Friday evening. It transpired that one son had been killed and another badly wounded at the war, and the third son was being called up shortly.

“ This is the last blow,” he was heard to say, “ we have sacrificed two, and that ought to be enough.” There is a large family, five young children being still at home, and the deceased’s wife is in a delicate state of health and arrangements have been made for her to undergo an early operation. This series of misfortunes greatly affected the deceased and it was noticed that his manner had been very strange of late.

Just after he had been told his tea was ready on Friday evening a gunshot was heard outside the house and the deceased was found under a yew tree with a bullet wound through his head, appearances suggesting that the poor fellow had placed the barrel of the gun in his mouth, the bullet penetrating the brain and emerging, at the top of the skull.

The inquest was held at the home of the deceased by Mr. Vere Benson and a jury, of which Mr. W. Noakes was the foreman.

Annie Johnson, the widow, who was much distressed when giving her evidence, said the deceased was 52 on the day of his death. At about 3.15 o’clock on Friday the deceased came in for a rifle, saying Sammy Gates wanted it to shoot deer. Witness was not surprised at this, because Mr. Gates had borrowed it before for deerstalking. The rifle was an old cavalry carbine, which was brought from Pekin by her dead brother, who secured it during the last China war. Deceased took the gun out and she did not see him again until 4.45, when she sent to the buildings to tell him tea was ready.

He said “ All right.” Five minutes later she heard the report of a gun and rushed out and saw the deceased standing in the cart shed. “ Oh, dad, you did frighten me,” she said, and he replied, “ Oh, did I.” He had the rifle in his hands. Witness went indoors, and as the deceased did not come in to tea she sent her son Jack out to him.

Jack came back again and directly afterwards witness heard a second report, and her daughter Minnie came running in, saying, “ Oh, come, dad’s hurt himself.” Witness and Jack ran out at once and found the deceased lying under the yew tree on the lawn. He was bleeding very much from the mouth, but there was no sign of life and he did not say a word. The rifle was lying by his side.

The deceased had been depressed for a long time, owing to the war and the death of one of their sons. Another son had been badly wounded, and now the third son was about to be called up. Deceased had been restless and had had no sleep for a long time. When he heard that the third son had been called up to join the colours he said, "This is the last blow. We have sacrificed two, and that ought to be enough."

Deceased had influenza some four years ago and he had also had his head injured in a motor accident, and since then he seemed a little queer every time he had a cold in the head. He had not had a doctor lately, although he had been so depressed. He would not see one. On the evening before the affair he was very restless. He would be on the couch, then jump up and walk about ; and he went out of the house and looked into the sky, running his hands through his hair at the time. He had never threatened to take his life.

Minnie Johnson, a daughter, said she was standing by the back door when she heard the report of a gun. She ran round to see who had fired it and saw her father lying under the yew tree. She did not see any signs of life and rushed in for her mother.

Jack Johnson, a son, said he went to look for his father after what his mother had told him, about 5 o'clock. He saw him near the buildings, and when his father saw him he picked up the rifle from behind the oat bin and walked towards witness, who asked him what he was up to with the rifle. His father replied that Gates wanted it for deerstalking. Deceased then followed witness towards the house. Witness went indoors and had just sat down to tea when his sister Minnie ran in and told them about their father. Witness had not heard the report of the gun.

P. C. Steer, stationed at Three Bridges, stated that at 6.15 on Friday evening information was brought to him of the occurrence, and he at once went to Belle Vue Farm and saw the body of the deceased man lying upon a door. He examined him and found he had been shot in the mouth, from which, as well as the nose, blood was oozing. There was a wound at the top of the head, suggesting that the bullet had gone right through. He was handed the rifle (produced). There was one empty cartridge case in the barrel, and there was also a little blood at the end of the barrel.

Replying to the Coroner, the son Jack said there were two cartridges kept in a cupboard upstairs and they were missing. He recognised the cartridge case produced as being one of them.

In reply to a juryman, Mrs. Johnson said the deceased left no writing of any kind.

The Coroner said that it was evident that the deceased had been greatly depressed of late on account of his misfortunes, and the worry had brought about a morbid condition of mind over which the deceased apparently had no control.

There was not much doubt that at the time the deceased was suffering from temporary insanity.

The jury returned a verdict that the deceased committed suicide during temporary insanity, and they handed their fees to the widow.

Another local man, Private Fred Hilton of the 7th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment was killed in action near Vermelles on the 24th of March at the age of 19. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Hilton of Tushmore (a small area which is now a roundabout on the A23), London Road, Crawley. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in Horley. He was buried in Vermelles British Cemetery. His name is included on Ifield Parish Church War Memorial as well as the Memorial gates.

Meanwhile, Ted is still with the 72nd Provisional Battalion when the time came for him to sign on for re-engagement with the Territorial Force. Presumably he is involved in training up the Battalion. He signed up on March 30th at Abbey Wood, Kent.

APRIL 1916

April 1 – DRUMMER J. IZARD, whose home is at Ifield Road, Crawley, and who was badly wounded on March 9th, is showing slight improvement in his general health, but unfortunately he has lost the use of his limbs. It will be remembered that he was shot in the neck and the back. Drummer Izard is in hospital in France, and his many friends sincerely hope his disablement will be of temporary nature only.

The papers on April 1st carry, for one of the last times, the Roll of Honour for Crawley and District Men Serving their King and Country. The practice of listing the men who were serving seems to have been discontinued in all the local papers shortly afterwards.

Alfred Edward Cook is shown as Regimental Quarter-Master Sergeant of the 4th Royal Sussex and an unranked Richard Edward Cook is listed as being with the 2/4th Royal Sussex.

April 15 – MISSING SOLDIER REPORTED DEAD. – Official intimation was received last week by Mr. and Mrs. Graveley, of Malthouse Road, Crawley, that their son, Private C. Graveley, of the King's Own Lancashire Regiment, who was reported missing after the engagement on May 8th, is dead. He was a reservist and was called to the Colours on the outbreak of war.

He took part in the retreat from Mons, and was in the battle of the Marne. During this battle he came in contact with hidden barbed wire entanglements and so badly injured his legs and feet that he was sent home to England. After returning to France and spending a few more weeks in the trenches he was again sent back to England with frozen feet. He returned to France a third time and

was engaged in the big battle which commenced on May 8th, since when he has not been seen or heard of. Deceased was a single man and had lived all his life in Crawley up to the outbreak of hostilities. Much sympathy will be expressed with the bereaved relatives.

Private Charles Graveley of the 2nd Battalion, King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment) was killed in action on the 8th May 1915 during the Second Battle of Ypres – the battle that saw the first use of chlorine poison gas by the Germans on the Western Front. He was 31. He was born in Worth, Crawley and had enlisted in East Grinstead. His brother, William Gravely, lived at 12, Victoria Road in Crawley. He is commemorated on the Menin Gate at Ypres on panel 12.

FOOTBALL. – By way of a change there was a game of football at Crawley on Easter Monday, the match being played on the North House School ground. The contestants were a team picked from the Crawley and Worth Boy Scouts and Mr. F. Dean's XI. At the start the latter pressed and Cook (this is Don, home from school for the holidays) opened the scoring, doing the hat-trick in a short while. Horn notched a couple of points for the Scouts, but before half-time Hall made the scores four all. In the second half Lee gained the lead for the Scouts and Knight added another; and before time was sounded Conlan and Hall brought the scores level, the game being a draw of six goals each.

April 29 – Mr. J. T. Charman, the much respected verger of St Peter's, West Crawley has just received the sad news that his nephew, Lance Corporal Harry Baker, Royal West Kent Regiment, has been killed in action in Mesopotamia on March 27th. Lance Corporal Baker was an ex-soldier and, at the outbreak of war, volunteered his services to his country and had seen much fighting. The deceased was 42 years of age and leaves a widow but no children. Baker was very well known in Crawley.

Lance Corporal Harry Ernest Richard Baker was with the 2nd Battalion Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). He was born in Greenwich about 1874, the son of John and Margaret Baker. Margaret, from Horsham, was the sister of John Charman who was the verger at St Peter's Church. He died on 27th March 1916 and his body was not recovered for burial. He is commemorated on Face E of the Kirkee 1914-18 Memorial near Poona in India.

Also on the 29th April, Ted was posted to the 70th Provisional Battalion.

MAY 1916

Across the sea, on the Western Front, the German offensive at Verdun was having a devastating effect. The great Allied attack on the Somme that was being planned

for the summer had become even more important as it was badly needed to take the pressure off the French. But, what was originally planned as an Anglo-French operation would now be a mainly British operation and was planned for the end of June. On the Eastern Front, June 1916 saw the Russians launch their most successful operation of the war, the Brusilov Offensive.

On May 31st the epic confrontation that came to be known as the Battle of Jutland began out in the North Sea off the coast of Denmark. The battle, the outcome of which was indecisive at the time but crucially persuaded the Germans not to attempt its like again, lasted just a few hours, ending on June 1st. Although the Royal Navy lost 14 ships as opposed to the German's loss of 11 vessels, the end of the battle saw the British still with strategic control of the North Sea, which she maintained for the remainder of the war.

As with every other part of the Great War, there is a Crawley connection.

June 17 – THE NAVAL BATTLE. Mr. T. Davy, the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Davy, of the High Street, Crawley, who is on board H. M. S. 'Royal Oak,' took part in the great naval battle in the North Sea, and fortunately escaped injuries. Only 16 years of age, he was one of the youngest men concerned. It is at present impossible to give actual details, but it is believed that the 'Royal Oak' sunk a German battleship, and known that she was responsible for the sinking of a cruiser, two destroyers and one, if not two, submarines.

JUNE 1916

DIED OF WOUNDS. – News has been received in Crawley that Private Jack Humphrey, son of the late Mr. W. J. Humphrey, blacksmith, has died of wounds sustained in action. It was known some time ago that he was shot in the spine, and he has now succumbed as the result of these injuries. With the bereaved relatives the sincerest sympathy will be felt.

Private John Humphrey of the 22nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers died on the 1st of June 1916 at the age of 20. He was a son of the deceased William and Clare Ann Humphrey of Crawley. His brother Michael was also a soldier and he was to die the following year. He had been born in Horley and had enlisted in Shepherds Bush. He is buried in Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension and commemorated on the Memorial Gates at Crawley.

DEATH OF A CRAWLEY SOLDIER. – The list of Crawley heroes who have given their lives for their country has been added to by the death of Prvt. James A. Collison, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. James Collison, 46, Alpha Road, Crawley, who was killed at the Front in France on June 4th. The sad news was conveyed to the bereaved parents by a letter written by Corpl. F. Stagg, which ran as follows:-

Monday, June 5th, 1916

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Collison, – it is with deep sorrow that I send you these few lines to tell you that your dear son was killed last night in a mine explosion. I feel so very sorry for you and I can only hope that God will give you strength to bear this very sad burden which has come to you.

Please accept my heartfelt sympathy in this hour of trial.

Believe me to be, yours sincerely.

F. Stagg

– Prvt. 'Jim' Collison was unmarried. He tried to enlist at the outbreak of war, or, to be precise, September 5th, 1914, but could not do so for medical reasons. He was determined to enter the Army if at all possible, so became an inmate of the Royal Sussex County Hospital and underwent an operation, the result of which enabled him to enlist, joining the Southdown battalion of the Royal Sussex regiment, at Bexhill, on November 25th, 1914.

He went to France on March 4th of the present year, so that he was at the Front just three months. From letters received from Corpl. Stagg, deceased had an extremely lucky escape on 2nd June, a piece of shrapnel shell striking him on the head, but fortunately his steel helmet protected him. The mine explosion which proved fatal to Prvt. Collison caused the death of many others. The deceased was scout of his battalion.

In happier days Jim was an enthusiastic supporter of the Crawley Athletic Football Club, for whom he was linesman. He was also a member of the Crawley harriers and of the Young Men's Athletic Club. He was of a very genial disposition and much liked; that he came of a very patriotic family the following will show: His brother, Prvt. Heinriek Collison, is on foreign service with the Royal Sussex Regiment. Not being of age to join the ranks he enlisted as a bugler. He was a member of the Crawley Boy Scouts and won a badge for war services in 1914. Another brother, Albert Vincent Collison, is a member of the Crawley Boy Scouts and he also won a war badge in 1914, but was the only one of the Troop to volunteer for war service this year. He has just completed four month's service with the Coastguard and has won his Sea Scouts' badge. Mr. James Collison, the father of these patriotic boys, is a corporal in the Crawley V. T. C. The bereaved parents have received many expressions of sympathy in their bereavement.

The British Legion Roll of Honour web site says that Private James Ambrose Collison of the 11th Battalion, Royal Sussex was killed in action near Cambrin on the 4th June 1916. He was 26 and a son of James and Ada Amelia Collison of 46, Alpha Road, Crawley. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in Cooden Beach, Bexhill. He was buried in Cambrin Churchyard and is commemorated on the Memorial Gates.

News of the death of Lord Kitchener had plunged the nation into mourning. Kitchener had set sail on a diplomatic mission to Russia on June 5th, on board H.

M. S. Hampshire, which, at approx. 19.30 struck a mine and sank just west of the Orkney Islands. Only 12 of the crew of 655, Kitchener and his staff survived. Those who did survive and caught a glimpse of him as the ship went down commented on his calmness. There were Memorial services up and down the country and one took place in Crawley on Wednesday, June 14th.

THE LATE LORD KITCHENER. MEMORIAL SERVICE AT CRAWLEY.

A service in memory of the late Lord Kitchener was held in the Crawley Parish Church on Wednesday afternoon, when there was a crowded congregation. By arrangement, the service was a combined one, to cover both Crawley and West Crawley parishes, and it opened with the singing of the National Anthem.

After the reading of psalms and choir singing the rector, H. L. B. Lennard said:

“The nation and the Empire are in mourning (and that of no conventional a kind) for the late Lord Kitchener. Yesterday a great memorial service was held in St. Paul’s Cathedral, at which the King, Queen, Queen Alexandra and many distinguished people were present. The solemn grandeur of cathedral music enriched the poignant beauty of the church service and deeply moved the vast congregation. It was a noble and inspiring tribute from all classes. We, too, in a much humbler way (imposed upon us by our small church and population), wish to join our voices to those of the great City of London. We are, therefore, holding a memorial service for the two parishes of this place in this church, in which service the clergy of both churches are taking part and at which parishioners of both parishes are present.”

“The news that that H. M. cruiser the ‘Hampshire’ had been sunk with Lord Kitchener and his staff was received early last week and was at first a stunning and crushing blow, for Lord Kitchener was one of the few public men whom nearly everybody trusted implicitly, and he was trusted because he was a strong man, who was thoroughly earnest in the discharge of his political and military duties, for Lord Kitchener was a great statesman as well as a great soldier.”

Lennard goes on to review all of Kitchener’s life before -

“We will now turn our thoughts to 1914 and onwards. On August 4th, 1914, England declared war against Germany, but England had what the Kaiser called ‘a contemptible little army;’ it mustered, I think, about 600,000 men. But the Continental armies were nine or ten times as large as ours. It was necessary therefore to raise new armies and Kitchener was the man who set to work to enlist recruits. Until quite recently these recruits have been obtained without compulsion, and though many men came forward and joined the Colours many refused to do their duty. I will not dwell on that. I only mention it to show that many difficulties had to be encountered and overcome. Lord Derby assisted the work of recruiting, as you all know, under the voluntary

system, but a National Service Act was found necessary and has been passed after much talk and delay.

Well, we now have an Army of 5,000,000 men (I am not quite sure of this figure, but I think it is approximately correct). 5,000,000 men instead of 600,000 and the vast increase has been made in less than two years. For that result the nation is chiefly indebted to Lord Kitchener, though, of course, he had many able men to help him. In your name therefore, as your spokesman, I pay our tribute of admiration and gratitude to the memory of the great soldier who we have lost. The ways of Providence are inscrutable and past finding out. We think that a man like Kitchener cannot be spared at a time like this. We wished him to see the final and decisive victory of the armies he created. But it was not to be so.

He did not even fall in battle, but was drowned at sea, either going down in the ship on which he was proceeding to Russia, or being swamped in an open boat, which may have capsized or sunk in the rough sea. We must not be discouraged even by the calamity we have suffered. We must ask God to raise up as wise and strong man to succeed the great one who is gone. We need a great commander and a great man at the War Office as much as ever, for the task of defeating Germany is not yet accomplished, but I trust it will be successfully achieved in the end. To all who are fighting on sea or land, to all who are tending the sick and wounded, to all who are working and watching and praying through these long weeks and months of conflict and strife, I would say, "Watch ye stand fast in the faith ; quit you like men, be strong."

The Blessing was given by the Rector, and the 'Dead March' in Saul was played on the organ at which the Rev. C. F. D. Trimming presided. Among the congregation was a number of the members of the Crawley and Ifield Volunteer Training Corps, under Company Commander Rossi-Ashton and Platoon Commander A. E. Taylor.

With the big push just weeks away, thousands of the new Kitchener Armies were preparing to go 'over the top' for the first time.

June 24 – 2ND. LIEUT. J. BANHAM is in one of the base hospitals in France suffering from gas poisoning but his many friends in Crawley and District will be glad to know that he is going on satisfactorily.

A CRAWLEY PATRIOT. – Good luck and congratulations to Sergt. Percy Simes on his patriotic action in re-joining the Army. Although over the military age, Simes attested in the last group, and on receiving the call at once decided to join up, irrespective of the fact that he could claim exemption absolutely – a true volunteer and patriot. Simes has already served 12 years in the King's Royal Rifles, and went through the Boer War, obtaining his medal and bars. He now

hopes to rejoin his old regiment. At the initiation of the Volunteer Training Corps movement Simes joined the local corps, and owing to his smartness and keenness rose quickly to the rank of Platoon Sergeant, and by his good example and sense of discipline assisted greatly to create the good comradeship existing in the local Platoon. In appreciation of his service, the members of the corps subscribed to make him a present before leaving, which was duly handed to him by the Company Commander on the eve of his departure. The character of the man is well shown by the unostentatious manner of his going. A valuable man to his country – we hope soon to hear of early promotion, and eventually a safe return.

WOUNDED – His many friends will regret to hear that Private H. E. Deadman 'C' Company, 9th Battalion, 13th Royal Sussex, whose home is at Westfield Road, Crawley, has been wounded in France. The injuries were to both legs, the left leg being seriously hurt, but he has just successfully undergone a third operation. Private Deadman is now in hospital in Gloucestershire, where it is sincerely hoped he will make a speedy recovery.

Over in France, the preparations for the 'big push' were all but complete. The weather had been poor and had delayed the attack by a week, but morale was high and it was felt that the preceding week long barrage of heavy artillery would not only destroy the enemies' wire but also most of the opposition themselves. The attack was set for July 1st and it was expected to be a stroll.

The day before, June 30th, a diversionary attack was launched at Richebourg. Three battalions of the Royal Sussex – the 11th, 12th and 13th (Southdowns) who formed the 116th Southdowns Brigade of the 39th Division – all men who had responded to the call of Lord Kitchener, went over the top for the first time following a bombardment of enemy lines. Despite the initial success of holding their first, and briefly their second objectives, the men of the Royal Sussex were forced to withdraw after suffering a shocking number of casualties and having to deal with a severe shortage of ammunition. The Royal Sussex lost 17 officers and nearly 350 men in the attack, with a further thousand wounded or captured, that came to be known as the Battle of the Boar's Head or, as, the official history of the regiment calls it, 'the Day Sussex Died'.

JULY 1916

Worse was to follow the very next day, as July 1st 1916 became the costliest and bloodiest day in British Army history. Over 57,000 men were killed, wounded or missing by the end of that terrible day. Nearly 20,000 of those were killed. Although the Battle of the Somme is nowadays remembered for that awful first day, the battle was to rage on until November. During this epic encounter the British developed new tactics including the creeping barrage, improved artillery-aircraft co-operation and employed tanks for the first time in action.

July 8 – LOCAL WAR ITEMS

Several Crawley lads are among those unfortunately wounded in the great advance of the past week.

News has been received that Sergt. W. Watts, of Church Street, who was formerly in the employ of Mr. T. Gardener, has been wounded in both arms, and is now in hospital in Nottingham. –

Prvt. Percy Knight, of St. Peter's Road, has been wounded, a bullet having entered at the bottom of his back and emerged at the groin, severing a blood vessel in its passage. Conveyed to the military hospital at Charing Cross, an operation was immediately performed, and he is making all the progress that can be expected. Percy was previously wounded in the shoulder, and made a good recovery. His father (Mr. Oscar Knight) and three brothers are also serving in the Army, and the other two brothers who are at home are in the Boy Scouts. –

Prvt. Clifford Fox, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Fox, of Albany Road, is also among the wounded, having received a shrapnel wound in the knee. He is now in hospital at Eastbourne, and is doing well. His brother, Prvt. Percy Fox, was wounded in Gallipoli, losing a toe, and is now in Egypt. –

Prvt. W. W. Day, yeoman of signals, who was reported lost, is now known to be a prisoner in Germany. –

Lieut. J. J. Banham, who recently returned to England suffering from gas poisoning, is now at home at Crawley on sick leave and is doing well. –

It is widely rumoured that Prvt. W. Cheeseman, of Crawley, who was the very popular collector for the Crawley Town Band, has been killed in action, the letter of a friend conveying the news, but there has so far been no official intimation, and his many friends are sincerely hoping that the rumour is unfounded. –

Mrs. Baker, of East Park, has received a letter from a native saying that her husband, who went through the siege of Kut, is a prisoner and all right, news of which is of a very gratifying character. –

Capt. Cyril Mitford Humble-Crofts, third son of Prebendary Humble-Crofts, rector of Waldron, was killed in action on Saturday. Capt. Humble-Crofts was nephew to Mrs. Chalk, of the Limes, Crawley. He was educated at Eastbourne College, and practised at Oakfield as a solicitor for some years, afterwards going to London. He was a good cricketer, and has played for the Martlets on several occasions. He enlisted as a private in the H. A. C., subsequently receiving a commission, and served in France as Captain, 13th Sussex, one of the Southdown Battalions. He was a most capable company officer, and had his life been spared would doubtless have risen in his gallant profession.

Capt. Cyril Mitford Humble-Crofts and Private William Edward Cheeseman of the 13th Battalion (Southdowns), Royal Sussex Regiment, were both killed in action during the attack on the 'Boars Head' at Richebourg on the 30th June. Cheeseman

was born in Sutton and had enlisted in Horsham. He is commemorated on the Loos Memorial and his name appears at Crawley.

DEATH OF MR. H. C. PACE, JUN.- With Mr. and Mrs. Pace, of the High Street, Crawley, the sincerest sympathy will be felt in the great loss they have sustained by the death of their only son, Howard Clement Pace, after many months' illness.

He was only 21 years of age and his youth makes the bereavement all the sadder. He joined the R. G. A. soon after the war broke out, but his constitution was not sufficiently robust to stand the strain. As a result of damp clothes and other causes he suffered from pleurisy, and consumption developed. He received sanatorium treatment, but the benefit obtained was not permanent, and after his discharge he became worse.

The very best was done for the lad by his devoted parents, and for a considerable time he was at Worthing, where it was hoped the sea air and the best of medical skill would do good, but all was unavailing and the patient was subsequently brought home to Crawley, where death occurred on Wednesday morning.

His early death under such sad circumstances has given rise to wide-spread sorrow, and the parents, as well as his two sisters, have the heartfelt sympathy of many friends. – The funeral is arranged for to-day (Saturday). A service will be held in the Congregational Church at 1 o'clock previous to internment in Crawley Churchyard.

Howard Clement Pace was born in Cuckfield on the 10th July 1894 and was a Gunner with the 4th Hampshire Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery. He had died at home in Crawley of pleurisy and consumption on the 5th of July 1916, just days before his twenty-second birthday. He was the only son of Henry Clement and Lillian Elizabeth Pace, who owned 'H C Pace and Son', the drapers and outfitters in Crawley High Street.

July 15 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Much sympathy will be felt with Police Sergt. Capelin and other members of the family in the loss sustained by the death of his brother at the Front. Among the local wounded are Sergt. Clarkson, who was a member of the teaching staff at the Crawley Church of England School, and Private Brackpool, whose home is in Alpha Road, Crawley.

July 22 – BOMB. L. BONIFACE writes to his mother, who lives in St. John's Road, Crawley, telling her that he is keeping well, " although it is hell out here now that the big advance is on." He adds that the air is simply full of screaming shells of all sorts and sizes, and they have the batteries of guns all round them, firing day and night. It is one continual roar, "but we are playing the devil with

Fritz." Bomb. Boniface says the boys get pretty used to the noise of the guns, and can sleep through it when they once get off, but it is a job to drop to sleep when the explosions shake the ground for about a mile around.

He adds, "I have had some rotten experiences since I wrote you last. We are in the very hottest part of the line, bar none, and they shell all the roads all around here. Our chaps are in a wood about a mile from here, and I have to keep taking something or other up to them. The first day we got here I was going up and one of our officers and his groom were riding about 20 yards in front of me. The officer came back to say something to me, and a shell burst by the side of the road and badly wounded the groom, but the officer and I both escaped.

The next day I was up in the woods with a water cart, when they started shelling the place. I lay down flat on my face, and the shrapnel and pieces of shell fell like rain all round me, one big piece falling about three inches from my arm, but that was the nearest they got to me, so you see someone is looking after me, or else my luck is dead in. They sent over a hundred shells into that part of the wood that day, so you can tell what it was like. I said 'Good-bye' to everyone, but here I am still. We had three fellows and a captain wounded that day out of 25, and two of them have been recommended for the D. C. M."

Bomb. Boniface concludes by stating, "I think we have got them on the run a bit now. They keep bringing the prisoners in here, and they do look a miserable lot, I can tell you. I have got everything I want and have quite settled down to the life out here now, but of course shall be glad to get home."

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – His parents have been informed that Sergt. L. G. Edwards (King's Royal Rifles), of The Croft, Crawley, has been wounded in the present offensive, and is now in hospital at Frencham. He received injuries to the face and throat, and in the latter organ there is still a piece of shrapnel, for the removal of which an operation is contemplated. – Among other local soldiers wounded are Lc-Corpl. F. Muncey, Prvt. W. Hygate and Prvt. Bert Lillywhite ; and that they will speedily recover from their wounds will be the earnest wish of all.

July 29 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The sad news has come to hand that the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Drughorn, of Ifield Hall, Crawley, was killed in action in France on the 15th inst. The deceased, who belonged to the Royal Fusiliers, was only 21 years of age. The family will have the deep sympathy of all in their sad bereavement.

Intimation has also been received that private Bert Briggs, of Spencers Road, Crawley, is badly wounded and missing. He was last seen in a German trench, with serious injuries, and nothing has been learnt of him since. Though the worst is feared, there is yet hope that he may have survived his injuries and is a

prisoner. Briggs, before he joined the Southdowns, was employed on the Tilgate Estate as a forester. He has a wife and five children, the youngest of whom he has not yet seen. With Mrs. Briggs, in her deep anxiety, much sympathy will be felt.

Although the name Briggs is used by the Sussex & Surrey Courier, this is either a mistake or an assumed name as the casualty referred to is most likely Albert Brett, as we shall see shortly.

Among the wounded in the recent fighting also appear the names of Private T. Cheale, Private E. Lindfield and Private S. S. Parsons, all of Crawley.

MILITARY TRIBUNAL. – There was no sitting of the Tribunal this week, it having been decided to meet fortnightly for the future.

Private William Frederick Drughorn was with the 10th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers who were part of the 18th Division when he was killed in action on the Somme on the 15th of July. He was born in Amsterdam and had enlisted in St. Pauls Churchyard. He was buried in Pozieres British Cemetery, Ovillers-Boiselle. His name is included on the Ifield War Memorial and there is a special memorial to him at Ifield Hall in the shape of a sundial. His father, who later became Sir John Drughorn, was the Lord of the Manor of Ifield. Sir John Drughorn was to be the main contributor behind the Memorial Park and gates in Crawley.

AUGUST 1916

After the devastating first days and weeks on the Somme, the British forces regrouped and enjoyed some limited successes, despite stiffening resistance from the Germans. By the time August had arrived, the idea of a decisive breakthrough was appearing less and less likely.

In Crawley, normal life was continuing as the sheer carnage on the Somme had yet to dawn on the country. Military absentees are still being picked up in Crawley and the Military Tribunals are continuing. Chris is playing bowls for Crawley throughout the months of August and September and Don appears in the August 5 papers playing for Crawley in a game of *CRICKET*. - *The first match of the season on the Crawley ground was played on Wednesday, the visitors being Three Bridges. The homesters proved the winners, for whom Cook, a promising player, took six wickets for only 12 runs, and Lovett two for 14.*

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – A communication received from his Colonel states that Lieut. Harold Sprake, of the 8th Black Watch, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Sprake, is missing. The many friends of the family are sincerely hoping that he is merely a prisoner of war in the hands of the enemy, and has suffered no worse fate.

Dr. and Mrs. Mosse, of Old Park House, Ifield, have one of their sons reported

missing and believed to be killed, and the sympathies of many are with them in their trouble. –

No further particulars are to hand as to Prvt. Bert Brett, of Spencers Road, Crawley, who is also missing, and who was last seen in a German trench badly wounded. Brett has a wife and five children, the youngest of whom has been born since he has been away ; and deep sympathy will be extended to the family.

Lieutenant George Harold Sprake of the 8th Battalion, Royal Highlanders (The Black Watch) was killed in action on the Somme on the 18th of July. He was born in Brighton, and his parents were Charles and Alice Julia Sprake, of 'Kimberly', Ifield. He was married to Alice. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Second Lieutenant Phillip Godfrey Mosse of the 6th Battalion, East Lancashire Regiment had been killed in action on the 18th April in Mesopotamia, the country which is now known as Iraq. He was 25 and the son of Herbert R. Mosse M. D. and Katherine Mosse of Roffey House, Horsham. He had formerly served with the Warwicks. He is included on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial as well as the Memorial park gates. His name is on the Basra Memorial in Iraq.

Another Crawley man, Prvt. Chas. Rice, of the Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry, the son of Mrs. G. Rice of 37, West Street, died in the British General Hospital in Amara, Egypt on the 18th ult., from dysentery and enteric. He was 27 and had been serving in India for five years before the outbreak of war.

August 12 – WOUNDED. – In the recent list of those wounded at the Front appears the name of Lance-Corpl. R. H. Holman, of the Royal Sussex Regiment.

SUSSEX VOLUNTEER REGIMENT. – The local members of this regiment joined others to the number of about 300 officers and men at Bignor Park on Sunday, and were inspected by the Duke of Norfolk. Captain Rossi-Ashton and Lieutenant A. E. Taylor were in charge of the Crawley contingent.

August 19 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES.- Among the local wounded at the Front are Lieut. G. F. H. Banks, Corpl. W. J. Bush, Lance- Corpl. E. Boncey and Privts. B. Eggleton and A. Lillywhite. Prvt. W. G. Scutt, of Crawley, and belonging to the Royal Sussex, is reported to be missing.

August 26 – WOUNDED. – It is officially reported that Lance- Corpl. G. Tingley, of Crawley, who is in the Royal Sussex Regiment, has been wounded. Prvt. T. H. Blundell, of the same, has also been wounded.

THE BANDMASTER'S VISIT. – Mr. H. G. Melville, who has been at the Front for a considerable time and seen much active service, paid a visit to Crawley

on Thursday, and will conduct the band on Saturday and Sunday evenings, at 7.45, in the Upper and Lower Squares respectively. He will receive a warm welcome from his old friends.

PROMOTION. – Lieut. S. Shepherd, A. S. C., youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Shepherd, Malthouse Road, Crawley, has been promoted Captain, a fact upon which he will be very warmly congratulated.

THE D. C. M. – Hearty congratulations will be extended to Corporal R. Bush, who has been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry during operations. When his officer became a casualty Corpl. Bush took command, and, under heavy machine-gun and shell fire, led his men into the enemy's second line trench. The official report states that he acted with great coolness and judgement. Corpl. Bush is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Bush, formerly of Ifield Road, Crawley, and now living at Leyton. He was a popular member of the Crawley Town Band, as were also his two brothers, who, like himself, joined the Army soon after the outbreak of war. The many friends of the family in this district will be much pleased to read of this well-merited distinction.

August 1916 also saw a change of leadership for the German Army on the Western Front.

The spectacularly successful partnership from the Eastern Front, General von Hindenburg and General Ludendorff, replaced von Falkenhayn who had resigned after it became clear that Verdun was costing the Germans as many men as the French Army without a decisive outcome in sight. Hindenburg and Ludendorff soon realised that the battles of Verdun and the Somme had severely diminished the German Army's offensive capacity. It was decided that the war in the west would have to be conducted mainly on the defensive for 1917, leaving the Central powers free to attack in the East. It was with this in mind that preparations for a powerful defensive position were made so that the Germans could withdraw to it when the time was right. This would not only give them the opportunity of picking out the ideal locations for their stronghold but would also shorten the line and free up thousands of men who could be used to take the offensive elsewhere. The new stronghold, officially known to the Germans as the Siegfried Stellung, would come to be known as the Hindenburg Line.

On August 28th the film *The Battle of the Somme* went on general release all around the country. It is estimated that over 20 million people saw the film in the space of just two months.

The August 22nd, The Times reported that "Crowded audiences...were interested and thrilled to have the realities of war brought so vividly before them,

and if women had sometimes to shut their eyes to escape for a moment from the tragedy of the toll of battle which the film presents, opinion seems to be general that it was wise that the people at home should have this glimpse of what our soldiers are doing and daring and suffering in Picardy."

Overall, the film became one of the biggest successes in British box office history and proved to be a countrywide morale raiser. With 20 million people watching it, it is very likely that wherever they were based (Ted is now based in Southend and Eddie is in Crawley) father and son would have seen it. Whether it was the film, or the general situation in France that moved them to decide on their next course of action will never be known but Quarter-Master Sergeant A. E. Cook and Private R. E. Cook were to reach a momentous decision in the coming weeks.

SEPTEMBER 1916

September 2 – PROMOTION. – Private Ernest Rice, whose home is at 70, West Street, Crawley, has been promoted to the rank of Corporal, while in France. He joined the Army as recently as February of this year and has been in three different regiments. Originally joining the 3rd Royal Sussex, he was transferred to the 22nd London Regiment, with which he went to France, and since he has been out he has again been transferred to another part of the London Regiment, this time to the 12th Battalion. Rice was a prominent footballer, playing for both Crawley Town and the Athletic Clubs, and many old chums will be glad to hear of his promotion.

THE D. C. M. awarded to Corpl. E. R. Bush, of the 1st Trench Howitzer Battery, 13th Royal Sussex, referred to in our last issue, was for conspicuous conduct in a recent battle.

The enemy was being attacked, when the officer in command became seriously wounded. No other officer being available, Corpl. E. R. Bush took command and led his men into the enemy's second line of trenches under heavy shell and machine-gun fire. The honour bestowed upon him was well merited and has given his many Crawley friends much pleasure.

- Another brother, Corpl. W. J. Bush, of the 7th Royal Sussex, was recently wounded in the left arm and leg whilst grenade fighting at Owillers. He was picked up by a sergeant and taken into a vacated German dug-out, where he lay for some 16 hours before he was brought in, and by a curious coincidence this same sergeant was wounded a few days afterwards, and was sent to the same hospital as Bush and they met each other there, much to the astonishment and delight of both. His father paid him a visit on Sunday and much to his surprise found him, not in bed, but at the gate to meet him, upon a pair of crutches, with the hope of abandoning them at an early date.

— Another brother, Lance-Corpl. W. D. Bush, joined the Royal Engineers, and is at present playing in the band of his Company at Marlow, Bucks. All the boys were formerly in the Crawley Town Band, and their doings in the Army are of particular interest to many old friends in this district, who are much gratified at Corpl. E. R. Bush's distinction.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING CORPS. — *The Crawley and Ifield Volunteer Training Corps, which is attached to 'C' Company 8th Batt. Sussex Volunteer Regiment, has just issued the report and statement of accounts for the year ended August 31st. The committee, of which Mr. A. Rossi-Ashton is chairman and Mr. A. E. Taylor vice-chairman, regret that after nearly two years of continuous work the burden of the cost of upkeep has become too heavy for the members to maintain without further outside help. Overcoats and other accoutrements are badly needed, and the committee confidently rely on a generous response to this appeal. Since the inauguration of the movement the members of the local Corps have paid out of their own pockets no less a sum than £180 for working expenses and equipment.*

The War Office has now taken over the Volunteer Force on a purely voluntary basis (except in the case of imminent danger of invasion) and contributes nothing in the way of funds; the entire upkeep must therefore be defrayed by the Volunteers themselves, with the support of their friends. The public is asked to support the Corps, so that the work may continue without being impeded financially.

A short resume of the career and the work of the Crawley and Ifield Volunteers may be interesting. The movement was initiated by the Chief Constable of West Sussex, who requested the local Rifle Club to form a night guard for a vulnerable portion of the railway line; this was promptly and satisfactorily carried out until notice was received that the guard could be discontinued. This work created a strong patriotic feeling and the Volunteer Training Corps was the result. After many discouragements, the Volunteer Force became an established fact and a body to be reckoned with.

Crawley was among the first of the units in Sussex to be inspected and enrolled by the Central Association, and from that time onwards good work had been done. Of the original membership, 24 men have joined the Army, and the training with the Corps has been extremely valuable to them. Much useful help was given to the men who joined under the Derby scheme, and the Corps is now training exempted men handed over to it by the Tribunals. The accounts show a deficit of £12.7s.6d. on the working expenses and maintenance account, and subscriptions to the Corps' funds can be forwarded to the London County and Westminster Bank, Crawley.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. — *Prvt. Frederick Ernest Rice, of the Middlesex Regiment, whose home is in Ifield Road, Crawley, is reported missing. A brother,*

Nat, was posted as missing as long ago as August last year, and nothing has since been heard of him. In all Mr. and Mrs. Rice have seven sons in the Army, six abroad and one in England; and all are well excepting the two referred to, of whom more reassuring news is eagerly awaited.

Prvt. A. E. Simmonds and Prvt. Geo. Scutt, of the Royal Sussex, whose homes are also in Crawley, are likewise reported missing.

Sergt. A. R. Baker, Royal Engineers, is reported a prisoner at Kut; and the under mentioned have been wounded:

Lance-Corpl. N. Langridge, Prvt. C. E. Ford and Prvt. T. H. Blundell, all of the Royal Sussex, and belonging to Crawley.

Private Frederick Ernest Rice of the 11th Battalion, the Middlesex Regiment had been killed in action on the 28th of July. He was 28 and the second son of John and Eliza Rice to die in the Great War. He had been born in Worth and had enlisted in Horsham. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial on the Somme and at Crawley.

Private William George Scutt was with the 8th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he was killed in action near Bernafay Wood on the Somme on the 13th of July aged 21. He was the son of William and Jane Scutt of County Oak, Crawley and had been born in Ifield. He had enlisted in Horsham. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial and his name is included on the Ifield and Lowfield Heath War Memorials as well as at Crawley.

September 9 – PROMOTION. – Sergeant is the rank to which Jack Elsey has been promoted, and many chums in the Crawley district will be glad to hear of the progress he is making in the Army. Elsey was formerly a local Territorial and also a Boy Scout, and he joined up on the outbreak of war and landed at Suvla Bay two years ago last month. He saw a good deal of active service on the peninsula. His regiment is now in Egypt, where a younger brother also is. Sergt. Elsey is the champion middle-weight boxer of his battalion, and a recent letter to his parents in Ifield Road tells them of his promotion and the further gratifying fact that he is fit and well. –

Prvt. W. O. Knight is another Crawley lad who has been promoted, receiving his second stripe on the 13th ult. He is with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, and is, happily, quite well. “We are still on the desert,” he says, “and not far from where there is fighting going on, but I don’t think we shall have the luck to get a ‘go’ for I think it will be all over just where we are before very long.”

SEARCHING FOR SHIRKERS. – On Tuesday evening, following a ‘raid’ on the picture palace at Horsham, Major Campbell Fraser (Recruiting Staff Officer), with Capt. Jones (Assistant Recruiting Officer), Police Superintendent

G. Wakeford and Police Sergeant Capelin, proceeded to Crawley and visited the picture hall here with the object of finding men of military age who had not joined up. Four who were eligible were interviewed, but were able to produce their papers, so that the 'raid' was unproductive. The scope of this campaign is, it is stated, to be extended, to bring in other buildings where young fellows are likely to congregate.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The sad news has been received that Prvt. Charles Tullett, whose home was at Hydehurst Cottage, County Oak, has been killed in action. He was only 19 years of age, and voluntarily enlisted in the Royal West Surrey (Queen's) Regiment in June last year. Writing to his mother, an officer writes: "I am extremely sorry to have to announce the death of your son, which took place on August 21st. We were engaged in a very fierce action with the Germans, and Prvt. Tullett was killed by a shell while taking a message. His death was instantaneous. He died in the performance of his duty, in which he was always astute, and he has left behind him the reputation of a gallant and energetic man. His place will not be easy to fill. In this battle we seem to have lost most of our honest and best, including all the officers in this Company excepting myself. The wonder is that anyone is alive. However, we gave the Germans better than we got ; they were mowed down as they tried to stop our advance, and I feel that many of our comrades' deaths are well avenged. His many friends in this Company have asked me to convey to you their deepest sympathy, in which I beg to join." –

Prvt. C. E. Ford, who was reported wounded last week, is now reported dead. For some years he was a roadman in the employ of the Council, and was naturally a familiar figure locally. He leaves an invalid wife and two children, for whom, in their sad bereavement, the greatest sympathy will be felt. –

Gunr. J. Rice and Prvt. E. Denman, both of Crawley, are reported wounded.

There is not a great deal known about Private Charles Edward Ford other than he was with the 8th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he died on the 13th of July at the age of 31. He was the son of Mrs. Emily Ford, of 12, Albert Cottages, Sunte Avenue in Haywards Heath and the husband of the late Daisy Ford. There is even less known about Private Charles Tullett of County Oak (the area taken up by the super stores opposite Manor Royal today). Both men are on the Thiepval Memorial.

September 16 – KILLED IN ACTION. – Many in this district will much regret to hear of the death of 2nd. Lieut. Fredk. T. Gillett, a popular lad who received his education at North House School, Crawley, and who was greatly esteemed by all who knew him. He was a son of Councillor and Mrs. F. Gillett, of The Pines, Bromley, and was 19 years of age. Since leaving Crawley, he was learning the woollen business at Peebles, Scotland and then he joined the Dragoon Guards at Dunbar on the outbreak of war.

After training at Aldershot he was sent to the Front with a draft in May last year. Two months later he was called out and offered a commission, and, after spending a period of further training at the General Headquarters, was gazetted, at his own request, to the Royal West Kents. He served a year with the regiment and was senior subaltern at the time of his death, which occurred when he was leading his men in an attack on a wood. For some time his fate was uncertain, but a letter from the Lieut-Col. commanding the Battalion conveyed definite news of young Gillett's death.

In this the C. O. wrote: " He was killed when with his platoon in an assault on an enemy trench. When getting near the trench the Battalion came under very heavy machine gun fire from a wood on our left, which the Battalion on our left had been unable to get possession of. Your son was shot through the head and killed immediately. I need hardly tell you how I feel his death, as I had always found him a most conscientious officer who could always be relied on to do all in his power to carry out his duties. I have never met a harder worker or a more conscientious officer." –

The Bromley Town Council passed a vote of condolence with Councillor and Mrs. Gillett in their sad bereavement, and many Crawley people who had the pleasure of young Gillett's acquaintance will join in this expression of sympathy at his unfortunate death.

Second Lieutenant Frederick Tremlow Gillett was with the 1st Battalion of the Royal West Kents when he was killed in action on the 22nd of July 1916. His name is on the Thiepval Memorial.

September 23 – THE D. S. O. – Lieut. J. E. A. Mocatta, a son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. O. M. Courage, The Mount, Ifield, has been awarded the Distinguished Service Order. The Lieutenant is in command of H. M. S. 'Nicator,' and he shared in the glories with Commander the Hon. Edward B. S. Bingham, who is a prisoner of war. The latter is recommended for the Victoria Cross, for the extremely gallant way in which he led his division in their attack, first on enemy destroyers and then on the battle cruisers. He finally sighted the enemy battle fleet, and, followed by the one remaining destroyer of his division (the 'Nicator') with dauntless courage he closed to within 3,000 yards of the enemy in order to attain a favourable position for firing the torpedoes. While making this attack 'Nestor' and 'Nicator' were under concentrated fire of the secondary batteries of the High Seas Fleet. 'Nestor' was subsequently sunk.

WOUNDED. – Corpl. Ernest Rice, whose home is at 70, West Street, and who only took his stripe a few weeks back, has, we regret to announce, been wounded. Two fingers on his left hand were splintered, and in a letter he has written to his

wife he says he owes his life to a button on his tunic, which was struck by a piece of shrapnel, which entered his thigh, making a nasty hole. He is now in hospital in France, expecting to be sent down shortly to the base. His many chums will be sorry to hear of his misfortune, and will wish him a speedy recovery.

THE JUTLAND BATTLE. – *Sun-Lieut. J. G. Y. Loveband*, youngest son of the vicar of Ifield and Mrs. Loveband, is among those recommended for early promotion by Admiral Jellicoe; and *Lieut. Palmer*, a nephew of the Rev. and Mrs. Loveband has been awarded the D. S. O.

DEATH OF LIEUT. HUGH MONTGOMERY. – Much regret will be felt locally at the death of *Lieut. Hugh Montgomery*, who formerly resided at Ifield Hall, Crawley. He was killed in action on the 13th. The second son of the late Mr. W. Montgomery and Mrs. Montgomery, he entered the 12th Lancers in February 1904, and joined the Irish Guards from the Special Reserve, getting his second star in June last year. He was one of the prospective candidates for Southampton. Whilst at Crawley Mr. Montgomery addressed several Unionist gatherings, and the public debate he had with the Rev. J. McAuslane will not have been forgotten. In football circles he and his brother were particularly well known, and they were the donors of the Montgomery Cup which was competed for by the clubs constituting the Mid-Sussex League. *Lieut. Montgomery* was married, his widow residing at Warwick Square, London, and with her and the other members of the family the sincerest sympathy will be expressed.

Lieutenant Hugh Montgomery was 37 when he was killed in action on the 13th September 1916. He and his wife Clara had lived at No. 54 Warwick Square, SW1. He is buried at the Guards' Cemetery in Lesboeuks.

September 30 – THE BURNING ZEPPELIN. – Several people in the Crawley district report having seen the burning Zeppelin fall during the raid early on Sunday morning, whilst the gunfire was quite audible. As a precaution, the Crawley fire engine was kept in readiness, with a fireman in attendance, and this again done during Monday night, when Zepps were also about.

WOUNDED. – The list of wounded this week contains the name of *Prvt. J. S. Wilkes*, Royal West Surrey, whose home is at County Oak, Crawley.

KILLED AT THE FRONT. – News has come to hand that *Rifleman William Henry Clark*, only son of Mr. W. Clark, who was formerly the coachman at Deerswood, Ifield, has been killed by a German shell. With two chums (*R. F. Young* and *Harry Young*) he joined the Army soon after the outbreak of hostilities, and has

seen a good deal of active service. His death took place on the 3rd inst. Clark was a single man, aged 24, and for seven years was a clarinet player in the Crawley Town Band. He will be much missed, and his death is deeply regretted by many friends and acquaintances, whilst considerable sympathy will be felt for the bereaved.

DEATH OF LANCE-SERGT. R. F. LONGLEY. – Very sincere regret has been expressed at the death, in action, of Lance-Sergt. Richard Ferguson Longley, the only remaining son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Longley, of Lindfield, and grandson of the late Mr. James Longley, of Crawley. His death took place on the 15th inst., and only two days previously it had been announced in Company Orders that he had been awarded the D. C. M.

The deceased was only 22 years of age, and belonged to the King's Royal Rifle Corps. He joined up soon after the outbreak of the war, and first went out to France a year ago last May. Like his brother, Second-Lieut. Leslie Longley, who was killed in action July last, he was a fine looking young fellow, and possessed a splendid disposition, and all his comrades esteemed him highly. He had been granted a commission, but it had not been gazetted at the time of his death.

Among the many letters received by the sorrow-stricken parents is the following from an officer of the regiment: "As an officer who was present when your gallant son was killed, I cannot let the matter pass without informing you of his noble work. He accompanied me in the great advance, and showed a courage and a coolness in action worthy of a British soldier. It was whilst going to the assistance of a wounded comrade that he was hit. A bullet passed through his heart, and death was instantaneous. By his death the regiment has lost an excellent non-commissioned officer with a promising career as an officer. His comrades mourn his loss, and tender to you their deepest sympathy with you in your great trouble. Permit me to add my deepest sympathy with you in your great loss, and hope that you will be given strength and courage to bear up under this terrible blow."

Another officer has sent the following letter: "It is with deepest regret that I have to inform you of the death of your son, Sergt. Longley, D. C. M. He was killed while helping a wounded comrade on the parapet, and it will be a consolation to you to know that his death was instantaneous. I can assure you that his death is a grave loss to the whole battalion, who are all proud of his splendid conduct on the 18th August, for which he had only just received his D.C. M. I, and the whole Company with me, wish to express our deepest sympathy with you. On every side I have heard expressions of regret at his loss. He was killed on the 15th September. I should have written to you sooner, but I am the only officer at present left with 'A' Company, and we are only just beginning to get straightened out."

Lance-Sergt. Longley was a popular young fellow at Crawley, where he frequently stayed and local friends will join in the expressions of sympathy with his greatly bereaved relatives.

Rifleman William Henry Clark was with the 10th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade when he was killed in action on the Somme on the 3rd September 1916. He was born in Buckswood, Ifield and had enlisted in Holborn. His father was Father William Clark from Handcross. He is listed on the Crawley Town Band memorial in St. John's Church and the Memorial Park Gates at Crawley. Both he and Lance Sergeant Richard Ferguson Longley are commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

There were three other Crawley fatalities in September whose names never seem to have been recorded in the local papers (there are of course editions missing). One was Private Arthur J. Tester of the 12th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment who was 19 when he was killed in action on Becourt Ridge on the 3rd of September. Private Tester was actually reported as 'missing' at first with actual confirmation of his death not coming through until the end of July 1917. He was the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Tester who lived in Crawley. He was born in Hurstpierpoint and had enlisted in Crawley. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Commander George Frederick Gerald Woodhall who was the Commander, H.M.S. "President" Royal Navy died of meningitis at Folkestone on the 13th September where he was the Divisional Naval Transport Officer and Senior Officer. He was 50 and the son of Lt. Colonel Frederick and Mrs Woodhall. He was married to Mrs Hilda Woodhall of 22, Down Street, Mayfair, London and the record states that he also owned Goffs Hill in Crawley. He is buried in St. Margaret's Churchyard, Ifield.

Second Lieutenant Gerald Stanley Hill, 1st Battalion London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers). He was born in Camberwell, London about 1893. He was killed in action on the Somme on September 15th. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Three of the men's names appear on the Memorial Gates, but strangely the name of Second Lieutenant Gerald Stanley Hill does not. There is a special memorial to him at St. Peter's Church that is erected by his bother Horace. The stone memorial is near the altar and reads: "To the Glory of God and in ever loving memory of Gerald Stanley Hill, 2nd Lieut. The 1st London Regt who fell in action in the Battle of the Somme, Sept 15th 1916 aged 22 years. The above windows were erected by his brother Horace Rowland Hill of this parish."

OCTOBER 1916

On October 3rd 1916, just six days after his 49th birthday, Quarter-Master Sergeant Alfred Edward Cook applied for Officer Cadet Training:

Application for Admission to an Officer Cadet Unit with a view to appointment to a Temporary Commission in the Regular Army for the period of the War, to a Commission in the Special Reserve of Officers or to a Commission in the Territorial Force.

The candidate will complete the following particulars and obtain certificates below as to character and educational qualification.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------|
| 1. Name in full | Surname | Cook | Category |
| | Christian names | Alfred Edward | C1 |
2. State whether desirous of appointment to –
- | | |
|---|----------|
| (i) A temporary commission in the Regular Army. | I |
| (ii) A commission in the Special Reserve of Officers. | See next |
| (iii) A commission in the Territorial Force. | Reply |
3. State in order of preference the branch of the Service in which desirous of serving e.g., Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers, Infantry, Army Service Corps, etc.
Note. – Unless otherwise stated it will be assumed that a candidate is prepared to accept a commission in any branch of the Service.
- (i) Labour & Works Battns. & Companies
(ii) Royal Defence Corps
(iii) Army Service Corps (Supply)
4. Unit (if any) to which desirous of being appointed. (If for the Army Service Corps state whether for Motor Transport, Horse Transport, or Supply.) Note. – No guarantee can be given for appointment to a particular unit. This is left blank.
5. Date and place of birth. 27th Sept 1867 Crawley Sussex
(Someone has written 49 and circled it here)
6. Whether married. Married
7. Whether of pure European descent. Yes
8. Whether a British Subject by birth or naturalization. (State which, and if by naturalization attach a certificate from the Home Office.) British by birth
9. Nationality by birth of father (if naturalized, state date.) British
10. Occupation of father. Builder & Contractor.
11. Permanent address of candidate. Lathbury. Perryfield Road. Crawley. Sussex.
12. Present address for correspondence. 182 York Road. Southend.
13. Schools or Colleges at which educated. North House Grammar School. Crawley.
14. Occupation or employment in civil life. Builder & Contractor.
15. Whether able to ride. No.
16. Whether now serving, or previously served, in any branch of His Majesty's Naval or Military Forces, or in the Officers Training Corps. If so, state: -

All the bright company of Heaven

- (a) *Regiment, Corps, or contingent 70th Provisional Batt.*
 - (b) *Date of appointment Enrolled in 2nd V. Batt. Royal Sussex Regt 18/8/91. Continuous service since.*
 - (c) *If serving in the ranks state whether on an ordinary peace engagement or for the period of the war only Duration of War.*
 - (d) *Rank Q. M. S.*
 - (e) *Date of retirement, resignation or discharge (this is ticked)*
 - (f) *Circumstances of retirement, resignation or discharge (this is ticked)*
 - (g) *Whether in possession of Certificate A. No*
 - (h) *Whether in possession of Certificate B. No*
- Category in which classified C1*

17. *Whether now serving, or previously served, in any other Government Department (Home, Indian, or Colonial). If so, give particulars, and attach official permission from the Head of the Department to make this application.*

Nil.

18. *Whether an application for a commission has been previously made, if so, on what date and for what branch of the service.*

Application made in August for commission as Qtr. Master in T. F. Placed on waiting list for such appointment as per letter 9/mise/1472 (T.F.3) attached.

(i) *I certify that the above particulars are correct and complete. I request that I may be admitted to an Officer Cadet Unit with a view to being appointed to a commission as stated in (3) above. I understand that I shall be held liable for service in the ranks if I fail to qualify for final recommendation for a commission.*

Date October 3rd 1916 Alfred E. Cook

Usual Signature of Candidate.

Signature of parent or guardian, if the

Candidate is under 21 years of age

(ii) *Certificate of moral character during the past four years. If the candidate has been at school, College, or other educational establishment during any portion of the period the certificate should be signed by the head of the establishment, otherwise it may be signed by a responsible person (not a near relative or connection), e.g., the minister of the parish or other local clergyman, a magistrate, a senior officer of the Army or Navy who has been well acquainted with the candidate in private life during the period.*

If the above-mentioned person cannot certify for the whole period of four years, a second certificate for the period not covered by the first should be signed by a similar person.

I hereby certify to the good moral character of Alfred Edward Cook for the last 40 years

Signature R. M. Helme

Rank, office or occupation Lieut- Colonel. T.F.

Date 5 October Address Lec Place Wisborough Green. Billingshurst

To be filled in when the above certificate does not cover four years

I hereby certify to the good moral character of

From

To

Signature

Rank, office or occupation

Date Address

(iii) Evidence that the candidate has attained a standard of education suitable for commissioned rank.

If the candidate has:-

(a) obtained a leaving or qualifying certificate as required of a candidate for admission to the Royal Military College under the regulations in force up to 1st April, 1912, the Certificate should be attached ;

(b) qualified at an Army Entrance Examination, the date of examination should be stated ;

(c) passed the matriculation examination of a University, or a test accepted in lieu thereof, the Certificate should be attached.

Failing one of the above, the following certificate must be signed by the Headmaster of a secondary school or other competent educational authority.

I certify from personal knowledge that Alfred Edward Cook has attained a standard of education suitable for commissioned rank. R. M. Helme Lieut-Col. T. F.

State here educational position e.g. Head of a College or School, etc.

The Head of the school has been dead some years R. M. H.

When the above certificates have been completed:-

*A candidate who is serving in the ranks * or in the Senior or Junior Division O. T. C. should apply to the Officer Commanding his unit.*

Other candidates should apply to the authorities enumerated in paragraph 6 of M.T. /391E.

(iv.) CERTIFICATE OF RECOMMENDATION FOR ADMISSION TO AN OFFICER CADET UNIT.

The above-mentioned Officer will see the candidate and, if he finds him suitable, will complete the following certificate after the candidate has been examined by an Officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps (see page 4):-

I certify that I have seen Q. M. S. Alfred E. Cook

And can recommend him as a suitable candidate in every way for admission to an Officer Cadet Unit with a view to being appointed to a commission. (The Officer commanding should add any other particulars he is able to furnish regarding the candidate's qualifications.)

Station Burnham-on-Grouch

Signed Lt.Col. (illegible) Commanding 70th Provisional Battn. T. F.

Date October 18th 1916

In the case of a candidate who is serving in the ranks this certificate must be endorsed by the G. O. C. the division in which the unit is serving is serving, or, if the unit is not included in a division, by an officer not below the rank of Brigadier-General, or by an Officer selected by the Army Council.

Signature of above officer W. J. Hillier – Brigr. General

Commanding Commanding 8th Provisional Brigade

Station Mald??

Date 20 Oct 1916

(v.) CERTIFICATE OF NOMINATION TO A PARTICULAR UNIT.

An Officer Commanding who wishes to nominate a candidate to the unit under his command may complete the following certificate.

I certify that I am well acquainted with

and can recommend him as a suitable candidate in all respects for appointment to a commission in (insert unit of service.)

Station

Date

Commanding

(vi.) Nomination in the case of a candidate for a Commission in the Territorial Force.

*is nominated for a Commission
in the (here insert name of unit.)
of the Territorial Force.*

Secretary

President

Territorial Force Association

Date

To be signed by a Candidate for a Commission in the Territorial Force.

(vii.) I accept the conditions of Imperial and General Service, and have accordingly signed a Declaration to that effect on Army Form E. 624.

Signature of Candidate.

* *Soldiers serving in the Regular Army on a 12 years' engagement or re-engaged are not eligible for admission to an Officer Cadet Unit.*

(viii.) *The candidate will fill up and sign the following declaration before presenting himself for medical examination.*

I declare upon my honour that:

1st. *I have never suffered from any serious illness or injury, XXXXXXXXXXXX**

2nd. *I am not, as far as I know, at present suffering from any mental or bodily infirmity, or physical imperfection or disability, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**

3rd. *I have never suffered from 'fits' of any description, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**

4th. *My vision for both near and distant objects is good with either eye without the aid of glasses, except as stated below.**

5th. *I have fully revealed to the Examining Medical Officer all circumstances within my knowledge that concerns my health.*

Signature *Alfred E. Cook*

Date *October 3rd 1916*

N. B. – A candidate who wears glasses should bring them with him when he attends for medical examination.

** The words in italics should be struck out in case there is no exception to record.*

(ix.) *An Officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps will, after reading the above declaration, and examining the candidate, complete the following Certificate:-*

N.B. – Candidates who wear glasses should bring them.

I certify that I have examined *Alfred E. Cook*
in accordance with the Instructions for the Physical and Medical Examination of Candidates for Commissions in the Regular Army and Special Reserves, and find that he is * *fit* *for Military Service. C. 1.*

(the words fit and C.1. are hand written and there is a large tick by the word fit.)

** Insert 'fit' or 'unfit.' If unfit, state cause of unfitness.*

Height 5ft 10 ½ *Weight* 12 st.

Chest Measurement Max. 40 Min. 37 ½

His acuteness of vision is as follows:-

V. R. without glasses = 6/12 ; with glasses = 6/9; Reads

V. L. without glasses = 6/12 ; with glasses = 6/9 ; Reads

Station Southend

Signature R. H. Powes mo??Troops Southend

Date Oct 4 16

The application will then be forwarded:-

Through the usual channel to General headquarters if the candidate is serving in the field ;

To the Secretary, War Office, London S. W., in other cases.

The newly appointed (and unpaid) acting Lance-Corporal Richard Edward Cook also began his Officer Cadet Training application in October 1916. Although the first page of his application is missing, the rest has survived:

17. Whether now serving, or previously served, in any other Government Department (Home, Indian, or Colonial). If so, give particulars, and attach official permission from the Head of the Department to make this application.

