

## World War I

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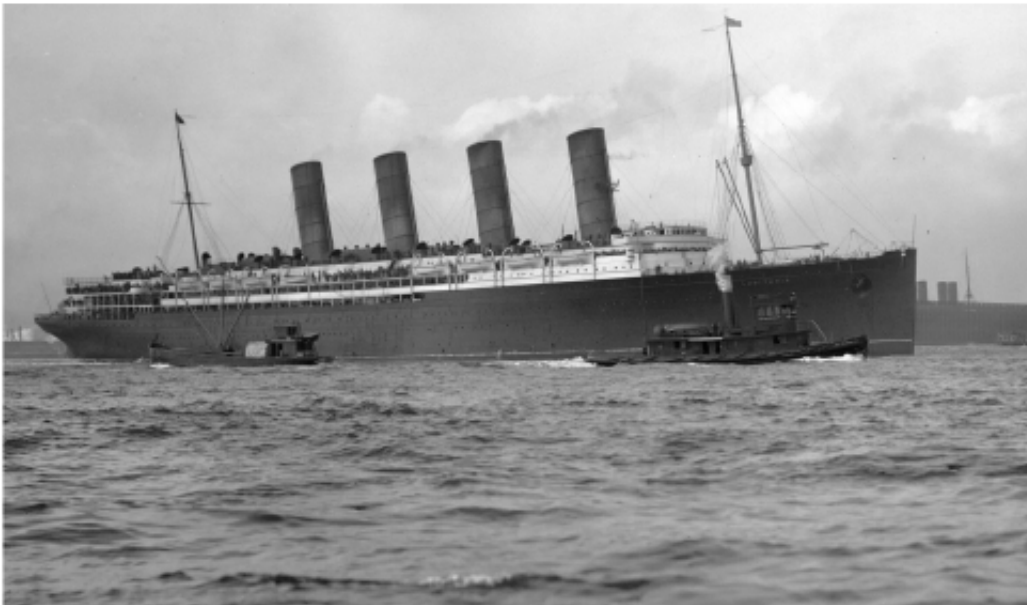
## Norman Frederick Allen

Norman was born on 14/09/1890 in Twickenham and baptised at Richmond on 01/02/1891, the only son of Frederick Allen and Susan Gray Allen, nee Wiltshire. His sister was born the following year. Frederick Allen was a commercial clerk for an auctioneers working in London and the family moved around various parts of South London prior to moving to Hurstpierpoint.

Norman attended Gideon Road school, Lavender Hill school and Mina Road School between 1899 and 1907. The 1901 census gives the family address as Meteor Street, Battersea. They moved to Southdown Terrace, Hurst around 1907/8, presumably for Frederick's work. However he died aged just 57 in March 1909. Norman and his mother then moved to Blossoms Well Cottages in Langton Lane, as on the 1911 census Norman is listed there as a nurseryman gardener. His sister was a live-in housemaid at Halton Shaws. Susan later moved to 5 Victoria Terrace, Western Road.

At some point between 1911 and 1915 Norman joined the mercantile marine. Unfortunately his merchant navy papers are unavailable so we cannot tell which vessels he sailed on. His mother received a message from him in April 1915 saying he was leaving New York shortly on the *RMS Lusitania*. He was working as a second class waiter. The *Lusitania* left New York on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1915 and made good time towards the UK. She was struck by a German torpedo about 15 miles west of Ireland on 7<sup>th</sup> May and, following the explosion, sank in round 18 minutes. Of the nearly 2000 passengers and crew around 1200 were killed. There are many good websites dealing with this attack and the aftermath. Norman's body was not recovered for burial.

His name is recorded on the Tower Hill memorial, on Pier 4 Course 7 Face L column D, and he is also remembered on both local war memorials. He is additionally included on his parents gravestone in the South Avenue cemetery at Plot A6.



*RMS Lusitania*

## Albert Anscombe

Albert, son of John Parker Anscombe, known as Parker, and Ann Anscombe, nee Humphrey, was baptised at Holy Trinity Hurstpierpoint on 02/08/1863. He was their third child and eventually had 7 siblings. In 1871 the family were living between the National School and the Lamb Inn. The house no longer exists but stood, roughly, where the public convenience building now stands in Cuckfield Road. Albert's father was a carpenter but he died in early 1881 at the very young age of 43. Albert's eldest brother Edwin followed his father and became a carpenter, his next brother was a draper and Albert became a baker.

Possibly baking was not an enjoyable choice as Albert enlisted in the East Yorkshire regiment in October 1882 aged 19. He was based in the UK for the first 2½ years of his service, first in Londonderry and then Sheffield. He was posted to Gibraltar for nearly 3 years followed by a similar length of time based in Trinidad. This was followed by nearly 4 years in Cape Town returning to the UK in October 1890. He served for 12 years in total and was finally discharged on 18/10/1894, and pensioned, although he was at home on census night in 1891 when he said he was a labourer.

He married Agnes Clara Tester on April 1894 at Hurst. Agnes was from Wivelsfield and her sister Mary had married Albert's brother Henry ten years before. Albert became an insurance agent for the Prudential and by 1899 the family had settled at 6 Church Terrace where Albert was listed in the local business directory. By 1901 they were at 1 Pierpoint Terrace. Albert and Agnes now had three children, Clara, Beatrice and Albert jnr. By 1911 they had two further children, Cecil and Wallace. The 1911 census records that they had 7 children, of whom two had died. A daughter Elsie had died shortly after her birth in 1906, however there is no record of the registration of a seventh child. It is likely therefore that this was either a stillbirth or a miscarriage. Their address in 1911 was listed as Townfield Terrace. During this period Albert was also a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion volunteer force Royal Sussex Regiment numbered 1768 and was subsequently awarded a long service medal.

