

Downham Boys of World War 1

A History by Elizabeth Howard.

. WAR MEMORIAL IN ST EDMUND `S DOWNHAM MARKET



WAR MEMORIAL DOWNHAM MARKET



DOWNHAM `S FALLEN HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

ASHBY , ARTHUR JOHN

. Born 1883 Rugby : in 1911 lodging with Mrs Elizabeth Canham in Bexwell Road ; builders clerk . Enlisted Downham , Machine Gun Corps . Killed in action in an air-raid on the base depot at Etaples . 20th May 1918 . Aged 34 . Buried Etaples Military Cemetery . Awarded British War and Victory medals . Married Ethel L ? living in Chelmsford 1920.

May 20 Mon. (1918)

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Last night, about 10:30., we had a disastrous air raid as a result of which we lost two men (one killed and the other died of wounds) and had one man wounded and also the O. C. Major E. V. Hogan, wounded. Enemy aircraft suddenly were heard, and began dropping bombs without our having received warning. Practically the entire Etaples hospital area was subjected to an aerial bombardment for fully an hour, after which the raiders departed, returning again some time after midnight, and dropped more bombs. They also employed machine guns. It is unofficially estimated that the total casualties in the Etaples area were about one thousand. Casualties were numerous in the staffs of several of the hospitals, and certain patients were also casualties. — Bright moonlight last night. The anti-aircraft fire appeared to be feeble.”

ADAMS

Lambert Victor, son of Charles and Emma Adams, sewing machine agent, of London Road, apprentice plumber, Private 8th (service) Battalion Norfolk Regiment, he died on 21st October 1916 commemorated at Thiepval. The 8th Battalion were serving on the Somme battlefields including that of Thiepval Ridge at the time and suffered many killed and wounded in the latter half of October. He was awarded the Victory and British war medals. Lambert was born in 1892 and had two younger sisters, Florence and Alice, and a much younger brother Sidney Ernest. The family were living in a 9 room house in London Road in the 1911 census. War Diaries : " Albert : 21st October 1916 . Battalion left Albert about 12.30 am and proceeded to trenches , arriving about 4.30am . The Battalion took part in an attack on Regina Trench . Casualties ORs killed 25 , wounded 89, missing 13 . -First Phase – zero to 2pm . Punctually at Zero hour, 12.6pm C B and D companies left our trenches and Regina was entered about 12.12 1/2 pm . Germans holding it adapted different attitudes . So far as can be gathered , those opposite C surrendered easily , those opposite B especially in a gap of about 100 yards between the left of B and the right of the 11th Lancashire Fusiliers showed fight and put up a good resistance but were finally either killed or taken prisoner . We lost 4 officers in taking the trench (2 killed , 2 wounded) . About 90 other ranks were casualties . One machine gun was knocked out on the way over . Information was slow in coming back due to the fact that a German barrage opened on Zollern , delaying the runners, the first intimation of things mentioned above , was at 1.53pm when Capt Morgan , DSO , commanding B company stated that the objective had been reached and that he was in touch with 11th Lancashire Fusiliers , 74th Infantry Brigade , on his left and 10th Essex regiment on his right. Second phase : 2pm to 6pm 21st October . A considerable amount of consolidation was necessary and D company remained in Regina Owing to the casualties and the amount of work to be done, I decided that D company should remain in Regina and not return . At the same time I issued orders to A company to be in readiness to move into Regina should Capt Morgan require them . "

AKRED

Albert John, son of John and Mary Akred of Black Fen Drove. He was born in 1896 the oldest of their children, he had two younger sisters and a younger brother. His father was a yardman and cattleman , and his mother a field worker. They lived at Downham West , Ouse Bank. He

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joined the 4th (special reserve) Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment and died on 18th February 1917 after the Battle of Miraumont He was possibly among the wounded who were taken to hospital at Etaples. He is buried in the Etaples Military Cemetery. He was awarded the Victory and British war medals. War Diaries : 4th Feb ; " Zero hour 9pm. Barrage on enemy front system lifting gradually until 9.30. At 8pm line advanced . The left company temporarily held up by enemy wire and the company in support then pushed forward . 3 am objective gained, line strengthened outposts consolidated . Casualties 6th- 16th February , killed 68, wounded 90, missing 3, believed killed 45 . 3 officers killed , 5 wounded . "



taken from Martin Edwards Roll of Honour, Fred Allen.

ALLEN

Frederick Samuel, son of Samuel and Rosalie Allen, signal fitter`s labourer . In the 1911 census the family are living at 3 Windsor Street . Fred is at school . He enlisted at E Dereham and joined the 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment . War Diary ; " 2/9/18. 5.15 am . Battalion attacked , objective gained . The enemy dribbled back and penetrated the line between the battalion and the New Zealanders . Casualties heavy . " He died of wounds on 2nd September 1918 in the Favreuil area and is buried at the Red Cross Corner Cemetery , Beaugny . He was awarded the Victory and British War medals . " Never will your memory fade away from home . "

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Walter Albert Aveis

AVEIS

Walter Albert, son of Walter and Charlotte of 9 Windsor St, carman for an oil company. He was born in 1898 and became an apprentice baker and confectioner. He enlisted on 28th Dec 1914 aged 17 in Norwich in the 13th Battalion King`s Liverpool Regiment and died of wounds in May 1918 aged 20 during the final battles of the Ancre and the Somme, and is buried at Lapugnoy Cemetery. He was awarded the Victory, British and 1914-1915 Star medals. See this on UTube : Created by Mr and Mrs C Utting." He was sent to the Dardanelles in May 1915 returning in September suffering a nervous breakdown . In March 1918 he went to France to meet his death 5th May 1918 aged 20 . He was buried at Lapugnoy Military Cemetery: Grave reference VII F 4 " Greater Love hath no man than he who gave his life for his friends ."

<https://youtu.be/xVSosjuzIc>

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Old Cemetery Downham Market

BAILEY

Ernest William, born Hockwold. enlisted 27th Aug 1915, Royal Army Service Corps attached to Casualty Clearing Station and was killed in action on 6th August 1916 and is buried at Bethune Cemetary. the date of his death and location of the cemetary would indicate he was a casualty of the battle of the Somme 1st July 1916 onward. He married Margaret Naomi Greenacre in 1903 and they had a daughter Lucy aged 8 in 1911 . He was a coachman and chauffeur to a Downham auctioneer and estate agent and lived in Lynn Road, maybe Hawkins. Awarded the British War, Victory and 15 Star medals.

War Diary 33 Casualty Clearing Station .

Bethune : 6th August . Evacuating by Ambi Train No 10 . Staff Nurse J B Lyle , SFNS , to be Sister from 5th July 1916 Att WO 24/7/16 "take in " . And 154 patients admitted . Capt J Stansfield returned to duty from 1st Corps Rest Station. 7th 11.30 am . Evacuating 60 patients to Barges 107 and 366 . 11.50 am . First German shell exploded about ¼ mile outside the town near the coast . 12.30 pm, finished loading the barges which were dispatched . Bombardment of town still continuing with heavy shells , decided to put into operation orders for evacuating all patients to the cellars . 1.15pm , all patients officers and other ranks reported in the cellars . 1.30pm , large German shell struck on the west corner of the chapel roof and exploded in mid air over the 3 ton motor lorries of the unit . The three lorries caught fire at once together with 2 motor ambulances of LW12 MAC standing next to them. The remaining cars of MAC saved but five had their outer covering torn to ribbons . The united efforts of the unit saved the fire from spreading helped by the hose of the town Fire Brigade sent by the Town Mayor . 3.30pm, DMS 1st Army arrived and ordered all patients to be

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evacuated to No 1 CCS at Chocques. This was completed by 4.30pm . 6 pm , nursing sisters evacuated to No 10 Stationary hospital as a temporary measure .

Casualties in the Unit .

Killed ; six ASC motor drivers of the 3 3 ton motor lorries . One officer`s servant from officer`s sick ward. Wounded . Six medical officers , remaining on duty ; four nursing sisters , remaining on duty ; five rank and file , one remaining on duty . Bethune : 6th August . Evacuating by Ambi Train No 10 . Staff Nurse J B Lyle , SFNS , to be Sister from 5th July 1916 Att WO 24/7/16 "take in " . And 154 patients admitted . Capt J Stansfield returned to duty from 1st Corps Rest Station. 7Th 11.30 am . Evacuating 60 patients to Barges 107 and 366 . 11.50 am . First German shell exploded about ¼ mile outside the town near the coast . 12.30 pm, finished loading the barges which were dispatched . Bombardment of town still continuing with heavy shells , decided to put into operation orders for evacuating all patients to the cellars . 1.15pm , all patients officers and other ranks reported in the cellars . 1.30pm , large German shell struck on the west corner of the chapel roof and exploded in mid air over the 3 ton motor lorries of the unit . The three lorries caught fire at once together with 2 motor ambulances of LW12 MAC standing next to them. The remaining cars of MAC saved but five had their outer covering torn to ribbons . The united efforts of the unit saved the fire from spreading helped by the hose of the town Fire Brigade sent by the Town Mayor . 3.30pm, DMS 1st Army arrived and ordered all patients to be evacuated to No 1 CCS at Chocques. This was completed by 4.30pm . 6 pm , nursing sisters evacuated to No 10 Stationary hospital as a temporary measure .

BELLHAM

Frank. son of Walter and Agnes , carpenter, living 1911 at Bennett St He was born in 1898 at Norwood , Mddx, when his father was a police constable . Enlisted Sleaford, Lincs. Lance Corporal 2nd/4th Lincs Regiment , killed in action 8th June 1917 at Cambrai , commemorated at Thiepval .Awarded the British war , Victory and 15 Star medals. "War diaries : Gouzeaucourt wood : 2/4th Lincolnshire Regiment . 7th June 1917 . Bt H Q at SW of Beaucamp ; C and D Coys in front line with B and A Coys in close support and intermediate line . Beaucamp 8th June 1917 . Two different officer patrols proceeded to German advance posts with the object of reconnoitering enemy wire , one patrol was fired on from an isolated German rifle pit. " 7th June, 19 mines of Messines went up at dawn as a preliminary to the Battle of Ypres .