No

18. Whether an application for a commission has been previously made, if so, on what date and for what branch of the service.

No

(i) I certify that the above particulars are correct and complete. I request that I may be admitted to an Officer Cadet Unit with a view to being appointed to a commission as stated in (3) above. I understand that I shall be held liable for service in the ranks if I fail to qualify for final recommendation for a commission.

Date 19th October 1916 x R. E. Cook x

Usual Signature of Candidate.

Signature of parent or guardian, if the Alfred E. Cook (Father)

Candidate is under 21 years of age Builder & C. Crawley. Sussex.

(ii) Certificate of moral character during the past four years. If the candidate has been at school. College, or other educational establishment during any portion of the period the certificate should be signed by the head of the establishment, otherwise it may be signed by a responsible person (not a near relative or connection), e.g., the minister of the parish or other local clergyman, a magistrate, a senior officer of the Army or Navy who has been well acquainted with the candidate in private life during the period.

If the above-mentioned person cannot certify for the whole period of four years, a second certificate for the period not covered by the first should be signed by a similar person.

I hereby certify to the good moral character of R. E. Cook for the last three years

Signature T. Read

Rank, office or occupation Headmaster

Date October 15.16. Address Grammar School Brighton

To be filled in when the above certificate does not cover four years

I hereby certify to the good moral character of R. E. Cook

From: his Childhood

To: the present time – I have known him all his life.

Signature T. H. Martin

Rank, office or occupation J. P. for County Sussex

Date Oct 16th 1916 Address The Gables. Crawley. Sussex

(iii) Evidence that the candidate has attained a standard of education suitable for commissioned rank.

If the candidate has:-

(a) obtained a leaving or qualifying certificate as required of a candidate for admission to the Royal Military College under the regulations in force up to 1st April, 1912, the Certificate should be attached ;

(b) qualified at an Army Entrance Examination, the date of examination should be stated ;

(c) passed the matriculation examination of a University, or a test accepted in lieu thereof, the Certificate should be attached.

Failing one of the above, the following certificate must be signed by the Headmaster of a secondary school or other competent educational authority.

I certify from personal knowledge that R. E. Cook has attained a standard of education suitable for commissioned rank.

State here educational position e.g. Head of a College or School, etc.

T. Read Headmaster, Grammar School Brighton

When the above certificates have been completed:-

*A candidate who is serving in the ranks * or in the Senior or Junior Division O.*

T. C. should apply to the Officer Commanding his unit.

Other candidates should apply to the authorities enumerated in paragraph 6 of M.T. /391E.

(iv.) CERTIFICATE OF RECOMMENDATION FOR ADMISSION TO AN OFFICER CADET UNIT.

The above-mentioned Officer will see the candidate and, if he finds him suitable, will complete the following certificate after the candidate has been examined by an Officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps (see page 4):-

I certify that I have seen Pte. R. E. Cook and can recommend him as a suitable candidate in every way for admission to an Officer Cadet Unit with a view to being appointed to a commission. (The Officer commanding should add any other particulars he is able to furnish regarding the candidate's qualifications.)

Station Tunbridge Wells

Signed B. J. Hodgson Lt. Col. Commanding 4th Res. Bn. Royal Sussex Regt.

Date NOV 15 1916

In the case of a candidate who is serving in the ranks this certificate must be endorsed by the G. O. C. the division in which the unit is serving is serving, or, if the unit is not included in a division, by an officer not below the rank of Brigadier-General, or by an Officer selected by the Army Council.

*Signature of above officer (illegible) Brig. General
Commanding Home Counties Res. Brigade*

Station Tunbridge Wells

Date 17.11.16

(v.) CERTIFICATE OF NOMINATION TO A PARTICULAR UNIT.

An Officer Commanding who wishes to nominate a candidate to the unit under his command may complete the following certificate.

I certify that I am well acquainted with and can recommend him as a suitable candidate in all respects for appointment to a commission in (insert unit of service.)

Station

Date

Commanding

(vi.) *Nomination in the case of a candidate for a Commission in the Territorial Force.*

*is nominated for a Commission
in the (here insert name of unit.)
of the Territorial Force.*

*Secretary
President
Territorial Force Association*

Date

To be signed by a Candidate for a Commission in the Territorial Force.

(vii.) *I accept the conditions of Imperial and General Service, and have accordingly signed a Declaration to that effect on Army Form E. 624.*

X R. E. Cook *Signature of Candidate.*

** Soldiers serving in the Regular Army on a 12 years' engagement or re-engaged are not eligible for admission to an Officer Cadet Unit.*

(viii.) *The candidate will fill up and sign the following declaration before presenting himself for medical examination.*

I declare upon my honour that:

*1st. I have never suffered from any serious illness or injury, XXXXXXXXXXXX**

*2nd. I am not, as far as I know, at present suffering from any mental or bodily infirmity, or physical imperfection or disability, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**

*3rd. I have never suffered from 'fits' of any description, XXXXXXXXXXXXX**

*4th. My vision for both near and distant objects is good with either eye without the aid of glasses, XXXXXXXXXXXX.**

5th. I have fully revealed to the Examining Medical Officer all circumstances within my knowledge that concerns my health.

Signature R. E. Cook

Date 19th October 1916

N. B. – *A candidate who wears glasses should bring them with him when he attends for medical examination.*

** The words in italics should be struck out in case there is no exception to record.*

(ix.) An Officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps will, after reading the above declaration, and examining the candidate, complete the following Certificate:-

N.B. – *Candidates who wear glasses should bring them.*

I certify that I have examined Cook R. E.

*in accordance with the Instructions for the Physical and Medical Examination of Candidates for Commissions in the Regular Army and Special Reserves, and find that he is * fit for Military Service.*

** Insert 'fit' or 'unfit.' If unfit, state cause of unfitness.*

Height 5.10 Weight 10.6 .

Chest Measurement Max. 36 Min. 34

His acuteness of vision is as follows:-

V. R. without glasses = ; with glasses = ; Reads

V. L. without glasses = ; with glasses = ; Reads

Station 7 York Road Tunbridge Wells

Signature (illegible)

Date 10.X1.16

The application will then be forwarded:-

Through the usual channel to General headquarters if the candidate is serving in the field;

To the Secretary, War Office, London S. W., in other cases.

It is a shame that the first page of Eddie's application is missing as it would have been very interesting to see what he had put down as his date of birth. It is also interesting to note that despite starting to fill out his application in the middle of October he had to get his application completed at somewhere as far away as Tunbridge Wells on three occasions, the 10th, 15th and the 17th of November. Surely the Military Authorities would have made it easier and more convenient than that for a man to apply?

I suspect that the real reason Acting Lance-Corporal R. E. Cook had his medical examination and his application completed in Tunbridge Wells was because no one would ask him about his age. At that time, men under 19 were only allowed to serve at home.

Whether it was Ted or Eddie who decided that they must go to France, whether they decided together or separately or whether they decided with a series of letters, the fact that they both applied within weeks of each other cannot be a coincidence. It may even have been as straightforward as 'if you're going, I'm going.'

With his 19th birthday still a couple of months away and having gotten away with lying about his age once at Horsham, and his father's papers already in, Tunbridge Wells may have been Eddie's best chance to jump the gun and catch up with his father. Whatever happened, provided they passed the Officer Cadet Training successfully, father and son would be going to France in 1917.

Acting Lance-Corporal R. E. Cook was officially confirmed as Lance-Corporal R. E. Cook on the 21st October.

October 21 – KILLED AT THE FRONT. – The sad news has been received that Pte. P. Hamilton, of the Coldstream Guards, died in France on the 7th inst. As the result of a gunshot wound in the chest. He was the eldest son of Mr. F. Hamilton, of Amberley, and married the third daughter of Mr. W. Charman, Old House, Tushmore. Prior to joining the Army, Pte. Hamilton was in the employ of the West Sussex County Council, and he was known and much respected by a good many local people. He went to the Colours in September, 1914, and although he had been in France 20 months he escaped all injuries until the time he received the fatal wound. Deep sympathy will be felt for the bereaved relatives.

Private P. Hamilton was 22 and with the 2nd Battalion of the Coldstream Guards when he was killed. He is buried in the Heilly Station Cemetery at Mericourt- L'ab.

October 28 – WOUNDED AT THE FRONT. – This week's list of those wounded at the Front contains the name of Pte. B. Harmer, of Crawley. Sergt. E. Pickard, of St. Peter's Road, Crawley, who was recently wounded, has, we are glad to say, made a good recovery and returned to France.

KILLED AT THE FRONT. – Mr. and Mrs. Edward Tester, The Lodge, Tilgate, have the sincere sympathy of many friends in the sad loss they have sustained by the death of their only son, Rifleman H. C. Tester, who was killed in action on the 16th ult. From the time he left school until he was 18, he was a messenger at the Crawley Post Office and subsequently an assistant postman. He joined the Army in January and went to France in June, since when he had seen much active service. Young Tester was a popular lad, who would have been 20

next month, and his death is deeply regretted by many. The following letter from Major F. H. Wallis has been received by Mrs. Tester: "I sincerely regret that I am unable to give you much information about your son. He was killed in an attack on the German trenches on the 16th September and was buried the same night by his comrades. I understand he died instantaneously and suffered no pain. I trust you will accept my deep sympathy with you. He did his duty splendidly and we have lost an excellent soldier. I think perhaps it may be some little consolation to you to know that he died doing his duty to the last."

Rifleman Herbert Clark Tester was with the 1/5th Battalion, London Regiment (London Rifle Brigade) when he was killed in action on the 16th September at the age of 19. He had been born in Shoreham and was the only son of Mr Edward and Mrs Alice Tester of 38, Malthouse Road, Crawley. He had enlisted in Crawley. He is on the Memorial Park Gates and also on the War Memorial at Slaugham. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

NOVEMBER 1916

November 4 – PROSTRATE SOLDIER RUN OVER. – On Sunday night, soon after nine o'clock, a soldier stationed at Pease Pottage camp met his death by being run over by a motor bus belonging to the East Surrey Traction Co. It was a very dark night, and the evidence given at the inquest went to show that the deceased was lying across the main road and the driver of the bus, which was going from Handcross to Reigate, did not see him until he was too near to avert an accident. The brake was immediately applied, but before the bus could be brought to a standstill the front off-side wheel had passed over the man's chest, inflicting injuries which had a fatal termination in a few minutes. The deceased was named Henry James Lincoln, a lance-corporal in the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, and his home was at Westgate Street, Norwich. He was 39 years of age and before joining the army was a general labourer.

The inquest was held at the Crawley Cottage Hospital on Tuesday afternoon by Mr. F. W. Butler, and a jury of which Mr. A. E. Taylor was the foreman.

Hannah Lincoln, the widow, gave evidence of identification, and, in reply to the Coroner, said she had never known her husband to have a fit.

William Killick, of the Middlesex Regiment, on police duty, said he saw the deceased about 9.10 o'clock near the George Hotel. Two other soldiers were with the deceased, who was singing. As the military police had orders to check singing by soldiers in the streets, he approached Lincoln, who at once ceased singing and proceeded with the other men in the direction of the camp. Witness was quite sure it was the deceased who was singing, because he used his flashlight. Deceased had not the appearance of having had too much to drink, but merely that of being in good spirits. A little while afterwards the conductress of the bus informed him that

a soldier had been run over. He had since seen the body and was quite certain it was the same man as he had previously checked of singing.

Chas. Ed. Williamson, the driver of the motor bus, said he had just passed the bottom of Goffs Park Road, Crawley, when he received a ring from the conductress, implying that someone desired to alight. He reached forward to catch hold of the brake lever, and while so doing he saw a soldier lying in the middle of the road. The man was lying with his head towards the hedge on the opposite side of the road. The near wheel of the bus was about four feet from the kerb and the deceased lay right in the track of the off-side wheel. He did not see the man until the bus was within five feet of him. At the moment the bus was only going at about six miles an hour. He at once applied the hand brake for all he was worth, but the front off-side wheel had passed over the man before he could pull up. The hind wheel did not pass over him. Witness got off and went round the bus, and found the deceased against the hind wheel. Some soldiers came along and witness informed them of what had happened. They pulled the deceased out from under the bus and took him away in a motor car to the Cottage Hospital. Witness did not see any movement on the part of the man after he was pulled out and could not say if he was conscious. There were plenty of people about at the time, but so dark was it that people on the footpath would not be able to see the man lying across the road. There was a small light from the lamp at the bottom of Goffs Park Road, but the deceased was lying below this and there were trees there which made it darker.

Joseph T. Jefferies, corporal in the deceased's regiment, and in the same Company, said he was informed by the last witness of what had happened. He had to request the driver to ease back a bit, as the hind wheel was pressing against the man. He then pulled him out. Deceased breathed just once as he was holding him, but was quite unconscious and did not move. Witness conveyed him in a motor car to the Cottage Hospital, where he was admitted. Witness thought the deceased was dead when they got to the hospital. He did not see anything of the accident. The night was certainly very dark.

Alfred Leonard Smith, private in the same regiment, said he assisted the previous witness in removing the deceased. He knew the deceased, but had not seen him during the evening.

Frank Stuart Tamplin, Captain in the R. A. M. C., and senior medical officer at Pease Pottage Camp, said he saw the deceased huddled up in a motor car, in which he had been placed after the accident, and he ordered his removal to the hospital. Witness followed and saw him at the hospital. He was quite dead. Subsequently he examined the body and found much bruising round each side of the chest and on the front. Several ribs were fractured on both sides, and it was almost certain there were further internal injuries. Death was undoubtedly due to those injuries.

Police Sergeant Capelin, stationed at Crawley, said every effort had been made to ascertain who were the men last seen with the deceased on the evening in question, but without avail, though the Military Authorities had assisted him in his inquiries. Witness undressed the man in the mortuary of the hospital. There were marks right across the body and the chest was crushed. It was quite evident from the smell that the deceased had had some refreshment. The military police officer was recalled and asked if he knew the two men whom he saw with the deceased when the latter was singing. He replied that he did not.

The Officer in Command of the Camp said the Company to which the deceased belonged had since been moved elsewhere. Inquiries had been made as to the identity of the soldiers last seen with the deceased, but they had been futile. Of course the men might not belong to the same Company.

The jury consulted in private, and, there being no suggestion of foul play and the likelihood of ascertaining the identity of the deceased's companions being remote, they decided to return a verdict on the evidence they had heard rather than have the inquiry adjourned. 'Accidental death' was the jury's verdict, with a rider exonerating the driver of the bus from any blame in the matter.

The jury gave their fees to the widow.

Henry James Lincoln is shown as a Private with the 13th (Labour) Battalion of the Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) on the Royal British Legion Roll of Honour web page. The page also says he was knocked down by a bus. He is buried in a Commonwealth War Graves Commission standard grave in the Churchyard of St Margaret's in Ifield.

SOCIALS FOR THE SOLDIERS. – With the clearing away this week of the Camp at Pease Pottage there came to an end the Wednesday socials and the Sunday four penny teas for the soldiers which have been held in the Congregational Church School Room ever since the camp was established. The weekly socials consisted of an entertainment, followed by a free tea – tea, coffee and cakes of all descriptions – and the talent was provided by various local ladies and gentlemen and also by the troops themselves; whilst the free tea was the result of the generous donations of local friends. The Sunday four penny teas paid for themselves, and like the socials, were very greatly appreciated, the teas being a marvel in value. Great thanks are due to all the helpers, whether the humble washer-up or the generous contributor; and that their efforts were very highly appreciated was shown by the many expressions of gratitude on the part of the men and also by the fact that on many occasions the weekly events were attended by no fewer than three hundred soldiers, many not being able to gain admission.

THE MILITARY CROSS. – This much-prized distinction has recently been conferred on Lieut. R. M. Fulljames, the son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Fulljames, who are well known to Crawley people through their relationship with Mr. and Mrs. Lehmann, of Ifield Lodge, and, of course, to Mrs. Fulljames and Mr. and Mrs. Banks, who also reside here. The gallant lad enrolled first in the Inns of Court Rifles, and at the end of eleven weeks received his commission in the Durham Light Infantry. In the official notice stating that His Majesty had been graciously pleased to confer the Military Cross on him “for conspicuous gallantry in action,” it is added: “He repeatedly reorganised his party, and after evacuating the wounded led forward the remainder to force a way through the wire.” From the General Officer Commanding his Division, Lieut. Fulljames has received the following message: “The G. O. C. wishes to place on record his appreciation of your gallant behaviour in the way you led your party in raids, and for assisting wounded under heavy fire.” the young officer is only 19 years old, and since he had bestowed upon him the Military Cross he has had another bar added to his medal. His father, Mr. T. Fulljames, saw service at the Front in the Sportsmen’s Battalion, and was invalided home in July. The many friends of young Fulljames in this district will be proud and much gratified to learn of his gallantry and its highly deserved recognition.

PROMOTION. – Sergt. W. H. Wood, of the 2nd Leinster Regiment, whose home is at Horsham Road, Crawley, has been promoted to Quarter-Master Sergeant in the 73rd Infantry Brigade. He has also just received the Military Medal. Going to France in September, 1914. Q. M. S. Wood has had the good luck to go through the thickest of battles without a scratch. That this good fortune may continue will be the sincere wish of many friends, who are also gratified at his well-deserved promotion and the presentation of the distinction mentioned.

WOUNDED. – Many friends in Crawley and East Grinstead will much regret to hear that Pte. H. Taplin, Royal Sussex regiment (younger son of Mr. and Mrs. Taplin, East Park, Crawley), has been wounded in France and had a leg amputated. He is now in hospital at Keighley, where he is, happily, going on satisfactorily.

November 11 – *REPORTED MISSING.* – Official intimation has been received that Rifleman A. E. Penfold, of the London Regiment, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Penfold, of South View, Ifield, has been missing since an engagement on the 7th October. Mr. and Mrs. Penfold have four other sons in the Army, three in France and another under training in St. Albans. Frank has been gassed and William (who was a gymnastic instructor at Crawley) was badly wounded, but both are now all right. Better news of the missing soldier is anxiously awaited.

WAR CASUALTIES. — *Several local deaths have unfortunately to be recorded this week.*

Second Lieut. Kenneth George Perry, of Melton, Newlands Road, Crawley, is among those who have died of wounds. He was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Perry, late of Chipstead and Hazelglen, Horley, and his young widow was formerly Miss Dorothy Bruckshaw, with whom the greatest sympathy is felt in her bereavement.

The deceased, who was 33 years of age, was a surveyor in the employ of the L. B. and S. C. Railway Company. He was among the first to join the Volunteer Regiment and afterwards went into the Artists' O. T. C., where he went through his training and got his commission as Second Lieutenant in the Royal Sussex. He was attached to the 3rd. Batt. at Newhaven for a short time and went to the Front early in October, being transferred to the 9th Batt.

After being in the trenches for a time he was sent back to 'rest,' and subsequently returned to the firing line on the 29th October. On the following day he was wounded ; and he died on the 1st November in the casualty hospital. During his training with the Crawley detachment of the Volunteers he was very smart and attentive and was universally liked, and, as a mark of respect, the Volunteers are attending West Crawley Parish Church to-morrow (Sunday), when some funeral music will be rendered. —

Private Stephen Parsons, third son of Mr. and Mrs. N. Parsons, of Spencer Road, Crawley, is also among those fatally wounded. He was single and would have been 34 had he lived till Wednesday. He joined the Sussex regiment and was afterwards transferred to the 17th Manchesters. He went to the front at the beginning of March, and was wounded soon afterwards, but he made a good recovery and again returned to the firing line, being fatally wounded last week. Mr. and Mrs. Parsons have three other sons in the Army (one of them in France) and another is engaged at Woolwich Arsenal, whilst a son-in-law is also in the Army. —

Intimation has also been received that Private Alfred E. Rice, of the 11th Sussex, a son of Mr. and Mrs. John Rice, of Ifield Road, Crawley, has been killed. He was single and 23 years of age. Two brothers, Fredk. and Nat., are among the missing, and another brother, Arthur Caleb, has been wounded. —

Another casualty is that of Private Jack Killick, of County Oak, Crawley, the news being conveyed in a chum's letter, but there is no official confirmation and better news is hoped for. —

With all those concerned much sympathy will be felt in their trouble.

Second Lieutenant Kenneth George Perry had been born in Croydon, a son of Charles and Caroline Perry who lived in Horley. He had been educated at the Whitgift School in Croydon. His name is on the Memorial Gates at Crawley, the Croydon Roll of Honour, the Horley War Memorial and at the Exning Parish Church

War Memorial (Exning, near Newmarket in Suffolk, was the home town of his wife, Dorothy.) He was buried in Puchevillers British Cemetery.

Private Stephen Parsons was killed in action on the 12th October 1916. He had been born in Ifield and had enlisted in Horsham. His name appears the Gates and on the memorial at St Peter's Church. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Private Alfred Edward Rice was 22 and with the 11th Battalion of the Royal Sussex when he was killed in action during the capture of the Schwaben Redoubt near Thiepval on the 21st of October. He had been born and enlisted in Crawley and was the third son of John and Eliza Rice to die in the Great War. The article mentions that Frederick Ernest and Nathaniel are both listed as missing. All three are remembered on the Memorial Park Gates and on the War Memorial at St. John's. Like his elder brother Frederick, who had been killed on July 28th, he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Private Edward Joseph Kerry (whose name is misspelt on the Memorial Park Gates as Kerrey) was with the 24th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers when he was killed in action on the 13th November. He was born in Hepworth in Suffolk and had enlisted in London. He had relatives living in Ifield. His name is recorded on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

November 18 – KILLED. – There is every reason to believe that Pte. L. Jordan, who was recently reported as missing, has made the extreme sacrifice for his country. A communication from a chum in the same company conveying definite information of his death. Pte. Jordan married a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Wood, of Woodville, Crawley, and with the bereaved in both families great sympathy will be felt. –

Definite news has also come to hand announcing, unfortunately, the death of Pte. J. Killick, of County Oak, and very deep sympathy will be expressed with his young wife and the other members of the family. The following letter has been received by Mrs. Killick from the Officer Commanding 'A' Company, Royal Sussex regiment: "I deeply regret to inform you of the death of your husband, Pte. J. Killick, who was killed by a shell whilst on duty in the trenches on 26/10/16. The whole company deplore the loss of a very gallant comrade and join with me in offering you very sincere sympathy in your great bereavement. He was one of the brightest men in my Company, and a cheery disposition, combined with an utter disregard of danger, made him a great favourite with both officers and men. May the knowledge that he died at his post doing his duty, help you to bear the sorrow." Prior to joining the Army Mr. Killick, who was married as recently as last Boxing Day, was in the employ of Messrs. C. T. Overton & Son, and was a much respected young fellow.

Private John Killick was 35 and with the 13th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he was killed in action on the Somme on the 26th October 1916. He was a son of Francis (who had died in 1913) and Maria Killick and was the husband of Mrs Maude Killick of South View, County Oak, Crawley. He had been born in Crawley and had enlisted in Horsham. His name is included on Lowfield Heath and Ifield Parish War Memorials and at the Gates. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Late October and early November had seen the Battle of the Somme finally grind to a halt. As part of a last attempt to break through to the objectives that had been planned to have been taken on the first day of the offensive, a new weapon known as 'tanks' were used for the first time. At its height, the offensive had reached five miles into German lines but had failed to meet any of its original objectives and the British Army had endured the bloodiest day in its history.

Over all the Somme had cost the British 420,000 casualties and the French around 200,000. German losses were estimated at over 450,000. Historian Gary Sheffield has said that "the *Battle of the Somme* was not a victory in itself, but without it the Entente would not have emerged victorious in 1918." It was acknowledged at German High Command that the German Army could not withstand 'another Somme.' The battle was described as 'the bloody grave of the German Army' and saw the end of the German Army that had existed before the start of the war. The word 'Somme' itself has echoed down the years as an expression of the futility of war and has a unique place in the national consciousness. Although primarily remembered for its bloody first day, the week-by-week casualty rates, as demonstrated in the pages of the local press, were unprecedented and now the whole of the nation was beginning to realise that not only were they in a battle of attrition, they were also in it for a long haul. The German officer, Friedrich Steinbrecher, said "Somme. The whole history of the world cannot contain a more ghastly word."

DECEMBER 1916

December 9 – LOCAL CASUALTIES. – The official list of casualties include the following, whose addresses are given as Crawley: Pte. F. Catherwood, Royal Sussex regiment, died of wounds ; Ptes. G. Hale and O. Thompsett, Royal Sussex Regiment, wounded.

Private Frederick Adolphus Catherwood was 28 when he died of wounds on the 23rd October. He was the son of Lilian Gibson, of 26, Highbury Grange, London and is also shown as coming from Southsea. The Courier states that his address is in Crawley but he does not appear to be commemorated in Crawley. He is buried at the Contay British Cemetery, Contay near the site of the 9th and 49th Casualty Clearing Stations.

December 16 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The sad news has come to hand that Pte. Arthur Stemp, of the Civil Service Rifles, has made the great sacrifice, he being killed in action on the 16th ult., in France, where he had been for only three months. Private Stemp was born in Crawley, and for a time worked at the International Stores. His mother is now living at Crawley Down. He was a nephew of Mr. John Charman, the verger of West Crawley Church, and was much liked and respected. Pte. Stemp was a married man, aged 28, and leaves a young widow, with whom much sympathy is felt.

Pte. C. A. Francis, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, whose parents reside in West Street, Crawley, is reported as missing since a recent engagement.

Private Arthur Stemp was with 15th (County of London) Battalion (Prince of Wales Civil Service Rifles), a part of the London Regiment and was about 28 when he was killed. He had been born in Crawley and enlisted at Somerset House. At the beginning of 1916 he and his wife were living in Peckham. He was John Charman's second nephew to die. He was buried in Larch Wood (Railway Cutting) Cemetery, Ypres. His name appears on the Gates at the Memorial Park.

Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, who was viewed as at least partly responsible for the disastrous Gallipoli Campaign, the ammunition crisis, the Battle of Loos and now the failed breakthrough on the Somme, was overthrown in December. Lloyd George became Prime Minister of a coalition government dependent on Conservative support. This move split the Liberal Party, with numbers of MPs remaining loyal to Asquith.

Shortly before Christmas 1916, the following communication was received at Lathbury:

*No. 4/4076. L/Cpl. Richard Edward Cook 4th Bn. Res. Royal Sussex
(Nominated for appointment to a commission in)
has been accepted for admission to No. 17 Officer Cadet Battalion
to join at Kimmel Park Rhyl
on the 3 JAN 1917
Form S. D. 601 sent 21 DEC 1916
Submitted by S. O. 3. on List
Appointed to a temporary commission Second Lieutenant
Posted Suffolks
See London Gazette dated 25.5.17
M. S. I. (K.)
4/6/17*

Eddie was a step closer to the war.

1917

Halted against the shade of a last hill,
They fed, and lying easy, were at ease
And, finding comfortable chest and knees
Carelessly slept. But many there stood still
To face the stark, blank sky beyond the ridge,
Knowing their feet had come to the end of the world.

– *Spring Offensive*, Wilfred Owen

THE events of 1917 would go a long way to finally resolving the Great War, but it would not be until 1918 that all the effects of these seismic events would be felt to their fullest extent. 1917 would also see both Ted and Eddie arrive in France. At home in Crawley, the sad litany of deaths, woundings and men being reported missing went on.

JANUARY

January 6 – THE WOUNDED SOLDIERS at the Crawley Cottage Hospital have spent a very happy time during the festive season, and the exceedingly pretty and effective decorations which they did in the wards have delighted others beside themselves. Some of the poor Tommies have only one arm to use, and how they managed to effect such a transformation in the appearance of the wards is a matter of surprise. On Christmas Day there was an entertainment for their benefit, a capital programme being sustained by the V.A.D. nurses and their friends, as well as by the soldiers themselves.

On Boxing Day the lads were entertained at Woodhurst by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Burnham, and here everything was done by Mr. F. Trim to make their visit an enjoyable one. A sumptuous tea was provided, and games of various sorts were indulged in both before and after the meal, whilst there was an ad lib supply of non-alcoholic refreshments and cigars. That the boys spent a happy time there is no question. On the following day they were entertained at Tilgate Forest Lodge, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. O. G. A. Nix, and here, too, they received most generous hospitality, luncheon and tea being supplied to them. Fishing for presents and other forms of amusement were enjoyed, and not the least pleasurable part of the outing for a couple of the visitors was the provision of accommodation at the house for the night, these two having got lost in the fog!

On Wednesday night in this week Dr. and Mrs. Matthews very kindly entertained the Tommies and the hospital staff at Holly Lodge, and a right merry time was spent. There were ample refreshments, and a progressive whist match provided plenty of enjoyment. On the whole, the wounded soldiers in the hospital have good reason to be well pleased with their experiences this Christmas, and their appreciation is conveyed in the following letter which they send us for publication:

'The wounded soldiers at the Crawley Cottage Hospital wish to tender their sincere thanks to the V. A. D. Nurses and all the many kind friends who contributed so generously towards our Christmas gifts, personal and otherwise. The number of friends is so great that we are unable to thank each one individually, and we hope that all will accept this small note as an appreciation of their great kindness. Special thanks must be accorded to Dr. Matthews, V. A. D. Nurses and friends for giving time from their own festivities to come to the hospital and give us a very enjoyable entertainment during the afternoon of Christmas Day. The

Matron and Sister showed great enthusiasm by their combined efforts in making our whole Christmas the great success it was – also taking the liberty of thanking them unanimously for the great kindness shown us while inmates of the hospital.'

Meanwhile, the following communication had been received by Ted:

*Q. M. S. Alfred Edward Cook – 70th Provisional Battn.
(nominated for appointment to a commission in.....)
has been accepted for admission to Garrison Officer Cadet Battalion
to join at Jesus College, Cambridge
on the 15 JAN 1917
Form S. D. 603 sent
Submitted by S. D. 3. G. on List 1550
Appointed to a temporary commission as Second Lieutenant
Posted 1st (Res) Garr. Bn. Suffolk Regt.
See London Gazette dated 10.3.17
M. S. I. (K.)
4/6/17*

There is another document attached to Ted's war record that confirms he served at home with the Territorials from 6/4/08 to 26/2/17 – a total of 8 years and 327 days. The document shows that he has been serving at home during wartime from 5/8/14 until 26.2.17. It also shows that he was entitled to the Volunteer Services Medal and that his next of kin is listed as – (Wife) Laura Cook, Lathbury, Perryfield Road, Crawley.

*January 13 – MENTIONED IN FIELD MARSHAL HAIG'S DESPATCH.
– Lieut. J. Banham (now promoted to Captain) and Sergt. W. H. Wood, both of Crawley, had the distinction of being mentioned in General Haig's recent despatch for gallant conduct ; and Rifleman F. Holton, a son of Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Holton, of County Oak, has received a card from his Major-General as follows: 'Your Commanding Officer and Brigade Commander have informed me that you have distinguished yourself by your conduct in the field and I have read their report with much pleasure.' All three will receive the cordial congratulations of many friends in the Crawley district.*

WAR CASUALTIES. – Official information has now been received that Pte. L. Jordan, of the Guards, at first reported missing, has been killed. It is also officially reported that Pte. S. Terry, of the Royal Sussex, whose address is given as Crawley, and Pte. W. Killick, of County Oak, have been killed in action. The bereaved will have the heartfelt sympathy of many friends.

Private Stanley Terry was with the 9th (Service) Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he died on the 12th November 1916. He is buried in Philosophe British Cemetery, Mazingarbe. His name appears on the War Memorial at Worth.

January 20 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Previously reported missing, Private A. E. Brett (Crawley), Royal Sussex Regiment, is now officially reported as killed. Private A. Hams (Crawley), Royal Sussex Regiment, is reported as missing.

Private Albert Edward Brett was part of 12th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment and had taken part in the attack on the 'Boars Head' on the 30th of June 1916 when he was killed in action. As the articles written at the time have stated, he was last seen badly wounded in a German trench. He was born in West Horsley and had enlisted in Crawley. His name is included on the Slaugham and West Horsley Parish Church War Memorial as well as the gates at Crawley. As his body was never found he is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

January 27 – MISSING. – The casualty list this week includes the name of Private E. Wood (Crawley), Queen's Royal West Surrey, who is reported as missing.

LETTER FROM THE FRONT. – Mr. T. W. Jutsum, the Ifield schoolmaster, has received an interesting letter from Corporal C. W. Golden, in which he says: 'A quiet Sunday afternoon here and thoughts have turned to Crawley and its happy memories. I thought you would be interested to know that my brother Sergeant Golden, has won the Military Medal. You remember he worked for Mr. Nash for a time. I believe he is now in or with the tanks. He was with poor old Collison when he went under. I have seen many old Crawley and Ifield boys out here and familiar faces in a strange country are links of home. My brother has spent a good long time out here and has been in a good number of scraps. Of course, if it were possible, I could give you a long account of the doings of the Sussex out here, as far as Crawley men are concerned. The life is not too bad here in the base, but later on will—————. (This appears to have been deleted by the official censor.) Trusting you are quite well, as I am, and with best wishes to you I must add with wishes to be back in good old Crawley.'

FEBRUARY

February 3rd – WORK AND WIN. TO THE EDITOR. Sir, under the new and energetic Government of Mr. Lloyd George measures are being taken to mobilise the whole nation for war. Every thinking man and every Municipal Authority must alike ask themselves this question: Am I, or are we, doing our duty, as Britons, in this great national crisis? Strong in wealth, in man power, in woman

power and in knowledge, are we using our money, our power and our knowledge to the best and most complete purpose?

If not, why not? Everyone can do something. I do think and feel most strongly that the duty and power of helping the War Loan is not sufficiently brought home to people in small country towns and in villages. Many a small man, not having a banking account, has money wisely hoarded for emergencies. This cannot be more safely kept than as War Loan securities, yielding a regular and regularly paid interest. It should be the duty of some individual, or some group of individuals, to press this matter in every village and to bring facilities for this safe and patriotic investment to everyone.

The clergy, the squires, local Councils – all can help. Every village should be organised for war. The production of food is a national necessity. The more that this is produced at home the more relief is given to the shipping, now reduced in power by Government demands and by the submarine menace and threat. Merchant vessels are to be armed. Might not 'letters of Marque' be issued, as in the Napoleonic wars, to armed merchant vessels and prize money be given to such for all enemy vessels destroyed?

But we at home, protected and indeed fed by our great silent Navy, must do our part. Labour is the farmers' difficulty. 'Substitution' is the remedy, and there should be a substitution department, with officers, who must devote themselves sufficiently to details to see that the substitutes are such as are wanted. And in our villages, either in connection with the churches or other organisations, all these matters must be pressed and expedited. Bye-laws which interfered heretofore with pig keeping are now suspended. The breeding, as well as keeping, of pigs becomes a practical matter for everyone with a garden. Manure is necessary for gardens. Refuse can now be converted into food. Potato parings and all that makes pigs' food can be saved and applied to that end. Labour is not so scarce as it is unapplied. Anyone can carry a bucket of pigs' wash to a neighbour who keeps pigs. Anyone can dig, and – crede experto – there is no finer exercise.

I write to urge organisation, as well as individual effort, and to suggest that every church body should become a centre of such. Far be it from me to find fault with others, and yet I dare say that none of us here, including myself, are doing as much as we might do by more strenuous effort. Let us try. We contend for liberty, for mercy to oppressed nations and for all we hold dear. Shall we do less than our best when we remember we work for the same end as that for which our dearest ones have died and die daily?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

W. J. CHALK.

On the 9th February, partly because of the continued French attacks on either side of the Noyon salient, and partly because of the after-shocks of the Battles of

Verdun and of the Somme, the German Army began its withdrawal behind the newly-formed Hindenburg Line. This would shorten their line and free up thousands of men to pursue offensives elsewhere – 1917 would be a year of defensive strategy on the Western Front for the German Army. The withdrawal was not completed until April 9th as not only did the Germans have to move mainly at night but they also took the time to destroy everything could have been of use to the Allies as they went. Thus the Allies were presented with a scene of utter devastation, which they were then forced to occupy in order to continue with their offensives.

February 10 – THE LATE PTE. L. JORDAN. – Mrs. Jordan, of Woodsville, Ifield Road, has received the following letter from Pte. S. F. Hunt, of the Grenadier Guards, respecting her husband, who, first reported missing, has since been reported killed in action: ‘Your letter in regard to your husband has been handed to me. It is perhaps not a pleasant task I have undertaken, but I am glad if by giving you what little information I have that it will set your mind at rest. I am afraid there is no doubt that your husband is dead, and the man who handed in his identity disc & c., assures me that he was decently buried. This man, unfortunately, since this happened has been killed or wounded. The case and the photograph which I now enclose were given to me, as I knew your husband, both of us being in the same Company, and, as it turns out, that I might be able to return them to you. Since his pay book, & c., were sent to the War office you would have had official news that he was killed. It may be some consolation to you to know that, as far as I can gather, death was almost instantaneous, your husband suffering no pain whatever. He was buried between the villages of Ginchy and Fleurs. May I offer the sympathy of myself and the few of his comrades who are left in your bereavement.’

Private Leonard George Jordan was with the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards when he was killed in action on the Somme on the 25th September. He had born in Lowfield Heath and had enlisted in Guildford. His name appears on the memorials at Lowfield Heath, Charlwood and at St Peter’s, Crawley, as well as the gates at the Memorial Park. Although the article refers to him getting a decent burial, he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, which means that the burial site has been lost and Private Leonard George Jordan’s body lies somewhere under the fields of Picardy.

February 17 – Captain J. Banham has been reported injured.

February 24. – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The elder son of Mr. A. R. Taplin, Lieut. H. A. Taplin, R. M. L. I., who was serving with the 190th Machine Gun Company, has been wounded in the right leg, but we are glad to say he is making good progress. –

Miss D. Maslin, of East Park, Crawley, has received the following letter from the War Office: 'In further reply to your letter concerning Rifleman A. E. Penfold, 12th Batt. London regiment, I am directed to inform you that an inquiry has been made into the unofficial report referred to in the War Office letter of the 29th January, but the evidence tendered is not considered sufficiently conclusive to justify final acceptance. For the present, therefore, Rifleman Penfold must continue to be officially reported as missing.'

MARCH

Page 2458 of the March 10th supplement to the *London Gazette* includes, under the headings 'Garrison Battalions.' and 'Suff. R.' – The under mentioned cadets to be temp. 2nd Lts.:– 27 Feb. 1917 Alfred Edward Cook.

March 17 – A SNIPER'S BULLET. – Official news has been received of the death of Pte. William Razzell, son of Mrs. Razzell, of West Street, Crawley, he having been shot by a sniper whilst in action. Pte. Razzell joined the 6th Battalion Royal Berkshires about a year ago, and was last home just before Christmas. He was 31 years of age and married, and with the young widow and the other members of the family very sincere sympathy will be felt. Pte. Razzell was well known in football circles, and he was also a member of the Crawley Fire Brigade.

March 24 – THE LATE PTE. W. RAZZELL. – Mrs. Razzell, of Albany Road, has received the following letter from the Platoon Officer concerning the death of her husband, announced in our last issue: 'I am sorry to have to write to you of the death of your husband, Pte. W. Razzell. I expect by now you have been informed that he was killed in action on the 17th, but I felt that the least I could do was write and offer you my deepest sympathies, seeing that he was in my platoon. Razzell was as cool as any man under fire, although it was his first show and was very popular with all his platoon. You will, I know, be glad to hear that his death was instantaneous, so that he suffered no pain. We were filing along a very shallow trench, and poor Razzell was shot through the heart by a sniper. Some of his friends buried him the next day, so you may rest assured that we did all we could for him. I have collected his personal belongings and am having them sent off to you.' – Pte. Razzell, who was 31 years of age, enlisted as a driver in the Royal Engineers and was transferred to the 6th Royal Berkshire Regiment. He was a popular member of local football clubs and also of the Crawley Fire Brigade. The bullet that killed Razzell went through his Corporal's backpack without, fortunately, doing further injury.

Private William Razzell was with the 6th Battalion of the Royal Berkshires when he was killed in action on the 17th February. He was married to Alice and they lived

at 9, Albany Road, West Crawley. His parents were Frank and Elizabeth Razzell. He had been born in Ifield and had enlisted in Aldershot. He is buried in Regina Trench Cemetery, Grandcourt. His name appears on the Memorial Gates.

March 31 – FUNERAL OF PTE. ELDRED THORNTON. – There were many manifestations of sympathy and regret at the funeral of Pte. Eldred Thornton, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Thornton, of Ifield Road, Crawley, whose sad death while on service at Newhaven we recorded in our last issue. The deceased, who was 41, was in the 3rd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment, and his death was due to septic poisoning due to an unknown cause. Military honours were accorded at Newhaven, where the body was put on train, and it was met at Crawley Station by Messrs. Bartley & Ward, who were in charge of the funeral arrangements. On Saturday the mortal remains were brought from the deceased's house to the Baptist Church, where the first part of the solemn service was conducted by the Rev. A. Waugh (Horsham) a numerous congregation being present. The internment was subsequently made in Ifield Churchyard. –

Mrs. Thornton has received the following letter: 'As Officer Commanding 'B' Company of this Battalion, I write to ask you to accept my deep sympathy in your very sad loss. I only joined the Company quite recently, so had not the opportunity of knowing your husband personally, but I hear nothing but praise and admiration from those who have been with him during his time in the Army. Words on these sad occasions are of very little comfort, but it may be of some consolation to you to know that your husband carried out all his duties in a soldierly and patriotic spirit, and was very popular with his fellow comrades.'

Private Cruiser Eldred Moore Thornton died in Newhaven of a 'poisoned foot' which was understood to be from an infected blister on the 19th of March. He was the son of Cruiser and Mary Anne Thornton of Ifield Road, Crawley and the husband of Alice and father of Jim Thornton of 11, Victoria Road, Shoreham. He had been born and had enlisted in Horsham. He is buried in St. Margaret's Churchyard Ifield and is commemorated on the Memorial Gates.

KILLED IN ACTION. – It has been definitely ascertained that Pte. F. E. Rice, of the 11th Middlesex regiment, has been recently killed in action. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. John Rice, of 80, Ifield Road, Crawley. This is the third son Mr. and Mrs. Rice have lost in the war, and the heartfelt sympathy of all will go out to them in their great trouble.

Meanwhile in the Russian city of Petrograd, ongoing demonstrations had forced the Tsar to abdicate and the installation of a new provisional government, which was forced to share power with the Petrograd Soviet socialists. This partnership would

cause chaos both at home and at the war and would have huge consequences before the end of the year.

APRIL

April saw another revision of the Military Service Act as men serving at home with the Territorials and men previously wounded were re-examined to see if they could be sent to the Front. The list of jobs that fell into the category of being reserved occupations was also revised.

The Germans' resumption in February of all out submarine attacks on all shipping, which was seen as a way to force the British out of the war within six months, led to the United States declaring war on Germany on April 6th. It was a worthwhile gamble to the German High Command as it was calculated that the American Army would need at least a year before it could contribute significantly on mainland Europe. If they could force the British out of the war before the Americans could get up to speed, the war would be won. The British instituted the convoy system in response, which drastically reduced shipping losses, and developed a host of anti-submarine measures.

On the Western Front, preparations for Haig's long awaited summer offensive in Flanders were in full swing but that didn't stop the British launching an attack at Arras on April 9th. This limited attack was designed to draw off German forces from a French attack on the Chemin des Dames and take high ground that dominated the plain of Douai. The new French commander, General Robert Nivelle, had recklessly promised that his offensive would quickly end the war in the West. Although Canadian troops secured Vimy Ridge, British and Australian forces made less headway. Haig kept his part of the offensive open until 16 May, trying to consolidate positions gained. Although generally successful, the cost in casualties was still high (158,000 men). In the air the war had swung in favour of the Germans as the Royal Flying Corps over Arras was decimated by losses of ten to one. This period became known to the RFC as 'Bloody April.' Equally unfortunate for the Allies, Nivelle's much vaunted offensive was crushed by the Germans. Within a week 100,000 men of the French Army were dead. Despite promises to call off the offensive if all was not going well, Nivelle continued with the attack into May.

April 7 – DEATH OF PTE. R. WILSON. – With Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Wilson and family, of High Street, Crawley, the sincerest sympathy will be expressed in the great loss which they have sustained by the death of Pte. Richard Wilson, of the 1st Battalion London Scottish Regiment. Although no official notification has yet been received, a letter from the Chaplain, dated March 29th, conveys the sad intelligence that Pte. Wilson met his death as the result of wounds on the French Front. In this the writer says:

'Your son was brought in here late last night very badly wounded. I grieve to say that before anything could be done for him he passed away. My deepest

sympathy goes out to you in your great loss. I pray that God may have you in His most gracious keeping during these hard and distressful days. All that fall in this great fight die for God, honour and Britain, nor will either God or Britain forget the supreme sacrifice they have made. I shall bury him this afternoon in a quiet cemetery nearby, where many another brave man lies in his last sleep. Such things as were on him when brought in will be sent down to the base and from there forwarded to you.'

The late Pte. Wilson had only been in France just over seven weeks, and his death, although a glorious one, at the age of 19, will be deeply regretted by a large circle of friends. He was an exceedingly happy lad, with a charming disposition, and it seems hard to think that he is no more. Pte. Wilson was the third son, and two brothers are still serving their country.

Private Richard Leslie Wilson was born in Crawley, a son of Mr Gilbert Stringer and Mrs Amelia Wilson of 16, The High Street, Crawley. He had enlisted in London. His name appears on both the memorials at St John's and St Peter's as well as the gates at the park. He was buried in the Warlincourt Halte British Cemetery at Saulty.

APRIL 14 – THE UNITED STATES AND THE PRESIDENT. TO THE EDITOR.

Sir, A fortnight ago the people of England were rejoicing in the somewhat startling news of the Revolution in Russia, perhaps one of the most wonderful events of the century, a thorough upheaval, and carried out with scarcely any bloodshed, a most curious and far-reaching episode, and perhaps without precedent. And now this week the people of England are again rejoicing in the news that has come from the West that the great American Republic, voiced by the president, has declared war against Germany.

The two Republics, Russia and the United States, are shaking hands across the troubled area of Europe, each perhaps from a different standpoint, but both with the same breadth of view, enunciating the same principles of liberty and humanity. The address of President Wilson to the American people will rank as one of the finest expositions of national policy that has ever been uttered. President Wilson stands forth as a great combination of the idealist and the practical, and undoubtedly is a fitting emblem of the American national character. The English people as a whole have not been quite just in their opinions of American policy and its President, but the difficulties of the situation were very great and not understood by the majority of the British nation. It was necessary for the people of the United States to be thoroughly satisfied as to the position of their nation. It had always been a strong point of American policy that they would not interfere with, or be entangled in, European politics, especially as very often the troubles arising were of dynastic origin. Then there was a large number of immigrants

from Europe, Irish and German, whose sympathies were not always in favour of the entente powers. But the re-election of President Wilson to the headship of the United States proved that he enjoyed the confidence of the people, and he has fully justified the confidence reposed in him, and exactly at the right moment when public opinion was fully ripe and when his idea of humanity was pushed to the extreme limit he declared war against Germany, and roused the enthusiasm of the United States to fever heat.

It would be well if every Englishman studied the oration of the President to the people of the United States, permeated with human nature, thoroughly brushing aside German sophistries, and sparkling with the democratic ideals of liberty and freedom: it will rank with the greatest speeches of ancient or modern times. The declaration of the United States must exert a very powerful effect on the result of the war, and when the war is over and the terms of peace are discussed it will be a grand scene to witness the representatives of the United States assisting in the foundation of a lasting peace. We must rest assured that in that case it will not be a diplomatic peace, but a peace settled on national lines, ordanastic influences will be thrust aside, and if it be possible to make that will last it will be the help of the United States that will bring this to pass. We may rely on this fact that now the American people have decided to take a hand in the great struggle there will be no half-heartedness. The characteristic energy and ingenious character of the American people will push matters forward with lightning speed. They know what a war means.

The United States had to fight for its existence a few years ago, when it staked its all on putting down slavery existing in its midst. The President Lincoln then, and the President Wilson now, will rank as the greatest leaders of the United States and as among the greatest statesmen of the world. Both bringing their great abilities in furthering the cause of civilisation and the betterment of the people. Had Germany won in this great war Christianity would have received a tremendous blow but the supreme efforts for the sake of right against might, of justice against injustice, and their efforts now being assisted by the United States for the same objects, in the words of President Wilson

'We have no selfish ends to serve, we desire no conquests, and no indemnity for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind, and shall be satisfied when these rights are as secure as fact and the freedom of nations can make them.'

Ideal phrases clothed in fitting words, and accepted by the whole nation.

'A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth that which is good.'

And as with the individual man, so with the whole nation, proving Christianity is a living vital force, and as at its birth it shattered the materialism of the world, so now amidst the turmoil of a terrible war it has raised its head and carried home to the hearts of the people that no sacrifice is too great to preserve the soul of the people

from base surroundings, and that the elevation of thought in the principles of right and justice, as part of the Christian belief, is still worth living for and can overcome and crush underfoot the false doctrine of a spurious philosophy.

There is a matter that demands a few words. A constant murmur is arising, not emanating from the people, that as a nation we were not prepared for the war and more than hinting that if we had been prepared events would have turned out differently, the underlying current being that in future the nation must be in a state of preparation for war ; but if we had been fully prepared our national industries would have suffered and probably by this time we should have been in a state of financial exhaustion. The burden would have been too great for the nation to bear, and when a nation is armed to the teeth and prepared for war, war always follows. It does not prevent war, but brings it to pass.

April 21 – CORPL. ERNEST RICE of 70, West Street, is lying dangerously ill, badly wounded in the right arm and shoulder, at the General Hospital, Rouen. Corpl. Rice has been serving in France for nearly 12 months in the 1/12th London Regiment and he was wounded once before in the hand and thigh. He was expected home any day on leave, and when the wire came to his wife she at once thought it was to say that he had arrived in England, and her disappointment was naturally very great. She wishes to thank the many kind friends for the great sympathy shown her in her time of anxiety.

The Military History Sheet that forms part of Eddie's war record shows that No.4076 (4076 is crossed out and replaced with his new number, 201434) served at home from the 5th February 1916 until he was discharged on the 25th of April 1917, a total of one year and 80 days. It is to be presumed that he has arrived in France at this time. His next of kin are shown as: R. Q. M. S. Cook (father), 72nd Provisional Battalion, Royal Sussex Regt., and Laura Cook (mother), 18 Perryfield Road, Crawley, Sussex. The sheet says that he is being discharged in consequence of being gazetted to a Commission in the Suffolk regiment. Authority W. O. letter 43/7.0/018 (M.S.J.K.) dated 14.5.17.

April 28 – DEATH OF PTE. A. THAYRE. – Mr. and Mrs. Thayre, of 30 West Street, Crawley, have had the sad news officially conveyed to them that their son, Albert, was killed in action on 26th September, 1916. He had been posted as missing since that date, but now comes the news that he was killed. The deceased was the fourth son and some years ago he emigrated to Canada, but last spring came over with a Canadian Regiment to do his duty for King and country, with the result that he made the supreme sacrifice on the date given. Previous to his emigration, Pte. Thayre was a keen footballer and did fine work both for Three Bridges and Crawley Clubs. He was a clever manipulator of the ball and

a splendid shot at goal. Of a very genial and happy disposition, he was extremely popular with all and his death, though the most glorious that man can die, is much to be regretted and sympathy is expressed with the parents, who also have one son a prisoner of war in Germany and another now undergoing training. The deceased was 28 years of age and unmarried.

Private Bert Thayre was with the 29th Battalion of the Canadian Infantry (British Columbia Regiment) part of the 2nd Canadian Division when he was killed in action. He was born on the 24th July 1888 in Ifield, the son of William and Kate Thayre. He was a carpenter by trade and had emigrated to Canada where he joined the Army in 1915. His name appears on the Memorial Gates. He is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial.

MAY

On 3 May the French 2nd Colonial Division mutinied. They arrived at the Front without their weapons, many of them drunk, and they refused to attack when ordered. As it was impossible for a handful of officers to enforce punishment on an entire division, there was no immediate official response which led to the mutiny spreading across much of the French Army. Around 30,000 men left the front and refused to return to the trenches. The mutinies were not a popular declaration against the war, just against the way it was being waged. Many French troops felt the huge casualties they had suffered up to that point had often been made in futile attacks. Infantry units remained in the line but declared that, whilst they were prepared to defend their positions, they would not undertake offensive action.

May 5 – PETTY OFFICER S. BROWN, son of Mr. G. Brown, of Princess Road, Crawley, who has been serving on H. M. S. 'Agincourt,' has been promoted to captain of a 60 ft. picket boat.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – In the lists published this week occurs the name of C. A. Cook (Crawley), Royal Sussex Regiment, previously reported wounded and missing, now posted as killed. Among the wounded are Pte. A. E. Holland (Crawley), Pte. H. Wickham (Crawley) and Pte. C. M. Woolven (Crawley).

Private Charles Albert Cook of the 9th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment died on the 18th August 1916, aged approx. 26. He was born in Tilgate, the son of William (a gamekeeper) and Sarah Cook. He had enlisted in Horsham. His name appears on the War Memorial at Worth and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial. He is not related (as far as I know) to my Cook family.

May 12 – WAR ITEMS. – Pte. P. Botting, of the Middlesex Regiment, whose home is given as Crawley, is reported wounded. – Lance-Corpl. H. Bolton, of the

King's Royal Rifles, who was wounded in the fighting at Gaza on the 19th ult., is happily going on all right. – It should have been Petty Officer S. Brand, and not Brown, who, as stated in our last issue, has been promoted to the captaincy of a 60 ft. picket boat associated with H. M. S. 'Agincourt.'

May 19 – WAR CASUALTY. – We regret to say that Pte. A. E. Holman, of the Royal Sussex, who was previously reported as missing, is now officially posted as killed.

May 26 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The official list of wounded issued this week contains the names of Pte. A. Peskett (Royal Sussex) and Pte. H. W. Broome (Royal Fusiliers), both of Crawley.

Private Albert Edward Holman was with 'C' Company of the 11th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment when he was killed on 3rd September 1916 at the age of 23. He had enlisted in Horsham. His parents, John and Matilda, lived at Mount Noddy, Paddockhurst Road in Worth. His name appears on the War Memorial at St Leonard's Church, Turner's Hill. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

On the French part of the Front there had been many arrests and trials with some mutineers being executed. There were stern reminders about the grave danger that France was in and gradually soldiers returned to their trenches. General Nivelle had been sacked on May 15th and his replacement General Philippe Petain set about rebuilding morale. The new commander visited the front and listened to complaints from the troops. Tours of duty in the front line were shortened, leave arrangements regularised and rest camps improved. Within months the crisis within the French Army was over, although it would take much longer to rebuild the offensive spirit of the troops. From this point onwards the burden of continuing an offensive war fell squarely on the armies of the British Empire.

This was the state of things on the Western Front when the following entry appeared in the Supplement to the London Gazette, 23rd May, 1917 edition page 5042.

*War Office, 23rd May, 1917. REGULAR FORCES. The under mentioned cadets to be temp. 2nd Lts. (attd.). 26th Apr. 1917:-
Suff. R. – Richard Edward Cook.*

JUNE

June 2 – SPECIAL MENTION. – Lance. Corpl. Howard Parsons, the fifth son of Mr. and Mrs. N. Parsons, of Spencers Road, Crawley, is included in a list of those 'The Commanding Officer wishes to place on record as worthy of special mention for good work and devotion to duty during the recent fighting on April 23rd- 29th.'

WOUNDED. – *The names of Pte. A. Hygate and Pte. C. Penfold, both of Crawley, and belonging to the Royal Sussex Regiment, are included in the recently issued list of men wounded at the Front.*

IN THE TORPEDOED ‘TRANSYLVANIA’ – *Mrs. Bayford, of Ifield, has received the sad intelligence that her husband, William Bayford, who was on the torpedoed troopship, ‘Transylvania’, is missing and probably drowned. The ship was sunk on the 4th May and it was on the 23rd that Mrs. Bayford had the news officially sent to her. With the widow and relatives heartfelt sympathy will be felt in their sad loss.*

The British launched a new offensive on June 7th at Messines Ridge, an area of tactically important high ground just south of Ypres. This area had been in German hands since the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915. Since that time, tunnels had been dug under the ridge, and 455 tonnes of ammonal explosive had been planted in 21 mines under the enemy lines. After four days of heavy bombardment, which all but destroyed the opposing German field artillery, 19 of these mines were set off with devastating results. The sound of the explosions could be heard right across the Channel in London and killed nearly 10,000 Germans at a stroke. After this spectacular success, the II ANZAC, IX and X Corps of General Plumer’s 2nd Army advanced under cover of a creeping barrage to secure all objectives within just 12 hours. More than 7,000 Germans were taken prisoner and total casualties within Friedrich Sixt von Arnim’s 4th Army numbered 25,000. Despite undertaking a major assault, the combination of mines, creeping barrage and small unit tactics worked to keep Plumer’s casualties down to 24,000 men. The capture of Messines Ridge was the prelude to the up coming attack at Ypres, which would be launched the following month.

June 9 – PROMOTIONS. – *First A. M. T. H. Lee, son of Mt. T. J. S. Lee, of Post Office Road, has been recently promoted from the rank of First Air Mechanic to Leading Mechanic in the Royal Naval Air Service. Pte. J. A. Wells, of the White Hart, Crawley, has been promoted to Lance-Corporal.*

Among the reports of Military Absentees and the Military Tribunal at Horsham is a plea for exemption for Alfred J. Waller (27), married, wood machinist in the employ of Messrs. R. Cook & Sons, which was referred to the Central Medical Board.

WAR CASUALTIES. – *The official list of casualties at the war include the name of Pte. A. A. Brunt, Royal Berks, of Crawley, as having been killed; whilst Sergt. Frank Constable, Royal West Kent, and Pte. H. Puttock, Suffolk Regiment, both of Crawley, have been wounded.*

Private Alfred Arthur Brunt was killed in action on May 3rd. He was about 26 years old. The C.W.G.C. website lists his parents, William and Maria as living at Effingham Croft in Copthorne. He was born in Alciston near Lewes and had enlisted in London. He is commemorated at Copthorne and on the Arras Memorial.

On the 14th June Private Stanley Killick of the 8th Battalion, East Kent Regiment was killed in action at Messines. He was born in Crawley around 1884, and had enlisted in Horsham. He was a son of Francis and Maria Killick and the brother of John and Frank Killick who were also killed in the Great War. His name is listed on the St John's memorial and on the park gates. His body was never found so his name appears on the Menin Gate at Ypres.

June 23 – SECOND-LIEUTENANT BERNARD TAYLOR, of the Royal Flying Corps, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Taylor, of Crawley, has just been awarded the Croix de Guerre for valuable service rendered in France.

THE WAR'S TOLL. – Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Parsons, of Spencers Road, Crawley, have received the sad news that their son, Pte. William P. Parsons, of the North Lancashire Regiment, has made the great sacrifice in France, this being the second son they have lost in the war. Three other sons and a son-in-law are still in the Army.

Pte. W. P. Parsons, who was aged 36 and a bricklayer by occupation, had for several years past been employed on the Hammerwood Estate near East Grinstead. He leaves a wife and three young children, and to these and the parents and other members of the family the greatest sympathy will be extended. The following letter, from the Captain of the deceased's Company, dated June 14th, has been received by Mrs. Parsons:

'I expect you have already had the bad news that your husband, Pte. W. P. Parsons, was unfortunately killed in the recent attack and this short note is only to tell you how sorry we all are in this Company and how deeply we sympathise with you. He had always done well with me and we shall miss him greatly, but I am afraid this is not much consolation for you. A big attack like this is a terrible test for anybody, no matter how brave they are, and your husband proved himself one of the best. I can only repeat how very, very sorry we all are for you.' –

Pte. W. Bayford, of the Royal Sussex, whose address is given as Crawley, is reported missing, believed drowned.

Lance Corpl. F. Packham, of the Royal Sussex ; Pte. W. P. Boniface, of the Royal Fusiliers ; and Pte. E. Bedford, Royal West Kents, also of Crawley, are reported wounded.

Sergt. Reg Turner, of Crawley, who was reported wounded in our last issue, is, we are glad to say, making good progress. He received his wound in the Battle

of Messines, a piece of shrapnel piercing his steel helmet and lodging in his head. He is now in hospital at Chelmsford. Sergt. Turner has been in France 17 months and has seen much fighting, taking part in the Battle of the Somme and also at Ypres, Vimy Ridge and High Wood.

Lance Corporal Packham, referred to above as being wounded, is a son of Mr. W. Packham, of Horsham Road. He received three wounds in the left knee and thigh in the recent big push, and is now in hospital at Huddersfield, where he is going on quite satisfactorily.

Private William Peter Parsons was with the 9th Battalion of the Royal North Lancashire Regiment when he was killed in action at the Battle of Messines on the 8th June. He was 36 and a son of Nathan and Mary Parsons. His brother Stephen had been killed in October on the Somme. He was married to Elizabeth and they lived at 32 Oak Cottages, Hazelwick Road in Three Bridges. He had been born in Ifield and had enlisted in East Grinstead. He was formerly with the Royal Engineers. His name appears on the memorials at St Peter's Church in Crawley and St Nicholas Church in Worth as well as on the Memorial Gates. He is buried in Wulverghem-Lindenhoek Road Military Cemetery in Belgium.