In 1912 the family were living in Fern Villa in the High Street and Albert was listed there as an insurance agent in the 1913 town directory. Later records for Agnes suggest that Fern Villa may have been a renaming of Townfield Cottages.

In September 1915 the Mid Sussex Times published a long list of Sussex men who were 'Serving the King and Country'. This listed every man then serving, including those in territorial regiments. Albert was listed under No 6 Supernumerary Company, 2/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment. He was then aged 53 and known to walk with a stick, the result of an off duty accident with a bayonet when he was in Cape Town. On 29/04/1916 he was automatically transferred to the 8<sup>th</sup> provisional Coy., Royal Defence Corps and numbered 6349. The RDC 'were intended to carry out duties connected with the local defence of the United Kingdom, including those hitherto performed by the Supernumerary Territorial Force Companies'. The local RDC was based in Burgess Hill and Albert would have been paid as though he were fighting on the front line. On 5<sup>th</sup> December, while returning from Lewes to a temporary base at Glynde Reach, he was struck by a train and killed. The inquest records that at the point where Albert was struck those returning to base had to walk along the railway line as there was no footpath. Two trains passed Albert at around 8.15 pm and it was suggested that in order to avoid one Albert had stepped into the path of the other, coming from Lewes, and been killed. This was not the first fatality to RDC men at that point. A verdict of Accidental Death was recorded. The Mid Sussex Times reported this but gave no details. Albert was buried in the old cemetery in the churchyard in plot F60 where there is a CWGC stone. He is also remembered on both local war memorials. As a member of the Prudential Assurance Company he is listed in their Roll of Honour.

Agnes remained at home and survived Albert by 36 years dying in the village, aged 89, in 1952.

## Arthur Thomas Anscombe

Arthur was born on 13/04/1884 at 25 Springfield Road, Horsham and baptised at the parish church there on 15/06/1884. He was the second child and only son of Peter Anscombe and Helen Anscombe nee Towse. His father died in October 1885 and Arthur and his mother moved to West Chiltington where he went to the local primary school. He transferred to Upper Beeding School in June 1892 but was taken off their list in September 1892 as his mother remarried and moved to Hurstpierpoint. Arthur's stepfather was George Stoner, the landlord of The Lamb Inn, and Arthur is listed there in 1901 and 1911. George ran a cab business, in addition to running the Lamb, and by 1911 Arthur was also driving. He married Edith Bransden on 29/04/1914 at Streat, and their son Arthur John was born on 21/10/1914 at York Cottage, Keymer.

In September 1915 he was listed in the Mid Sussex Times amongst those men already serving. He was said to be part of No. 6 Supernumerary Company, 2/4<sup>th</sup> battalion Royal Sussex Regiment. However this was a little out of date as it is known that he enlisted before this. Although his army papers are no longer available, almost certainly amongst the 'burnt papers' destroyed when the repository was hit by an incendiary bomb during WW2, we can deduce from other sources that he originally enlisted in Brighton in November 1914, numbered 1221, as a private in the Army Veterinary Corp. He was sent to France arriving there on 22/12/1914 entitling him to the award of the 1915 Star as well as the War and Victory medals. Whilst in France he was transferred as a gunner to the Royal Field Artillery and re-numbered 178783. This may seem a strange transfer but Arthur had experience with horses as a cab driver so his ability was useful since the heavy artillery was pulled by horses. He had served four months with the AVC.

Units of the RFA were then sent to Salonika. During 1917 Arthur was part of the C Trench Mortar Battery when he was injured on 8<sup>th</sup> July. Recently published medical reports show that Arthur had a gunshot wound to his left thigh which resulted in a compound fracture of his femur. He was taken to the 28<sup>th</sup> General Hospital on 13/07/1917. His femur was wired, but his wound does not appear to have healed and there is a suggestion in the records that his leg was eventually amputated on 07/08/17. He was transferred to the Ambulance Train for transport back to the UK but died from his wounds at the Ambulance Train depot at 0410 hrs on 12/08/1917. He is buried in the Salonika (Lembet Road) Military Cemetery in grave number 1130.

His name is recorded on both local war memorials and additionally on the Keymer memorial where he is recorded as A J Anscombe.



*Badges of the Army Veterinary Corps and Royal Field Artillery as depicted on CWGC gravestones.*

## **William Joseph (or John) Bailey**

William was born on 21/08/1865 at Alverstoke and baptised there on 05/10/1865. He was the son of John Thomas Bailey and Maria Bailey nee Cook. His father was a coachman and his mother a housekeeper and William became a groom when the family moved to Kensington and Chelsea. They were living at 17 Ensor Mews in 1881.

William signed on to the Royal Navy on 21/11/1882 and was numbered 122164. On these papers he is listed as William John however since all other details are correct, including a reference to Capt. Beaumont, we can be sure it is the same person. After a brief period overseas William returned to the UK in 1885 and in 1889 his papers note him as being on shore. An entry reads 'not to be borne on ships books while acting as private servant to Capt. Beaumont of Excellent.' He was signed off from the navy on 11/09/1890 and the 1891 census lists him at 4 College Row, Portsea as a butler, presumably to Capt Beaumont.

He married Elizabeth Albery in Chelsea on 23/12/1891 but they had no children. He was initiated into the Brownrigg Lodge of Unity at Old Brompton on 05/07/1900 and paid dues there at least until 1909.

By 1901 he was living in Chatham with Elizabeth and listed as butler to Admiral Holland but by 1911 he had returned to work for Captain, now Admiral Sir Lewis A Beaumont who was living at St George's House (see the two notes below). William died, reportedly at St George's, on 03/05/1919 and was buried in Ewhurst on 08/05/1919.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission list him as a member of 72<sup>nd</sup> Protection Company Royal Defence Corps with service number 6352. He is included in the United Kingdom Book of Remembrance kept at the CWGC headquarters in Maidenhead. He is also listed on both local war memorials.

