

EAST BRENT REMEMBERS

WORLD WAR ONE

1914 – 1918

**A TRIBUTE TO ALL THE MEN OF EAST BRENT WHO SERVED
IN WORLD WAR ONE**

**ALSO TO THE FAMILIES WHO LOST LOVED ONES AND THOSE WHO
LIVED IN FEAR OF LOSING SONS, HUSBANDS AND FATHERS DURING
THOSE LONG 4 YEARS.**



World War One was for the first time in history, a GLOBAL WAR that started in Europe on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918.

ITS EFFECTS WOULD TOUCH OUR VILLAGE AS IT WOULD EVERY OTHER COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD!

MORE THAN EIGHTY YOUNG MEN, FATHERS, AND SONS ETC WHO WERE BORN OR HAD FAMILIES IN OUR EAST BRENT PARISH SERVED IN WORLD WAR ONE.

AT LEAST 19 GAVE THEIR LIVES.

THIS ARTICLE IS DEDICATED IN REMEMBRANCE TO ALL OF THEM.

**COMPILED BY
JOHN RIGARLSFORD
AND
EAST BRENT PARISH HISTORY GROUP**

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**Acknowledgements.**

Special thanks to Ian McClaren of Biddisham for the 1918 Absent Voters List of East Brent servicemen.  
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Also my thanks to the following for their help with information and photos etc.

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Janet Harding East Brent  
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Michael Ham Rooksbridge  
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Joceline Wickham.  
John Flavin Lympsham  
Helen Batt  
Kathleen Smith nee Sandford

WGC. War Graves Commission  
Ancestry.  
GenesReunited

If I have forgotten anyone please give me a reminder! Without your help this project would not be possible.

A very detailed study by John Flavin of Lympsham of the men commemorated on our East Brent War Memorial and the actions they took part in. is available to view here as a PDF.

[East Brent War memorial notes by John Flavin. PDF](#)

View images and notes on the East Brent War Memorial here.

<http://www.rooksbridge.org.uk/history/warmempics.html>

## **Three Cousins, Three Emperors, Three Empires and the Road to World War One**



**At the outbreak of World War One, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, King George V of England and Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, rulers of the three largest Empires of Europe were all descendants of Queen Victoria. In fact it was only in early 1918 that the British royal family hastily changed its name from Saxe-Coburg to Windsor!**

**By the end of the war only one would be victorious, another would be assassinated by his own people. And the other would be a cowering wreck in exile in Holland!**

Of the three, the belligerent Kaiser (Bill) Wilhelm had long been Sabre rattling, wanting to gain territory for his Greater Imperialistic Germany with the aim of becoming ruler of the whole of Europe.

**On 28th June 1914, Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian Serb student assassinated the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, in Sarajevo, Bosnia.**

An event which would eventually plunge almost every nation in the world into a war that resulted in over 16,000,000 deaths and 20,000,000 wounded, both military and civilian. This touched every community in the world! Including ours here in East Brent!

**On 28 July, the Austro-Hungarians fired the first shots of WW1 in preparation for the invasion of Serbia.**

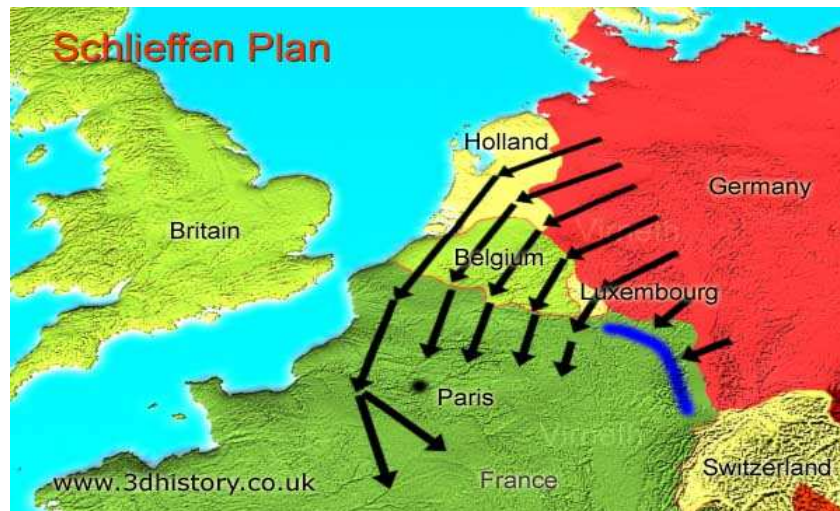
This event was used as an excuse for Germany to back Austria-Hungary's invasion on Serbia. And for Germany to expand its territory.

In its bid to expand, Germany fought on both its eastern and western fronts. But in the opening days with Russia still mobilising, The Germans first concentrated on its western front, intending to use the infamous Von Schlieffen plan drawn up as early as 1905.

With France's defences concentrated on its border with Germany, Baron Von Schlieffen's plan was to invade France via neutral Luxembourg, Holland and then Belgium - whose French borders were undefended - and taking the channel ports before cutting off Paris. And swinging round to trap the French forces against its own border with Germany!

**On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1914 Germany put its Von Schlieffen plan into action after declaring war on France and Belgium.**

**In support of France and Belgium, Britain declared war on Germany on the 4<sup>th</sup> August.**



Schlieffen's plan to take Paris was foiled when the small British Expeditionary Force held the Kaisers army back at Ypres until the French could come up and reinforce them.

In the late 1800's after centuries of wars against France, Britain fearful of Germany's rise signed alliance's with France and Belgium which led Britain to become involved.

(In the early stages the British Expeditionary Force was allied to the French forces and under the command of the French Commander in Chief. Generale. Joffre).

The commander of the British forces was Field Marshall John French who commanded the British army on the Western Front between August 1914, when World War I began, and Dec. 17, 1915, when he resigned under pressure.

The early battles fought under Field Marshall French's direction at Ypres, Belgium and elsewhere were infamous for high numbers of British losses—e.g., more than 117,000 casualties in the first two battles of Ypres. He was considered unable to adapt himself to unfamiliar conditions of modern warfare or to work together with the British government, or the French and Belgian generals with who he was supposed to cooperate. He was eventually succeeded by General (afterward Field Marshal) Douglas Haig.

Both French and Haig came from Cavalry backgrounds during the Boer wars. and were more used to fighting against opponents armed with sticks and spears who could be overcome by numbers of red coated cavalry, and they too found it difficult to adapt to fighting against a superior trained army equipped with machine guns, modern artillery and barbed wire!. Our soldiers were, the saying was... "Lions led by donkeys"!

The Generals believed that the enemy could be flattened with a huge bombardment that would destroy the enemy trenches and cut the barbed wire etc? At the battle of the Somme in 1916 the bombardment lasted a week and could be heard in London! But the German dugouts were deeper and stronger than the British had expected. And when the shelling stopped they simply ran back up out of their dugouts with their machine guns and literally mowed down the lines of infantry men walking towards them or entangled in the barb wire. Which of course had not been cut!

Eventually Haig came to respect the ways of modern warfare on an industrial scale and made great strides with the introduction of Tanks and Aircraft etc.

At the outbreak of war in August 1914 the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) which was first available to aid the French against the might of the German army, consisted of less than 750,000 regular soldiers. Kaiser Wilhelm II dismissed them as “Britain’s Contemptible Little Army”!

By the end of the war, over 8,700,000 troops would have volunteered or been conscripted to serve and swell the ranks of the **“Old Contemptibles”** as our 'Tommies' liked to be known, This number included nearly 2,000,000 Commonwealth troops.

Of these, The total killed in action, plus those who died of wounds, disease or injury, plus missing presumed dead was over 956,000!

According to the War Graves Commission, less than 600,000 are buried in named graves. Nearly 180,000 were buried but were unidentifiable by name

Over 300,000 were missing and have no known grave. These are listed on various memorials to the missing.

## OTHER THEATRES OF WAR.



EUROPEAN ALLIANCES AND BATTLEFRONTS, 1914-1917

The BEF first saw action in Belgium at the defence of Mons which due to overwhelming odds resulted in a retreat as the Germans pressed on towards Paris.

Not only did men from East Brent fight on the Western front, a number of our East Brent servicemen fought in other theatres of the war such as Gallipoli and Mesopotamia etc.

Men like John Derrick the son of the Rev. Derrick who died at Gallipoli. Also George COMER who's family had emigrated to New Zealand and died as part of the Anzac force at Gallipoli. And Edward Emery of Rooksbridge 2nd Dorsetshire Regiment who was taken prisoner at Kut in Mesopotamia (*Modern Iraq*) and died in captivity.

While the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Somerset Light Infantry served on the Western Front those serving in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the S.L.I. and 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment were sent to join the Indian forces and fought in the Middle East.



**These records are based on available records, family mementoes and what we know of the service and lives of those East Brent parishioners known to have served.**

**And also to preserve memories of some of those who returned but have largely been forgotten.**

When compared to the deaths in WW2. The carnage of WW1 and its effect on small communities such as ours can only be appreciated when we look at the number of names inscribed on our unique and recently refurbished (2014) East Brent War Memorial.

Over eighty or so young men — Maybe more? and maybe young women? — born or with families within our parish of East Brent served during the conflict... of these nineteen died during active service. The names of seventeen of these are commemorated on our superb recently refurbished village war memorial.

That is over 20% of a generation of young men lost from our parish, who in their prime, did their patriotic duty!

Thankfully, many returned, but had to carry the burden of the horrors and injuries that they had endured while adjusting to life in a changed world.

As with communities all over Britain, from 1914 and the duration of the war, many young men from families in our East Brent parish -- sometimes as many as four sons -- volunteered and signed up to do their patriotic duty, in this war that was promoted as the "War to end war" And which was reckoned to be all over by Christmas!

Sadly, it was not to be. And those who gave their lives over the next 4 years are remembered and commemorated and recorded on war memorials in almost every village! Many of the young men from our parish who served were among the many who volunteered at the start in 1914. These are the men awarded the 1914 Mons Star. an later 1914-15 star medals.

A large proportion were enrolled into the local Somerset Light Infantry and surrounding Devon, Dorset and Gloucester Infantry regiments. These Infantry guys would have been right there in the front line! The first to 'Go over the top' into 'No Mans' land.

Some would have fought in the trenches of Mons and the first battle of Ypres etc. Their battalions suffered huge casualties. Mainly due to the use in the early days of outdated cavalry tactics against far superior trained and equipped German forces. Slowly the generals learned that 100's of men crossing no mans land equipped with only with bolt action rifles, were no match for barbed wire and a couple of well sited German machine guns!

Due to the heavy losses in the early part of the war, conscription was introduced in 1916.

# CONSCRIPTION WW1

**Due to the heavy losses during the early stages of the war, conscription was introduced in January 1916.**

## **1914:**

At the outbreak of war in 1914 the British Army had less than 800,000 regular soldiers at its disposal.

The Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener soon realised that the British Army was far too small compared to the French and German forces and wanted to build an army of 70 divisions. He introduced a recruitment drive for volunteers. (Including this iconic poster designed by Alfred Leete of Weston Super Mare).



## **1914-1915:**

These were the years of the **Volunteer Army**

In August 1914 the British Government called for an extra 100,000 volunteer soldiers to come forward.

They got 750,000 men by the end of September, and by January 1915 more than 1 million volunteers had been trained and joined the armed forces at the various battlefronts.

However huge losses were suffered in the early battles of WW1 such as at Ypres and Mons.

By Mid 1915 volunteer numbers were falling fast and the National Registration Act was created.

It was a list of all the men fit for military service who were still available.

## **1916-1918:**

Conscription was introduced in January 1916, for single men aged 18-41. Within a few months World War 1 conscription was to include married men also.

Men who got called up for service could appeal to a local Military Service Tribunal. Reasons included health, already doing important war work or moral or religious reasons. The last group became known as the Conscientious Objectors.

750,000 men appealed against their conscription in the first 6 months. Most were granted exemption of some sort, even if it was only temporary. Only 2% of those who appealed were Conscientious Objectors. In an agricultural area such as here in East Brent, Farmers and or their eldest son could apply for exemption on grounds of agriculture being classed as an essential occupation.

That did not stop over 80 men of our small parish of East Brent signing up to serve.