BOWMAN

Walter, born 1886 at Marham ,son of William and Elizabeth , farm labourer at Stow Bardolph , living in Lynn Road. Enlisted Downham , 28th Aug 1914 ,formerly 4th Norfolk Militia . married Lilian Rumbelow at St Edmunds 1907 . Their son is noted as " not the son of the soldier " 51st Machine Gun Corps , died of wounds 14th November 1916 on the Somme, and buried at Coutray .British War and Victory medals awarded, but returned to the War Office in 1923 "undisposed of " .

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The history of the 51st MGC suggests that Walter arrived in Camiers from Folkestone , on 25th October 1916 , and was in 49th Casualty Clearing Station on 12th Nov 1916 and died of his wounds 2 days later .

BRYAN

Charles William , born Bourne , Lincs, son of Joseph and Ann Bryan , brewers labourer, living Lynn Road, 1901 . Both parents died 1902 and 1907 and younger sister Ethel found in 1911 living in Dr Barnardos Girls Home , Barkingside. Enlisted Downham Market, 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment , killed in action 27th July 1916 , third battle of Ypres, commemorated Thiepval . Awarded British War , Victory and 14 Star, with clasp, medals. Married Downham 1913 Daisy daughter of Emma Spinks. War Diaries : 26th . 10.45pm. Left Bivouac at Pommier and moved up to assembly positions in Longueval . Had to go through heavy barrage of poison gas shells and whole battalion had to put on their gas helmets. There was also an artillery barrage on most of the road going up. Moved via Quarry (map reference) at junction of tracks at (map reference) and German trench near Windmill at (map reference) , then along trench to road at (map reference) and up street running N and S through Longueval . Relieved 2 Coys 12th Gloucester regt who were roughly on line L of Longueval along road to cross roads at (map reference) and from there to road at (map reference) . On the L of the cross roads there was a slight trench but on the R it was all ruined houses and only one small section of trench for one platoon. The remainder took cover behind ruined houses and in shell holes . 27th 2am . Arrived at Longueval . A Coy was on L from L in Longueval to cross roads at (map reference) . B Coy was on R from there to road at (map reference) C Coy went into a partially dug trench behind A Coy running from (map reference) D Coy occupied a bit of trench from (map reference) and all Coys did what they could to dig themselves in . 2.am . Bn HQ arrived at (map reference) . Orders as enclosed were issued for the attack at 7 10 am on 27th . 1/Bedfords were in support and 16th R Warwicks were in reserve . 5.10am Our artillery preparation started and the German heavy artillery kept up an intense fire on our positions at Longueval especially on A and B Coys and on the approaches to the village . This bombardment was kept up for 24 hours with only slight lesser intervals and the barrages were so strong that practically every runner became a casualty during this period . MO (Capt M Scott) RAMC attd , wounded (gassed). Other ranks 50 killed , 133 wounded , 50 missing believed killed , 5 wounded shell shock , 4 wounded gassed . 15 wounded remained at duty . Total 12 officers and 257 other ranks . 28th . 5am . The positions gained were consolidated and held until relieved by 1/E Surreys on morning of 27th when they withdrew to the Pommier bivouac . "

BROWNE

James Reginald , born Downham one of five sons of Henry and Mary Browne , of Bridge St , game and fish dealer. .Enlisted Attleborough, 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade. Killed in action 24th April 1918. War Diary : "At 9am enemy Very lights were seen going up on the NW outskirts of Villers Brettoneux and enemy machine guns opened up at Bn HQ . It was afterwards ascertained that the enemy after breaking through south of VB – Warfusee road , had

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turned in northwards between our front line and support lines and also in the rear of the latter being unobserved owing to the dense mist and smoke barrage . A and C Companies taken unawares in the rear were overwhelmed after a sharp fight by superior numbers of the enemy the whole of the two companies with few exceptions being killed or captured . Very little was ascertained as to their exact fate but it is known that one platoon of D Coy fought to their last man and was completely wiped out . 2nd Lt Doyle was dangerously wounded whilst commanding this platoon and was found the night of 24/25th during a counter attack by the Australians . Casualties 23/26th April , Officers 15, killed , wounded and missing . ORs killed 18 , wounded 96 , missing 268 ." Awarded British War and Victory medals.



Downham - Weston

casualties

BUSHILL

Charles William , born 1889, (born Union Workhouse) son of Louisa Bushell, later Stapleton, living Ouse Bank, with grandparents Mark and Lucy Bushell , gardener, in 1901 , and with widowed grandfather at Hythe Cottage in 1911, farm labourer. Enlisted Sheffield 2nd/5th York and Lancaster Regiment . Killed in action 7th March 1917 aged 26 ,buried Queen`s Cemetery , Bucquoy . Bucquoy was taken by the 7th Division in March 1917 when the cemetery was started. Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Diaries : "Miraumont : Front Line , 7th March 1918 . Brisk shelling of sector . Great coolness and devotion shown by Pte Parkinson (stretcher bearer) C Coy , attending to wounded under fire when 4 men were killed and 7 wounded of a total of 14 men occupying a shelter although wounded himself

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CLARKE

William Osborne , born 3rd August 1892 Downham , son of William Charles and Susannah of Ryston End , butcher and of Crossways , Lynn Road . Enlisted Downham 2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment 1911, transferred to Belgaum Aug 1914 , arrived in Bombay Sept 1914 , disembarked at Saniyah and formed part of 18th (Indian) Brigade) . 15th November , began march toward Basra along the Shatt Al Arab meeting Turkish resistance and experiencing cold windy nights initially without great coats or blankets , killed in action 17th November 1914 Mesopotamia aged 22 , commemorated Basra cemetery . Awarded British War , Victory and 15 Star medals.

COLLEN

Charles Thomas was the son of Charles Collen and his second wife Ellen , of The Queen`s Head , Bridge St, and later of York Villas . He enlisted with his older brother Sidney in Sept 1914 and joined the 9th Battn Norfolk Regiment . He is listed as wounded in the regimental casualty lists after 21st March 1918 , the first day of the last Spring Offensive , and was evacuated to 1st Southern General Hospital in Stourbridge . His right shoulder was operated on to removed shrapnel on 2nd April , but he suffered a sudden collapse and died there on 5th April 1918 . He was brought home and is buried in Downham King`s Walk Cemetery . The War Diary gives this account . "Lagnicourt Sunken Road . At 5 am the enemy heavily bombarded our system with gas and heavy calibre shells and an attack was evidently imminent . This bombardment continued intensely all day obliterating our front and close support lines also Strong Points . Owing to the heroic resistance of our men the enemy had only penetrated our front and close support lines up to 12 pm . This was due to the overwhelming numbers of the enemy and the obliteration of our system of defence . Our support company C Coy , did very gallant work in Skipton Reserve holding on till 5 o`clock then when both flanks had gone and not until then did they retire . Previous to this a very

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gallant counter attack was launched by the company in reserve going forward from Sunken road Lagnicourt to Skipton reserve . This and other persistent efforts of the men in Skipton reserve must have entirely baffled the enemy as attacks there were given up and he confirmed his attacks to Lagnicourt and the flanks . They being successful our men in Skipton had to retire owing to their part of the line being exposed to great danger . 22nd March 1918 . The battalion HQ and remainder of the officers and men then took up positions in the Morchies Vaux line . " . (photo copyright N Brunn)



CORLEY

George born Denver, coal carter living Bennett St , 1911. Son of Edward and Jane, marine store dealer of Downham West . Enlisted Downham 15th November 1914, 2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment died of disease , 16 Oct 1916 in Mesopotamia commemorated Basra Cemetery. Awarded British War, Victory and 15 Star medals. The date of his death is given on the CWGC site as 31st October although the Medal roll gives it as 16th Oct . " The Mesopotamia campaign : Gen Sir Frederick Maude was appointed to the so called Tigris Corps in July 1916 , and the following month of the whole corps . He immediately set about reorganising and resupplying British and Indian forces in the region . British strength in the region was reinforced by an influx of Anglo Indian troops although sickness continued to claim an inordinate number of casualties until Maude finally revamped the British system of medical supplies , virtually non existent to that point . By October 1916 he had 150,000 troops under his command around half of which were serving on the front lines . He was

determined to launch a renewed offensive against Kut before the arrival of the winter floods .

"

CORLEY

John , brother of the above George , living 1911 , farm labourer in Bennett St . .Enlisted E Dereham 1st/5th Battalion (Territorial Force) Norfolk Regiment died 1917 aged 25 , Palestine. commemorated West Jerusalem memorial . Married Florence Venni (dau of Jacob and Margaret) in October 1914 ; had Frederick J born and died Dec quarter 1914 and George in March quarter 1916., later of Wisbech Road. Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Diaries : " 2nd Battle of Gaza 17th – 19th April 1917 : Gaza was defended strongly by the Ottoman Army . The battle began at 5.30 am with a 2 hour artillery bombardment during which the French ship Requin fired at Ali Muntar . During that afternoon the ship was

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targeted by a German submarine . All guns had been deployed at one per 100 yards compared with one every 36 feet at Arras. The guns could not provide a sufficiently dense bombardment . On the right the 54th East Anglian Division with the Imperial Camel Brigade was to advance north from Sheik Abbas toward Kh Sihan . This attack by the 163rd Norfolk and Suffolk Brigade was led by a tank toward the Ottoman redoubt , 4th Battalion Norfolks on the left and 5th Battalion on the right . At 9 .00 the tank followed by part of the 5th Battalion entered a redoubt capturing 20 prisoners and killing most of the infantrymen , so many casualties they were unable to withstand a strong counter attack . 1,500 men including 2 commanding officers , 12 company commanders were killed from 8th Hampshires , 4th and 5th Norfolks . "

CRABB

Thomas son of George , farmer , and Sarah , born Littleport , one of 10 surviving children , horseman on farm. . Living Tallymore Farm, Denver ; with his six older unmarried brothers and two older unmarried sisters aged between 37 and 17 . . Enlisted 9th Oct 1914 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment , killed in action 20th Oct 1915 . War Diaries . " Oct 15th – 27th . We were in billets at Vaux where we did route marches and carried out company training . Here the whole battalion were trained as grenadiers . We had one accident with grenades causing two men to be killed and Lt Borton and 4 men wounded . " He is buried Villers Bretonneaux Cemetery. . Awarded British War , Victory and 1914 Star medals.