Note 1. Admiral Holland was Admiral-Superintendent of Chatham dockyard from 1899 – 1902. He retired as Admiral in 1908.

Note 2. Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont GCM, KCMG was commander-in-chief Plymouth. He had a distinguished naval career being given command of *HMS Excellent* in 1893 and becoming Director of Naval Intelligence in 1895. He spent some years on the Pacific station and was promoted to Vice Admiral and Commander-in-Chief Plymouth in 1902, a role he held until 1908. He was First and Principal Naval Aide-de-Camp to the king in 1911 before retiring the following year.

## Edward Stanley Banks

Edward Stanley Banks was born at East Hoathly on 20/11/1894 but so far his birth registration has not been found. The CWGC list him as the son of Ada Banks, who was a single lady, the daughter of Frances Banks. Census records for Edward are also hard to trace. In 1901 his mother Ada was working at Eridge castle in Frant as a housemaid and his grandmother was listed in Maresfield with Henry Lester, a gamekeeper, and his apparently adopted son Edward Robinson. Henry was almost certainly Frances' son in law and Edward her natural grandson. The 1911 census entry for 3 Alice Terrace, Hurst Wickham has Frances, Ada listed as her daughter, Edward listed with the surname Banks as her grandson and Phyllis Lester listed as her granddaughter.

Edward's army papers are among the 'burnt papers' but, although badly damaged, there is sufficient left to know that he attested in Brighton on 09/02/1916 as a private in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Middlesex Regiment giving his age as 21 years and 81 days. He was numbered G/40174. He said he had previously served in the Sussex Yeomanry as private 3199. He also said he was an ironmongers assistant. Following a period of training he was posted to France arriving in Boulogne on 11/09/1916. He was wounded on 28/10/1916 and taken to the 24<sup>th</sup> General Field hospital suffering from gunshot wounds to his arms and legs where he died from these wounds on 10/11/1916.

He is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery with grave reference XII.D.10. He is also listed on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Middlesex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Ernest Barnes

Ernest was born in Ringmer in November 1892 the son of Walter Barnes and his wife Emily Barnes nee Funnell. His father was a general dealer and was running the local shop at Rushy Green in Ringmer. In 1901 and 1911 Ernest was still living at home in Ringmer. He married Alice Jane Reed at St James parish church, Dover on 05/02/1916 knowing that he was about to be sent overseas. A son Edgar was born on 01/08/1916 in Dover and a daughter Alice Vera on 25/09/1918 in Hurst. Alice Vera was born after Ernest's death. The family were living in Hurst at Hazeldene Terrace on 16/05 1919. Following Ernest's death Alice snr remarried, Walter Baker, in the third quarter of 1919 in the Lewes district, and moved to Malling Street Lewes.

Ernest enlisted in Lewes very early in WW1 on 05/11/1914, as a gunner in the Sussex Royal Garrison Artillery giving his address as 4 Lime Terrace, North Street, Lewes, and his occupation as baker's roundsman. He was numbered 119304. He served in the UK rising from gunner to bombardier, then corporal and finally to sergeant on 10/06/1916. He was posted to the 176<sup>th</sup> siege battery in July 1916 but his papers are badly fire damaged so it is not possible from these to say where this was. He landed in France on 25/09/1916 but was admitted to the field hospital suffering from rheumatic fever in early February 1917. He was invalided home on the hospital ship *Cambria* and sent to the War Hospital in Leeds but was listed as back on duty by the end of March. However, he did not return to France until the end of January 1918 joining the 253<sup>rd</sup> siege battery, at what looks like Storolangtoft, in early February 1918. He was injured in the face and chest on 02/04/1918 and taken to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Aus. Gen. Hospital at Abbeville. Here his injuries were listed as including a serious gunshot wound to his arm resulting in a compound fracture which was wired together. Later entries seem to suggest his arm may have been amputated. He died from his wounds on 09/04/1918.

He was buried in the Abbeville Communal Cemetery Extension in plot IV.A.5. He is remembered on both local war memorials and also on the Lewes and Ringmer memorials.



## **Richard Henry Bartley**

Richard Henry Bartley, the son of Robert Bartley and Jane Stern, was reportedly born c.1876. His place of birth cannot be confirmed as on three different census entries three different places of birth are given, Burgess Hill, Keymer and Hurstpierpoint. His family were living in Keymer in 1881 but his immediately elder sister was baptised in Burgess Hill in 1878. Richard was not baptised in either Keymer or Hurstpierpoint.

In March 1901 he was boarding with the Godley family in Manor Cottages and was listed as a journeyman butcher. He married Edith Godley at Hurstpierpoint on 08/04/1901 and they had four daughters born between 1902 and 1909. By 1911 they were living at 2 Green Lees, Western Road and he was working as a butcher for Mr Baker. Until recently this shop was occupied by Reflections hairdressers and more latterly an osteopath.

Richard, then aged 38, was called up in 1915 and following a physical medical examination initially placed in the reserves but was taken on to the strength of the 10<sup>th</sup> battalion Royal Sussex regiment on 15/06/1916 as a private numbered G/12761. The G in his number indicates that he had signed on for General service during war time only. Further medical examinations followed and he was discharged on 05/09/1916 under Kings Regulations as being permanently physically unfit. He was also refused a weekly pension in October 1916, perhaps as he had not served for enough qualifying days. The reason for his discharge becomes clear when we examine his death on 08/04/1917. He had become an inmate of the County Asylum at Hellingly suffering from 'general paralysis of the insane'. He died following a fall downstairs with the post mortem recording his death as accidental.