In 1918 during the last months of the war, the Military Service Act raised the age limit to 51. Conscription was extended until 1920 to enable the army to deal with continuing trouble spots in the Empire and parts of Europe.

## **1918 and on... Re-enlistment.**

After the Armistice, most of the men who had signed to serve for the 'Duration of Hostilities' were quickly released back to their homes, jobs and families to get the economy back on track.

Some men were offered a bounty, with the opportunity to re-enlist for a further 2, 3, or 4 years. This was £20, £30 or £40 respectively.

Because of the economic and jobs situation at home, many took up the offer. Including some of the men from our village! Beside the financial advantage, it was more exciting than coming home to milk and clean out cows twice a day!

However men were still needed in the Army of Occupation in Germany, Palestine, and in the garrisons of the Empire. And enlistment was still in force.



# IN FLANDERS FIELDS

IN FLANDERS FIELDS THE POPPIES BLOW  
BETWEEN THE CROSSES, ROW ON ROW,  
THAT MARK OUR PLACE; AND IN THE SKY  
THE LARKS, STILL BRAVELY SINGING, FLY  
SCARCE HEARD AMID THE GUNS BELOW.

WE ARE THE DEAD. SHORT DAYS AGO  
WE LIVED, FELT DAWN, SAW SUNSET GLOW,  
LOVED AND WERE LOVED, AND NOW WE LIE  
IN FLANDERS FIELDS.