CULLING

Arthur, of Priory Terrace, clerk to ironmonger, born 1890 Downham , son of Harry and Sarah , of 5 Priory Terrace , painter. enlisted 8th July 1915, 8th/9th Seaforth Highlanders at Fort George , Invernesshire . War Diary : " Canada Huts at Dickebusch . Lillers rebuilding Battalion after its decimation on 28th Sept . the casualty lists killed in action 11 NCOs and 32 men . In action at Crenay – Vermelles , main line of trenches . Addressed on 2/10/15 Major General MacCracken who thanked them for the great honour they had done to themselves, the regiment and Scotland in the great battle of 25th Sept . He died of wounds 6th Oct 1915 aged 25, buried Le Treport cemetery. Le Treport was an important hospital centre for No 3 , No16 and No 2 hospitals , which were established by March 1915 eventually totalling 10,000 beds . Awarded the British War , Victory and 15 Star medals.

CULLING

Thomas, older brother of the above Arthur, cowman working in 1911 , born Downham. 1888. Joined 2nd Battalion London Regiment which took part in the 3rd battle of Ypres . Killed in action 16th August 1917 . Commemorated Menin gate, Ypres.Awarded the British War and Victory medals. "War Diary : All Companies. Zero hour will be at 4.45 am tomorrow morning . Warn your men to assemble in silence and to keep still between dawn and zero hour . 2nd London regt will be on the left . 2nd London regt will assemble in Jargon trench and Jargon switch and the area between these two trenches . Objectives will be captured as mentioned below . The creeping barrage will start 200 yards in front of our present front line

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and will move at a rate of 100 yards in 5 minutes .. Lt Col Kellett , C/o 2nd London regiment .
 “

DIXON

George , born Swaffham, 1888, son of Mrs Emma Dixon, of Priory Road, lodging 1911 with Fred Dye hairdresser and tobacconist , Bridge St , Downham . Joined 9th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (part of 12th (Eastern) Division , killed in action 7 Oct 1916 at the battle of Le Transloy , commemorated Thiepval cemetery. Awarded British war , Victory and 15 star medals. The 9th Bttn R.F. were “in the XV Corps area , the objective was set 300 yds forward along the north west end of Rainbow Trench and Bayonet Trench up to the Gird trenches . Just before zero hour a German machine gun barrage began on the front trenches of the 12th Division and began an artillery bombardment particularly on Gueudecourt . The 6th Royal West Kent on the left was stopped by the machine gun barrage as were the 9th and 8th Royal Fusiliers of the 36th Brigade on the left . . “

DOUGHTY

Donald Ernest , born Easter Sunday , 14th April 1895 , son of William and Frances , painter and plumber of Lynn Road , employed as a groom to Charles Hawkins on enlistment . Enlisted E Dereham 10th August 1914 1st /5th Battalion Norfolk Regiment (TF) Embarked Mediterranean Expeditionary Force 30th July 1915 , missing presumed killed in action 28th August 1915 at Gallipoli , commemorated Helles memorial . Awarded British War, Victory and 15 star medals.

EAGLE

Percy, one of 8 sons and 6 daughters of Arthur and Martha Eagle , born Massingham 1891 . living 1911 Welney brother to Albert George who took the licence of the Rose and Crown Hilgay , 1918 . Enlisted from the Swan Hotel , Downham 15th May 1st/6th Prince of Wales Staffordshire Regiment. Killed in action on the first day of the first battle of the Somme, 1st July 1916 . commemorated Thiepval cemetery. Awarded British war and Victory medals. Mother applied for 14 star for her late son in 1923.

War Diary for 1st/6th :-

War Diary entry for 1st July 1916.

Battalion in trenches at Fonquevillers , preparatory to an attack on Gommecourt wood and village. Battalion on right 6th South Staffs , Battalion left 7th Notts and Derby regt . The attack was preceded by an intense bombardment lasting 65 minutes and the infantry assault took place at 7.30am under cover of a smoke barrage. The attack was carried out by means of four waves, each wave consisting of one platoon per company . The 1st wave occupied the assault trench the 2nd and 3rd waves the fire trench and the fourth wave the retrenchment . These were followed by consolidating and carrying parties found by the 5th North Staffs. Immediately the smoke appeared the enemy opened heavy machine gun fire and barraged our front line. Whilst the assault was in progress this fire caused heavy casualties which occurred chiefly in

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the first four waves . The casualties so depleted the strength of the waves that very few men succeeded in reaching the enemy wire which was found to be very strong in parts. Owing to the smoke many men lost direction and were unable to see the gaps in the wire. Previous heavy rain had made the trenches in a very bad condition especially the assault trench which was from 2 – 3 feet deep in mud. This caused delay in the waves leaving the trenches. The enemy front line trench was found to be very strongly held and with so few men left it was impossible to advance. After this those who had not become casualties retired to the assault trench . Nothing of note occurred between this and 5pm when the Battalion was relieved by the 5th North Staffs and proceeded to St Amand and billeted.

Strength prior to 1st July, 32 officers, 960 ORs ; strength return July 6th , 18 officers, 709 ORs ; Casualty return officers killed 8 , missing 4 , wounded 6 . Total 18 , ORs killed 34 , missing 122 , wounded 170 , total 326.

Commemoration for 1st July 1916 , St Edmunds 1st July 2016.

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FINCHAM

Herbert, son of Lot , baker, and Sarah , of Bridge St . born Fincham . enlisted 18th May 1915 , 7th Battalion Norfolk Regiment . killed in action, service record notes died on or since 12th October 1916 , battle of the Somme , nr Flers, buried Grevillers British Cemetery. Awarded British war , Victory and 15 star medals. War Diaries :” 10th October : Bulls Road, near Flers . 7th Norfolk & 7th Suffolk in front line -D Coy right front , A Coy left front – we are due to attack Bayonet Trench the Hun front line opposite us on 12th October . 12th October : Today at 2.5 we attacked Bayonet Trench – last night assembly trenches were completed and all the battalion lay out in them until 5 am . The attack was carried out with all four companies in the line . The object was first to attack and capture Bayonet Trench and then to sweep on to and take Luisenhof farm and establish a line beyond it . At 2.5 our artillery barrage commenced and our men advanced to the assault. After advancing 50 yards the Hun opened fire with MCGs from both flanks and from in front . Our troops continued to advance

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but before reaching the enemy`s trench , ran into barbed wire which had not been cut . This coupled with the machine gun fire prevented any further advance and our men lay down in shell holes from which they brought rifle fire to bear on the Germans who were standing up in their trenches shooting at them . We caused considerable casualties this way . After dark we made further attempts to cut a way through to the enemy trench but ran into barbed wire which had not been cut . But the wire proved too strong and the survivors then crawled back to our lines and reformed . Only 2 out of 12 officers came back unhurt . ORs killed 36 . "

FREEMAN

Edgar, born 1887, Hilgay, son of John and Elizabeth , farmer and agricultural labourer of Hilgay. Working 1901 aged 14 as a cattle and milkman at Ten Mile Bank. He joined the Royal Marine Artillery in 1903 underage. Re-enlisted 1915, gunner , served on HMS Invincible at Jutland, killed in action 31st May 1916 . Invincible received a direct hit on Q battery which caused P battery to explode . The German High Seas fleet ships the Lutzow and the Derrflinger sank the Invincible in 90 seconds , with a loss of 1,026 lives . There were 6 survivors . Commemorated on the Portsmouth memorial. Awarded British war , Victory and 15 star medals. Also awarded Coronation and Delhi Durbar medals 1911.

FROST

John William , son of John and Eliza Frost of Farthing Sq , Downham West , 1901 eldest of five.. Enlisted 17th Aug 1914 , 19th Hussars , promoted Cpl and Sergt . The London Gazette of May 1917 shows him being transferred to the Northants Regt as a Sergt. He was commissioned in April 1917 as 2nd Lt. He was awarded the Military Cross , " For Conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. After successfully capturing his objective, with his platoon, he attacked an enemy strong point which was occupied by a machine gun, and imperilling the whole line, and captured it , thus enabling his company to join up with the battalion on the right. He displayed an admirable courage and quick grasp of a critical situation." He married Vera Thompson in 1918 whilst at Roehampton hospital . Templeton House and Roehampton were hospitals which specialised in amputations and the new use of prosthetic limbs. 42,000 officers and men were admitted to Roehampton in the course of the war. He died 23rd March 1919 . He was also awarded the British War, Victory and 14 Star medals . His widow applied for the 1914 star via the hospital matron, and the address given was Wisbech Road. , later changed to Sunderland. (Possibly).