He is buried in the South Avenue cemetery at grave C.165 with his grave marked by a CWGC stone. He is additionally listed on both local war memorials. Although his death was after his discharge, and he had not been entitled to a pension in his own right, following his death Edith applied for a pension and was awarded 15/- per week, followed a month later by a gratuity of £25. She survived him by over 40 years and was buried with him in 1960.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## William Baxter

William has been a particularly difficult man to trace. While I believe what follows to be correct I would be pleased to hear from anyone who can add information to this record. The family details are included to show William's various name changes.

William was born illegitimately to Emma Baxter on 28/03/1886 and baptised at the parish church on 02/05/1886 as William Hayler, his mother being noted as a single woman. Emma was nineteen. The confusion in name almost certainly stems from the fact that Emma was the daughter of Elizabeth Hayler, formerly Batty. Emma's baptism at St Nicholas Brighton on 09/12/1867 gave her parents as Charles Batty a commercial traveller, and his wife Elizabeth. As no death has been found in the right period for Charles Batty it is very likely that this was a common law marriage. Further evidence to support this is the marriage of a Charles Batty in 1868 and Elizabeth's marriage to William Hayler on 17/02/1869 in Hove. She gave her father's name as James Batty. Elizabeth had been baptised at the Zion Independent chapel in Dent in Yorkshire in 1830.

On the 1871 census Emma (Botts) was boarding, aged four, with Frederick Bannister and his family in Queen's Gardens, while Elizabeth and William Hayler were living at Foxhole Cottages with his four children from his first marriage, plus a new daughter Caroline, born in July 1869. Frederick's first wife Mary had died in August 1868 following childbirth and not long after they had moved to Hurst. By 1881 Emma, now calling herself Baxter, was living with William and Elizabeth at Number 2 Bedlam Street. She continued to call herself Baxter for the rest of her life. One of the other difficulties in tracing William has been the differing spellings of Hayler as Haylor, Haylar and in some transcriptions, Huyler.

By 1891 Emma was working as a kitchen maid for a family in Greenwich, William Hayler, aged 5, was living with his uncle Alfred and his family at 8 Park Cottages. Although William Hayler snr was still alive Alfred had taken on the role of head of the family. Elizabeth had died between 1881 and 1891. Ten years later in 1901 Willie Baxter was working as a page and living with Alfred's widow, who was a Boarding House Keeper in Spring Gardens. Emma had returned to the village and was a cook for a prep. school run at Belmont House, between Gothic House and Eastern House.

William Baxter ran off to join the navy, signing on at Chatham, aged 16, in April 1902. He was noted as underage, numbered 360274 and rated as a domestic 3<sup>rd</sup> class, meaning he was placed in the cookhouse. He remained at this rating, transferring from the training ship *Pembroke* to *Triumph*. His papers say that he went 'on shore' on 07/05/1906 and at this point he joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, the Worcestershire Regiment as a private, enlisting in Chatham. Although his army papers are not available to view we know that he was numbered 10000. This number coincides with an enlistment date between February 1906 and January 1907. He would have received basic training and been transferred to the current Worcestershire Regiment Depot, then at Parkhurst on the Isle of Wight. He remained there rising through the ranks. The 1911 census shows him as a corporal in barracks at Carisbroke. The battalion was deployed to Alexandria in Egypt from 1913 and William married Daisy Pink there during that year. They had no children. The regiment was in Cairo at the outbreak of the war and they returned to Liverpool on the troopship *Deseado* arriving on 16/10/14. They entrained for Winchester for a brief period of training and left the UK for Le Havre on 06/11/1914.

The regimental diaries record that the contrast in weather, enforced marches and fighting in the trenches meant that large numbers of the regiment suffered from trench foot, many finding it difficult to stand for any period. This was one of the earliest mentions of the condition. The regiment were based close to Neuve Chapelle up to early 1915 taking part in the various skirmishes in the area, also playing a pivotal role in the Battle for Neuve Chapelle. They were further deployed for the Battle of Aubers and Bois Grenier. William appears on a wounded list on 22/05/1915 as a quarter master

sergeant, but his injury is not defined. He recovered and returned to his unit. By the following year he had become an acting Warrant Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> class.

He was killed in heavy fighting on 31/03/1916 and initially buried in Noulette orchard cemetery with eight other British soldiers. His effects, and later his medals, were sent to Daisy. After the war the Commonwealth War Graves Commission took the decision to exhume and rebury those soldiers originally buried in smaller cemeteries which were difficult to maintain in an appropriate manner. William was re-interred with honour at Lievin Cemetery Extension in plot number IV. E 6. He is remembered on both local war memorials and the 'Worcestershire World War 100' web site also remembers him.



*Badge of the Worcestershire Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## **Ernest Frank Berry**

Ernest was born at Firle on 03/05/1898 the son of Alfred Ernest Berry and Mary Berry nee Pankhurst. He grew up in Firle and attended the local school there. By 1901 the family had moved to 16 St Peter's Place, Lewes and his father was listed as a domestic coachman. Ten years later his father was a domestic gardener. Ernest had two younger sisters.

De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour states that Ernest enlisted at Chichester on 25/06/1916 as a private in the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment, numbered G/13466. His occupation before enlistment was as the County Accountant's clerk. His army papers are not available to view, but it is known that Ernest served with the Expeditionary Force from May 1917. The 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion RSR war diaries record that much of May 1917 was taken up with training in the St Omer area before they relieved the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion in early June taking over their trenches. By mid July they had moved forward and on 30<sup>th</sup> were ordered to move up to the dugouts along the canal bank ready for an attack on Pilckem Ridge the following day. Heavy rain fell that day and it was reported that in some of the trenches the men were standing in 2ft 6 ins of water. German artillery fire was particularly fierce overnight and Ernest was killed in action on 01/08/1917. He has no known grave and is remembered on Panel 20 of the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial. He was entitled to the War and Victory medals.