TAKE UP OUR QUARREL WITH THE FOE:  
TO YOU FROM FAILING HANDS WE THROW  
THE TORCH; BE YOURS TO HOLD IT HIGH.  
IF YE BREAK FAITH WITH US WHO DIE  
WE SHALL NOT SLEEP, THOUGH POPPIES GROW  
IN FLANDERS FIELDS.

~~~~~

Written by John McCrae, May 1915

A Canadian Doctor in the trenches.

(Dr. John McCrae died of pneumonia on the western front in 1918)

The following notes are of what we know of the 80 or so men of our parish who gave East Brent as their family residence or birthplace before or during their service.

Many of these stories have been contributed by family members, without which this project would not have been possible, and to whom we are truly grateful.

Regrettably, we know very little of the lives and service of some of those involved.

“They rarely spoke about it”!

There are no doubt more names to add and more information out there to find.

(The WW1 records of the lower ranks were not felt important enough to be moved out of the London War Office during WW2. Many of the records were either burnt or damaged by water during the 1940's London Blitz. Only 40% of the WW1 service records survive).

Was your grandfather, great Uncle or any of your family members involved in the Great War, the so called ‘War to end Wars’?

Did your grandmother, aunt or any other female relative serve as nurses or do other war work at home or abroad?

Do you have any stories, photos, medals, service records or memorabilia etc?

Especially anything relating to their lives during and after the war.

If you know or can tell anything at all about the lives of any of these brave men and women of our East Brent parish and what became of them and their families after the war ended, we would love to include it. Please get in touch. jonrig@rooksbridge.org.uk 2014

PART ONE

THE MEN RECORDED BELOW, MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE AND ARE REMEMBERED ON THE EAST BRENT WAR MEMORIAL.

COMER George Inman

7/830 Trooper. Canterbury Mounted Rifles, N.Z.E.F

Nationality: New Zealand

Date of Death: 28/08/1915

Born in East Brent. Son of Mary A. Comer, of Morrin Rd., Ellerslie, Auckland, and the late Benjamin Comer.

(The family had moved from East Brent to New Zealand at sometime before 1901).

The **Canterbury Mounted Rifles Regiment** was a mounted infantry regiment from New Zealand, raised for service during the First World War. and formed part of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force.

They served in The Gallipoli, Sinai and Palestine Campaigns.

George Inman Comer died at Gallipoli during the unsuccessful battle for Hill 60.

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Cemetery: HILL 60 (NEW ZEALAND) MEMORIAL



COMER Wilfred.

117061 Gunner 261 Seige Battery Royal Garrison Artillery

Enrolled into Army Reserve 8th Dec 1915

Mobilised Sep 1916

Killed in Action 21st May 1917.

Buried in the Tilloy British Cemetery France.

CREES Bertram Frank

13986 Sapper. Royal Engineers 17th Field Coy.

Awarded the 1914 Mons Star, British and Victory medals.
Enrolled August 1914.

Date of Death: 30/04/1915 Age: 30

Commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial.

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL

Son of Frederick and Emily Crees, of East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset;

husband of Winifred Crees, of Cholwell, Temple Cloud, Bristol.

The 17th Field Co. R.E. Joined the 2nd Battle of Ypres. In March 1915. Bertram Crees died just a month later.

The Second Battle of Ypres began in April 1915 when the Germans released poison gas into the Allied lines north of Ypres. This was the first time gas had been used by either side and the violence of the attack forced an Allied withdrawal and a shortening of the line of defence.

DERRICK John Leslie

Rank: Captain. Yorkshire Regiment. 6th Bn. (Green Howards).

The 6th Battalion of the Yorkshire Reg. took part in the ill fated Gallipoli landings between 3 July and 6th of August 1915 Only a few survivors were evacuated.

Date of Death: 27/08/1917 Age: 27

Son of the Rev. J. G. and Edith Derrick, of 2, Royal Crescent, Cheltenham.

Enlisted in Public Schools University Bn. Royal Fusiliers in 1914. Gazetted 2nd Lt. Dec., 1914. Served in Gallipoli 1915, Egypt Jan.-July, 1916; France and Flanders July, 1916-Aug. 1917.

Promoted Capt. July, 1917. Just a month before his death at Flanders.

Memorial: TYNE COT MEMORIAL

There are 11,956 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Tyne Cot Cemetery, 8,369 of these are unidentified.

DERRICK, JOHN LESLIE, Capt., 7th (Service) Battn. The East Yorkshire



John Leslie Derrick.

"He joined my battalion over 18 months ago, and during that time always showed himself to be as fine an officer as any Commanding Officer could wish to have. In action he was exceptionally cool. He would go and be followed anywhere by his men, who had implicit confidence in him. I can assure you that this battalion has suffered a very great loss, and both officers and men greatly feel his death." *Unm.*

Regt., only s. of the late John George Derrick, Chaplain to Cheltenham Union, by his wife, Edith (2; Royal Crescent, Cheltenham), dau. of H. Rée, of 11, Lansdown Crescent, Cheltenham; b. Cheltenham, 4 Sept. 1890; educ. Cheltenham Grammar School, and Pembroke College, Oxford, where he held the Townsend Scholarship, and took Honours in Mathematical Moderations and History Finals; was for some time Assistant Master at Coatham Grammar School, Redcar; volunteered 4 Sept. 1914, as a Private in the Old Public School and University Battn. Royal Fusiliers; was gazetted 2nd Lieut. Dec. 1914; served with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in Egypt from Jan. 1916, until July of the same year, when he was transferred to another battalion of his regiment, and served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders; was promoted Capt. July, 1917, and was killed in action at Langemarck, near Ypres, 27 Aug. following. His Commanding Officer wrote:

John Leslie's father the Rev J G Derrick, was a keen photographer, but not an incumbent of our parish church, but he spent much of his time in East Brent in what we believe was a second home while he travelled about taking photographs of the area. Many of his original photographic plates are now at the Somerset Records Office.

DINWIDDY Leonard Arthur. (Harry)

11631 Private. Coldstream Guards.

Posthumously awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals

Born 1895 in Rooksbridge. Som.

Son of Thomas and Annie Dinwiddy,

His family moved to Taunton soon after.

When he enrolled at Exeter, his family were living at Crowcombe, Nr Taunton. Som.

A regular serviceman he entered France on 22 Dec 1914.

He was awarded the DCM. in June 1915



11631 Private. L.A. Dinwiddy, 3rd Bn., C. Gds. (LG 3 June 1915).

For conspicuous gallantry on 25th and 26th April, 1915, at Givenchy, in assisting to rescue Officers and men from a deep mine full of poison gas. The courage and devotion to duty displayed were very pronounced, the risk of death through asphyxiation being very great.

Died 8th Oct 1915. age 20.

He is commemorated on the LOOS memorial Nr Arras N France.

The Loos Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay.

DURSTON John

442054 Private. Canadian Infantry (British Columbia Regiment) 7th Btn

Date of Death: 22/06/1917 Age: 35

Son of Charles and Lydia Durston, of Hawker Cottages, Bristol Rd., Bridgwater, Somerset, Born at Rooksbridge, Somerset.

By 1911 he had emigrated to Canada. And served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force

Cemetery: ARRAS ROAD CEMETERY, ROCLINCOURT



EMERY Edward

9408 Sergeant Dorsetshire Regiment 2nd Bn.
Re- enlisted at Taunton 1914.

Awarded 1915 star, British and Victory medals. (Posthumously)
Date of Death: 17/09/1916 Age: 36

Edward Emery died as a prisoner of war at Aleppo in Mesopotamia while attached to the Indian Expeditionary Force D. He is buried in: POW Commonwealth War Dead Cemetery: BAGHDAD (NORTH GATE) WAR CEMETERY



Edward was a career soldier first enlisting in 1896 at the age of 16 into the Somerset Light Infantry for 12 years.

He re-enlisted 1908 into the Dorset Regiment for a further 9 years with the view to complete 21 years service. and saw service based at Poona, India.

The 2nd Battalion Dorsets was in Poona, India, when war broke out and was shipped in Nov 1914 to Mesopotamia to join the Indian forces of the Indian Expeditionary force.

From Dec 1915 - APRIL 1916 he was trapped along with the 8000 strong British-Indian garrison in the Siege of Kut and later taken prisoner by the Turks. They were marched to imprisonment to Aleppo. Where he died of dysentery.

While captive they suffered appalling conditions. (The Indian captives were treated even more harshly) Of the 350 British men of the battalion captured, only 70 survived their captivity.

One of 15 children of George and Hannah Emery of Rooksbridge. Two of his brothers Alfred and George also served in WW1 while a third Frederick had served in the Boer war.



He married Florence Mabel Hastings, of 6, South Petty Staff Lines, Poona, India. (Daughter of his commanding Officer). They had three children. It is believed Florence and the children returned to England after his death.

During his service abroad he wrote several letters to his parents at home. This appears to be the last one, written days before his battalion was besieged at KUT and taken prisoner.

28 Oct 1915

My dear mother,

I am afraid it is some time ago since I last wrote to you. I have received a letter from Alice sometime ago, and was sorry to hear that you were not very well, and I do hope that you are getting on alright now. Charles wrote and gave me all the home news a few

weeks ago. He seems to be getting on well with his dairy work. Florrie also sent me a letter she got from Edie and we are very pleased to hear she is married and getting on comfortably. Florrie said she was going to write to you, Have you received a letter from her lately?

Both herself and the children are doing well in India with the exception of Teddy who has had sore eyes, which I hope to hear are alright now. I had a letter from Jesse a few days ago, he seems to be doing well. I am getting on alright out here. The weather is very pleasant now, but we have had a very hot summer under trying conditions. Still I am looking confidently forward to the finish of all this business and shall be glad when it is all over.

Well dear mother I will now close hoping that you are better and that Father, Alice and Gladys and all at home are doing well. With love to you all.

Your affectionate son Ted x

FISHER Ernest.

19156 Pte 5th Batt. Dorsetshire Reg.
Formerly 1039 N' Somerset Yeomanry.

Awarded British and Victory medals posthumously.

Enlisted at Bath.
Killed in Action at Flanders 12 May 1917.
Buried in Vaulx Hill Cemetery France



Vaulx-Vraucourt village was taken in the spring of 1917, lost (after severe fighting) in March 1918, and retaken in the following September.

The 5th Battalion fought at Gallipoli, Egypt and Palestine, and the Western Front.
He was posthumously awarded The British War medal and Victory medal.

Born in East Brent. Son of Shoemaker James and Mary FISHER.

In 1901, 7 year old Ernest was living with his parents four sisters and older brother next door to the Blacksmith forge in Brent Street.

In 1911, 17 year old Ernest was living and working for Evan BOLEY farmer at Batch Farm Lympsham.
(His medal record gives his address during his WW1 service as North Yeo, Edingworth. East Brent.

GAMLEN William Henry

266522 Private Gloucestershire Regiment 1st/6th Bn.
Posthumously awarded the British and Victory medals.

1st Batt. Took part in the Battle at Somme.

On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure.

Date of Death: 23/07/1916 Age: 39

Son of William and S. A. Gamlen, of Chapel Farm, East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset.

Cemetery: THIEPVAL MEMORIAL

GRANT Alfred

620300, Gunner 2/1st (Somerset), Royal Horse Artillery

"B" Bty. 223rd Bde., Royal Field Artillery

The 2/1st served in France from 1917 to 1918.

Died age 25 on 03 October 1917
Flanders.

Posthumously awarded the British and Victory medals.

Remembered with honour at ABBEVILLE COMMUNAL CEMETERY

Born Rooksbridge 1892. Son of George and Susan GRANT.

Husband of Martha Mabel Grant, of 205, Manchester Rd., Walkden, Manchester.

He enlisted at Taunton into the Somerset Div of the Royal Field Artillery. He fought at Flanders and died in France. At the time of his death his wife Martha was living in Manchester.

He would probably have known Ralph POPHAM (Below).
Who was also a casualty of WW1.

From their numbers they seem to have enlisted almost at the same time in either late September or early October 1915 and both were posted to 2/1st Somerset RHA at Woodbury Camp. Then, after a spell at Larkhill from early 1916 they left Southampton for Havre on 02-07-16. (*David Porter*)



ABBEVILLE Cemetery

Near the Somme in Northern France it contains over 2.500 Commonwealth war graves.

Photos. Norma and Melanie Body. Rooksbridge.

GRANT William John

28199 Pte Royal Lancs Reg. 7th Battn.

Awarded British and Victory medals

Conscripted on the 24th July 1916 into the Devonshire Reg.

Posted to the Reserves while given leave to help his mother during haymaking. Recalled for service Feb 1917.

Recalled to the BEF and disembarked at Le Havre arrived at Rouen 29th July 1917. Where he was transferred into the Royal Lancs Reg. in Aug 1917.



Killed in Action Flanders 23 Sep 1917. Originally buried at Fusilier Wood. See below.

Born 1899 Son of George and Susan (nee Sandiford) GRANT. of Rooksbridge.

Brother of Alfred GRANT who died in France Dec. 1917.

And of Joseph GRANT

At the time of his death the family were living at East Huntspill.

Melanie and Norma Body

He is commemorated on the War memorial at East Huntspill (Jenny Binning)



DUHALLOW A.D.S. CEMETERY

Duhallo Advanced Dressing Station, was a medical post 1.6 kilometres north of Ypres. The cemetery was begun in July 1917 and in October and November 1918, it was used by the 11th, 36th and 44th Casualty Clearing Stations.

The cemetery contains many graves of the artillery and engineers and 41 men of the 13th Company Labour Corps, killed when a German aircraft dropped a bomb on an ammunition truck in January 1918, are buried in Plot II.

After the Armistice, the cemetery was enlarged when graves were brought into this cemetery from isolated sites and a number of small cemeteries on the battlefields around Ypres. Special memorials commemorate a number of casualties known to have been buried in two of these cemeteries, Malakoff Farm Cemetery, Brielen, and Fusilier Wood Cemetery, Hollebeke, whose graves were destroyed by shellfire.

There are now 1,544 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery, 231 of the burials unidentified. There are also 57 war graves of other nationalities, mostly German.