Private William Bayford was with the 1/4th. Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment on the troopship *Transylvania* when it was torpedoed in the Gulf of Genoa on the 4th May. He was 37 and a son of William and Eleanor Bayford of Church Lane Villas, Much Hadham in Hertfordshire. He was the husband of Mrs Isabella Dorcas Lilliot of Crawley who later remarried and lived in Ifield. He was born in Much Hadham and had enlisted in Crawley. His name is included on the Ifield War Memorial and is commemorated on the Lilliot family memorial in St Margaret's Church, Ifield. His name also appears on the Gates at Crawley. He is also commemorated on the Savona Town Memorial in Italy.

On 25th June, the first members of the American Expeditionary Force began to arrive in France. Although these troops would require months of training and would not be able to contribute to the war effort proper for the immediate future, their arrival gave Allied morale a huge boost.

Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook joined up with the 9th Battalion Suffolk Regiment at Maroc, a small village about 10 miles to the south-east of Bethune, on the 27th June 1917. The 9th Battalion was attached to the 71st Brigade, 6th Division. There is a document in the War Diary, dated December 1917, that states that Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook was part of 'A' Company. He is only mentioned a few times by name in the diary but we can follow his story through 'A' Company and the Battalion. It is worth mentioning that if any Officers are sent off on leave, special duties or training courses, it is usually noted in the War Diary, so it is safe to assume that if he is not mentioned as leaving, he is there with the Battalion and therefore with the Company.

The British Expeditionary Force was by mid-1917 unrecognizable from the 'Contemptible Little Army' that was so disparaged by the Kaiser in August 1914. The B. E. F. had arrived in France in 1914 with roughly about 125,000 men. By the time the Great War came to an end, this had become five and a half million.

The role of Second Lieutenant was that of a 'junior' officer and fitted into the command structure of the British Expeditionary Force thus:-

The B. E. F. was broken down into four or sometimes five Armies. Each Army was commanded by a General with a Field-Marshal being the Commander-in-Chief. A typical Army was then sub-divided into Corps of which there would be three or four which could be moved between Armies as required. Each Corps was headed by a Lieutenant-General.

Below Corps came the Division which was comprised of three infantry Brigades. A Division consisted of approx. 19,000 men – 12,000 infantry, 4,000 artillery with the rest being supply, HQ staff, medical, engineers and general support services. Divisions could be moved between Corps when required. Brigades were divided into four Battalions each of around 1,000 men (three after the reorganisation that took place in early 1918). Each Battalion was commanded by a Lieutenant-Colonel or a Major and was further divided into four Companies of around 200 men. Individual Companies were commanded by a Captain. Next, each Company was divided into four Platoons each commanded by a Lieutenant. Finally, each Platoon was sub-divided into four sections of ten men, headed by Sergeants. So it is likely that Eddie, as a Second Lieutenant, would have been partly in charge of a Platoon of roughly 40- 50 men from the time of his arrival with the 9th Suffolks.

The following excerpts are based on my interpretation of entries taken from the War Diaries of the 9th Battalion Suffolk Regiment, written in the first instance by Lieutenant -Colonel F. Latham D.S.O., who himself took command of the Battalion on July 10. Eddie's arrival is recorded thus:-

Place: Maroc. Date: 27/6/17

Batt employed in tactical digging operations. Batt moved in to Corps reserves to Aix Noulette. Following Officers reported their arrival: 2/Lt. A. H. Stoyale, 2/Lt. R. E. Cook, 2/Lt. E.L. Turner, 2/Lt. W. J. Futter, 2/Lt. H. Simmons.

Place: Aix Noulette Date: 28th to 30/6/17

Batt in Corps reserve. On the 29th 2/Lt. J. A. Simmons joined Battalion along with 8 other ranks. On the 30th, Battalion moved to billets in Saily Labourge.

Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook's first experience of the trenches was to start the very next day.

June 30 – WAR ITEMS. – Pte. J. Maynard, Royal Fusiliers, and Pte. W. Johnson, East Yorks, both of Crawley, are reported missing; and Corpl. E. Bonsey, Royal West Surrey, of Crawley, is reported wounded.

News has just reached home that Pte. S. H. Dean, R. A. M. C., son of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Dean of Ifield Road, Crawley, has been commended for bravely fetching a wounded man from a front line sap who had laid there for some time without food or attention. We are pleased to add that, although he has been in the thick of the war for ten months, Pte. Dean is quite well and fit.

In regard to Pte. W. Johnson, referred to above, his mother, who lives at Bellevue, Tilgate, has received the following letter: 'Dear Madam, – In reply to your letter, dated the 18th inst., asking for information of your son, Pte. W. Johnson, I am extremely sorry to have to inform you that he has been missing since the 3rd May, and nothing has since been heard of him. On the date above mentioned he went into action with the battalion, and was afterwards reported to me as 'missing.' Enquiries which I have made have failed to bring to light any definite information of what happened to him, but I am afraid that it is only too certain that he was either killed or taken prisoner by the enemy. Assuring you of my deepest sympathy with you, I remain, yours sincerely, H. S. Williams, Captain.'

Private William Johnson was the second son of John and Annie Johnson to die. He had been badly wounded in a battle at Ypres in February 1915 during which his elder brother James had been killed in action. William was killed in action on the 3rd of May 1917. He had been born in Crawley and had enlisted in Haywards Heath. His father John had committed suicide in March 1916 when a third son had been called up. Like his brother James, William's body was never found and he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial. Both brothers' names appear on the Memorial Gates.

JULY

The 9th Suffolk Battalion moved from the reserve trenches in to the front line on the night of the 1st July. A typical diary entry – the 3rd July – reads 'Battalion in front line trenches. Casualties 3 other ranks killed, 2 wounded.' The Battalion sustained casualties every day they spent in the front line.

Elsewhere at the continuing Battle of Messines, on July 11th, the German Army had deployed a sinister new weapon – gas shells fired by artillery. The drawback to this new method of delivering gas to the enemy was that the obviously limited size of an artillery shell when compared to the existing gas cylinders, meant that they could only deliver small amounts of gas at a time. However, gas shells allowed more accurate delivery of chemical agents at longer range and with the element of surprise. This coincided with the development by the Germans of more potent agent known as 'mustard' gas (Yperite) which not only burned everything it touched but also

lingered for days at a time, thus increasing its effectiveness. Along with very effective, deadly phosgene gas, available since 1915, this innovation, which was soon copied by the Allies, meant that the use of gas by both sides would increase dramatically throughout the rest of the war.

'A' Company came out of their position to the left of the Battalion's part of the front line, relieved by 'C' Company on the night of the 12th and were withdrawn to Philosophe to provide working parties. Their relief was short-lived, however as they were soon back at the front, this time to the right hand side of their sector, on the night of the 14th. While 'B' and 'C' Companies were resting in Philosophe, the Battalion lost four more casualties on the 16th, two of them killed.

The Battalion was then in Reserve for two nights but at the front line again from the night of the 19th for a five day spell before being relieved by the 6th Battalion Sherwood Foresters on the night of the 24th. Again they suffered casualties every day, 15 in total with 2 being killed.

The diary entry for the 22nd July is especially chilling:-

Battalion in front line trenches casualties 1 O.R. killed, 8 O.R.s wounded (4 gassed by shells.)

When the Battalion came out of the front line they then moved by bus to a training area at Frevillers.

The diary entry for the 26th is noteworthy because it records the arrival of a 2nd Lt. S.H. Phillips, who would eventually move to the 11th Suffolks with 2nd. Lt. R. E. Cook and be wounded on the same fateful day. The Battalion spent the remainder of the month in training with various reinforcements arriving on a daily basis but with no further casualties. On 31st July, the day that finally saw the start of the long-awaited offensive at Ypres and the battle that would come to be commonly known as Passchendaele, the Battalion was inspected by the Brigade Commander, Brigadier General E. Fatham C.B., C.M.G.

July 14 – WAR CASUALTIES. – The week's official lists contain the names of the following Crawley men who have been wounded: Pte. A. Bond, Royal Sussex Regiment; Pte. G. Langridge, East Surrey regiment; Pte. A. J. Brinkhurst, Royal Sussex Regiment; Sergt. J. Elsey, Royal Sussex Regiment; Pte. F. Packham, Royal Sussex Regiment; and Pte. J. H. Miles, Royal West Kent Regiment.

July 21 – WOUNDED. – Two Crawley men figure in this week's list of wounded, viz., Private F. E. Stone, Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, and Gunner W. Etheridge, of the R.G.A.

Also in the pages of the July 21 papers is an article about the Monday sitting of the Military Tribunal in Horsham which includes news of Alfred Waller's appeal

for exemption and gives a clear indication of what the Cook family business is up to:

Alfred J. Waller (27), married, a wood-working machinist, employed by Messrs. Cook & Sons, of Crawley, had been passed B1. The Special Medical Board reduced the classification to C3 and, as the man is working entirely on war material, the Tribunal granted six month's exemption.

July 28 – WAR CASUALTIES. – *We regret to say that Pte. A. J. Tester, the youngest son of Mrs. Tester, 72, Ifield Road, Crawley, who was reported missing on September 3rd last year, is now officially reported killed. He joined up in November, 1914, in the Royal Sussex Regiment, and was first stationed at Bexhill, going to France in March, 1916. He was only 18 years of age. Mrs. Tester has three other sons serving their country, namely, Gunner F. G. Tester, Machine Gun Corps (Salonika); Shoeing-Smith A. F. Tester, Royal Engineers (France); and Pte. A. Tester, Royal Sussex Regiment, who is on his way to India. Three sons-in-law are also serving viz., Pte. C. Apps, Labour Battalion (France) ; Pte. F. Lind, Royal Sussex (France); and Sapper J. Challen, Royal Engineers (Chatham).*

News has also come to hand of the death in France of Lance-Corpl. A. Ashley, Royal Fusiliers. For several years the deceased, who was aged 28, was in the employ of Mr. C. Burgess, of Crawley, and during that time took a keen interest in the local Congregational Church and School, being secretary of the latter. He married Miss Steer, who was also engaged by Mr. Burgess, and they subsequently had a business at Turner's Hill. Lance-Corpl. Ashley was doing clerical work in France, and at the time of his death was resting in his tent, when a bomb burst with fatal effects. With the young widow and child much sympathy is expressed.

Pte. A. G. Moore, of the Royal Fusiliers, whose home is at Crawley, is reported wounded.

This week Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Taylor, of Crawley, have received the sad intelligence that their only son, Bernard, of the Royal Flying Corps, has met with an accident in Scotland, whither they have gone, but no news has yet arrived from them. Lieut. Taylor was recently made the recipient of the Croix de Guerre for conspicuous services in France and latterly he had been in Scotland, where he was engaged as an instructor. Many friends of the family will sincerely hope that the accident is not of a serious nature.

Lance-Corporal Albert Ashley was with the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers when he was killed at the age of 29 on the 8th July. He was the son of Frederick and Margaret Ashley and the husband of Lois Anna Ashley, of 89, Southbridge Rd., Croydon. He is buried at Canada Farm cemetery which took its name from a dressing station set up for the great summer offensive at Ypres.

AUGUST

August 4 – SECOND LIEUT. TAYLOR'S ACCIDENT. – The many friends of the family will be glad to learn that Second Lieut. Bernard Taylor, of the Royal Flying Corps, is now out of danger and making good progress. As briefly announced last week he had an accident whilst flying in Scotland and though he did not fall a considerable distance he received bad injuries to the head as well as a broken ankle. The jaw was fractured and also the bone of the nose, the latter injury being dangerously near the brain. As mentioned above, the danger has now happily passed, but it will be a considerable period before he is again thoroughly fit.

A CRAWLEY SOLDIER'S ACCIDENT. – News has come to hand that Private F. Attwater, of the Border Regiment, whose home is at Crosskeys Avenue, Crawley, and who has seen much fighting in France, has been the victim of a painful accident. Full details are not given, but it is clear that he has been very badly scalded and is now lying in Bethnal Green Military Hospital. All will hope that Private Attwater will make a rapid recovery.

AN IFIELD SOLDIER KILLED. – Mr. and Mrs. J. Penfold, of Bonnett's View, Ifield, have received official intimation that their son, Rifleman A. E. Penfold, of the Londons, has been killed in France. He was reported missing in October last and now comes the definite news of his death as the result of a shell bursting and a piece of shrapnel striking him near the heart, killing him instantaneously. Before joining up Penfold was employed on the railway and for a time was engaged by Mr. F. Larscombe. He was a single man, aged 30. Much sympathy is felt for the parents, who have five other sons, one son-in-law and over twenty nephews serving their country.

Rifleman Albert Edwin Penfold was with the 1/12th Battalion of the London Regiment when he was killed in action on the 7th October 1916. He was a son of John and Emily Penfold, born in Worth and he had enlisted in Horsham with the Royal Sussex Regiment before he was transferred to the London Regiment. His name is included on the Ifield War Memorial and on the Memorial Park Gates. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

August 11 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Official intimation has been received of the death of Robert Joseph Moore, Royal Garrison Artillery, whose home is in West Street, Crawley, and much sympathy has been expressed with the widow and little daughter, as well as with Mrs. Razzell, his mother-in-law, with whom the family lived. Moore was badly wounded on the 25th July and succumbed the following morning, his age being 40. Mrs. Razzell lost her son

William in February, he being shot through the heart: her daughter, Mrs. Pullen, died in the same month: and now has come the sad news of the death of her daughter's husband. –

Pte. W. Holman, Royal Fusiliers, of Crawley, previously reported missing, is now reported to be a prisoner in German hands. –

Pte. W. Mitchell and Pte. G. H. Charman, both of the Royal Sussex, and whose homes are at Crawley, are reported wounded. –

Capt. Ronald Fulljames, of the Durham Light Infantry, is also included in the list of injured. We learn that he has had an arm smashed, and are glad to know he is making good progress. Capt. Fulljames is a very popular officer, and the men of his Company, particularly, much regret his casualty.

Gunner Robert Joseph Moore had been born in Framlingham in Suffolk. He had enlisted in Horsham. He was with the 245th Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery on the 25th July when he suffered the wounds which would kill him the next day. He was buried in the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery and remembered in Crawley on the memorial Gates.

On the 14th August Private Nelson Charman of the 7th Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment died of wounds. He was born in Lower Beeding and had enlisted in Horsham. His name is included on the Ifield War Memorial and on the gates at Crawley. He was buried in Brandhoek New Military Cemetery in Belgium.

Private George Samuel Franks of the 2/6th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, part of the Indian Army, died of disease in India on the 17th August. He was born and had enlisted in Brighton and was resident in Ifield. His name appears on the Ifield War Memorial and on the park gates. He was buried in Tank Cemetery and is commemorated on the Delhi Memorial.

On Friday, 17th August 1917, Second Lieutenant Alfred Edward Cook arrived in France. Although his war record says that he was a Second Lieutenant with the Suffolk Regiment and then subsequently with the Labour Corps, it does seem likely that, due primarily to his age, Ted would have been sent straight to the Labour Corps. There is a document from April 1918 that says he is serving with the 175 Labour Company. This is doubly unfortunate as either way we have no record of which Suffolk Battalion he may have served with so we have no war diary and the Labour Corps did not keep diaries at all. Ivor Lee, the co-author of 'No Labour, No Battle: The Labour Corps in the First World War' tells me that 'one of the problems in advising about Labour Corps Companies is that it was quite common for a man to be moved to another Company. Although this was not as common for Officers it still happened. Assuming he remained with 175 Company then the places where they served included: Nurlu, Hamel, Roisel, Tincourt, Manancourt, Bohain, and Le Quesnoy.'

The Labour Corps had come into being when the British War Cabinet realised that a real danger of defeat in France could occur not because of a shortage of fighting

men but because of a failure to support those men. Unskilled labour was needed for almost everything to support the war effort. From unloading of supplies, building of railways, digging roads, digging trenches and graves – every conceivable kind of job needed doing. This was one of the main reasons for the Military Service Act, as, up until its introduction, all voluntary recruits were needed for fighting. The Act created a category of men who, through age or slight physical disability or even conscientiously objected to the war, were not fit for service in the trenches but could work. Later in the war foreign labour from places as far away as Egypt, India, South Africa and China was recruited. These foreign units, which also included prisoners-of-war, were not used near the front line as that was left to the British companies who often had to work under heavy fire. When the German Army launched its Spring Offensives in 1918, the situation was so grave that the Labour Corps literally had to drop their spades and pick up their rifles and fight alongside the regular soldiers. From that point on until the end of the war they always worked fully armed and ready to fight when the need arose.

August 18 – PRIVATE H. G. GOODWIN, of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, previously reported missing, is now known to be a prisoner of war.

WOUNDED. – Mrs. Streatfield, of London Road, has received news that her son, Private Frank L. Streatfield, The Buffs, has been wounded in the right arm and legs. He only joined up on the 24th March last, and was sent to France on 26th May. Mr. and Mrs. Martin, of North End, have heard that their son, Sapper R. P. Martin, R. E. Signallers, has been wounded in the right arm and is now in hospital at Horton. He had been home on leave and only back on duty six days when he and an officer inspecting wires were both wounded by a shell which exploded near them.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – We much regret that several local deaths have this week to be recorded. Capt. George Luard Alexander, London Regiment, who was killed in action on the 6th inst., was a son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. O. M. Courage, The Mount, Ifield, and the sincerest sympathy is felt for the young widow and child, as well as for the other relatives. The gallant officer, who was Brigade-Major, was the only son of Capt. R. M. Alexander, of Strathallan, Ryde, and was 31 years of age.

Lieut. Cottle, whose home is at Manor House, Ifield, has also made the supreme sacrifice.

Others in this district who have recently laid down their lives in the country's cause are Pte. Lanaway, who married a daughter of the late Mr. A. Charman, West Street, Crawley; Pte. Thos. Butler, of County Oak; and Pte. Alfred Moore, also of County Oak, Crawley. The deepest sympathy is expressed with the bereaved.

Pte. W. Allen, of Crawley, and Pte. Allingham, late of St. Peter's Road, Crawley, are reported wounded.

Captain George Luard Alexander was serving with the 1/8th (City of London) Battalion London Regiment (Post Office Rifles). He was acting Brigade Major of the 140th Brigade, part of the 47th (2nd London) Division when he was killed in action. He was born about 1883 in Bayswater and was a son of Captain Ranald M Alexander who was from Canada. He was married to Hilda, the eldest daughter of Oswald Michell Courage, a director of Courage Breweries, and his wife Gertrude Hilda. George and Hilda had one child. He died on 5th August 1917 and was buried at the Anzac Cemetery, Sailly – Sur – La – Lys.

Lieutenant Walter Edward Worsdale Cottle, who had starred with the ball in a game of cricket against a Crawley side containing the Cook cousins in May 1915, was killed in action on the opening day of Third Ypres, the 31st of July 1917. His name appears on Panel 9 on the Menin Gate at Ypres.

Private Thomas Butler was also killed in action on the 31st of July. He was with the 8th Battalion of the Royal West Surrey Regiment. He was born in Charlwood and had enlisted in Horsham. His name is included on the Ifield War Memorial and on the gates at Crawley. He is also commemorated on the Menin Gate, on Panel 11.

Private George Alfred Moore was with the 26th (Service) Battalion (Bankers) of the Royal Fusiliers when he died of wounds on 7th June 1917, the opening day of the Battle of Messines. He was born near Uckfield and was approximately 36 when he died. He had enlisted in Horsham. His name appears on the memorials at St. Nicholas in Worth, at Lowfield Heath and at St. Margaret's in Ifield as well as the Memorial Gates. Like Walter Cottle and Thomas Butler, his body was never found so he too, is commemorated on the Menin Gate on Panel 8.

There is a bit of a mystery concerning Private Lanaway. There are only two Lanaways listed on the C.W.G.C. website. One is Driver E. E. Lanaway serving in Egypt who died on the 29th June 1917 and is buried in Alexandria. The other, is William Frank Lanaway, a Rifleman with the 11th Battalion of King's Royal Rifle Corps, who was the son of Simon and Sarah Lanaway of Forest Road, Roffey in Horsham. His date of death however, is recorded as the 20th September 1917.

August 25 – MISSING AND WOUNDED. – Pte. B. Eggleton, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, whose home is at Crawley, is officially reported missing, and Pte. Tingley, formerly of Crawley, has been wounded.

On the Western Front, the great offensive at Ypres struggled on through the wettest 'summer' for 40 years. The original objective of breaking through the German lines and attacking the German submarine bases on the Belgian coast had, in view of the weather, been scaled down and the objective now was to push the Germans

off the higher (and drier) ground around Ypres so that the German artillery, which constantly bombarded British positions in the salient, would be deprived of many of its excellent observation points.

For the 9th Suffolks, the entire month of August 1917 was taken up by training. It is safe to assume that apart from the usual Battalion training that went on, additional training was given to the men in preparation for the forthcoming offensive that would become known as the Battle of Cambrai. On the 8th of August the Battalion was paraded in front of the Corps Commander who presented the Battalion with medal ribbons following the Battalion's successful trench raid at the beginning of June. His speech has survived and is included here to give an indication of what exactly was expected of Officers and men and also how the Army leaders were thinking at the time:-

“ In the course of one's service one has to do many things, but nothing one has to do is a greater privilege than to come to a Brigade like this, and, in the name of His Majesty the King to present the Medals and decorations which have been so well earned. You, to-day however, have added an additional pleasure to my visit, because I must heartily congratulate your Commander and yourselves on a very excellent turnout, and upon the excellent physical appearance of the men whom I see before me to-day. I am not in the least surprised at seeing such a good turnout – it is what I expected. I expected it because whenever you have had to do anything to do in this campaign you have done it. I expected it, because you belong to one of the celebrated old Divisions which made for themselves such a glorious reputation at the beginning of this War.

It is an enormous asset, and a tremendous privilege to belong to one of the old Divisions and consequently to be heir to all their old glories and traditions. There is no shadow of doubt that the example and discipline of the old six Divisions exercised a predominating influence on the new armies, and were the greatest factors in forming that fine spirit in those Armies which has enabled them during the last year to carry to success offensive operations on a grand scale. I do not think, therefore, that it is possible to place too high a value upon the traditions of the 6th Division. We look to it, although there are not many of the old soldiers left, to set an example of soldierly conduct, discipline and courage to the rest of the Corps.

I am now about to present in the name of His Majesty the King decorations which have been won by some of your comrades. Before doing this, I want all here to understand that these decorations are not mere pieces of ribbon, but that these ribbons are the hallmark of the approval of your Sovereign and your Country for deeds of courage, for deeds of leadership, and for deeds of initiative which have added to the traditions and to the glory of the 6th Division. There is no question whatever that it rests with the junior leaders, (junior officers and N.C.Os) whether there shall be success or failure in the operations which you are ordered

to carry out. Our junior officers and N.C.Os are continually, during the course of battle, faced with the responsibility of solving important tactical problems and that responsibility can only be successfully undertaken when we have initiative and fearless leading in our junior ranks, and in the rank and file that determined disciplined courage which is only found in trained soldiers living up to the highest traditions. I want you to remember that we have now done with defensive warfare – practically everything that you will be asked to do in the future will be in the nature of an Offensive. Every leader must therefore so train him that the will for victory, and forward movement under all conditions become in each individual a sub-conscious habit of mind. It is a great thing to hold your trenches inviolate from any attempt of the enemy to get into them, but it is a far greater thing that when you are ordered to take a trench that that trench shall be taken, and even yet greater that the trench shall be held against all counter-attacks.

Now men, I will not keep you any longer, except to repeat how great an honour we all look upon it to come and see these decorations presented to men, who have, under the supreme test of battle, displayed all those qualities which I have been trying to put before you.

These men who stand here to-day have proved their courage, their initiative and their right to be considered as leaders of men under the supreme test of War.”

The rest of the day was taken up with Battalion Sports Day. On the 19th a Divisional Rifle meeting was held with the ‘A’ Company No.1 Platoon Lewis Gun Team winning the bugle. Training then continued until the Battalion was moved to Vaudricourt where it was held in Divisional Reserve.

SEPTEMBER

September 8 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Lance.-Sergt. O. Brackpool, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, whose home is given as Crawley, is reported to have been killed. The following local men are reported wounded: Pte. A. H. Bennett, Coldstream Guards;

Pte. H. Shepherd, Hampshire Regiment ; Gnr. W. J. Cove, R. G. A. ; Pte. H. Denman, Leicester Regiment ; and Bomb. D. Holloway, R. F. A. The last named was hit in the left elbow joint by a piece of shrapnel, but the injury is happily not too serious and Bomb. Holloway will soon be back in action again.

Percy Pockett, of the London Regiment, has been recently sent back from France suffering from nephritis and he is now recovering in a hospital in Somersetshire.

Lance Sergeant Oliver Brackpool of the 9th (Service) Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, was killed in action on the 27th July. He was the son of Arthur and Sarah Brackpool, born in Worth about 1896. He had enlisted in East Grinstead. He was killed by a shell and buried near the trenches, but the site of his grave was subsequently lost

during the chaos of Third Ypres. He is remembered on the war memorial at Crawley Down and commemorated on Panel 30 of the Menin Gate at Ypres.

September 15 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – We regret that Pte. Arthur Henry Smith, whose home is at 89 High Street, Crawley, has been killed in action. For a considerable time Mr. Smith was a gardener at Worth Rectory, and was a useful member of local horticultural societies. He joined up in June, 1916, and went to France in February this year. His Commanding Officer has written to Mrs. Smith as under: 'It is with the greatest regret that I have to inform you of the death of your husband in action on August 27th. As his Company Commander, allow me to assure you of my and his comrades' deepest sympathy with you in your loss. We feel we have lost a comrade and a friend, whose place it will be difficult to fill. We trust and believe that his supreme sacrifice will not be in vain in the eyes of God Almighty, who I earnestly pray may give you all solace in your great bereavement.'

Pte. Smith, who was 29 years of age, was in a Welsh Regiment. Mrs. Smith and the little daughter will have the heartfelt sympathy of many local friends.

Among those whose names appear in the list of wounded are Pte. J. Owen, Royal Fusiliers, Crawley; Pte. T. Sadler, Royal Sussex, Crawley; and Pte. W. Shaw, Royal Sussex, Crawley.

Private Arthur Henry Smith was with the 16th (Service) Battalion (Cardiff City) The Welsh Regiment. He was born in Copdock near Ipswich. At the time of his death his wife, Margaret Ellen and his daughter were living at 89 High St, Crawley. Willett's Directory of Crawley records this was the address of Frederick Merritt, a labourer. When he enlisted in Haywards Heath he gave his address as Lindfield, so his wife may have moved later to lodgings. His body was never found for burial so he is commemorated on Panel 94 of the Tyne Cot Memorial. For reasons unknown his name does not appear at Crawley.

Also killed that week was Gunner Nathaniel Bartley. He was with 'D' Battery, 162nd Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery when he was killed in action on the 19th September. He was 31, a son of Mr Nathaniel and Mrs Clara Bartley. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in Crawley. He was buried in Reninghelst New Military Cemetery in Belgium. His name appears on the gates at Crawley.

September 22 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – This week's official list of war casualties includes the name of Pte. V. Friend, of the Buffs (Crawley), as having been killed in action; and Pte. C. A. Francis, of the Royal Sussex (Crawley), previously reported missing, is now reported as having been killed. The following Crawley men are reported to have been wounded: Pte. S. J. Vine, Royal Sussex; Pte. W. O. Malthouse, Royal Fusiliers; Corpl. G. Charman,

Royal Sussex; Lance-Corpl. F. J. Lavington, Royal Sussex; and Pte. E. Lee, Royal West Kents.

Private Victor Friend was with the 8th (Service) Bn Buffs (East Kent Regiment) when he was killed in action on the 10th August as his battalion made an unsuccessful attempt to capture a position known as 'Lower Star Post'. He was born in Worth about 1898 and resident in Copthorne Bank when he enlisted. His name appears on the War Memorial at Copthorne. His body was not found for burial and so he is commemorated on Panel 12 of the Menin Gate at Ypres.

Private Charles Arthur Francis had been reported missing in November 1916. He was with the 13th Battalion of the Royal Sussex when he was killed in action on the Somme on the 21st of October 1916. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in Hastings. He was the son of James Thomas and Harriett Francis. His name appears on the gates at Crawley and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

September 29 – WAR CASUALTIES. – A telegram from the War Office conveys the sad news of the death in action of 2nd. Lieut. Lewis George Edwards, of the King's Royal Rifles, elder son of Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Edwards, of The Croft, Ifield Road, Crawley. 2nd Lieut. Edwards joined up voluntarily early in September, 1914, but had only been in France seven weeks, going there immediately after his last leave, which he spent at Crawley. Prior to the war he was engaged at a London bank. Very sincere regret will be felt at his death, for he was a popular lad and absolutely thorough in all he undertook, and the parents will have the sincere sympathy of many friends in their sad bereavement. 2nd Lieut. Edwards, whose brother went to France only a month ago, was 23 years of age last April.

Among Crawley men reported wounded are Corpl. G. Simmonds, Warwick Regiment; and Lance-Corpl. W. Merritt, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry.

Second Lieutenant Lewis George Edwards was part of the 11th Battalion, Kings Royal Rifle Corps when he was killed in action at Ypres on the 20th September. He had been born in Slinfold. His name appears on the gates at the Memorial Park and at Tyne Cot near Ypres in Belgium – the largest British Military Cemetery in the world.

Gunner William James Pullen, serving with the 182 Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery, died of wounds on 28th September. He was born in Ifield around 1883, a son of Maurice and Eliza Pullen. He was a plumber by trade and lived in West Street. He had enlisted in Horsham. He is buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery. He is remembered on the gates at Crawley.

At the Front, after two more days of training, the 9th Suffolk Battalion moved to Braquemont on the 3rd of September, and then at 6.15 pm on the night of the 4th moved up to the support line trenches, relieving the 9th Norfolks. The next four

days were spent in support before the Battalion moved up to the front line on the evening of the 9th September. Again, straightaway they began taking casualties with 4 O.R.s being wounded (3 gas shell poisoning) on the 11th and one man reported missing from 'D' Company on the 12th. The Battalion were relieved on the 13th but not before 3 other ranks were wounded (2 by gas shell poisoning) and then a further four casualties occurred while the Battalion was being relieved. The Battalion then made its way to Mazingarbe where it was in reserve until the night of the 18th when they were again moved up to the front line trenches. The Battalion lost two O.R.s, one killed on the 19th, and on the 20th, two other ranks killed and seven wounded, the wounded being *'transport personnel who were billeted at Les Brebie and were received by hostile shell falling in lines about 12.30 am.'* There were also two other fatalities and nine woundings amongst the other ranks of the Battalion before they were relieved on the night of the 22nd. The Battalion then moved into Divisional Reserve south of Maroc to provide working parties for the rest of September but even there they continued to take casualties with eight other ranks being wounded and three other ranks being killed. The diary entry also notes that 2nd Lt. S. H. Phillips (who had been made Assistant Adjutant) was also wounded on the 30th.

OCTOBER

October 6 – WAR CASUALTIES. – We regret to hear that Mr. and Mrs. Cason have lost one of their sons in the war, and to the parents, as well as the widow, who is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tyler, who have long resided at Ifield, much sympathy will be felt in their sorrow.

Pte. A. H. Smith, of the Welsh Regt., whose home is given as Crawley, is also among the brave lads who have given their lives for their country.

Gunner W. Eggleton, whose home is at Spencer's Road, Crawley, is suffering from severe shell shock in France. A shell exploded near to where he was standing, but he fortunately escaped injury, beyond a few cuts and bruises. The shock, however, was very great, but he is happily making satisfactory progress.

Private Issac William Cason was 44 when he died of wounds on the 2nd September. He was with the 708th Company, 9th Labour Battalion of the Labour Corps. He was born in Southend on Sea and had enlisted in London. He was married to Alice Mary and they lived in South Northwood. His parents lived at Bonwycks Place, Ifield. He had formerly served with the Royal Engineers. His name is included on the war memorial at Ifield and curiously, is misspelt on the gates at Crawley as Casson. He was buried in the Canada Farm Cemetery (a former dressing station) about 8 km north-west of Ypres.

Private William Thomas Garner, serving with the 6th Battalion of the Border Regiment died of wounds on the 5th October. He was born in St. Pancras and had enlisted in London. His mother lived for a time in Crawley. He had been formerly

with the Royal Flying Corps. He was buried in Dozinghem Military Cemetery, near Proven, not far from Mendinghem. He is commemorated on the Memorial gates in Crawley.

October 20 – DIED OF WOUNDS. – Sapper F. E. Harding, of the Royal Engineers, who, as reported in our last issue, had sustained dangerous bomb wounds in both legs, has unfortunately succumbed to his injuries. He was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Harding, of Ifield Road, Crawley, and before joining the Colours two years ago was employed on the railway at Croydon. He had been in France nearly the whole of this time and was last home on leave in November. He was expecting further leave this week. Sapper Harding was 33 the day before his death. Writing to his parents, the Chaplain says: 'I very much regret to have to inform you that your son, in spite of everything that could be done, died of his wounds yesterday (October 8th), thereby giving his precious life for God, King and country. I buried him this afternoon in the presence of some of his comrades at Estaires and can assure you that ever tender care will be taken of his grave. I can only offer you my sincere sympathy in your great sorrow and pray God will give you strength to bear up under your great trial.' The Captain writes: 'You will have heard by now of your great loss. Your son was badly wounded. He was taken to hospital and all possible was done, but he was too weak to feel much. We all send you our sympathy and only wish it was of some use.' Many local friends of the family will join in these expressions of sympathy.

KILLED IN ACTION. – Private Phillip George Penfold, of the D.L.I., whose home is at Tushmore, Crawley, was killed in action on the 29th ult., in France. He joined up about a year ago and had been in France only a few months. Penfold was previously employed at Messrs. Cheal & Sons' Nurseries and was a much respected young fellow. He was 38 years of age. He leaves a widow and two children, and with these and the other relatives sincere sympathy will be felt.

WOUNDED. – Included in this week's list of wounded appears the name of Sergt. J. H. C. Lindfield, R. F. A., of Crawley.

MISSING. – Pte. C. King, who before enlistment was a postman and whose home is at Ifield, is reported missing.

AN IFIELD SOLDIER'S FATE. – Intimation has just been received that a son of Mr. A. Laker, of Ifield Wood, is among those who have recently made the great sacrifice for King and country in France, and many friends of the family will be much grieved to hear the sad news.

Sapper Frank Edward Harding was with the 19th Land Drainage Company, part of the Royal Engineers, when he died on October 8th. He was buried at the Estaires Communal Cemetery. His name appears at St. Peter's and there is a memorial to him at St. John's in the form of an addition to the headstone of Mary Ann Harding, his sister, who had died in February 1907, aged 26. It reads:- 'Frank Edward Harding died of wounds at Estaires on Oct 8 1917 age 33 'the strife is over, the battle done.'

Private Phillip George Penfold was with the 20th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry when he was killed in action near Ypres on the 21st, not the 29th, of September. He had been born in Charlwood and had enlisted in Crawley. His parents were William and Elizabeth Penfold.

Private Arthur Laker was with the 1st Battalion of the Royal West Kents when he died of wounds on October 4th. He was 38 and a son of Albert and Ellen Laker of Oak Farm, Ifield Wood, Crawley. He was married to Alice Laker, 86, Camilla Road, Bermondsey. He was born in West Grinstead and had enlisted with the Royal Sussex in Crawley. Both men's names appear on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial and at the gates in Crawley. Both are also commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial.

October 27 – PROMOTION. – Pte. D. Holloway, of the R. F. A., of Crawley, who has now recovered from his wound, has been promoted to the rank of Corporal.

WOUNDED. – Pte. J. Maslen, of the Rifle Brigade, whose home is at Crawley, is reported to have been wounded.

Pte. W. Banbrook, of the Oxford & Bucks Regiment, whose wife lives in Albany Road, Crawley, is in Hazelmere Hospital suffering from severe shrapnel wounds in the foot, received in one of the recent pushes.

WEDDING OF CAPT. R. M. FULLJAMES. – Many friends at Crawley will be much interested in reading of the wedding of Capt. R. M. Fulljames, M. C., 20th Durham Light Infantry, which happy event took place on Tuesday at the old church at Beconsfield. The bride was Miss Maud Cooper, daughter of Mrs. Cooper, of Marlow, by whom she was given away, and the bridegroom was supported by his uncle, Mr. Ernest Lehmann, as best man. The bridegroom's father, Mr. Tom Fulljames, and his grandmother, Mrs. Fulljames, were among those present. The bridal party were entertained at lunch after the ceremony by the bride's sister, Mrs. Allen, and the happy couple left later in the day en route for St. Mawes, near Falmouth, Cornwall, where they are spending their honeymoon.

It will be remembered that Capt. Fulljames was wounded in one of the recent pushes and that he only left the convalescent home at Hawarden Castle last week. He is quite happily recovered from his wound and expects in a fortnight's time to resume service with his regiment at South Shields, pending his return, when

thoroughly fit again, to the Front. Both bride and bridegroom were the recipients of many presents and very hearty congratulations, among the donors being not a few of Capt. Fulljames's friends at Crawley.

Back on the Western Front, October 1st saw the 9th Suffolks providing working parties in Divisional Reserve where they were withdrawn for a day's rest before training continued up until the 8th, when, at night, they relieved the 14th Battalion Durham Light Infantry in the support line. The Battalion then moved up to the front line proper on the night of the 9th where they remained until the 13th when they were withdrawn into the support line trenches. This seems to have been a very quiet stint and the Battalion suffered no casualties.

However, this respite was short-lived as the Battalion again found themselves in the front line trenches on the night of the 16th. The 17th was quiet, but on the 18th they lost thirteen other ranks as casualties including two killed. The 19th of October was even worse, as the diary entry reads:

Battalion in front line trenches. Battalion was subjected to a very heavy bombardment. Casualties 2nd Lieut. R.F. Packer killed, 2nd Lieuts. C.C. Dew and C. Sweisley and F. Goatcher wounded. 6 other ranks killed, 25 O.R.'s wounded. 1 other rank missing.

'B' Company relieved 'C' Company in the firing line. 'D' Company was unable to relieve 'A' Company until night 20/21st.

In other words, conditions were so bad that 'A' Company, along with Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook, were cut off from their comrades for over 24 hours. The Battalion was then relieved on the 21st and withdrew to Bully Grenay. The next day, they marched to Noeux-Les-Mines and entrained for Lillers where they then marched to Auchy Au Bois. The Battalion spent the next week training before a route march to La Thieuloye on the 29th and then on to Denier on the 30th.

ANZAC, Canadian and British forces combined on the 30th October to take the village of Passchendaele despite the pouring rain and appalling casualties, finally bringing the offensive to a close. The Battle of Passchendaele has come to epitomise the pointless slaughter of trench warfare over the years. The offensive produced over half a million casualties and was described by the Germans as 'the greatest martyrdom of the War.' On the 31st October, the 9th Suffolks War Diary notes that 2nd Lt F. Goatcher had died of his wounds.

NOVEMBER

November 3 – MISSING. – Official intimation has been received that Pte. A. Hole, who formerly resided in Spencer's Road, Crawley, and latterly was engaged on the Tilgate Estate, living in the Brighton Road Lodge, is missing.

PROMOTION. – *The many friends of Mr. J. Wells, the genial proprietor of the White Hart, Crawley, now in France, will be pleased to hear that he has been promoted to sergeant.*

KILLED IN ACTION. – *Another local death at the Front has this week to be recorded. Pte. Ernest John Wood, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. John Wood, of Ifield Steam Mills, having made the great sacrifice. The deceased, who was a single man, aged 43, was in Australia at the outbreak of hostilities, and he voluntarily joined the Australian Imperial Forces. He had been in France since January last, and his death took place on the 12th inst., as the result of machine gun fire. He was able to get home on leave in May last, though it was impossible for him to be at the funerals of his mother and father. Much sympathy will be felt with the family in this further bereavement.*

News has also come to hand of the death in action of Pte. Benjamin Mould, of the Queen's Regiment, who formerly worked in the Tilgate Gardens under Mr. E. Neal, and who was a very interested member of the Crawley and District Gardener's Association.

Another well known Crawley man in the person of Pte. Jack Cain, of South View Cottage, Crawley, a son of Mr. and Mrs. O. Cain, has given his life for his country, official intimation of his death in action having been received this week. Before joining the Army, Mr. Cain, who was a married man, was a painter, who had been employed by Messrs. Bartley & Ward for many years, and his death will be much regretted by all who know the family.

Private Albert Hole was with the 13th (Service) Battalion (3rd South Down), Royal Sussex Regiment when he was killed in action on 27th September at 'Tower Hamlets'. He had been born in Worth about 1877, a son of James and Ann Hole and was a house painter living in Flint Lodge, Tilgate, Crawley. He had enlisted in Chichester. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial and his name is recorded on the Slaugham War Memorial.

Private Ernest John Wood was with the 35th Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, when he was killed near Ypres on the 12th October. He was born in Hellingly, East Sussex and had enlisted in Sydney, Australia. Educated at the National School, Portslade by Sea, Sussex. He was the eldest son of John and Ann Wood who had died earlier that year and the brother of Walter. Ernest had emigrated to Australia in 1898 when he was 24, and became a draper and outfitter there. His name appears on the memorial gates at Crawley and he is commemorated on the Menin Gate in Ypres.

Pte. Benjamin Mould was with the 3rd/4th Battalion, Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) when he was killed in action on the 10th October. He was 34. He was a son of Henry and Sarah Mould, of Chilbolton, Hampshire and was married to Lily Eliza

Mould, of 29, St. Paul's Road, Luton, Bedfordshire. He is commemorated at the Tyne Cot Memorial.

November 10 – THE LATE PRIVATE J. W. CAIN. – Mrs. Cain, South View, Hoggs Hill, has received the following letter from the Chaplain with reference to the death of her husband, Private J. W. Cain, of the Grenadier Guards, who died from wounds sustained in action: 'Dear Mrs. Cain, – This is to bring my earnest sympathy with you in the great loss you have suffered in the death of your gallant husband, who was wounded and died of his wounds on October 12th. I find that he was buried by one of our chaplains in a cemetery near by the dressing station where he was taken to. But I would like you to know that we held a memorial service last Sunday and honoured our gallant dead, commending them into the hands of God and praying for all mourners at home. There is a glory about the death of these gallant fellows who made the supreme sacrifice, and I know you must be proud of your hero. May God help and comfort you in this great sorrow.'

MILITARY MEDAL. – Private C. Dumsday, R. A. M. C., of Crawley, has been awarded a Military Medal for meritorious services at the Front. – Private C. McCormick, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, of Crawley, has received a like distinction.

AN IFIELD SOLDIER KILLED. – Previously reported missing, Rifleman C. King, son of Mr. J. King, The Forge, Ifield, is now reported to have been killed in action. A letter from the Captain states: 'In reply to your letter of 31st October 1917, I am very sorry to have to tell you that Rifleman King has since been reported killed in action. He was properly buried by our own divisional burials officers and the grave marked and registered. I regret that I have not the number and the exact location of the grave with me now, but if you apply to the Graves Registration Officer he will give you full particulars. I am very sorry for you and for the regiment, as Rifleman King was an excellent soldier.' Before joining the Army Rifleman King, who was a single man, aged 38, was a postman connected with the Crawley Office, and a much respected fellow. The bereaved relatives will have the sympathy of many friends in their sad loss.

Private John Walter Cain was with the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards. He was born in Slaughtam and had enlisted in Horsham. His parents were Osborne and Harriett Cain. His name appears on the Memorial Park Gates at Crawley and also on the Slaughtam War Memorial. He was buried in Ruisseau Farm Cemetery.

Rifleman Charles King was with the 2/8th Battalion of the London Regiment, (Post Office Rifles) when he was killed in action at Ypres on the 20th September. It is likely that he was fighting in the Battle of the Menin Road (part of the Third Battle of

Ypres). The British Army suffered 21,000 casualties on that day alone. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in Horsham. His name is included at the Memorial Park Gates, the Ifield War Memorial and the Crawley Post Office War Memorial. Despite what the letter from his Captain says, Rifleman Charles King's body was lost in the subsequent fighting and never found and so he is commemorated on the Menin Gate at Ypres. His name appears on Panel 54.

The first two weeks of November saw the 9th Suffolks undergoing more training with a few men arriving as reinforcements. The entire Battalion must have been aware at this time that, as they were being trained in forming up in special 'Tank Formation', they must be in line to soon go 'over the top'. On the 15th, the Battalion left Denier and marched to Frevent where they then travelled by train to Peronne. The Battalion then marched to Moislaine where they spent the night and the following day before moving by route march to Bois Dessart on the evening of the 16th. The Battalion spent the night under canvas.

November 17 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The death has occurred in action of Capt. W. A. L. Poundall, M. C., of the Royal Flying Corps, whose mother has recently come to reside at 13 High Street, Crawley. Capt. Poundall, who was 23 years of age, was awarded the Military Cross for his gallant conduct in the Somme battles in July last year. He was afterwards transferred from the South Lancashire Regiment to the Royal Flying Corps, with whom he had been out since Christmas. With the widowed mother much sympathy has been expressed. – The following Crawley men are reported wounded: Gunner J. A. Stainforth, R. G. A.; Pte. A. Glover, Royal Fusiliers; and Pte. W. Sargeant, Hussars.

Captain William Arthur Lloyd Poundall was with No.33 Squadron (RFC) when he was killed in action on 31st October. He was from Wimbledon, where his name appears on the memorial. He was buried at the White House Cemetery, St. Jean-les-Ypres.

On the 17th and 18th the Battalion were issued with 'additional and special equipment'. The diary entry for the 19th reads – 'Battalion moved to positions of assembly in conjunction with Tanks preparatory to attack on Hindenburg Line north of Beaucamp'.

Operation Orders issued at 8.45 a.m. on the 19th state that:-

The 71st Infantry Brigade on Z day will attack enemy's line N.N.E. of BEAUCAMP being a portion of an attack on a large scale and which is being launched in the form of a surprise. The 9th Suffolk Regiment on the right and the 1st Leicestershire Regt. on the left of Brigade sector of attack will capture the 1st system of the 1st objective which is the HINDENBURG Front Line system, consisting of a front line and immediate support line.

FIRST PHASE – FIRST OBJECTIVE

The 9th Suffolk Regt., will attack and capture Front Line L.31.d.14.38 to L.31.c.33.83 and also enemy advanced outpost line (PLUSH Trench) R.1.c.77.70 to Q.S.b.54.24

COY. ATTACK AREAS

'A' Company will follow behind tanks on Battalion Frontage and Mop up Plush Trench obtaining touch with own troops to either flank.

After Foresters and Norfolks have passed through and taken 1st objectives 'A' Company and 'B' Company will form a portion of the Brigade Reserve and will only be moved on orders received from the Brigadier General Commanding Brigade.

MOPPING UP AREAS

After the objectives of the Battalion are taken Companies are responsible for areas as under:-

'A' Company

Plush Trench from Q.6.b.55.20 to R.I.c.60.80 and the area in front of it up to Valley Trench bounded on the West by Argyle Road and on the East by a line from R.I.c.60.80 to L.31.c.99.20.

There is a page in the War Diary which is a 'Nominal Roll of Officers of the above Battalion December 1917'. According to that list, 'A' Company were being led by Capt. P. L. Scudamore, Capt. G. M. Brown and Lieut. J. C. Rowbotham with 2nd Lieuts. H. Almack, R. E. Cook, J. A. Simmons and S. T. Marchant.

20th NOVEMBER 1917 – THE BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

The Battle of Cambrai is probably most famous as the first massed tank attack in history. The tank was first used a year earlier towards the end of the Battle of the Somme, and, encouraged by what had been learnt, Churchill had ordered mass production. Cambrai saw the Allies and the Germans each make tactical innovations and both sides learnt from the other as the war began to move into a new phase. Cambrai was essentially the last great battle of stagnant trench warfare.

On the morning of November 20th 1917, the Allies attacked with over 300 tanks and six divisions against just two German divisions. The tanks were carrying fascines at the front in order to get across the trenches and were followed into No Man's Land by the infantry in columns – not in the usual lines. Another innovation was the complete lack of a preparatory bombardment by the artillery – the usual prelude to an attack – instead just a curtain of smoke was laid down before the advancing tanks and infantry.

Within hours, the battle seemed to be a spectacular success. At a cost of approximately 4,000 casualties, the British Forces that day penetrated further into

German territory than had been achieved at Third Ypres in four months. Church bells were rung throughout Britain as it seemed as though a victorious end to the war was in sight.

The joy was short-lived however as the attack had produced a sharp and awkward salient. On November 30th the Germans counter-attacked using their own tanks supported by airplanes and the first use of storm trooper tactics. Ignoring pockets of resistance, storm troopers moved fast into the British rear, leaving infantry units to mop up after them. The counter attack was successful and succeeded in driving the British back to where they had started. Both sides had learnt valuable lessons that would ultimately bring the stalemate to an end the following year.

From the 9th Suffolks War Diary:-

Battalion formed up in 'Tank Formation' at positions of assembly immediately in rear of the Tanks, of which there were two sections working with the Battalion. Assembly point being in rear of our then support line from Argyle Road to Barricade Road. 'A' Company was formed up in one wave across the front allotted the Battalion. 'D' Company was in two waves in the rear of 'A' Company and the right section of Tanks while 'B' Company was in two waves in rear of 'A' Company and the left section of Tanks. 'C' Company had half a Company in rear of 'D' Company and half in rear of 'B' Company, in one wave acting as Battalion support. Assembly was complete at about 1 a.m. and men wrapped themselves in blankets and slept in their positions. Zero hour was at 6.20 a.m.

Tanks and Battalion moved forward at 6.10 a.m. and our artillery barrage opened at Zero. Battalion moved off lines of platoon column until through our own wire and within 200 yards of Plush Trench when platoons swing out into extended order. Some trouble was experienced from the Tanks not keeping direction until past Plush Trench. Of the right section two of the tanks were out of action shortly after Zero, and the third lost direction, leaving 'D' Company to get through the Hindenburg wire, through the ordinary gaps made by the enemy. Enemy retaliatory barrage was weak, but concentrated. A portion of 'D' Company was caught in the shell-fire and sustained several casualties.

'A' Company dealt with Plush Trench successfully and Tanks and remainder of Battalion passed through to attack the main Hindenburg Line. At 9.05 a.m. messages were received that the Battalion objectives had been captured, enemy resistance had been feeble and casualties slight. Companies were in touch with both flank Battalions. The Commanding Officer established Battalion Headquarters in the original enemy first line immediately after objectives had been captured.

Lieut. G. J. Bryant, who was commanding 'C' Company then got in touch with 'B' Company tanks and moved his half Company to the N.E. to follow the Tanks in to and through Marcoing. 2nd Lt. G. Hopkins went in advance to reconnoitre the country and to find 2nd Lt. A. J. C. Taylor who was in command

of the other half Company. He proceeded to about L22a4.4. (Marcoing Sheet 57C N.E.4. Ed 5A 1:10:000) and returning met the complete Company in the valley about L21 C. The Company moved forward in Artillery formation to a point about L.21.d.80.70. where they were sniped at from their left front.

The Company extended to open order and advanced to the crossroads at L22a60.63, then turned east and attacked the village. Enemy resistance here was practically nil. 2nd Lt. A. J. C. Taylor and one platoon were detailed to remain in the vicinity of the Church to mop up some dug-outs and cellars. 2nd Lt. G. Hopkins went in advance with a platoon and the remainder of the Company followed in close support and pushed through to the canal bridges and held them until the 29th Division had passed through.

'C' Company, with Tanks were the first troops to enter village, and passed through, mopping up as they went, to their objectives. Casualties in village one other rank killed and one O.R. wounded. The Company captured about 30 prisoners including one officer, and the papers of an enemy Divisional office. The Company reported back to the Battalion in the Hindenburg Front Line System about 3.30p.m. Battalion remained in the captured trenches and consolidated. Prisoners captured by the Battalion amounted to about 150 including three Officers. Three machine guns were also captured.

Casualties 8 O.R.s killed. 3 Officers wounded. 56 O.R.s wounded.

The following is taken from the Official History of the Suffolk Regiment:

On November 15 the battalion left Denier, travelling by road and rail to Moislains, and marching the next evening to a canvas camp in Dessart wood. On the 19th, moving after dark, they slipped noiselessly into their assembly position preparatory to a surprise attack on a large scale, in conjunction with tanks, on the Hindenburg line. During the night the tanks crawled out of their shelters where they had been in hiding, and moving slowly along white tapes laid to guide them to their starting points, formed up in order of battle. The battalion, deployed into line, lay down in the open behind them. The stillness of the night was broken only by a random shell or a short desultory burst of machine-gun fire.

The attack, kept secret until the last moment, started at 6.20 a.m. on November 20 with 324 tanks and six divisions operating on a six-mile front. The particular sector allotted to the 6th Division (Major-General T. O. Marden), to which the 9th Battalion belonged, lay between Villers Plouich and Beaucamp. At zero hour the tanks began lumbering slowly forward in the twilight, with the infantry following closely in their wake. Suddenly a German machine-gun rapped out a few rounds, and as the sound died away in the mist a thousand British guns thundered forth in answer. The formidable array of tanks, crashing through everything that lay in their path, soon drove the enemy to ground. The

9th Battalion, under Lieut.-Colonel Latham with a flag-stick in his hand, crossed No Man's Land and quickly reached the lightly held German front line. Here Lieut. E. W. N. Taylor was wounded after rescuing, with the aid of his batman, Pte. H. J. Smith, a tank which had caught up a knife- rest in its tread and was helpless. The enemy, taken completely by surprise, had only time to fire a few shells, his machine-gun nests on the flanks being destroyed by the tanks before they were able to render any considerable account of themselves. By nine o'clock in the morning the battalion had seized its objective and was in touch with both flank battalions, with its headquarters in the original German front line. The villages of Ribecourt fell easily to the 6th Division.

After the capture of the German front and close support trenches 'C' Company pressed forward to Marcoing with orders to seize the cross-roads in front of the village and the bridges over the river and canal in the village itself. When, at about 11 a.m., the company began to advance, it was found that two battalions, under 2nd Lieut. A. C. J. Taylor had already moved off, and 2nd Lieut. G. Hopkins went ahead with his batman (Pte. A. Mingay) to try and stop them. Passing some divisional snipers under 2nd Lieut. G. G. Cooper, 2nd Lieut. Hopkins reached the cross-roads, where he found four of the enemy, who surrendered. Observing 2nd Lieut. Taylor and his men about four hundred yards away to the right he signalled to them, and the two platoons closing in, joined with the rest of the company under Lieut. Bryant, who now came up. 'C' Company then advanced and entered Marcoing. Shortly afterwards a tank arrived, and at the same time some 29th Divisional troops were seen entering the village from the north. 'C' Company, marching back through Ribecourt, did not reach headquarters until after dark, having captured a village, with about 100 prisoners and a machine-gun, at a cost of only two casualties – an exceptional performance. At nightfall the battalion – now held in reserve – occupied the line of trenches captured by them in the morning. Altogether they had captured 150 prisoners and three machine-guns, sustaining only 70 casualties, amongst whom were 2nd Lieuts. E. W. N. Taylor, W. A. Bridewell, and G. M. T. Head, wounded.

That evening the Battalion received a wire from 71st Brigade Headquarters:-

'Wire from 6th Division lines 4-8 p.m. begins AAA Divisional Commander congratulates all ranks on the fact that the Division has captured all objectives taken 16 officers 700 O.R.s prisoners including two Battalion commanders AAA this is the best bag for the day three guns have also been captured AAA Ends AAA The B.G.C. adds his congratulations on the very successful issue of the days fight AAA Added all units'

The War Diary for the 21st:-

'Battalion consolidated captured trenches.'

From the Official History:-

November 21 was spent in consolidating captured trenches, the battalion moving up the next day to the Hindenburg support system. After being three days in reserve they moved, on the 27th, into support positions in Bois Neuf, with one company in front-line trenches at Noyelles, sustaining a few casualties daily.

The War Diary contains an Operational Order dated the 26th which refers to the Battalion's movement back in to the front line that night and Point 5 makes interesting reading:-

'It is to be carefully impressed on all ranks that the enemy at Rumilly Ridge can observe all movement & smoke above trenches. Men are not allowed out of trenches by day except on duty. The invariable result of smoke or movement is shelling. Except on duty no soldiers are to go into Noyelles.'

On November 30, in the great German counter-attack, the 29th and 6th Divisions held the centre of the line and were the solid nucleus upon which the whole battle hinged, both to the left and the right. Although in front-line trenches the casualties in the battalion were extraordinarily light, not even exceeding a score. Major W. R. Whitson was killed, and Lieut. G. F. Bryant and 2nd Lieut A. C. J. Taylor were wounded in re-establishing a platoon post which had been lost. The War Diary entry for the 30th November reads:-

Battalion in front line trenches. Casualties 1 Officer and 4 O.R.s killed, 2 Officers and 12 O.R.s wounded. Enemy attacked a post held by 'C' Company and post withdrew, but was afterwards re-established. Enemy attacked British line on our right flank and penetrating to Gouzeaucourt compelled Regimental Transport to evacuate their lines.

The Official History:-

At Gouzeaucourt the brigade transport and details, in scattered groups near the Villers Plouich road, were engaged in their ordinary daily work when, soon after nine o'clock in the morning, the village of Gonnellieu was suddenly observed to be in flames, with the enemy advancing on Gouzeaucourt. The battalion transport, hurriedly horsing up and taking whatever stores were at hand, bustled down the Metz road out of immediate danger of capture. An hour later the enemy entered Gouzeaucourt, the few remaining details of the battalion being collected at the south-west corner of the village to check his further progress. About noon the German onrush having been stopped, a

battalion of the Guards advanced and cleared the village: later, all the battalion stores were secured and taken to a new camp near Dessart wood. That evening Lieut. Vernon Lee, who with his groom and a four-mule limber was bringing back some wounded men and the body of Major Whitson, was heavily shelled near Ribecourt, his own horse and that of his groom, being literally blown to pieces, though none of the party was touched.

Meanwhile, at home in Crawley

November 24 – THE SUPREME SACRIFICE. – All who know the family – and their friends are numbered by the hundred – will learn with very sincere regret of the death in action of the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Wilson, High Street, Crawley.

Second Lieut. Gilbert J. Wilson, of the Sussex Yeomanry, was killed in Palestine on the 6th inst., and the official telegram conveying the sad news was received on Tuesday this week. It was only in March last that Richard, another member of this much-respected family, gave his life in his country's cause. Gilbert was 31 years of age and was married shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, at which time he had grocery and provisions businesses at Rotherfield and Turners Hill. He disposed of the former business and re-joined his old regiment, the Sussex Yeomanry, with which he had been connected since he was 18 and the annual camps, of which he regularly attended until he went into business.

Gilbert went out to Gallipoli in October, 1915, as a sergeant, and from thence to Egypt, being promoted to second lieutenant three months ago. Gilbert was immensely popular and much liked by all who knew him, and to those of his friends who had not heard of his lamented death this intimation will be read with feelings of the deepest sorrow, whilst with the doubly-bereaved family and the young widow the greatest sympathy will be felt. Another brother, Charlie, who went out with Gilbert in the same regiment, is still in Palestine, in a machine gun section.

JOINED UP IN NIGERIA. – There are many in the Crawley and Ifield district who will be interested in hearing that Mr. Frank Cooper, who for some years has been an inspector on the Nigerian Railway, has joined the Army. He has enlisted as a colour-sergeant in the West African Field Forces. Frank has three brothers fighting in France, and he has shown great patriotism by voluntarily joining the Army and sacrificing his lengthy leave in England. Since he was last home a son has been born. That good luck may attend him will be the sincere wish of many friends in this district.

Second Lieutenant Gilbert John Wilson was with the 16th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment when he was killed in action near Sheria in Palestine on the 6th November. He was born in Westminster. His younger brother Richard had died of wounds in March. His name is included on the Rotherfield Parish Church War Memorial and at both St John's and St Peter's Memorials as well as on the Park Gates. He was buried in the Beersheba War Cemetery in Palestine.

Also killed in November was Rifleman Michael James Humphrey. He was with the 16th Battalion of the London Regiment (Queen's Westminsters) when he was killed in action on the 30th aged 27. He was a son of William and Clare Ann Humphrey of Crawley and was married to Emily (who later remarried) of Redstone Road, Redhill. His brother John had been killed at the beginning of June 1916. He was born in Horley and had enlisted in Piccadilly. He was buried in the Moeuvres Communal Cemetery Extension.

Moeuvres remained in German hands right throughout the Battle of Cambrai and the Commonwealth War Graves site notes that the cemetery extension was undertaken by the Germans after the battle so it is likely that Humphrey was buried by the Germans. Both Humphrey brothers are remembered on the Memorial gates.