Ernest is listed on both local war memorials. The probable reason for his inclusion on the Hurst memorials is that his parents were living at Ruckford having moved there between 1911 and 1917.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## **Richard Blunson Broad**

Richard was born at Hurstpierpoint on 26/08/1892 and baptised there on 23/09/1892. He was the eldest child, and only son, of Horace Broad and Kate Broad nee Blunson and had two younger sisters. His father was a local farmer, farming at the time of Richard's birth at West Town farm however, the family farm was The Ham on the Hurst/Hassocks border. Following the death of his grandfather in 1908 Richard's family moved to take over the running of the family farm. He attended Hurstpierpoint College where he was a popular pupil and gained caps in cricket, football and fives. Richard had a feel for engineering and from October 1911 worked for his uncle's company, Westwood and Co., in their drawing office. He moved to Fraser and Chalmers of Erith in January 1912 and became a student member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. During his period at Fraser and Chalmers he spent time in every department including the foundry, boiler shop and machine shop. In February 1914 he was sent by the firm to Cambrian Collieries in Ebbw Vale to test the heavy compound winding engines they were installing there.

Richard's army papers are not available to view, but with the outbreak of war it is known that he enlisted as a trooper in the 12<sup>th</sup> Lancers in September 1914, having previously served locally in the Sussex Yeomanry. Within a year he gained a commission in the Royal Field Artillery. He was sent to France and shortly after his arrival, on 26/10/1915, he was 'mentioned in despatches'. During his time in France he applied for, and was elected to, Associate Membership of the Civil Engineers on 09/04/1918. By then he had risen through the ranks to lieutenant, captain and was an acting major being part of the 'U' anti aircraft battery of the Royal Field Artillery. He was admitted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> general hospital in Le Havre on 04/11/1918 suffering from 'flu which rapidly worsened to bronchial pneumonia. His parents were informed of his illness and set off to visit him but the news of his death arrived after they had left. He died at 20:45 on 06/11/1918 and was buried, with full military honours, at Ste Marie Cemetery in Le Havre with grave ref. Div.62.II.R.3. He was entitled to the War and Victory medals and the 15 star.

Richard's name is included in the Royal Artillery Commemoration Book. His name is also listed in Hurstpierpoint College chapel, on the two local war memorials and also on the lych gate to Clayton church.



## **Bramwell Joseph Brown**

Bramwell was born on 11/04/1883 at 35, Hereford Street, Brighton, the son of Hannah Brown. This was the address of the local workhouse being used as a hospital. On later census returns Bramwell says he was born in Portslade. Following Bramwell's birth Hannah married carter William Martin at the Zion chapel in East Grinstead and Bramwell was listed with them in East Grinstead on the 1891 census. By 1901 he had moved to Newhaven and was a greengrocer's assistant. His mother was widowed and working as a housekeeper on Kent's Farm in Hurst. Bramwell met Rhoda Marie Everest and they married in Newhaven on 24/12/1904. Their first child Florence Margaret, was born at Hurst on 21/10/1905. A son Alfred John was born in Newhaven on 29/07/1907 and another daughter Elsie Elizabeth on 26/11/1909 in Lewes. By 1911 the family had moved again to The Common, Bolney and Bramwell was a cowman on a farm. His mother was now living in a small cottage in The Ribbetts in Hurst.

When Bramwell attested into the Royal Army Medical Corps in Brighton on 01/11/1915 he was living in Plumpton and working as an agricultural labourer. He was numbered 72741, completed training and served at home until being transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, the Hertfordshire Regiment, on 15/07/1916. He was sent overseas arriving in Boulogne from Folkestone on 11/12/1916. On 31/07/1917 he was reported missing and the army lists his official presumption of death as the same day. This was the first day of the third battle of Ypres known as Passchendaele. His name is recorded, with other colleagues, on the Ypres (Menin Gate) memorial on panels 54 and 56 and he is also remembered on both local war memorials. He was entitled to the War and Victory medals which were sent to his wife, then living at 9 Park Cottages in Manor Road. Rhoda remarried, John Morris, in 1918.



*Badge of the Hertfordshire Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## William and Albert Edward Brown

Although Albert's name appears first alphabetically on the memorial William was his ten years older brother. Details of both men below deal with William first as he was older.

William and Albert's father was George Brown, who was born in Pyecombe, and variously described as a manservant, house porter and general domestic servant. He worked at Danny. He married Jane Miller in Hurst in 1867 and they had 3 children. Jane died in 1878 and George remarried, Jane Sayers, in Hurst in 1880 and moved to Bedlam Street. This was sometimes listed as 5 Bedlam Street but later as The Pest House. George and his second wife went on to have 9 children, including William and Albert. George died in 1908 and following his death Jane moved to Bearstokes. Jane died in 1936.

### William

William was George and Jane's first child, baptised on 06/08/1882. By 1901 he was listed as a domestic gardener, quite probably working at Danny with his father. He married Fanny Parsons at Hurst on 27/04/1907. She was born in Thakeham and in 1901 had been working as a domestic servant in Hurst. They had one child, William George, who was born in Hickstead in October 1907. By 1911 William snr. had returned to live in Bedlam Street, next door to Whitpain Cottage, and was listed as an 'odd man domestic'. This probably indicates he was still working at Danny but undertaking a variety of jobs on the estate.