FIRTH

Frederick Alexander, born Downham 1888, son of Augustus and Charlotte , grocer and draper. Living 1901 Lynn Road. joined 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment 16th August 1914. . Invalided out Feb 1917 with an aneurism , and the Silver Badge which prevented him from further service or a white feather . The 1st Battalion were at the battles of the Somme throughout 1916 .Died in Doncaster on 30th November 1917. He was at the time a coal screener at Colliery and had an Army pension . His mother was present at his death . Sgt Firth was one of three brothers serving in the Army (His older brother Horace Augustus was a CSM in the

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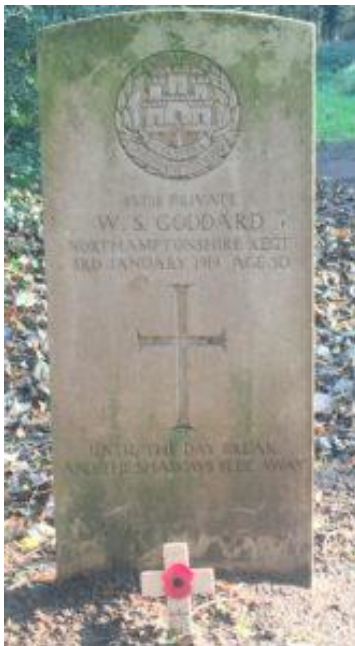
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Suffolk Regt). Mother living Coronation Terrace Downham 1919 applied for the clasp to the 14 star for her late sergeant son , 1919. Awarded British War, Victory and 14 Star.



GODDARD

John , son of Fred and Fanny Goddard, house painter of Windsor St , Downham; auctioneers labourer , married Florence Dorman Dec 1/4 1907 , 2 daughters , living Church Road . joined 28th May 1916 at Norwich , 3rd Reserve Battalion Norfolk Regiment , discharged physically unfit for service due to his left shoulder being damaged by a gunshot wound , on the Somme battlefield , admitted to Etaples for 2 days , and sent home in 1916 to spend 3 1/2 months at Gosford War Hospital , Northumberland , and later Ripon hospital ; discharged 5th April 1918 ; widow awarded 22/- per week and 12/8d for their three children . Died 21st May 1919 buried Downham Market , grave reference 10.31. Awarded British War and Victory medals.



GODDARD

William Smith , brother of the above , b 1888, working as an hotel boy in 1901 , and as a corn porter , living in Railway Road, 1911 . Enlisted 28th Sept 1914 9th Northamptonshire Regiment , sent to France 1916 , discharged unfit for further service 25th Oct 1918 , chronic laryngitis June 1917 possibly gassed . HIs medical record shows his later address as Flour mill, March .. Died at Downham 8th January 1919 possibly in the influenza pandemic ; grave reference 10.40. . Awarded British War and Victory medals.

(photo copyright N Brunn)

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GOODRUM

Nathan, son of George and Harriet of Bexwell Road. He was born 21st Nov 1881 and was working as a gardener , Playhouse Yard , 1901. In 1911 he was working as a gardener at Johnsons Hall Gardens, Eccleshall, Staffs. (This still exists as a garden centre today) Living with him at the time of the 1911 census was William Blackston who was some 6 years younger . He too joined the 1/5th North Staffordshire Regiment , they had consecutive regimental numbers, and was killed 21st July 1915 . Nathan enlisted 3rd March 1915 1st/5th Prince of Wales Staffordshire Regiment , he embarked for France on 3rd March 1915 and died on 13th Oct 1915 . The war diary for that date shows the battalion in Trenches at Bailleulmont , and that the 13th was a quiet day . However the previous week on the 4th a raiding party had gone out to attack an enemy listening post , and one man was killed . On the 5th 3 men were diagnosed with scarlet fever and 4 officers and 49 men were isolated . Commemorated at Loos, awarded British War, Victory and 15 Star medals.

GOODRUM

Robert, brother of the above, working as a hotel waiter in 1911 at Cliff Terrace, Hunstanton , enlisted Dover , 6th Duke of Cornwall`s Light Infantry ex- Royal Fusiliers, killed in action April 1917 at Tilloy les Mofflaines , aged 30, husband of Daisy Victoria daughter of Reuben Goodrum, married West Ham 1913, and had two possibly three children.. Buried Tilloy British Cemetery. Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Diaries : 9th April : the battalion remained in Brigade Reserve in their position until 12.30 pm when orders were received from

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Brigade HQ to advance and take up position in the Assembly trenches . About 2.35 pm orders were received for the Battalion to advance in the direction of Central and to assist 6th SLI who had been held up . The battalion moved forward and took up a position in trenches and shell holes . At about 5 15 orders were received fro 6th DCLI in conjunction with 6th SLI to attack and capture the Brown Line . Immediately on advancing the leading companies came under heavy machine gun fire. They suffered heavy casualties and were forced to fall back into the German Communication trench which they held for the night . Casualties 4 officers , 96 other ranks . "

GROMETT

Charles , son of Charles and Sarah nee Walsh ,of Bridge St , fishmonger , born Downham. 26th June 1888, enlisted 22nd October 1907 . Living in Salamanca Barracks , 1911 , 2nd Bttn Yorks and Lancs , L/Cpl : promoted Sergeant 20th August 1914 ,1st Battalion East Yorks Regiment which landed at St Nazaire on 10th Sept 1914 ; wounded in the thigh at the battle of the Aisne ; died of wounds 27th Sept 1914. buried St Nazaire.. Married Edith Cobb at Beverley Dec 1913 .Awarded British War, Victory and 14 Star with clasp.



GROMETT

Ernest, brother of the above , born Hull 22nd November 1885 . Living with parents in Downham 1891 , the elder by 6 years of his brother Charles . Enlisted at Regina, Canada. 3rd August 1915, 2nd Battalion Canadian Pioneers. Arrived in France 11 January 1917 . Was part of the Canadian Railway troops , tasked to keep railways lines working to take men and materiel from the ports to the front . Killed in action 22nd May 1918 at Arras, buried Bellacourt Military cemetery which was enlarged by the Canadian Corps from 1916 – 1918 , Riviere , Pas de Calais . .

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GROOM

Ernest George , son of Henry and Matilda , of Parsons Lane, grocers porter , born Crimplasham . enlisted Motor Machine Gun Service , RA , and later 6th Battalion Machine Gun Corps ; the Motor Machine Gun Service RA was motorised by motor cycles with sidecars , and armed with Vickers Machine Guns . In the 1911 census for Bridge Road , Ernest was living with his three sisters , they were dressmakers and a council teaching assistant , and he was working as a cycle and motor mechanic . Died of wounds at home 20th Oct 1918 aged 31 following the last battles of the Hindenburg Line . Grave reference 37.12.. Awarded British War and Victory, and 14 Star medals.

(photograph copyright N Brunn)



GROOM

William John, brother of the above , joined 8th Battalion Norfolk Regiment . Killed in action aged 41 , 9th March 1917 at the battle of Miraumont, husband of Ethel (possibly Chapman , married Spalding 1913) , buried Miraumont German Cemetery , commemorated Bucquoy. Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Diaries : 11pm 9th March . All 4 companies in Miraumont trench , most from 6th March until zero hour 5.15am 10th March . Casualties noon 9th March – noon 10th March 6 killed, 14 wounded, 4 missing . Appendix C notes " barrage during operations against Irles and Grevillers trench on 10th March the officers commanding B C and D Coys are of the opinion that it was the best barrage they have ever followed not excepting 1st July 1916 . It was very noticeable how it was one of the first topics of conversation among wounded , prisoners escorts and runners . Not a single shell was reported as having fallen short . It inspired confidence even in men who had not been over the top before . Caught between the two bodies of British troops , the Boches surrendered (a few were killed , one man who ran away being dropped at 50 yards by a sniper .)" "

HARNWELL

George son of George and Mary Harnwell , of Bridge Road, coal merchant`s carter . In 1911

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George is 13 and an ag lab. .Joined 1st/5th Norfolk Regiment , killed in action 21st August 1915 , aged 16 , Gallipoli , buried Haider Pasha cemetery Istanbul.. His family say ` On 21st August 1909 , exactly three years before he died , when he was just 11 years old , George saved a younger boy from drowning in the creek at Salter`s Lode. He received a bravery commendation.` Awarded British War , Victory and 15 Star medals. The 1st/5th Norfolk regiment was formed in E Dereham in August 1914 , part of the Norfolk and Suffolk Brigade , East Anglian Division . They embarked at Liverpool on 29th July 1915 for Gallipoli via Mudros . They landed at Suvla Bay on 10th August 1915 . After the landings , the fate of the 5th Battalion became shrouded in mystery . E Company was known as the Sandringham Unit and its officer was Capt Beck of Sandringham . The War Diary continues " 19th August 1915 . 7.30pm . Commenced to move and arrived at new position which we learned to be the firing line the same night . 20th Spent the day digging ourselves in , were troubled by snipers , had a few casualties . 21st same position . Were told to hold ourselves in readiness for attack at 3pm but had no orders to move . 16 officers killed (including Capt Beck) missing 2, wounded 3 . "



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HAWES

John, son of Albert and Mary A , farm manager, Railway Road, born Denver 1890,. living Station Road, Walsoken 1911 , horseman., married Rosetta Smith, West Ham 1916 Enlisted 12th August 1914, 3rd Coldstream Guards, L/Corp , killed in action 27th July 1917 aged 27. at Passchendaele , 3rd battle of Ypres. Buried Bluet Far Cemetery , Ypres. Awarded British War, Victory and 14 Star with clasp medals . "War Diaries: Trenches Boesinghe sector . 27th At 1pm there were few if any grenadiers between the canal and the Steenbeck . The Battalion was ordered to advance at 5pm . At 5 pm the Battalion advanced and occupied a line from SE Corner wood 14 south of Boisen Baboon reserve and SW line of Artillery wood to railway . Trench was obtained with 38 Div on our right near in canal corner and with the French on our left . We took 3 officers 35 other ranks prisoner and many others killed during operation . 28th Quiet day , At 4pm left half battalion Wood 14 – Souteuf were relieved by 1st Battn Irish Guards . 29th Bttn relieved by 1st Bttn Scots Guards and returned to Camp Forest area. Casualties during this time . Officers 7 wounded , OR s 29 killed , 82 wounded , 72 missing . "

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HAYLETT

Walter Ernest , son of Robert and Marie Haylett, town post man. of Railway Road, born Downham, joined Royal Garrison Artillery, home address given as Telephone Exchange , clerk, married Elizabeth Bradford of Newmarket, 30th July 1916, enlisted 10th December 1916 140th Siege Battery RGA. Entrained for Southampton and onward embarkation for France , 31st July , killed in action April 1917 , buried Achiet le Grand Communal cemetery, between Arras and Bapaume which was opened in April 1917 , and used by 45th and 49th Casualty Clearing Stations . Widow awarded 13s/9d per week pension . Awarded British War and Victory

HEWING

Ernest , youngest child of Jonathan and Clarinda ,of the Railway hotel between 1901 and 1911, born 1897 . enlisted King`s Lynn, RASC transferred to 18th London Irish Rifles, London Regiment. died of wounds 15th August 1917 at the third battle of Ypres , buried Brandhoek New Military Cemetery, between Poperinghe and Ypres.Awarded British War and Victory medals. "War diaries : 15th August 1917 : Esquerdes . Training . on one hours notice " The 18th LIR went into the line on the 18th and suffered a number of casualties from that date , they were in Halifax camp on the day Ernest died.