HAM Frederick C

1735 Private Monmouthshire Regiment 1st Unit 2nd Bn.
Awarded 1914 Star, British and Victory medals posthumously.

Born 1890. Son of Hannah HAM

Entered France Nov 1914.

Date of Death: 01/07/1916 (Somme)

Cemetery: AUCHONVILLERS MILITARY CEMETERY

The 2nd Monmouth's Battalion was one of only a small number of Territorial Battalions to have been granted the 1914 Star. They were mobilised for active service on August 4th 1914 and remained on active service in Germany with the Army of Occupation until May 1919. In November 1914, the Battalion entered the trenches near the Belgium Town of Ypres. Large numbers of the soldiers had served underground and it was not long before the Battalion became well known for its efficiency in trench building and tunneling and placing mines under the enemy trenches!

They had the honour of obtaining the first Distinguished Conduct Medal to be granted to a Territorial Unit. Their honours list is probably as large as any Territorial Battalion.

HAM Sydney William

971 Sapper Royal Engineers 2nd (Wessex) Field Coy.

Posthumously awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals

Date of Death: 02/10/1915 Age: 18 (Somme)

Son of Jeffery and Emily Ham, of East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset.

Brother of Geoffrey Archer HAM. who also served.

The 2nd (Wessex) Field Company, The Royal Engineers served with 27th Division, The 27th Division was formed at at Magdalen Hill Camp near Winchester in November-December 1914 from regular army units who had arrived back in England from garrisons of the Empire. The Division proceeded to France on the 20th to 23rd of December 1914 as a much-needed reinforcement. The Division concentrated in the area between Aire and Arques. In 1915 they saw action at St Eloi and in The Second Battle of Ypres. In November they were ordered to Salonika.



Cemetery: HANGARD COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION (Somme)

Photo courtesy of Sara Kew.

HARRISON Albert

5655 Private Gloucestershire Regiment 2nd Bn.

Date of Death: 09/05/1915 Age: 35
Posthumously awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Son of James Harrison, of 35, Gloucester Rd., Trowbridge, Wilts.; husband of Hannah Harrison, of East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset



In August 1914 : 2nd Battalion Gloucester's were in Tientsin, China. They returned to England, landing at Southampton on 8 November 1914. when it came under command of 81st Brigade in 27th Division at Winchester.

Landed at Le Havre 18 December 1914.

At the beginning of 1915 the two regular battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment were present on the Western Front. 2nd Battalion was to be involved the battle of Second Ypres, the German offensive which saw the first use of gas. The Gloucesters were fortunate in not coming under gas attack during this battle, and the Canadian Army made a name for itself in stopping the first German assault, but the later fighting involving the Gloucesters was fierce nevertheless.

Cemetery: YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL



The Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing is one of four British and Commonwealth memorials to the missing in the battlefield area of the Ypres Salient in Belgian Flanders. The memorial bears the names of **54,389** officers and men from United Kingdom and Commonwealth Forces (except New Zealand and Newfoundland) who fell in the Ypres Salient before 16th August 1917 and who have no known grave.

POPHAM Frederick

20593 Private Somerset Light Infantry 7th Bn

Date of Death: 01/10/1916 Age: 23

Cemetery: THIEPVAL MEMORIAL

Posthumously awarded. British and Victory medals

Son of Frank and Ellen Popham, of Bristol Rd East Brent
Brother of Henry Popham.

The 20th Division of the 7th Batt. was established in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's Second New Army, K2. Early days were chaotic, the new volunteers having very few trained officers and NCOs to command them, no organised billets or equipment. The units of the Division first assembled in the Aldershot area with brigades at Blackdown, Deepcut and Cowshott. Artillery was particularly hard to come by; 12 old guns arrived from India in February 1915! When the Division moved to Witley, Godalming and Guildford, the artillery had to go by train as there was insufficient harness for the horses. Another move was made, to Salisbury Plain, in April 1915. The Division was inspected by King George V at Knighton Down on 24 June 1915, by which time all equipment had arrived and the Division was judged ready for war.



On 26 July 1915 the Division was sent to the Saint-Omer area, all units having crossed to France during the preceding few days. The Division served on the Western Front for the remainder of the war, taking part in many of the significant actions:

1916

The Battle of Mount Sorrel, a local operation in which the Division recaptured the height with the Canadians

The Battle of Delville Wood*

The Battle of Guillemont*

POPHAM Ralph

620298 Gunner Royal Field Artillery "B" Bty. 223rd Brigade.

Posthumously awarded British and Victory medals.

Enlisted at Taunton.

Date of Death: 04/01/1918

Cemetery: ROCQUIGNY-EQUANCOURT ROAD BRITISH CEMETERY, MANANCOURT

He would probably have known Alfred Grant.

From their service numbers they seem to have enlisted almost at the same time in either late September or early October 1915 and were first posted to 2/1st Somerset RHA at Woodbury Camp. Then, after a spell at Larkhill from early 1916 they left Southampton for Havre on 02-07-16. (*David Porter*)

POPLE Charles

40544 Private Enlisted into the Gloucester Reg.
at Weston super mare. Transferred to 4th Batt.
Worcester Regiment.

Date of Death: 23/04/1917 Age: ?
No known grave. Commemorated on the Arras
Memorial.

Posthumously awarded British and Victory
medals.

Born 1888 Son of Henry and Hannah POPL of
Turnpike Road Rooksbridge?
Married Martha Nuttycoombe of Biddisham in
March 1916.



The 4th Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment (29th Division) marching to the trenches near Acheux, 28th June 1916. Image courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

4th Battalion Worcesters.

August 1914 : in Meiktila in Burma.

Returned to England, landing at Avonmouth 1 February 1915.

Sailed from Avonmouth 21 March 1915 for Gallipoli, going via Egypt.

Landed at Cape Helles on 25 April 1915.

January 1916 : evacuated from Gallipoli to Egypt.

20 March 1916 : landed at Marseilles for service in France.

The French handed over Arras to Commonwealth forces in the spring of 1916 and the system of tunnels upon which the town is built were used and developed in preparation for the major offensive planned for April 1917.

No other details found

Arras Memorial

The ARRAS MEMORIAL commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7 August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and have no known grave. The most conspicuous events of this period were the Arras offensive of April-May 1917, and the German attack in the spring of 1918.



PUDDY John

17373 Private Somerset Light Infantry 1st Bn.

Date of Death: 08/08/1916 Age: 20 probably of wounds received at Somme.

July to November 1916 saw the Battles of the Somme. On 1 July 1916 at 7.30 am fourteen British Divisions, including the 1st battalion S.L.I. began the attack. On the first day 26 officers and 478 men of the 1st battalion were killed, missing or wounded,

Posthumously awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Son of Samuel and Emily Jane Puddy, of Yardwall, Mark, Highbridge, Somerset.

On enlistment he was a farm labourer working at Brent House.

ESSEX FARM CEMETERY

Essex Farm was the location of an **Advanced Dressing Station** (ADS) during the Great War, and now is the site of a CWGC Cemetery, as well as the remains of several bunkers some of which were used by the ADS. The site is located just north of Ypres,

There are 1,200 servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 103 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate 19 casualties known or believed to be buried among them.

It was in Essex Farm Dressing station that Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae of the Canadian Army Medical Corps wrote the poem 'In Flanders Fields' in May 1915.

STUDLEY Gerald William Henry

295591 Private Somerset Light Infantry 12th (West Somerset Yeomanry) Bn

Date of Death: 02/09/1918 Age: 20

Missing presumed killed.

Posthumously awarded British and Victory Medals.

Son of Mrs. Beatrice Jane Studley, of 9, South Terrace, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset.

12th (West Somerset Yeomanry) Battalion

Formed at Ismailia in Egypt on 4 January 1917

30 April 1918 : embarked at Alexandria for

Marseilles, landing 7 May.

Cemetery: VIS-EN-ARTOIS MEMORIAL

This Memorial bears the names of over 9,000 men who fell in the period from 8 August 1918 to the date of the Armistice in the Advance to Victory in Picardy and Artois, between the Somme and Loos, and who have no known grave.

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CASUALTIES NOT COMMEMORATED ON EAST BRENT MEMORIAL

BABB William Edward

137133 Private 3rd Batt. (Infantry) Machine Gun Corps.
Formerly 516899 London Regiment.
Enlisted at Taunton.

Born 1899 East Brent
Son of William Henry and Sarah Ann Babb, of 6, Cyril St., Taunton, Somerset.

Died Flanders 02/09/1918 Age:19
Possibly during the Second Battle of Bapaume, 31 August - 3 September 1918

Posthumously awarded British and Victory medals.
He is commemorated on the VIS-EN-ARTOIS Memorial Nr Arras N France.
No other record found



This Memorial bears the names of over 9,000 men who fell in the 3 month period from 8 August 1918 to the date of the Armistice in the Advance to Victory in Picardy and Artois, between the Somme and Loos, and who have no known grave.

His family had moved to All Saints Road, WSM c 1901.

At the time of his death in 1918 his parents were living in Taunton.

He is commemorated on the War memorial at St Marys church Taunton?

TURNER Arthur

14805 Private Gloucestershire Regiment.

Born 1892 East Brent (In 1891 his father Thomas was curate at St Marys. East Brent).

by 1901 eight year old Arthur and his parents were living at Chelwood Rectory Nr Bath.

Son of the Rev. Thomas Henley Turner and Lucinda J. M. Turner, of 14, The College, Bromley, Kent.
Enlisted at Bristol.

Died 09/09/1915 from war wounds at home at Chelwood.

Arthur Turner's father was a church rector at Chelwood near Pensford

Arthur having been born at East Brent is buried at Chelwood and may appear on a war memorial in that area?

No other record found

The Armistice

11th November 1918

“The Eleventh hour of the Eleventh day of the Eleventh month.”

“At 10-59 we were being shelled.

11-00 Silence...? The first time in 4 years.”

(Quote from a front line soldier).

The Forgotten Soldiers.

After 4 long weary years our surviving soldiers returned home. Wives and Mothers were reunited with husbands and sons they thought they might never see again. Many of the men had to get to know children that they had barely seen before.

It would be a time of joy or sadness and above all, great change for many.

Many of these ex-servicemen appear to have returned and integrated back into village life and in many cases their stories have been forgotten!

They came home to a completely different country and way of life to the one they left. The jobs promised on their return had disappeared as many businesses had closed down due to the affects of wartime shortages.

The Women’s Rights movement had gained strength and many of the women who had stepped in to do the absent men’s work, resented having to stand down again after getting used to earning a regular wage.

Many of the returning ex-soldiers were suffering the affects of over four years of hardships and traumatic experiences. Also many would have to live the rest of their lives with the affects of wounds, gas and sometimes shell shock. In many cases making them unemployable. This must have had a huge impact on some of these sometimes very young men, and their families which would affect them throughout their later years.

In rural areas such as ours most would probably have returned to farm work or maybe moved away looking for employment in the town or cities?

Let us not forget also, the wives and mothers of these young men who had to adapt and sacrifice so much while their men folk were away and again on their return, learning to live with someone who was probably a different person to the one they knew before they went to war!

They are all dead now.

We owe them. We must not forget them!

PART TWO

Recorded below are some of the men of East Brent who survived the horrors of World War Two, to return to a much changed world.

AMESBURY Edward Albert.

145957 Pte Gloucester Reg

Later 5083 Sgt Manchester Reg.

Born East Brent 1882

By 1901 his Widowed mother Emma and the family were living in Moss Side, Manchester.

While none of his WW1 service records can be found, it appears...

After his WW1 service with the Gloucester and 9th Manchester Regiments, he re-enlisted at Dunkirk at the age of 39 as a sergeant for a further two years 1919-21. assigned to the Manchester Regiment.

His 1919-21 service record shows him as married and home address as 35 Henry St. Chorlton-on-Medlock. Manchester.

(Chorlton-on-Medlock, a former working-class district in central Manchester, destroyed during the post-war national practice of 'slum clearance' from 1957 to 1975).



BISHOP Ernest Walter

57794 Lead Driver. Royal Horse Artillery.
Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Born 4th April 1894, East Brent son of Walter and Annie Bishop

He served in the military as a lead driver in the Royal Horse Artillery. Between 1914 and 1918 in Egypt, Africa and Italy.

He was awarded the British and Victory medals and star. After training he appears to have been posted first to the Egypt theatre of war? (No service records found)



After the war he worked for the Drainage board. Ernie "Did Ditches and things" He was hard working and well respected. He worked as an Agricultural contractor for local farmers and the River board.

A devout Methodist, both he and his father Walter Bishop were organists at East Brent Chapel. It is also thought that his father Walter was once minister there.

Ernest at one time was responsible for climbing the Knoll and raising the flag. And when called upon would volunteer along with others to- 'Clean-up' after the 'Horse-racing' at Brent Knoll!

Ernie being quite religious had a beautiful organ at his home and his grandchildren hated going to visit on a Sunday. Ernie would hold a 'Service' which the kids found boring!

He was quite a character and a man of many talents. He was keen on West Country History and Natural History and was a self taught artist.