Aged 33 William snr. enlisted as a gunner in the Royal Garrison Artillery in Hove on 11/12/1915 and was numbered 88336. On his army papers he described himself as a pumping engineer. He remained in the UK and was posted to the 179<sup>th</sup> Heavy Battery of the Royal Field Artillery on 08/06/1916 who were then training in Cirencester. They arrived in France on 01/10/1916 and a week later William joined the 14<sup>th</sup> Heavy Battery and was immediately involved in heavy fighting near Pozieres. During the very wet winter of 1916/17 the battery moved towards Arras ready for the spring offensive. The heavy guns had to be pulled out of the mud by tractors, when they were available, or somehow manoeuvred by hand. The photograph below shows the 14<sup>th</sup> heavy battery manhandling a 60 pounder gun and some of the conditions they were working in. It was back breaking labour. William was killed in action on 18/04/1917 and is buried in the Tilloy British Cemetery in grave ref I.E.30. Fanny moved to Danny Lodge after his death.

William is listed on both local war memorials and also remembered on his parents grave in the South Avenue cemetery in plot C44.



*14<sup>th</sup> heavy battery moving a 60 pounder*



*Badge of the Royal Garrison Artillery as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

### Albert Edward

Albert was baptised on 04/06/1893 at the parish church. He was the 7<sup>th</sup> child and 3<sup>rd</sup> son of George and Jane. His upbringing was very similar to William above however he does not appear to have married. On the 1911 census he was listed at home with his widowed mother who was then living at Bearstakes.

Like his brother Albert too enlisted in Hove, but into the Royal Army Medical Corps, and was listed as private No. 47911. As with so many WW1 army records Albert's papers were destroyed by an incendiary device whilst in storage in WW2 so we cannot be certain when he enlisted. His medal record states that he entered France on 15/05/1915, entitling him to the 1915 Star. Since he would have received some training before he arrived in France, but is not included in the lists of men serving in 1914 published in the Mid Sussex Times, it would seem likely that he enlisted in early 1915. His first listing in the MST is as a member G Company RAMC in March 1915.

We know that Albert was part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance section of the RAMC. This formed part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Division. The field ambulances were a mobile front line unit collecting the wounded and, after an initial assessment, transferring them to the nearest Casualty Clearing station further back behind the lines. The term 'ambulance' simply records that they carried the wounded but does not mean a vehicle. During 1917 the 4<sup>th</sup> Division was involved at Arras and in both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> battles of Scarpe.

As front line troops, although not actually fighting, the field ambulances were very vulnerable. Albert was killed in action on 22/07/1917, just three months after his brother. The death notice in the local paper, inserted by his mother, says he was killed by a shell. The CWGC record that two other members of his team were killed the same day and are buried in adjacent graves to his. He is buried in the Faubourg D'Amiens Cemetery in Arras with grave ref. V.J.3

Albert is remembered on both local war memorials and on the foot stone of his parent's grave.



*Badge of the R.A.M.C.  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Frederick Edward Burt

Frederick was born in Hurstpierpoint on 23/08/1886 and baptised on 07/11/1886. He was the son of George Burt and Harriett Burt nee Gladman and had seven siblings. Although baptised as Frederick Edward he did not use his second name on official documents and should not be confused with Frederick, the son of William and Mary Jane Burt, born in Hurst in 1883. In 1891 Frederick and his family were living at 1 Ruckford but by 1901 had moved to Shave Cottage between Cobbs Croft and Danworth. George was a general labourer and by 1901 Frederick was working as a carter boy.

Frederick joined the Royal Navy in Portsmouth in 1906 as a stoker 2<sup>nd</sup> class. He signed on for a 5 year period which was to be extended by a further 7 years to make the full complement of 12 years service. Initially numbered SS 103194 he was placed on *HMS Nelson* but after promotion to stoker 1<sup>st</sup> class moved to other vessels including *HMS Neptune* where he was listed on the 1911 census. A new register of stokers was undertaken by the navy in September 1911. Technically Frederick was discharged and immediately re-engaged and re-numbered K12729. Moving through the navy accounting system he is shown moving, via Victory II, to *HMS Blenheim* and *HMS Imperieuse* before finally transferring to *HMS Bulwark* on 01/08/1914.

*HMS Bulwark* was a pre-dreadnought battle ship assigned to the 5<sup>th</sup> Battle Squadron. In August she acted as cover for the transport of the British Expeditionary Force to France and on 4<sup>th</sup> September returned to base at Portland where various exercises were undertaken. With a concern that an invasion from Germany was imminent she moved to Sheerness with the specific task of protecting S E England. In the early morning of 26/11/1914 she was moored 4 nautical miles west of Sheerness in the Medway estuary, having taken on coal the previous day, when a massive explosion ripped through the vessel. The later board of enquiry found that ammunition had been stored in passageways and overheated causing an explosive chain reaction. The ship was blown apart with debris reportedly falling up to six miles away. In all 788 men were killed, including seven who died of their wounds later. Only 61 bodies were ever recovered and identified.

Frederick is listed on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial at Southsea and also on both local war memorials.



*HMS Bulwark*

## Arthur Burtenshaw

Arthur was baptised in Albourne on 28/03/1880, the fifth of nine children born to William Burtenshaw and Mary Jane Burtenshaw nee Gander. Mary seems to have been known by her second name, Jane. The 1881 census shows the family living on Trusslers Hill, but the 1891 census says Trusslers Hill cottage. William was an agricultural labourer and Arthur learnt from his father as by 1901 they are both listed as agricultural labourers, now living in Albourne Street. Arthur married Emily Avery in the first quarter of 1910 and their son Arthur John was born on 08/03/1910 in Hurstpierpoint. The 1911 census lists Arthur and Emily with their baby son living at Alder Cottage on the Brighton Road. Arthur was listed as a nurseryman gardener. He worked at Geers market garden for seven years before enlisting. Arthur junior was his only child.