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HOWCROFT

Ernest , youngest son of John and Caroline of Lynn Road, tin plate worker 1901. .Born Downham 1897, enlisted East Dereham , 1st/5th Norfolk Regiment 6th August 1915. died prisoner of war (of the Turks) 2nd Sept 1917 in NIgde hospital , buried Baghdad military cemetery. Awarded British War, Victory and 15 Star medals.

HUBBARD

Harry, born Wereham 1895 son of Harry and Elizabeth , waggoner for miller, living 16 Windsor Terrace ., in Downham West 1911. Working 1911 as assistant in mineral water manufactory ; enlisted 1st/5th Norfolk Regiment , landed at Gallipoli 6th August 1915 , died 28th August 1915 aged 19 at Gallipoli , commemorated Helles war memorial . Awarded British War , Victory and 15 Star medals.

JOHNSON

Walter Edwin, b 1888, son of Harry and Rose , carpenter and builder of Lynn Road. Enlisted Norwich 18 May 1915 Royal Engineers A/Corp 2nd Field Company. Discharged 8th Oct 1917, sickness, after the battle of the Aisne. Transferred to 25th Field Ambulance France , died of wounds May 1918 . Awarded Military Medal. and the British War, Victory and 15 Star medals; commemorated Soissons war memorial. Married Hannah English, 25, daughter of Noah , chimney sweep April 1914. "At the end of May , IX corps found themselves facing the overwhelming German attack when despite fierce opposition pushed the Allies back across the Aisne to the Marne . Having suffered 15,000 fatal casualties IX Corps was withdrawn . The Soissons memorial commemorates the 4,000 officers and men who died during the battles of the Aisne and the Marne 1918 . "

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Walter Edwin Johnson

KENDLE

Frederick , b 1881 , son of William and Mary , self employed cabinet maker ,of Lynn Road. Living in 1901 aged 20 , at the Charles Club , St James Westminster, kitchen porter.(Also living in were Albert E Steward , 20 b Downham, and Sarah Burgess, 50, linen room maid also b Downham). 1911 living as a chef in restaurant in Plumstead, with wife Mary Jane (nee Buck married 1905), helper in sweet shop ,and 2 children Frederick and Doris.. Enlisted Ilford 7th Battalion London Regiment , died 29th Dec 1917 at Cambrai , although according to the war diaries there were no casualties over the Christmas week . Buried Etaples . Etaples was the site of more than a dozen general hospitals, four Red Cross hospitals, and could accommodate 100,000 men in the sand dunes. In 1917 the hospitals were treating 22,000 wounded and sick and it may be that Fred Kendle was transferred from the battlefield to Etaples for treatment and then to be shipped home , but he unfortunately died there . Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Diary 7th London Regt : "Ribemont : 25th Dec 1917 : Xmas day . Voluntary church parade in shed at station. 26th Dec , Battn had dinner in shed near the Railway station . Every man was seated at tables made by Pioneer sections . Sgts and Sen NCOs waited on the men . Brig Gen visited the men after dinner and made a short speech ."

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KENT

Albert William, born 1894 Battersea, son of Albert and Adelaide of Russell Cottage, Railway road , gasworks asst, 1911 labourer for baker. Enlisted Downham 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment , died of wounds May 1915 aged 21. after the first battle of Ypres/ Loos. buried Cologne Southern Germany . This would indicate that Albert William was a prisoner of war of the Germans . Awarded British War and Victory medals.

KING

Arthur Ernest Gromett , born Salters Lode c 1887, son of Arthur and Elvina , miller . Living 1891 Salter`s Lode , with parents and sister Ruby , grandparents William , wind miller, and Rose Anne living next door . In 1911 he was married to Alice and living in Farthing Sq , 2 daus . Enlisted Norwich , 13th Royal Sussex Regiment , killed in action 28th March 1918 during the 2nd battle of the Somme . War Diary : Battalion ordered to withdraw but owing to late arrival of orders because heavily engaged and only with difficulty got back to position between Marceleave and Wrencourt where it withdrew to a position 500 yards from Marceleave ." Buried Villers Faucon cemetery extension , Somme. Awarded British War and Victory medals.

LACK

Frederick , born 1895 , son of Emily Lack , field worker, of Farthing Square, Downham West ; working for Hugh West at Salters Lode 1901; enlisted 1913 Norfolk regiment, transferred to 18th Co. Machine Gun Corps, embarked Folkestone 13th September 1916 , reported missing 16th Oct and then confirmed killed in action 16 Oct 1916 possibly killed when the 6th Division were capturing Thiepval village , part of the 1916 Somme battles. Awarded British War, Victory and 15 Star medals. No War Diary has been found for 18th MGC but this is a summary of their activities in October 1916 . " The 18th MGC was formed from the Machine Gun sections of 18th Brigade , 6th Division in February 1916 . Later that year they were in action at Flers Courcellette on the Somme , and again at the battle of Morval and the battle of Le Transloy. Le Transloy : in the 12th Brigade the 1st King Own tried to bomb down Spectrum Trench to Dewdrop Trench in the evenings of 14th and 15th October and in a pre dawn attack on 15th October , the 2nd Sherwood Foresters in the 6th Division took the gunpits in front of the British held section of Cloudy Trench and took several prisoners . On the left of the division the 11th Essex overran Mild Trench and bombed up the Beaulencourt road before being forced back by a counter attack . In the 111 corps area, the 3rd South African regt attacked after dark on 14th October , captured the Pimple, and 80 yards of Snag Trench . The rain gradually abated and 17th October began fair but clouded over and rain fell again during the night . The British bombardment had continued as planned but the German artillery reply was vigorous leading up to zero hour at 3.40am on 18th Oct .
! Wikipedia .

LANKFER

Ernest, son of Frederick and Maud , baker and farmer , of Railway Road, b 1899 Downham. joined 18th Highland Light Infantry, possibly from the Norfolk regiment , killed in action 1st

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Oct 1918 commemorated Tyne Cot. (There seems to be some problem identifying the date of death , two Ernie Lankfers are given both HLI one previously Northumberland Fusiliers, the other Norfolk regiment , one kia 26 /10/1917 and the other 1/10/1918) Lance Corporal.. Awarded British War and Victory medals.

LEVERICK

Arthur, born 1898 Southery, Brandon Creek, son of Mary Ann Leverick , named Archer L Peckett in 1901 census and as Arthur L in the 1911 when he was a telegraph messenger. enlisted Downham Market, Lance Corporal 23rd Royal Fusiliers formerly Royal Sussex Regiment, killed in action 28th Jan 1917.third battle of Ypres; .commemorated Thiepval. Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Diaries : "On January 9th a move was made from Oneux to Candas, to Beauquesne on the 11th to Bouzincourt on the 13th and to Aveluy on the 20th . From there it went into the trenches at Courcelette A and C Companies being in the front line and B and D in support . After its capture , Courcelette remained near the front lines until the Germans withdrew to the Hindenburg line early in 1917. Intense cold was experienced at this time . The ground , like iron , was covered in snow . The frost was intense , one man being actually frozen stiff at his post on sentry and drinking water carried to the front line arrived as lumps of ice from which bits were chipped off for eating . "

MARTIN

2nd Lt JAMES NELSON MARTIN, born 1893 . Royal Field Artillery, 61st Trench Mortar Battery : Killed in action 21st March 1918 at the battle of St Quentin.

Younger of two sons of Henry Richard and Gertrude Martin of the Swan , High St. Working as a chemist`s shop assistant 1911 , and possibly apprenticed to Augustus and Whitmore Baker, chemists of High St , Downham Market . Father died 1907 . Enlisted Newcastle upon Tyne , RFA , gunner, 2nd November 1914 .Embarked to France 10th Sept 1915 . Gun shot wound to face 11th July 1916 , admitted to general hospital Rouen 14th July 1916 .To England 15th July 1916 ; Promoted Sergt Feb 1916 , Returned to France April 1917 .: Discharged to commission April 1917. Entered RA Cadet School , Exeter, June 1917 . Commissioned July 1917. 2nd Lt 61st Trench Mortar Battery , RFA . Missing presumed killed in action 21st March 1918 aged 25 . His death was confirmed by Gnr Michael of Y Battery 61st TMB in 1919 . see letter attached . Commemorated at Pozieres . Will probated to brother Sidney Wallace Martin, effects £473 . Notification of his death also sent to Miss M Crane , 49 Florence Road, Thorpe Hamlet , Norwich , following enquiries to the Netherlands Legation without result which ended as a presumption of death . This letter below was received in January 1919 when Gnr Michael was repatriated from POW camp in Germany .