A painting of 'Nut Tree Farm' by Ernest Bishop
Which is thought to be the last thatched cottage in East Brent

Photo: Marlyn Truckle-Whatley

Donated to the parish by Marlyn Truckle-Whatley
(Granddaughter of Ernest Bishop)

He tended his large garden of tulips etc. and was keenly interested in West Country history and the local flora and fauna.

Died Dec 1970. East Brent (heart attack outside post office)

Ernest Bishop and his wife Edith, never owned a car. They were well known for cycling everywhere. Even to Scotland for a holiday with a tent on the back of the bike!

Edith had a bad accident on her bike in the 50's and so they were unable to cycle long distances after that. However they still rode locally, to the local Post office etc. to draw their pensions.

It was on one of their regular visits to East Brent Post Office, that while Edith was inside, and Ernest waited outside with the bikes, that Ernest had a massive heart attack and was dead before Edith could get outside! A sad end to such a well liked and talented man. (Marlyn Truckle-Watley. Grand-daughter)

BURGE William Clement

(Also recorded as W C BIRCH)

9554 Blacksmith. Army Service Corps 'Remount Service'

Awarded British 'Victory' and 'War' medals

The ASC Remounts Service was responsible for providing the horses and mules to all other army units.

Enlisted at Webbington 1915. Aged 39. As a "Specially enlisted Shoeing Smith"

Served in France 1916-19

Received 7 days Field Punishment No 1 and forfeited one days pay on 22/1/1917

For being absent from his post overnight.

Discharged from RASC. Woolwich on 15th April 1919. With a 30% Disablement.

Received weekly pension of 8/3d



Born Rooksbridge 1876 Son of John and Mary Ann (nee Norey) Burge (Ancestry)

Married Bertha Carter 1903.

Died 1962

COLES Ashley Thomas

2346 Rifleman. 12th Rifle Brigade.

Formed at Winchester in September 1914 as part of K2 and came under command of 60th Brigade in 20th (Light) Division

22 July 1915 : landed at Boulogne.

Born East Brent 29 March 1894, son of William and Mary Ann Coles of East Brent.

Brother of George Coles

Married Ellen Pleece, 21 June 1919, Cardiff

In 1911 was working as a labourer on the farm of Henry Puddy, Brent St, Victoria House, Brent Knoll

Died 2 June 1964, Weston super Mare Hospital.

(No service records available)



Photo: David Loveridge.

(His son Ashley Coles Jnr served on the cruiser Black Prince for the duration of WW2 and became a well known photographer in Burnham on Sea and later had a signwriting business in Bedminster Bristol)

COLES George

13963 Pte. 10th Devonshire Regiment.

Awarded the 1915 Star, British and Victory medals

Volunteering in 1915 he entered France in Sep 1915.

Seeing service throughout the war and remaining on 'Z' reserve until 1919.

In the Great War, a total of 25 battalions of the Devonshires were raised. They fought on the Western Front, in France, Italy, Macedonia, Egypt, Palestine, and Mesopotamia.

These battalions were some of the first to 'Go over the top' with great loses!

Born 1890 son of William and Mary Ann Coles, East Brent. Brother of Ashley Coles.

In 1911 George was living with his parents and sister Annie at Edingworth and working as a farm labourer (JJ)

(No service records available)

Photo: David Loveridge.



COLES Richard.

47310 Rifle Brigade.

Awarded British and Victory Medal.

Believed to be a brother of Ashley and George Coles?

The Cap Badge appears to be that of the Rifle Brigade?



No service records found.

Photo: David Loveridge

Another family photo shows him working for Colthurst and Symonds. Brick and Tile makers at Highbridge.



COMER Frank

17154 Gunner Royal Garrison Artillery
Awarded British and Victory Medals.
Also awarded the "Long service with Good Conduct" medal

Son of Joseph and Emma COMER of Church House, Church St, East Brent.
Brother of George COMER (below)
He married Charlotte Lucinda Robinson at S. Shoebury. 5 Sep 1908.
His son Frederick Charles COMER was born 29 June 1913.



A Regular soldier, he served a total of 22 and a half years in the army. Enlisting in 1896 until demobbed in 1919.

He was posted to Nova Scotia in 1897 for 4 years. And then to Jamaica and St Helena from 1902 – 05. He then appears to have served in UK until outbreak of WW1, when he was sent to France in 1914. He was wounded and had a short period back in the UK in Military hospital at Liverpool in 1916. He then was posted back to France until he was demobbed in 1919.

His medical record shows he suffered several bouts of illness etc. Such as Scabies while in Nova Scotia. Malaria in Jamaica. In 1916 he was treated for Arthritis.

His Character throughout was recorded as "Very Good"

COMER Frederick

Capt. 26th RASC Training Res. Battalion
Awarded British and Victory medals.

With the introduction of conscription in 1916, recruits would be posted to these battalions for basic training, before they were posted to an active service unit.

No service records found

Born 1887, East Brent.
Son of Robert and Rose Comer
Married Aline Robinson

Died 11 Dec 1961, East Brent.

(His son Ernest "Sam" Comer was killed in Korea in 1952)



The wedding has taken place at St. Albans, Herts, of Captain Frederick Comer, A.S.C. (late of the Cambridgeshire Regiment), son of the late Mr and Mrs Robert Comer, of East Brent, and Miss Aline Robinson, elder daughter of the Rev. Fredk. and Mrs Robinson, of Wick Wood, St. Albans.

Western daily Press 18/07/1918

COMER George

117484 Driver. A.S.C.

Awarded British and Victory medals.

Born c1895, East Brent

Son of Joseph and Emma Comer of Church House, Church St, East Brent.

Brother of Frank Comer

Enlisted in the Army Service Corps at Grove Park WSM 26 Aug 1915 age 20.

Joined the Expeditionary Force in France May 1916

Suffered a bout of Influenza Aug 1916.

Dec 1916 received 8 days Field punishment for Refusing to obey an order by an NCO. (See below)

In 1917 he was a lorry driver. His commanding officer noted. "Inclined to be lazy, lacks energy"!

Was invalided back to UK for 2 months with Jaundice. Aug 1917

Oct 1917 Transhipped to Dar-es-Salaam arrived Nov 1917 to serve with the East Africa Force.

Hospitalised for 3 mths with Malaria. Mar- Jun 1918.

30 Oct 1918 'Forfeited 3 days pay for "Non Compliance to an order given by a Senior Officer"!

Nov 1918 He suffered a further bout of Malaria While in Mozambique.

Eventually being transported to hospital in Port Amelia.

On 15 Dec 1918 he embarked Port Amelia for transfer to England.

On Christmas Day 1918 he went 'Absent Without Leave' from 9am and until 11-15am on the 8th of Jan 1919. "338.25 hours"

For which he was given 7 Days Detention.

His Date of Discharge is unknown?

George Comer appears to have been quite a strong willed character, even being sentenced to 'Field Punishment' while at the front!

JJ

Field Punishment.

This was given in serious cases such as..

Striking or Disobeying a direct order from a Superior Officer.

It consisted of the convicted man being placed in fetters and handcuffs or similar restraints and attached to a fixed object, such as a gun wheel or post, for up to two hours per day.

During the early part of World War I, the punishment was often applied with the arms stretched out and the legs tied together, giving rise to the nickname "crucifixion". This was applied for up to three days out of four, up to 21 days total. It was usually applied in field punishment camps set up for this purpose a few miles behind the front line, but when the unit was on the move it would be carried out by the unit itself. It has been alleged that this punishment was sometimes applied within range of enemy fire.

During World War I Field Punishment Number One was issued by the British Army on 60210 occasions.

(Wikipedia)



COOK Ernest

184230 Gunner 2/75 Mtn. Royal Field Artillery. (Signaller)

Awarded British and Victory medals.

1911 census shows Ernest Cook born Charlynch, Somerset, 27 living in East Brent with his wife Sophie, 26 and daughter Marjorie, 1. He was working as a gardener.

He married Sophia Treslove Ganfield at Burnham in 1909

They had five children. 4 daughters and a son. Violetta, Mavis, Iris, Raymond and the last Eryll? or Linda born 1917 while he was on active duty.



He enlisted as a gunner Dec. 1916 Giving his age as 31 and occupation as Groom/Gardener.

June 1917 he was posted to the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. Via Alexandria.

By Sept 1918 He had been re-designated as a signaller serving in Palestine.

He embarked for home at Port Said on 7/9/1918

He appears to have finally been de-mobbed in Mar 1919 With an exemplary record. *"Honest reliable and trustworthy and proved of excellent service during the advance in Palestine and Syria"*

COOK Henry

41440 L/Cpl Hampshire Regiment.

388926 L/Corp. 497th Royal Engineers.

Awarded British and Victory medals.

First served in France Dec. 1914

Enlisted into 'Z' Reserve April 1919.

No other service records found

Born 1887 at Rooksbridge he was the son of George and Mary COOK

In 1911 he was a farm labourer living at Splott Farm, Mark, with his wife Ellen and 1 year old son George.

CROSS William

019114 Pte. A.S.C. Mech. Transport.

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals

Listed as: from East Brent. in the 'Absent Voters List' of 1918.

No service records found

DAUNTON Charles W.

17157 Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry
WW1 No. 647 RSM R.A.S.C.

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Charles W Daunton born Axbridge Workhouse 1871. He married an Ada Ansell at York in 1898. Father of Charles Daunton of Bellcombe East Brent and Elsie Daunton of The Bungalow Bristol Rd Rooksbridge.

He enrolled as soldier No. 1777 at Devonport in the 2nd Bat. Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry in 1888 age 17. 1890 Transferred to the Army Service Corps as a driver. Aug 1890 he received good conduct pay and promoted to Lance Corporal. In Oct 1891 he was awaiting trial for "Disobeying a lawful command and striking a Superior officer"! He forfeited his Good Conduct pay and was demoted back to driver. Between 1893 and 1898 he regained and lost his Lance corporal status several times!

He served most of his time in the UK apart from 3 years in South Africa during 2nd Boer war 1899-1902. He was awarded The Kings South Africa Medal and clasps for service in Cape Colony, Orange Free State, Johannesburg, Diamond Hill and Belfast.

While in S Africa in May 1899 he was promoted to Corporal and in Sep 1899 he had become a Sergeant. While in Capetown in 1900 he appears to have signed on to complete 21 years service.

In Feb 1903 He was promoted to Company Sergeant Major.

He completed his 21 years service in June 1909.

At the outbreak of WW1 at the age of 44 he signed up again as a driver in the Army Service Corps. He was almost immediately promoted to C.S.M. By 1915 he was with the Expeditionary force in France and Italy where he earned the British War and Victory medals and the 1914-15 Star.

He was demobilised at Woolwich Dockyard on 15 Feb 1919.

He died age 74 in 1945 at the home of his daughter Elsie at Rooksbridge. His occupation at that time was General Labourer and Army pensioner.

In 1944 just before he died he was in receipt of a pension of £102-17s-5d. per year.

DAVIS George Herbert

391 Wessex Div Royal Engineers
No medal record found.

Born East Brent Circa 1892

Son of Edward and Mary Davis. 34 Exeter Rd. WSM

On enrolment as a regular in 1909 he was a 17 year old apprentice house painter living in Weston Super Mare.

DINWIDDY George

12266 Gunner 77th Brigade Royal Field Artillery.
Awarded British and Victory medals.

The 77th Howitzer Brigade went to France in 1916 and saw action at the Somme.

Born in East Brent 1880 Son of Sarah Dinwiddy of East Brent

On enrollment as a 34 year old volunteer in Aug 1914 at Merthyr S Wales, he was a coal miner in Aberfan. In August 1917 he married widow Edith Baldwin at Wandsworth in London.

After demob in 1919 he lived at various addresses in Wandsworth until at least 1946.



DUDLEY William

201980 Pte. 1/4th Som. Light. Infantry.

1/4th Battalion

August 1914 : Part of South-Western Brigade, Wessex Division.

9 October 1914 : sailed from Southampton, landing at Bombay 9 November 1914.

23 February 1916 : landed at Basra in 37th Indian Brigade, 3rd Indian Division.

Remained in Mesopotamia throughout the war.

Awarded British and Victory medals

No other service records found

Born Rooksbridge.

DUNSTON Walter

59910 Pte. 1/5th R. Welsh Fusiliers

Sailed from Devonport on 19 July 1915 for Gallipoli, going via Imbros and disembarking Suvla Bay on 9 August 1915.

December 1915 ; evacuated from Gallipoli and moved to Egypt.

Awarded British and Victory Medals

Born East Brent 18 Feb 1893. Son of John & Martha Dunston

Walter 18 and his brother Reginald 28 appear in Welsh 1911 census at Ogmoor Vale Glamorgan. as Colliery workers. living at the home of Thomas Morgan.

Died 1974, Weston super Mare district.

Walter Dunston worked for many years at the Cheddar Valley Dairy in Rooksbridge.

No other service records found

DURSTON Frederick

158588 Sgt. Att. 52nd Queens Holt?

No medal record found.

Possibly attached to a Canadian Regiment?

Born 1887

1911 census shows Frederick Durston, 24. Farm labourer living with his parents Charles and Lydia (nee Millard) Durston at 'Hawkers Cottage' Bristol Road Rooksbridge.

He died in 1951 aged 64. He was living with his daughter in the council houses at what is now 'Watersmeet Close'

It is said that he always suffered ill health after was discharged without a pension when he was wounded in the head and no longer able to serve.

No service records found



By 1911 his brother John Durston had emigrated to Canada where he served as a private in Canadian Infantry, 7 th Batt'n (British Colombia Reg) was a casualty in France in 1917. and is commemorated on the East Brent war memorial.

DURSTON Walter W

15335 L/Cpl Army Veterinary Corps

436336 L/Cpl Agricultural Coy, Labour Corps

No Medal Record Found

Born 1875 Son of William and Ellen Durston of Lympham.

On conscription aged 41 in March 1916 he was living at Poplar Cottage, Edingworth. with his wife Elizabeth nee Banwell who he married in 1899 and 6 young children.

On his discharge in Feb 1919 the family address was 3 Manor Villas, Bleadon.

DYER Fred

14723 Pte. Somerset Light Infantry
375252 L/Cpl. Labour Corps
Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Enrolled Weston S Mare Sep 1914.
later transferred to Devonshire Reg. 449 Co'y Labour Corps.
Went to France Sep 1915. Was wounded in the Back and Hip on 26th Sep 1915 and returned to hospital in England.
Returned to France June 1916. In Sept 1916 while fighting at 'Vimy Ridge' he was returned and hospitalised at Plymouth for 6 weeks suffering with Nephritis, (Blood in urine) attributed to "Exposure".