The Very Reverend, Chaplain 4th Class, Laurence O'Dea of the Army Chaplain's Department died on 4th November 1917 in London. He was 66 and was born in Kilkenny, Ireland on 6th May 1851. He was buried at Crawley Monastery.

DECEMBER

In Russia the return of Lenin and nationwide discontent with the war had swept the Bolshevik party to power in November. The Bolsheviks had promised to take Russia out of the war and in December an armistice was agreed with Germany and peace negotiations began at Brest Litovsk, to end Russia's involvement in the Great War. Here at last was Germany's chance to win the war. No longer needing to fight an offensive war on the Eastern Front, the spring of 1918 would see them have unprecedented numbers of men and materiel on the Western Front, giving them all they needed to launch a bid for victory before the Americans could enter the war proper. With the French Army still recovering from the mutiny of earlier in the year all that stood between victory for the Kaiser and his army was the British Army under Haig.

December 8 – CHANGE RINGING. On Sunday last, to celebrate the great victory in France, a touch of Kent treble Bob Major, 1,200 changes was rung at Crawley. ACCIDENTALLY KILLED. – Official information by telegram was received on Wednesday night by Mr. J. Harding, of Malthouse Road, Crawley, that his son, Frederick, belonging to the Tanks, had been accidentally killed in camp near Poole, Dorsetshire. Before he joined up Private Harding was employed at Tilgate and he was a member of the Volunteer Band. He was a single man, aged 19.

In their sad and unexpected bereavement the family will receive the heartfelt sympathy of many friends.

December 15 – A CRAWLEY SOLDIER'S FATAL ACCIDENT. – As briefly mentioned in our last issue, Pte. Frederick Arthur Harding, a son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Harding, of Malthouse Road, Crawley, has been the victim of an accident, which unfortunately had a fatal result. He was a member of the Machine Gun Corps, attached to the Tanks, and was stationed at Bovington Camp, Dorset. It seems that he was engaged in cleaning the inside of a tank and as the result of a mining operation some 140 yards away a huge stone was hurled into the air and it fell through the open trap door of the Tank and stuck Harding on the head, smashing his skull. He died within two hours without regaining consciousness.

The body was brought home to Crawley on Saturday night and the funeral took place at Ifield on Monday. Pte. Harding was only 19 years of age and was a very popular and much liked lad. Before joining up in February this year he was employed on the Tilgate Estate and was a member of the band of the Volunteer Regiment, prior to which he belonged to the Boy Scouts, and as a mark of respect the Volunteers attended the funeral and formed a guard from the lych gate to the church and from the church to the graveside.

The coffin was covered with the Union Jack and at the conclusion of the service the 'Last Post' was sounded. There were many evidences of sorrow and regret, and in their sad and unexpected bereavement the family has the sincere sympathy of many friends. Among the many floral tributes from friends and family was the following:- 'To my darling Freddie, with everlasting love, from his broken-hearted sweetheart, Muriel.'

December 22 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The official lists this week record the death of Private A. Lee, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, whose home was at Crawley; and the following local men are wounded: Corporal F. Busbridge, R. W. Kents; Private J. Sibley, Bedfords; and Private Arthur Peskett, Royal Sussex. The last named was wounded, for the second time, on November 6th in the advance on Jerusalem. He has a bullet wound in the left knee and another in his back, and he is now in hospital in Cairo, happily making good progress.

The death of Private Alfred Lee had been reported in the Pease Pottage column of the local press on November 24.

THE LATE PTE. A. LEE. – The family of the late Private Alfred Lee, of New Buildings Farm, who was killed in action on the 29th ult., have received several letters relative to his unfortunate death. The Commanding Officer writes: 'Please accept my deepest sympathy at the death of your son who was

killed instantaneously by a shell about xx a.m. on the 29th ult. His death is a great loss for the Battalion and his Company. He was always such a good worker and worked so cheerfully.' – The Captain of the Company to which the deceased belonged writes deeply regretting his death and says that he was buried by his comrades and a cross placed over the grave.

Private Alfred Lee was with the 8th (Service) Battalion (Pioneers), Royal Sussex Regiment. He was born in Worth around 1895 and had enlisted in Horsham. He was buried at Minty Farm Cemetery, north of Ypres.

December 29 – PASSED AS FIT WITH HEART TROUBLE. – A lad named Soper, aged 18, who lives in Spencer's Road, Crawley, and who was recently discharged from a training battalion after only two months' service on account of heart disease, has been granted a pension by the Appeal Tribunal. Although he had suffered with his heart for several years he was passed as fit for service and whilst on parade a fortnight afterwards collapsed. Judge Parry, who dealt with the matter, remarked that it was extraordinary that the Military doctors did not discover the lad's condition before passing him for the Army.

KILLED IN ACTION. – The death is officially announced of Private H. J. Potter, Machine Gun Corps, the second son of the late Mr. Wm. Potter and of Mrs. Potter, late of Station Road, Crawley, and now of Brighton. Private Potter fell in action on December 3rd. His brother Charles was wounded in the hand and face last autumn when serving in France and he is still in hospital.

Private James Henry Potter was with the 96th Company of the Machine Gun Corps when he was killed in action on the 3rd December. His name appears on Panel 154 at Tyne Cot. The last 1917 casualty that had a link with Crawley was Stoker 1st Class Trayton Finden Sandles who was lost with the destroyer *HMS Torrent* in the North Sea on the 23rd December. He was 30, a son of William and Jane Sandles of Malthouse Road, Crawley. He was married to Dorothy. He is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial.

On the Western Front, the 9th Suffolk Battalion were relieved from the front line trenches at dusk on the night of 1st/2nd December, as per Operation Order No.75 by the 9th Norfolk Battalion. They had suffered a 'moderate bombardment' all day with one O.R. being killed and three O.R.s being wounded. The Battalion then withdrew to support where they were held in reserve. Point 4 of Operation Order No.75 is recorded here:-

Platoon guides of 'A', 'C' and 'D' Coys will await Norfolk Coys. At country road junction L.10.c.68.72. Guides will report to 2nd Lieutenant R. E. Cook at this

point at 4.45 p.m. Platoon guides of 'B' Coy. will await Coy. Norfolks at junction of track & tramway at L.10.a.72.02. on Eastern edge of wood at 4.45 p.m.

The 2nd of December found the Battalion hard at work digging trenches and wiring. 'C' and 'B' Coys heavily shelled while at work. Casualties one O.R. killed, two O.R.s wounded. On the 3rd the War Diary states:-

'Right flank threatened by enemy attacking Marcoing. 'C' Coy swung round to face S.E. & dig in in front of road (Premy Chapel-Ninc Wood) in support to 2nd Sherwood Foresters. 'B' Coy in communication trench in Reserve. Work on making new line.'

The Battalion was still in support on the 4th with 4 other ranks being wounded until the morning of the 5th where they withdrew at 4 a.m. leaving 'A' & 'B' Coys as Outpost line.

'A' & 'B' Coys rejoined the rest of the Battalion in support at 3 a.m. on the 6th. Casualties three O.R.s wounded. The Battalion remained in support and providing working parties until the 12th. On the 7th, nine other ranks were wounded, and on the 8th, Capt. R.B. Christophers and one O.R. were wounded (gas shell). The 9th saw two other ranks wounded. From the 10th onwards reinforcements started arriving in dribs and drabs. The Battalion were at rest in Etricourt when Operational Order No.78 came through with orders for the entire Brigade to move.

Operational Order No.78

Point 1.

The 71st Inf. Bde will move by bus on the 14th Decr. Busses will be at the Southern entrance of Hannancourt on the Moislains- Hannancourt road facing north at 10.30 a.m.

Point 4.

2nd. Lieut. C. H. Miller M. C. and 2nd Lieutenant R. E. Cook will report to Brigade Intelligence Officer at head of Bus column, V.10.a.2.9. at 10.15 a.m. tomorrow and will be allotted busses nos. 37-??. They will superintend embussing of Battalion. 2nd. Lieut. C. H. Miller M. C. will obtain embussing strength of the Battalion from A/Adjutant before proceeding.

The Battalion then moved by bus to Bailleulmont where they were to remain for the rest of the month, training and being reinforced. On the 24th, it is recorded in the War Diary that Lt. Col. F. Latham D.S.O., 2nd Lt. H. L. Frampton and No. 16186 Cpl A. Sargeant had all been mentioned in Sir Douglas Haig's dispatches.

The entry for the 25th December reads:-

'The Commanding Officer visited all Companies and wished the men good luck for the coming year. Gifts were received from the following, Queen Alexander Field Force Fund, Lady Cadogan and committee of N.W. Suffolk Conservatives, Lord Francis Harvey, Divisional fancies and cards of good wishes from Major M.F. Heigham and Capt. H.C. Stafford.'

The Official History:-

On December 1 the battalion concentrated in Bois Neuf, afterwards withdrawing to the Hindenburg support line, where Captain R.B. Christophers was wounded. Mid-December found the company in Bailleulmont, where they spent a happy and restful Christmas, the reality of which was enhanced by the frost and the snow and the Christmas-card colouring of the old French village.

Thus 1917 came to a close with both sides still locked together in a stalemate but lessons had been learned and plans were being made. With the Russians all but out of the war, the French still near mutinous and the Americans not yet ready to fight, it was obvious to the world that Germany would have the opportunity in the coming spring to win the war.

1918

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear...

But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

– *I have a rendezvous with Death, Alan Seeger*

JANUARY 1918

On January 1, 1918 the battalion marched to Courcelles-le-Comte. The first two bullet points of Order 0079 state:-

- 1. Tomorrow, 1st Proximo, the Battalion will move by march route from its present area to Courcelles-Le-Comte via Bailleuval, Basseux, Bellacourt, Ransart, Alinfer and Ayette. Order of march:- Drums, H. Qtrs. 'D', 'C', 'B' & 'A' Coys. Companies will move at 100 yards interval. Transport will move with Battalion, divided into two portions; intervals of 100 yards to be maintained. The Battalion, including Transport, will be formed up on Main Road ready to move off at 8.30a.m., head of Headquarters resting on Church.*
- 2. 2/ Lieut R. E. Cook will be in charge of rear party.*

The Battalion spent the next fortnight at Courcelles-Le-Comte with replacements trickling in and undertaking Battalion Training. There was also time for medals to be awarded and for the Battalion to be inspected by various dignitaries.

On the 2nd January, Capt. (T L/Col) F. Latham D.S. O. (the keeper of the 9th Suffolks War Diary) was awarded Brevet Majority for distinguished service in the field. On the 3rd, T/Capt. C.V. Canning, 2nd Lt. (Temp Lt) J. V. Lee and Sgt. R. F. Hurle were awarded the Military Cross.

On the 5th the G. O. C. Brigade inspected Companies by platoons as follows:- 'C' Coy marching order, 'D' Coy drill order, 'B' Coy fighting order, 'A' Coy kit inspection. The 6th saw the Battalion take part in Brigade Parade. The Brigade formed up in the 1st Leicestershire parade ground at 10.15a.m. After L/Crpl F. Parr and Pte. R. Taylor had received the Military medal ribbon and a gallantry card respectively, the Brigade then marched past by Battalions. Training then continued until the 17th when the Battalion marched to Fremicourt where they relieved the ¼ Seaforth Highlanders in the trenches on the 18th. 'A' Company are in Support at Coy. H.Q. on Sunken Road. On the 19th the Battalion lost one other rank killed and one wounded.

The Battalion were relieved on the 22nd by the 9th Norfolks and although the Diary says that the Battalion were 'at rest' for the remainder of January it also says that they were providing working parties. While the Battalion were 'resting' Lt. Col F. Latham D. S. O. is noted as being away on an aeroplane course. He returned on the 28th in time for what must have been a poignant occasion. The Diary entry for the 29th January 1918 reads:-

The Officers of the Battalion had a Farewell dinner as Battn. is to be disbanded in the near future owing to shortage of men. Letters from Divisional and Brigade Commanders were read out by the Commanding Officer. Roll of Officers who were present attached.

Lieut.-Colonel F. Latham D. S. O., Major T. B. Hall;
Captains H. C. Stanford, P. L. Scudamore, C. Allerton, D. S. O., (Adjutant),
R. England, M. C. L. Wilmot-Johnson, W. F. Fitch, M. C.,
Lieuts. C. H. Woods, J. C. Rowbotham, H. L. Hayne, H. E. Faulkner, and
A. G. Douglas;
2nd Lieuts. A. H. Stoye, G. Hopkins, F. Bullen, J. A. Blanch, J. W. Harding,
R. E. Cook, E.L. Turner, J. A. Bramley, J. A. Simmons, G. G. Cooper, S. H.
Phillips, and S. H. Habershon;
Captain and Quartermaster Starling, Captain F. C. Lees, R. A. M. C., Rev. E.
F. Blackburne, C.F.; Lieut. J. V. Lee, M. C. (attd.).

The Germans, reinforced by thousands of men from the Eastern Front now that Russia had negotiated her withdrawal from the war, and aware that the Americans were not yet up to combatant status, were certain to attack in vast numbers in the Spring.

With Lloyd-George prevaricating over sending more men to France and Foch wanting the British to take over an extra 40 miles of front line, Haig had to reorganize his forces by amalgamating numerous battalions and reducing the manpower in each division by reducing the number of battalions in each brigade from four to three. The 9th Suffolks were just one of many Battalions that found themselves being disbanded at that time.

Back in Crawley, the sad procession of names of the fallen and their obituaries continued:-

January 19 – DIED FROM WOUNDS. – The sad information has come to hand of the death of Lance-Corpl. Sidney Wallace Stokes, of the Rifle Brigade, the only son of the late Mr. David Stokes and Mrs. Stokes, of Crawley, who has died from wounds. The deceased, who was 35 and married, joined up in August last and went abroad soon afterwards. He sacrificed a good business to serve his country, and his wife and two young children had this week come to reside at Ifield during his absence. The greatest sympathy will be felt for the bereaved. The following letter has been received from the Chaplain:

'In answer to your letter of the 5th inst., I deeply regret to inform you of the death of your son, S32606 Lance-Corpl. S. W. Stokes, who died from wounds on December 8th, 1917. He was wounded on December 7th, 1917, and died at a dressing station the following day, where he was buried by some of his comrades, close to Passchendaele. Whilst with this Battalion he had proved himself a most excellent and conscientious soldier, always doing his duty in a thorough and cheerful manner and his loss is one which will be felt by us all. I am sorry for the delay there has been in notifying you, but the officer who was in charge of the Platoon at the time has been away from the Battalion and I was under the

impression that he had written to you. I sympathise with you most deeply in your sad bereavement and also wish to convey to you the sympathy of his comrades.'

WOUNDED. – Acting Capt. T. F. Lavington, Royal Sussex Regiment, whose home is at Crawley, is reported wounded.

Lance Corporal Sidney Wallace Stokes was with the 7th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade when he was mortally wounded on the 7th December 1917. He was married to Mrs G. E. Stokes (an Elizabeth Stokes is living at 94 Malthouse Road in 1918 and may be her). He was born in Walthamstow and had enlisted in Dartford. Despite the Chaplain mentioning his comrades burying him close to Passchendaele, it is reasonable to assume that his grave was subsequently lost as he is commemorated on a panel at Tyne Cot. His name is recorded on the gates at Crawley.

January 26 – CRAWLEY V. A. D. HOSPITAL. – Mrs. C. J. Ockenden was the subject of a little presentation at this Hospital on Wednesday afternoon. Her husband, who has resided here all his life, having accepted an appointment in Gloucestershire, it necessitated Mrs. Ockenden resigning as one of the V. A. D. nurses, a position she has held since the opening of the Hospital as a Military Auxiliary Hospital in 1915. During the whole of that time she has not only done her routine work most loyally, but she has always been most willing to fill any temporary vacancy, and it was felt her services should not pass unrecognised. She was accordingly presented with a leather attaché case, with her initials and the dates of service inscribed, the present having been subscribed for by all the members of the staff.

WAR CASUALTIES. – Official news has come to hand of the death from wounds of Pte. James Holder, of the Queen's, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Holder, of Ifield Road, Crawley. Prior to joining the Army Holder was a cowman employed at The Elms. He had served for about 18 months and his death occurred recently in Egypt. He was a single man, 24 years of age. The family has the sympathy of many friends in the bereavement thus sustained. –

Pte. H. Hobbs of the Royal Fusiliers, is reported missing; and C. S. M. F. P. Dalton, of the London regiment, is reported wounded.

Private James Holder was serving with the 2/4th Battalion of the Royal West Surrey Regiment Palestine when he was killed on the 1st January 1918. He was a son of James and Elizabeth Holder who lived at 89 Ifield Road. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in Guildford. He was buried in the Jerusalem War Cemetery, Israel. His name is recorded on the Memorial Park Gates.

Private Robert James Evan Johnstone, a son of James Evans Johnstone and Henrietta Johnstone, who came from Trinidad, died of accidental injuries on the 29th

January. He was serving with the Royal Army Service Corps attached 'D' of Docks, General Head Quarters when he died, having previously served with the Lincolnshire Regiment and the 9th and 21st Lancers. He was born in Trinidad and was living in Dorking. He had enlisted in Hounslow. His mother, Henrietta was living in County Oak, Crawley in 1918. He was buried in Etaples Military Cemetery and is remembered on the gates at Crawley.

FEBRUARY 1918

The 1st of February saw the 9th Suffolk Battalion preparing for disbandment. On the 2nd, the diary says *'Orders received to send two drafts, one consisting of 15 Officers and 300 O.R. to be sent to the 11th Battn Suffolk, second of 12 Officers and 250 O.R.s to be sent to the 12th Battalion.'* The 3rd and 4th were spent preparing the drafts. Even while this was going on the Battalion were still receiving replacements of their own. From the Official History:-

'On February 5 drafts of the 9th Battalion left Lebuquiere for the 11th and 12th Battalions. These drafts were fortunate, inasmuch as they fell amongst friends and remained links in the regimental chain. As mementos bugles were presented to Major-General T. O. Marden (G. O. C. 6th Division); Brig.-General P. W. Brown, D. S. O., commanding the 71st Brigade; to the brigade-major and the staff captain, the company commanders; Captain and Quartermaster Starling; and to the oldest members of the battalion. The silver bugle won by the battalion at the divisional rifle meeting (in August) was presented to Lieut.-Colonel F. Latham.'

The 9th Suffolks' War Diary entry for the 5th of February 1918:-

Drafts for 11th and 12th Battns left Billets at one and 1.30p.m. by lorries. Nominal Roll of Officers attached who proceeded with drafts. The Divisional General said good bye to Battn. at 9.30a.m. wishing Officers & C.O.s and men the best wishes of the Division and thanking the Bs for the good work they had done since being with Division. Bugles were presented to the G. O. C. Division, Brigade, Brigade Major and Staff Captain. Captain P. L. Scudamore and the oldest members of the Battalion letter of thanks are attached. The silver bugle won by Bn. at Divisional sports was presented to the Commanding Officer Lt. Col F. Latham D. S. O.

Here is the letter of thanks:-

Captain A. Weyman, Brigade Major, 71st Infantry Brigade, thanks the Officers, Warrant Officers, N.C.O.s and men of the 9th Battalion the Suffolk Regiment for their great kindness in presenting him with such a handsome memento of the Regiment on their disbandment. The Bugle will bring back pleasant memories of

the cheery times he has had with the Regiment, and of the many friends he has known.

He takes this opportunity to say how proud he is of the honour done him by their very kind presentation, and how greatly he feels the disbandment of the 9th Battalion the Suffolk Regiment, after having served with them since December 1915.

He wishes the Officers, Warrant Officers, N.C.O.s and men of the 9th Battalion The Suffolk Regiment the very best of Good luck in the future.

HQRS. 71st Inf. Bde

6th Division B.E.F.

9th Battalion The Suffolk Regiment

Officers of Nominal Roll of the above Battalion posted to the 11th Battalion The Suffolk Regiment 5.2.1918

Captain G. K. Moseley

Captain W. F. Fitch M. C.

Captain C.V. Canning M. C.

Lieut. C. H. Woods

Lieut. H. B. Falkner

Lieut. A. H. Stoyle

Lieut. F. Bullen

Lieut. H. Almack

2 / Lieut. R. E. Cook

2 / Lieut. J. A. Simmons

2 / Lieut. G. W. Harvey

2 / Lieut. G. G. Cooper

2 / Lieut. W. B. Sapey

2 / Lieut. S. H. Phillips

2 / Lieut. G. L. A. Duddy

The 11th Suffolks were part of the 101st Brigade, 34th Division and were at Hamelincourt in training when the 9th Suffolk draft joined them. The officers commanding the Battalion – Lt. Col E. M. Richardson and then Major G. L. S. Tuck – had a different way of keeping a War Diary. Rather than provide long and detailed descriptions of critical events they preferred to cover these with separate ‘Account of operations’ addendums attached to the main body of the Diary. Lt. Col E. M. Richardson joined the Battalion and took over command on the 16th February so the 9th Suffolk draft had already had time to settle in before he took over.

From the 11th Suffolks War Diary:-

5.2.18 – Draft of 15 Officers and 300 O.R.s arrived from the 9th Suffolks.

6.2.18 – Commanding Officer inspected the draft and divided them amongst the Companies.

(Sadly, there is no record in the Diary that indicates which Company 2 / Lieut. R. E. Cook, or any of the other officers, became a part of.)

7.2.18 – Draft inspected by G.O.C. 101st Brigade.

One of the forms that has survived as a part of Eddie's war record is Army Form B.103 – Casualty Form Active Service which seems to have been used to keep a record of his time with the 11th Suffolks.

Posted from 9th Bn., Suffolk Regt. 5.2.18

Leave 7.2.18

Leave extended to 28.2.18

Joined Battn. Field 2.3.18

So it seems that on the day of this inspection, Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook returned home to Crawley for three weeks leave. In light of the fate that awaited him at least he got home to see his mother and the family one more time. The 11th Suffolks had a quiet time without him.

8.2.18 – Training continued. Lorries conveyed 15 Officers and 110 O.R.s to the Chequers (Divisional Theatre).

9.2.18 – 34th Division (less Pioneers) relieved in the Gommiecourt area by the 59th Division and moved to the Le Cauroy area, coming into G.H.Q. Reserve. The Battalion marched from Hamelincourt to Bienvillers where they spent the night in billets. Weather favourable to marching.

10.2.18 – The Battalion marched from Bienvillers to Liencourt arriving at Liencourt about 2p.m. Weather fair some rain. Billets very fair.

11.2.18 – Battn. Resting. Kit inspection.

The Battalion continued training for the next 13 days except on Sunday the 17th and 24th when they had a Church Parade. On the 26th, the Battalion were inspected by Corps Commander Lt. Gen Haldane and received orders to move into line.

27.2.18 – Batt. moved to Bailleuval. Ideal weather for marching.

28.2.18 – Batt. moved to Carlisle Lines near Mercatel. Advance party sent up to line in lorries.

Casualties during month NIL

Back in Crawley the papers reported:

February 2 – RIFLEMAN G. DEAN, of the Queen's Westminsters, son of Mr. Geo. Dean, The Swan, Crawley, is in hospital at Cairo suffering from the effects of shrapnel wounds received outside Jerusalem. He was injured in the face and both legs, and subsequently the right eye has had to be taken out. He is now happily making good progress. At the time of receiving his wounds Rifleman Dean was carrying a wallet case in his right breast pocket, and a piece of shrapnel penetrated this and the letters it contained and lodged in this case, probably saving his life. Rifleman Dean has been on active service for eighteen months and has served in France, Greece, Egypt and Palestine.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICES. – Serqt. Fredk. Geo. Hunt, A. S. C., son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. G. Brand, Princess Road, Crawley, has received the following gratifying intimation: 'Your Commanding Officer and Brigade Commander have informed me that you distinguished yourself during the operations before Cambrai from 20th to 27th November, 1917, by the untiring efforts you made to effect the smooth working of a horse ambulance service, whereby many wounded were evacuated. I have read their reports with much pleasure.'

DEATH OF SAPPER VICTOR TAYLOR, R. E. – Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Taylor, of Newhaven, have now received official intimation confirming the sad news they had received by wire that their youngest son, Victor, a sapper in a Sussex Army Troop Company of the Royal Engineers, died on the 15th ult. in a Casualty Clearing Station in France, after a short but painful illness. It need hardly be stated that this sudden bereavement has come as a terrible blow to the family, particularly in view of the cheery letters received from deceased and the belief that he was in good health until the first intimation of his illness was received from the Matron of the Clearing Station in question. That his illness must have been sudden and his decease quite unexpected can be gathered from the Matron's letter, which speaks of the deceased as being very brave during his short but distressing illness ; and from the following letter from the Officer Commanding his Company:-

'Dear Mr. Taylor. – No doubt you have received my wire informing you of the death of your son, which took place in hospital very unexpectedly. Your son was a very good boy, and was, I think, very much liked by the other men. He never gave me or anyone else the smallest trouble during the time he was with us, and he will, I know, be missed by many of the non-commissioned officers, as well as his own friends. Please accept my sincere sympathy, in which the other officers join, to you and Mrs. Taylor in your bereavement.

Yours faithfully,
Maurice M. Wood, Captain.'

Sapper Taylor, who was but 20 years of age, had just completed his apprenticeship as a landscape gardener with Mr. Hemsley, of Crawley, when he joined H. M. Forces in August, 1915. He was last home on leave, after spending 17 months in France, in the latter part of November last year, returning to France in the best of health and with his usual excellent spirits on December 4th, since when, as was his custom, he had been a regular correspondent until a few days before the unexpected news of his illness was received. The parents, who, with their family, are sadly distressed, have the consolation that at least one representative of the family (Sergt. C. Butcher, brother-in-law to the deceased) was serving in the same Company, and was thus able to do what little he could for their son. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor and family have received a great many expressions of sympathy, to all of which they are quite unable to reply, and they hope their friends will accept their message of thanks which appears in another column as the only acknowledgement.

Sapper Victor Ernest Taylor was serving with the 577th Army Troops Company of the Royal Engineers when he died at the age of 20 on the 15th January 1918. His parents, James Adams Taylor and Jane Taylor lived at 31, Meeching Road, Newhaven. He was born in Seaford and had enlisted in Newhaven where his name appears on the War Memorial. He was buried in the Rocquigny-Equancourt Road British Cemetery at Manancourt.

February 9 – MILITARY MEDAL. – Among the recipients of the Military Medals recently bestowed is Private R. Butcher, R. A. M. C. of Crawley.

February 16 – DIED OF WOUNDS. – It is officially reported that Lance-Corporal G. K. Hawkins, of the Household Cavalry, whose home was at Crawley, has died of wounds.

PRISONER IN GERMAN HANDS. – Gunner B. Denman, R. G. A., of Crawley, who was previously reported as missing, is now officially reported to be a prisoner in German hands.

A SOLDIER'S FUNERAL. – There was an impressive ceremony at the Crawley Catholic Church on Saturday, when the funeral took place of Sergt.-Major Edmund Bryant, of the Hussars, whose death occurred at Birmingham under very sad circumstances. The deceased had been in the Army for twenty-five years and had seen considerable service. He was under medical treatment at the time of his death. The deceased soldier's relatives are buried in the churchyard connected with the Catholic Church here and a brother, the Rev. Father Edmund, was formerly stationed at the Crawley Monastery, so that the family is known to local Catholics. The body was brought to the church on Friday, where it reposed until

the funeral. The Mass, sung by the students, was said by the deceased's brother, and Father Bernardine, the Provincial, gave the Absolutions at the conclusion of the service and also at the graveside. The chief mourners were the father and a sister, the latter being a nun from the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Roehampton. Military honours were accorded at Birmingham, and the funeral arrangements were entrusted to Messrs. Bartley & Ward.

Corporal George Kenner Hawkins was 21 when he died of wounds on the 10th January 1918. He was a son of George and Mary Anne Hawkins of Ewhurst Farm, Ifield Road, Crawley. He was born in Kemmerton in Gloucestershire and had enlisted in Windsor. His name is included on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial and at the Park in Crawley. He was buried in the Tincourt New British Cemetery.

Sergeant Major Edmund Bryant was a long serving regular soldier who had served in South Africa during the Boer War (1899-1902). He was born in Walthamstow about 1875 and was the son of Daniel and Jessie Bryant. Daniel was a Bank Clerk, later a Commercial Clerk and came from Peckham in Surrey. He died of an illness on 3 February 1918. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records show that he was married and his wife Margaret was living at 114, Asylum Road, Peckham.

February 23 – SERGEANT A. HOLDAWAY, of the Royal Engineers, who is with the Expeditionary Force in Egypt, has been promoted to the rank of Company Sergeant-Major.

FOR BLINDED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS. – On Saturday evening a concert was given in the Railway Hotel, Crawley, for the second time, by the Horley Munition Works Concert Party, the object being to assist the funds of St. Dunstan's Hostel for Blinded Sailors and Soldiers. The result was especially gratifying. No less than £15.13s.10d., being realised on Saturday, whilst the previous concert brought in £16.7s.6d. On each occasion there was a crowded audience and the sums mentioned were the result of silver collections, no admission money being charged. Those present were urged not to forget the cause, and the magnificent collections showed that they did not do so. A blind representative from St. Dunstan's was present and made a powerful appeal on behalf of this very laudable object, and at the same time highly eulogised the noble and self-sacrificing efforts of Sir Arthur Pearson. The programme was of a miscellaneous character and much pleased the audience, and the unexpectedly good result has been a source of much pleasure to the organisers.

MARCH 1918

Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook rejoined the 11th Suffolk Battalion in the 'field' on the 2nd March 1918. With the advent of spring, and the ground beginning to dry out, and

the Americans still not ready to join the fight, everyone knew that a German attack was imminent.

From the War Diary:-

1.3.18 – Batt moved off at 3.30p.m. to relieve 2nd Batt Royal Scots in the front line near Fontaine. Relief complete by 10p.m.

2.3.18 – Sector very quiet but attack by the enemy expected within a short time.

3.3.18 – Patrols discovered no unusual activity, work continued to repairing trenches & wiring.

4./5./6.3.18.- Right Coy. of Batt relieved by 16th Royal Scots making the River Sensee boundary between Bns inclusive of Royal Scots.

7.3.18 – Normal quiet trench warfare.

8./9 3.18 – Batt relieved by 15th Royal Scots and went into support positions.

10.3.18 – Batt bathed and worked on support trenches digging new support lines.

11.3.18 – Batt relieved 16th Royal Scots in the right sub-sector.

12./13./14./15./16.3.18 – Very quiet, trenches required a great deal of repair, Communication Trenches fire-stepped, trench system thoroughly reorganised.

17.3.18 – Batt relieved by 15th Royal Scots and went into support positions.

18./19.3.18 – Batt in support trenches, attack expected any morning. Batt standing to in position till 8.30a.m.

20.3.18 – Batt relieved 16th Royal Scots in left sub-sector front line. Lt. Col Richardson left to command 175th Brigade. Major G. L. S. Tuck assumed command.

Meanwhile in Crawley:-

March 17 – MILITARY PRISONERS ESCAPE. – In the early hours of Friday morning last a couple of soldiers, who had been arrested on a charge of being

deserters and placed in a cell at the Crawley Police Station, managed to make good their escape by removing the lock of the cell door, and, so far, they have not been re-captured. They had given considerable trouble on the previous day, their capture being effected only after a chase of several miles across country and not before P. S. Capelin had been assaulted. It appears that the men, who were in uniform, were challenged by the police officer on the main road, he demanding to see their passes. The sergeant was immediately attacked by the men, who got him down after a struggle and made off. Then ensued an exciting chase, and other police, both civil and special, came to the assistance of P. S. Capelin. After a run of several miles in the wooded country around Crawley the men were arrested and locked up. They were seen safely in the cell at 3 o'clock on Friday morning, but soon after 5 o'clock it was found that the prisoners had escaped, the lock having been completely removed. The alarm was at once given, and the police in all neighbouring towns and villages were apprised of the matter. There is good reason to believe that a burglary at Horley later the same morning was the work of the escaped prisoners, food only having been stolen ; but from this point no information has up to the present been obtained. Their re-arrest can only be a matter of a short time, when, in addition to the original charge, the men will have to answer charges of another character.

March 23 – PRISONER IN GERMAN HANDS. – Previously reported missing, Private H. Hobbs, of the Royal Fusiliers, of Crawley, is now actually reported to be a prisoner in German hands.

THE LATE PRIVATE C. KING. – Mr. King, Forge Cottage, Ifield, has received from the Postmaster-General a large printed card, suitable for framing, bearing the words:

'I desire to express my deep regret at the death of Mr. Charles King, who, after 24 years' faithful service to the State as an officer of the Post office, has lost his life while serving his country in war.'

March 30 – Pte. A. E. Sims, London Regiment, who formerly lived at Crawley, has been reported to have been wounded.

Operation Michael, also known as the Kaiser's Battle, or Kaiserschlacht, began with an unprecedented artillery bombardment of gas and high explosive shells at 4.40 a.m. on March 21st 1918. Over a million shells, including high explosive and gas, were fired in just five hours along a 60 mile front. The attack fell principally on the British Third and Fifth Armies. Now the price for taking up an additional 40 miles of line from the French and the politicians' prevarication over sending reinforcements to the Western Front would be paid.

The Kaiser's Battle was the beginning of the end of the Great War. It was also the beginning of the end for Ludendorff. Although the German Army achieved spectacular gains the same tactics that brought them this success also proved to be their undoing. On the morning of the 21st March, following the severe bombardment and aided by a spring fog, the German storm troopers were virtually undetected as they penetrated what was left of the British lines.

On that day the 11th Suffolks (Cambridge) are part of the 101st Brigade which also contains the 15th Royal Scots (1st City of Edinburgh) and the 16th Royal Scots (2nd City of Edinburgh). The 101st Brigade are part of the 34th Division. This formation now consists of four Brigades – the 101st, the 102nd, the 103rd and the Pioneers. The division is led by Major-General C. J. Nicholson with his H.Q. at Gomicourt. The 34th Division makes up part of VI Corps which is commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir J.A. L. Haldane at his H.Q. at Boisieux-au-Mont. VI Corps was part of the Third Army, commanded by General Hon. Sir Julian H. G. Byng based at his Headquarters in Albert. The Third Army front extends southwards from Roeux to Gouzeaucourt and the 11th Suffolks are at the front just to the right of the river Senser. The Third Army holds a front of 28 miles with 14 Divisions.

The Fifth Army, which bore the brunt of the attack, held a front of 42 miles with just 12 Infantry and 3 Cavalry Divisions. Roughly speaking, their front extended southwards from Gouzeaucourt down to Barisis where, on their right, they linked up with the French Army. The attack was not aimed at the French but to drive a wedge between the British and French Armies – a blow which was designed to end the war.

The 175 Labour Company, with Second Lieutenant A. E. Cook, was stationed at the tiny hamlets of Villers Faucon and Roisel, just east of Peronne, about 5 miles behind the front line.

Facing the twenty-nine British Divisions were seventy-six German Divisions. Aware that the scales would never again be so heavily tipped in Germany's favour, the great German tactical mastermind, Ludendorff, is reported to have said that to win the war outright 'We must beat the British.'

March 20 is recognised as the last 'proper' day of trench warfare as the fighting became mobile once again after almost four long years of stalemate. From this point on the battles would ebb and flow, sometimes over the same piece of ground countless times until the end of the War. It was impossible for the Allies not to know what was going to happen but the difficulty lay in predicting when and where the attack would occur.

The 11th Suffolk War Diary entry:-

21.3.18 – Enemy attacked

THE KAISER'S BATTLE

11TH SUFFOLKS ACCOUNT OF ACTION BETWEEN 20.3.18 and 23.3.18

1. *The 11th Suffolks relieved the 16th Royal Scots in a sector just to the right of the River Sensee on the night of 20/21. Officers patrols were sent out during the night but no signs of the enemy were seen but work was heard in the North end of Rotten Trench.*

2. *At 5 a.m. the enemy opened a general bombardment on the Battn Area, heavy Minenwerfer were considerably used on the front line and a strong concentration of gas was placed all over the area. As the morning went on the bombardment gradually diminished.*

3. *This bombardment was very destructive to the front line though it caused few casualties; very little damage was done to our front line wire.*

4. *A party of the No 8. Storm Battalion (German Stormtroopers) effected an entry into the front line of the Company on the immediate left of the Battalion under cover of a bombardment. The party was driven out by 8 a.m. leaving several dead in the trench.*

5. *At 3 p.m. the enemy opened intense bombardment on the Battalion Area. This had practically ceased on our front by 3.30 p.m.*

6. *At 3.30p.m. the enemy were seen to attack the Battalion on left. Wave after wave advanced from South to North across the front of 'C' Company.*

7. *Horn Trench and Shaft Avenue as far North as Farmers Lane were manned by 'B' Company and Battn. H.Qrs.*

8. *The North East corner of the left Company front was involved in the enemy attack and connection was temporarily lost between Coy. H.Q. in Pug Avenue and the right platoon of the left Company in Claw Trench and Claw Support.*

9. *The left Company at close range and Bn. H.Qrs and 'B' Company at 1000 yds range enfiladed the enemy attack and were able to do considerable damage to the advancing waves.*

10. *While this attack was going on hostile Infantry in Artillery formation and guns could be plainly seen moving West towards Fontaine and Fontaine Wood.*

Hostile Infantry were also seen in force moving Westwards from Crux Trench and Beta Nebu.

11. The Garrison of Shaft Trench were twice attacked by Machine Gun fire by low flying aeroplanes. One plane was brought down by rifle and Machine Gun fire.

12. By 6p.m. the left Coy front was completely re-established. A bombing block had been formed in Bush Trench. This block was twice unsuccessfully attacked by the enemy and a party from the left Company twice attempted to advance north from the block without success.

13. At 6.45p.m. a warning was received from H.Qrs 101st Brigade that the Battalion would probably receive an order to withdraw to the Second system on Henin Hill as soon as it was dark. All Coy Commanders were assembled at Bn. H.Qrs by 7.30p.m. and detail orders were issued in anticipation.

14. At 8 p.m. orders were received from G.O.C. 101st Brigade to withdraw to the Second system with an outpost line on the line Farmers Lane- Senser Reserve – ‘A’ Posts connecting in Farmers Lane with the 3rd Division whose front line was then Brown Support and with the 15th Royal Scots in the ‘A’ Posts. Only slight alterations to the anticipatory orders were necessary and the withdrawal began about 8.30p.m.

15. ‘B’ Company sent a platoon at once to the ‘A’ Posts. ‘D’ Company the previous Reserve Coy, was already in position in Senser Reserve. The right front Coy (‘A’ Company) withdrew as far as the junction of Senser Avenue and Hind Support using three Lewis Guns Teams as a rear guard. The left Company (‘C’ Coy) covered its own withdrawal as far as Shaft Avenue. The bombing block in Bush Trench was attacked twice again during this withdrawal. From the above points ‘B’ Company less 1 platoon covered the withdrawal of Bn. H.Qrs, ‘A’ and ‘C’ Coys to the Second system on Henin Hill. ‘D’ Company and 1 platoon of ‘B’ Coy covered the withdrawal of the remainder of ‘B’ company.

16. By 1 a.m. on 22.3.18. ‘B’ and ‘D’ Coys were in position in the new outpost line in touch with 15th Royal Scots on right and the 3rd Division on left. ‘A’ and ‘C’ Coys were in the first line of the Second system in touch with a Company of the 16th Royal Scots on right and 3rd Division on the left. Battn H.Qrs personnel manned ‘C’ 9 Post. H.Qrs Officers occupied an abandoned Battery position. All wounded had been evacuated from front system and all Battalion baggage.

17. *About 3 a.m. a party of 22nd Northumberland Fusiliers about 100 strong reported and were placed in the Reserve line of the Second system.*

18. *At 5 a.m. an intermittent bombardment was opened on Henin Hill being especially heavy on the reverse slope in the neighbourhood of Bn. H.Qrs at position T.4.d.9.8.*

19. *At 9a.m. the Battalion Pioneer Sergeant returned from Ipswich Dump and said the troops on the right were retiring and the enemy was advancing North from Croiselles. Almost immediately afterwards parties of troops from the right were seen coming back towards Bn. H.Qrs. These were stopped by Bn. H.Qrs Officers and sent to form a defensive flank facing South East in continuation of Bn. H.Qrs personnel in Post C.9. At the same time the party of 22nd Northumberland Fusiliers were sent to continue the defensive flank on the right. After the troops on right had retired Officer Commanding 'A' Company (Capt. W. E. Harrison) sent 1 platoon to form a defensive flank facing South between the right of 'A' Coy and C.9. Post. At the same time O.C.'B' Company (Capt. L. H. Rodwell) finding a party of 150 enemy forming up on his right bent back his right to connect up with the right of 'A' Company. At 8.45 a.m. a strong enemy party advanced along Hind Avenue east of Farmers Lane, they were driven off by O.C.'D' Coy (Capt. G. F. Reid) who was wounded during this fight. Two further attacks were made on Farmers Lane from West but both were successfully driven off. The enemy attacked North West from Croiselles but were driven back by rifle, Lewis and Machine Gun fire.*

20. *At 11a.m. owing to continued shelling of our own artillery 'B' Coy took up a position in shell holes to connect right of 'D' Coy, with 'A' Coy overlooking a valley which was dead ground to the first line of the Second system. The enemy tried to get small parties into the valley but was prevented by rifle fire. Between 11 a.m. and noon field guns were seen to be taken in Croiselles and there were signs of the enemy forming up in Sensee Valley.*

21. *At 11a.m. hostile shelling on the western slope of Henin Hill became very intense and the old battery position became practically untenable.*

22. *Between noon and 1 p.m. the Battalion was attacked twice by low flying hostile aircraft.*

23. *At 1 p.m. the troops on the right of the Battalion retired Westwards in large numbers and left the right of the Battalion in the air.*

24. *The Bn. H.Qrs Officers with runners and signallers moved to dugout at T.4.a.8.9.*

25. *At 2.30p.m. the Intelligence Officer (2nd Lt E. T. Belton) went over to find what the troops on the right were doing. He got in touch with a small party under an Officer who expressed his intention to continue the withdrawal stating that he was the last party to leave.*

26. *At 3.30p.m. the Signal Officer (2nd Lt D.B. Johnson) visited Coys in front of Henin Hill and reported that they were still in same position as they held before the troops on right retired.*

27. *At 4 p.m., owing to the continued shelling by our own artillery 'B' Coy withdrew into 'A' Coy and Hind Avenue. About this time the enemy tried to work along the trench to attack right of 'A' Company in first line Second system, several attempts were repulsed. A block was formed by Lieut. W. R. Hall. M.C. who repulsed several enemy attacks with great coolness and determination before being wounded and subsequently killed. O.C.'A' Company (Capt. W.E. Harrison) sent 1 platoon to right of Bn. H.Qrs personnel in C.9. Post and was reinforced with 1 platoon of 'B' Company to strengthen this position.*

28. *About 5.15p.m. owing to the advance of a considerable number of enemy from South 'D' Company withdrew into Hind Avenue.*

29. *At 6 p.m. the enemy launched an attack in the South against the right of the Battalion. They were engaged by rifle, Lewis Gun and Vickers Guns of the 34th Machine Gun Battalion and suffered very considerable casualties. The enemy however succeeded in working round to the South West of the defensive flank formed by Bn. H.Qrs personnel and two platoons of 'A' Coy. After a sharp fight these two platoons and Bn. H.Qrs personnel withdrew to a bank running North East to South West under heavy Machine Gun fire from the South and South West of Henin Hill. As this party passed Bn. H.Qrs Officers with runners and signallers left the dugout at T.4.a.8.9. and formed up the whole party behind the bank and brought fire to bear on parties of the enemy who were attacking 'C' Company and remainder of 'A' Coy from the South West. This party subsequently brought heavy fire on the enemy attempting to advance westwards from the South West slopes of Henin Hill.*

30. *At 7 p.m. that night, 'C' Coy and remainder of 'A' Coy were almost surrounded and started to withdraw into Hind Avenue, this withdrawal was completed by 8.30p.m. They were covered by a few men of 'B' Coy and Lewis Gun and Lt. C. H.*

Woods, who showed exceptional gallantry and contributed largely to the success of the withdrawal, was killed. The Battalion less Bn. H.Qrs and two platoons of 'A' Coy assisted 3rd Division in holding Hind Avenue facing South. At 8 p.m. on the way to Hind Avenue 'C' Coy H.Qrs met 8 Germans with 5 British prisoners, they killed all the Germans and released the prisoners and brought them in.

31. At 8.15p.m. Bn. H.Qrs and 2 platoons of 'A' Coy moved under cover of darkness from Bank to take up allotted positions in front line of Third system in front of Boyelles. A party of details under the Adjutant (Capt. J. H. Brett) remained in the neighbourhood of the Crucifix position at B.33d.4.9. and covered the withdrawal of the above mentioned party to Third system, subsequently this party under orders from G.O.C. 9th Bde remained till 2.30a.m. to cover withdrawal to Henin of the 9th Brigade.

32. At midnight the remainder of the Battalion in Hind Avenue received orders through the 3rd Division to withdraw and rejoin Bn. H.Qrs, they rejoined at Hamelincourt about 8. 30a.m on 23.3.18.

On the 23rd March, the 175 Labour Company are recorded as being at Templeux La Fosse which is just to the north and west of Peronne, under 10 kilometres away. According to various war maps this point is essentially the support line and there can be little doubt, given the scale of the onslaught that the men of 175 Labour Company had to join the fighting. The Germans attacked there again on the 23rd and the next day the line was behind Peronne, so the fighting must have been ferocious and ended in a headlong fighting retreat behind the town. The next day saw the Battalion being moved to a 'quieter' sector after their ordeal, the Diary continues:-

24.3.18 – Batt marched to Gouy En Teenois.

25.3.18 – Batt marched to Ambrines.

26.3.18 – Batt marched to Buire Au Bois.

27.3.18 – Batt marched to Petit Houvin and entrained for Merville.

28.3.18 – Batt detrained at Merville and marched to billets in Vieux Berquin.

29.3.18 – Batt marched to Erquinghem and billeted in La Rolanderie Farm (reserve Bde position).

30.3.18 – Batt relieved 18th Welsh in Houplines sector front line.

31.3.18. – Normal trench warfare.

Casualties sustained during March 1918

	Officers	O.R.
Killed	3	29
Died of wounds		8
Wounded	5	88
Missing		71
Total	8	196

The Germans broke through in several places on the front of the British Fifth Army by the end of that first day. After two days the Fifth Army was in full retreat and the right flank of the Third Army also had to withdraw to avoid being outflanked. Those men who had stayed on to protect the retreat were soon swept away by the following German infantry. This phase of the war came to be known as the 'March Retreat' and cost the Allies over 250,000 casualties. Amongst the fatalities were men from Crawley:

Private Arthur Heather was serving with the 9th Battalion of the Royal Sussex when he was killed in action on the 21st. He was 27 and was born in Crawley, a son of Henry and Lucy Heather. He was married and lived at 15, Princes Crescent in Brighton where he enlisted. His name appears on the Brighton War Memorial.

Private Thomas Henry Cooper was 35 and serving with the 8th Battalion of the Queen's Own Royal West Kents when he was killed in action, also on the 21st March. He was born in Ifield, a son of Mr and Mrs Cooper who lived at number 36, Ifield Road. He had enlisted in Chichester and was formerly with the Royal Sussex Regiment. Both these men were lost in the chaos of that first day and were never seen again. They are commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial and remembered in Crawley on the Memorial Gates.

Private Edwin Linfield, of the 13th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, from Ifield, was also killed in action during the March Retreat, on the 29th March. He had enlisted in Horsham. He was buried in Villers Bretonneux Military Cemetery.

Ludendorff's battle plans, meticulous as they were, had no final strategic target. He was quoted as remarking to the Crown Prince Rupprecht – 'We chop a hole. The rest follows.' Therefore the onrushing storm troopers soon found themselves cut off from all contact, and more importantly, from all chance of re-supply of food and ammunition. When these same storm troopers and the oncoming German infantry arrived in deserted Allied bases and French towns the wealth of food and in particular alcoholic drink that they found caused the advance to come to a crashing halt. This pause allowed the Allies time to regroup. Although their lines had been broken through in many places they were still, crucially, unbeaten in the field.

The offensive ground on as Ludendorff continually hurled his Armies at the strongest defensive positions of the British. On March 28th he launched the Mars offensive aimed at Arras to try and enlarge the gap between the two British Armies. This was successfully beaten off and Ludendorff's frustration grew.

Operation Michael was eventually called off on April 5th. Initially, the offensive was seen as a great success in Germany, as it was the greatest advance of the whole war up to that point. This jubilation soon turned sour as it was realised that both Arras and Amiens – vital railheads for the British – were still in the hands of the Allies. German losses were over 230,000 men and most of those were the specially trained storm troopers and assault divisions who could not be replaced quickly. Also the hard won territory that they now moved in to occupy consisted of the devastated landscape of the 1916 Battle of the Somme. What had not been wrecked by the fighting had been destroyed by the Germans themselves when they had withdrawn to the Hindenburg line in early 1917. Furthermore, the Allied losses of men and materiel could be replaced by the regular arrival of American troops and by British factories, now on full scale war work. The Germans, although buoyed by reinforcements from the East, had suffered irreplaceable losses.

With new drafts being rushed out from England, reinforcements were arriving at the Battle Zone by the hour, the British Army dug in on a new front and defences began to stiffen. The line had been bent and had given some ground, but was now whole again. At the top level of Allied command the March Retreat had repercussions. Field Marshal Haig felt that his French opposite number General Petain had been rather slow in providing reinforcements for his sorely pressed men. The outcome of this was the decision by the Allies to appoint General Ferdinand Foch as Supreme Allied Commander. With Foch having the final say as generalissimo of all Allied forces there could be no further individual nation prioritisation.

APRIL 1918

From the 11th Suffolk Battalion War Diary:-

Place: Cuvel 1.4.18 – Normal trench warfare, quiet sector, front line untenable owing to water, support & reserve lines held.

Place: Houplines 2.4.18. / 3.4.18. Slight shelling and trench mortar activity each day.

4.4.18. Patrol failed to find any trace of enemy movement his front line appeared to be (illegible) like our own.

5.4.18. 10 p.m. Batt. relieved by 22nd Northumberland Fusiliers and proceeded to La Rolanderie near Erquinghem forming part of Bde. in support.

6.4.18. Batt. bathed and refitted.

7.4.18. Church of England parade service 11 a.m.

8.4.18. Training begun as far as possible.

Meanwhile in Crawley, the local papers report:

April 6 – DEATH OF MAJOR J. J. BANHAM. – We much regret to announce that official intimation has been received of the death in action of Major J. J. Banham, second son of the late Mr. J. Banham and of Mrs. Banham, The Meadows, Malthouse Road, Crawley. Major Banham, who was 31 years of age, was killed on the 27th ult. He was a very popular officer and his death will be as keenly regretted by his fellow officers and the men under his control as by his many friends in the Crawley district. He enlisted soon after the outbreak of hostilities, joining first the Public Schools Battalion, and was subsequently transferred to the Royal Sussex Regiment. The deceased was for a time in Messrs. Longley & Co.'s works at Crawley, and afterwards went to New Zealand, where he had a sheep ranch.

Returning to England after some three years, he entered Messrs. Longley & Co.'s office, and it was not long after this that the war broke out, and 'Joe' as his friends familiarly called him, joined the Army, since when he had seen much active service. He was once slightly wounded in the arm and afterwards gassed, the latter trouble laying him aside for a time. He was excessively keen in all he undertook, and success was what he aimed at, whether in the athletic field, in business, or as a soldier. Very sincere sympathy will be expressed with the bereaved relatives. A memorial service has been fixed for this (Saturday) afternoon at four o'clock at West Crawley Parish Church.

Major Joseph John Banham was with the 9th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment a part of the Fifth Army when he was killed in action during the March Retreat on the 27th March. He had been born in Methwold in Suffolk and was the second son of Joseph John and Julia Banham. His father had died before the war; his mother was Julia Longley, the sister of James Longley, the founder of Longley's the builders. Major Banham, who was once mentioned in despatches, has his name on the gates at the Memorial park in Crawley. During the chaos of the retreat, his body was never found and so he is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial along with 14,000 other British casualties whose bodies were never recovered during the fighting of March 21st – 7th August 1918.

On April 4th, two other men with connections to Crawley were killed. Private Hedley James Corbett of the 8th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment was killed in action that day. He was born in Exeter around 1897 and had enlisted in Middlesex. He is listed on the St John's Memorial and on the Memorial gates and, although his connection with the area is unknown, his mother was from nearby Turner's Hill. He is commemorated on Pozieres Memorial.

Private Frank Hubert Chantler was with the 7th Dragoon Guards when he died of wounds on the 4th April. He was 28, a son of the late Mr D. Chantler of Crawley,

later of Brighton; husband of Mrs Nellie Chantler, of Crawley. He was born in Worth and had enlisted in Lewes. He was buried in Avesnes sur Helpe Communal Cemetery and is remembered on the gates in Crawley.

APRIL 9th 1918 THE BATTLE OF THE LYS

On April 9th, the anniversary of the great crisis at Arras, our storm troopers rose from their muddy trenches on the Lys front from Armentieres to La Bassee. Of course they were not disposed in great waves, but mostly in small detachments and diminutive columns which waded through the morass which had been upheaved by shells and mines, and either picked their way towards the enemy lines between deep shell holes filled with water or took the firm cause-ways. Under the protection of our artillery and trench mortar fire, they succeeded in getting forward quickly in spite of all the natural and artificial obstacles, although apparently neither the English nor the Portuguese, who had been sandwiched in amongst them, believed it possible. Most of the Portuguese left the battlefield in wild flight and once and for all retired from fighting in favour of the Allies.

– from Marshall Von Hindenburg's autobiography *Out of my Life*.

Early on the 9th April 1918 the 11th Suffolks were not in the front line. 101st Brigade was in divisional reserve, billeted in and around La Rolanderie farm. The following description of the start of the assault is taken from Lieut. Colonel J. Shakespeare's *The History of the Thirty-Fourth Division 1915-1919*:

After a quiet day and night, at 4.15 a.m. on the 9th April, the Boche guns to the south of our position spoke in an unmistakeable manner. The volume of sound was so great that it could only portend an attack on a considerable scale, and as the hours passed and there was no cessation to the din, we all realised that yet another 'day' had arrived and all units and parties 'stood to'. The bombardment did not affect our front line, but our back areas got more than usual shelling..... At 8.05 a.m. the 101st Brigade was ordered to stand to....at 9 a.m. General Nicholson heard from the 40th Division that the enemy were in the front line on their right flank. An hour later came an order for the 101st Brigade to march to the south of Bac St Maur, and to act on the orders of the 40th Division as the Portuguese front had broken.... The orders did not reach 101st Brigade HQ until 11.20 a.m.... Bac St Maur was found to be in the hands of the enemy and the Brigade took up a defensive position near Fort Rompu.

This from the History of the Suffolk Regiment:

After a series of marches and a railway journey the battalion arrived at Erquinghem, billeting in La Rolanderie farm, the brigade reserve position, and

on March 30th went into the front line in the Houplines sector, the 34th Division holding a line of some 8000 yards in front of Armentieres. Shortly after sunset on April 7th the Germans bombarded the town with gas-shells, causing heavy casualties. The 101st Brigade being now in corps reserve, the 8th was spent at La Rolanderie, with the 12th Battalion close by at Fleurbaix.

Before dawn on the 9th the enemy opened an intense bombardment south of the Lille railway, but no attack developed along the 34th Division front. At 10 a.m. the 101st Brigade as corps reserve was sent off to the south of Bac St. Maur; but an hour later the corps commander came to divisional headquarters and, hearing that the enemy had broken the Portuguese front and entered the battle zone of the 40th Division, told Major-General Nicholson to use the brigade to cover his own flank.

On approaching Bac St. Maur and finding that village in possession of the Germans, the 101st Brigade took up a position facing west and south-west near Fort Rompu, when fighting began immediately. Thus the first troops of the 34th Division to enter the general engagement were those who, almost up to that very moment, had formed the corps reserve, a rare tactical anomaly.

Terrific fighting followed. On the 10th the battalion, having formed a defensive flank, beat off attack after attack. Twice the Germans broke through, but on one occasion the breach was closed by Captain Rodwell and his company, and on the other by Captain Canning and his company, assisted by Major Wright.

At 3.20 p.m. Lieut.-Colonel Tuck received orders to withdraw behind the river Lys. Speaking on the telephone, the officer commanding the battalion next on the left, which was still in the front line, explained that he could not possibly get clear in less than two hours. Colonel Tuck replied that in those circumstances he would do his best to hold on till five o'clock. He did so; and though the casualties in those two extra hours were heavy, this noble imposition helped materially to save two brigades.

Thus, without intermission, the struggle continued.

There are two entries in the War Diary for the 9th April:

4. a.m. Enemy started shelling Erquinghem. Companies got out in front of village in trenches, drum fire heard on right front, attack anticipated.

11.18 a.m. Batt moved forward under orders and became front line.

There is a little more information in the Account of Operations appendix to the Diary:-

During the night 8/9th April the Battalion less 2 Coys. was in Divisional Reserve Erquinghem and 3 Coys. in La Rolanderie Farm.

At 4.a.m. hostile bombardment commenced. By 4.30a.m. 3 Coys. were in Artillery Formation in fields and trenches near billets as arranged in case of hostile shelling. At 10a.m. Erquinghem was heavily shelled. Battn. H.Qs and remaining Coys. moved to field and trenches between Erquinghem and railway. 11.15a.m. – Battalion ordered to move to Bac St Maur. 12 noon – Enemy reported at Fleurbaix. The 2 Coys. in La Rolanderie left under orders 103rd Brigade, remainder of Battalion started to move towards Bac St Maur. 12.15p.m. – Move to Bac St Maur cancelled. Battalion ordered to form up facing Fleurbaix and get in touch with 103rd Brigade on left and 16th Royal Scots on right. The Battalion deployed, 3 Coys. in Front Line and 1 in reserve and advanced to a line running from Streaky Bacon Switch where left was in touch with 103rd Brigade to Rue Delpierre about 1 mile South of Erquinghem where right was in touch with 2 Coys. of the 12th Suffolks who were in touch with 16th Royal Scots. The Battalion picked up elements of 12th Suffolks, 40th Division and became the Front Line. By 3p.m. the line was established in touch with both flanks. For the remainder of the day enemy attempts to advance were repulsed.

German forces had shelled Armentières with tonnes of mustard gas. The British were eventually forced to evacuate the area but the Germans themselves could not enter the town properly for nearly two weeks because of the heavy contamination. Witnesses to the bombardment stated that the shelling was so heavy liquid mustard gas ran in the streets.

APRIL 10

The War Diary reads:

5p.m. Batt withdrew North of River Lys and took up position with outposts on all flanks.

The War Diary Account of Operations Appendix:-

10.4.18 – About 7 a.m. the enemy attacked and broke through between Right 12th Suffolks and Left 16th Royal Scots. The 12th Suffolks fell back. On receipt of this information the Reserve Coy. at La Rolanderie Farm was despatched to counter-attack the enemy and fill gap between right of 11th Suffolks and left of 16th Royal Scots. By 8.45a.m. the enemy were driven back and gap was filled and touch was re-established. This left the Battalion with no Reserves whatever except Battn. Hqs. Personnel dug in just West of La Rolanderie Farm. Reinforcements were asked for to act as Supports, 2 Coys of the 4th Duke of Wellingtons were ordered up but had not arrived by 3p.m. when they received orders to withdraw. During the morning the enemy pushed forward Infantry,

Machine Guns and Field Guns (probably our own). The continual harassing caused troops on the Right of Battalion to give ground slowly. The Right Coy, however by refusing, its Right flank kept touch with troops on the right. About 2 p.m. the enemy attacked the whole Battalion front, except the Left Coy, very heavily. About 2.30 p.m. the troops on the Right of the Battalion withdrew and the enemy obtained lodgement in the centre of the line held by the Battalion creating a temporary gap. The 2 Right Coys withdrew to Erquinghem Switch under cover of outposts and got in touch with a party of Duke of Wellingtons on right. The troops in centre whose position had been penetrated were rapidly reformed on a line joining Battalion H.Qs. Personnel West of La Rolanderie to right of the Left Coy with outposts in front. By 3.15 p.m. the enemy onslaughts had been checked and the line had been completely re-established between Left Coy and original position and right of Right Coy in Erquinghem Switch. At 3.30 p.m. orders to withdraw North of Lys were received. O.C. 9th Northumberland Fusiliers, the Battalion on our left, stated that he would require two hours to withdraw forward troops. The Battalion held off repeated attacks of the enemy until about 5p.m. when the troops on the left had withdrawn and the Left Coy were heavily engaged from 3 sides, while the centre of the Battalion was heavily pressed by the enemy with numerous Machine Guns. About 5 to 5.30p.m. the Battalion was withdrawn in accordance with orders to North of Lys and proceeded to the neighbourhood of Waterlands where it took up a position with outposts out facing every direction. The Battalion in accordance with orders was in Support for remainder of Brigade holding Lys Defences, but as the Right of Brigade appeared to be in the air and the Battalion was subjected to Machine gun fire from L'Estrade and L'Hallobeau and there were sounds of firing from the direction of Le Veau, patrols were sent out to get in touch with any British troops in the neighbourhood and to find out positions of the enemy. Patrols reported Right of Royal Scots just North of Jesus Farm left of 147th Brigade in the neighbourhood of Touquet Parmentier enemy in L'Estrade, L'Hallobeau and La Menegate and captured the N.C.O. in charge of a German Trench Mortar Detachment. 2 Coys. were sent out to take up outposts position between left of Royal Scots and right of 147th Brigade.