Skidbrooke , North Somercotes, Lincs . 7/1/19.

Dear Sir , (letter addressed to Messrs Reed and Wayman)

In reference to your advt in The Times, I very much regret to state that I saw 2nd Lt Martin shot and I believe he was killed instantaneously . On the morning of the 21st March . Mr Martin

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and 9 men (including myself) were holding a position which was called The Three Cottages and abutted the road from Holnon to Fayet (about a kilo from St Quentin) . We had two gunpits which were connected and had the same outlet by a passage to the rear .

It was arranged that we should fire on the crossroads in the village of Fayet , in the event of the enemy breaking through the front line and advancing . .

At 10 am we received news that the enemy was in Fayet and Mr Martin told us to begin firing our objective being about 900 yards distant .

We continued firing until 2pm when we were attacked from the rear by a body of about 200 Germans . Mr Martin saw we were quite unable to cope with such a strong force and told us the only alternative was to surrender .

Accordingly he went out of the gunpit with 8 of us immediately following all of us with our hands up . I am afraid he was shot through the chest for I saw the fluff fly from his tunic as the bullet struck his chest . I being stood about two paces to his left rear at that moment . We had no opportunity of attending to him for the Germans struck us with rifles , kicked us and sent off through their lines .

The reason Mr Martin was shot was that we fired to the last , if we had not done so I should think that they would have taken him prisoner along with us .

Our captors appeared to be very angry because they had seen the bombs leave the guns .

I believe the enemy had several casualties as the bombs were very powerful . One of the gunners did not come out of the gun pit when we surrendered but hid under a bed in our dug out and was not captured until 5 pm and he saw Mr Martin lying dead just where he was shot . I take this opportunity of remarking that Mr Martin was both liked and respected by the personnel of the battery and I tender my sincere sympathy to his parents.

They have at least the consolation of knowing that he died nobly in the act of doing his duty .

Please excuse the plain stating of details and lengthy letter.

I am yours respectfully , W B Michael .

NB My address was 112435 , Gnr WB Michael, Y Battery , 61st TMB . France .

MOORE

George, b 1861 , son of John Moore, gardener and rose grower , of Bottom Wells, Paradise Road , and Cock Drove. . Sergeant 18th Labour Corps , Army Service Corps Was enroute for Gallipoli in the RMS Royal Edward from Avonmouth via Alexandria when it was torpedoed by U14 and sunk 13th August 1915 , commemorated Helles memorial . Awarded British War and Victory medals. Married Sophia Lowe of Derby , had one dau Edith .

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MOULTON

Theodore , son of Robert and Jessie Moulton , living Lynn Road, 1911, b 1884 Fincham , bricklayer`s labourer. formerly hotel page boy at the Castle . Enlisted 16th Aug 1914 Norfolk regiment , discharged 15th Dec 1915 , re-enlisted Waterford , Ireland, 20th Battalion Middlesex Regiment ,(20th Duke of Cambridge`s Own) killed in action 4th Jan 1917 on the Ancre , in the action known as the Retreat to the Hindenburg Line, commemorated Thiepval . Awarded British War , Victory and 14 Star medals . War Diaries : 4th January 1917 , Bouchavesnes. On 3/1 the usual intermittent shelling during the forenoon . Afternoon several medium TM (Trench Mortars) fell on our support line and behind the right company . It appeared to be firing from the orchard . Patrol went out 11.15pm but no hostile patrol was encountered nor could the enemy be heard in his trenches . Casualties 3 killed , 3 wounded . ” .

MOULTON

John Seraphis , b 1888 brother of the above , joined 6th Battalion East Kent Regiment , died 4th August 1916 at the battle of Pozieres , commemorated Thiepval . Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Dairy :

Trenche : 3/8/16/ Orders from B` de re attack received . The day was quiet on the whole . In the afternoon the Bn was moved into position for the attack . B coy on the left , D coy on the right A and C coys in reserve .

About 9 pm the enemy shelled our trenches heavily but the French 75s were turned on to the German batteries with gas shells, which completely stopped the shelling . The guns then opened an intensive bombardment of the enemy`s trenches . At 11 pm 2nd Lt Hanmer and a party of bombers crept up under the barrage to be ready to bomb an enemy MG should it open on our men or on the 8th Fusiliers on our right . At 11. 05 pm C coy went over the parapet followed by D coy the barrage lifting at the same time . D coy then went through B to take the trench on the left of the strong point. D coy went rather to the right . A coy were brought up from reserve and then C who consolidated the strong point taking together with a coy of R Es . The coys then pushed on and when dawn broke it was found that B coy was in Ration Trench where 2 blocks had been made. 2nd Lt Routley and a Sussex officer made a reconnaissance as far as Mouquet Farm . The Germans attempted a counter attack from Mouquet Farm upon whom our Lewis Guns were turned with good effect . All the dug outs in the captured trenches were cleared of Germans , the total bag of prisoners amounting to 2 officers, one of whom wore the Iron Cross and 87 ORs chiefly Prussian infantry . About 4 am the enemy started to shell the captured trenches. About 11 am the Bn was relieved by the 6th R W Kent Regt going back to huts in Martinsart Wood . The total casualties were : 4 officers wounded, 114 ORs killed , wounded , missing .”

NICKLIN

William , born Stamford, Lincs. son of Alfred and Leonora Nicklin, draper , lived Grantham, Bristol, York, Chesham , and retired to Downham (sister Leonora known as Siss , died on

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Christmas day 1942 aged 67 in the Howdale Home). 2nd Lt C Co. Special Brigade , Royal Engineers, died of wounds 24 August 1916 aged 40, commemorated Flatiron Copse, Mametz Wood. The Special Brigades RE were formed after the successful use of gas at Loos in 1915 and coordinated the training of men in the use of gas . C Coy 1st Battalion was part of the Special Brigade to handle gas cylinders . ..Awarded British War and Victory medals. (the photograph is courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, HU 118393 of 2nd Lt William Nicklin, RE.) 2nd Lt Nicklin had a varied life , he was a draper`s apprentice , his father was a draper and a miner in Johannesburg, S Africa . He volunteered whilst in S Africa for the Imperial Yeomanry and served in the Boer War to 1902 . He is buried at Quarry Cemetery .



PACK

Alfred Edward, one of 12 children of William and Emma Pack , rural postman , of Lynn Road. Assistant bootmaker living in Wisbech in 1911 . married Mabel Perkins Wisbech March 1/4 1913 . Enlisted Wisbech 1st Battalion London Regiment , Royal Fusiliers, died 16th March 1918 aged 29 , buried Hamburg Military cemetery . Citation on gravestone " Death divides but memory clings " . Probably a prisoner of war . Awarded British War and Victory medals.

PACK

Horace Algernon, brother of the above, born Hilgay, married Edith Olive Darkens at Yarmouth 1910 and had 3 children , butcher`s assistant living Thornage 1911. .Enlisted King`s Lynn, Suffolk Regiment , 7th Northamptonshire Regiment , killed in action July 1917 aged 32 , 3rd battle of Ypres. commemorated Menin Gate. Awarded British War and Victory medals. " War

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Diary : 31/7/17 . Reninghelst . A and C Companies attacked the enemy line at Shrewsbury Forest at 3.50 am this morning during which the commanding officer Lt Col Mobbs DSO was killed . Our casualties were 2 officers killed , 2 officers missing , 8 officers wounded . OR s killed 37, wounded 162 , missing 47 , total 246 . Congratulatory memo received from BGC 73rd IB. (At zero hour the barrage will be put down 200 yards in front of assembly positions . At zero plus it will move forward at the average rate of 100 yards in 4 minutes . Previous to zero hour (3.50am) the Germans were shelling moderately in No Mans Land causing some casualties amongst our troops we were forming up for the attack . A German barrage fell 50 - 100 yards in front of our forming up line less than 3 minutes after zero causing rather heavy casualties . It had rained incessantly throughout the operations and the men were thoroughly exhausted , wet through , and covered with mud .)



PORTER

Harold , baker journeyman, born Hilgay 1880, son of Robert and Susanna of the Jolly Angler , Hilgay , publican and baker. married 1905 Mary Elizabeth Register , Ely district, had Dorothy and Richard.. Enlisted Feb 1898 Norfolk Regiment , but discharged in Sept 1898 having misrepresented himself . Joined Suffolk Regiment , Lance Corporal , transferred to 2nd Battalion Essex Regiment , killed in action 9th August 1917 , aged 37, buried Feuchy British Cemetery . Awarded British War and Victory medals. " "War diary 2nd Bttn Essex Regiment ; front line . 9th August 1917 . 180 men of the Battalion plus 30 men of the Duke of Wellingtons took part in a raid on the enemy` s front line in conjunction with a large raid made by the 12th Division on our right . The object of the raid was to capture or kill as many of the enemy as possible and to obtain identification . The objectives were two portions of the

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German front line . Zero hour was 7.45 pm . At zero minus 4 minutes the raiding party crawled out onto the ridge in front of our line . At zero hour they advanced toward the enemy lines under a creeping barrage which was not very intense . The party soon came under very heavy machine gun fire and in some cases the enemy came out of his trenches to meet them and formed a bomb barrage . What remained of the raiding party had then to retire . Casualties 3 ORs wounded , 3 ORs to FA , 8 ORs evacuated . 10th August very quiet , a few of the bodies of men who had been killed in the raid were got in "

RUMBELOW

William Ernest, born 1880 , son of Robert and Hannah Rumbelow, of Builder`s Place, Lynn Road, bricklayer`s labourer. formerly of the Essex Regiment later Hampshire Regiment . married Valentine Silvys Rozier , milliner of French origin , Downham 1912, of Bridge St.. killed in action Aug 1917 aged 25. Passchendaele , 3rd Battle of Ypres , commemorated Tyne Cot. Awarded British War and Victory medals. "War Diary : 16th August . 2nd Hampshires . At 1.30am the battalion was in assembly positions . The concentration march was successfully carried out mainly owing to the careful arrangements made by Capt D Day , OC Y Coy , who had laid out a tape from Knowle farm and the Steenbeck . This tape was followed by the whole battalion and also by the Essex regt . Had it not been present our CO was of the opinion that the battalion would have arrived incomplete as the night was very dark and the ground very wet and boggy . A certain number of casualties wee suffered during the approach march and while in the assembly position several NCO s and men were knocked out by one shell . "

SHELDRAKE

Leonard Harry,. born 1892 Stoke Ferry, son of William and Louisa of Lynton House, also Cyprus house , also Acacia house , miller`s clerk . Enlisted King`s Lynn, 21st September 1914 , embarked for France 20th August 1915 . Gunner, 23rd Siege Battery, (four 6" howitzers) Royal Garrison Artillery 25th Heavy Artillery Brigade . Died of wounds 9th Nov 1917 aged 25 buried Lussenhoek Military Cemetery . This village was part of the British communications trench and later it was the site of four casualty clearing stations and a hospital . It is between Poperinghe and Ypres. .. Husband of Olive Ada nee Nixon of Stow Bridge.Awarded British War and Victory medals.