Arthur's army papers are amongst those lost during a fire in WW2 so we do not know much about his service. He is recorded elsewhere as enlisting in Brighton, initially in the Royal Sussex Regiment as a private numbered 15116. Since he was not entitled to either WW1 Star his enlistment must have been after September 1915. Once overseas he was transferred to the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and numbered 30111. He was killed in action on the morning of 07/06/1917, aged 37, along with eleven other members of his battalion who fell during an advance. They are buried side by side in the La Laiterie Military Cemetery, Belgium with his grave ref. XII.A.21. He was entitled to the War and Victory medals which were sent to Emily by which time she had moved to Lahore Cottage, College Lane.

Arthur is remembered on both local memorials and additionally on the Albourne Memorial inside the church. As a member of an Irish regiment he is also listed on the Irish Roll of Honour.



*Badge of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Edward Campion

Edward was born at Danny House on 18/12/1873 and baptised at Hurstpierpoint on 01/02/1874. He was the third son of William Henry Campion and Gertrude Campion nee Brand. He had a privileged upbringing as the son of the local squire. Both the 1881 and 1891 censuses show him at Danny. He was educated at Eton, leaving in 1891, and gazetted as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant of the Seaforth Highlanders on 07/12/1895 having previously been in the militia. Promoted to a full lieutenant on 08/06/1898 and Captain in March 1901 he is listed on the 1901 census as a lieutenant based at Farnborough. In fact he was the ADC to the Major-General of the Infantry Brigade from October 1900 to October 1901. He had already served in Crete, 1897; Nile Expedition, 1898 and the battles of Atbara and Khartoum being awarded the Egyptian medal with two clasps and the Khedive's medal. From there he served in South Africa, where he was awarded the Queen's medal with five clasps. He later served in India.

At the outbreak of WW1 his battalion was sent to France and he was promoted to Major in October 1914. He had six days in the Queen Alexandra's Military Hospital at Millbank suffering from flu at the very beginning of January 1915 and immediately after his return to France he was mentioned in dispatches in February. He appeared on the casualty list for May 1915 suffering the effects of being gassed near Ypres. After a period in hospital he returned to Danny to convalesce and was expecting to return to the front. He was promoted to temporary Lieut. Col in September 1915. Following a relapse he was admitted to Queen Alexandra's Hospital in November 1915 suffering from gastritis. He was sent home for a 2 day respite over Christmas but returned to the hospital on 26<sup>th</sup> December now listed as suffering from a duodenal ulcer. He was transferred to the Endsleigh Palace hospital where he died on 25/02/1916. His death was registered in the St Pancras district but he was buried at Hurstpierpoint in the churchyard in grave number D108.

His name appears on both local war memorials and the nominal roll of Eton College.



*Illustration from War Illustrated Volume V p. 364*

## Thomas William Richard Carter

Thomas was born while his parents were living at 179 Fratton Road, Portsmouth. He was baptised just up the road at St Mary's Portsea on 01/12/1881. His father Richard Thomas ran the grocer's shop, now a kebab shop, opposite the old Trafalgar public house. His mother was Clara Carter nee Bigwood. She was born in Chichester and in 1877 was the booking clerk at Billingshurst railway station. Thomas' father died in 1886 and his mother moved to Maddon Mills in Croydon where she ran a grocer's shop in her own right. By 1901 she had moved again to run the Post Office in Hurst High Street. Thomas was working as a grocer's assistant in the village. He married Beatrice Mary Bayfield on 17/09/1910 in Frimley. Thomas and Beatrice were living at the Chase Lodge in Southwater in 1911 where Thomas was a farm bailiff. Their daughter Joan Beatrice was born there in July 1911. By 1913 they were all living locally and a son Richard Edward James was born in September 1913. It is not clear where they were living at that time but probably in Albourne.

Thomas enlisted in the 16<sup>th</sup> (Sussex Yeomanry) Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment in Hove and was numbered 320529. Since his army papers no longer exist the date of his enlistment is unclear but it is likely to be in 1915. He was promoted to corporal and it is known that he served in Egypt from late 1916. He was killed in action during a successful advance during the battle of Sheria on 06/11/1917. He is buried in the Beersheba war cemetery in grave ref. M.21. He was entitled to the War and Victory medals which were sent to Beatrice who was then living at Santa Cruz (26) Cuckfield Road, Hurst.

Thomas is remembered on the Albourne war memorial, both local war memorials and also on his mother's grave, B'24, in the South Avenue cemetery. She died in 1939.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## Walter and George Chatfield

Although George appears first alphabetically on the war memorial his brother Walter was the elder by four years. Details below are thus given in age order.

Walter and George's parents were Arthur Chatfield, the local tailor, and Ellen Chatfield nee Burtenshaw. In 1881 they were all living at 2 Layton Terrace, Hurst. Walter was their eldest child.

### Walter

Walter was born on 18/10/1880 and baptised at the parish church six weeks later. He attended the local school and went on to become a market gardener. By 1901 he was staying in Preston, Brighton and met his future wife, Emmeline Annie Scrace there. He and Emmeline were married on 16/11/1907 and their first child Elsie was born on 29/12/1909 in Brighton. In 1911 they were listed at 38, Middle Road in Preston, Brighton, next door to Emmeline's parents. Walter had obtained a position as estate gardener for Mr. M.P. Castle JP of Oakhill House, Sevenoaks and he and Emmeline moved to live in a cottage on the estate. Their second child, Leslie, was born there on 26/01/1914. It is said that Walter used to take Leslie with him when he worked pulling him around in a wheeled truck. Newspaper reports suggest that Walter had been working for Mr Castle for around 10 years when he received his call up papers, however known dates cast doubt on this.