He was discharged from service in Mar 1919 with 100% Disablement pension of £3-9s-6d. P/week.
His pension ended with his death from tuberculosis in May 1921.

Born East Brent 1886.
Son of George and Jane Dyer
Married Lucy Dyer 1909
C 1911 they were living at Yarrow Lane Mark. Som.
Their 3 children were. Ernest b; Dec 1910, Betty b; Nov 1913 and Lily b; Mar 1917.
Labourer for Rural District Council.

EMERY Alfred

2nd Lieutenant Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.
Awarded British and Victory medals.

Entered France July 1918.
When awarded British and Victory medals in Jan 1925 Gave his forwarding address as: 1, Rue de la Bouche. Ypres. Belgium.

Born East Brent 1875 son of John and Fanny EMERY.
1901 He was landlord of Knoll Inn. East Brent.
In 1911 census he is a Commercial traveller.

EMERY Alfred

29396 Devonshire Regiment
Enlisted Dec 1915 originally with the Devonshire Reg.
Appears to have been discharged at Catterick Aug 1916 as:
'Medically Unfit' "Not likely to become an efficient soldier"?

Born Rooksbridge 1890.
Son of George and Hannah Emery of Rooksbridge.
1910 Alfred James Emery, 20, married Nellie Binning of Badgworth
On enlistment in 1916 he was a farm labourer. residing at Ashton House, Ashton near Wedmore, Somerset
With wife – Nellie, and sons Alfred and Ernest and daughter Ruth Emery, 9 months.

Brother of Edward Emery who died as a prisoner of war in 1916. and George Emery who also served.

EMERY Ernest John

285045 Pte. 30th Gloucester Regiment
Awarded British and Victory medals.

Of 'Brent Wood' East Brent. He was married to Agnes and they had 5 children.

He was wounded in France and convalesced in Ashcombe House Emergency Hospital. WSM.
He later returned to farming at Jarvis Lane East Brent. With his sons Ernest and Reginald.

His other son, Louis "Dick" Emery, seen here, served as a Lance Corporal in WW2 as a paratrooper landing behind enemy lines on D-Day. (see [Weston Mercury Sept 1944](#))

Photo: Ernest, Agnes and son Louis. Courtesy of Sara Kew.
No Service records found.



EMERY George Durston

148719 Gunner. Royal Field Artillery
Awarded British and Victory medal.
No service records found

Born 1892 at Rooksbridge.

Son of George and Hannah Emery of Rooksbridge.

Brother of Alfred Emery and Edward Emery who died as a prisoner of war in 1916.

The 1911 census gives his name as George Durston Emery. He is boarding at the Brent Knoll Inn and working as a barman.

During WW2 he worked for his brother Charles at the Cheddar Valley Dairy in Rooksbridge.
After his first wife Beatrice died in 1943 He married Florence Crook landlady of the Wellington Arms at Rooksbridge.

He died on 26 October 1957 at Burnham on Sea hospital. At the time of his death his address was The Wellington Arms, Rooksbridge. which his son George and daughter-in-law Dorcas later took over as Landlord.



FIELD Stanley

HMS Satyr.

Born 1900 in East Brent
Son of William and Hannah Field.

Served on the WW1 Destroyer "Satyr"
Satyr was an R class destroyer, launched in 1916. She served in the First World War and was broken up in 1926.

No medal or service records found



In 1911 the family were living in East Brent

FISHER Frederick Charles

21260 Gunner 8th S. Batt. Royal Artillery.
Awarded 1914 Star, British and Victory medals.

Born 10 Feb 1884 at East Brent.
Parents – James and Jane Fisher. brother William Henry

Enlisted as a gunner in Royal Reg. of Artillery in 1904
He served for 2.5 years in Gibraltar from 1905-07
Next 7 years were served in the England.
He was posted with the British Expeditionary Force to France from Oct 1914-19.
On return to England he was re-enlisted in the Royal Fusiliers.
Finally being demobbed in 1920 at Brecon. Where he gives his permanent address as c/o Mr G Morgan, Cross Keys, Abergavenny.

During his time in Gibraltar Frederick appears to have had several instances of disobeying orders, being drunk and absent from Roll Call etc.!

For example: 19 Feb 1906. 1 "Urinating his bedding", 2. "Breaking out of Barracks while a prisoner and returning at 10-40pm" 3. "Being deficient in personal clothing. Fined 5/-. 14 days loss of pay and confined to Barracks for 14 days. Similar offences and sentences happened a number of times which indicates Frederick may have had a drink problem?

In 1916 While serving in France he was treated for deafness brought on by shell shock. He committed more offences such as drunkenness and absent from Roll Call etc. For which he received 7 days "Field Punishment No2"

Frederick appears to have signed up as a regular career soldier. However, he may have been affected during WW1 by the trauma's of war?

Frederick would have served in the early battles at the out break of WW1

GILLHAM Ernest

609 Gunner 1st S. Royal Horse Artillery
Awarded British and Victory medals.

No service records found

Born c 1892 Wedmore

Son of George and Eliza Gillham
1911-16 Living in Rooksbridge.
Died 24 May 1963, Whitchurch, Cardiff



GRANT Joseph

77346* Driver. Royal. Engineers.

Awarded British and Victory medals.

Entered the war in France May 1916.

No service records found

Born 1895 at Huntspill . Son of George and Susan (nee Sandiford) Grant,
1911 he was boarding with Joseph and Emma Sandiford at Rooksbridge.

Brother of Alfred GRANT who died in France Dec. 1917.
And also William J Grant 28199 Pte Royal Lancs Reg.

Clifford J GRANT 77345 also Driver Royal engineers. Was possibly a cousin?

He married Nellie Ham in 1919. They had daughters Kathy and Mary.

Died 7 October 1957 at The Rosary, Rooksbridge, East Brent.

Joe was a member of the East Brent and District branch of the British Legion. And Mr John Emery the branch standard bearer attended his funeral.

He was also a keen skittles player and part of the Wellington Wanderers skittle team.

Apart from his military service, It is believed he completed nearly 50 years working at the Cheddar Valley Rooksbridge Dairy.

(Melanie Body)



GROVES James

M2/167584 Pte. Mech. Army Service Corps.

Listed as: from Rooksbridge in the 'Absent Voters List' of 1918.

No medal or service records found

HAM Arthur George

1663 Sgt. Prince Of Wales. Co. 1st Welsh Guards.

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Also awarded Distinguished Conduct medal.
And the Military medal for extreme Bravery under fire.

Born 1894 son of George and Mary Ham. East Brent

He entered France Nov 1915. And was awarded the DCM and Military medals for gallantry while in the trenches.

1663 Cpl. A.G. Ham, W. Gds.
(Highbridge) (LG 28 Mar. 1918).
For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in an attack. He rushed his Lewis gun forward under heavy fire and engaged some enemy machine guns which were giving trouble. On reaching the enemy's trench he got a captured machine gun into action against the enemy and was of the greatest assistance in organising machine gun teams and getting the guns into action. His cheerfulness and courage were a splendid example to all.

No other service record found

HAM Geoffrey Archer

Capt. 8th Som. Light Infantry

Awarded British and Victory medals.

He was discharged early as Physically unfit so was eligible for the Silver War Badge.

The badge was awarded to all of those military personnel who had served at home or overseas during the war, and who had been honorably discharged from the army under King's Regulations. Meaning the soldier had been released on account of being permanently physically unfit but had served his country.



Served in France 1916-18. He applied for the 1915 Star medal but was unsuccessful because he did not actually enter the theatre of war in France until 4th Jan 1916!

On his medal application in 1919 gives address as Victoria House, Brent Knoll.

Born 11 June 1889

Parents Jeffrey Ham and Emily Binning

After serving in France, he returned to England, He married Fanny Grace Harris in Bristol in 1926. I don't know what profession he was in, but before the war, in the 1911 census, he was an assistant clerk in the civil service working in London. In 1955 he was living at 16 a, Hanbury Road, Clifton, Bristol. He died 6 May 1956, in Bristol, age 66.

His brother Sidney also fought in WWI, but was killed in action in France 1915, age 18.

(Sara Kew)

HAM George Benjamin Higgs

20592 6th Somerset Light Infantry.

No service record found

George enrolled Dec 1915

Awarded British and Victory medals.

He was taken prisoner after being wounded in the arm and losing an eye during the battle.

At sometime after his service in WW1 the family moved to a farm opposite the old East Brent Post Office

Born 1893 at Loxton Som.

Son of William HAM and Sarah HIGGS who farmed for a short while at Mill Batch Farm East Brent before moving to Bow Farm Loxton to take on the farm from Sarah's parents when her father retired.

Eldest son of 11 children.

George Benjamin married Kate BODY in 1924.

In 1931 he began farming at Elms Farm, Rooksbridge.

His son Michael and grandson David still farm at Elms Farm.

His grandson Christopher Ham is a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Royal Veterinary Corps.



HAM Jesse Wilfred

4553 Pte 2/6th Gloucesters

Awarded British and Victory medals.

Son of Frederick John and Martha Ham

Born 1898

Died 3 June 1965 .

Address at death – The Laurels, East Brent

Wife – Dorothy Ellen Watkins (married 1924)

No WWI records found



HAM Roland

86184 Gunner. Royal Artillery.

T329854 Dvr. A.S.C.

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Born Rooksbridge 1896.

Parents George and Mary Ham. Wife Dorothy Rose Sandford.

Drafted 'For Duration of the War' age 19 on 1 Feb 1915.

Posted to the British Expeditionary Force (France) Oct 1915 with the Indian Cavalry Div.

1916 with the 'N' Battery of Royal Horse Artillery.

July 1916. "Slightly Wounded, remained on duty"

Dec 1917. Granted Good Conduct Badge.

Aug 1918. Given 7 days Confined to Barracks for "Ill treating an army horse.

Demobilised. Jun 1919.

The good conduct badge was an inverted chevron, worn on the lower left sleeve. It was awarded for a number of years good service. One chevron was for at least a couple of years trouble free service. Or undetected crime!

After the war he lived at Riverside, Gills Lane Rooksbridge from where he ran his cattle haulage business.

HAM Sydney Robert

8451 Royal Fusiliers.

Awarded 1914 Mons Star with Clasp and Rose stud.

British and Victory medals.

Born 1899. Parents Frederick and Martha Ham of Yew Tree Farm East Brent

In 1922 he married Dorothy SAY daughter of Henry and Sarah SAY of "Elm Tree Farm" Factory Lane Rooksbridge. now "Beech Lawns"

Farmed at 'Elm Tree' Farm until his death in 1946.

Their daughter Freda taught music and was organist at St Marys Church.

A bar clasp inscribed "5 Aug. to 22 Nov. 1914" was given to all those who qualified for the 1914 Star and who served under fire. and suffered heavy losses during the first battle of Ypres.

Since the same ribbon is used with the 1914-15 Star, holders of the 1914 Star were permitted to wear a small silver rosette on their ribbon when the decoration itself is not worn.



HAM Walter Jeffrey

41874 Pte. Middlesex Reg.
4946 12th Lancers.
32462 Pte. Royal Warwickshire Regiment.
Awarded British and Victory medals.

Originally enrolled WSM into 12th Lancers Dec 1915
Transferred to the Warwickshire Reg. in Dublin.
Posted France with BEF Jan 1916.
Was wounded by 'Shell Gas Attack' May 1918.
Spent 9 months in hospital suffering the affects of gas before being discharged in Feb 1919.



Born East Brent 1897
Wife. Dorothy Florence (Molly) .
Daughter Sheila Audrey (JJ)
Parents Frederick John Ham and Martha Day. Of Yew Tree Farm East Brent.
After his war service, Walter ran an farm egg collection and wholesale business in East Brent, and paid the local children for blackberries which he sold to Robertsons Jam factory in Bristol.
Died East Brent 1958

HAM William Arthur/Henry?

Somerset Light Infantry

Born 1876 Weare
Married Martha Ann Churches
Worked on a farm at Stone Allerton.
Had seven children.
Some of who later moved to East Brent
Died 1935
(This soldier is included in the Allerton Roll)?

**HATCH Ernest Edward**

T362649 Pte, Royal Army Service Corps.
Enlisted March 1916
Discharged Feb 1919.
No Service records found.

Born 1887
Parents Henry and Matilda Hatch
Occupation in 1911 – harness maker
C 1918 of 'Prospect House' East Brent.

HATCHER Percy

26391 Pte. R. Warwickshire Reg.

44695 Pte. Royal Berkshire Reg.

Awarded British and Victory medals.

Percy James HATCHER was born on 12 October 1898 in Uphill. WSM. Som..

Married Alice Emery of Rooksbridge in 1924

They lived most of their married life in Brent Knoll

Percy died on 17 June 1978 at the age of 79 in Burnham on sea Som (Hospital).

About 1924 he was a Butcher. Between 1934 and 1963 he was a dairy worker in Cheddar Valley Dairy. Factory Lane. Rooksbridge. SOM

No WWI records found



Last but one in a family of ten brothers and sisters. On leaving school Percy helped for a couple of years in the pork butchery business of his late father. However, being very fond of horses, he left the district to go to Cromhall, a village in Gloucestershire, and for a period of three years looked after the hunters belonging to a family there. His father had by that time retired from the butchery and, the brother who had been running it having been called up to join the Army, Percy returned home to manage the business. Besides doing the buying, the slaughtering and the selling in the shop, he drove a horse-and-trap to deliver to customers in the surrounding countryside. It was not long, though before he himself was of age to join the Army, and in October 1916 Was enrolled in the Royal Berkshire Regiment.

After a short period of training he was posted to France and took part in the fierce engagements that followed in that country and in Belgium. In June 1918, during the fighting near Albert, he was wounded in the groin by a hand grenade and had to spend eight months in hospital in England until February 1919, when he was demobilised, Percy ran the butchery business for seven years in partnership with his brother. He then took a variety of jobs around his borne district until, in March 1934, he joined the Cheddar Valley Dairy Co to work in the Cheese room.

For the following twelve years, besides this work, he helped in various departments as occasion required, and then divided his time between milk reception and relief boiler man. In 1954 Percy was given charge of the Boiler house and its two Cornish boilers,

Mr. and Mrs. Hatcher (she was a sister of the late Manager of the Creamery, Mr. Charlie Emery) had three children, all married: a son, who lives in Canada, and two daughters: and each of them has two children.

Percy was an active committee member of the Brent Knoll branch of the British Legion. He used to play a lot of skittles, with considerable success; and he and Mrs. Hatcher did much ballroom dancing.