APRIL 11

The Battalion War Diary reads:

5 a.m. Batt took up position along Armentieres- Bailleul railway facing South West.

7.30 p.m. Batt withdrew to La Creche and spent night in farm near Blanche Maison

And, on this, the day that Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook would suffer the wounds that would kill him, this extraordinary message was issued by the famously taciturn Sir Douglas Haig:

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

By *FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG*

K.T., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E.

Commander-in Chief, British Armies in France

TO ALL RANKS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS.

Three weeks ago to-day the enemy began his terrific attacks against us on a fifty-mile front. His objects are to separate us from the French, to take the Channel Ports and destroy the British Army.

In spite of throwing already 106 Divisions in to the battle and enduring the most reckless sacrifice of human life, he has yet made little progress towards his goals.

We owe this to the determined fighting and self-sacrifice of our troops. Words fail me to express the admiration which I feel for the splendid resistance offered by all ranks of our Army under the most trying circumstances.

Many amongst us are now tired. To those I would say that Victory will belong to the side which holds out the longest. The French Army is moving rapidly and in great forces to our support.

There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man; there must be no retirement. With our backs against the wall and believing in the justice of our cause each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the Freedom of mankind alike depend upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment.

D. Haig

Commander-in Chief

British Armies in France

General Headquarters

Thursday, April 11 1918

It has to be a doubt, given the chaos surrounding the attack and the British Army's retreat over the river Lys, whether Eddie and his comrades actually saw this message, but then, there were lines in place for rations and ammunition and evacuation of wounded, so it is possible. The War Diary Account of Operations Appendix continues:-

11.4.18 – At 2a.m. the Battalion formed rearguard to the Brigade who were withdrawn to Nieppe and by 5.30a.m. had taken up position along Armentieres

– Bailleul Railway facing South West from Nieppe Station to a point 700 yards North West in touch with the 103rd Brigade on left and the 16th Royal Scots on right. During the day outposts and patrols were pushed forward in front of the Railway. During the afternoon the enemy attacked the 103rd Brigade heavily but the 11th Suffolks were not involved. About 6p.m. orders were received that the Division would withdraw at 7.30p.m. At 7.10 p.m. the 103rd Brigade on the left were moving back, also Royal Scots on the right under heavy enemy Machine Gun fire also 18th Northumberland Fusiliers in Support. The Battalion remained in position on Railway until 7.30p.m. but found it impossible to withdraw to La Creche along the Railway as the line between Le Veau and Steenwerck Station was already in the hands of the enemy. Battalion H.Qs. by moving across country joined up with the 101st Brigade H.Qs. At the Railway just West of La Creche, remainder of Battalion moved via Bailleul Road to the right of La Neu Monte, the Battalion was billeted in Reserve in a Farm between Blance Maison and La Neu Monte.

When I visited Erquinghem-Lys in March 2008, I had arranged to be shown around by M. Jack Thorpe. Jack is the curator of the marvelous local museum in Erquinghem. This summation of the first days of the Battle of the Lys is based on what he told me:

La Rolanderie farm is approx. 1.4 km from the town of Erquinghem-Lys and 5km to the front line. On the morning of the 9th April, the 11th Suffolks came racing out of the farm and charged towards the front line to help, but only got about half way there, when they had to dig in and establish a new front line. The existing front line which had not moved for two or more years had been virtually destroyed by shells, gas and the hundreds of thousands of Germans who were now advancing towards them. The Battalion suffered many casualties on that morning so that when the Germans attacked them in the afternoon all cohesion was swept away within two hours by sheer weight of numbers. It became a free for all every man for himself as all the British regiments retreated to the relative safety of the town, now about 3kms away, remorselessly pursued by the enemy.

Just past La Rolanderie, there is a little stream, which crosses the road and gradually leads in to Erquinghem. With the area so flat and offering hardly any cover, and with the road being the obvious target for machine gun fire, a lot of the British soldiers were forced to throw themselves in to the stream and wade/swim back in to town. When they finally arrived in Erquinghem they found the town in ruins, and worse, the bridges over the river Lys had been blown up to hamper the enemy's advance. A stand was made just south of the town as the enemy approached from the right and in front.

The scene has been immortalised in a painting by Ronald Campbell in which you can clearly see some of the buildings of the town (one of which is still standing – it has

been renovated since that time but is the same size and shape) and also the roads that the Germans used to advance. Jack was even able to show me exactly where some of the British had crossed the river, wading against the strong current. He was also kind enough to give me a copy of a book titled *Hell on Earth – A Personal Record of The Battle of the Lys April 1918* by a chap named F. Haydn Hornsey. I had read so many books about the Great War and 1918 in particular that only referred to the Battle of the Lys in passing or a chapter at most. Whilst these were useful in their own right, what Jack had provided me with was an eye-witness account of a man who was serving with the 11th Suffolks and was at La Rolanderie Farm when the German attack began. I can remember my hands shaking with excitement and my mouth going dry as I realised what a precious aid to my search this would be (luckily Jack was able to help with the latter as he provided me with a nice cold beer when we visited the museum later that day).

Reading Hornsey's account finally convinced me I would have to make a stab at producing this book. When it came to writing about the Lys, Jack was able to put me in touch with Bob Richardson, F. Haydn Hornsey's grandson, so I could ask permission to use the salient points from his grandfather's book. What follows is Hornsey's account of his experiences from the beginning of the attack until dawn on the 12th April:

It was now well past midnight. Shells came faster and faster, and they were not all gas shells now. Many were dropping quite near. What a strange silence came over us! What was in store?

Crash!

A shell had dropped in the camp less than fifty yards away. Oh, the cruel noise! Shrapnel struck our tin hut with great force. I could hear men running about outside and cries of stretcher-bearers, "For God's sake hurry."

Crash!

Another and another. What could we do? All of us were lying flat on the boards – our tiredness forgotten, as also was our hunger. We were now in for it. Shells came faster and faster, but many were dropping short.

Crash!

That was another in the Camp. The left side of us this time. Many were hurt. Oh, the groans and cries of the wounded!

Just as the shelling was at its height and tension in our hut at breaking-point, the Sergeant Major came inside (I noticed he had his tin hat on and his revolver in his belt).

"Everybody get in fighting order quick. Get outside as soon as possible. All your packs leave in the hut," he shouted.

We were all outside in a few moments. Dawn was just breaking when we received orders to follow an officer. He led us through the camp to a large lorry

which had brought a load of spades. Thousands of them. We all had to take one and then go up to an ammunition dump where an extra three hundred rounds each were given us. Hand bombs were also served out. He then led us into a large wheat-field.

This part of the country was very flat. As far as the eye could see, our fellows were digging in. Each one had to dig his own trench to protect himself. The enemy were shelling us like blazes, but they were going well over. Several bursts of machine gun fire broke out – our Lewis Gunner fell dead, a bullet through his heart. This fellow had come out with us and was killed, but never saw a German. Such is mechanical warfare.

What was our position now? What had happened? What had become of our fellows who ought to be miles in front of us? The awful truth dawned upon me. The enemy had broke through all our lines, and we were here to try and turn the tide. The shells were now falling nearer; our line was a great half-circle right across the country, and we were about in the middle – another battalion on our left, with Portuguese on our right.

The day broke bright and sunny. I had dug three feet in when I struck water and was obliged to get out and dig on my knees and pack the clods of earth in front of my hole (that is all you could call it) for some sort of cover. The enemy moving about the skyline could easily be seen.

Captain Kay came along, his servant following.

“Do your best, boys” he said. “The Germans have broken through; we have got to stop here as long as we can.”

“Had no food to-day or yesterday? What do you mean? Can’t help it. It’s now too late to borrow any,” he said when told that we had no food for two days.

Machine gunning had commenced on both sides. The Captain walked along the line, not appearing to notice that the machine gun bullets were flying all round him. His servant went along more on his hands and knees than walking.

Captain Kay was an Englishman and a gentleman. He was more than brave. He was very often reckless in his bravery. He treated the German machine gun fire with contempt. He would say to his men, “You take cover.” You can guess that we all loved him, and there was not one of us who would not have followed him through Hell if he had only said the word.

Shells were now breaking our frail line. The enemy had got the range. A German airplane was above us, dropping lights for artillery range.

Where were our airmen? I never saw any that day. Were our guns all going back into safety? Great masses of German troops began to get near us, taking all the cover that was possible. Great hordes of storm troops could be seen. Our rifles and machine guns kept up a terrific fire, and we gave them Hell. We were taking toll and a dreadful one, but still they came nearer and nearer. Their machine guns were sweeping our posts.

It was now 10 o' clock in the morning. All our officers were dead or wounded. The wounded could not be got away now that 'Jerry' was so near to us. Our only chance was to hang on until dark and trust to darkness to help us, but the odds looked too great. Already we had lost quite a lot of our men. Each hour the defenders were getting thinner and thinner. Our Lewis Guns were keeping up a steady fire. Another great fear was whether our ammunition would hold out until night.

Enemy artillery was playing Hell with us. 'Jerry' had got the range well. Blast that airplane – here it was again! A machine gun was trained on it. The plane dropped more lights. Hundreds of rifles were turned on it. It did not look possible for it to escape from all that fire, but it sailed safely back over the German lines and disappeared.

Some heavy shells were dropping on our left. The German artillery had been on fourteen hours without ceasing, but of all amazing things, as a lull came in the shell fire, I could hear a skylark singing beautifully. It sat on a clod of soil about thirty yards in front of me. It sat there singing – perhaps welcoming the approach of spring amidst all the noise and blood. How uncanny!

At 2.40 that afternoon the Germans attacked. They approached us under every bit of cover they could find, supported by a terrific barrage of shell fire and machine guns – it was just as if Hell's gates were opened on to us. At 3 o' clock our right flank, which had consisted of the Portuguese, had gone – they bolted with very little resistance.

This terrific fight went on each minute, the Germans slowly and surely closing in on us. At approximately 3.30 our left flank had gone. Harassed now on three sides, the German fire never ceasing – our fire getting weaker and weaker – how much longer? It was now a case of how many minutes. It was now or never. Several hundred of us jumped out of our holes and ran with our heads down, fearing to look behind, running and praying that we could reach those farm ruins in time. A bullet hit my water bottle with great force. I really thought I had been hit.

"Why the Hell don't you hurry, Bill?" I yelled. He was about done up. Comrades were falling right and left. Still a hundred yards to go, and bullets were as thick as ever. God, we reached the ruins, and as I reached them I had one glance back. Only a mere handful of us seemed to gain these buildings. The ground was littered with British dead and wounded.

What a sight these dead and wounded! The background swarming with Germans. Their shell fire was as fierce as ever, their objective no doubt being the road along which we had to go. Machine gun fire on three sides. I was faint. Bill seemed on the verge of despair. We were now going through the farm yard – a group of cattle stood there frightened and looking bewildered. Four or five more lay dead. I noticed a farm horse dead at the other side of the yard, half blown away by shell fire.

Half a minute later we were going through the camp where we had slept the previous night. Everything was smashed to the ground. Destruction on all sides. An officer lay dead here, no doubt killed in trying to get up to the lines in the early fighting.

We were making for the road, as all the survivors were. That road led to our freedom. We half ran, half walked down that road like madmen. Not an English shell was going over. Panic was everywhere. Our only thought was to escape this cruel fire.

At last we reached the road. Many dead and wounded lay here. A large shell had dropped right in the middle of the road, tearing it to pieces. Some French refugees (consisting of father, mother and two young girls) were slowly walking down the road, the mother leading two cows, the man pushing a two-wheeled conveyance, and the two girls were carrying baskets and smaller bundles. Despair was written on their faces. The shells did not seem to worry them; misery was deeper in their hearts than all the shells could now do. The shells had already done their worst to them. Their home lay in ruins – everything lost! They were simply going somewhere, but to what place they did not know.

We had to keep on, yet the road was too dangerous for us to walk on. A dyke ran along the side of the road, half full of water, but that did not matter in the least. Straight in – anything was better than those bullets. Oh, my head was going round! I began to feel queer – I was nearly done up – that don't care feeling began to come over me. I pulled myself together, saying "No. It's no good giving way." We had got to go on. "I don't want to die, keep on, keep on." That was my thought.

Slushing through the water one minute up to your knees and next up to your waist, but thank God we were getting away from those machine guns. On and on. Oh, how tired I was getting! In a flash my thoughts were of my home and my mother. I could see her smiling face, and she was saying, "Come on, come on, my boy."

"What the Hell's up with you, Fred?" said Bill. "You've been standing like a fool. Do you want 'Jerry' to have us?" The spell was broken, and I came back to earth. On and on, through water and mud.

As we got farther down the road, more and more troops joined us in that long dyke of freedom.

At last the village of Erquinghem was reached – destruction everywhere – the same old tale. Ruin, desolation, and death. Thousands and thousands of shells must have fallen in or around this village during the last twenty-four hours. The street was ripped up, and equipment of all sorts lay everywhere; it had been discarded in the mad rush for liberty. The estaminet at which we had stopped the night before had half its roof blown away. Bill and I stood and gazed at it. Things had happened and were happening so very quickly that nothing surprised us now. Many of our fellows made an appearance out of a cellar.

“Plenty of booze in the cellar, mates,” they shouted. We were soon in there and armed with three quart bottles of champagne. I forced one in each side pocket and opened the third. This was the first time I had tasted champagne. We stood there, or clothes muddy and dripping. I swilled the drink down. Having had no food or drink for nearly thirty-six hours, one would have thought it would have made us drunk. However, strange to relate, it did not, although we bolted the best part of half a gallon between us. It made us a little merry, but we were soon on our way.

Half a mile on we were to have another blow, for we heard a terrific explosion. What was that? Were the Germans behind us as well as on three sides? No. It could not be that. We looked at each other in dismay; then the awful truth burst on us. We now knew that the bridge over the canal had been blown up by our own Royal Engineers to hinder the enemy’s advance. This proved to be so, for when we came up to the canal the big bridge had gone – and the canal in flood! What could we do?

Clothes and equipment also lay everywhere here, which only too plainly told us that if we wanted to go on there was only one way, and that was to swim the canal.

Some badly wounded chaps lay on stretchers. They had been carried as far as possible. They needed help, but they had to be left.

Lower down several men could be seen swimming through the dark cold water. Many were drowned while attempting to swim this canal. We must soon think about it. Bill was cursing. Just then a violent burst of machine gun fire broke out not many hundred yards away from us. The Germans were in the village we had just left. Let them stop who liked – we were going through the water.

I slung my rifle on my back, discarded my gas mask, put my wallet into a waterproof ammunition case, and walked into the water, Bill following me. We were soon in deep water, the current very strong. Thank goodness we could both swim well. My clothes hung like lead – the two bottles of champagne did not improve matters. I was almost giving up when my feet touched the bottom, and we waded out.

What a pickle to be in! Not a dry thread on us. I was cold, and my teeth were chattering.

“How about a drink, Bill?” I said. He did not want one. He mumbled something about a ‘gammy’ knee. Well, we kept on and came to a road leading God knows where. We never knew and never cared, only we knew others were going that way, so I took it that we were right.

The German shell fire had ceased, but their machine gun fire was still to be heard in the village we had just left. Many dead were lying about here, no doubt killed early in the afternoon by shell fire. Dry clothes we wanted, and dry clothes we must have at all costs. We must rob the dead to help the living. The first one I approached. No! I couldn’t. He was knocked about too badly. Too much blood.

We eventually each got a dry tunic and cardigan and took our shirts off and put a cardigan and tunic on. We also helped ourselves to ammunition and a gas mask. Poor fellows, they would never need them again. We turned one over to cover him up with our wet tunics when a portion of a loaf showed up from his pack. We were starving. Who could blame us? We took the bread and devoured it in a few minutes. How good it seemed! Bread had never tasted so palatable. It was no good messing about – we had already wasted enough time. It would soon be dark. What should we do then?

“Don’t worry Bill; let’s keep on,” I said.

Darkness was now almost upon us. Soon we came to a group of soldiers, who represented several battalions, discussing the best way to proceed. We were absolutely lost. Still the stragglers kept coming up, and what tales of misery and misfortune each had to tell! Just before six o’ clock several chaps came along who had just come through the canal. They informed us that many of their comrades had drowned trying to cross it. They could not bring their Lewis Guns with them. They were obliged to throw them into the water.

It was now dark. How strange the absolute silence was! Everything in this light seemed weird. Guards were placed lower down the road to prevent a surprise, and twelve of us, Bill and myself included, with an officer, set out to try and get some information as to where we were on the main road. If only the British guns would open out, all would be well for us. We could then walk towards the flare of the guns, but our guns were strangely silent. After a long walk we found the main road. We then commenced our journey back to our comrades and arrived safely. How glad they all were to see us and to know we had found a way to get back! We now lost no time in striking off to get to that road.

We tapped another bottle of champagne, walking along in the slush. Nothing but mud and water. It had now begun to rain. It must have been 10 o’ clock by the time we got on to that road.

Another half hour’s tramp brought us up to the main body of the troops, all lying on the road resting. What a day every one of these soldiers had been through! What did tomorrow hold in store for us? Perhaps as bad as to-day. What they were all waiting here for no one seemed to know. Word came round about 12.30 that rations would soon be up. But time went on, and there were no signs of rations coming. Oh, how cold and wet I was!

I looked at Bill and said, “Open one of your bottles.”

“Good; that’s a little better.”

“How long do you think that grub will be?”

It was getting colder, and the drizzle of rain made matters worse. I dozed into a kind of sleep, dead beat. I could feel that damp striking through my clothes, but I was too cold and stiff to move. Cold, wet and hungry, but it was a relief to be at rest with those machine guns quiet.

I was asleep several hours when I was awakened by horses galloping towards me. Several limbers drawn by two horses were amongst us. The rations at last! Thank God! I hoped there was plenty for each man. They might have brought them up before. We wondered why there was not much excitement higher up where the limbers had stopped. I soon knew the reason.

Yes, we could have plenty of rations, yes, as many as we could carry, for those rations were Rifle Ammunition and Lewis Guns. Next I heard someone shout, "Come on, you men, there. Stick a few bandoleers over your shoulders. You're bound to want them."

Someone wanted to know something about rations.

"I know nothing about food. Think yourself damn lucky you have plenty of ammunition," was the reply.

I dropped down again against Bill.

"Anybody got any fags?" I asked. I would have given anything for a smoke. I was soon supplied with a cigarette, and I had no sooner started to smoke when an officer detailed several hundred of us and we were told to follow him.

"Has everyone got plenty of ammunition?" the officer yelled, "I must have a Lewis Gun or two."

"Sorry," someone answered. "We only had four sent up, and they have gone with two officers who have taken several hundreds of soldiers to spread a thin line across the country to try and stop 'Jerry' as he advanced to-day."

We tramped across field after field until we arrived at a railway line. The rails were banked up about five feet, with a dyke at each side and a few willow-trees. We soon found we were to hold these lines to-day and not to give them up without a struggle.

Eventually rations came up. One small loaf to four with a little jam. What a feed to last a day! It took me about two minutes to 'lose' mine.

Then we began to dig ourselves in, by the side of the railway line. The dyke at the bottom was full of the usual 'beverage' – water, therefore the necessity of digging in higher in the bank.

The day went on, and but for occasional bursts of machine gun fire and a few German airplanes coming over, things were quiet.

Towards dinner time machine guns began to sweep the railway lines, and a few shells began to drop.

"Look up." A 'Jerry' plane was coming over. He was machine gunning us as well. Where were all our airmen these days, to let the enemy have it all their own way like this?

"Look, Bill, look at the sods coming down the hedge there," I said. Our Lewis Guns were firing on them, making them take cover. Hundreds of rifles began to crack. 'Jerry' wasn't going to have those lines without having to pay dear for them. Germans were to be seen everywhere – thousands of them, the old square heads,

how we hated them! Take that, and that, as I aimed at them in the distance. It was a little too far out to see what damage had been done. So the time went on, and the Germans were slowly but surely closing in on us.

"Here is that blasted airplane again," I said to myself. He came straight over our lines, firing his gun as he swept along. Our rifles blazed away at him. Oh! How I should have liked to see him brought down!

By this time many Germans could be seen coming down the same hedge we went down yesterday.

Our rifle fire was being kept up well, but it was impossible to take a good aim now, as a score of machine guns were sweeping the top of those railway lines, thousands of bullets skimming them every minute.

"Bill," I said, "we're done this time."

"Yes, blast'em. Look at the sods coming down there," he replied.

The enemy came nearer and nearer, closing in on us. Our situation grew grave, and the more we had to expose ourselves, the greater our losses. We were losing men fast now.

"I am sick of it all now, I wish a bullet would hit me," I said to myself.

It was now somewhere about dinner time, and things looked bad. We must have lost quite half our men by now. The wounded went or were taken farther up the railway lines. I don't think the stretcher cases could be got away. Shells were being fired point blank from the field guns.

By this time a few Germans had reached the other side of the line and commenced to throw their hand bombs over, causing loss of life and panic. The situation was desperate – the machine gun fire was madder than ever. Every minute I expected them to come charging over the top of those lines.

Someone said, "Fix your bayonets." I fixed mine. Bill fixed his.

A lot of good we should be now in a hand to hand fight in our weary condition, against fresh troops. I happened to glance to the right at that moment. What few troops of ours were still alive were retreating fast along the railway bank. A hand bomb came over and exploded about thirty yards to our left. Like a flash Bill and I started to run down the bottom of the bank after the other chaps, others of course following. Every few yards we had to step over our dead, who were all hit in the head. Every moment I expected the Germans to sweep over the lines and put paid to us. In a few minutes perhaps their machine gun fire would stop; then they would soon be at us. Good God, the quicker the better. We should be out of our misery then. Weary and tired, I didn't care what happened.

We had now travelled several hundred yards. A dyke ran away from the railway lines, and our chaps were running down this as fast as the water which was in it would allow. I could see a wood beyond this dyke. If we could only gain that, we might get away. My hopes began to rise. Fresh strength seemed to come to me. As long as those guns were sweeping the railway lines, we were getting

away; that's all I cared for at the moment. Another five minutes and we should perhaps be clear.

We had now gained the wood, and I scrambled through some barbed wire. I caught one of my puttees on the wire and left half of it behind. The other half came undone and fell off as I ran through the wood. How miserable and wet we all were!

Still the shell fire was going on. The Germans no doubt thought we were still defending that railway. Little did they dream that the only defenders on this side of the line were our dead. We got safely through the wood and carried on down a hedge. Bill was lagging behind, nearly done up.

"Can't go much farther," he said. "I can hardly bend my knee." Slushing through water and mud didn't seem to agree with Bill's rheumatism. After swearing at him a time or two, I got him along a little faster.

A small farmhouse stood just in front of us. We made for it. We decided to look in to see if any food could be found. Alas! Our hopes were dashed. We were evidently not the first this time. We peeped down the cellar. Nothing, only empty cases and disorder. We were just off when I noticed a stew pot on the grate. I looked in and found a little stew which looked as though it had been there several days. It smelled all right, so we decided to take the pot with us. We ate the meat as we went along, only stopping to have a drink out of the pot. It was 'tres bon', even if it was a day or two old. We wished there had been twice as much. A little farther on we sighted the main road, and in a few more minutes we had reached it.

It was one long straight road as far as the eye could see, with the British Army in a complete rout: Staffs Regiment, Duke of Wellington, King's Royal Rifles, Suffolks, Northants. All these were there and many more besides. Staff officers on horseback and also Generals. All were there, so complete was this retreat. We were so thick, it was like coming out of a Football Ground on a Saturday afternoon. Limbers were hurrying back, saving just what few things they could get away with. Artillery men with the eighteen pounders up to God knows what. Wounded men lay on the side of the road in scores, many crying out for someone to help them along, and I am sorry to say those who could not walk were left behind for 'Jerry' to take care of.

The situation was desperate – darkness was creeping on us. Perhaps it was all for the best. The machine gun fire had left off for some time now, but a few heavy shells were still coming over. Of course they knew we were on that road. What in the Hell would happen if they followed us up? They would have the whole lot of us, and the War might be finished then. Bill said he hoped they would, and he was not going any farther. With that he fell out and threw himself down on the side of the road.

I tried to pull him up. Bill did not intend to move. "Might as well be dead as alive," he said. "Shoot me out of the way."

“He’s ill or mad,” I thought to myself – and if we did not soon move, we should be taken prisoners. Whatever happened, I did not intend to leave Bill.

Time went on, and troops continued to pass by. I continually kept pleading and arguing with him, but all to the same purpose. Soon we should be alone on that road, with the exception of the wounded and those who had died of wounds.

“If you don’t come, Bill,” I said, “I’ll shoot you,” as I raised my rifle to the level of his head.

“Now or never – your last chance – will you come?”

“No!” he said. “Shoot me and save yourself.”

I was in despair – nothing I could say or do seemed to make any impression on him. What could I do? Nothing to be heard but the cries of the wounded and the wind howling through the trees.

Once more I turned to him.

“Bill, think of your little girl.”

He straightened himself up, and it seemed as if something inside of him had moved.

“Yes, bless her,” he said. “I had forgotten her. To Hell with the Germans! I won’t give in. God, my head! Move on, then – slowly.”

I pulled him up – his rifle fell off his shoulder, and I picked it up and slung it over mine. I put my arm around him, and the two of us moved off. Bill could walk only slowly. I think we must have been absolutely the last ones.

It was now quite dusk, and but for a groan or two from some wounded men left behind, not a sound could be heard. How uncanny!

I did not suppose the Germans would come too far to-night. A little way on I could see a light – it was a fire on the side of the road. What was it for? It was a little too far off in this light to make out what it was. As we approached, we found a small fire under a copper. It stood outside a Y.M.C.A. ‘All are Welcome’ I could see written in large letters on the side of the building. What memories rushed through my brain as I read these words over and over again!

The copper was nearly full of boiling cocoa, sugarless but hot. We soon got two mugs and were drinking mug after mugful. Those Y.M.C.A. people, who had stayed practically right to the last and made cocoa for thousands of our boys, are worth the V.C.

Bill got a box and drew it up against the fire. The warmth was really very comforting. I did not know when last I had felt the heat of a fire.

Troubles for the moment were now forgotten. ‘Jerry’ might go to Hell, for all we cared. It was now dark. God what was that? Something was touching my leg. It was only a large tabby cat. How it made me jump!

“We must be on the move, Bill,” I said. He did not answer me. I thought he was going to have another spasm, but he slowly rose, and we continued up that long road.

We were lost. Yes, lost in France. We had not the slightest idea where we were going, and incredible as it seemed, we had lost the British Army.

So we dragged along this seemingly endless road mile after mile. A gun boomed somewhere from the British lines, or better, let us say, British Territory. This was the first British gun I had heard for the last three days. God, those three days seemed like three years.

We eventually came to a village. Not a soul was to be seen – the village was ours to do with as we liked. I was about done up, and we decided to stay the night somewhere in one of what appeared to be the last few houses left standing – and see what morning brought forth.

We had lost all idea of time. It might have been twelve, two, or four, for all we knew. It would not have been so bad if we had had a few fags.

We went into a farmhouse, not having any matches or lights. One place to us was as good as another. We lay down on the floor. A few shells kept going over us but they were dropping a long way off, and we fell into a doze.

Dawn began to break, and some cocks somewhere in the rear of the house began to crow. “Hear, Bill, when its light we had better have a look round.”

In another half hour it was daylight. We soon found that we had passed the night in a decent farmhouse. The furniture was certainly in disorder, but I had great hopes of finding some food. After a thorough search, no food of any description was found. I suppose we were second again. All we found was some sour beer and ground coffee. We went a little farther down the road and searched another cottage, but we met with very little success. All we found was some stale bread.

“Come on,” I said. “let’s get away.” And we moved off. “Bill, I wonder what the time is now?” I said.

“No idea – it seems ages since last night.”

My mind began to go all over it again. On and on we went, farther down the road, the village we had just left being now out of sight.

“Look, Bill, there are some of our chaps.”

Thank God! Some of our chaps in sight. How comforting it seemed to see them once again!

We soon got up to our fellows – they were in all sorts of places. Some had dug holes, others were in ditches and dykes, in fact anywhere where there was cover. I could not see any of our regiment. There were all sorts, but none of our mob. I could see Bedfords, Northants, Duke of Wellington, Staffs, King’s Royal Rifles and many more as we walked along the line, not quite knowing what to do. The line ran straight off the road to a large farmhouse and buildings. We decided to make our way to it.

We soon learned from one chap that our troops had orders to lie low, as ‘Jerry’ had been seen that morning across the fields, about in line, I thought, with the farm we had just left.

“Oh! Blast ‘em!” said Bill.

“Who gave those orders?” I asked.

“Only a second lieutenant,” came the reply.

“Is he in charge here?”

“I don’t know. I’ve been here since yesterday, and he’s the only one I’ve seen,” came the reply.

We proceeded until we got to the farm yard.

All the live stock on this farm was still here, I found out. The pigsties were full of pigs – all white, and they looked like the Yorkshire breed. There must have been forty or fifty of them – all sizes, from stores up to large breeding sows. There were also six nice calves, and as they heard me they rushed to the door. I suppose they expected we had come to feed them. Some really nice poultry walked about and we noticed some half grown cockerels.

“They’re real good. We’ll have one or two of them before we go back. It’s a shame to let ‘Jerry’ have all of them,” Bill said.

So far ‘Jerry’ hadn’t put in an appearance. Perhaps he might let us rest to-day and come on at night.

After a time we went into the house, where there was plenty of beer, but as it was not good enough we decided to lie down for a little while.

I think I must have fallen off to sleep when I heard voices which roused me. I looked up and saw a captain in the room with a second lieutenant.

“Is this the Lewis Gun team?” I heard the captain say.

Bill and I were only half awake. The lieutenant pointed to some other fellows and said, “Yes, sir. Number One. The one with the gun, that’s Number Two there, and the others carried the ammunition.”

“Yes, very good, Clark, that will do now. What about the other gun?”

He turned to me, saying, “Do you think you could manage it?”

“Yes, sir, I think I can. I don’t know a lot about them, but I think I know enough to manage them.”

“All right, then, you are Number One.”

“You,” pointing to Bill, “are Number Two, and two of you others will help with the ammunition. My runner will be up with the gun in about half an hour.”

“You will see, Clark, these men have their orders.”

“Yes, sir,” and off went the captain with Second Lieutenant Clark following him.

Soon our gun came up, and with two more chaps carrying ammunition, Lieutenant Clark with them. They handed the gun over to me and dropped the ammunition on the floor, no doubt glad to get rid of it, and stood back. They were told they could go back where they came from. The officer beckoned us to follow him. I put the gun on my shoulder, also my rifle. I did not mean to lose that. Bill’s face was a study as he struggled to put the sixteen pans of ammunition on his back.

“Well, this is a bit of all right,” he said.

The officer required one gun to be put in the corner of the farm yard and the other one to fire from the end of the pigsty. Our orders were to fire occasional bursts all night into the country in front of us. We were instructed to try and hold out until the following afternoon, when a battalion of Guards with Vickers Guns would come up to support us. We were to have the pigsty. There were two large sows in this one, and they were making a terrible lot of noise, as I expect it was their feeding time. We let them out and soon found a yard brush and shovel and cleaned out the sty. Bill brought a large bundle of clean wheat straw, which made us as comfortable as could reasonably be expected. We knocked a few bricks out of the wall – enough to place the gun in. Bill suggested that we should have another bundle of straw and make a good job of it. We had a fairly good view of the country in front of us. There was a hedge just on our left. Right in front of us were several small belts of trees and some bushes, with more hedges beyond them. We thought the Germans must have advanced as far as this.

It was now late in the afternoon, and things were still quiet. One or two German airplanes were flying rather high, and a few shells were dropping over.

What a Hell of a noise the pigs and calves were making! One could hardly hear oneself speak. We let the calves loose and drove them into the paddock at the back. The pigs we hardly knew what to do with. Anyhow, we threw a lot of mangel wurzel over, which quietened them. Presently word came up that we had got to stop wandering about, as ‘Jerry’ had been sighted in one of the belts of trees. We were to stand to with the Lewis Guns and as soon as it was dark to send out a few bursts of bullets. We knocked a few more bricks out of the wall, so that we could see better. We then put a large bundle of straw in the doorway to stop the draught. We decided then to try the gun once more before it got too dark. We put the pan on all right and released the safety catch, and I rested the gun on the wall and aimed it at trees which stood well out. I pulled the trigger, and the gun gave a mad roar and sent out its metal of destruction. I could hardly hold the devil. All of a sudden it stopped.

“What’s up now?” I said to Bill.

“Why, you fool, you’ve emptied a whole pan. You’ll use up all the ammunition we’ve got in a few minutes at that rate. Press your trigger and release it. Fire the gun in bursts,” he replied.

We decided to reload the gun and then have something to eat – we were fairly comfortable in the straw – it was now quite dark, and we all began to eat.

The Germans were sending all manner of coloured lights up into the sky – they looked quite pretty. I wondered what they were all about. A few very bright lights were being sent up which appeared to come from the belt of trees on our right.

The night wore on, and we were taking it in turns to fire the gun. Dawn would now soon be breaking – the cocks had started crowing – the trees and other

objects became more visible. We kept a sharp look out now – the whole lot of us. This was one of ‘Jerry’s’ favourite times to attack. The break of dawn – and it had now become quite light.

Everything seemed suddenly to have come to life. Many birds could be heard singing, and those pigs had started grunting again ; the calves could be heard piteously asking for someone to feed them. We could shut our ears to the noise of the calves, but the row of the pigs squealing and grunting got on our nerves.

“That’s better,” I thought to myself, as two fellows from Number One Gun threw plenty of roots over to them. They were soon quiet.

An hour later, we had a visit from the captain, who was just making his final inspection of the gun teams because he knew that things would soon develop. As ‘Jerry’ had been sighted a little farther down.

“All right in here?” – “Yes, Sir.”

“Keep the gun going when the Boches show themselves.”

“You see, we are short of machine guns,” I heard the officer say as they walked away. An hour later more ammunition was sent up to us.

Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook has been wounded by now. Whether he is on his way to No. 64 Casualty Clearing Station at Proven or is awaiting evacuation is unknown. This, then, was as close as I was ever going to get to finding out how Second Lieutenant Cook was wounded and subsequently died. Barring some new evidence being unearthed somewhere and finding its way to me, this was it – I had got some way but now I would have to take a best guess at the rest.

The obituary that would shortly appear in the Crawley local papers would reveal that back home at Lathbury Laura and Dorothy had received a telegram on Saturday April 13th 1918 advising that Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook had been wounded on the 11th (in fact he was probably already dead by the time they read it). This implies that rather than being detached from the main body of the British Army he was with them and more importantly with men who knew him. His evacuation to No. 64 Casualty Clearing Station at Proven (a.k.a. Mendinghem) also bears this out.

If he was not lost in the chaos of the retreat and was with the main body of the British Army then he was almost certainly with the Battalion along the Armentieres – Bailleul railway facing South West. Now the War Diary’s Account of Operations clearly states that although there was fighting in the afternoon, the 11th Suffolks were not involved.

This means it is most likely that Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook met his fate either manning one of the outposts or, given the nature of his wounds – a gunshot wound to the abdomen, indicating he was standing up and facing the enemy – leading a patrol in front of the railway line.

Tantalisingly, F. Haydn Hornsey’s grandson Bob Richardson revealed to me that in his book his grandfather “did change the names. His best friend after the war was

mentioned in the book and he changed his name!" Could it really be possible that the aforementioned Second Lieutenant Clark is really Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook from Crawley? Of all the names that Hornsey could have chosen it does seem an odd twist of fate that Cook may have been replaced by Clark – especially without an 'e'.

Hornsey clearly states that when he and Bill caught up with the rest of the British Army there was 'none of our mob.' He does have a sleep later on before his encounter with Second Lieutenant Clark so could Eddie have arrived while Hornsey was asleep? It could be argued that being in the same Battalion both men should recognise one another but Battalions were usually 1000 to 1200 men strong and besides Hornsey had only just arrived in France and Eddie had only officially joined up with the Battalion on the 2nd March. Perhaps it is as simple as both men being in different Companies and Clark/Cook then gets a mention because Hornsey does recognise him as being from his own Battalion.

Tellingly, Second Lieutenant Clark is not mentioned specifically as being with the Captain when he does his rounds on the morning of the 12th. Where was Second Lieutenant Clark that morning?

Of course, we shall never know the truth and it could easily be said that I am clutching at straws, but after all this time searching and trying to build up a picture of Richard Edward Cook it is so frustrating to have this potential glimpse of him, like a fly trapped in amber, and realise that I will never know for sure.

As I said, being shot in the abdomen suggests two things, one, that he was standing up when he was hit and two, he was facing the enemy. If the latter instance is the case it speaks volumes about the esteem he was held in, as, being on patrol and being discovered and fired on by a rampant enemy would obviously mean a panicky retreat but the men around him still managed to get Eddie back to the other side of the Armentieres – Bailleul railway line and on to a cart to Mendinghem. Surely the nature of his wounds would have made it impossible for him to walk. F. Haydn Hornsey, having taken part in a counter-attack a few days later, describes an instance similar to what I think may have happened:

'In the middle of the afternoon orders came along the line that if nothing happened before dark we were to retire, as the position could not be held.

It would soon be dark, and everyone was keenly looking out for any possible danger. I crept along a little under cover: then I walked in a bending position to where our officer lay wounded. He was badly wounded and would not get over it, but we were determined to try and take him back with us. He was still conscious and wanted to know all that had happened. We tried to cheer him up by telling him he would soon be home – his wound was of the real 'Blighty' order. I really think he knew he was sinking, but he was setting an example of what most British officers do.

It was now practically dark, and we began to move back quickly. Not a sound was heard, and we just followed one another. I did not know who was in the lead. The officer lived until we got back. Those who were carrying him laid him on the side of the road – their own lives were too valuable to drag a dead man about, no matter who he was. I wished we could have buried him, but there was not sufficient time.'

A stomach wound was perhaps the wound that was feared most of all in the Great War for it meant almost no chance of survival and often a long drawn out painful death. I have read many books about the War and I recall a passage written by a chap who had been discussing with his comrade on the eve of an attack about the wounding they would least like to have to endure and they both agreed that being wounded in the stomach was the worst of the lot. The next day, after the attack was over, he saw his comrade on a stretcher, and when he enquired as to the nature of his wound his comrade gave a rueful smile and said 'in the guts.' He never saw him again.

Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook was found to be dead on admission at Casualty Clearing Station No. 64 outside the small village of Proven on Saturday the 13th April 1918. The entry of Army Form B.103 states:-

13.4.18. 64 C.C.S. Adm. GSW.abd (Dead on Adm.) 13.4.18.

Meanwhile in Crawley, the local papers were reporting:-

MILITARY MEDAL. – The Military Medal has been awarded to Private A. E. Hollands, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, whose home is given as Crawley, for bravery in the field.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Sidney Law, who was in the Garrison Artillery, is this week reported to have been killed in France. He was a son of Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Law, of Horsham Road, and before joining the Army was employed by Mr. H. Yetman, of the High Street. In their sad loss the parents and other relatives will have the sympathy of many friends. –

Private W. Lintott, whose home is officially given as Crawley, is reported to have died.

Another local casualty is that of Pte. Beale, of Tushmore, who is reported to have been killed.

Pte. Frederick C. Cain, of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. O. A. Cain, of Albany Road, Crawley, was wounded in the face and shoulder by shrapnel on the 22nd ult., and is now in the Auxiliary Hospital, Liverpool.

Lance Bombardier Sidney Walker Law was with the 154th Heavy Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery when he was killed in action on the first day of the March Retreat, the 21st of March. He was born in Kemsing, Kent, the son of Frederick and Esther Law. He had enlisted in Redhill. He is remembered in Crawley on the Memorial Gates and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

Private W. Lintott is a mystery. There are three W. Lintotts shown on the C. W. G. C. website. One is Private William Richard Lintott of the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Sussex who died aged 32 on the 29th August 1915. Then there is a Rifleman W. Lintott who came from Ashford and was serving with the 5th Battalion of the London Regiment (London Rifle Brigade) when he died on the 17th June 1917 or, lastly, a Lance Corporal W. Lintott of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Sussex regiment who died aged 40 on the 5th December 1917 while serving in India.

On Sunday, the 14th April 1918, the following telegram arrived at Lathbury:

To: Mrs. Cook Perryfield Road Crawley Sussex

Deeply regret 2 / Lt R E COOK eleventh Suffolk Regt died of wounds April thirteenth Army council express sympathy

From: SECRETARY WAR OFFICE

Two days later, on the 16th April, Private Donald Herbert Cook joined the Machine Gun Corps. The Brighton Grammar School *Past & Present* magazine had recorded that Don had joined the Prince of Wales' Own Civil Service Rifles (the Civil Service Rifles were one of the few Regiments that would still accept volunteers) in late 1917. His name can be found listed as having served in the Regiment's Official History but as his service records did not survive the blitz of 1940 (when over 65% were destroyed by fire), what scant records do remain tell us almost nothing of his time in the Army. All that can definitively be said (from his number, which were all sequential) is that he transferred to the Machine Gun Corps from the Civil Service Rifles on 16/4/1918.

This means he almost certainly went to Belton Park in Grantham which was the Training Centre for machine gunners and their teams, before being sent overseas. Without his papers, it is impossible to determine which unit he served with, or where. You can get a rough idea sometimes based upon other soldiers with nearby numbers whose papers have survived, but in Don's case there is nothing to go on. He would have gone (almost certainly to France) in late May or early June 1918. The medal rolls do tell us that he was discharged to Class Z reserve (liable for recall) on 19/2/1919.

Whether this move from the Civil Service Rifles to the Machine Gun Corps was a voluntary thing is unlikely. Usually recruits had no choice in the matter – they were merely advised that they were transferred and that was it – they were in the Machine Gun Corps.

After the men had been trained, they sometimes joined a new Company being formed in the UK to go overseas, but other times they were sent directly to the HQ in France where their unit in the field would be decided, based upon the need to replace soldiers killed, wounded or sick up in the front lines.

On the 17th April, the 175th Labour Company are based at Allonville near Amiens, nearly 100 miles away from where Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook had met his fate.

How and when Ted and Don found out about Eddie's death is not known.

The 11th Suffolks saw a lot of fighting over the next few days.

The War Diary says:

12.4.18. 5.0a.m. Batt formed up in artillery formation about 1 mile South East Bailleul.

11.a.m. Batt became involved in fighting.

13.4.18. 3p.m. Batt attacked by enemy pushed back.

Place: Bailleul 14.4.18. 2a.m. Batt withdrawn to line of railway South East of Bailleul station.

15.4.18. 4a.m. Batt relieved by 2/6 South Staffords and marched to Meulehook. Work carried on in Army 1st line.

9p.m. Batt became front line again through enemy advance

16.4.18. Patrolling & digging actively carried on.

17.4.18. Considerable shelling attempts by enemy to advance.

18.4.18. 2a.m. Batt relieved by 17th & 18th King's Liverpool Regt.

19.4.18. Quieter day

20.4.18. Ditto

The Crawley local papers for April 20th record:-

DEATH OF 2ND LIEUT. R. E. COOK. — The sad news has been received of the death of 2nd Lieut. Richard Edward Cook, of the Suffolk Regiment, only son of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Cook, of Perryfield Road, Crawley. A telegram on Saturday announced that he had been wounded, and this intimation was succeeded by a communication conveying the information that he had succumbed to his wounds, which, it is understood, were in the abdomen. Very great sympathy will be felt for the bereaved parents and daughter, as well as for the other members of the family, who are held in high respect in the district.

2nd Lieut. Cook was 20 years of age and he joined the Army as soon as he was eligible, remaining at school until a short time before he was 18. He was a very bright and promising lad, and though he has sacrificed his life in the greatest of all causes, his death will nevertheless be deeply regretted by all who know the family.

On 24th April, a package containing the effects of 2nd Lt. R. E. Cook was delivered to Lathbury – the shipping note has survived as part of his war record:

From: THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT, General Headquarters, 3rd Echelon: British Armies in France.

To: MESSRS. COX & CO.'S SHIPPING AGENCY, LTD., 16 Charing Cross, London, S. W.

*The undermentioned effects of the late
2 Lt R E COOK, 11 Suffolk
are forwarded herewith, by registered post.
INVENTORY (all the items listed have been ticked off)*

Record of Service

Cigarette Case

Watch

Ditto unveiled with strap guard

Powder Puff

Tie pin

2 Studs

Badge

2 ditto (collar)

10 buttons

Letters etc.

24/4/18

Please acknowledge receipt.

Of all these items, the thing that puzzled me most was the presence of a 'powder puff'.

Shortly after writing the above, I overheard an item on a television chat show that provided a most poignant explanation.

It is said that the fear that men had to endure in the trenches when facing moments of great stress could sometimes make the colour drain away from their faces. Junior officers could not afford to show that they were affected by fear in front of the men they were supposed to be leading and so had hit upon the trick of carrying a powder puff with a bit of rouge around with them. When they had to face moments

of crisis they could quickly dab on a bit of colour to their cheeks to help give them the appearance that they were not scared and that all was well.

The presence of the powder puff does, in a sense, make him all the more real. Here is a glimpse of a 20 year old boy from Crawley who is trying to do his best and does not want to let himself and the men who are relying on him down.

All the things I have learnt about Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook's time in the Army – going 'over the top' in the first wave following the tanks at Cambrai, enduring the greatest bombardment the world had ever seen and helping his Battalion organise a fighting retreat at the Kaiser's Battle, the horror of having to go through it all again at the Lys and his fatal wounding by the side of the Armentieres-Bailleul railway line – have left me with a huge sense of pride and admiration for this young man and the way he conducted himself but the presence of the powder puff just makes me feel an incredible sadness.

April 27 – PRESUMED TO HAVE BEEN KILLED. – Mrs. Johnson, of Belle Vue Farm, Tilgate, has received from the officer in charge of records the following notice: 'It is my painful duty to inform you that no further news having been received relative to Pte. William Johnson, who has been missing since May 3rd 1917, the Army Council have been regretfully constrained to conclude that he is dead, and that his death took place on the date named (or since). By His Majesty's command I am to forward the enclosed message of sympathy from Their Gracious Majesties the King and Queen. I am at the same time to express the regret of the Army Council at the soldier's death in his country's service.'

A brother, Pte. James Johnson, was killed some time ago. Both lads were greatly respected. William was employed in the dairy at Tilgate for over nine years and James was in the Tilgate gardens. In this further bereavement Mrs. Johnson and the other members of the family have the sincere sympathy of many friends.

WOUNDED. – Pte. A. E. Hollands, Royal Sussex, is reported to have been wounded.

DROWNED. – Official intimation has been received that Pte. W. Bayford, of Crawley, previously reported missing, was drowned.

DIED FROM WOUNDS. – Mrs. Beale, of Tushmore, Crawley, has received news from the War Office that her husband, Driver Roger Beale, of the M. T., has died from bomb wounds in France. He was a son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Holloway, of County Oak, and before enlisting in June 1915, was a chauffeur. He leaves a widow and two children, for whom much sympathy is felt. The following letter has been received from the Captain:

'Dear Mrs. Beale, I feel I must write you a few lines and offer my sincerest sympathy in the sad loss you have sustained, and to let you know a few details concerning your lamented husband's tragic end. He was just returning into the park on his lorry, after his day's work, when a bomb from enemy aircraft burst and injured him. He was at once placed on an ambulance and conveyed to hospital, where he expired from his wounds. I, as well as his companions, deeply deplore his loss, for he was always such an excellent man in all his duties.'

Private Roger Linden Beale was serving with the 44th Auxiliary Steam and Petrol Company part of the Army Service Corps when he died of wounds on the 25th March. He was born in Redhill and before the war was a chauffeur and married a Miss Lily Daisy Holloway. After the war the Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes she had married a Mr Messer and was living at Tushmore, Crawley. He is buried in Rosieres British Cemetery.

Private William Geer of the 1st Battalion, Royal West Surreys was killed in action on the 16th April. He was 34, a son of Harry and Harriett Geer of Mill Lane, Ifield. He was married to Rose and they lived at number 19, West Street. He was born in Maplehurst and had enlisted in Horsham. His name is included on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial and on the gates at Crawley. He is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial.

Included on the Memorial gates is the name H. C. Ramsay which may be Lieutenant Herbert Cyril Ramsay of the 1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment who died of wounds on the 22nd April. He was buried in Brown's Road Military Cemetery, Festubert.

His connection with Crawley is unknown.

On the Western Front the fighting raged on. From the 11th Suffolks War Diary:-

21.4.18. 4.0a.m. Batt relieved by 133rd French Division and marched back to (illegible) East of Boschepe

Place: Boschepe 22.4.18. Batt moved to School Camp near St. Jan Ter Biezen

Place: St. Jan Ter Biezen 23.4.18 Batt inspected by Dir. General & complimented.

24.4.18. Bathing refitting.

25.4.18. Orders received to stand by ready to move forward.

26.4.18. Batt ordered to dig Poperinghe line & moved to (illegible) North East of Poperinghe work carried on, digging, frontage shifted to right.

27.4.18. Batt relieved by 2/5th Leinsters, moved forward to Brandhoek Line.

28./29./30.4.18. Digging in Brandhoek Line, intermittent shelling, several casualties.

Casualties sustained during month of April

	Officers	O.R.
Killed	4	39
Died of wounds	4	3
Wounded	10	157
Missing	5	272
Total	23	471

From the History of the Suffolk Regiment:-

On the 14th Brig.-General R. C. Gore, C. B., C. M. G., who had commanded the 101st Brigade since its arrival in France, was killed in action. He was succeeded by Brig.-General W. J. Woodcock, D. S. O. The next day the 59th Division having been overwhelmed, the 11th Battalion once more became part of the front line. On the night of the 17th-18th the battalion was relieved, moving at first into reserve trenches and three days later back to Boeschepe. The casualties in the battles of the Lys amounted to nearly five hundred, including the following officers –

Killed: Captain G. K. Moseley; Lieut. E. T. Bolton; 2nd Lieuts. G. L. A. Duddy, R. C. Foster, and R. Theobald, M. C.

Died of wounds: Captain W. E. Harrison, M. C.; 2nd Lieuts. R. E. Cook, H. A. Reed, M. C., and W. H. Roxbrough, M.C.

Wounded: 2nd Lieuts. W. P. Anness, G. L. Bryant, M. C., J. E. Garnett, G. W. Harvey, H. D. S. Page, S. H. Phillips, H. E. Rowe, G. D. W. Thacker, and Lieut. and Quartermaster H. Cranfield.

Prisoners of war: Captain L. H. Rodwell, M. C.; 2nd Lieuts. G. S. Keightley, G. T. Lloyd, R. S. Shepherd, and J. A. Simmons.

After the first battle of Kemmel Ridge the 34th Division came out of the line and was employed in digging defence lines near Poperinghe, being twice called upon to stand and prepare to defend the line it was digging, namely, during the second battle of Kemmel and also the battle of Scherpenberg Ridge. On neither occasion, however, were the services of the division actually required.

The Battle of the Lys, or Fourth Ypres, as it also came to be known, was called off by Ludendorff on April 29. Despite spectacular gains and forcing the British into a chaotic retreat, his troops had again lost touch with their lines of supply and communication, and yet again no real strategic objectives had been taken. The Allied lines had been broken and many casualties had been lost on both sides but the newly-formed Allied lines, which still protected the vital railway hub at Hazebrouck, were not broken and stood firm on the morning of May 1st.

Although the Battle of the Lys was not the turning point of the war it was certainly a definitive moment. Ludendorff was to launch two more offensives that

spring and early summer (Operation Gneisenau and Operation Blucher-Yorck) but never again on such a great scale as the German Army's losses of men and materiel started to take an effect. Allied casualties for the fighting in the Lys sector April 9 – April 30 were over 82,000 with the 34th Division alone sustaining almost 5,000 losses.

There are two very clear instances of extraordinary heroism included in the History of the 34th Division that will give the reader a further idea of conditions during the battle. The first is the story of Private Arthur Poulter, 24, of the 1/4th Battalion, West Riding Regiment who won the Victoria Cross

'for conspicuous bravery when acting as a stretcher bearer. On ten occasions Private Poulter carried badly wounded men on his back to a safer locality, through a particularly heavy artillery and machine gun barrage. Two of these were hit a second time while on his back. Again, after a withdrawal over the river had been ordered, Private Poulter returned in full view of the enemy, who were advancing, and carried back another man who had been left behind wounded. He bandaged up over forty men under fire, and his conduct throughout the whole day was a magnificent example to all ranks. This very gallant soldier was subsequently seriously wounded when attempting another rescue in the face of the enemy.' – From the London Gazette 28th June, 1918.

Arthur Poulter survived the war and died in 1956. In 2005, the town of Erquinghem-Lys, led by Jack Thorpe, in his capacity as secretary of the local historical society, erected a monument dedicated to Pte. Poulter by the railway line. In the distance can be seen La Rolanderie farm.

Also there is the following incident that must have occurred on the 9th or 10th April. The Germans were held up in one place by a single machine gun. Try as they would, they could not get on, so deadly was its fire. At last an officer hoisted a white flag, and went forward to ask the gun team to surrender. To his astonishment, he found only one man alive. Him he promised the best treatment and all kinds of things to chuck up, but the lad said no he would die with his comrades. The German officer went back, and the lad fought on until he was killed. By these acts and countless others, the way to Ypres, and the Channel Ports, had been saved.

The last word on Battle of the Lys should perhaps be left to F. Haydn Hornsey:-

Now began one of the biggest tasks we had yet encountered, and that was to go back and find our battalion. Bill and I and another fellow started out to go somewhere – wherever fate guided us. We had not the faintest idea where we were going, but set out with the sole idea of walking somewhere, in the hope that we should come across the remainder of our battalion.

We kept on walking – how long and how many miles, God only knew. We must have walked a tremendous distance, as our feet were getting sore – we were tired and beginning to feel the effects of hunger.

Everywhere this sector seemed full of French troops, but we eventually came across the headquarters of the Duke of Wellingtons, where we stayed the night. After making many enquiries, we heard that our battalion was at a certain village. The next day we again set off, and after a journey which seemed endless we arrived there, only to learn that they had left the previous day. A battalion of Northumberland Fusiliers were here, resting. Our condition was appalling. What a filthy state we were in – our clothes all muddy and torn in many places – boots sadly in need of repair and a fortnight's growth of beard on our chins.

That night we lay on bare boards with one blanket over us. It was bitterly cold – our bodies were aching and felt as stiff as the boards themselves did. Tired and worn out as we were, real sound sleep was impossible. We only lay shivering and dozing until daybreak. Daylight was really welcome, for now I could get up and have a run round to warm myself a little. Eight o'clock came, and we managed to get hold of some hot tea, not too strong and with plenty of grease on the top, but nevertheless it was hot – it certainly did seem to go down well – it was ages since we had last had tea.

Late in the afternoon we received orders to proceed to a certain place somewhere in France, miles behind the lines. We were told to get away as soon as possible, as we had a long walk in front of us. Our battalion was expected there this day, but if they had not arrived when we did, we were to wait for them.

We commenced our journey in search of the battalion to which we belonged. We tramped over main roads, by-roads and lanes for miles and miles. We got tired – the continual walking was monotony in its worst form. We felt as though we were on an endless walk – a tramp which had to be kept up, anxious as we were to rest – we dared not stop, in case we missed our battalion. We passed through several villages – the estaminets were open, all packed with troops drinking and enjoying themselves under strange circumstances. We were thirsty – so thirsty we felt like dying – felt like giving up.

At last we arrived at the camp and approached the tent of the Quartermaster Sergeant. We told him who we were while we still stood outside the tent. "Oh, yes! What do you say? Only three of you? C Company? Go and get in any of the tents in the first row from the hedge." As each tent had sixteen men in it, to have three more met with disapproval. However, we were allowed in and lay down on the bare ground, but we were thankful to have anywhere to sleep. The only advantage we had was that we could keep warm, as were sleeping almost on top of one another. It was now about six o'clock, and by eight o'clock we were out and about again. Breakfast was up – consisting of one small piece of fish and very little greasy tea. In fact, there were more tea-leaves than tea.

While we were sitting there, I could see that we were attracting a good deal of attention. These troops we were with had just come out from England and were all smartly equipped, with bright buttons, shining shoes, and spotless in every detail. Some asked where we had been to get in such a condition. Others wanted to know when we had last had a shave. Scores of other questions were fired at us. These fellows had not the slightest idea what we had been through and what they might perhaps have to go through themselves. If they had to go through what we did, they would understand what it meant to be a soldier in time of war. What a contrast we were to them – covered in mud, with worn-out shoes, torn clothes, and long beards! No wonder they asked us all these questions.

Although in our own battalion there was not one chap with whom we had come out, this was easily explained. The battalion had been made up with new troops to full strength. There is no doubt that it was needed, for out of one thousand two hundred men who went into that wheat-field on the 9th April, less than fifty answered the roll call when they were taken out of action a few days after. 'C' Company was completely wiped out, and I believe we three were the only survivors.

Included amongst the papers in Ted's war record is an Arrival Report which states:

- 1. Rank and Name: 2nd Lt A. E. Cook*
- 2. (a) Regiment and Brigade (or Division): 12 Res. Gare Bt. Suffolk Regt.*
- 2. (b) If attached to another unit overseas, the Battalion and name of Regiment must be stated:*

Attd. 175 Labour Coy. B. E. F.
- 3. Address in United Kingdom: Lathbury, Crawley, Sussex*
- 4. Date of leaving Unit (Abroad): 30/4/18*
- 4a. If a Staff Officer, date of cessation of Staff duties: (there is a line through this)*
- 5. Date of Embarkation for England: 1/5/18*
- 6. Port of Embarkation for England: Boulogne*
- 7. Port of Disembarkation (England): Folkestone*

8. Date of Arrival in England: 1/5/18

9. Cause of Return: Special Leave

10. Dates if on leave, from: 1/5/18

To: 11/5/18

11. Authority: 4th Army

12. Whether examined by a Medical Board since return from Continent: No

MAY 1918

May 4 – KILLED IN FRANCE. – *The sad news has come to hand the Pte. William Hills, of the Royal Sussex, has made the supreme sacrifice in France. Before joining the Army Mr. Hills was engaged as a butler at Broadfield, Crawley, where he had been for many years, and he had a whole host of friends, who will deeply regret to hear of his death.*

Another Crawley man to sacrifice his life for his country is Sergt. Jack Heritage, of the R. G. A., son of Mrs. Heritage, of the High Street. The deceased soldier, who was 32 and married, was awarded the Military Medal a short time since, and as recently as Easter was home on leave. The bereaved relatives have the sincere sympathy of many friends.

Mr. and Mrs. W. Thayre, of West Street, Crawley, will have the heartfelt sympathy of all who know them in their recent bereavement, official news having been received this week of the death in action of Pte. Percy Thayre, of the Grenadier Guards. Another son, Bert, made the great sacrifice about a year ago ; and a third son, William, was captured in the battle of Mons and is still a prisoner in German hands. Pte. Percy Thayre, who was 23 years of age and single, was in the Metropolitan Police Force before he joined the Colours, and was a very popular and much-liked man. The greatest regret is expressed at his demise and much sympathy offered to the grief-stricken parents.

WOUNDED. – Official news has been received that Pte. Douglas Bates, a son of Mrs. Bates, of the Gossops Green Railway Crossing, has been wounded in one leg below the knee. He is now in hospital at Bristol, progressing favourably.

TAKEN PRISONER. – Information recently received by Mr. and Mrs. Cooper, of Ifield Road, Crawley, shows that their son, Pte. Harold Cooper, of the Wiltshire Regiment, was taken prisoner by the Germans on March 21st; and there is, unfortunately, reason to believe that another son, Pte. T. H. Cooper, of the West Kents, has shared a similar fate.

A CRAWLEY MAN'S BRAVERY. – 'To Edwin Brown, for courage in extinguishing a fire after an explosion, in which he lost the sight of an eye, and enabled 600 of his fellow workpeople to get clear.' These were the terms upon which His Majesty the King agreed to the presentation of a medal to Mr. Brown, whose home was at Crawley, where several of his relatives still reside, and who is now engaged at a munition works. The medal was pinned upon Mr. Brown's breast by Lord Ashcombe, the Lord Lieutenant of the County, in the presence of many distinguished persons, as well as workpeople, and Mr. Claude Clark, in introducing his lordship, recalled the circumstances of the act, mentioning the nature of the work that Mr. Brown was engaged upon when a fuse exploded and stuck him in the eye, whereby he lost the sight of that eye. Notwithstanding his injury, Mr. Brown rushed up to the fire extinguisher, put out the fire and at the same time gave the alarm, enabling the many workpeople to escape. All happened in a few moments and but for what Mr. Brown did, at the imminent risk of his life, many would probably have perished. When Dr. Williamson came up afterwards and asked "What is the matter with you?" Mr. Brown coolly replied "Only a knock in the eye." the coolness displayed, added Mr. Clark, undoubtedly averted a great disaster. – There were other felicitous speeches, in which very warm thanks were accorded Mr. Brown and the hope expressed that he would live long to enjoy the honour he had so nobly won.