SHELDRAKE

Sessions Samuel Sheldrake was the son of William and Louisa Sheldrake , millers clerk , living Stoke Ferry . Enlisted London , disembarked 21st Sept 1914 . Awarded the British War and Victory medals and his father applied for his 1914 Star . His will was probated in June 1919 by his father , effects £191 , of Acacia House. War Diary : " 8th April . Enemy shelled Armentieres with 25,000 gas shells . This bombardment lasting throughout the evening . Our area not affected . Our ration wagon slightly delayed . Casualties 3 CQMS , . Weather misty and damp . "

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SMITH

William. Possibly Frederick William Smith ,policeman, son of James Smith, bricklayer; enlisted August 1914 , 1/5th Battalion Norfolk regiment . married Florence Murrell , sister of Evelyn Murrell see below , in Downham 12th July 1915 one daughter Muriel born 1916 , landed Gallipoli 6th Aug 1915, killed in action 21st August 1915 . commemorated at the Helles memorial. Awarded British War , Victory and 15 Star medals.

SPINKS

George William, son of John, mole catcher, and Mary Spinks of Denver . He was a navy working in Dartford , Kent with his brother Charles in 1901 . Married 1906 Sarah Watson , and by 1911 was living in Fulham as a builder`s labourer with 2 children. Enlisted Attleborough B Btty ,93rd Brigade Royal Field Artillery , killed in action 22nd March 1918 , when the 5th Army was driven back across the Somme battlefields., buried Pozieres . Awarded British War and Victory medals.

STEWARD

Charles Edward, born 24th Dec 1872 Downham , baptised Wimbotsham . son of John and Mary Steward . Joined the Rifle Brigade 11th Jan 1894 aged 21 . Service included Hong Kong, Singapore , India , South Africa, before finally being discharged January 1906 at the end of his 12 year term . Awarded the South Africa medal with the clasp for Transvaal . Living in 1911 in Victoria St , corn porter , with brother in law Alfred Daines, and his wife, and 3 surviving children (out of 6) . Married Rosa Daines 1904 in Downham . Enlisted Norwich 3rd/9th Norfolk Regiment at Norwich 27th August 1914 . He was gassed on two occasions in January and March 1918 and hospitalised . but returned to duty . Killed in action 8th Oct 1918 aged 45. close to the village of Magny la Fosse , commemorated Vis en Artois cemetary which was created for the casualties of the Advance to Victory between the Somme and Loos. Awarded British War and Victory medals.

STOCKING

Alan(Allan) John , born 1895 ,gas fitter , son of Claud and Charlotte Stocking , pork butcher and grocer of Bridge St , Downham . Married Annie Johnson daughter of Harry and Rose Johnson, and sister of Walter Edwin Johnson , see above ; had Nancy 1914 and Alan J 1916. served Norfolk Regiment and 10th Battalion Essex Regiment .missing presumed killed in action 22nd Oct 1917 aged 25, Passchendaele , 3rd Battle of Ypres . The 10th Bttn had become part of the British Salonika Force St. The 10th Bttn were at Poelcappelle `` 22/10/17 . Battalion attacked and captured enemy positions east of Poelcappelle , afterwards relieved by 11th R Fusiliers , then proceeded to Cane Post . 23/10 moved to Tunnelling camp. OR s killed 26 , died of W 10, wounded 182 , missing 23 .". The medal rolls seem to indicate he was a prisoner . Commemorated Tyne Cot . Awarded British War , Victory and 15 Star medals.. (Annie Stocking remarried in Lewis Matthew Francis, 28, in 1919.).

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courtesy of Janet Stocking

THORPE

Frederick John, born 1888, Denver, son of Walter and Rebecca Thorpe , father died 1894 aged 32 at Silt Fen ag lab , mother remarried Isaac Bailey 1899 ; married Alice Cooper , March 1/4 1915 . Enlisted Worcester with the Worcester Yeomanry Cavalry , having previously been in the 3rd Volunteer battalion Norfolk regiment 1907 and subsequently the 19th Hussars. Killed in action in defence of the Suez Canal , April 1916 , commemorated Jerusalem memorial . Awarded British War, Victory and 15 Star medals.

WALES

Richard Henry , born Salters Lode , son of Daniel and Jane, roadman , of Lynn Road, assistant horse breaker 1911 served 8th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment , killed in action 15 Sept 1916 aged 25. married Elizabeth Ann Lynn, in Sussex in June 1/4 1916. Buried at Flers which was a village captured in September 1916 . Awarded British War, Victory and 15 Star medals. War Diary : "14th September 1916 : Battalion in trenches making all preparations for part in 4th Army offensive on 15th September . 15th September 1916 : Battalion

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ordered to take Quadrilateral assisted by the Heavy Section of the M.G.C. with "Tanks" advance about 500 yards N E and dig in . Battn was in a position for attack about 4.30 am . Zero hour 6.20 am . Three waves were supplied by D, D and A Coys under Capt Hatch , 2nd Lt Hodges and Lt Draisey respectively to attack the Quadrilateral , which was on our left flank whilst B Coy co-operated by bombing down trench leading to it . At 6.00 am heavy artillery opened slow barrage on Line Morval to Les Boeufs . At Zero hour 6.20 am intense artillery barrage opened and unluckily was cut short where our 3 companies were drawn up for the attack in shell holes .. This mistake caused many casualties . Our attacking companies pushed forward and though supported by 1st The Buffs, and later reinforced by the 2nd Yorks and Lancs Regt , failed to take the position . "Tanks" did not arrive to assist and the position was not heavily shelled previous to the attack . Brigade ordered original trenches to be held and to await orders . As battalion had suffered very severely in casualties , 6 officers killed, 7 wounded , we were relieved by 2nd Yorks and Lancs at 6pm and put in Brigade reserve in trenches S E of Guillemont . "

WALKER

Cyril , b 14th June 1896 St Ives Huntingdon , son of Arthur and Emma Walker, nee Cook, living at Wissington in 1911 with his grandparents. Served 7th Battalion Norfolk Regiment ,arrived in France May 1915 , killed in action Oct 1915 aged 19 during the first battle of Ypres ;. commemorated at Loos. Awarded British War, Victory and 15 Star medals.

WATSON

Charles Vince Watson was the son of James and Elizabeth , of Church Road , relieving officer of pensions . born 26th Sept 1880 . By 1911 he was working as a mineral water manufacturer . Married 1914 Cecily dau of Herbert Jones of Verdun House , Bridge Road, farmer . Each Heavy Trench Mortar Battery consisted of 70 personnel , and were used alongside the main infantry and artillery . He was killed on the 18th April and his will , value £400 9s 1d was probated by Donald Sutherland , telegraphist and James Alfred Beckett , gas company collector . Awarded British War and Victory Medals . Commemorated Cambrai .

WATSON

Henry Parsons, born 1900 in Downham., son of Beatrice , grandson of George and Sarah Watson, builder , of Lynn Road. Enlisted Maidstone , Kent, 20th Duke of Cambridge`s Own, Middlesex Regiment . killed in action August 1918, aged 19 , at the battle of Lys , buried Hagle Dump cemetery , created from April 1918 on the Ypres – Poperinghe road . Awarded British War and Victory medals.

WATTS

Frederick , born 1881 Southacre, son of Newton Watts , coachman of Westacre, and Ann . Groom and stable helper, Royal Mews, St George Hanover Sq . Enlisted Peckham, Surrey, 1st Battalion East Surrey Regiment , killed in action May 1917 aged 37 , battlefields of the Somme,. commemorated Arras memorial . Awarded British War and Victory medals. War Diaries : "Philip Gibbs , British HQ Wed May 9th 1917. Fresnoy itself has been a difficult place

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to hold since the Canadians too it so gallantly on May 3rd . As we had not Acheville, to the north of it , and Oppy to the south , it jutted out like a square walled bastion with exposed sidesThe Canadian officers are full of praise for the dogged spirit of the South Country English lads who held on inspite of a frightful fire , served their machine guns to the last , and only fell back from their advanced lines when for a time Fresnoy village , a heap of ruin like all these villages of war , became a death trap in which no man could stay alive . "

" A good deal of rain fell during the night of 7th /8th May and during the morning . The wood and village of Fresnoy will be attacked this evening and our original line re-established . East Surrey`s , DCLI and Gloucesters will remain in present positions and hold line at all costs . Zero hour 7pm E Surreys and Gloucesters all withdraw to position E of Vimy Ridge . Loss of Fresnoy village . Total casualties on May 8th , officers killed wounded or missing 14 , Other ranks killed wounded or missing 495 (of which 420 missing). " Married Mary Hudson , Camberwell 1903 , 2 daus , and one son . Enlisted 11th Dec 1915 . Wounded and gassed February 1917 . Awarded British and Victory medals .