M Fear WSM

HILL Bert

110705 Cdt. R.A.F. corps

No medal or service records found.

Born 1899 Son of dairyman and Cheesemaker Thomas and Elizabeth Hill

The Absent voters list of 1918 lists Bert HILL as a cadet in the RAF.

RAF was founded on 1 April 1918 when Bert was 19 years old?

HOBBS Reginald

7547 Pte/ Acting Corporal. 1st Som. Light Infantry

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals

Entered France Dec 1914.

Demobbed may 1919.

No WWI records found

HUETT Percy

86339 Dvr/Gunner Royal Field Artillery

Served in France 1915

Awarded 1914-15 Star and Victory and British medals.

No service records found

Born 1893 Son of Charles and Alice HUETT

After his war service, he married Mary Louisa Slade in 1921

They had four children. Albert, Robert, Alma and Ethel.

He was a Stone mason working for a Brent Knoll Company for 40 years. And lived in Woodbine Cottage.

He died 1963 at Burnham Hospital at the age of 70

He was a sidesman at St Marys Church for many years and a founder member and Vice-president of the East Brent British Legion. At his funeral the members of the British Legion formed a Guard of Honour and were the bearers of his coffin.

(Melanie Body)



HUETT Walter Randolph

534284 Pte. 449 Agr. Co. Light Cavalry?.

No medal record found.

Born 1886. Son of Thomas Huett of Manor House Farm, Edingworth. Som.

Conscripted at the age of 30 Taunton April 1917. Volunteer Yeomanry. Att. Somerset Light Infantry. Southern Theatre of war in the Balkans.

Demobilised Feb 1919.

Died 1925

JEFFERIES George

27548 Pte. 1/6 N. Staffs

Mobilised in 1914, served in France from 1915 to 1918;

No medal or service records found

Born c1883, Newbridge Berkshire.

1901 Census working for Walter Duckett, farmer as a farm labourer at Church Farm, East Brent. Also working there was his sister Rose Jefferies, servant, 20, single. Also born Newbridge

The 1891 census shows George and Rose living in Catcott Burtle, with their mother Eliza Jane (born Mark) and stepfather Thomas Clarke.

Rose and George's father was John Jefferies, born c 1857, Allerton, Somerset a cowman

The Absent Voters 1918 list gives his address as Manor Farm Edingworth.



LANG Frank

1894 – 1906 Gunner Royal Artillery

1916 Sgt Wessex Royal Engineers.

Enlisted Jan 1894. Occupation on enlistment – Gardener

Served. Malta Feb 1895 – Oct 96. Gibraltar Nov 1896 – Jan 1900

Boer war S. Africa Jan 1900 – July 1900.

China July 1900 – Dec 1902

1900 S Africa Medal & Clasp (Cape Colony)



Earned 1900 China medal.



1916 Re-enlisted for the duration.

He appears to have committed some misdemeanours during his service in China! Forfeiting his Gunners pay a couple of times in July 1900.

On 8th Dec 1900 he was Tried and imprisoned for 2 months. (Charge unknown)?

He was discharged 1 Jan 1906

He appears to have re-enlisted 1916 for the duration of WW1 as a Sgt. In the Wessex Royal Engineers. Finally being discharged 1 Feb 1919.

508317 1914-18 Sgt. 502nd Wessex R.E

transferred No 20077 Somerset Light Infantry.

Awarded British and Victory medals.

(No record of his WW1 service found)?

B 1876. Mother – Elizabeth Lang. East Brent. In 1911 he was a house painter living in Milton WSM with his wife Ruth and three young children.

The Absent Voters list of 1918 gives his address as Manor Farm Edingworth.

LEE Albert

202744 Pte. 1/4th Glosters

Awarded British and Victory medals

Born East Brent 1892

Mother Mary A Lee

1901 census shows an Albert H Lee, aged 9, living at Edingworth with his mother Mary A Lee, widow, aged 50. and sisters Elizabeth and Beatrice (JJ)

By 1911 he is a farm worker for a Mr Brock at Oldmixon.

It is believed after the war Albert married and had a son.

And set up as a carpenter wheelwright in Brent Knoll. (DS)

The Absent Voters list of 1918 gives his address as Edingworth.

No record of his WW1 service found

LEE William

150474 Cpl. 13th Machine .Gun. Sec. 5th Canadian. Infantry. Bat.

William was born at Shapwick

There is a William C Lee, 5, son of Job and Mary Ann Lee in the 1901 census living at Bristol Road, East Brent. Father was an agricultural labourer. he is living with Henry and Kate Frost in 1911 assisting on the dairy farm. aged 15 (JJ)

It is believed William Married and lived in Burton Row. And worked for Ralph Rich on the farm all his working life. (DS)

The Absent Voters list of 1918 gives his address as Edingworth.

No record of his WW1 service found

NUTTYCOMBE Herbert Willerby "Bill"

19083 Pte: Somerset Light Infantry.

Later after suffering bronchitis he transferred to the Labour Corps. 346010.

Awarded 15 Star, British and Victory medals

Enlisted May 1915

Served in France from Dec 1915 until discharged Jan 1919

No other record of his WW1 service found

Son of Fred and Lavinia Nuttycomb of Burton Row. East Brent.

The brother of Thomas Nuttycombe who also served.

On discharge, He became a master builder.

Married Eva May Phillips from Spaxton in Sep. 1920

Died 1956

(Jenny Binning)

**NUTTYCOMBE Thomas.**

1371 and 165530 Pte North Somerset Yeomanry

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Served in France from Feb 1915.

No other record of his WW1 service found

Born 1892. son of Fred and Lavinia Nuttycomb of Burton Row. East Brent.

Brother of Herbert Nuttycombe above.

Married Bertha Petherham at Badgworth 1916

Their son Ernest "Joe" served in WW2 and married a German lady Helena Haas. Their son Terence was born in East Brent in 1949.

(Jenny Binning)

PETERS John Edward

205180 Lieutenant. 7th Som. Light Infantry.

No medal or service record found

Son of Jeffrey and Louisa Peters nee Bawden

Of Burton Row Farm, East Brent.

Occupation – carpenter

POOLE Leonard

240642 Pte Somerset Light Infantry.

(2/5th Battalion Somerset Light Infantry

in January 1916 joined part of Rangoon Brigade in same Division).

Born in Westford, Nr, Wellington Som. in 1899.

Son of Joseph and Emma POOLE

The youngest of thirteen, He ran away from home when he knew two of his older brothers had gone abroad to war and walked over 7 miles to Taunton where he enlisted into the Somerset Light Infantry clearly under age. He must have convinced the enlistment officers that he was or nearly 19 years old, for he was quickly posted overseas with the British Indian force to Rangoon in Burma.



Awarded the British War Medal.

(No other service records found).

He is known to have served in Burma.

Men who served in Burma in the Rangoon Brigade, were not awarded the 1914-15 star or Europe 'Victory' medal.

"After his return from service he was restless and determined to find one of his brothers in the USA. It was difficult to get into the USA at the time. So he first went to Canada. He travelled one day into USA on the pretext of going to see a Boxing match. He then stayed in the USA where he found an older brother living in Detroit. He worked for a while for General Motors.

He eventually returned to England and back to his roots at Rockwell Green Nr Wellington. Where he worked at Fox Bros. weavers, where he met his future wife who was the daughter of a foreman weaver at Whitney's Oxford who came to Fox Bros.

They married at Wellington in July 1929. They started married life at Glastonbury as a salesman for Singer Sewing machines while his wife ran the shop selling machines and Haberdashery etc.

They moved to East Brent in 1934 living in a cottage opposite the War Memorial Nr James Stores. Leonard worked for some years for James Stores until he had to do what was considered 'War Work' during WW2. at BAC working on aircraft.

Eventually, the cottage where they lived was condemned due to lack of running water and toilet etc. And they moved with their five year old and 3 month old daughter Rita into No 5 Manor Close, in October 1937 Where Rita still lives happily today" (Rita Thomas. nee Poole).

POPHAM Ernest John

116090 Trooper. 1st Canadian. Mounted Bat.

No UK medal or service record found.

Enrolled at Vancouver Canada 29 march 1915.

Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force.

Born Acacia Farm Rooksbridge Sep. 1885 Son of Thomas and Eliza Popham

He migrated to Canada early 1900's

On his return to the UK after the war he lived with his wife and family at Beaconsfield House in Rooksbridge.

For many years until into his 80's he worked at the Cheddar Valley Dairy in Rooksbridge.

POPHAM Henry

14384 Pte. 1st Royal Irish Rifles Regiment

142724 L/Cpl R.A.M.C.

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals

Born 1888, East Brent son of Frank and Ellen Popham

Occupation a Valet.

Enlisted August 1914 at Bristol.

Entered France June 1915.

For most of the war he appears to be with the Royal Irish Regiment. Assigned to the Western theatre of war.

Promoted to Lance-corporal in 1915.

Granted 10 days leave in Sep 1917 while suffering with Malaria.

Was discharged Aug 1918 with 20% Disablement due to Malaria.

With pension of 5/6d a week rising to 8 shillings in 1920.

JJ

Royal Irish Rifles during Battle of the Somme

**POPHAM Roland George**

382586 Ftr. 267. Brigade. Royal Garrison Artillery

Awarded British and Victory medals.

No WW1 service records found

Son of Thomas and Eliza Popham

Brother of Ernest POPHAM

Born Acacia farm. Rooksbridge 1888

Died Lancashire Sept 1963

POPLE John

110253 Pte. Royal Berkshire Reg.

Labour Corps

Awarded British and Victory medals.

No army record found

Born 1884, Rooksbridge

Son of Henry and Hannah Pople of Turnpike Road.

The Sixth of seven children three of his older siblings were handicapped.

SANDFORD Annie

Voluntary Aid Detachment.

Annie born Sep 1895 was the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Sandford of 'Riverside Cottage' Gills Lane Rooksbridge.

During WW1 she served as a Voluntary Aid Nurse at Ashcombe House Emergency Army Hospital WSM.

She married Henry Atherton from Congesbury

She died in her nineties.



SANDIFORD Herbert

H/35143 Tpr. 7th Hussars

No army records found

Born Rooksbridge. 1892

Son Of Walter and Emily Sandiford?

Married Martha Neads of Yatton in 1910

Parents of Maurice and Joseph Sandiford

Photo Melanie Body.

**SLOCOMBE Henry**

SE/10893 Pte. Army Veterinary Corps

Awarded 1915 Star, British and Victory medals.

Entered France Sep 1915.

Born Rooksbridge

No other records found

SMITH Charles Samuel

S/306987 Pte. 60th Rld. Sup Det. R. A. S. C.

Awarded British and Victory medals.

Born Brixton House East Brent.

No other records found

TAYLOR Albert Edward

99524 Pte. Mach. Gun Corps

Awarded British and Victory medals.

No other records found

P.O.W.?

Address New Road Cottage East Brent

THOMAS Maurice Phippen

86186 Driver Royal Field Artillery.

192878. Q. Royal.Engineers.

Awarded 15 Star, British and Victory medals.

Enrolled Feb 1915 age 17 into the Royal Field Artillery. (He gave his year of birth as 1896)!

Posted to France for the duration of the war.

Later transferred to Royal Engineers.

Was in the Territorial Reserve Feb. 1919

Son Of John and Pamela Thomas. of Pear Tree Farm Rooksbridge. Born 1898. He was a farm labourer.

Brother of Reginald Thomas

THOMAS Reginald

216550 Dvr. 1st Som. Royal Horse Artillery

Awarded British and victory medals

No army record found

Son of John and Pamela Thomas.

Of Pear Tree Farm, Rooksbridge.

Brother of Maurice.

Reginald married Ellen "Nellie" Thomas who for many years was the Butter and Cream maker at the Cheddar Valley Dairy until her retirement.

VINCENT Ivor Arthur

51754 Cpl. C. Sqdn. Machine Gun Corps

Awarded the 1914 Mons Star with clasp and rose, British and Victory medals

Clasp to the 1914 Star

A bar clasp inscribed "5 Aug. to 22 Nov. 1914" was given to all those who qualified for the 1914 Star and who served under fire. Since the same ribbon is used with the 1914-15 Star, holders of the 1914 Star were permitted to wear a small silver rosette on their ribbon when the medal is worn.



Born 1894 Parents Hector and Elizabeth Vincent of East Brent

After being discharged from the Somerset Light Infantry as 'Under Age'.

He enrolled into the Cavalry of the 5th Dragoon Guards Sept 1914.

In his short military career he also served with the 12th Lancers and the Machine Gun Corps

He was posted on 6th Oct 1914 to The Expeditionary Force in France. Where he took part in the battle of Mons.

He suffered serious eyesight problems and was discharged in June 1915 as 'Unfit for war service'. Possibly the affects of gas?

Died Dec 1951 aged 57, Weston super Mare district.

WARD George

266518 Pte. 1/6th Gloucester Reg.

Awarded British and Victory medals.

Born Bristol in 1896 son of Helena and Dixon Ward living at Locking Hutton.

C 1918 the family were living in East Brent.

No army record found

WARD Harry

20946 Pte. Res. 4th Devons

Born 10 August 1899. Son of Albert and Mary Ward. Bristol Rd East Brent

Died Sept 1973, Bristol

No medal or army record found

WARD William

8938 L.Cpl. 2nd Som. Light Infantry

Awarded British and Victory medal.

Also the South Persia General Service Medal and clasp in Nov 1923.

From the outbreak of war on 3 August 1914 the 2nd battalion was posted on garrison duty in India and it was based here for the duration of the war. The 2nd battalion saw action in the Middle East.

At the end of the war he appears to have served a further two years until 1920 in Southern Persia (Iraq) with the Somerset Light Infantry. For which he was awarded the General Service Medal and Clasp.

In Nov.1923 he was serving with the 2nd SLI at Akbar barracks, Agra, India.



Born 1892 Godney, son of Albert and Mary Ward.

living on Bristol Road, East Brent in 1911

No WW1 records found.

WATKINS William John

229733 Air Mechanic RNAS aboard HMS

"Pegasus"

Enlisted May 1917

Transferred to RAF on its formation in Apr 1918

Discharged on RAF reserve Jan 1920

Born 30 Jan 1898. Son of George Watkins and

Mary Ann Bees of the Knoll Inn, East Brent

Died 27 Feb 1966

On enlistment gave his occupation as Motor Mechanic.



After his war service he started a wholesale Wine and Tobacco business based in East Brent.

HMS Pegasus was an aircraft carrier/seaplane carrier bought by the Royal Navy in 1917 during the First World War. She was laid down in 1914 by John Brown & Company of Clydebank, The ship was converted to operate a mix of wheeled aircraft from her forward flying-off deck and floatplanes that were lowered into the water. Pegasus spent the last year of the war supporting the Grand Fleet in the North Sea, but saw no combat. She spent most of 1919 and 1920 supporting British intervention against the Bolsheviks in North Russia and the Black Sea. The ship remained with the Mediterranean Fleet until 1924, but was placed in reserve in 1925 after a brief deployment to Singapore. Pegasus was sold for scrap in 1931.

WICKHAM Archdale Kenneth

Lieutenant London Reg. Machine Gun Corps

Born in September 1897 in Yeovil SOM. The son of Rev. Archdale Palmer "Archie" WICKHAM vicar of East Brent between 1911-35. and Harriet Elizabeth Amy STRONG.