Private William Hills is another mystery. There are three William Hills listed on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission web site. The first, Private William Hills, of the 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabineers) died on the 24th March. Secondly, there is Private William Edward John Hills who was with the 1st Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers when he died on 21/03/1918. Lastly there is Lance Corporal William John Hills who was serving with in 'C' Company of the 7th Battalion of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) when he died on the 28th March. He was 24 and the son of Uriah and Sarah Hills, of 38, Chipstead Lane, Riverhead, Sevenoaks, Kent. By a strange coincidence all three of these men are commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial.

Sergeant Jack Heritage M.M., was serving with the 66th Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery when he was killed in action on the 21st April 1918. He was 34 and was born in Crawley. He was married to Ivy and they lived at No. 15 Batavia Road in New Cross. He was awarded the Military Medal (M.M.). He was buried in Eblinghem Military Cemetery and remembered on the Gates in Crawley.

Guardsman Percy Frank Thayre was with the 4th Battalion of the Grenadier Guards when he was killed in action near Vieux on the 12th April. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in London. He was buried in the Aval Wood Military Cemetery at Vieux-Bequin. His name, along with that of his brother, appears on the gates at the Memorial Park.

Ted's Arrival form has a date of 6/5/18 and he has signed it. Written over the form is a scribbled note that says 'leave extended until 18/5/18.'

This is probably due to the doctor's note dated 6/5/18:

2/Lt. Cook A. E. 175 Labour Company Age 50 8/12 years

This officer is suffering from rheumatism.

I recommend that he be granted one week's extension of leave.

Ted confirms this in his letter of May 9th 1918 to the War Office:

Re: Extension of Leave (from B.E.F.)

To Staff Capt. 'E of L' Dept. War Office

Sir

I have the honour to report that I have not yet received the Extension of Leave Form which was to be posted on to me by an officer in room 047 (I believe that was the number) on Monday 6/5/18.

My leave expired 11/5/8 and the extension – recommended by M. O. Millbank was until 18/5/18.

I have the honour to be Sir

Your Obedient Servant

A.E. Cook 2nd Lt.

Labour Company

Late 1st (R) Garr Bt. Suffolk Regt

And then this letter addressed to the Secretary of the War Office, on May 15th, a little over a month since Eddie's death. One can only imagine his state of mind at the time of writing.

Re: My letter 9th inst & attached wire '7469 A. G. 4.C.'

Sir

Reference above.

I have the honour to inform you that I received the paper extending my leave on the 10th inst.

The reference number of this paper being: '153538/4 A. G. 4.C. B. 3B'

I beg to report that although my rheumatism is not well, I feel fit to return to my unit and am therefore not sending a Medical Certificate.

I am applying through my O. C. Coy on my arrival in France for 'Home Service'

On the grounds of:

(1) Death of only Son in action 13/4/18

(2) Illness of both of my remaining brothers in my business.

(one in asylum – brain trouble)

(3) Rheumatism.

I understand I cannot apply except through O. C. Coy on reasons 1 & 2.

Reference concluding two words of attached wire ('await instructions')

Please wire me before 12 O' clock noon – on Friday if I am to do this.

I have the honour to be Sir.

Your Obedient Servant

A. E. Cook 2nd Lt.

May 18 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Mrs. Cole, formerly of Crawley and now of Tunbridge Wells, has received the sad news that her youngest son, Private Lionel R. Cole, of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, was killed in Palestine on the 29th April. He joined up in 1915, when only 16 ½ years of age, and after serving one year in France returned to England, where he remained until he was 19, when he was sent to Egypt in November of last year. The deceased mother's father, it will be remembered, was for a considerable time in the employ of Mr. H. Gravely, baker, and the family removed soon after his regretted death to Tunbridge Wells. Mrs. Cole will have the heartfelt sympathy of many friends in her bereavement.

The name of Private S. B. Bryant, of the Bedfords, whose home is reported to be Crawley, is also among those who have been killed in a recent action.

The under-mentioned Crawley men are officially reported to have been wounded:

Sapper E. A. Day, R. E.; Gunner W. Lillywhite, R. F. A. ; Private A. J. Weeks, King's Royal Rifles; Corpl. H. P. Hygate, Royal Sussex; Signaller W. H. Johnson, Royal Sussex; Private W. Mitchell, Royal Sussex; and Private G. Deacon, of the Bedfords.

Private W. Worsall, of the Shropshire Light Infantry, is officially reported missing.

Private Lionel Robert Cole was 19 when he was killed on the 26th April. He was buried in the Jerusalem War Cemetery in Israel. Private Sidney Bancroft was also 19 when he was killed on the 30th May. He was buried at St. Souplet British Cemetery near Le Cateau.

May 25 – LOCAL CASUALTIES – Official lists record the following casualties among Crawley and Ifield men:-

Pte. C. F. Charman, Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, of Ifield, killed.

Pte. E. A. Freeman, Sherwood Foresters, of Crawley, wounded.

Lc-Corpl. R. Road, Middlesex, attached to London Regiment, of Crawley, wounded.

Pte. T. H. Cooper, Royal West Surrey Regiment, of Crawley, missing.

Private Charles Frederick Charman was 26 and serving with the 6th Battalion of the Royal West Surrey Regiment when he was killed in action during the March Retreat on the 27th March 1918. He was a son of George Henry and Olive Kate Charman who lived in Lowfield Heath, born in Pulborough and resided in Merstham. He had enlisted in Redhill. His name is included on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial and on the gates in Crawley. His body was never found in the chaos of the retreat. He is another commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial.

The May 1918 edition of the Brighton Grammar School *Past & Present* magazine has the following obituary:-

2nd Lieut. RICHARD EDWARD COOK (1913- 1915)

Suffolk Regiment

Died of Wounds, April 13th, 1918, aged 20.

Cook came from Crawley, and though he was not long with us will be remembered by many of those even now in the School. He distinguished himself in the School games and Marshall House in the year 1915, when he and his cousin Donald were the bowlers, carried off the House Challenge Cup with ease, Three Houses were dismissed with a total score of less than ten, Cook being responsible for 24 wickets at a cost of 30 runs. He was a House Prefect during his last year. He joined up as soon as he was eligible and served for some time in the ranks before he received his commission. He was an only son, and his father has been himself serving since the beginning of the war.

JUNE 1918

June 8 – WAR CASUALTIES. – The following were among local casualties officially reported this week:

Pte. W. H. Every, London Regiment (Crawley), killed;

Pte. W. Knight, Royal Sussex Regiment (Crawley) missing;

Sergt. J. H. C. Lindfield, R. F. A. (Crawley) and

Pte. A. T. Gates, Royal Sussex Regiment (Crawley), wounded.

Private Walter Henry Thomas Every was 29 when he was killed in action on the 5th April. He was a son of Walter and Elizabeth Every of Stoke Newington and was the

husband of Edith Evelyn Every (who later remarried) of 15, Cross Keys, Crawley. He was born in Hackney and had enlisted in Stoke Newington. His name is recorded on the War Memorial at Ifield and on the Park Gates in Crawley. He is commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

June 15 – DEATH OF PTE. A. J. GORING. – The sad information has been received that Pte. Alfred John Goring, of the Warwickshire Regiment, has died of enteric fever in a hospital at Egypt. Before joining the Colours, at the outbreak of the war, Mr. Goring was for over 20 years employed in the grocery establishment of Mrs. Garrett and Mr. Harold Garrett, Brighton Road, and was a greatly respected young fellow. He had been in the Territorial Force for a considerable time. Mr. Goring resided in Horsham Road, Crawley, and was home for last Christmas, as well as a little later, when he had his final leave before proceeding abroad. Previously he had been stationed in various parts of England. He had been in hospital practically ever since he arrived in Egypt, suffering from dysentery and lately from enteric, to which he succumbed on the 8th inst. His death will arouse considerable regret on the part of many friends, and much sympathy will be extended to the widow and relatives. Pte. Goring was 44 years of age.

Private Alfred John Goring died of disease at Ismailia in Egypt on the 7th June. He was the husband of Mrs E. Goring and they lived with his grandparents at 15, Horsham Road, Crawley. He was born in Brighton and had enlisted in East Grinstead. He had served with the Royal Sussex Regiment before joining the Warwickshires. His name appears on the gates at Crawley and also on the War Memorial at Worth. He was buried at the Ismailia Military Cemetery in Egypt.

June 22 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The following names appear in the official list of casualties this week: Bomb. H. Charman, R. F. A., Crawley, wounded; Pte. H. Tyrnell, Hants. Regiment, Crawley, wounded; Pte. P. S. Botting, North Staffords, Crawley, wounded; Acting-Corpl. C. McCornick, Royal Sussex, Crawley, wounded; and Lc. Corpl. J. Read, M. G. C., Crawley, missing.

GRIEF TURNED TO JOY. – Mr. and Mrs. Bryant, of the George Hotel Shades, Crawley, have recently had an extraordinary experience in connection with the war. Both their sons are in the Army, and one of them, Private Sidney B. Bryant, of the Bedfordshire Regiment, who went to France in November last, was officially reported killed on March 23rd, the intimation being accompanied by the usual form expressing the King's sympathy. The parents were naturally greatly grieved at this sad news, and, desirous of ascertaining some particulars of their son's death, wrote a letter, in reply to which an Officer of the Company to which the soldier belonged sent a communication stating:

'Your son was spared all suffering. He was shot through the heart in the battle of St. Quentin and his death was instantaneous. I am sorry to have to tell you that owing to the nature of the fighting it was then quite impossible for us to bury our dead. Your son, though only a boy in years, was a good soldier and a brave man, extremely popular with the Company. It is impossible for me to realise what the news of his death must mean to you. May I assure you that you have the sincere sympathy of the Company in your great loss.'

With this confirmation of their son's death Mr. and Mrs. Bryant, much distressed, conveyed the sad tidings to the lad's former home and a memorial service was held in the church where he used to be a member of the choir. The joy of the parents can be imagined when, a few days since, they received a postcard, in the lad's own writing, stating that he was a prisoner of war in German hands. The War Office has now written expressing regret at the error and asking for the return of the official papers.

June 29 – MISSING AND WOUNDED. – Sgt. E. C. Deacon, M. G. C., of Crawley, is reported missing ; and Lance-Corpl. T. H. Boorer, of the Lancashire Fusiliers, whose address is also given as Crawley, has been wounded.

SAPPER ERNEST COURT, reported wounded some ten weeks ago, has been lying in hospital in a very serious condition, and has now lost his right arm. The doctors were compelled to amputate the limb in order to save his life, and it is sincerely hoped he will now make a good recovery.

JULY 1918

The situation on the Western Front was now approaching a 'tipping point'. The entire series of spring offensives had yielded the greatest territorial gains of the whole war for the Germans. However, as we have seen, no decisive victory in the field had been won and the German Army was now reaching the end of its strength. Their numbers were estimated to be depleted by over a million casualties in the first six months of 1918. The new positions they held were mostly sharp uncomfortable salients that would be difficult to defend when facing an Allied counter-attack. It is said that German High Command needed 200,000 men a month to continue the war, but even by lowering the age of conscription to the next annual class of eighteen year olds, only 300,000 recruits would become available for the entire year.

The Allies on the other hand had no such problems. Their manpower losses had been horrendous but the steadily-increasing numbers of the American Army were more than making up for them. The Americans had also begun to fight in the war proper during the Blucher-Yorck offensive. War matériel was streaming across the English Channel and the Allies were now under the unified command of Marshal Foch. On July 15, the last great German offensive of the Great War began on the river

Marne. The Germans were almost instantly halted by the French who launched an offensive of their own against one side of the German salient on July 18. Although this attack was held off and the salient successfully evacuated, the Germans had been stopped and pushed back. The initiative was passing irrevocably to the Allies.

July 6 – THE TORPEDOED HOSPITAL SHIP. – Private Ernest Stanford, R. A. M. C., of Ifield Road, Crawley, writes: 'Seeing that I sent you a copy of the 'Llandovey Castle News' some time ago, you may be under the impression that I was on her when she was sunk last week. However, I left her quite recently and joined the 'Gloucester Castle' after serving a very happy 19 months aboard the sunken vessel.' Many friends of Pte. Stanford will be glad to hear of his good luck.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Private H. J. Baker, Military Transport, Army Service Corps, of Craigan Lodge, Crawley, has died in a French hospital as the result of gas poisoning. He was 31 years of age. The widow and other members of the family will have the sincere sympathy of many friends in their bereavement.

Gunner G. Parker, R. G. A., Bombr. P. Parsons, R. G. A., and Private P. Ellis, East Surrey regiment, all of Crawley, have been wounded.

Confusion surrounds the fate of Private H. J. Baker. A check on the Commonwealth War Graves site reveals eight H. J. Bakers for the year 1918. Of those, three died after July including the only H. J. Baker who is shown as a member of the Army Service Corps. There is a Private Henry James Baker who was with the 8th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he was killed in action on 21st March 1918. He was 24. He was born in Southease, and had enlisted in Lewes where his parents ran the local Post Office at Rodmell. The British Legion Roll of Honour web site has that Private H. J. Baker as being killed in action on March 21st 1918 – not as having died from gas in a French Hospital.

July 13 – WOUNDED. – Pte. C. H. Covey, of the Royal Warwicks Regt., of Crawley, is officially reported to have been wounded.

A CRAWLEY SOLDIER'S ACCIDENT. – Gunner Ralph Charman, who is attached to the Tank Corps, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Charman, of Horsham Road, Crawley, has had the misfortune to meet with a bad accident in France. His duties since he has been across the water have been more particularly as a despatch rider and a few days since he came into violent collision with a staff car when taking a corner. His injuries included a fracture of a leg which he had previously broken as a child, and he has been brought to a London hospital for treatment. He was exceedingly lucky to have escaped without more serious result. We understand he is making good progress.

MISSING. – Official intimation has been received that *Corpl. Claud Jenner, of the Essex Regt. (attached to the Northhamptons), whose home is at 4 Spencer's Road, Crawley, has been missing since May 27th.*

July 27 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – *We regret to state that two Crawley men reported missing a year ago are now presumed to have been killed. Pte. John Wm. Izard, of the Royal Sussex, second son of Mr. Joseph Izard, of 62, Ifield Road, and Pte. Benjamin Eggleton, of the Royal Sussex, son of Mrs. Eggleton, of Albany Road, are the soldiers referred to, and much sympathy will be felt for the parents in their bereavement.*

Pte. Izard was reported missing on March 26th, 1917, and the Army Council have been regretfully constrained to conclude that his death took place on that date. Prior to joining up the deceased was a footman in the employ of Mr. and Mrs. Goddard, of Tilgate Forest Cottage. A brother, Pte. Joseph John Izard, of the Royal West Kents, was wounded in the spine some time since; whilst the two remaining brothers have had the misfortune to meet with very serious accidents in civil employment.

Pte. Eggleton was in the employ of the Railway Company before he rejoined the Colours as a reserve man, he having previously served for eight years in the Army. He was reported missing in July last year and his death is now presumed by the Army Council. He was a single man, 30 years of age. Both were well known young men and their death will be deeply regretted by many friends of the families.

Pte. G. Philpott, of the Royal Sussex, whose home is at Crawley, is officially reported to have been wounded.

Private John William Izard was 20 when he was killed in action at the First Battle of Gaza on the 26th March 1917. He had been born in Ifield and had enlisted in Horsham. His name appears on the gates at Crawley. He is commemorated on the Jerusalem Memorial.

Private Ben Eggleton was with the 7th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he was killed in action near 'Twin Copses' during the Arras Offensive on the 4th July 1917. His parents, Charles and Ellen Eggleton lived at Southfields in London. He had been born in Bolney and had enlisted in Horsham. His name is also on the gates at Crawley. He is commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

AUGUST 1918

August 3 – THE CROIX DE GUERRE. – *Miss Constance Colt-Williams, daughter of Mrs. Colt-Williams, of the Old Rectory House, Ifield, and until going to France a member of the V. A. D. working at the Crawley Hospital, has been recommended by the French Authorities for the Croix de Guerre, for refusing to*

leave her wounded soldiers when the Germans attacked her hospital, le Chateau de Beamieux, on May 27th, in the Aisne provinces. This hospital formed the most advanced clearing station in the French lines. Miss Colt-Williams was, unfortunately, taken, and remains a prisoner of war.

WOUNDED. – Pte. A. E. Akehurst, M. G. C., of Crawley, is reported to have been wounded.

MILITARY TRIBUNAL. – There were no Crawley or Ifield applications for exemption at last Monday's sitting of the Military Tribunal, but the following were granted the periods of exemption mentioned on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee:

Herbert Cook (47) married, builder, of Crawley, six months.

Now this is a mystery. There had been no mention of Herbert and Chris and the company in the local papers for two years. The last mention of Chris was playing in a Bowls match for Crawley in 1916. He was mentioned every week as playing for the Crawley Bowls Club throughout the 1915 and 1916 seasons but then just seems to disappear. So, with the lack of any information, I had been assuming that Herbert and Chris had been quietly keeping the usual company business going along with whatever they were doing for the war effort.

Until I saw Ted's letter to the War Office on May 15th which included his reasons for wanting to seek a Home Service post. One of those reasons was 'Illness of both of my remaining brothers in my business. (one in asylum – brain trouble).' It has long been family legend that Chris may have spent some time in a sanatorium as a way of avoiding his responsibilities when a young lady of his acquaintance became pregnant. Clearly, Herbert is back on his feet to attend the tribunal, so does this mean that Chris is still in the asylum? Up to this point there had been no mention of either brother ever being summoned to a tribunal, and, as the company was undertaking official work for the war effort, they would be exempt as a matter of course.

The letter written by Ted in May carried the heading 'CONTRACTORS TO H. M. ADMIRALTY, WAR OFFICE & OFFICE OF WORKS' – but that had been crossed out. I think what has happened is that for whatever reason the war work has come to an end and that has meant that Herbert has become eligible for conscription. The only explanation I have for the whereabouts of Chris, three years his junior and why he hasn't been called to the tribunal is that he is still 'ill' in the asylum. It does make me feel rather proud that my great-grandfather, who, with his nephew having already been killed and his son and his brother still fighting, was not applying for exemption but has been granted it.

August 10 – THE MILITARY MEDAL has been awarded to Lance-Corporal T. H. Borrer, Lancashire Fusiliers, of Crawley.

PRISONER OF WAR. – Information just to hand shows that Corpl. Claud Jenner, of Spencer's Road, Crawley, recently reported missing, is a prisoner of war in German hands and is in good health.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE was read to the Crawley public from the garden of the George Hotel annexe, a large crowd gathering in the lower Square for the occasion. Because of this arrangement the message was not shown on the screen at the local picture hall. Mr. S. P. Matthews, chairman of the Ifield Parish Council, made an excellent speech, and was warmly cheered for his well-expressed praises of the Prime Minister's masterly statesmanship, and of the gallantry of the Allied Forces, as well as of the splendid and devoted work of the nurses. The doctor did not forget, either, to refer to the patriotism of those at home, especially the women; and emphasised the importance of the Prime Minister's message to 'Hold Fast.' – Lt. Col. Bramsden and Commander Yerburgh-Bonsey also addressed the gathering, which enthusiastically gave round after round of cheers for all actively engaged in the war. – The singing of the National Anthem, 'Rule Britannia' and 'Auld Lang Syne' brought to a close proceedings which will long be remembered.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Holton and family have the heartfelt sympathy of all their friends in the sad loss they have sustained by the death of their elder son, Hubert, who was in the Royal Sussex Regiment. Although the news has not been officially communicated to them, there seems no doubt that Hubert, whilst engaged in signalling, was recently killed outright by the explosion of a shell, this information having been brought home by Pte. Rice, of East Park.

Prior to the outbreak of war Hubert was engaged in the herbaceous plant department of Messrs. J. Cheal & Sons' nurseries, of whose staff the father also for many years been a respected member: and the call for men found a ready response from the lad, who voluntarily enlisted and subsequently saw much active service in Egypt and Palestine. Only a short time since his battalion was transferred to France, and it was here that he made the great sacrifice. It was expected that Hubert would be having early leave, and in view of this the plans of his marriage to Miss May Peskett were to have been announced for the first time last Sunday.

Like his only brother, Frank, who is in the King's Royal Rifles, at present stationed at Winchester, Hubert was a much-liked lad, and his unfortunate death is deeply regretted. The bereaved relatives, as well as his heart-broken fiancé, have the sincere sympathy of all in their great trouble.

Official news was received on Thursday that Lance-Corpl. Percy Knight, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, whose home is in St. Peter's Road, Crawley, has been wounded for the fourth time. He has had the bad luck to be wounded twice in

Palestine and twice in France. He is the eldest son of Lance-Corpl. Oscar Knight, all of whose sons are in the forces.

The Prime Minister's message of 'Hold Fast' to the country was more apt than the people could have realised. On the Western Front the fighting was reaching a critical last ditch level and, all of a sudden, a decisive victory in the field seemed possible at long last.

On the 8th August, aided by over 500 tanks, the British Fourth Army and French First Army launched the Battle of Amiens. The British part of the assault was spearheaded by the Canadian Corps under Lieutenant General Arthur Currie and the Australian Corps under Lieutenant General John Monash. Assisted by a thick fog the combination of infantry, artillery, tanks and aircraft proved spectacularly successful, the Allies creating a 15 mile gap along the German front and causing chaos in the German rear positions. Total German losses for the battle were around 70,000, including 30,000 prisoners. The Allies losses numbered 42,000. The German Army had been dealt an irrevocable blow. In his memoirs, Ludendorff called the 8th August 'the Black Day of the German Army.'

August 24 – AN AIRMAN'S DEATH. – There passed away, at Lincoln, Pte. Donald Leslie Lucas, of the Royal Air Force, son of Mr. Lucas, of Park View, Ifield, who is also serving in the Army. The deceased was only 18 years of age and succumbed to heart failure. The body was brought home for burial and the sad rites were administered at Ifield on Tuesday by the Rev. L. A. A. Willan (rector of West Crawley). Messrs. Ockenden were in charge of the local funeral arrangements, the body being enclosed in a coffin of polished elm, having brass furniture. There were many evidences of sorrow and regret at the young airman's premature death.

THE LATE PTE. R. HOLTON. – The following letter has been received from an officer commanding a Company of the Royal Sussex Regiment relative to the lamented death of Pte. R. Holton, a son of Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Holton, of County Oak, Crawley:

'It is with the greatest sorrow that I have to acquaint you of the death in action of your son, Pte. R. Holton, who rendered the supreme sacrifice during the severe fighting in which the Battalion has recently been engaged. He has been in my Company for some considerable time, and always proved himself to be an efficient and willing soldier, whilst he rendered invaluable service in his capacity of a signaller. We all feel we have lost a comrade whose place it will indeed be difficult to fill. I can only ask you to accept, on behalf of my brother officers and myself, this expression of our deepest sympathy in your sad bereavement, and whilst I know your loss must seem irreparable, I feel sure the blow will be softened by the

knowledge that your son has laid down his life whilst bravely fighting for his God, his King and his country, in the noblest of all causes. If there is anything further I can do in this matter, or any other information you would like to have, I hope you will not hesitate to let me know.'

WAR CASUALTY. – *Lance-Corpl. A. E. Payne, of the Sherwood Foresters, whose home is given as Crawley, has been officially reported killed.*

Private Donald Leslie Lucas was with the Boys Training Wing of the Royal Air Force at Cranwell when he died at Lincoln Hospital on the 17th August. His name is included on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial.

Private Richard Hubert Holton was with the 1/4th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he was wounded at Grand Rozoy on the Marne and died of those wounds on the 29th July. He was 25, a son of Richard Henry and Sarah Holton of County Oak, Ifield. He was born in Ifield and had enlisted in Horsham. His name is included on the War Memorial at Ifield Parish Church. He was buried in Sur Vesle British Cemetery. His name and also that of Private Donald Leslie Lucas appear on the gates at the Memorial Park in Crawley.

Private Arthur Edward Payne was the second son of Arthur and Esther Payne of Haynes Farm, Copthorne to die in the Great War. He died on 14th July but his body was never found. He and his brother are remembered on the Memorial at Copthorne. He is commemorated at Tyne Cot.

August 31 – WOUNDED. – Private A. J. Hollis, of the Royal Sussex, whose home is at Ifield, has been wounded.

PRISONER OF WAR. – *It is officially reported that Private H. Cooper, of the Wiltshire Regiment, and who lives at Crawley, is a prisoner of war.*

A CRAWLEY CHAUFFEUR'S DISTINCTION. – *Private H. Price, of Spencer's Road, Crawley, who before joining the Army was the chauffeur at Broadfield, had the distinction of being engaged to drive the King during His Majesty's recent visit to France. In a letter home Private Price says; "As a souvenir His Majesty presented me with a gold wrist watch with the initials 'G. R.' engraved on the back. He presented it personally and shook hands cordially before leaving for England." Private Price, who is in the Army Service Corps, already treasures a silver-mounted pipe from the Queen for driving Her Majesty under similar circumstances.*

SEPTEMBER 1918

September 7 – WOUNDED. – Private F. J. Dean, of the Australian Imperial Force, whose home is at 47, Ifield Road, Crawley, has been wounded for the third

time and is now in hospital in England. Private Dean, who has been in France over two years, has been awarded the Military Medal. Other local men reported wounded are Gunner G. J. Knight, R. G. A., and Bombr. P. Parsons, R. G. A. Lance-Corpl. J. Knight, of the London Regiment, is in hospital at the base, suffering from the effects of gas.

Rifleman John Blundell of the 13th Battalion, Kings Royal Rifle Corps, was killed in action on the 13th September. Aged 38, he was born in Crawley, a son of William and Amelia Blundell. He was the husband of Mrs Ellen Blundell of Lee Green, Kent, who later emigrated to Quebec. He had enlisted in Woolwich and was buried in Fifteen Ravine British Cemetery. He is remembered on the gates at Crawley.

September 14 – THE MILITARY MEDAL has been awarded to Private F. Rice, of 102, Spencer's Road, Crawley, who is in the Royal Sussex Regiment. This distinction has been bestowed upon him in recognition of his bravery in carrying in the wounded under heavy shell fire in France on July 29th. As one of the 'Terriers,' Private Rice was mobilised on the outbreak of war, and after a short stay at Newhaven he went overseas, and was in the landing at Suvla Bay. Subsequently he was transferred to Egypt and saw much fighting in Palestine, and, later on, proceeded to France, where he has been engaged in the dangerous work of stretcher bearing. Private Rice was recently home for a fortnight's leave, the first he had had for over three years.

LOCAL CASUALTIES – Official intimation has been received that Private Albert Collison, of the Royal Fusiliers, third son of Mr. Jas. Collison, of Alpha Road, Crawley, has been wounded in the shoulder and is in hospital in Hampshire. Other local men officially reported wounded are: Corpl. F. Packham, Royal Sussex; Pte. J. F. Richardson, Royal Sussex; Pte. G. W. Jupp, Royal Sussex; Pte. G. Barnes, Somerset L. I.; and Pte. A. J. Oram, Royal Fusiliers.

September 21 – A MILITARY MEDALLIST. – Corpl. F. J. Chatfield, of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. Chatfield, of Albany Road, Crawley, has been awarded the Military Medal.

LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES – Corpl. C. M. Woolven, of the Royal Sussex, whose address is given as Crawley, is officially reported to have been killed in action.

Private W. Sired, of the Royal Sussex, whose home is in Alpha Road, Crawley, has been wounded in the left arm and is in hospital in Cardiff.

DIED FROM WOUNDS. – Sergt. A. W. Golden, M. M., who for nearly two years was employed as a hairdresser by Mr. George Nash, at Crawley, has died from wounds received in the course of a very plucky action. During

an enemy attack Sgt. Golden, together with two Lewis gunners, jumped into an abandoned tank, started the engine and moved forward to the post where the enemy was thickest. They checked the advance, inflicted heavy casualties and took 14 prisoners. Sgt. Golden operated the tank until he was badly wounded. His initiative, gallantry and coolness delayed the enemy's advance for a considerable time ; and in recognition of this he was awarded the D. C. M. Unhappily, Sgt. Golden, as mentioned above, has since succumbed to the wounds he then received.

No trace of Corpl. C. M. Woolven can be found on the Commonwealth War Graves web site. There are only nine men called Woolven who died during the war and the only one listed as serving in the Royal Sussex is 19 year old William Thomas Woolven who died on the 25th September 1915 at Loos on the opening day of the battle. His parents are listed as living at Littlehaven Lane in Roffey in Horsham.

Sergeant A. W. Golden, D. C. M., M. M., was 26 and serving with the 11th Battalion of the Royal Sussex when he died of wounds on the 26th April. He was a son of William and Hannah Golden, of Worcester Park. He was born in Devonport. He was buried at the St. Sever Cemetery Extension at Rouen.

Lance Sergeant Harold Phillip Hygate, who, as a Corporal was wounded in May, died of wounds on the 23rd September. He was 31 and serving with the 7th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment. He was the husband of Mrs Annie Hygate and they lived at 119 The High Street. He was born in Slaugham and had enlisted in Crawley. He was mentioned in dispatches in the London Gazette of the 25th May, 1918. Remembered on the gates at Crawley he was buried in Doingt Communal Cemetery Extension.

September 28 – WAR CASUALTIES. – This week the following casualties to local men are officially reported:

Sgt. Albert Edward Mills, of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, has been wounded for the third time and he is in hospital at East Stafford, suffering from a bad shell wound in the left leg.

Pte. Leonard George Mills, aged 18, brother of the above, has also been badly wounded, he having been shot through the left thigh by a machine gun bullet. He is now in hospital at Birmingham. They are the sons of Mr. A. D. Mills, of Malthouse Road, Crawley.

Pte. W. Rice, of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, has been wounded.

Pte. A. Faulkner, of the Royal Sussex, is officially reported to be wounded and not missing.

Pte. Richard Johnson, of the Norfolk Regiment, son of Mr. S. Johnson, St. John's Road, is reported missing since August 23rd. He had only been in France three weeks.

Ordinary Seaman Nash, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. Nash, of West Street, Crawley, was on board a monitor which was sunk by internal explosion on the 16th inst., and in which one officer and 19 men were killed, and 57 men missing, presumed to have been killed. O. S. Nash is happily among the survivors, but he was seriously burnt about the head and face and hands. He is now in hospital at Dover, and latest reports show his condition to be as favourable as can be expected.

A SOLDIER'S SAD DISCOVERY. – A distressing story was told at the inquest on Tuesday on the body of Flo Izard, wife of Phillip Izard, a railway engine coalman, now serving as a gunner in the R. F. A., and whose parents live in Church Street, Crawley.

The husband said he last saw his wife alive in July, 1917, when he was home on leave. They lived in Frederick Street, Brighton, and he arrived home again from France on Sunday evening, when he was informed that his wife had been taken to the Infirmary. When he went there the next morning he learned she had died shortly after midnight. They had been married 16 years ago and had six children living.

Mrs. Ida Brooks, a sister of the deceased, said the latter was a cleaner at the Grand Theatre, she saw her sister in bed on the 19th, when she appeared to be very ill, but, in reply to a question by witness, she denied being pregnant. She refused to have a doctor. When witness saw her on the following day she said she had had a miscarriage. Witness then called a doctor in. The next day her sister got much worse and the doctor ordered her removal to the Infirmary. During her illness the deceased told witness she had taken a certain preparation, but did not say where she had obtained it.

Dr. Ross, medical officer at the Infirmary, said the deceased was in a collapsed condition on admission and dangerously ill. There was evidence of miscarriage having taken place, but the deceased made no statement to him. A post mortem examination revealed puerperal septicaemia following an abortion, there being no evidence of instruments having been used.

Mr. Coroner Bush, who sat without a jury, found a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony.

OCTOBER 1918

October 1918 saw the first signs of the second wave of the 'Spanish Flu' arrive in Crawley. The first wave had been seen as a typical flu epidemic with the sick and the elderly most at risk but the virus had mutated and returned to France and the United States with a vengeance. This mutation, and its subsequent spread, is seen as being directly attributable to the Great War. In ordinary life conditions favour the spread of a mild strain of the virus. Those who become really ill are stuck indoors but those people who only have the mild variation carry on as normal, working and shopping

and interacting with their fellow citizens and thus spreading the milder strain. However, in the upside-down world of the trenches, the severely ill were bundled onto trains and sent to field hospitals which were to become vast breeding-grounds for the deadlier form of the virus.

October 5 – KILLED IN ACTION. – Another local lad to sacrifice his life for his country is Private Richard John Johnson, of the Norfolk Regiment, third son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Johnson, of St. John's Road, Crawley. He was recently reported missing, but now official news has come of his death in action on August 23rd. Private Johnson had been in the Army seven months and in France only three weeks. Prior to enlisting he was an under gardener at The Mount, Ifield, where he was much respected; and his parents and other relatives will have the sympathy of many friends in their sad loss. A brother, Signaller W. H. Johnson, was wounded in March last and is still convalescing.

DIED OF WOUNDS. – It is officially reported that Lance-Corpl. S. V. Sadler, of the Royal Sussex, whose home is given as Crawley, has died of wounds.

WOUNDED. – Corpl. F. Flint, of the Royal Sussex, whose parents live at Gossops Green, Ifield, has been wounded for the second time. He was shot right through the chest, the bullet emerging at the back. Happily, his condition is not so serious as it might have been, and he is making satisfactory improvement in Chichester Hospital.

Private Richard John Johnson was with the 7th Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment when he was killed in action on the 23rd August aged just 18. He had been born in Ifield, a son of Samuel and Emily Johnson of 9, St. Johns Road, Crawley. He had enlisted in Horsham. He was buried in Meaulte Military Cemetery. His name appears on the gates at Crawley.

Lance Corporal S. V. Sadler was with the 7th Battalion of the Royal Sussex when he died of wounds on 28th August. He was 22 and a son of Mrs. A. Sadler, of Richmond Hill in Surrey. He was buried in the St. Sever Cemetery Extension at Rouen.

Airman Clerk 1st Class Maurice Alfred Pavey of No.8 Cadet Wing, Royal Air Force died at Hastings on October 9th aged 30. He was a son of Harry and Ellen Pavey and married to M. A. Pavey of Ifield. He had originally served with the Devonshire Regiment. His name appears on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial. He was buried in St. Margarets at Ifield. He is commemorated on the gates at Crawley.

October 12 – LOCAL WAR CASUALTIES. – The under mentioned local men are included in this week's list of war casualties:

Pte. G. L. Holmwood, of the West Yorkshire Regiment, son of Mr. A. W. Holmwood, of Tushmore, Crawley, is officially reported missing since

September 1st. He went to France in March last. Prior to joining the Army Pte. Holmwood was employed at the Crawley Post Office, and before that was a gardener at Messrs. J. Cheal & Sons Nurseries. More reassuring news is anxiously awaited.

Sergt. E. C. Deacon, M. G. C., of Crawley, who was previously reported missing, is now officially reported to be wounded and a prisoner.

The following Crawley and Ifield men are wounded: Pte. G. W. Rice, Pte. T. Towes, and Pte. A. V. Collison, all of the Royal Fusiliers; and Pte. H. P. Adsett, of the Royal Sussex.

Pte. G. J. Barnes, of the Royal Sussex, whose home is officially given as Crawley, is reported to have been killed.

LANCE-CORPORAL WALDOCK, of the Bedfordshire Regiment, son of Mrs. Waldock, Spencer's Road, Crawley, has had the honour of having the Military ribbon personally pinned on his breast by General Foch, following no fewer than four recommendations for bravery. Lance-Corpl. Waldock, who joined up in 1914, has been wounded three times, on the last occasion in the hip, and he is now in England, serving on the staff at Norwich.

October 19 – KILLED IN ACTION. – The sad news has come to hand of the death in action of Pte. Frederick George Burgess, second son of Mrs. Miles, of 54 West Street, Crawley, who was attached to the Royal Irish Rifles. Pte. Burgess, who was single and aged 20, was a tailor by trade, but before joining the Army he was for a time engaged at Vicker's Small Arms Factory. He had been in France for a year and nine months and spent his only leave home in August last, returning to France in the 27th of that month. His death occurred on the 5th September, and in a letter to his mother an officer writes:

'In reply to your letter of October 4th I can but give you the stories of those who saw your son's end. His Battalion was making an attack when the leading waves got held up by barbed wire, under a murderous fire. Your son, with some others, then rushed forward and started to cut gaps for their comrades to pass through. It was a gallant thing to do and he deserved the luck that is said to favour the brave, but an unlucky bullet hit him in the head and he died instantly. In these days of selfless sacrifice it is some small consolation to know that your son met his end in a manner to call forth the admiration of the brave lads who fought beside him. He was missed keenly by the boys of his Company, where he was a great favourite, and I myself, as his platoon officer, miss his cheerful and willing help. I have known him for several months and always found him ready to do a man's work in a manly way, and I always had a great liking for him and a trust in his courage that everyone does not merit. He was a really good boy that could ill be spared. I can but offer you my heartfelt sympathy in your loss and trust that

the knowledge that your boy 'played the great game' like a man may soften your sorrow with a touch of pride in his demise.'

DEATH OF CRAWLEY HOSPITAL MATRON. – Feelings of profound sympathy and regret were aroused when it became known that Miss Howard, the greatly revered matron of the Crawley and Ifield Cottage Hospital, had passed away on Monday evening. Her end was quite unexpected and but very few people knew that she was even ill. The Matron, who was out in the town on Tuesday in last week, fell a victim to influenza on Wednesday, and this developed into pneumonia, which had a fatal termination on the day named, notwithstanding the most unremitting attentions of the medical staff.

Miss Howard's extremely sad and sudden death is deeply deplored by all associated with the hospital, and indeed by all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance, for she was a most charming woman and an able administrator. She had been the Matron of the hospital here for five and a half years, and the thoroughly conscientious manner in which her responsible duties were discharged had gained the high appreciation of the committee, the medical and nursing staffs, and the Red Cross V. A. D. Detachment.

Since the outbreak of the war a large number of wounded soldiers had passed through the Matron's hands, receiving most patient treatment and careful nursing, and for her work in this connection she was recently recognised by the British Red Cross Society, who specially mentioned her for valuable services. Miss Howard received her training at the Greater London Hospital and previous to coming to Crawley held the position of Matron of the Victoria Hospital, Walton, Norfolk, and for a brief period filled a like post at Watlington, Oxfordshire. Her home was at Lowestoft, where her father and two sisters reside, and for those and other relatives the greatest sympathy will be felt in their very sad bereavement. Miss Howard, who was 51 years of age, was of a robust nature and never had an illness prior to that which caused her death.

WAR CASUALTIES. – The following casualties to local men are reported:-

Pte. H. Pattenden, of the Royal West Surrey Regiment, whose home is in Princess Road, has been wounded in the left arm, but is going on well in hospital in France.

Sergt. P. Simes of the K. R. R., of Princess Road, has been gassed, but is fortunately making a good recovery.

Pte. G. King, of the Hants regiment, and Pte. A. Barnes, of the K. R. R., both of Crawley, have been wounded.

Pte. Jack Tullett, son of Mr. Thos. Tullett, of Tushmore, was gassed on September 28th and also wounded by shell. He is in hospital in England, going on favourably.

Private G. J. Barnes was with the 7th Battalion, Royal Sussex when he died on the 2nd September. He was buried in Guillemont Road Cemetery. Private Frederick George Burgess was a rifleman with the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles when he was killed in action on the 6th September at the age of 20. He had enlisted in Woolwich and was formerly with the Rifle Brigade. He is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial and remembered in Crawley on the gates.

October 26 – THE SCHOOLS CLOSED. – Owing to the alarming spread of influenza in the district the Managers have closed the public schools at Crawley.

WOUNDED. – Pte. W. A. Heyden and Pte. J. Tullett, both of the Royal Sussex and living at Crawley, are among those officially reported this week to have been wounded.

COTTAGE HOSPITAL CLOSED. – In view of the Matron's much regretted death and illness among the staff, the committee have decided to close the hospital for a fortnight. It is hoped to re-open on the 7th proximo.

THE MILITARY MEDAL. – Corpl. Frederick Packham, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, son of Mr. W. Packham, of Horsham Road, Crawley, has been awarded the Military Medal 'for his gallant conduct on August 8th during the operations near Morlancourt.'

Corpl. Packham was wounded on the same day, though happily, not seriously. He enlisted in August, 1914 and was at the Suvla Bay landing. He fell ill with dysentery and was treated in a Bristol hospital, and after recovering was sent to France in 1916. He sustained severe wounds at Messines Ridge in July, 1917, which necessitated his being brought to England; and in the following November he returned to France, since when he has seen much active service. His friends will warmly congratulate him on his well-earned distinction.

NOVEMBER 1918

November 2 – LOCAL DEATHS. – During the past few days there have been a sad number of deaths in Crawley, several of them due to the prevailing malady. Brief details are appended:

Hilda Mary Mills, daughter of Mr. Mills, of Malthouse Road, died on Friday, aged seven.

Ivy Frances Buckman, daughter of Mr. Ray Buckman, Malthouse Road, died on Saturday, aged seven.

Ethel Kate Gibbs, daughter of Mr. J. Gibbs, Malthouse Road, died on Sunday at Croydon, where she was in service, and buried at Crawley on Thursday, aged 23.

Rosina Dean, widow of the late Mr. Edward Dean, who for very many years was the proprietor of the Sun Hotel, Crawley, died on Tuesday, at the age of 74.

Ethel Maud Tullett, a niece of Mrs. Dean, with whom she lived in Ifield Road, died on Saturday, aged 13.

Benjamin Tullett, of Malthouse Road, died on Tuesday, aged 57.

Mary Penfold, wife of Mr. Chris Penfold, of Spencer's Road, died on Wednesday, aged 37.

Caroline Tame, of Malthouse Road, died on Friday, aged 68.

Florence Jenden, daughter of Mr. Charles Jenden, of Princess Road, died in the Isolation Hospital on Monday, aged 10.

More deaths would follow in the coming weeks.

WAR CASUALTIES. – *The sad news has come to hand of the death in action of Rifleman Frederick Edwards, K.R.R., youngest son of Mr F. Edwards, Bank Terrace, Crawley, at the age of 19. He was in the employ of Mr W. C. Gadsdon before he joined up in March last year, and he proceeded to France just before Christmas. He was in charge of a section at the time of his death, and was killed leading it when only a few yards from the enemy. He fell a victim to machine gun bullets. Writing to his parents, his officers speak most highly of the deceased, remarking that he was popular with everyone, especially for his talents as a comedian. He was the life of his Platoon and a general favourite, whilst he also was a very brave soldier.*

Another local lad to make the supreme sacrifice is Corpl. Edward Nicholls, of the Trench Mortar Battery, son of Mr. C. Nicholls, The Elms, Crawley. He had been in France just over three years, and had been slightly wounded on three occasions; and he died of wounds received in action on the 15th ult. Aged 22, he was formerly a confectioner in the employ of Mr. E. S. Hibbs, and afterwards in the Borough, London. Among the letters received by his parents is one from a comrade who writes:

'He was a great favourite with all the boys in this Battery, being such an amiable and unselfish chap, and we feel that the loss of your son – our chum – is irreparable. Please accept our heartfelt sympathies and feelings, and I trust that the knowledge of the high esteem in which he was held by one and all will in some measure make your burden of sorrow lighter.'

Sergt. W. O. Knight, of Crawley, has just been wounded for the second time, he has shrapnel wounds in the back. – Sergt. A. E. Mills, of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, of Crawley, has had to have a leg amputated as a result of wounds recently received. – Corpl. A. E. Willett, of the Royal Sussex, is suffering from bullet wounds in leg and foot. – Other Crawley men wounded are Lance-Corpl. G. Cook and Pte. A. J. Holder.

The Frederick Edwards referred to here is Rifleman Charles Richard Edwards who was with the 11th Battalion of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps when he was killed in action on the 2nd October. He was a son of Frederick and Myra Edwards who lived at Bank Terrace, on the Brighton Road in Crawley. He was born in East Grinstead and had enlisted in Horsham. His name appears on both St John's and St Peter's memorials. He was buried in Sucrerie Cemetery, Ablain St. Nazaire.

Corporal Edward Nicholls was serving with the 21st (County of London) Battalion (1st Surrey Rifles), London Regiment but was attached to the 142nd Trench Mortar Battery when he died of wounds on the 15th October. He had enlisted in Camberwell and was resident in Bermondsey. He was a son of Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Nicholls, who lived at Tilgate Forest Cottage in Crawley. He was buried in Estaires Communal Cemetery Extension. Both men's names are recorded on the gates at the Memorial park in Crawley.

Gunner William Lillywhite of the Royal Field Artillery died on the 2nd November. He was born in Holloway and had enlisted in Brighton. He was a son of William Joseph and Eleanor Lillywhite. He was buried in St. Marie Cemetery, Le Havre. His name appears on the gates at Crawley although it is not clear what his connection with Crawley is.

Private Sidney James Rapley was serving with the 53rd Training Battalion, Royal West Surreys when he died at home on 4th November at the age of 18. He was a son of William and Clara Rapley of Merton Cottage, Ifield and had been born in Charlwood. He had enlisted in Brighton. His name appears on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial and he was buried at St. Margarets. His name is recorded on the gates.

November 9 – WAR CASUALTIES. – The sad news has come to hand of the death of Major Donald P. Sims, oldest son of the late Mr. J. G. Sims, of Gaytonthorpe, Crawley.

Pte. F. Rice, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, whose home is at 102 Spencer Road, Crawley, was admitted to a French Hospital on the 2nd inst., seriously ill, suffering from gunshot wounds of the leg and arm.

Sig. L. G. Holmwood, of the West Yorks, whose parents reside at Tushmore, Crawley, and who was recently reported missing, is a prisoner in German hands.

Second Lieutenant Donald Palmer Sims was serving with the 2nd Battalion of the Honourable Artillery Company (Infantry) when he was killed in action on the 23rd October in Italy. He was 34 and was buried in Tezze British Cemetery in Italy. His name appears on the memorial at St. Peter's and on the gates at the Memorial park.

On the Western Front, the German Army had reached the end of its strength. What became known as the Allies 'Hundred Days' offensive had broken through the Hindenburg Line on October 8th. The German Army was now in full scale retreat with the Allies in hot pursuit. The German High Command were persuaded that an

armistice was needed as the entire nation was close to collapse. The British Navy's long standing blockade had pushed the German nation to the brink of starvation. The Bolshevik Revolution had spread from the Eastern Front and people were openly talking in the streets about doing away with the Kaiser.

The spark of the German revolution took place on the 29th October at the Wilhelmshaven Naval Base. In August, German naval leaders decided to send the High Seas Fleet into the North Sea to give battle to the combined British and US naval forces that commanded these waters. This was to be a suicidal 'Death or Glory' mission. Operations Plan No.19 was adopted on 24 October. The German government were not informed of the decision. However, news of the mission leaked out to the sailors, few of whom wished to sell their lives uselessly for a lost cause. Discontent and mutinous behaviour quickly spread through the crews of many warships and on 30 October, Admiral Hipper cancelled the planned fleet sortie. Within days revolutionary activity had spread around the country and a republic was proclaimed on the 9th November. The Kaiser, still clinging to power, was told in no uncertain terms that he had to abdicate. Famously, when he threatened to lead the German Army in to Berlin to put down the revolution he was told that 'the Army no longer stands behind Your Majesty.' Crushed, the Kaiser fled to neutral Holland, where he remained until his death on 4 June 1941.

While the Allied advance continued, the new German leadership sent a delegation across the lines to seek an armistice. The terms they were presented with amounted to complete German demilitarization and withdrawal from all occupied territories. The Allied Naval Blockade would continue until full peace was agreed. The Germans were in no position to refuse. On Sunday November 10th they were given the newspapers from Paris which showed them that the Kaiser had abdicated. With chaos reigning at home the leader of the German delegation, Matthias Erzberger, was unable to get through to Berlin to get instructions but he was able to get through to Hindenburg at Spa. The Field Marshal simply told him that an armistice had to be signed at any cost. Finally, after three days of negotiating in a railway siding in the forest of Compiègne, the armistice was signed between 5:12am and 5:20am, Paris time, November 11th, 1918.

News of the signing of the armistice was quickly communicated to all armies who were told that hostilities would cease at 11 a.m. that morning. The Great War was over. In Paris, London, New York and all around the world people went wild with celebration.

November 16 – JOY AND THANKSGIVING. – The news of the signing of the armistice was received in Crawley with the greatest enthusiasm, and the streets quickly became very animated. Flags and bunting were profusely displayed, and at night the well-lit shops made a cheering change from the former darkened conditions. A merry peal was rung on the Parish Church bells, and the Crawley

Town Band were out on both Monday and Tuesday nights, their patriotic music adding greatly to the joy and enthusiasm of the people. On the former evening Capt. Tupper made a rousing speech in the Upper Square, and there were rounds upon rounds of cheers for the Army and Navy, and the responsible Ministers of the Crown. A service of thanksgiving was held on Monday evening in West Crawley Parish Church, and a similar service took place in Crawley Parish Church on Thursday.

November 23 – A LOCAL FAMILY'S BEREAVEMENT. – We hear with great regret of the affliction which has fallen upon Mr. and Mrs. Chalk during these days of national rejoicing. They went to Goring for a change on Tuesday, 12th inst. On Thursday evening Mrs. Chalk heard of the death of the only son of her brother, Mr. Hodding, of Harness Grove, Notts. Captain H. E. Hodding died of wounds received in action aggravated by poisoning from a gas shell. He had previously been awarded the Military Cross, for bold initiative, in leading his Company on the death of his Captain. After a visit to England he went out again, promoted to Company rank, and has now lost his life, after the armistice had been signed. On Tuesday, 19th inst., Mrs. Chalk had the further shock of hearing of the death of her nephew, Captain Arthur Maughan Humble-Crofts. R. A. F., from pneumonia following influenza, at Dover, where he has been stationed for some months. Capt. Humble-Crofts died on his 35th birthday. He was the fourth son of Prebendary Humble-Crofts, R. D., Rector of Waldron, was B. A. Oxon., and was married to Miss Margaret Cooper, whom we remember at Crawley for her great kindness in singing at the bazaar to pay the debt on the Crawley and Ifield Schools. The funeral took place at Waldron yesterday (Friday). Their friends will deeply sympathise with the mourners stricken by this double blow in the very hour of victory. But those who have been taken from us have not died in vain.

SERVICES OF THANKSGIVING were held at all the local churches on Sunday, and good congregations were the rule. At Crawley Parish Church the morning service opened with the Doxology, followed by the National Anthem, and in the evening 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow' was sung as a processional ; the recessional, 'Brightly gleams our banner,' being proceeded by the National Anthem. The hymns during the services were of an appropriate nature, and the sermons by the rector (the Rev. H. L. B. Lennard) and the Rev. Mr Whiteway respectively, suitably dealt with the great victory.

The preacher, in a reference to the great events of the past week, said for all Monday last was a day of unspeakable relief. It was also a time for deep thankfulness and rejoicing. Words failed them to express their joy at the deliverance from intense grief and suspense. He rejoiced in the blow which had

been delivered at despotism and in the overthrow of the Kaiser and his militarist clique. It was a good sign of the times that the common people did not bear alone the sufferings of war, but that arrogant rulers who made war were at last experiencing something of its deprivation and loss. Now it was for humanity in quietness to work out its salvation and reap the opportunities peace would bring. There must be great changes in the social order, but he distrusted violent means of bringing this about and hoped reforms would come by constitutional means. They looked for the kingdom of God, which could only come by the silent permeation of society with Christian principles. He pleaded for renewed consecration to that high task. There was need for searching of heart and serious thought so that the problems of the future could be faced wisely and with resolute hearts.

IN MEMORY OF THE FALLEN. – It has been decided to perpetuate the memory of those belonging to West Crawley, who have fallen in the war by erecting an east window in St. Peter's Church, the cost of which is estimated at £200. A fund has been started, with Mr L. E. H. Yates as hon. secretary.

November 30 – IFIELD'S WAR MEMORIAL. – It is proposed to erect a memorial at Ifield to those who have lost their lives in the war, as a mark of reverence for their memory and of sympathy with their relatives, and a meeting, called by the Vicar, has decided on a granite cross, possibly 10 ft. high, to be placed in the churchyard. If possible the names, as well as the inscription, will be put upon the cross, but failing that, a brass tablet containing them is to be placed in the church. It is hoped that that all households will contribute, so as to make it a gift from the parish at large. The probable cost has not yet been ascertained, but a committee has the matter in hand and, meanwhile, the Vicar will be grateful if all who had losses will send him the names and rank.

The war was over but it had left three great mysteries behind. On the gates at the Memorial park the first name listed is that of L. G. Adams. However, the British Legion Roll of Honour web site does not include an L. G. Adams but does include an L. G. Abrams who could be firstly, Lawrence Grant Abrams a Private with the 13th Battalion of the East Surreys, who died of wounds on the 16th April 1918. According to the Roll of Honour web site he was born in Sutton and had and enlisted in Wandsworth. The C.W.G.C. website lists his parents, Michael Frank Arnold Abrams and Sarah Abrams, as living in Fulham. There is no apparent connection with Crawley but his name is included on the Ifield Parish Church War Memorial. Private Lawrence Grant Abrams was buried in the Orpington (All Saints) Churchyard Extension. Or he could be Lawrence Golding Abrams a Lieutenant with the 35th Army Postal Company, Mechanical Transport, Royal Army Service Corps who died on 3rd November 1918 aged 35. Son of Sydney J. and Wilhelmina Abrams, of Natal,

South Africa; husband of Phyllis Abrams, of 8, Caithness Rd., Brook Green, London. Buried in Ste. Marie Cemetery, Le Havre, Seine-Maritime. The C.W.G.C. website has only one L. G. Adams and that is Private Llewellyn Glendwr Adams of the 9th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, who died on the 22nd November 1917, aged 25. According to the C.W.G.C., he was the foster-son of Mrs. E. R. Adams, of Colwyn Bay. The link to Crawley is not clear. Private L. G. Adams was buried in the Tincourt New British Cemetery.

Then there is R. L. Butcher who, according to the Roll of Honour web site could be either - Private Robert Leslie Butcher of the 2nd Battalion, Canadian Infantry (Eastern Ontario Regiment), who was killed in action at Ypres on the 27th April 1915. He was a son of Alfred and Mary Butcher who lived in Crawley and is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres. Or he could be Private Robert Lennox Butcher of the 4th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, who died on the 9th October 1918. He was 19, a son of a Mrs. C. Butcher, of 152, Mercers Road, Tufnell Park. It seems as though Robert Lennox was the son of Robert Henry George Butcher who fell on 10th April 1915. There are two reasons for thinking this. Firstly, R. H. G. Butcher's father's middle name was Lennox and secondly R. H. G's wife's name was Catherine (I am indebted to Russell Gore for pointing this out). He was buried in Forenville Military Cemetery in France. Perhaps conclusively, the War Memorial at St. John's clearly states the name of Robert Lennox Butcher.

And thirdly, H. G. Martin, whose name is on the gates and also appears on the St. Johns Memorial. There are eight H. G. Martins on the C.W.G.C. website. One of them is shown as serving with the Royal Sussex. He is Private Henry George Martin of 'C' Company, 2nd Battalion. He was born at Poplar in London, a son of Charles Edmund and Kate Martin and was married to Elsie Rowena Mary Martin, of Brighton Cottage, Newport, Essex. He died on the 9th September 1916, aged 23. He was buried at Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, Longueval on the Somme.

DECEMBER 1918

December 7 – MY THREE YEARS IN GERMANY By A. G. Harmer, 9th Royal Sussex Regt.

On the night of the 25th September, 1915, about 30 of us – members of the 9th Royal Sussex – found ourselves entirely surrounded by large numbers of the enemy and were obliged to surrender. We were first sent to Lille, where we remained two days, receiving small portions of bread and a little thin vegetable soup. From Lille we were despatched in cattle trucks to Munster. The terrible journey occupied another two days, and during that period we received neither food or drink of any kind, nor were we allowed to leave the trucks for any purpose. I still look back upon that journey with horror, for we were not treated like human beings.

Arriving at the prison camp, for over two months we had to exist on the daily prison rations. The food was not only scanty, but wretchedly bad, and hungry as we were we often could not eat it. It consisted of awfully smelling pieces of bread and a little thin watery soup made by boiling cabbages, potatoes or some other ingredients in large quantities of water so that a few vegetables were made to go a very long way. We also had served out at times some burnt acorn decoction as a substitute for coffee. Such was our fare until parcels arrived from home, and we were all very grateful for them, I can assure you.

Life in the camp was very monotonous, but we were all cheered up by the letters we received from home, and we were allowed to write home one postcard each week and one letter a fortnight. We were not badly treated while in the camp, but when we were sent out in the different working parties things were very different. We were often sent out long distances to work in the mines, living in lagers near where the mines were situated. We were roused up at 4.30 a.m. and returned to our sleeping quarters at about 3 p.m. In the mines all prisoners alike were brutally treated by those set over us. Men were knocked and kicked about for very trifling offences, or for no offences at all. It was common knowledge among us that men were actually killed outright in these mines – sheer brutal murder of which no notice was taken by the authorities. At first a number of us refused to go down the mines as we knew that at home German prisoners were not made to go down the mines. As a punishment we were stood out in the open – not daring to move – and kept thus for 14 hours at a stretch until men dropped from fatigue and exhaustion. At last we had to give in, and down the mines we had to go. Many died from accidents underground, for there were very few safeguards – life was cheap and the death of a prisoner mattered very little. While we were away from camp in these working parties our food parcels were not sent regularly to us and one Christmas Day, although our Christmas boxes had arrived in the camp, we did not get them in time and our Christmas dinner was chestnut soup.

Early in 1917, I was separated from my two chums, Owen Payne and Frank Wells, and was attached to the camp at Fredrichsfeld, and so only heard about them in letters from home. I made two unsuccessful efforts to escape into Holland. Just before leaving work one dark night in March, 1917, two of us evaded the guards, walked all night and hid in the daytime. We got about 25 miles when we ran into a party of guards at a railway bridge. We were quickly collared and escorted back. For this we each received 14 days in prison on bread and water. Early in November, 1918, the same two of us made another attempt ; this time we got within seven miles of the frontier when were again caught, this time by some German police, and were again sent back, but luckily as the Armistice was signed shortly after we received no punishment.

I often witnessed during the latter part of my stay in Germany the sad sight of unfortunate prisoners arriving in batches who had been forced to work behind

the German lines. These poor fellows were in a deplorable condition, ragged, emaciated, half-starved. Many of these died soon after arrival and others had died on the way. Without doubt there are many parents, wives and children here at home mourning the loss of these dear ones whose fate they will never learn – missing is all the information they will be able to receive.

After the Armistice was signed the camp staff cleared off and we were taken in charge by an English captain and lieutenant who a few days before had been captured trying to make their escape. These two officers made plans for the evacuation of the British prisoners then at Fredrichsfeld. Parties of 50 marched to Wesel, went by train to Rotterdam, where they were taken over by the British authorities, fed and fitted out with new clothes.

We were then sent to Hull. Here we had a grand reception and everything possible was done for our comfort. We were in Blighty once more and anxious to be sent home to our friends. It was Saturday mid-day, November 23rd, when I arrived at Hull, and I had the exquisite pleasure of being welcomed by my parents and sisters on Tuesday evening, November 25th, after an absence of over three years.

One painful occurrence happened just before I left Fredrichsfeld. A British prisoner had been there since 1914, and almost on the day of release he was accidentally killed by coming in contact with one of the live wires surrounding the camp. He was electrocuted, poor fellow. Now I am at home I want to heartily thank all those who sent parcels out to us from Switzerland. This food was a real Godsend to us, for we never could have existed on the meagre, wretched food allotted to us by the German authorities.

I fancy all those who have spent any time in German prison camps will never want to see another German – man, woman or child – and I sincerely hope that before long every German now in England, naturalised or unnaturalised, will be sent back to Germany never to return. In conclusion, for the comfort of those who still have loved ones out there and have not heard from them lately, I should like to say that at the time I left the fit ones were being sent away as rapidly as possible ; those who were sick or unfit to travel were being taken care of by the British and French authorities and will be got away as soon as possible. Friends can be assured that they are being properly cared for and will soon be sent home.

December 28 – CHRISTMAS AT CRAWLEY. – Crawley had a quiet Christmas even though the dread war nightmare has passed away. The streets presented more life and bustle than has been the case since Christmas of 1913, and the shops had just a little of their pre-war gaiety, though it was, perhaps, of the ‘ genteel poor better days’ kind of gay appearance, still it was an advance on War Christmas and gives one hopes of happier times.