WAY

Horace Elijah, born 1877 South Creake/Downham son of Frederick and Roseanna Way , watchmaker and jeweller, of High St Downham . In 1911 was living in Worcester as a commercial traveller in cattle medicines. Enlisted Birmingham , Norfolk Regiment and later 246th Co Machine Gun Corps , killed in action July 1917 third battle of Ypres, commemorated at the Menin Gate. Awarded British War and Victory medals. He has no known grave but is commemorated on the Menin Gate. "War Diary : 15th July 1917 . Embarked ib HMT Austrolinda 4pm , strength of coy 10 officers , 177 O.Ranks , sailed 5.30pm. 16th Disembarked marched to Rest camp no 1. 17th Medical inspections . 18th 7pm Entrained at Le Havre for Bailleul via Abbeville Hazebrook . 19th 7pm Detrained at Bailleul marched to camp . 20th Taken on strength of 19th Division . Inspection by GOC division. 21st Gun drill . 22nd Church parade . 23rd Baths for whole coy . 1 Sect attached to 58 MGC for instruction in the line . 25th No 3 section relieved no 1 section and no 2 section relieved no 4 section for instruction in the line. 26th Gun mounted in camp for anti-aircraft work . Fired 50 rounds at 3am at enemy plane . 27th No1 section relieved no 3 section , no 2 section relieved no 4 section , and takes up position in line with guns . 28Th 2 O R wounded . 29th No 3 section relived no 1 section, casualties I OR killed , gas came over billet about 3 am . 30th General attack opens 3.50am . 8 guns of the coy in the line. 31St 2 teams of no 4 section sent to reinforce no 3 section . 1 team reported missing . "

WHEATLAND

Alfred James, born Godstone , Surrey, 1875, son of James, gardener of East Grinstead, and Martha b Litcham. Living Lynn Road, 1911 hotel beer driver . Married Minnie Burt, 1905, living Bennett St , 1919. 3 children . Enlisted Norwich , 9th Oct 1914 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment , killed in action 27 July 1916 aged 41 during the Somme battles of the summer of 1916. commemorated Thiepval. Awarded British War Victory and 14 Star medals.(Minnie remarried aged 35, widow, in 1921). See Bryan , Charles William who was in the same battalion

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and killed in the same place on the same day . Longueval . War Diaries :War Diaries : 26th . 10.45pm. Left Bivouac at Pommier and moved up to assembly positions in Longueval . Had to go through heavy barrage of poison gas shells and whole battalion had to put on their gas helmets. There was also an artillery barrage on most of the road going up. Moved via Quarry (map reference) at junction of tracks at (map reference) and German trench near Windmill at (map reference) , then along trench to road at (map reference) and up street running N and S through Longueval . Relieved 2 Coys 12th Gloucester regt who were roughly on line L of Longueval along road to cross roads at (map reference) and from there to road at (map reference) . On the L of the cross roads there was a slight trench but on the R it was all ruined houses and only one small section of trench for one platoon. The remainder took cover behind ruined houses and in shell holes . 27th 2am . Arrived at Longueval . A Coy was on L from L in Longueval to cross roads at (map reference) . B Coy was on R from there to road at (map reference) C Coy went into a partially dug trench behind A Coy running from (map reference) D Coy occupied a bit of trench from (map reference) and all Coys did what they could to dig themselves in . 2.am . Bn HQ arrived at (map reference) . Orders as enclosed were issued for the attack at 7 10 am on 27th . 1/Bedfords were in support and 16th R Warwicks were in reserve . 5.10am Our artillery preparation started and the German heavy artillery kept up an intense fire on our positions at Longueval especially on A and B Coys and on the approaches to the village . This bombardment was kept up for 24 hours with only slight lesser intervals and the barrages were so strong that practically every runner became a casualty during this period . MO (Capt M Scott) RAMC attd , wounded (gassed). Other ranks 50 killed , 133 wounded , 50 missing believed killed , 5 wounded shell shock , 4 wounded gassed . 15 wounded remained at duty . Total 12 officers and 257 other ranks . 28th . 5am . The positions gained were consolidated and held until relieved by 1/E Surreys on morning of 27th when they withdrew to the Pommier bivouac .

WILSON

Herbert, born Downham 4th Sept 1868 , son of Daniel , nurseryman`s labourer, and Fanny , living Bridge Road 1871 . In 1891 living Cromwell Terrace, greengrocer, with younger brother Ernest, and wife and dau : 1901 furniture shop asst living Chelsea. Married Harriot Elizabeth Monk , 1899 , had two daughters Adeline and Winifred . Served 5th Battalion Norfolk Regiment , Gallipoli , and later in January 1915 , perhaps because of his age , with the Canadian Army Medical Corps in France . Killed in action 19th May 1918 in an air raid on the Canadian General Hospital at Etaples. " Area attacked by Enemy Aircraft , casualties I officer , I nursing sister , 167 O R s killed , 19th May 1918. " Buried Etaples. (Probably awarded British War and Victory medals.)

WRIGHT

Edward Charles , born Downham 1891 , son of George and Emma , both born Suffolk, general and rural postman . Living Priory Terrace 1911 . Enlisted Peterborough , Northamptonshire Regiment , and 1st Royal Dublin Fusiliers . Died of wounds June 1917 aged 26. buried Reading Cemetary , Berks.. (Probably awarded British War and Victory medals.)

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“ War Diary : Acheux .Raiding party arrived Front Line 0030 . 2nd/Lt Devon and 80 other ranks told to take enemy`s wire before our barrage lifted but was wounded whilst returning . Party left our trenches at 0130 . Upon reaching enemy wire fire was opened by enemy with bombs , rifle grenades , rifles , M guns, guns and trench mortars and party had to retire . All ranks behaved very well and some behaved very gallantly in bringing in dead and wounded . Casualties 3 OR killed , 2 officers and 7 OR wounded and 19 OR missing . 30/6/1917. Orders for tonight to move up ready for the attack . 6 OR fromthe raiders came in early morning having hidden in shell holes in No mans land for all of yesterday . 2 men of raiders reported missing now reported killed. ”

YOUNG

Thomas William, born 1869 St Luke`s Middlesex, son of Thomas Young, general labourer b Wells Norfolk..Living 1901 Salters Lode, bricklayer, and later builder and contractor. husband of Harriet Grace Booty, married 1896 Downham, dau of John Booty . Enlisted 9th Oct 1914 served 3rd Battalion Norfolk Regiment ,this was a reserve battalion , based in Felixstowe where it remained throughout the war. died at the Cliff Hospital Felixstowe Sept 1915 aged 46. Awarded the British War, Victory and 14 Star and clasp . buried St Edmunds , grave reference 20.24.



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YOUNG

William Thomas., son of the above .apprentice plumber living Ryston End 1911. enlisted Downham Sept 1914 , 5th Battalion Norfolk Regiment , served in Gallipoli 1915 and then in Egypt and Palestine , killed in action at the 3rd Battle of Gaza 2nd Nov 1917 buried Gaza War Cemetery . (Probably awarded British War , Victory and 15 Star medals .)

MURRELL

Evelyn Irene, born Downham 1895 daughter of William Murrell , innkeeper of the Coffee Pot who died in 1932 aged 72 , and Harriet nee Bird daughter of Henry Bird previous owner of the Coffee Pot . Mother died May 1915, older sister Florence married Frederick William Smith 12th July 1915,. see above. Evelyn joined the Women`s Royal Air Force in May 1918 and was posted to work as a clerk at RAF Marham . She died at home aged 23 on 27th November 1918 of influenza and pneumonia in the presence of her sister Florence. The third sister Muriel Grace Murrell married in the June 1/4 of 1934 , Thomas Frederick Frost , a younger brother of the above John William Frost MC. They too had a daughter Janet E , in the Sept 1/4 of 1935. So far Evelyn Irene Murrell, WRAF, is not commemorated on either war memorial . **NOTA BENE** Thanks to the Town Council of Downham Market , Evelyn is now commemorated on the main town war memorial . April 2015. And as of 6th April 2016 the small brass plaque to Evelyn`s memory is now in St Edmunds close by the main War Memorial .

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Old cemetery, Downham Market

The influenza pandemic of 1918/19 is reported in the County Medical Officer for Health's 1918 return . He is for the duration of the war the School Medical Officer for Health as well . He has, as he remarks, no deputy nor assistants , and the routine medical inspections of children are in abeyance.. However he says he has tried to maintain a medical inspection service to schools. None of what he says is particular to Downham but for the county as a whole . This influenza was particularly virulent in young people . Evelyn Murrell, see above, was typical of the age group. She may well have become infected through the soldiers who drank in the Coffee Pot , or at work at RAF Marham . Prof John Oxford, virologist , has now attributed the outbreak to the 3 million plus soldiers who were processed through the Army camp and hospitals at Etaples . And the MOH Dr Nash has in 1918 grasped that Scabies or the itch , may well have been contracted from the soldiers on leave who were notoriously lice ridden . But he still has not linked soldiers coming home and influenza . The Downham burial register shows the deaths of six young people in November 1918 including Evelyn. the others are 27, 27, 45, 9 and 40 years old . 5 deaths are from the Union Infirmary and one at Lynn Hospital . There were 43 deaths in all in 1918 comparing with 33 in 1914, 41 in 1915, 25 in 1916 , and 36 in 1917. . Marriages too show the pace of the war, just 8 recorded in Downham in 1914, 21 in 1915 , 8 in 1916 , 2 in 1917 , 13 in 1918 and 12 in 1919.