He served in France as Lieutenant between 1916 and 1920 with the Machine gun Corps. London Regiment . He was awarded WW1 British and Victory service medals.

He was wounded in April 1918. (WDP 09/04/18)

After his service, He became an Architectural Historian and wrote books articles for several magazines. As an architectural historian He was the author of 'The Churches of Somerset', 'The Villages of England' 1932. And 'The Italian Renaissance' 1935.

I have his cuttings, one of which is from The Geographical Magazine, November 1940 (pages 406-417) entitled 'The Jacobean Country Church: I. The Seventeenth Century Atmosphere'. (James Wickham. Son) This scholarly article starts with a very personal introduction:

1917, during the later stages of the battle of Arras, I was sharing a shell-hole with a lance-corporal for whom I had a great regard, and who was killed at my side a few weeks later. Existence was uncomfortable and we discussed preferable occupations, as many soldiers must be doing again. My friend, who had come to the war from Leeds University, said he wished he was back in his laboratory. I said that I should like to be on a bicycle, exploring country churches, a habit I had acquired while at school at Winchester...' He goes on to say that his wish was granted. While his friends was not.

"Given that our father died when we were both young, the few things we know are really second hand via stories from our mother. For example, we were always told that he got a head wound while doling out the rum ration and the bullet passed through his tin helmet. It's a nice story, but probably not entirely accurate". (James Wickham. Son)

"I don't think my mother- who died in 2000 aged 91 ever recovered from his death. He was the love of her life. He introduced her to a love of history, particularly architectural history that opened up a whole new world for her. Their backgrounds were very different, she was a glamorous divorcee with three children and a troubled past and he was the son of a country vicar - Archdale Palmer Wickham. When they married the provost of Eton forbade my father from receiving communion (my father was a devout Christian) because in marrying my mother, a divorcee, he considered my father to have committed adultery and told him he should resign as Housemaster, the Headmaster fortunately supported my father and he kept his house. We left Eton when he died.

Personally although I barely remember my father I have always been very proud that he fought in the First World War. Amongst my contemporaries – I was born in 1947 – it is their grandfathers not fathers who fought in this war but my father was 50 when I was born so was a young man in 1914." (Joceline Wickham. Daughter)

, 1924–1951 he was a housemaster and teacher of modern languages and history in Eton College. He was also interested in rare books, manuscripts and pictures. He founded the college Archaeological Society in 1943.

Archdale Kenneth died of lung cancer on 20 June 1951 at the age of 53 in Eton. Surrey.

Spouse: Raymonde Ghislane CRAWLEY. Raymonde Ghislane CRAWLEY and Archdale Kenneth WICKHAM were married on 23 December 1943. Children were: James John Rufus WICKHAM, Jocelyn WICKHAM. (Jane Jones)



WICKHAM Reginald Trelawney

Probationer Flight. Officer R.F. corps

No medal or service record found

Parents: Rev. Archdale Palmer "Archie" WICKHAM Vicar of East Brent and his first wife Emily Edwina nee BALDWIN.

Reginald Trelawney Wickham, RAF, second son of the Rev A P Wickham and the late Mrs Emily Helena Macpherson Wickham, was married on July 6th at St Marys Church, Harrow on the Hill, to Mary Olive, younger daughter of the late Rev William Vassall and Mrs Vassall of Aisholt, Somerset (Flight Global archive. - <http://www.flightglobal.com/pdfarchive/view/1918/1918%20-%200780.html>)

Reginald Trelawney Wickham Cadet granted temporary commission as 2nd Lieutenant 18 Nov 1918

Died Uganda 21 Sept 1938 (Jane Jones)

WILSON Henry James

140548 449 Pte. Agr. Co. Labour Corps

No medal or army record found

In the Absent voters list his address is given as Mudgley Rooksbridge.

WOODWARD Henry Phipps John

Pte. Inns of Court. Officer.Training.Corps

No Service records found.

Henry Phipps John Woodward (4 April 1898 – 3 April 1966) became an Australian politician and a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for a single term between 1944 and 1947. He was a member of the Australian Labor Party.

Early life

Henry Woodward was born in East Brent was the son of Frank and Mary Woodward of 'Church Farm' His father was a farmer and General dealer (Rag and bone man). He was educated to elementary level in East Brent and initially worked with his father but later became a produce agent and farmer in East Brent. He migrated to Australia in 1922 and was a farm produce agent and company director. He sat in parliament as a member of the Labour Party but joined the Liberal Party after leaving office.

State Parliament

Henry Woodward entered parliament as the Labour member for Lane Cove after he won the seat at 1944 state election. This was a surprise result as Lane Cove was considered one of the most conservative seats in the assembly. The incumbent Democratic Party member Herbert FitzSimons had retired and his party's new candidate was John Cramer a future Liberal member of the Australian House of Representatives

Divisions between the two conservative parties resulted in Woodward gaining an 800 vote (2%) victory. Later the unification of New South Wales' urban conservative politicians with the Liberal Party in 1945, brought the end of Henry Woodward's parliamentary career. He was easily defeated by Liberal candidate Ken McCaw at the 1947 election. Woodward did not hold parliamentary or ministerial office. (Jane Jones NZ)



A brief guide to the medals awarded to servicemen of WW1

At the end of the war, almost every individual who entered into active service in the First World War was eligible to at least one, two or three campaign medals according to their service. Affectionately known by those who received all three as.....

Pip, Squeak and Wilfred!



WW1 Medals awarded to 19083 Pte. H W Nuttycombe Som. Light Infantry. Of East Brent
Courtesy of Betty Griffin

Pip, Squeak and Wilfred are the nicknames given to the three WW1 campaign medals — The 1914 Star or 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal respectively.

This collection of three medals were primarily awarded to the Old Contemptibles (B.E.F.). And those who served the whole duration of the war.

Normally all three medals are worn together and in the same order from left to right when viewed from the front.

Conscripted men who served from 1916-18 were awarded the British and Victory medal known as 'Mutt and Jeff' after cartoon characters of the day as were 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred'

The set of three medals, or at least the British War Medal and the Victory Medal are the most likely medals to be found among family heirlooms.

About the Medals:

Medals awarded for service in WWI included:

- **1914 Star (Mons Star)** was awarded for service in France or Flanders (Belgium) between 5 August and 22 November 1914.
Most of these men would have been part of the small British regular army.
- **1914-15 Star** was awarded for service in France or Flanders (Belgium) between 23 November 1914 and 31 December 1915, or for service in any theater between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915.
This is the medal most likely to have been awarded to the early volunteers who had to undergo three months training before being sent to the front.
- **Allied Subjects Medal** was awarded to individuals (not necessarily British) for service to the Allied cause, for example, by helping British Prisoners of War escape.
- **Allied Victory Medal (Victory Medal)** was awarded for service in any operational theater between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918. It was issued to individuals who received the 1914 and 1914-15 Stars and to most individuals who were issued the British War Medal. The medal was also awarded for service in Russia (1919-1920) and post-war mine clearance in the North Sea (1918-1919).
- **British War Medal** was awarded to both servicemen and civilians that either served in a theater of war, or rendered service overseas between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918. It was also awarded for service in Russia, and post-war mine clearance in the Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea between 1919 and 1920.
- **Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)** was awarded to lower ranks and non-commissioned officers for bravery.
- **Distinguished Service Order (DSO)** was generally awarded to officers ranked Major and higher for distinguished war service.
- **Military Cross Medal (MC)** was awarded to commissioned officers of Captain and below, as well Warrant Officers, for valour during active operations.
- **Military Medal** was awarded to non-commissioned officers for bravery in land battle.
- **Silver War Badge (SWB)** was awarded to servicemen who became ill or were wounded while serving in a theater of war or at home.
- **Territorial Force War Medal** was awarded to servicemen who were members of the Territorial Force either on or before 30 September 1914 and who served in an operational theater abroad between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918.
- **Victoria Cross Medal (VC)** was awarded for valour in the face of the enemy.

The British War Medal, 1914-1920

This is the most commonly issued medal.

All men who served in the main theatres of war qualified for this medal, as did those who did service in, for example, India.



The Victory Medal, 1914-19

This medal was awarded to all those who entered a theatre of war. It follows that every recipient of the Victory Medal also qualified for the British War Medal



The 1914-15 Star

The 1914-15 star medal was awarded to men who served before Conscription in 1916.

A Star similar to the 1914 Star (see below) was issued to all personnel, with certain exceptions, who served in a theatre of war before 31 December 1914



1914 Star

Also known as the Mons Star.

The 1914 Star was issued to officers and men of British forces who served in France or Belgium between 5 August and midnight 22/23 November 1914. The day after Britain's declaration of war against Germany and the end of the First Battle of Ypres.

The majority of recipients were officers and men of the pre-war British army, the British Expeditionary Force (the *Old Contemptibles*), who landed in France soon after the outbreak of the War and who took part in the Retreat from Mons (hence the nickname 'Mons Star') After suffering heavy losses.



Recipients of this medal also received the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

Clasp

Often referred to as Clasp and Roses. Was awarded to those who had operated in battle within range of enemy mobile artillery during the early period. The clasp was inscribed with the name of the battle and dates that the recipient was part of.

When the ribbon bar was worn alone, recipients of the clasp to the medal wore a small silver **rosette** on the **ribbon bar**.

General Service Medal (1918)

The **General Service Medal (1918 GSM)** was introduced to recognise service in minor Army and Air Force operations for which no separate medal was intended



Military Medal (MM)

Awarded to men of British and other Commonwealth countries, below commissioned rank, for bravery in battle on land.



Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)



An extremely high level award for bravery. It was awarded to other ranks of the British Army and formerly also to non-commissioned personnel of other Commonwealth countries.

Equivalent of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) awarded for bravery to commissioned officers.



Long Service and Good Conduct Medal

This award was to recognise 18 years service in the regular army.



Silver War Badge

The Silver War badge was originally issued to officers and men who were discharged or retired from the military forces as a result of sickness or injury caused by their war service.

It also stopped certain young suffragette ladies handing a white feather signifying cowardice to men out of uniform!



Douglas Haig

Field Marshal **Douglas Haig**, (19 June 1861 – 29 January 1928) was a British senior officer during World War I. He took over command of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) from 1915 to the end of the war. He was commander during the Battle of the Somme, the battle with one of the highest casualties in British military history, the Third Battle of Ypres, and the Hundred Days Offensive, which led to the armistice in 1918.

He has been criticized for his leadership during the First World War. Some called him "Butcher Haig" for the two million casualties under his command, and regard him as representing the class-based incompetent commanders, saying as a 19th century cavalry man, he was unable to grasp modern tactics and technologies.

Some historians believe the huge losses of life in the very early days of WW1 were due to Haig's use of out-dated cavalry tactics against the highly trained and modern equipped German forces. Which earned him the name of the "Butcher"



Haig had earlier trained and commanded Cavalry forces with some success while fighting in Sudan and the Cape in the late 1890s and during the Boer war. While conditions in France in 1914 virtually ruled out the use of mounted cavalry, Haig still believed that by softening up the enemy trenches with large scale artillery bombardment. He could overwhelm the enemy positions with large numbers of infantry men. However his relatively small volunteer army was outnumbered by a far superior trained and equipped German force.

A few hundred men charging across 'no mans land' with bolt action rifles, were no match for barbed wire funneling them into the sights of a couple of well placed German machine guns!

By January 1915 Haig's 18,000 men were reduced to less than 3,000 within weeks at the first battle of Ypres "(Wipers)"

He was commander in chief for the duration of the war becoming a field marshal in 1917.

By this time he had come round to accepting the advantages of improved technology such as the use of tanks and automatic weapons etc. And it his dogged devotion to duty and tactical knowledge which is credited to the defeat of the German Army in 1918.

When his military career ended in 1920 Haig devoted his time to the welfare of ex soldiers. He did not agree with separate organizations for officers and enlisted men.

He was a founder member of the British Legion formed in 1921. This organisation amalgamated the welfare of all ranks of ex servicemen in all branches of the armed forces.

updated 21/11/14