Fortunately, there were many khaki boys home and a good sprinkling of our gallant sailor lads, and these helped to give a brighter appearance to the streets. These, together with the local lads who have been repatriated from Germany, had many notes to compare, and one could not but hear 'And do you remember?' and, alas! many of the remembered ones will never see Crawley again.

The town had quite a novelty for this time of year in the shape of an old English fair, and it seemed strange to hear this going on during Christmas Day, and, doubtless, the music of its organ proved a mixed pleasure to many. A party of musical people visited the town for two nights, Christmas Eve and Christmas night, and these, with the Imperial Picture Palace, were the only sources of amusement during the holidays. No outdoor sport was available and no dances, so really Crawley folk were able to have a real indoor Christmas, which probably is the very best thing that could happen after the strenuous times of the past four and a half years.

All the bright company of Heaven



Men of the Royal Sussex Regiment, Summer 1918. Ted and Eddie are centre, standing. (original copy with you. Plus close up h/w)



The Battle of Cambrai .The 9th Suffolks followed 'H' tank section in the attack on November 20th 1917. 'Hyacinth' has come to grief while attempting to cross an enemy trench. IWM Q6432



One of the many German guns captured that day. IWM Q6355



Out of the mist. German stormtroopers advance on the morning of March 21st, 1918. IWM Q47997



The 175 Labour Company were just outside Peronne on 23rd March 1918. Here, a tank passes through the ruins of the town. In the background can be seen an abandoned Expeditionary Force Canteen and smoke from burning stores IWMQ10838



The Main Street, Armentieres. The streets were running with liquid mustard gas and the Germans were unable to occupy the town for days after the fighting had ended here. April, 1918.



BA 102475 – A German soldier surveys the devastation around Armentieres, April 1918.

All the bright company of Heaven



Waiting for the enemy on the banks of the river...



..and by the railway line. The Battle of the Lys, April 1918. Q006589 and Q8689

IN MEMORY

OF ALL THOSE GALLANT YOUNG LADS WHO FOUGHT AND DIED IN THE GREAT CAUSE OF FREEDOM.

The autumn leaves are falling swift
And leaving bare the tallest tree ;
So from our hearts has gone adrift
The hope that kept us glad and free.

For 'neath a foreign sky, alone,
Our boy has breathed a last good-bye ;
And whispers steal around our home
That Jesus called him from the sky.

His brow unsooth'd by gentle hand,
His doubts unstill'd in failing light,
And mem'ries sad of mother-land
Like shadows steal o'er darkening night.

Yet stay! A gentle sound he hears
And in his face a smile has played,
And still'd and calmed are all his fears –
“ Tis I,” soft spoke, “ Be not afraid.”

So rest him there apart from strife,
Where last he drew his fleeting breath ;
How sweet and pure a boyish life,
How great! How grand! A hero's death.

Lingfield, Dec. 4th, 1918. *F. S.*

PART THREE
MEMORIALS
1919-1921

Have you forgotten yet?.....

Look up, and swear by the green of the spring
that you'll never forget.

– *Siegfried Sasson*

1919

The beginning of the year 1919 could not have presented a starker contrast to the beginning of the previous year. The start of 1918 had seen the Allies facing a certain massive German attack on the Western Front and the end of the conflict had seemed just as far away as ever. Now, with the dawning of a new year, the nightmare of war was finally over and the building of a new world and ‘a land fit for heroes’ could begin.

Britain had lost over three-quarters of a million men. Most families in the country had lost a father, a son, or a brother and everyone seemed to know someone who had also lost somebody. The streets were beginning to fill up with men home from the Front and the sight of men displaying the hallmarks of terrible wounds and unimaginable suffering was becoming more and more commonplace. In Crawley, a special New Year party was held at Crawley Hospital for injured soldiers and there were many meetings about the proposed war memorials.

The Peace Conference opened in Paris on 18th January. This involved representatives from over 30 countries as well as the ‘Big Four’ – Georges Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France; David Lloyd-George, Prime Minister of Great Britain; Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America; and Vittorio Orlando, Prime Minister of Italy. Russia, because it had signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, was excluded and Germany was not allowed to attend the meeting where her fate would be decided. After nearly five long years of war the conference had to find a way to make a satisfactory peace. This meant virtually re-drawing the map of the world while dealing with dozens of other social and political issues. Paris was effectively the seat of global government until the conference came to an end the following year on the 21st January 1920.

The Allies, especially France, were very keen to ensure that any peace settlement would make it impossible for Germany to ever again wage aggressive war. To achieve this goal, a set of severe military and economic terms were at the heart of the Versailles Treaty. Germany ceded all occupied territories, the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine (taken from France in 1871) and all her overseas colonies. Germany lost significant territory to the newly created state of Poland and had vital economic and strategic regions such as the Rhineland occupied by Allied forces. The German Army was limited to 100,000 men and the navy reduced to a small coast-defence force. Submarines and aircraft were prohibited and restrictions were placed on the manufacture of machine guns. Germany had to accept total responsibility for starting the Great War by signing up to Article 231, known as the ‘War Guilt’ clause. She also had to pay reparations of 132 billion Reichsmarks (£6.6 billion) to pay for the cost of the war.

The Paris peace conference also brought about the creation of President Wilson’s ill-fated League of Nations and encompassed treaties that dismantled the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires and gave territory from Bulgaria to Greece, Serbia and Romania.

The Treaty of Versailles was formally signed on the 28th June. Many felt the War Guilt clause and level of reparations were a step too far. Numerous historians have argued since about whether or not these terms directly led to the rise of Nazism and World War Two.

Indeed, Marshal Ferdinand Foch himself declared after the signing of the treaty:

This is not peace. This is an armistice for twenty years.

As the result of a public meeting held in the Railway Hotel Assembly Rooms on a Friday night at the end of January, a Post of the Comrades of the Great War was started at Crawley. It was a well-attended gathering, presided over by Brigadier-General H. Clifton Brown, and he had the support on the platform of Capt. Simpson, from the Comrades' Headquarters; Capt. Appleby, of Ifield, a blinded hero of the war; Mr. S. P. Matthews, J. P.; Mr. Gilbert Gardner, Mr. Dunsmore and Mr. A. G. Kale, who acted as Hon. Secretary. The audience included quite a number of Comrades from Horsham and the balance, in the main, were local discharged soldiers and sailors, some of them unfortunately bearing plain evidence of their sufferings and sacrifice in the great struggle.

The Chairman made it clear that the object of the meeting was not to interfere with the Federation of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors, a branch of which they knew was going strongly in Crawley, and if there was a proposal to have closer association between the Federation and the Comrades he should be glad to support it. During the four years' war they were held together by military organisation and discipline, and now they were united in the bonds of comradeship. There was still something for them to do. He referred to the industrial unrest throughout the country. The object of the Comrades was to get the country going again, and make it better for everybody. Capital and labour worked together splendidly in the trenches, and there was no reason why that comradeship should not continue. They should work in peace as they did in war, and if that were done the great industrial unrest would be stopped for all time. The formation of Comrades' Clubs all over the Empire would work wonders, bringing masters and men together, and so preventing quibbles and disputes.

Capt. Simpson, hon. organiser of the Comrades, fully explained the objects of the movement, and said the discharged soldiers and sailors formed the greatest possible asset in the reconstruction of the country. This should be realised by the public. There were grievances and injustices to be dealt with and the Comrades were going to see that these things were properly adjusted. It was up to the civilian element to find the money to start a club in Crawley, realising that that it was the greatest asset to the country to gather together those men who had won the war and were able, by their united effort, to make a brighter and better world. Already there were 780 branches of the Comrades, thirty of them in South Africa, some in Rhodesia and even one in the Philippines. Unity won this war, and unity on the

part of the discharged men would result in the bettering of conditions throughout the Empire.

Capt. Appleby said he was engaged in travelling to all parts of the country, addressing meetings in order to make the public realise the importance of the discharged soldiers and sailors' movement. He maintained that the men who had stuck everything for nearly five years in the war were able to play an important part in the reconstruction of the country. When they were in No Man's Land it was not military discipline that kept them together; it was their love for each other, and if that feeling were continued they could accomplish much for this country. There were domestic differences between the Federation and the Comrades. The Federation had resolved not to admit officers to their clubs, and that was what he (Capt. Appleby) and many others objected to. As an officer he was glad to be with his men in France and to share the dangers with them; was he not fit to be with them now? Were they in Crawley going to have an organisation which excluded officers? Personally, he felt that he was fit to have a guiding hand in the movement of the discharged soldiers and sailors, but the Federation would not have him, or any other officer. Friendly rivalry might do good, but he did appeal to them to have an organisation which permitted the officers and men to mingle together for their mutual good. There were many hard cases concerning discharged soldiers and sailors to be dealt with, and Government was handicapped by red tape. What they wanted was immediate action and an organisation such as the Comrades which could see that no man suffered any hardship longer than was necessary.

After a brief address by a Horsham representative, questions were invited. There then followed a heated debate between Mr. H. V. Brock, a prominent member of the Federation in Crawley, and Capt. Simpson with Mr. Brock pointing out that the Federation had already started a movement in Crawley and he did not think that the Comrades would be acting straight if they decided to start something in opposition. Capt. Simpson considered it was a case for a mutual compact.

Mr. S. P. Matthews, in proposing that a Post of the Comrades of the Great War should be formed in Crawley, said he had gone into the question and could not but feel that if the discharged Service men were going to join a club that the Comrades would do the most good. The men were led by their officers during the war, and why should the men lose the comradeship of those officers now. His advice was to rope in as many members as they could, officers included. It was intended to have a war memorial at Crawley, and he would do his uttermost to see that it should take the form of a club for soldiers and sailors; and, further, he would do all he could see that at that club they could get their glass of beer (applause). He desired to see friendly feeling all round and hoped the Federation would join forces with the Comrades, so that all would be in a stronger position.

The proposition was seconded and carried.

In February, another local resident returned from France and her story appeared in the press:

The only woman from Crawley who went to France as a carpenter to help make huts for the troops has returned home. Her name is Miss Budgen, of Ifield Road, Crawley, and in a brief account of her experiences across the water she says: 'I have worked in France about two years. With 13 others I left England in January, 1917, to make huts for soldiers. The first three months were terrible. We were in a hotel in Calais for a week, where we had our first taste of Fritz. After we moved to the camp – just three huts and a mess room – our boots froze to the floor, and we could get no water as the pump was frozen; and we also knew what frozen bully and frozen bread were like. In about three months, as new girls arrived, we had a new camp – 15 huts and mess room – where the occupants of each hut had their own table. There was a beautiful recreation hut, and we had our own laundry, ablution, bath rooms & c., and two tennis courts. We also kept pigs and chickens and rabbits, which, when fat enough, made a nice change from army rations.

Our camp was called 'The Ladies' Camp,' and it was at a little village called Boulogne, about three miles from Calais. We saw the first bombardment on Calais from the sea on April 25th, 1917, and air raids, and though we had two comfortable dug-outs with seats and gas laid on, quite a lot preferred to stay in the huts and risk everything and see what was going on ; it was a beautiful sight with the star shells, shrapnel, searchlights, & c., and we had bombs within 100 yards of our camp, but fortunately no one was hurt, though heaps of shrapnel fell near and often the wood had bullets embedded in it.

In 1917, while the harvest moon was full, we had another good taste of Fritz, and often while in the fields the boys made us sit in the bottom of a trench or in any old shed to escape the shrapnel. One day at the works, which were about a mile from the camp, the Chinese during a raid came running in and hid under the benches.

Every Saturday we had either a concert or dance in our recreation hut to which we could invite the boys, and on Sundays during the summer we went to neighbouring camps to sports, in which we used to compete sometimes with the W.A.A.C.'s. We had a splendid tug-of-war team, of which we were very proud, as we only lost one pull all through the summer. We also had our own concert party 'The Woodsnippers.' We used to give concerts at hospitals and other camps, and other concert parties gave us some good treats, including the M. T.'s 'The Crows', 'The Reds' and 'The Remounts.'

We cannot speak too highly of the conduct of the English troops since the minute we landed at Boulogne, as at every turn they were at hand to help us, and have at all times acted as men. There were French and Belgian soldiers, and Germans from the prison camps, a number of which were opposite our camp;

Portuguese, Africans, Alsatians, Chinese and a number of others. We women were supplied with gas masks, as our works were close to the poisonous gas factory. Sometimes we got fed up, but on our way to work we would perhaps see a number of Red Cross barges or Blue Cross barges come down the canal and we soon forget our worries and put an extra spurt on, realising that our troubles were nothing compared with theirs.

We had a farewell party at Byfleet last week, when Mr. Tarrant (our employer) gave us a few figures. He said that if the huts we made were stood side by side they would reach 300 miles. Also we made 100 camps, 100 hospitals capable of accommodating 1,000 patients each, stables to hold 80,000 horses; and among the huts being 18,000 of the Tarrant portable kind. In one week we used 23 tons of nails. We had no uniform, but just a badge with W. G. T. (W. G. Tarrant) on it. I like the carpentering work very much and would much like to continue it, as I never felt more fit in my life, and everyone else says the same.

There were regrets at leaving everything behind, as we all agreed it was the happiest time of our lives. Our huts were named, among others, *The Ritz*, *The Cabin*, *Lorna Doone*, *The Better 'Ole*, *The Ark*, *Kia-ora*, *Blighty*, *The Shack &c*. We were issued with workman's passports, the first issued to British women, my own number being O.I. We were kept within a three mile radius of the camp, our only other rule was having to be in camp at 8.45 sharp, when the gates were locked. One of our greatest pleasures after work was getting a lift home, as we were all very tired, and even a mule van or a ration lorry was a help.

We worked from eight in the morning till five at night and 12.30 on Saturdays. Besides Tarrant's portables we made the Nissen hut, the circular sawing of which was very hard at first. We also made the Dechat hut from scraps of wood and old boxes. One day coming home on leave we stopped and inspected a large Handley-Page aeroplane at their camouflaged sheds at Marquis and watched the bombing squadron pass over every night.'

A letter appears later that month bemoaning the proposal that the Comrades' Club was to have a license:

Sir: In reading the report in your last issue of the meeting held at the Railway Hotel, Crawley, in support of starting a Post of the Comrades of the Great War in Crawley I was very sorry to see that our very popular medical man, Dr. Matthews, said he would use his influence to get intoxicating drink supplied wherever the club is established. Now I feel sure everybody will rejoice to see an up-to-date club established where all returned Service men can meet for social intercourse, but I think many well-wishers will be doubtful of the good results if there is added another place where drink can be obtained, and I am sure Dr. Matthews, with his great experience of the evil effects of drink upon the health and happiness of

the neighbourhood will on reflection hesitate to place temptation in the way of the men who have so nobly overcome one great enemy, only to have to face another that Mr. Lloyd George said was a worse enemy than the Germans.

Yours faithfully,

A. PESKETT

Crawley, Feb 3rd, 1919.

THE ISOLATION OF INFECTIOUS CASES. – Following on the resolutions recently passed by the Crawley and Ifield Parish Councils, strongly advocating more drastic measures in regard to the isolation of infectious cases, orders have been given by the Horsham authorities that all such patients shall be promptly removed to an Isolation Hospital for treatment.

DEATH OF SERGT. C. RICE. – Mr. J. Rice, West Street, Crawley, has just received the sad news that his only brother, Sergt. C. Rice, 1st Batt. East Kent Regiment, has died in the 83rd General Hospital at Boulogne. The deceased was acting as C. Q. M. S. at Malines when the illness which proved fatal first came upon him, but so far details have not yet reached his relatives. ‘Charley’ Rice was a Crawley boy, and at a very early age was a member of the Town Band, in fact, he was a regular member at the age of 19. He joined the Army many years ago, and was one of the Old Contemptibles, taking part in the historical battles of the Marne and Mons. He had been wounded three times, and, in addition, had suffered the agonies of gas. His embarkation to France in September last made his seventh trip, so it can be truly said he did his duty for King and country. Sergt. Rice was 27 years of age. His widow and two children live at 11, Malthouse Road, Crawley, and to these the heartfelt sympathy of all will be given.

Sergeant Charles Alfred James Rice of the 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) had died of illness (most likely influenza) on the 29th January. He was born in Ifield, a son of James and Ann Hannah Rice, of Malthouse Road and was married to Lucy. The twins were named Jackie and Mary. He was buried in Terlincthun British Cemetery, Wimille, France.

On February 13th a largely attended public meeting was held in the Railway Hotel to consider the provision of a permanent war memorial for the district and to receive suggestions thereon. Among the suggestions were swimming baths, a clubhouse where the discharged Service men and others could meet, a bandstand, a recreation ground, a public hall and a granite column with room on the top for a statue of a local celebrity.

Mr. Gilbert Gardner said he would like to see the club proposal carried out. He realised it was a big undertaking, but it had been a big war, and on such occasion he thought they should have hearts larger than marbles. He felt that we owed a deep debt of gratitude to those who had fought our battles – some, alas,

never to return – and he would therefore like to support the establishment of a club for those who had done so much. He would give his support to the scheme for a public hall in which there should be such a club, but he hoped it would be open to others as well as the returned service men.

Mr. W. J. Chalk expressed the opinion that a bandstand, though it would be of benefit to the town, would not be a fitting memorial to those who had faced death and to those who had made the great sacrifice. He favoured the erection of a stone commemorating our soldiers and sailors, with possibly a gun or two in concretion with it.

There would be a lot of debate before a final decision would be made. As if to remind everyone of the price that had been, and still was, being paid, came news in the papers that weekend of:

DEATH OF SERGT.-MAJOR F. KILLICK. – Very many friends of the family will be grieved to hear of the death of Sergt. Major Frank Killick, whose home was at County Oak, Crawley, and who passed away on the 6th inst. in Hellingly Asylum, to which institution he was removed some months now. He had been in the Army a good many years, seeing considerable service in the South African War and also in the war just ended. He unfortunately came home suffering from shell-shock, and his illness subsequently became so acute that his removal to the institution named became necessary. The deceased was 42 years of age. The funeral took place at Lowfield Heath on Thursday afternoon, when there were many expressions of sympathy with the bereaved and of regret at the death of one man who was greatly respected by all who knew him.

R.S.M. Frank Killick, (Long Service Good Conduct Medal), of the Royal Field Artillery, 5th Division, Ammunition Column, had returned home in July 1918 and was subsequently committed to Hellingly Asylum. He was the last son of the late Francis and Maria Killick to die because of the Great War. He was buried in St. Michaels Church at Lowfield Heath, where his name also appears on the War Memorial. Along with his brothers, John and Stanley, he is remembered in Crawley on the gates at the Memorial Park.

In the same edition of the local papers a letter appears from a relative:-

THE CRAWLEY WAR MEMORIAL TO THE EDITOR

Sir: I am not sure whether Crawley desires its war memorial to be an expression of thanks for the victorious ending of the war or a memorial to the fallen. If the former, perhaps the proposed bandstand would not be inappropriate, but if the latter, may I, as a member of a Crawley family which, through the war, is the poorer by three men's lives, venture to suggest that before the town is committed

to the bandstand scheme some steps might be taken to ascertain the views of the relatives of those men whose memory it is intended to honour.

I make no criticism with regard to the suggestions for a club or a library, either of which would be an acquisition to the town, but it is unlikely that sufficient funds can be raised for them. I for one would like to see something which by its nature would be recognised by all who pass by as a memorial of all those men who have made the great sacrifice for their country and all of us.

Suppose a granite cross or some similar monument, simple of design but large enough to have dignity, and with all the names inserted on the base, were erected, say at the south end of the green in the High Street, and sufficiently railed in to prevent any sort of desecration, is it not conceivable that as anniversaries come round many would be proud to lay at its foot some small tribute to the memory of their lost man and thankful to have some tangible spot where they could do so? But one could hardly lay a wreath on the steps of a bandstand, which is not unlikely to become a playing ground for children when not in actual use.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

E. KILLICK

43, St. Luke's Road, Brighton.

There were to be many letters to the local press over the next few weeks arguing over the merits of various schemes.

Private Donald Herbert Cook, 146802, of the Machine Gun Corps, was discharged from the Army on the 19th February 1919. Where he was at the time of his discharge and exactly when he arrived home are not known. The Crawley he returned to had changed forever and it was now his turn, as it was for Ted nearly forty years previously, to find himself the heir to the family business. Also returning home at around the same time, the papers report:

NAVAL CHAPLAIN'S RETURN. – Amongst our recent returns from the fighting line is the Very Rev. Alexius Calderbank, O. S. F. C., vicar of the Crawley Monastery. He volunteered on the outbreak of war, but it was not until March 19th 1915, that he got his appointment to the famous Tenth Cruiser Squadron, of whose wonderful blockading work we have heard so much since the signing of the Armistice. With this Squadron the Padre spent all his time at sea, serving first under Admiral Sir Dudley de Chain and then under Admiral Sir Reginald Tapper. When the latter hauled down his flag in February, 1918, Father Calderbank was transferred to the Squadron employed in convoying troops from Canada and America, and in this capacity crossed the North Atlantic sixteen times before the signing of the Armistice. In addition to being mentioned in despatches, the rev. gentleman has also received the Cross of the Legion of Honour for services in an Allied cruiser. We understand that

Father Calderbank has gone away for a little rest after his strenuous and nerve-wracking experiences.

March 19 – THE SOLDIERS' GRAVES. – Writing home to Crawley, Sergeant-Signaller C. G. Parsons mentions in his letter the care bestowed on the soldiers' graves in France, and particularly refers to the graveyard close to Ypres. This, he says, has been well looked after and beautifully kept up. There is a cross on each grave, with the name, number, rank and unit of each soldier on an aluminum plate, also the date of death; and a complete register of the graves is kept. It is a lovely churchyard, he adds, and he thinks this information will be a source of comfort to those at home who have relatives buried there.

BOWLING CLUB. – The annual meeting of the Crawley Bowling Club, which has its headquarters and green at the George Hotel, was held on Tuesday night, Mr. T. Bartley presiding. Mr. F. W. Weskett, the hon. secretary, in his report, mentioned that, notwithstanding the continuance of the abnormal conditions due to the war, the club had had a very successful season, the only disadvantage being that they were unable to fix up matches with some of the old clubs owing to the latter's inability to raise teams. From various causes about a dozen members had left, but more new members had joined and there was every promise of a good season.

It was hoped to renew fixtures with Burgess Hill, Redhill and Croydon, as well as with more local clubs. – Mr. S. H. Brooks, hon. treasurer, submitted the statement of accounts, showing a balance in hand of £2.16s.6d. Mr. J. Ward was reelected president, Mr. F. W. Weskett hon. secretary, and Mr. S. H. Brooks hon. treasurer; and a committee was appointed consisting of Messrs. E. Bateup, A. T. Harms, G. H. Mitchell, R. G. Morley, T. Bartley, H. Soan and C. Cook. – A vote of thanks was accorded Mr. Buckley for his interest in the club and his efforts to keep the green in good condition.

This article marks the return of Chris to the affairs of Crawley. Just quite where he has been over the last year is unknown – but it is probably safe to assume that he was the brother referred to in Ted's letter to the War Office in May 1918 as 'one in asylum – brain trouble.' He certainly does not appear to have been called to the Military Tribunals in Horsham to apply for exemption, as Herbert had to in August 1918.

An article in the March 29th papers describes how the decision was arrived at that Crawley would have its Memorial Recreation Ground:

There was a further public meeting at Crawley on Friday night, called on this occasion to receive the report of the committee which was appointed to consider the various schemes suggested for a war memorial for the town. There was a large

audience, presided over by Dr. Matthews, who was supported on the platform by several members of the committee.

The doctor explained that the committee had gone into the where of the suggestions made most thoroughly. With regard to No. 1 scheme, which was a club for ex-Service men, every phase of the question was discussed and there were excellent representatives of the men present in the presence of Capt. Tupper and Capt. Appleby. The final decision of the committee was that they did not consider that such a club could be a fitting memorial of the war and if such a club was to be established in the town it should be an effort by the men themselves, supported, of course, by outside subscriptions, and should be run by the men themselves.

As to the scheme for a provision of a town hall, it was felt that it was beyond their means, and it was not deemed expedient to impose upon the town something that might be a burden in the absence of an endowment. For that reason the town hall was ruled out. That left two other schemes only, for the committee felt that they should constrain themselves to the suggestions submitted to them and not discuss any others.

Those two suggestions were a bandstand and a recreation ground. With regard to a bandstand, it was intended that such a thing should be an ornate erection and not such as they might see on piers; a 'garden temple' was a better description of the sort of bandstand needed, to be in keeping with the surroundings and built in an approved manner to suit everybody's taste and to plans designed by an architect. That, the committee felt, would be a real peace memorial; and also required would be a war memorial for those who had fallen in battle, and for this they suggested an obelisk which should be noticeable to everybody. The plea of the committee was that the bandstand should be on the village green, with an obelisk at the end of it and a captured German gun at the other end to balance the scheme. He had ascertained from the Surveyor that the County Council would offer no objection to the site, if finally agreed upon, and the matter could come before the Roads and Bridges Committee of which he (Dr. Matthews) was a member, at their next meeting.

But he had to state that a letter of protest had been received from the Rector of Crawley, who complained that a bandstand would obstruct the view of the main road from the Rectory windows, and very strongly objecting to its being erected on the Green adjacent to the entrance to the Rectory. As a matter of fact, the proposed site was on the Green opposite the Albany Hotel, which would not be visible from the Rectory, and he produced for inspection a plan of the Green showing a bandstand, with guns at either end (an obelisk could take the place of one of the guns), with a fencing around the whole.

Personally, he (Dr. Matthews) did not advocate any particular scheme; but that was the view of the committee, and it was for that meeting to decide.

The remaining scheme was that of a recreation ground, and the committee formed a sub-committee to make inquiries into the most suitable site and to make

the best bargain they could. It was not considered advisable to disclose the positions of the sites which were being dealt with, nor to give to the meeting any figures at the present moment, because to do so might affect the purchase price, but he could assure the meeting that the site would be selected with the greatest care and would be obtained at a reasonable figure.

A GENEROUS PROMISE FROM IFIELD.

Dr. Matthews proceeded to say that Mr. Drughorn, of Ifield Hall, had made a very generous offer. Only a short time since he very kindly contributed £250, which was half the cost of a motor ambulance for the part use of the Crawley and Crawley Down hospitals, and when the ambulance was subsequently sold for £250 and his contribution was returned to him, Mr. Drughorn very kindly sent him the amount to donate to nursing institutions at Crawley (applause).

Now Mr. Drughorn had offered to give £500 towards a memorial for the fallen subject to the condition that the scheme should be a recreation ground and bandstand, and that at the entrance to the grounds there should be a tablet giving the names of all those belonging to the parishes of Crawley and Ifield who have fallen in the war; and, further, on the condition that the relatives should contribute a shilling each so that they would have the satisfaction of knowing they had subscribed to the memorial (applause). The committee, therefore, recommended that this scheme should be, either a bandstand and a recreation ground on separate sites, or the two combined; and it was for that meeting to decide.

Mr. J. Penfold thought all would agree that it would not be in the interest of the people to put a bandstand in a recreation ground. The usual practice days for the band were Saturday and Sunday nights, and they had played in the Square, and he felt quite sure that it would be better to keep in the town on these occasions. Of course the band would go to the recreation ground on summer evenings if required, but on Saturday and Sunday nights they would prefer to keep to the town. Besides, the band could not go to the recreation ground if the weather was wet.

Mr. Hemsley said of course the band would not go to the recreation ground if the weather was wet, neither would they play in the street if it was wet unless they wanted pneumonia and so support the local doctors (laughter). As to the upkeep of a recreation ground, where was their patriotism if they said they could not do what Haywards Heath, East Grinstead, Horsham and other places were doing? There they had new recreation grounds and it should be just as possible at Crawley. To keep such a place in order would be a mere flea bite and he was surprised they had not got such a place before. He had considered it a disgrace to Crawley that the few seats that were provided had been destroyed with the result that there was no place for aged people to rest.

THE VARIOUS PROPOSITIONS.

The Chairman pointed out that the propositions before the meeting now were:-

- 1. A bandstand on the Green, with an obelisk at one end and a captured German gun at the other end, the names of the fallen to be engraved on the obelisk.*
- 2. A recreation ground alone.*
- 3. A recreation ground containing a bandstand, with tablet for the names of the fallen; and*
- 4. A bandstand on the Green, and a recreation ground with a plainer bandstand in it.*

It was decided that those present should vote on cards and these were handed round, and when filled in were subsequently classified by a committee of scrutineers, with this result:-

*For scheme 3 51 votes
For schemes 1 and 2 79 votes
For scheme 4 32 votes
For bandstand on the Green 17 votes
For Recreation Ground 3 votes*

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There were seven spoilt papers.

The Chairman thereupon declared that the decision of the meeting was that the memorial should take the form of a recreation ground, containing a bandstand, and a tablet at the entrance bearing the names of the fallen. He added that the committee would do its utmost to obtain the best possible site on the best possible terms ; and he also announced that Mrs. Chalk was compiling a list of those belonging to Crawley and Ifield who had fallen in the war and would be glad if relatives would let her have the names and other details.

And news of still another fatality to add to the list of the district's casualties:-

AN EX-SOLDIER'S DEATH. – The death took place on the 17th inst. of Mr. Albert Edward Ellis, late of the Royal Scots Regiment, the youngest son of Mrs. Boniface and the late Mr. John Ellis, of 12, Oak Road, Crawley. He was discharged from the Army about a year ago, being disabled, and since then had much improved and had been able to work. He was recently attacked with influenza and pneumonia followed with fatal results. He was only 21 years of age and was a young man much liked by all his comrades. From a lad he had

been a popular athlete and was one of the team who won the shield for the British School. – The funeral took place at Ifield on Saturday, the Rev. L. A. F. Willan officiating at the sad service.

The family mourners were Mr. and Mrs. Boniface (mother and step-father), Mrs. Woodman (sister), Mr. W. Ellis (brother), Miss Daisy Jupp (his fiancée), Mrs. Hoy, Mrs. E. Mitchell and Mrs. Flint (aunts), Mr. A. Ellis (uncle) and Mr. Hoy (cousin). Mrs. Surridge, Mrs. Ayling and Mrs. Fielder were also among those present to pay their last respects.

Like all those men of Crawley who had served and died for King and Country during the Great War, the name of A. E. Ellis would appear on the gates at the Memorial Park in Crawley.

In April the new local Post of the Comrades of the Great War succeeded in acquiring the premises, No. 8, Brighton Road, Crawley, as a club, and were in need of various things to furnish the place. This they did by arranging an invitation concert at the Railway Hotel Assembly Hall on a Friday evening.

Mr. A. Rossi-Ashton and Capt. W. Appleby had arranged the concert and a very excellent programme was gone through, the contributors being a party of talented vocalists from Brighton under the direction of the well-known Mr. W. A. Lauder.

At the onset Mr. Rossi-Ashton remarked that the concert was intended to serve a double purpose: Firstly, it was arranged for the entertainment of their friends and comrades; and, secondly, its purpose was what might be called advertisement. He desired to call particularly the attention of all people in Crawley to the fact that the Comrades had started in Crawley and they had come to stay. As most of those present knew, they had now a club house, and they wanted their friends very kindly to help them to put that club house in order.

He pointed out that, in his opinion, it should be a privilege and a duty to help the men who came forward when they were called by King and country and who had now returned. It was their bounden duty, he thought, to do what they could for them (hear, hear). He distinctly remembered when the war began hearing all over the place the song 'We don't want to lose you, but we think you ought to go.' Well, they went, and unfortunately some never came back; but it was up to those present and their friends to do what they could for those who were fortunate enough to return; and therefore he again called their attention to the fact that they now had a club and required money, furniture and all sorts of things. He appealed particularly to the ladies, who could do anything when they liked, to come forward and help them. The programme of music was then proceeded with.

A Saturday at the end of May saw the revival of the national game among the local Cricket clubs and according to a local reporter:

'it made one feel that the war was really over at last to see the boys wielding King Willow again. At Ifield there was quite a reunion when those old friendly 'foes' Holmbush was met. Among the players were men who had done service for King and country on every battle front, and very interesting were the little personal experiences exchanged among the players. How lucky Ifield cricketers are to have a ground at all, considering that many players have returned from war to find their playing pitch wrecked and nowhere available to indulge in their favourite pastime. This point was put rather tersely last week by a returned warrior. 'Go out and risk your all for four years for your country, and yet on your return there isn't a field to have a couple of hours pleasure on.'

Slowly, life in Crawley was beginning to settle in to a new normality. Throughout June, Chris is playing for Crawley Bowls Club and Don is playing and performing well for Ifield Cricket Club.

At Ifield, the first of the district's war memorials was dedicated:

The dedication of the granite monument erected in the Ifield Churchyard to the memory of those men in the parish who have fallen in the war, took place on Friday evening, and was a most impressive ceremony. It has been erected in a prominent position near the lynch gate and is a dignified erection of Cornish silver grey granite, rough punched, surmounted by a wheel cross, and on the granite base is the inscription: 'Sacred to the memory of the officers, non-commissioned officers and men from this parish who fell in the war, 1914-1918. Pro rege. Pro Patria.' Here follow the names as under:

P. G. Masse, M. A. Pavey, A. E. Penfold. P. G. Penfold, S. J. Rapley, W. G. Scutt, J. H. Stowe, E. J. Wood, L. G. Abrams, G. L. Alexander, H. G. Baker, W. Bayford, T. Butler, I. W. J. Casson, C. F. Charman, N. Charman, W. Cottle, W. F. Drughorn, W. H. T. Every, F. Franks, G. S. Franks, W. Geer, G. K. Hawkins, F. Hilton, R. H. Holton, J. Hoy, C. King, E. J. Kerrey, J. Killick, A. Laker, D. L. Lucas, A. Moore.

The first part of the service was held in the church, where the Vicar (the Rev. W. Loveband) officiated and the Crawley Town Band, under Mr. G. Melville kindly attended and accompanied the hymns and Psalms, Mr. T. W. Jutson being at the organ. 'O God our help in ages past,' 'There is a blessed home' and 'Peace, perfect peace,' were the hymns rendered in the church, where the Vicar gave a short, but very appropriate and impressive address.

The dedication service proper took place outside, with prayers and collects, and the hymn 'On the resurrection morning,' accompanied by the Band. The

ceremony concluded with a fine rendering of the 'Last Post' by Bandsmen S. Brooman and A. Brown, and the playing of the slow march 'Marlborough,' followed by the National Anthem. The monument, which is the largest and finest in the churchyard, cost approximately £120, which sum was raised by public subscription.

At the end of June there was a hearty 'Welcome Home' party for the discharged sailors and soldiers of Crawley, together with their wives, when, at the invitation of the clergy and friends of Crawley and West Crawley Churches, a social was held at 'Springfield,' kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Parbury. The gathering was originally arranged for the Parish Room, but it was soon evident from the number of acceptances that this building would not be nearly large enough, but certainly the lovely grounds of 'Springfield' made a much better venue.

So far as could be ascertained every discharged man in the town had an invite, but, of course, all could not accept, but there was a large party present. The proceedings opened at 7 p.m. and continued till 10.30. Mrs. Parbury received the guests at the main entrance, and on the lower lawn a large marquee had been erected and a most sumptuous tea had been provided, but numerous small tables were placed outside, and these, too, were quickly taken. There was a host of lady workers who administered to the guests' comforts, and so well was this part organised that none were kept waiting. During the tea and the assembling of the guests the Hazeldene Orchestra, under the baton of Mrs. Jones, gave a much appreciated programme of music. The whole of the grounds were thrown open and the visitors availed themselves of the opportunity of seeing the lovely gardens, and certainly the flowers and water gardens were quite worthy of the admiration expressed. A concert followed, the raised terrace at the end of the lawn making an ideal stage. Before the programme opened the Vicar of West Crawley (the Rev. L. A. F. Willan) said:

My friends, I have been asked to act as spokesman on behalf of the clergy and friends of Crawley and West Crawley Churches and in their name to wish you a very hearty welcome to the dear homeland and home life. We greatly appreciate all you have done for us and we know we cannot repay the debt we owe to you for what you have done. The perils that you have faced during the awful war has been brought home to us by the list of names of those who have fallen. Many we know have made the great sacrifice (and many have been maimed) and been previously wounded, but all we can do is thank you for all you have done and to thank God for your safe return. This is the social gathering, but I would like to call your attention to the religious side.

On Wednesday next we will be dedicating our war memorial, the large east window in St. Peter's, when the Lord Bishop of Lewes will be present and on the following Sunday evening we are having a thanksgiving service to Almighty

God for giving unto us the great victory and for bringing you all safely back to us again. I hope you all of you that can will be present. Now I am not going to give the names of those who have assisted in arranging and working for the gathering – but I must thank Mr. and Mrs. Parbury for their great kindness in lending their grounds (applause). I am sure we greatly appreciate this kind act.

There was a plentiful supply of cigarettes and the concert which followed was much applauded and deservedly so. Encores were kindly given to repeated requests. More refreshments followed, and then dancing on the lawn was indulged in. The Crawley Girl Guides provided a number of most useful workers who were of great assistance. The whole thing was a great success and reflected the utmost credit on those who had arranged the gathering.

PEACE. – The news that the Peace Treaty had been signed did not create any excitement at Crawley, most people receiving the information very calmly, though with a measure of pleasure. During the whole day the youngsters had indulged in the fun of discharging small fireworks, and some fog signals were exploded at Crawley Station; a few flags were to be seen, and in the evening the Town Band included in its weekly programme some patriotic airs. On Sunday brief reference was made to the happy event at all the local places of worship, and the National Anthem was rendered.

WEST CRAWLEY CHURCH WAR MEMORIAL. – Special services in connection with the dedication of the stained glass east window, erected to the memory of those parishioners and others who have lost their lives in the Great War, commenced on Sunday. The preacher in the morning was the Rev. W. Loveband and in the evening the Rev. H. L. Martley occupied the pulpit. There were large congregations. The consecration service proper took place yesterday (Wednesday), the proceedings being of a very impressive character. The window, which is an exceedingly beautiful one, has been executed by Messrs. Percy O. Bacon, of Newman Street, London, and it is acknowledged by all who have seen it to be a voluble addition to the church and a fitting memorial to those who have made the great sacrifice. The subject of the centre light is our Lord the Consoler, with a scroll over the head bearing the text, 'Come unto Me all ye that labour.' the two side lights contain St. Peter and St. Paul, with scrolls bearing the texts, 'Upon this rock I will build My church' and 'I have fought the good fight.' In connection with the window is a brass tablet, executed by Messrs. Hart, Son and Peard, of Oxford Street, London, upon which is engraved the names of fifty-eight parishioners and others who have fallen. These names are as under:-

All the bright company of Heaven

Joseph Banham	Edward Linfield
Nat Bartley	Charles Kenneth Mitchell
Albert Edward Brett	Robert Joseph Moore
Frederick George Burgess	Edward Nicholls
John Walter Cain	Howard Clement Pace
Frank Hubert Chantler	Stephen Parsons
James Collinson	William Parsons
Richard Edward Cook	Kenneth Perry
Thomas Henry Cooper	William Pullen
Lewis Edwards	Herbert Cyril Ramsay
Charles Richard Edwards	William Razzell
Benjamin Eggleton	Nathaniel Rice
Albert Edward Ellis	Frederick Rice
Charles Arthur Francis	Charles Rice
Hedley Garrett	Alfred Rice
William Geer	Charles Alfred James Rice
Alfred Goring	
Edgar Gorringe	Charles Sayers
Frank Edward Harding	Donald Palmer Sims
Frederick Hedger	Frederick Soan
Roland Hilder	George Harold Sprake
James Holder	Arthur James Tester
John William Izard	Percy Frank Thayre
James Johnson	Bert Thayre
William Johnson	Cruiser Eldred Moore Thornton
Richard John Johnson	
Leonard George Jordan	Gilbert John Wilson
Harry Knowles	Richard Leslie Wilson
Sydney Law	Gerald Woodhall
William Lillywhite	William George Wright

There are four side windows in the chancel of the church, which are being filled in with stained glass, the subjects being the four Evangelists. Three lights are being given by Mr. Horace Roland Hill, of Oakwood, Crawley, in memory of his brother, Gerald Stanley Hill, who fell in action in August, 1918 ; and the fourth light is the gift of the Vicar (the Rev. L. A. F. Willan) in memory of his father, the Rev. George Arthur Willan, who died at Crawley in August last. These windows are also being executed by Messrs. Percy Bacon and will be in place in a week or so. The services are being continued on Sunday next, when the preacher in the morning will be the Rev. W. St. J. De la Bere, of Newbury, and in the evening the service will be conducted by the Vicar and take the form of a special thanksgiving

for the safe return of those who have been on active service, a solemn *Te Deum* to be sung at the close. The memorial will cost between £250 and £300.

On July 6th a dinner and concert took place in the Drill Hall, East Park, of the Crawley detachment of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, the event being arranged as a wind-up of the V. T. C., in anticipation of early demobilisation. The proceedings were of a very happy and enjoyable character. Capt. A. E. Taylor, the O. C. 'A' Company, occupied the seat of honour, and he was supported by Capt. S. P. Matthews, M. O. of the Battalion, Capt. Rossi-Ashton, C. S. M. Thos. Bartley and Sergeant E. W. S. Mitchell. There were also present Corpl. Collison, Corpl. Lee, Corpl. Butcher and Corpl. P. Chantler and about 35 Privates. Mr. Newport placed an excellent repast before the company and at the conclusion of this the toast of 'The King' was given by the Chairman and enthusiastically responded to.

After the tables had been cleared the concert was proceeded with, and to this each volunteer had been asked to invite a friend, preferably a serving or discharged soldier or sailor. As a result the company was augmented by numerous visitors and all very much enjoyed the programme which had been arranged. This was sustained by Mr. Lauder's Concert Party from Brighton. Up till ten o'clock harmony reigned supreme and all present not only felt fully appreciative of what they had heard, but would gladly have listened to more had circumstances permitted. The gathering was a big success and the organisers had, as they deserved, the hearty thanks of the company.

THE DEDICATION of the new stained-glass east window in St. Peter's Church, West Crawley, full particulars of which were given in our last issue, took place on a July Wednesday afternoon, a crowded congregation being present at the service. The window is a memorial to those in the parish who had unfortunately fallen in the war, and the consecration ceremony was performed by the Lord Bishop of Lewes, who was accompanied by the Vicar (the Rev. L. A. F. Willan), the Rev. H. L. Barrett Lennard (Rector of Crawley), the Rev. H. L. Martley (rector of Blatchington and rural dean of Seaford) and the Rev. Herbert Mais. The Bishop gave an eloquent and very impressive address from the 10th verse of the 1st Epistle St. Paul to Timothy. The Vicar conducted the service, with the exception of the lesson, which was read by Mr. Martley. Mr. Harry Steadman was at the organ and played suitable voluntaries before and after the service, and the hymns were 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow,' 'For all the saints' and 'How bright these glorious spirits shine.'

Although the Cook family are not mentioned by name as attending the dedication ceremonies, it is inconceivable that the whole family would not have been there. I can only imagine Ted's thoughts as they sat in the church which he and his father and his

brothers had built in 1892, the church which now contained a brass memorial tablet which included the name of his dearly-loved only son, now dead, killed in the greatest war the world had ever seen.

With the treaty being signed and Great War now officially over, the Ifield and Crawley Parish Councils united for the purpose of carrying out a joint celebration of peace for the two parishes on the 19th July putting several committees in place to make the necessary arrangements. It was proposed that:- *the day's doings should commence at one o' clock with a procession. After proceeding through the main thoroughfares the parade will adjourn to a field, where a sports programme would be carried out. In the evening there was to be a carnival, followed by fireworks and a bonfire. The residents were encouraged to put on a general display of flags, bunting, etc., to give the town as bright an appearance as possible for such an important occasion.*

Days before the event the papers are full of the upcoming celebration:- *Next Saturday promises to rank among the best festivities ever held in the place. Mr. J. Penfold has very kindly lent the Town Meadow, as well as the adjoining field (which will presently be the public recreation ground), for the occasion, and a reference to our advertisement columns will convince all of the excellence of the programme provided. Several committees are busy in arranging the details, and it only requires a fine day to make the proceedings a huge success. The old people are to be fed and entertained on a subsequent date. A list of subscriptions to the fund will also be seen in another column.*

A huge advertisement, taking up half a column proclaims:-

IFIELD AND CRAWLEY PEACE CELEBRATIONS.

PROGRAMME.

SATURDAY NEXT, JULY 19TH.

A GRAND PROCESSION will start from the Square at one o' clock sharp, and parade the chief thoroughfares.

ATHLETIC SPORTS, for children, 1.30 to 4; Adults, 4.30 to 6 ; in the CRAWLEY TOWN MEADOW. For particulars see Bills.

DANCING on the Ground.

BATTLES OF CONFETTI in the Square at 8.30 p.m.

A GRAND CARNIVAL & TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION will leave the Square at 9.15, concluding with a DISPLAY of FIREWORKS and a HUGE BONFIRE on the Ground.

CRAWLEY TOWN BAND HAS BEEN ENGAGED.

To carry out the above programme about £350 is necessary, and towards this the following monies have been contributed:-

(There follows a long list of contributing townspeople, amongst them Mr. C. Cook, Miss E. Cook and a Mr. Cook.)

On the Thursday of that week, Don is playing cricket for Ifield in an all-dayer against Mr. Spicer's XI. Opening the batting for Ifield is W. J. Denman, the author of 'Wayfarer Denman's Crawley Revisited.'

I mention this as an example of just how small Crawley was then, with everyone knowing everyone else. Bill Denman was nearly 40 when he served in the war with the 1st Essex Regiment, going to France and becoming a Corporal, working in the cookhouse section. One day while he was there, he met up with his two nephews, his sister Annie's two eldest sons, James and William Johnson, who had marched that day into camp on their way to the front. Knowing that their uncle's regiment was nearby, they sought him out and all three had a night out on the town, before the two boys continued on their way to the front. As mentioned elsewhere, James was killed at Ypres on the 27th February 1915 and William was severely wounded in the same battle. William eventually recovered and returned to the front, where he was killed at Arras on the 3rd May 1917. Their father, John, shot himself in despair in the family garden in March 1916.

Bill Denman was one of the many casualties of poison gas during the war, which left him with breathing problems which may have contributed to his early death in 1945. Another side effect of the gas was to cause all his teeth to rot and he had had to have them removed by an Army Surgeon using a pair of pliers, without the benefit of anesthetic.

Ifield lost that day to a team consisting of well-known members of London and Brighton clubs. The report says that *'the game was an all day one, and this contributed to the pleasure and reminded one of days passed by'*. Bill Denman was out to a *'brilliant running catch'*. Don took a wicket and is recorded as *'putting up a stubborn defence'* before going lbw for eight.

The papers of July 24th:

PEACE CELEBRATION AT CRAWLEY. A RECORD PROGRAMME.

The Peace Celebration at Crawley was a huge success, despite the unkind nature of the elements. Nothing has hitherto been attempted in the town on so large a scale and nothing has ever passed off more successfully or given greater pleasure to the people. The occasion was, of course, unique, and the inhabitants generally, realising this, put forth their best efforts to make the day of red-letter character. This it proved to be, for even the showers in the afternoon and the much heavier rains in the evening did not damp the ardour of those who took an active part in the demonstration nor lessen the delight of the vast crowds that thronged the streets. From near mid-day to just past midnight Crawley gave itself up to real rejoicing and vied in its programme of festivities with much larger and important towns.

The daylight and torchlight processions were especially attractive features and far eclipsed anything of the sort ever seen in Crawley; whilst the decorations were also of a very general character and in many cases really good. The main street from one end to the other looked extremely gay, a great quantity of decorative material being employed to the best advantage, and though a few individual displays stood out prominently, all were good and it was evident that everybody had done their best to make as fine a show as possible. At night, particularly, when all the vari-coloured fairy lights were burning, the effect was fine and would, of course, have been still more so but for the unwelcome rains.

The arrangements for the celebration had been made by the joint Ifield and Crawley Parish Councils, who appointed several committees on which were co-opted a number of others, all putting into the work that spirit and determination which spelt success.

The paper goes on to list the various committees, among them one for Athletic Sports, who include Mr. C. Cook as one of its members.

THE MID-DAY PROCESSION.

The first item in the programme was the mid-day procession, which assembled in the Square and subsequently paraded the chief streets, finally dispersing in the Town Meadow, kindly lent for the day by Mr. J. Penfold. It was headed by little Miss Winnie Tring, who, seated in a prettily-decorated trap, nicely represented Queen of Roses. Her brother was to have led the pony, but his get-up frightened the animal, so he sat with his sister. The Council School children followed, then the Crawley Town Band, under Mr. Gilbert Melville, behind them being the Church of England School children. Also in the procession were the boy pupils of North House School, the Girl Guides and Brownies, and the members of the Fire Brigade, as well as the following tableaux:-

'Peace' represented by Miss Edith Fuller.

'Britannia and Cubs' represented by Miss Doris Vickers as Britannia, Canada by Miss Edith Morley, New Zealand by Miss Rossi-Ashton, India by Miss Phoebe Rossi-Ashton, and Australia by Miss Gertie Longley.

'John Bull,' impersonated by Master Norman Lord.

'Victory,' Miss Eva Ward, with Miss Fuller as 'Stars and Stripes' and Miss Jenner as 'France.'

'Angel of Peace,' Miss Betty Tidy, with Miss Phyllis Harms and Miss Phyllis Morgan as heralds; and the little Misses Norah Skinner, Edith Tullett, Marjory Tullett and Hettie Tullett as cherubs.

THE SPORTS.

The athletic sports took place in the Town Meadow under the management of those previously mentioned, the events from 2.30 to 4 p.m. being confined to

children and those from 4.30 to 6 p.m. to adults. There follows a long list of winners and runners up.

THE CHILDREN'S TEA.

Tea was provided for all children of school age and six hundred much enjoyed the *al fresco* meal which was supplied by Messrs. Newport and Hibbs, and gave great satisfaction. Their wants were ably attended to by the committee, who were assisted by several friends; and the children, as a memento of the important occasion, were each presented with a commemoration mug, whilst at the conclusion they also received a gift of sweets.

A parcel of goodies has been sent to those children who are unfortunately in the sanatorium and a mug has also been reserved for each of them.

THE EVENING'S DOINGS.

Dancing had been arranged for, but by this time the weather had become too unfavourable. Later in the evening the cars began to assemble in the Square for the torchlight procession and meanwhile there was to have been a battle of confetti, but this was not generally indulged in to any great extent for the same reason, though a large quantity of confetti was disposed of.

Happily the weather cleared a little and the rain eased, and the arrival and marshalling of the decorated cars created the greatest interest and enthusiasm, all present being astounded at the number, the novelty of the ideas, and the splendid get-up of every one of them. There were no fewer than two dozen tableaux and amongst them were:-

'The Big Four,' including townspeople as Lloyd George, Clemenceau, Italian Minister and Wilson. Also on this car were Beatty, Haig, Britannia, America, Italy, France, Japan and Belgium. There was also an armoured car, with revolving turret, from which there were occasional explosions, 'Britannia,' 'Angel of Peace,' an airship drawn by a tractor and a group of munitions workers on a car displaying numerous shells.

The procession was led by 'Field-Marshal' T. Bartley, mounted on a spirited steed, and Mr. H. Soan, dressed as an Admiral of the Fleet, was also mounted and well looked the part he represented. Others mounted were Miss Buckette, who made a charming 'Joan of Arc,' and a relative of Mr. Surridge as the 'Mounted clown from Timbuctoo.' In addition Mr. Fuller had his motor cycle and side-car very effectively decorated, and also in the procession were several masqueraders, including Mr. M. Nightingale, junior, who was dressed as a joker and assisted in the marshalling of the procession, as well as to act as conductor on the car of 'The Bandstand.'

A conspicuous item was an effigy of the ex-Kaiser hanging from a gibbet.

The procession was well lighted by torches, and after parading the principal thoroughfares, dispersed at the northern end of the town, the rain at this time

falling heavily. The weather having again cleared temporarily, the huge bonfire was lighted and burnt beautifully, cheers being raised when the effigy of the ex-Kaiser was caught in the flames. The fireworks formed the concluding item of a very interesting and enjoyable day's programme. The sports and other prizes were kindly distributed by Mrs. Matthews, who was presented by the committee with a bouquet of Marechal Niel roses.

PEACE CELEBRATION: IFIELD.

Ifield village carried out a very interesting sports programme on Saturday and also entertained the people, both old and young, to tea in celebration of peace. A general committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements, and the event passed off most successfully. About four hundred children and adults partook of tea, served on the Recreation Ground, and the cakes, & c., which were left over afterwards served as light refreshments, together with minerals for the children and women, and an 18-gallon cask of beer for the men. There were sweet scrambles for the children, the sweets being generously given by Mr. F. Ellis and Mr. W. Wood. The school children were also presented by the Cricket Club with a complete cricketing set in bag for the boys and a stool ball set for the girls, in addition to a flag for the school. Messrs. Hinds and Ludford provided gramophones, which much enlivened proceedings. Mr. Coleman kindly lent tarpaulins and wagons, and Mr. Dungate was good enough to supply tables; and others who worked hard were Mr. M. Laker and Mr. W. Wood in preparation of the ground.

CHANGE RINGING. – On Peace Day the local ringers, assisted by Miss N. Shorter, made an attempt to perform a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples, on the Crawley Parish Church bells, but this failed after 840 changes had been rung. On Sunday, for divine service in the evening, a quarter peal of 1,260 changes was rung.

Don has a special mention in the sporting columns of the papers at the end of July:-

One of the chief features of the match was the splendid bowling of D. H. Cook, whose six wickets for 17 runs was a splendid performance. I shall be much disappointed if he does not turn out about our best local bowler if he is used a little more. He has had few chances to bowl, but when he had the opportunity he showed fine form indeed.

Ifield School hosted 'A welcome home supper and smoking concert' for the men of Ifield rural district who enlisted for the Great War in August 1914 with some 90 guests attending. Among the friends present were Capt. Appleby and

Capt. Towse, V. C. (both blinded heroes), Col. Lewin, Mr. Kenneth Brown, Mr. Ludford, Mr. Spicer, Mr. W. Wood, Mr. M. Laker and others.

The supper was followed by the finest musical programme heard in the district for many a long day, and everyone regretted its all too early termination. The company greatly appreciated the songs all the artists readily responded to the repeated encores demanded by their audience.

The concert was followed by tales and speeches by Col. Lewin, Capt. Towse, V. C., and Capt. Appleby. Col. Lewin referred in touching terms to the Old Contemptibles, and his well-framed sentences moved all who heard him pay tribute to these brave men. Capts. Towse and Appleby were followed with close attention, and their clear exposition of the united effort required to be out forward by everyone to 'win the peace' and combat the insidious influences at present rife in England made the position clear to their listeners. It is manifest that these gentlemen are carrying out a great and good work in clarifying the position to those who are less able to see what the future has in store, and the applause at the conclusion of their speeches was sufficient proof that their words found a ready appreciation.

The Comrades of the Great War, Crawley Club, was informally opened on the 1st October when it was rather gleefully announced that the club would be 'applying for a licence for the premises and that when the club is in going order there will be an official opening ceremony, on which occasion that great soldier, Capt. Towse, V. C., will be the central figure. Mr. A. Rossi-Ashton, who has done excellent duty as Commandant and president during the formation of the club, has resigned in favour of Capt. Appleby, who has done and is still doing, despite his blindness, wonderful work in all parts of the country in furtherance of the great Comrade movement.'

The Crawley Comrades also decided on forming a football club after a meeting in October. Don was to play for the team for many years. The club colours were black and white stripes, with the Comrade's badge on the breast. They would play their home games at the old Athletic ground in Goffs Park Road. The club was affiliated to the Sussex County Football Association. It was clearly understood that the club was to be run without thought of opposition to the town club, but for the purpose of providing games for those who otherwise would not get games. All the players would be at the service of the Crawley Club. Don himself played for the 'proper' Crawley side many times.

On November 11th, at precisely 11 a.m. the entire country came to a standstill for two minutes as the nation remembered those they had lost and marked the moment, just a year past, that the guns had fallen silent forever.

A further public meeting regarding the war memorial took place at the end of November. The report says that:

In accordance with the vote of a public meeting, the war memorial for Crawley and Ifield is to be a recreation ground with a bandstand thereon, and on an ornamental arch at the entrance will be engraved the names of the fallen. A change has been made in the site originally chosen and the committee in charge of the matter has now obtained at a cost of £820 about seven acres of ground on the Three Bridges Road known as the Crawley Meadow. To carry out the scheme in its entirety the committee consider that a sum of about £1,750 will be required. A donation of £500 has been very generously given by Mr. J. F. Drughorn, and it now rests with the public generally to respond as liberally as possible in order to raise the balance. The object is one of historical importance, as this recreation ground will be a standing monument in memory of the men who have fallen in the greatest war in the history of the world.

Further the ground is a long felt need and will be a great boon to the children of the two parishes and the inhabitants generally. A number of ladies have kindly undertaken to make a house to house collection, and it is confidently expected, having regard to the importance of the occasion and the scheme, that there will be no difficulty in raising the amount of money required.

A sign of the changing times in Britain is also reported in the following week's edition with the news that the first meeting of the Crawley Branch of the Women's National Unionist and Coalition Association was held at the Railway Hotel on the 19th. With women now eligible to vote, the crowded meeting was exhorted not to waste the opportunity by the speaker, Miss Goring Thomas who ended with a moving description of France during the war. One morning as she sat on a trench just outside Arras, and looked at some of the utter devastation around her, her eye caught the inscription on a small mound close by,

'To the memory of an unknown soldier, English.' One seemed, she said, to hear a voice crying out, *'Try and get the people at home to realise that the country we thought worth dying for is worth living for, and carry on.'*

On a Saturday night at the Plough Inn, the Ifield Cricket Club held a supper and smoking concert at which a most enjoyable time was spent by a large gathering of club members and friends. During the evening a presentation of a cricket ball was made to Mr. D. H. Cook, as a small memento of his good services as a bowler. The Honorary Secretary reviewed the past season, during which 19 matches were played, of which 11 were won, one was a tie and seven were lost.

1920

In January, the war memorial at St. John's was unveiled:

CRAWLEY CHURCH WAR MEMORIAL. DEDICATION OF THE CROSS.

A large congregation assembled on Saturday afternoon for the dedication service in connection with the war memorial erected in Crawley Approach. It is a wayside cross of slender Gothic type, 16 ft. high, designed to harmonise with the church tower in the background. Three steps rise to the base block, on two sides of which are inscribed the names of those who made the great sacrifice. The front side facing the High Street bears the inscription: '1914-1919. To the glory of God, and in undying memory of men who gave their lives for King and country in the Great War,' and on that side fronting the church is inscribed: 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'

The names of the fallen engraved on the northern and southern sides are as under:

Joseph John Banham, Nat Bartley, John Blundell, Robert Henry Butcher, Robert Lennox Butcher, Frank Hubert Chantler, William Edward Cheeseman, Richard Edward Cook, Hedley James Corbett, Charles Richard Edwards, William Thomas Garner, Hedley Garrett, George Kenner Hawkins, Arthur Heather, Jack Heritage, Roland Hilder, John Humphrey, Michael James Humphrey, Harold Phillip Hygate, Roland James Evans Johnstone, Frank Killick, John Killick, Stanley Killick, Harry Knowles, Harry George Martin, Charles Kenneth Mitchell, Howard Clement Pace, Sidney Wallace Stokes, Herbert Clark Tester, Gilbert John Wilson, Richard Leslie Wilson, Ernest Wood, Roland George Hewitt Wright and Arthur Stemp.

These names number 34, and it should be pointed out that those who have unfortunately lost their lives from the district of Crawley, West Crawley and Ifield total approximately a hundred, the other names being on the memorials in Ifield Churchyard and West Crawley Church respectively. The work of the memorial cross was carried out in Portland stone by Messrs. Andrews, of Eastbourne, whilst the architect was Mr. A. H. Jones, of Hanover Square, London, a son-in-law of Mr. M. Nightingale, Hazeldene.

The congregation assembled around the memorial, the base of which was draped with a large Union Jack. The full choir, under Mr. A. T. Harms (choirmaster and organist), was present, as well as the Crawley Town Band, under Mr. G. Melville; and the clergy in attendance were the Rector of Crawley (the Rev. H. L. Barrett-Lennard), the Rev. L. L. White way (curate of Crawley), the Rev. L. A. F. Willan (vicar of West Crawley), the Rev. C. Porter (curate of West Crawley) and the Rev. Preb. C. W. S. Wilson (Rural Dean and Vicar of Cuckfield), the last-named of whom gave the address in the church and subsequently conducted the dedication ceremony.

At the cenotaph the hymn 'Stand up! Stand up for Jesus!' was sung to the accompaniment of the band, after which the people proceeded to the church, where

the service was that authorised for use in the diocese. The Psalms were the 23rd and 46th, and the hymn which followed 'There is a blessed home.'

The Rev. Preb. Wilson took for his text a part of the 12th verse of the 8th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 'Therefore, brethren, we are debtors.'

In these words, said the preacher, we had the assertion of the great apostle which applied to everyone in that church and in this country to-day. We were indeed debtors and we owed a debt that would be hard to pay. We owed a debt to all those who from August 4th, 1914, and during the long weary years which followed answered to the call of King and country, went out to foreign lands, leaving their work and their calling in life to fight in the Great War against fearful odds, to face dreadful dangers, to endure long and trying hardships, great sorrows and sufferings. To them, indeed, did we owe a great debt, and especially to those who never returned – to those dear lads who gave up their lives for the sake of their country and who made the great sacrifice for the sake of us.

Yes, indeed, when we thought of those men who went from this parish, so well known to all of us, and very dear to many – to those men who had so willingly jeopardised their lives in the battles and gave up all for the sake of us – we were indeed debtors. And why? Because we know they saved our country. We had heard of the terrible stories of the sufferings borne in other countries and we trembled to think what would have been the result if the enemy had ever effected a landing on our shores. We thought of the desolation and destruction which would have ravaged this fair country to which we belong. We thought of the possible death which would have been meted out to many of us; we thought of the practical slavery to which we would have been reduced if our enemies had been supreme.

From all these horrible possibilities we were rescued by the brave lads who fought for our sakes, and debtors indeed we were to those who went out to fight not merely in the defence of our country, and certainly not for the acquisition of power or territory, but to fight for the maintenance of those principles which alone can make a nation great – the principles upon which the British Empire existed, viz., Justice, liberty, righteousness and truth. They went out to fight for those principles in the eyes of the whole civilised and uncivilised world, and because they did so nobly and so well we were great debtors of theirs.

How could we pay the debt, the greatness of which we could never forget, especially to those who died that we might live? In the first place we could keep their memory fresh and green. We live in a world of bustle; that which is of importance to-day is forgotten tomorrow; but it would be a great shame if we allowed the memory of those brave lads to pass away or allow their remembrance to be forgotten.

We had met that day to unveil and dedicate a beautiful cross which we had set up to their memory – a cross which from its very form reminds us, and would be a constant reminder to everyone of us, of that great act of self-sacrifice of the

Saviour of mankind. Those brave, heroic souls whose memory we were honouring had fought and died and were now at rest in the care and the keeping of the Father who loves them so well. So that day we were doing something to pay the debt which we owed and for hundreds of years – we might hope until the end of time – there should stand at the west end of that church. To be seen by all who come to worship here and also by all Crawley people, the great memorial, the constant reminder of those who in this Great War gave up their lives for us.

To put up such a memorial cross was comparatively easy. It means the expenditure of a certain sum of money which was not begrudged. But there was something by means of which we could do something to repay the debt we owed, and that something was still harder. It was by endeavouring to maintain in our country those great principles for which these brave souls fought and died – to make our country a better home than it ever was before for everybody, and it could only be so if everyone did his best to maintain in our dealings with one another the principles of justice, freedom and unselfishness without which the great troubles of the present day could never be settled.

If we did not carry out those principles we should be untrue to the memory of those brave men who had made the sacrifice; but if we did further those principles we should be doing something to make this country a better land and would also be doing something to pay the debt and prove ourselves worthy of those brave, heroic souls who gave their lives that we might be free.

After the Nunc Dimittis and prayers, the hymn ‘Ten thousand times ten thousand’ was sung as a recessional, the congregation afterwards re-assembling around the memorial. Here Mrs. Barrett-Lennard, assisted by Mrs. C. J. Mitchell, unveiled the monument, and following prayers the hymn ‘For all the saints’ was sung, the band again accompanying, and the impressive service concluded with the Benediction and the ‘Last Post,’ sounded by three members of the band.

Mrs. Barrett-Lennard placed a laurel wreath on the front of the memorial, and was followed by several mourners with magnificent floral tributes.

As with the dedication at St. Peter’s, it is inconceivable that the family would not have attended the unveiling of the memorial at St. John’s. Also recorded in the sporting columns that week – *Crawley Comrades* visited Horsham Railway Athletic on Saturday and had very little difficulty on winning 7-0. The winners, however, did not get off lightly, for D. H. Cook was so badly hurt that he had to be taken from the ground.

He had recovered from his injuries by the beginning of May as he took part in an extraordinary game of football that showed that the spirit of comradeship that the war had left behind was still evident:

May 6 – HORSHAM COMRADES v. CRAWLEY COMRADES. The eagerly anticipated match for the ‘Cassidy’ Cup between the Comrades of Horsham and

Crawley took place on Saturday evening and was voted the sternest fought game seen at Horsham this year. Crawley took with them a great number of spectators and many who were unable to make the journey assembled at the headquarters and gave the team a hearty cheer as they motored away. The teams had met at Crawley a fortnight ago, when Horsham proved themselves the better team and won by eight goals to five, so they had good reason to feel confident of their ability to win the cup, particularly as Lever was unable to play owing to injuries received on Wednesday. This was a bad blow to the visitors, as Lever is not only a fine opportunist, but his work with Cook on the left wing has been a feature of the Comrades' matches. Jenner came up from right full back to the inside left position, C. Creighton coming into the defence, and Elsey took Raper's place under the bar.

The game was a thrilling one, full of exciting incidents, but can be summed up in a few words, as the defences were much too good for the attack. The goalkeepers had but few chances to distinguish themselves so well were they covered, but on two occasions Elsey made saves which can only be described as great. The first was from a lightning cross by Sturt, who had wormed his way almost into goal and fired at the far post, but the goalkeeper somehow got across and deflected the ball round the post; and, again the ball struck Percy Knight and twisted almost under the bar, but Elsey punched away and came into violent collision with the post.

At the other end Burchell was absolutely beaten by fine shots from Turner and Cook, and in the closing minutes Brooks sent in a beauty, but by inches it missed its billet. At the expiration of ninety minutes no goals had been scored, so it was decided to play another ten minutes each way. This was rather hard on Crawley, as for some time they had lost the services of their centre forward (E. Knight), who had badly damaged his shoulder. Horsham attacked for all they were worth and Crawley's defence had a hard task, but they came through the ordeal safely. In the closing ten minutes Crawley's attack was very hot, and, as stated, Brooks nearly did the trick, but the final whistle went with neither side able to claim a goal.

The Rev. Father Cassidy (the donor of the cup) and the Captains (A. Felton and H. George) met, and the rev. gentleman said: "The game has been one of the very best I have ever seen and it has well repaid me for all the trouble I have taken to secure the cup. I think both sides have shown they are worthy to hold the cup, and I would suggest that the captains agree that the clubs should be joint holders and spin a coin to ascertain which should be the holders for the first six months." The Rev. Father thought that a replay would be unfair to the men who had fought such a gallant battle that day. Felton won the toss and was presented with the cup, whilst George received the 'Godman' Cup on behalf of his team, which defeated the West Sussex Police.

It will be noticed that there is no detailed criticism of the game, but that is unnecessary, as the blank score sheet shows that every man played his part in a worthy manner. The teams were:-

Crawley Comrades. – A. Elsey; C. Creighton and P. J. Knight; A. Miller, P. J. Soper and A. Felton; S. Brooks, R. P. Turner, E. Knight, C. Jenner and D. H. Cook.

Horsham Comrades. – W. Burchell; J. Stevens and A. Denham; A. Etheridge, E. Parker and H. George; R. Soper, L. Stewart, H. Sturt, C. Rogers and J. Stoner.

The Horsham Comrades had provided a much appreciated dinner for their guests, and the visitors were highly gratified and pleased at this proof of good fellowship and friendship.

On reaching home the Crawley boys were met by a large crowd of very enthusiastic supporters. Bells, bugles, bottles and various musical instruments were all employed to make a noise, but these were almost drowned by the loud cheers that were given. The cup was proudly borne on high and some of the players were 'chaired.' It was a fitting finale to a splendid performance. The officials, too, came in for cheery recognition.

At the first annual meeting of the Comrades' Club, Don was elected to the committee and it was recorded that – *As a token of respect and remembrance of the fallen in Crawley and Ifield parishes, it was decided to place wreaths on the war memorial crosses in Crawley and Ifield Churchyards each month.*

Chris meanwhile is mentioned as becoming a director of the Crawley and District Bowling Green and Tennis Club which had been set up immediately adjoining the new public Recreation Ground which was finally open for use in September.

Another war memorial was unveiled in Crawley at the end of that month:-

POSTAL WAR MEMORIAL. – *There was a large gathering at the Crawley Post Office on Sunday afternoon, when there was unveiled the War Memorial erected by past and present members of the staff to the memory of their colleagues who made the supreme sacrifice in the war. In addition to the members of the staff there were present the Rev. L. V. White way (rector of Crawley) and boys of Crawley Church Choir, the Postmaster (Mr. D. F. Charles), the Organiser (Mr. R. A. Arnold), Mr. Wyes (Surveyor's Office, Corydon), Mr. C. J. Mitchell (ex-postmaster), Mr. J. Wilkins (chairman Crawley Parish Council), Mr. W. Garland, J. P. (vice-chairman Ifield Parish Council), Mr. D. Tully (sub-postmaster, Hand Cross), the relatives of the fallen heroes, Mrs. D. F. Charles, Mrs. C. J. Mitchell and Miss B. Mitchell, Mrs. Wyes, Mrs. Ford, son, Mrs. W. J. Denman, Mrs. O. G. Hall, Mrs. W. Ellis, Miss Hall, Mr. H. Bacon, Mr. J. Gibbs and Mr. W. Homewood, whilst all departments of the office were represented.*

Mr. Clarke opened the proceedings in a brief speech in which he said that everyone should realise how indebted we were to the men who died giving their all that we might live to enjoy the heritage we did. England would have been a far

different place in which to live had the enemy conquered. He knew all sympathised with the relatives left behind, and we should be grateful for what the men had done for us.

Charles King had served the Post Office nearly 15 years, William Joseph Thorndike (who was one of the 'contemptibles') and Herbert Tester about five years. At the outbreak of war the staff had 23 men eligible for the Army, and of these 21 served, whilst the other was placed on most important and indispensable duties in a coast town. The hymn 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow' was sung, and the Rev. Whiteway offered prayers appropriate for the occasion, and Mr. C. J. Mitchell then unveiled the memorial, which had been covered with the Union Jack. The Rev. L. A. F. Willan read the Lesson.

'Let saints on earth in concert sing' was the closing hymn, and this brought a brief but very impressive service to a close. The memorial consists of an oak tablet beautifully embellished by very fine carving, and bears the words 'In proud and grateful memory of Charles King, Herbert Tester, William James Thorndike, of the Crawley Postal Staff, who made the supreme sacrifice 1914-1918. Their name liveth for evermore.' Mr. Harry Bacon executed the tablet, which hangs in the public counter.

The continued national outpouring of grief was to find a new focus on Armistice Day 1920. The idea of a permanent memorial to an unknown soldier who would symbolise the thousands of men who were lost in the fields of France and Belgium came from the Reverend David Railton, chief chaplain of the 42nd London Division. In July 1916, Railton conceived the idea at his billet in Erquinghem-Lys (the same place that would be destroyed in April 1918 during the Battle of the Lys). As the war was still going on at that point, and with no real end in sight, he resisted the temptation to write to the powers that be and try and get things moving. When the war was finally over, and things had begun to return to normal, he wrote to the Dean of Westminster in August 1920 with his suggestion as he felt that Westminster Abbey was the proper place for a tomb of this importance.

The Dean was very enthusiastic and replied to Railton in October that he had already been in contact with the War Office, Buckingham Palace and the Prime Minister and that permission had been given. The Dean also suggested that Railton's own Union Jack, battered and stained, which had overseen Holy Communions and covered countless bodies of the slain at funerals be used that day. One hundred sandbags of French soil would also be brought over with which to fill the grave.

During the night of November 7/8th, under orders from the War Office, four unidentified bodies – one from each of the four main battlefields of the Western Front: the Aisne, the Somme, Arras and Ypres – were brought to the village of Saint-Pol sur Ternoise. The men who had brought the bodies were then sent away so there

was no danger of anyone revealing which battlefield the chosen body had come from. The choice was made by a blindfolded Brigadier-General L. J. Wyatt and the remaining three bodies were reburied in a nearby military cemetery.

On the morning of November 9th, the body was moved to Boulogne where it lay overnight in a converted chapel of rest at the headquarters of the French Army. The following day the body, now in a coffin of Hampton Court oak, was escorted down to the port where Marshall Foch, the Commander-in-Chief of the French Army, gave a speech on behalf of the French Government, expressing his gratitude to their gallant allies. Foch saluted the coffin as it was carried up the gangplank and was then placed on the deck of the destroyer *HMS Verdun*, chosen especially to commemorate the French victory at Verdun. As the destroyer left harbour she was joined by an escort of six warships.

When *HMS Verdun* arrived at Dover, she was greeted with a nineteen gun salute fired from the castle. The coffin was then taken by train to Victoria Station, where a plaque still marks the occasion of its arrival on platform 8 and a small Remembrance ceremony is still held every year.

On November 11, Armistice Day, the coffin, on a gun carriage, on which a steel helmet, a webbing belt and a side-arm had been placed, was escorted to the Cenotaph where King George V was waiting. After he had placed a wreath of red roses on the coffin, the gun carriage moved off towards Westminster Abbey, with the King and a distinguished company of military men and statesmen following in a slow march. At the North Door of the Abbey, the clergy came to meet the coffin, which passed through an honour guard formed from one hundred winners of the Victoria Cross (including Private Arthur Poulter) to its final resting place.

In the presence of royalty, statesmen, military men, ordinary members of the public – among them a group of about a hundred women who had been chosen to attend as they had each lost their husband and all their sons in the war – the Unknown Soldier was laid to rest in the nave at 11 a.m., covered in soil brought from France. The grave was then capped with black marble stone from Belgium featuring this inscription, composed by the Dean of Westminster, and engraved with brass from melted down ammunition.

BENEATH THIS STONE RESTS THE BODY
OF A BRITISH WARRIOR
UNKNOWN BY NAME OR RANK
BROUGHT FROM FRANCE TO LIE AMONG
THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS OF THE LAND
AND BURIED HERE ON ARMISTICE DAY
11 NOV 1920 IN THE PRESENCE OF
HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V
HIS MINISTERS OF STATE

All the bright company of Heaven

THE CHIEFS OF HIS FORCES
AND A VAST CONCOURSE OF THE NATION

THUS ARE COMMEMORATED THE MANY
MULTITUDES WHO DURING THE GREAT
WAR OF 1914 – 1918 GAVE THE MOST THAT
MAN CAN GIVE LIFE ITSELF
FOR GOD
FOR KING AND COUNTRY
FOR LOVED ONES HOME AND EMPIRE
FOR THE SACRED CAUSE OF JUSTICE AND
THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD

THEY BURIED HIM AMONG THE KINGS BECAUSE HE
HAD DONE GOOD TOWARD GOD AND TOWARD
HIS HOUSE

In Crawley, there is no mention of what took place that day but there is an article about the evening's activities.

ARMISTICE NIGHT DANCE. – The recently opened Victoria Hall was the scene of a dance in celebration of the second anniversary of the Armistice on Thursday night. The floor was in excellent condition and a complete orchestra provided most pleasant music for the many dances. The spacious hall, with very pretty stage effects, looked exceedingly gay, and in the room beyond, refreshments were provided at popular prices. Dancing commenced at 7.45 and continued till one o' clock on Friday morning, all present spending a very happy time.

The following editorial appeared in the columns of the local papers shortly after Armistice Day:

THE MORAL OF SACRIFICE.

International affairs in which the Embassy is involved have again achieved a complexity. The emotional atmosphere of Armistice Day has not been dispelled yet, and, although we admit that sentiment should play a part in all human problems, a cooler temper is necessary for accurate judgement. The discussion on Reparations between Britain and France, which have been proceeding during the last few days, seem less difficult in the light of the sacrifice that was completed two years ago.

Such celebrations as those of Armistice Day check the tendency to forget the war, the quite natural reluctance of most people to face such a reality, and they

emphasise the need of some reparation done to Europe on behalf of Germany, to atone for the amount of suffering she wantonly inflicted on the world. We look upon the principle of this aspect of the Treaty of Versailles as particularly sound, but, like so many other features of the Peace that are based upon abstract principles, it is difficult of application. Germany has committed a wrong, and, since the laws of equity are of necessity based upon justice rather than compassion, Germany must not be surprised at punitive action in respect of that wrong.

But what is Germany, and who is the criminal? The nearest we can get to an answer is a list of names of high personages we vowed to punish, but the chief of whom are at present either in luxurious retirement or remaking their fortunes as journalists and memoir writers. The danger of pressing reparations to their logical conclusion is that the wrong people may suffer, surely nobody in this country or France desire the innocent children of Germany to pass their lives in economic bondage, a vicarious sacrifice for the sins of their fathers. The French point of view is strict logic, as far as it goes, but it does not seem to recognise the implications of loading a defeated nation with fictitious debts, the only result of which would be to cripple the stability and dwarf the outlook of millions of people who will not be in the least guilty of what the generation before them has done. The satisfaction to be obtained from doing this is less than justice, and it is not the moral of the 'Poilu.'

The true lesson of the 'Unknown Warrior' is that war is a futile, barbarous thing, and that all nations should be brought to recognise the fact. In other words – the League of Nations. Unless fifty or a hundred years hence there is to be another such procession through Whitehall and to the Arc de Triomphe, the nations of the world must make use of the new machinery at Geneva. The conception is simple enough to be true. But it is said in some quarters that French representatives in the Assembly of the League of Nations have been instructed to withdraw if, notwithstanding their opposition, the admission of Germany within the League should be sanctioned. Such action on the eve of the initiation of practical idealism would be unfortunate and tactless.

1921

Early 1921 saw Don as part of a working committee at Ifield Cricket Club and in April he became hon. treasurer of the Crawley Comrades. This is significant because it shows Don as being part of the Comrades' committee at the time when the Comrades' Clubs right throughout the country were about to be amalgamated with the Officers' Association, the National Association of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers and the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilized Sailors and Soldiers to form the British Legion as we know it today. Earl Haig was one of the primary movers behind this merger and was President of the Legion until his death in 1928.

There was to be one last surprise for me as my research came to an end, another reminder that the past is all around us and its coincidences are sometimes stranger than you can imagine. One of the last mentions I could find of Don in the local papers was a huge article reporting on a night of joint celebration for the West Crawley Band (who had won the local Band's Association Cup for the 4th time) and the Crawley Comrades. The celebrations took place at the Victoria Hall on Friday, June 17th, and took the form of a dinner and a cigarette concert:

The Chairman, Mr. Banks, said in his speech that as regarded the foot ball cup it had for over twenty years resided in Horsham, but the Crawley Comrades had this season made a great effort and had succeeded in bringing it to Crawley (applause). To show they had worked to secure the honour he mentioned that in the Horsham Charity Cup Competition the Comrades in the first round beat Partridge Green away by four goals to two, in the second round they beat Ifield by 14 to nil, in the semi-final with Trinity away they drew one all and in the replay at home won by one goal to nil and in the final with the Y. M. C. A. away they drew five all, and in the replay away they made a good job of it by winning by ten goals to two (applause). From what he (Mr. Banks) knew of Crawley football at present it was very much in the ascendant and they had a wealth of young players and he could see no reason why the cup should not stop in Crawley for the next twenty years (applause).

After the band presentations it was the turn of the Comrades:- Mr. Mitchell mentioned that the Horsham Charity Cup Competition had already produced some £200 for charities, hospitals in particular, and he hoped the Crawley and Ifield Cottage Hospital would receive at least £30 in its quota (applause). He then handed the cup to Mr. Felton (the captain) and the medals to the following: Messrs. Felton, D. H. Cook, Creighton, P. Soper, S. Brooks, E. Knight, Billy Knight, C. Miller, Reg. Turner, A. Miller, Percy Knight, C. Jenner, H. Raper and W. T. Sturt, all of whom were loudly cheered.

The coincidence here is that not only is Partridge Green the small village where I live now, but I also had a long association with the village football club, including two stints as manager. For the record here is the match report:-

HORSHAM SENIOR CHARITY CUP. PARTRIDGE GREEN 2: CRAWLEY COMRADES 4. Crawley Comrades accomplished a fine performance on Saturday when they visited and defeated Partridge Green in the first round of this competition. The visitors were strongly supported and the display given by the Comrades aroused much celebration. The game opened in the visitors' favour, E. Knight opening the scoring, but soon after Birdfield equalised and immediately afterward gave his side the lead. The homesters did not long enjoy

their lead, Brooks putting the sides level. W. Knight and E. Knight adding further points. This sharp scoring delighted the spectators, six goals in 25 minutes being unsurprising for such good teams. Strange to say no further goals were scored, the visitors winning by four goals to two. The winners were: H. Raper; E. Knight and C. Jenner; R. P. Turner, P. J. Soper and A. Felton; S. Brooks, W. Knight, E. Knight, C. Creighton and D. H. Cook.

In July the great reorganisation that would lead to the formation of the British Legion is referred to:-

FEDERATION OF DISCHARGED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS. – The members of the local branch of this Federation had a wind-up dinner and smoking concert on Wednesday night at the White Hart. Mr. J. A. Wells presiding over the very pleasant proceedings. The branch was formed in June, 1918, with the object being to establish a club in Crawley, for which purpose whist drives and concerts were held as a means of raising funds.

Owing to various difficulties the club had never matured, and now the Federation, the Comrades of the Great War, the National Association of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers and the Officer's Association have ceased to exist as such and are merged into one Association, known as the British Legion, which came into being on July 1st. Hence the winding-up of the local branch on Wednesday. It seemed to the Chairman a pity that that branch of the Federation, which was free from debt and getting on very nicely, should have to close its activities, but the British Legion had been formed to embrace all such organisations, and it was up to the members of the Federation to join the Legion if they wished to do so. That was a matter for them to decide later.

The long-running issue of the recreation Ground was eventually resolved in 1921. The August 4th papers:-

A RECREATION GROUND WITH MAGNIFICENT MEMORIAL GATES.

The War Memorial for the combined parishes of Ifield and Crawley takes the form of a recreation ground, as decided upon by a public meeting of inhabitants in 1919, and the meadow on the Three Bridges Road, consisting of seven acres, which has been secured for the purpose, has already proved to be a great acquisition to the town, is being much used by children and adults alike. The money for its purchase was raised by voluntary subscriptions, the entire sum being £1,020 5s.5d. Of this amount a most generous donation of £500 came from Mr. J. F. Drughorn, who also kindly bore the whole of the cost of the magnificent entrance gates and the bronze tablets recording the names of the fallen. With

the balance at their disposal, after paying for the ground and making up the roadway near the entrance, the committee have had a cricket pitch made and provided oak posts and chains to go around it, as well as half a dozen oak seats. Having done all they could with the means at their disposal the committee have approached the Ifield and Crawley Parish Councils with the view to their now taking over the recreation ground and providing for its future maintenance out of the rates.

This was finally agreed in December.

The British Legion's first ever Poppy appeal is referred to in the November papers:-

CRAWLEY POPPY COLLECTIONS. – At Crawley on Remembrance Day the poppy collections for Lord Haig's fund were organised by Mr. Chas. Courtin, who at short notice was able to enlist the willing services of 18 ladies, whose efforts were very successful. The collection raised £30.9 1/2d.

MEMORIAL TO FALLEN BANDSMEN. – There has recently been fixed in the Crawley Parish Church, a fumed oak tablet in memory of the nine members of the Crawley Town Band, who lost their lives in the Great War. It is a very beautiful design and was executed by Mr. Harry Bacon, himself an ex-member of the Band. The memorial was unveiled and dedicated at a special service on Sunday afternoon, when there was a full congregation, and the robed clergy present were the Rev. H. L. Barrett-Lennard (rector of Crawley), the Rev. L. A. F. Willan (vicar of West Crawley), the Rev. L. L. Whiteway (curate of Crawley) and the Rev. J. L. Stewart (vicar of Staplefield).

The Band, who had provided the memorial to their dead comrades, was present and accompanied some of the hymns under the conductorship of Mr. Yarnold, Mr. A. T. Harms was at the organ and rendered 'The March of the Crusaders' (Sibly) as the congregation were assembling. The Revs. Willan and Stewart shared the lessons, and the prayers and responses were taken by the Rector, whilst the hymns sung during the service were 'O God, our help in ages past', 'God of the living in whose eyes' and 'the supreme sacrifice.' Mrs. Barrett-Lennard and Mrs. Percival Wood together unveiled the memorial, which was dedicated by the Rector, and subsequently the Rev. J. L. Stewart delivered an appropriate address. 'The Last Post' and the 'Reveille' were sounded by Sergt. G. Napper and the organist effectively played the 'Palestine March' (Archer) as the closing voluntary. The service was very impressive throughout. The inscription on the memorial is:-

'In proud and grateful memory of W. Clarke, D. Duffell, C. Fieldwick, C. Foote, A. Heather, H. P. Hygate, W. Rice, C. Rice and W. Gilderson, members

of the Crawley Town Band, who fell in the Great War, 1914-1918. Their names liveth for evermore.'

Of those men, Heather, Hygate and C. Rice are listed on the Memorial Gates. But what can be found of the others?

There are 310 entries for W. Clarke on the C.W.G.C. website so our man could be any one of those. D. Duffell was the son of George and Emily Duffell, of Chapel Lane in Charlwood. He was a driver with the Army Service Corps who died, aged 20, on the 4th September 1915. He is commemorated in the Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery in Egypt. The Chatby Memorial stands at the eastern end of the cemetery and commemorates nearly a thousand Commonwealth servicemen who died during the First World War and have no other grave but the sea. Many of them were lost when hospital ships or transports were sunk in the Mediterranean, sailing to or from Alexandria. Others died of wounds or sickness while aboard such vessels and were buried at sea.

Charlie Fieldwick was 19 and a Private with the 12th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment when he died on 3rd September 1916. He was a son of William and Florence Fieldwick, of Turner's Hill. He was buried at the Hamel Military Cemetery near Beaumont Hamel, one of twenty of the Regiment who were all killed during an attack on Mesnil and who are all buried there. He is commemorated at Turner's Hill where the original cross that marked his grave can be found in the local church.

The only C. Foote that can be found on the C.W.G.C. site is Private Charles Horatio Foote, of the East Surrey Regiment attached to the London regiment. Private Foote was 29, the son of Charles Edward and Emily Foote, of 21 Warburton Square, London Fields and the husband of Frances Foote also of London Fields. He died on the 16th June 1918 and is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial which means his body was never found.

There are two W. Gildersons on the website, Lance-Corporal William Gilderson, age unknown, who died on the 22nd August 1917 while serving with the Machine Gun Corps. He is commemorated at Tyne Cot. The other is Private William Charles Gilderson of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment who was 39 and married to Florence when he was killed on 18th June 1915, near Ypres. His name is recorded on the Menin Gate.

Twenty entries exist for W. Rice, but I am guessing our man is Private William Rice of the Royal Sussex Regiment, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rice, of 6, Horsham Road, Pease Pottage. He was with the 8th Battalion ('D' Company) when he was died, aged 19, on the 1st November 1916. He was buried at the St. Sever Cemetery extension at Rouen, the site of several military hospitals during the Great War, indicating that he may have been a casualty who never recovered from his wounds.

ARMISTICE DAY. – *The two minutes' silence was solemnly observed here, as elsewhere, all business and movement being suspended for the time being and at some of the places of worship there was a brief service. In the evening there was much merriment in the Victoria Hall in celebration of the victory, a long night dance being held. Refreshments were supplied by Mr. G. Edwards, of the Sun Hotel, and Messrs. F. and N. Hibbs. Dancing was indulged in from eight till one o' clock and the introduction of several ball-room novelties added much to the pleasure of all present. The hall had been prettily decorated with festoons, bunting and balloons, and the floor was in fine condition. The orchestra was frequently encored and one popular piece was played no fewer than eight times. A dance was also held in the George Hotel, and this, too, was a great success.*

The last part of Ted's war record is a letter written to him at Crawley from a Staff Captain W. D. Rowe dated November 9th 1921:

15358/10 (M.S.A.E.(5))

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated 28th October 1921, regarding your rank on retirement, I am directed to inform you, that as you have not held the rank of Captain for the minimum total period of six months, it is regretted that you are not eligible to be granted that rank on relinquishing your commission.

The grant of higher rank to Officers on the termination of their commissions is governed by Army Order 376 of 1918, a copy of which is enclosed for your information.

I am,

Sir, Your obedient servant,

W. D. Rowe

Staff Captain for Military Secretary

So it seems that Ted did stay on in the Army beyond the end of the war. How likely it was that his request for Home Service was granted is not clear but stay on he did, being appointed Lieutenant and then Acting Captain at the age of 54. He returned home to Lathbury for good in autumn 1921, to Laura and Dorothy and the rest of the family, and to the family business.

The Cook family and the business would continue to flourish in Crawley for nearly another forty years, through the better times that did come, and through the darker times of the Second World War, when the Cook's factory (employed making drop tanks for Spitfires) was destroyed by a Nazi 'doodle-bug' in July 1944 – but that is a story for another day.

How the family dealt with the loss of Eddie, not only as an individual, but as the family heir can only be imagined. In time the business would pass to Don and to

my grandfather Les. Eddie's absence must have hung over the family like a pall, not least upon my grandfather whose birthday was April 13th, the date of Eddie's death, and every subsequent birthday he marked would be tinged with memory and with sadness. The world had changed forever and with it the lives and the future of the Cooks.

The last word from these times comes from two pieces that appeared in the local press a few weeks after Armistice Day:-

A HAPPIER FUTURE. – A special visit was paid to Crawley on Wednesday evening by the Rev. F. C. Spurr, of the Regent's Park Chapel, and a fairly large audience gathered in the Baptist Church to hear his address on 'The best days of the world are coming.' He gave a most racy and eloquent address. He confessed that he was an optimist, and said he could not have delivered a lecture on such a subject at a more opportune time, since the Irish peace treaty had just been signed. Whatever they had thought of Lloyd George, they could not refrain from giving him his meed of praise for what he had done at the Irish peace conference. He argued that the best days of the world were coming, because he believed in the livingness and activity of God.

All this was shown in the world of nature, in human history and in the progress of individuals. He asked them not to believe that all the good days were in the past. No one would like to revert to the past when they had no bicycles, no electric lighting, no modern sanitisation and none of the conveniences and improvements of modern days. The late war, with all its horrors, was over, and with all the efforts being made for universal peace in the future, he looked forward to the better days that had yet to come.

All the bright company of Heaven

THE SILENCE.

Being some lines written on Armistice anniversary, 1921.

*How wondrous silence is!
When, stood aside from daily strife,
We think in silence of each life
That gave itself for mother, wife,
Or any that it loved.
What thoughts come flocking down the way
To our sad hearts to make them say
“How wondrous silence is!”*

*What awe doth silence have!
It speaks of battles raging long,
Of brave hearts forced to march along
And help to swell the mighty throng
All unafraid of death.
It says that some will ne'er return
And that the world for them must mourn
What awe doth silence have.*

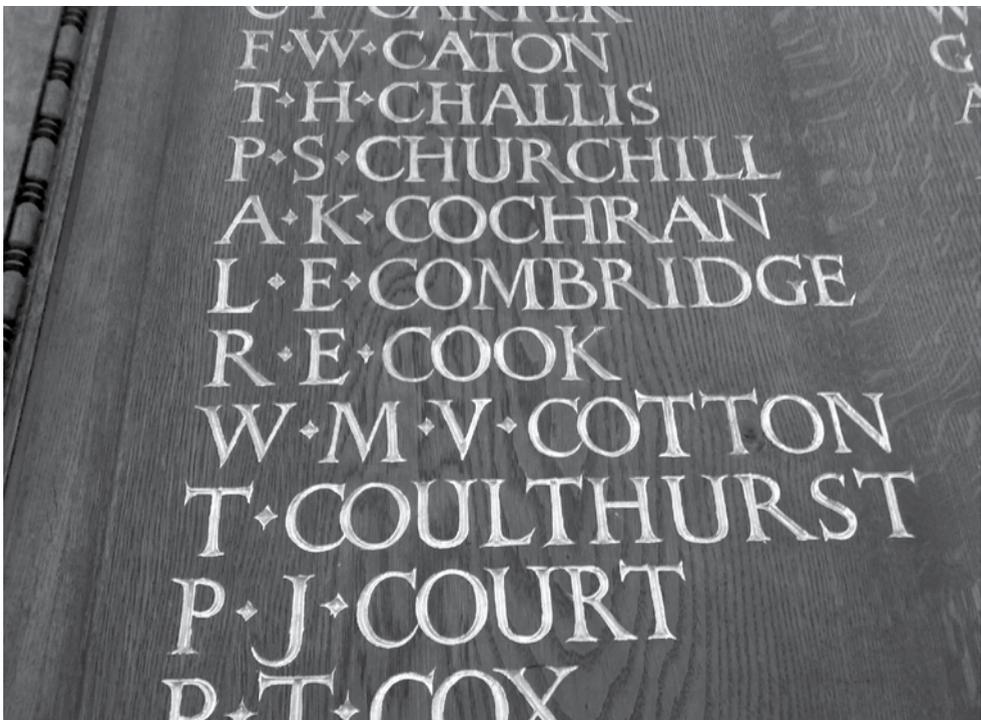
*What comfort silence gives!
The loved ones thinking of their dead,
Possess no more dull hearts of lead,
For even as is bowed each head,
A voice rings loud and clear:-
“Fear not for those who passed away,
They live in realms of endless day!”
What comfort silence gives.*

J. M.

11th November, 1921.



The brass tablet at St. Peter's unveiled July 1919.



Eddie's name at Brighton.



The Peace Parade, July 1919. Miss Winnie Tring, as 'the Queen of Roses' and her brother lead the Parade southwards along the Brighton Road. Note the Comrades of the Great War poster in Mr. Skinner's window.



Norman Lord as 'John Bull' followed by 'Victory' Miss Eva Ward, with Miss Fuller as 'Stars and Stripes' and Miss Jenner as 'France.'



The Schoolchildren of Crawley marching in the parade.



The parade turns into Springfield Road.



The unveiling of the war memorial at St. John's, January 1920.



The Memorial Park gates 2010.



The Ploegsteert Memorial. Two Crawley men are commemorated here. William Geer, 34, of 19, West Street, killed in action 16.4.18 and Frederick George Burgess ,20, of 62, West Street, killed in action 6.9.18. Neighbours in life, their names are diagonally opposite one another.



The lion atop the Menin Gate, forever looking eastwards.

All the bright company of Heaven



The Suffolk Cemetery at La Rolanderie farm. The cemetery contains the graves of 43 soldiers from the United Kingdom, of whom 36 belonged to the 11th and 12th Suffolk Regiment, and of whom eight are unidentified. The Front is on the horizon.



The Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing.

PART FOUR

ENDINGS

2010

How could we pay the debt, the greatness of which we could never forget, especially to those who died that we might live? In the first place we could keep their memory fresh and green. We live in a world of bustle; that which is of importance today is forgotten tomorrow; but it would be a great shame if we allowed the memory of those brave lads to pass away or allow their remembrance to be forgotten.

The Rev. Preb. Wilson, January 1920

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors – St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans

Pass not without remembrance

AND so, years have passed. That tumultuous generation has all but faded away and the Great War itself, has, in the time it has taken to research and write this book, slipped from living memory into history. All along the Western Front, traces of the war can still be found. The 'Silent Cities' of war memorials and cemeteries bear mute testimony to the sacrifices that brought them into being.

In France, outside the small town of Erquinghem-Lys, La Rolanderie farm still exists. The farm can be clearly seen from the Eurostar railway line on the approach to Lille. Standing in the field is a small military cemetery known as the Suffolk Cemetery. Away in the distance to the east you can see a church spire which marks the approximate spot of the German front line. The cemetery contains the graves of 43 men, 36 of whom belonged to the 11th and 12th Suffolks. Eight of the men are unidentified. Most of the burial dates are shown as the 19th April 1918, meaning that these men were injured during the German attack and were subsequently cared for by the Germans before succumbing to their wounds.

As indicated in F. Haydn Hornsey's eyewitness account the farm was all but destroyed on the 9th and 10th of April 1918. It has since been rebuilt but there is a sort of stable/shed/outbuilding which dates back to those times. Although the 11th Suffolks were only at La Rolanderie for a short time, it seems quite possible that Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook may actually have set foot there. He would certainly have marched along the pathway which is right next to the outbuilding as it leads to the road. It was quite poignant standing there, trying to imagine what the attack must have been like, knowing that a 20 year old boy from Crawley would be caught up in it and be dead just days later.

As we left the farm, Jack pointed out to me a little pile of shells and grenades which had surfaced in the fields as the farmer was going about his ploughing. This happens every year, 90 plus years on, and these munitions are still deadly and can go off and kill or maim people today. A local bomb disposal expert takes them away and destroys them safely on a regular basis.

Looking back towards Erquinghem-Lys I could see the stream used by Hornsey and many others for their escape and away to the right, the town of Armentieres which was also totally destroyed by the Germans during the attack. It is said that so many gas shells were fired into Armentieres that the Germans could not enter it for days afterwards as the streets were running with mustard gas.

Behind Erquinghem-Lys is the River Lys which the 11th Suffolks crossed on the 10th April and just beyond that is the Armentieres-Bailleul railway line where Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook was to meet his fate.

Twenty kilometres or so, across the Belgian border, lies the small city of Ieper, or, as it was formerly known, Ypres.

Ypres was almost completely surrounded during the war and was reduced to rubble by German artillery which could fire on it from in front, to the left and to the right, even from behind. The city guarded the way to the Channel ports and, as the

last Belgian city not to be in enemy hands, became a symbol of Allied defiance. It was feared that if the city fell the war would be lost. After the war was over Winston Churchill said in January 1919: *'I should like us to acquire the whole of the ruins of Ypres...A more sacred place for the British race does not exist in the whole world.'*

Churchill never got his wish as by that time the former inhabitants had started to return to their shattered homes, anxious to rebuild and put the years of the Great War behind them as quickly as possible. After much discussion it was decided that the British government would build a memorial to the missing of the infamous Salient in the shape of a triumphal arch straddling the Menin Road, the new Menin Gate. Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, the memorial was opened on 24 July 1927 by Lord Plumer, who in his speech said, "He is not missing. He is here."

The Gate is crowned with a statue of a lion that looks forever eastwards, towards the enemy, down the road that these men took to the front. Below the lion is the memorial's dedication which reads 'To the armies of the British Empire who stood here from 1914 to 1918 and to those of their dead who have no known grave.' It is here that the names of 54,896 British Empire soldiers who disappeared in the mud and carnage around Ypres between the beginning of hostilities and August 1917 are recorded – the total number of the missing for the salient for the whole war was so large that there was not enough room on the Gate for all the names and it was decided that another memorial to the missing would be built at Tyne Cot.

The names of the men from Crawley and the surrounding area can easily be found. For instance, clearly visible to the right of the left hand archway is the name of Lieutenant Walter Edward Worsdale Cottle, of Newdigate, who once, on a far off day, played cricket at Crawley against a team that included the two Cook cousins. All these men of Crawley very likely knew each other and now their names look out at each other across the massive archway of the Gate for all time.

Every night at 8 p.m., the road is closed by police and the Last Post is played by the buglers of the Last Post Association. The Association was formed by members of the local fire brigade as the citizens of Ypres were keen to show their gratitude for their freedom which had been won at such sacrifice. It has now continued uninterrupted since July 2nd 1928 – apart from when the Nazis invaded in World War Two. It is a local legend that when the Nazis were chased out, the first thing the locals did was re-institute the ceremony under the Gate.

Each night the ceremony is played out, with hundreds of people attending and paying their respects. Anyone who has been to the ceremony cannot help but be moved by it and for me it has an added poignancy as you can clearly see the names of the men from Crawley on the vast stone tablets.

In Crawley itself, her sons are commemorated on the local war memorials around which ceremonies are still performed during the second week of November every year. The churches mentioned in this book are still there, as are some of the pubs. The George Hotel is there, although the lovely bar it used to have, that my

grandfather and Don used to frequent most nights of the week, is now a Greek theme pub. Across the High Street stands the White Hart where Chris played whist 120 years ago and, heading south across the old level crossing is the Railway Inn, the scene of many Volunteer and Territorial smoking concerts. Next to the pub can still be seen the platforms of the old Crawley train station. Directly opposite the Railway is the old Imperial cinema that once may have shown 'The Battle of the Somme'.

If you look closely enough some of the old buildings built by R. Cook & Sons are still there as well, although the Cooks themselves are now long gone. My great grandfather, Herbert Cook, died in April 1933, just a few months after my mother was born:

THE LATE MR. HERBERT COOK. FUNERAL OF A CRAWLEY BUILDER. We regret to record the death, which occurred suddenly on Thursday last week, of Mr. Herbert Cook, 'The Laurels,' Springfield Road, Crawley. He was 63 years of age and was born at Crawley, being the second son of the late Mr. Richard Cook, who founded the building firm of Messrs. R. Cook & Sons, Crawley about 70 years ago. The firm has been responsible for a number of important contracts in the South of England, being mainly responsible for building in connection with railway stations and schools. St. Peter's Church, West Crawley, was built by the firm in 1892.

Mr. Herbert Cook took considerable interest in his father's business and entered the firm when he was a young man. He was one of the directors at the time of his death. Mr. Cook was of a retiring disposition, his main interest being centred in the business.

The funeral was held at St. Peter's Church on Monday. The service was choral and was conducted by the Vicar of West Crawley (the Rev. H. A. K. Baynes). The hymn sung was 'Abide with me,' and the 23rd Psalm was chanted. Revelation xxi., 1-7, was used as the lesson; Mr. W. H. Shelley at the organ.

The family mourners were Mr. and Mrs. D. H. Cook and Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Cook (sons and daughters-in-law); Mr. and Mrs. D. Pearson (son-in-law and daughter); Miss E. Cook (sister); Mr. A. E. Cook (brother); and Mr. W. Chapman and Mr. H. Chapman (brothers-in-law). Mrs. Cook (widow), Mrs A. E. Cook (sister-in-law) and Mr. C. Cook (brother) were unable to attend owing to illness. The employees of Messrs. R. Cook & Sons, Ltd., followed the cortege with Mr. R. O. Clarke representing the office staff and Mr. G. Attfield (works foreman) at the head of the other employees.

Wreaths were sent as follows:- In ever loving memory of a devoted husband, from a sorrowing wife; Don and Joyce; Les and Christine; Phil and Don; Robin, Josie and Jennifer (the kiddies); Ted and Laurie; Emmie; Chris; employees of Messrs. R. Cook & Sons Ltd.; Will and Bess; Bert and Artie, and Norah and

Peggy; Alf and Percy; Dick and Dorothy; Mr. and Mrs. Walder and family; Mrs. Pearson and Mrs. Sivier; Mrs. Larcombe and Mrs. Everett; E. B. Ockenden; Mr. Mrs. and Miss Mitchell; Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Willett; Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Brooks; Mr. and Mrs. Small and Kathleen; Mr. and Mrs. Milton Bridger; Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Morley; Mr. and Mrs. J. Penfold; Mr. and Miss Moore; Thora; Mrs. A. K. Garrett and Mr. H. Garrett; Mr. H. J. Pusey and Mr. and Mrs. S. Bartley.

My great grandmother, Ellen, was to die peacefully in a nursing home in Pound Hill in July 1967, aged 97.

It is worth noting that although Herbert's obituary records him as being the second son of Richard Cook, he was in fact the third, but over fifty years on from the death of Harry, it is perhaps not surprising that he has been all but forgotten.

Moving south away from the level crossing, and turning right into Perryfield Road you can see that Lathbury, or No. 18, is still there, now converted into one bedroom flats. It was here, at home, twenty years after the death of his son, that Ted died on August 11th 1938.

THE LATE MR. A. E. COOK. FUNERAL AT CRAWLEY.

Crawley lost another well-known inhabitant by the death of Mr. A. E. Cook, of 18 Perryfield Road, which took place at his residence on Thursday at the age of 70 years. He leaves a widow and one daughter, the only son, Lieut. E. Cook, having been killed in the Great War. The deceased was the senior partner of the well-known building firm of Messrs. R. Cook & Sons.

He was a member of the Old Volunteers formed by Major E. Henty and when this became the 4th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment he was a sergeant. He was in camp with his Battalion at Newhaven when war was declared. He went to France and received a Commission in the Suffolk Regiment.

Before the war he was a member of Crawley Rifle Club which won numerous trophies. He was a member of the Crawley Bicycle Club at the time the members wore uniform and started on their 'pennyfarthings' at the sound of a whistle. Since the war Mr. Cook has been a member of the Crawley Parish Council and a churchwarden of St. Peter's. He will be greatly missed as he was highly esteemed by all.

The funeral service was held in St. Peter's Church, and the internment followed in Snell Hatch Cemetery. The Rev. H. A. K. Baynes (who was for twelve years Vicar of St. Peter's) and the Rev. C. P. N. Rowband officiated. Mr. J. H. Burdon presided at the organ and played 'Blest are the Departed' (Spoor) and 'O rest in the Lord' (Mendelssohn). The 23rd Psalm, 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' was chanted and the hymn, 'Abide with me,' was sung. The lesson was Revelation xxi. 1-7.

Mrs. Cook (widow) was unable to be present, and her only daughter (Mrs. R. Harman) was with her. The family mourners were Mr. R. Harman (son-in-law), Mr. C. Cook (brother), Mr. D. H. Cook and Mr. Leslie Cook (nephews).

Among the floral tributes are the following inscriptions:-

With fondest love to my dear one, Laurie.

To dear Dadda, with all our love, Dorothy and Dick.

To dear Ted, from his sorrowful sister and brother, Emmie and Chris.

To grandad, with love, from his little Pat-Pat (from his garden).

With deepest sympathy and love, Nell and Phyllis.

Leaving all happy memories, Don and Joyce.

To a real and true uncle, Les and Christine.

In fond remembrance, from all at Newton Pagnell.

In kind remembrance, Mr. and Mrs. C. Harman.

With deepest sympathy, from all who served with him in the Second V. B. 1/4th Royal Sussex Regiment.

With sincere sympathy, from the employees R. Cook & Sons.

Laura died a few years later in May 1941. The papers reported it thus:-

FORMER RESIDENT'S DEATH. – The death took place at Newport Pagnell on Thursday last week of Mrs. Laura Cook, widow of Mr. Alfred Edward Cook, formerly of Lathbury, Perryfield Road, Crawley. Mrs. Cook, who was 74 years of age, had been unwell for a long period and had gone to Newport Pagnell to recuperate. Mr. Cook, who died in August, 1938, was for many years an esteemed member of in the public life of Crawley, being a churchwarden of St. Peter's and a member of the Crawley Parish Council. He was the senior member of the building firm, Messrs. R. Cook & Sons, Ltd. The funeral took place on Saturday.

A service was held in St. Peter's Church and the internment was in Snell Hatch cemetery in a grave adjoining that of her husband. The Rev. A. Douglas Wing officiated. The family mourners were: Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Harman (son-in-law and daughter) and Mr. D. H. Cook and Mr. A. L. Cook (nephews). The floral tributes included the following:

With love, Dick and Dorothy.

With love, from Pat.

In loving remembrance, Em and Chris.

In loving memory, Les and Chris.

With love and sympathy, Don and Joyce.

With love and sympathy, from all at Barbrelyen.

The Pat referred to in both Ted and Laura's obituaries is, I believe, Dorothy and Dick's adopted daughter. Dorothy, apparently, was unable to have children. What

became of Pat is not known. Dorothy and Dick had retired and were living somewhere in Hove when they both died in 1967, within a few months of one another. I have been unable to find their final resting place. It is to be assumed that any surviving letters from, and pictures of, Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook that may have existed at that time were then subsequently thrown away.

At the top of Perryfield Road is a footpath that takes you through to the place where West Street on the right and Newlands Road on the left meet. I can remember using this footpath as a short cut on my way to and from Southgate Junior School in the 1960's and early 70's. New houses have sprung up at the Perryfield Road end, which used to be known as the 'Bricker' – the old Cooks' brickyard – by my mother and her sister who used to play there as children, as Eddie and Don must have done before them.

All of the older houses in Newlands Road, West Street, Oak Road, Denne Road and Springfield Road are known to have been built by the Cooks. Some of the houses opposite Goffs Park are Cooks' buildings as well. Springfield Road and West Street were built by Richard Cook when he was starting out and the buildings in Newlands Road and on the Horsham Road were built by my grandfather and Don a generation later.

Big sister Emma died on March 30th 1949 and my grandfather, Les, died on the 29th December 1951, of tuberculosis. His obituary says:-

A member of one of Crawley's oldest families, Mr. Alfred Leslie Cook, of Polvarth, Newlands Road, Crawley died on Saturday at the age of 49. He was the younger son of the late Mr. Herbert Cook and brother of Mr. D. H. Cook, of the Laurels, Crawley and was a partner in the firm of Richard Cook & Sons Ltd., building contractors, which was founded by his grandfather, the late Mr. Richard Cook, in the middle of the last century. Mr. Cook was well known in Masonic circles in Sussex, and was a past Master of the Forest Oak (Crawley) Lodge.

He leaves a widow and two daughters, Miss Josephine Cook and Miss Jennifer Cook. The funeral service was held at St. Peter's Church on Tuesday.

On the other side of the Horsham Road lies Goffs Park and the Manor house is still there. Today amongst other uses, it houses the Crawley Museum, but it was here that a young Laura Petts came from Newport Pagnell to work as a domestic in 1890 or so. The bell-tower of St. Peter's can be seen from here and the church itself is just a short walk away. Approaching the level crossing and then walking back up Springfield Road, you come to the block of flats that has been built on the corner of Oak Road, on the spot where Emma and Chris used to live.

Chris died on January 5th 1961.

HE SHOT FOR ENGLAND. MR. C. COOK.

A member of one of the oldest Crawley families, Mr. Christopher Cook, of 38, Springfield Road, died in a nursing home last week. He was 87.

Mr. Cook was the last surviving son of the founder of Richard Cook & Sons Ltd., builders, and was a retired director. The firm was founded in 1859. As a member of the firm, Mr. Cook was concerned in the building of St. Peter's Church, West Green. He belonged to the Forest Oak Lodge of Freemasons.

A keen sportsman, he was a prominent member of Crawley Shooting Club and shot for England. He was also a founding member of Crawley Bowling Club, and had played for the county. Another of Mr. Cook's great interests was pigeon racing.

Mr. Cook, who was one of the greatest authorities on the history of Crawley, was unmarried. The funeral took place on Tuesday, with a service at St. Peter's Church, West Green. Internment was at Snell Hatch Cemetery. Canon Clifford Earwalker (rector of Crawley) officiated.

Thus Don became the last surviving male of the Cook line. It is known that he and his wife Joyce did want to have children but it was not to happen. Don struggled with a debilitating illness for a number of years before his death and I cannot help but think that the war got him in the end. My mother has described him as a short tempered man, and of course I never really knew him (although I was paraded before him several times), but I do feel a certain sympathy.

How difficult must it have been to step into what should have been Eddie's shoes and take over the business? What did he think about every time he took the cricket pitch after the war? When every single one of his little brother's birthdays was an anniversary of Eddie's death? And then, having to deal with the death of that same little brother?

Don died on December 29th 1962.

WAS BUSINESSMAN, FREEMASON AND SPORTSMAN. MR. DON COOK.

Mr. Don Cook, a member of one of Crawley's oldest business families, of 36, Springfield Road, died on Saturday. He was 63.

Mr. Donald Herbert Cook was the managing director of Messrs. Richard Cook and Sons, building contractors, a firm founded by his grandfather in 1859. He had been ill for about six years. He was master of the Forest Oak Lodge of Freemasons in 1934-35 and was a founder member of the Crawley Lodge. In his younger days he was a keen sportsman. Following the First World War, in which he served, he played for Crawley Comrades F. C. and for Ifield Cricket Club. Mr. Cook leaves a widow, Mrs. Joyce Cook, a mother aged 92, and a sister, Mrs. P. M. Pearson.

As St. Peter's Church, West Green, was built by Mr. Cook's grandfather,

Richard Cook, the funeral service was held there on Wednesday and internment was in Snell Hatch Cemetery.

Moving along Springfield Road, at the corner of West Street, the building which once housed the offices of R. Cook & Sons still stands, facing the railway line, watching as life goes on in Crawley.

What has been written in this book is all that remains of the lives of the Cooks of Crawley. Everything else has been lost, as waves are lost on a beach.

‘In Flanders Fields the poppies blow, Between the crosses, row on row.....’

Across the Channel, an hour’s drive from Calais, on the road to Poperinge and Ieper, lies the small Belgian village of Proven. Just outside of Proven is Mendinghem Military Cemetery. Mendinghem, like Dozinghem and Bandaghem, is a nickname given to this group of Casualty Clearing Stations by the troops. Here, on April 13th 1918, Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook was found to be dead on admission with a gunshot wound to the abdomen. At times of great pressure, it was common for the medical staff to divide casualties into three categories – those who can wait for treatment, those who have a chance of surviving but need to be treated immediately and those who are beyond help. It is quite likely that Second Lieutenant Cook did not even survive the journey to Mendinghem and that he succumbed to his wounds en route in the back of a wagon. Of course it is to be hoped that, being a terminal case, he was ‘helped’ on his way with an overdose of morphine, lying in a bed made of clean sheets, comforted by a pretty nurse. In reality, if he did make it, he may just have been put to one side and left to die quietly.

There are three other men of the 11th Suffolks buried nearby who died shortly after Eddie, lending more weight to the theory that he was part of a patrol that got into a fight with the enemy. They are Private E. Daines, who died on the 15th April 1918, Lance Cpl. V. Sharpe of ‘B’ Company who died age 21 on the 17th April and Private L. Davey who died on the 18th April. Both Daines and Sharpe came from the small village of Kirtling near Newmarket. There is also a Lieutenant H. M. Brown M. C. of an unspecified (but definitely not the 11th) Suffolk Regiment who was 21 when he died on the 14th April 1918.

Mendinghem is a beautiful but strange place. It lies five hundred metres beyond the village of Proven, just past the football pitch, set back about a hundred metres from the main road, down a dirt track. There are a couple of houses there and one of them has a garden which backs on to the cemetery. As with all the other cemeteries, it is immaculately looked after. You can hear the occasional car go by but otherwise the only sounds to be heard are birdsong and the wind as it races past. There are over 2,400 graves here including some Chinese labourers and some Germans. The German graves face away from the British and towards far off Germany, whereas the British graves are facing towards the Channel.

I have visited many times, usually in the spring, and have spent hours watching the bare trees waving and the clouds scudding by. When I first visited, I knew almost nothing about Richard Edward Cook and nothing at all about the Great War. On my most recent visit this year, I thought of the story that had been uncovered and how true it is when people say that sometimes ‘truth is stranger than fiction.’ The moment that I realised that Ted was also a soldier and had served in France at the same time as his son will stay with me forever, much like the moment when I was standing at the entrance to St. Peter’s church in Crawley and I looked to my left and saw the words set in stone ‘R. Cook & Sons Builders’.

Each cemetery has a visitor’s book but unfortunately these are not kept so there is no record of whether the Cooks ever visited. It is unlikely in the extreme that they never visited at least once and very probable that they made an annual pilgrimage of it, much as I do now.

At one end of the cemetery stands the Cross of Sacrifice which faces the Stone of Sacrifice which carries Rudyard Kipling’s words ‘Their name liveth for evermore.’ But what does that mean exactly?

Eddie Cook’s name can be found in Brighton, on one of two vast wooden panels that commemorate the fallen of Brighton School, which are still in the original School building, although the School itself is long gone and the building is now Brighton Sixth Form College. The panels, which are hanging in the exam hall either side of the entrance, have the names of 133 boys of the School engraved in gold leaf recorded on them. Above the entrance, there is a plaque that says:-

‘Those whose names are recorded here were sons of this school who died for England. At the call of King and country, they left all that was dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty & self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom & inherit peace. Remember them always and steadfastly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain.’

In Crawley, the name of Eddie Cook can be found on the Memorial Park Gates and at St. Peter’s and St. John’s Churches.

When unveiling the memorial at St. John’s the Rev. Preb. Wilson said: “*We live in a world of bustle; that which is of importance today is forgotten tomorrow ; but it would be a great shame if we allowed the memory of those brave lads to pass away or allow their remembrance to be forgotten.*”

And it is true to a certain extent, their names have not been forgotten and are commemorated every year, but the actual men themselves, and their stories have been lost to us for a generation.

The ‘War to End All Wars’ proved to be nothing of the sort. Europe and the world were fighting another global conflict just twenty years later and Britain has

been involved in conflicts more or less ever since. In the end the Great War was just another war after a war and just another war before a war – a fact amply demonstrated by the updating of the memorial at St. John's to include the fallen of World War Two and the most recent up dating in 2010 which included two names from World War Two and two names of local men who had died in Afghanistan.

Midway along one of the rows at Mendinghem lies the final resting place of Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook. When headstones replaced the wooden crosses in the early 1920's, the families were contacted and invited to add an inscription to each headstone. Ted and Laura's last words to their son were:

'MY PRESENCE SHALL GO WITH THEE AND I WILL GIVE THEE REST.'

On April 13th 2008, a Sunday morning that threatened a deluge, just as I arrived at Snell Hatch Cemetery, the heavens opened and I was forced to take shelter in the gazebo. I had given a lot of thought on how to mark the 90th anniversary of the death of Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook. He had not even been a memory for the 40 years since the death of Dorothy in 1967 – he was just a name in the family history with a wrongly recorded date of birth and a wrongly recorded date of death.

The victory of 1918 remains the greatest ever achievement by the British Army for make no mistake, despite the presence of the rest of the Allies, it was the British Army who were decisive in the field and yet that seems to be a fact that is scarcely remembered today.

I had discovered during the course of my research that by any definition Second Lieutenant R. E. Cook was a hero – for without his and thousands of others' sacrifice the world would be a far different place today. When their backs were against the wall and the future of civilisation was at stake, when the German Army were pushing hard to break the British lines and force the British into the sea, he and his comrades sacrificed life and limb to save the world as they knew it. The consequences of his sacrifice had to be lived with by the Cooks, especially Ted and Laura and Dorothy and of course his cousin-brother Don. If Eddie had lived and gone on to marry and have children then Don may have had a male heir to pass the family building business on to, instead of just winding the company up. R. Cook & Sons could still be building today and the Cook line could still be a part of modern Crawley affairs. As it is, all that hope and promise came to an end somewhere along the Armentieres – Bailleul railway line in one of the greatest battles the world has ever seen.

When the rain had finally ended and the wind had chased away some of the clouds to let the sun through, I made my way to Ted and Laura's graveside. I thought about how difficult and sad the rest of their lives must have been. I thought about the telegram arriving on the 14th April 1918, when Laura and Dorothy, knowing what is was likely going to say, opened it and received the news that changed their lives forever. I wondered how Ted and Don had got the news, where they were and what

they were doing and I thought about the possible feelings of guilt that Ted may have had, leading his only son into the Territorials and then into the Army proper. From my rucksack, I took a small packet filled with earth I had removed from that little corner of a foreign field that is forever England. I emptied the contents of the packet on to the graves.

In some small way, a tiny part of Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook had come home.

Renny Richardson March 2007 – August 2010

Two little boys had two little toys
Each had a wooden horse
Gaily they played each summer's day
Warriors both of course

One little chap then had a mishap
Broke off his horse's head
Wept for his toy then cried with joy
As his young playmate said

Did you think I would leave you crying
When there's room on my horse for two
Climb up here Jack and don't be crying
I can go just as fast with two

When we grow up we'll both be soldiers
And our horses will not be toys
And I wonder if we'll remember
When we were two little boys

Long years had passed, war came so fast
Bravely they marched away
Cannon roared loud, and in the mad crowd
Wounded and dying lay

Up goes a shout, a horse dashes out
Out from the ranks so blue
Gallops away to where Joe lay
Then came a voice he knew

Did you think I would leave you dying
When there's room on my horse for two
Climb up here Joe, we'll soon be flying
I can go just as fast with two

Did you say Joe I'm all a-tremble
Perhaps it's the battle's noise
But I think it's that I remember
When we were two little boys

All the bright company of Heaven

Do you think I would leave you dying
There's room on my horse for two
Climb up here Joe, we'll soon be flying
Back to the ranks so blue

Can you feel Joe I'm all a tremble
Perhaps it's the battle's noise
But I think it's that I remember
When we were two little boys

*(Morse – Madden arr. Braden) H. Darewski Music / EMI / Redwood Music (P) 1969
Cond. Alan Braden – Produced by Mickey Clarke*



Perryfield Road 1907.



Lathbury 2010.



Level Crossing 1912.



Level Crossing 2010.



The Office and Yard buildings at Springfield Road



Springfield Road 2010.

All the bright company of Heaven



St. Peter's from the east 1905.



St. Peter's 2010.



Crawley remembers 2010.



Remembrance Day 2010.



Mendinghem Military Cemetery, the final resting place of Second Lieutenant Richard Edward Cook, 2010.