Walter enlisted on 26/11/1916 and was placed in the 27<sup>th</sup> (Reserve) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers and numbered 3273. He was transferred to 6<sup>th</sup> Service Battalion, Queens Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) as no. 17792 on 03/10/1916 and sent overseas just over a week later where he served with the British Expeditionary Force. He was subsequently wounded in the back and chest at Vimy and transferred to the No 8 casualty clearing station. He had been writing weekly to Emmeline and the children and a letter from her to the authorities, kept in his army file, says she is worried that her last two letters had been returned with the word 'wounded' written across them. Could they tell her which hospital he was in and how bad were his wounds? No reply is recorded in his army papers but a recently published letter from his commanding officer sent after his death said, 'he was an essentially plucky man, and a splendid chap'. Sadly Walter died from his wounds on 11/04/1917.

He is buried in the Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun in grave ref. I.M 3. His medals and effects were sent to Emmeline who had returned to Brighton and was living at 37, North Road, Preston.

Walter is remembered on both local war memorials, and also in the St Peter's Brighton Memorial Book



*Badge of the Queen's own (Royal West Kent Regiment)  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## George

George's story is very different.

He was born in Hurst in November 1884 and baptised at the parish church on 01/03/1885. He attended the local school, and in 1901 was still living at home in Hurst working as a domestic groom. By 1911 he too had become a market gardener, boarding at a house in Middle Road, Kingston by Sea with several other gardeners. He married Emily Reed on 06/09/1913 at Southwick but they had no children. He also received call up papers and enlisted at Brighton on 21/08/1916 just two months after his brother. He was listed as gunner 163885 in the 57<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Artillery giving his address as Myrtle Cottage, Kingston Lane, Southwick, his parents in law's address.

It was soon realised at his medical assessment that he was not well and fuller details are given in his papers. He had previously suffered from rheumatic fever and was not considered medically fit. The medical board said that while his condition was not the result of his service the exercise required of war service would aggravate it and he was discharged after 40 days on 29/08/1916 as 'no longer fit for service'. He applied for, and was awarded, a pension for six months but there is no record of his receiving a silver war badge. He subsequently had regular six monthly medical assessments. His papers record that he died on 07/11/1918 and his death was registered in the Steyning district in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 1918.

His name appears on both local war memorials but not at Southwick where he is buried.

## Harry Clark

Harry was the son of Harry Clark and Annie Diana Clark, nee Stevens. He was born in Brighton in 1894 but his mother died when he was four years old. In 1901 he was staying with his paternal grandparents in Lahore Cottage, Hurst who lived next door to his uncle Edward and Aunt Mary. By 1911 Harry had become a despatch rider in Fulham and added an 'e' to his surname so that on all further paperwork he is listed as 'Clarke'. By 1913 he was working as a clerk for a motor company. His father who had worked for the Parks Department in Brighton as a gardener, died in 1914 and Harry named his aunt Mary as his next of kin.

Harry enlisted as a gunner in the 7<sup>th</sup> London Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery on 01/05/1913 in Fulham and was numbered 1309. This was a territorial force but Harry signed for four years on the understanding that if necessary he would be embodied. The first two years of his service were spent at home and included a weeks training on Salisbury Plain in July 1913. He was posted to France on 17/03/1915 landing at Le Havre. He was hospitalised with a severe bout of flu in July 1915. He was returned to the field a fortnight later but readmitted via the 45<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance almost immediately and not finally returned to service until 24/09/1915 having been ill for nearly two months. He was killed in action on 02/03/1916 and is buried in grave 6 of the Vermelles Communal cemetery. This is a small cemetery close to Vermelles British Cemetery. Two other members of the RFA who were killed the same day as him are buried next to him. Harry was entitled to both the 1914 and 1915 stars as well as the War and Victory medals which were sent to his sister Amy.

Harry is remembered on both local war memorials as well as on his grandparents grave, A24, in the South Avenue cemetery.



*Badge of the Royal Field Artillery  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## George Edward Coster

George was born in St George in the East in London at the end of 1887 to James Coster and his wife Mary Ann Coster nee Ryan or Regan. James was a Londoner and Mary Ann was born in County Cork. On the 1891 and 1901 censuses George was shown living at home with his parents. His father was listed as a carman and in 1901 George had a similar listing. His father died in 1909 and his mother subsequently moved to Hurstpierpoint, living in the High Street and working as a needlewoman.

George's army papers are not available to view and information on his service is hard to find. Some time between 1901 and 1911 he enlisted as a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers and was numbered L/13341. The 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion were stationed in Jubbulpore from 1908 and George's service number would suggest that he almost certainly enlisted sometime between January 1908 and the middle of the year. The Royal Fusiliers were still stationed in India in 1911 and George appears on the list at the barracks in Jubbulpore as a private. He had not married.

In late 1914 the battalion boarded the *SS Dongola* in Calcutta. Originally a P and O cruise ship she was doing regular duty as a troopship carrying family members as well as troops returning to the UK prior to the battalion being sent to Gallipoli. George died from cerebral malaria on 14/12/1914 while on board and was buried at sea on the approach to the Gulf of Aden.

His name is recorded on the Hollybrook Memorial at Southampton on panel 106 (addenda) and also on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Fusiliers  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Frederick Charles Crockford

Frederick was born in Burstow, Surrey on 25/08/1899 and baptised there on 15/12/1899. He was the son of blacksmith Charles Henry Crockford and Emily Salome Crockford, nee Mitchell. In 1901 the family were living in North Road, Worth. As a blacksmith Charles moved around and Frederick is known to have attended at least two schools before he was 7 years old. Prior to 1907 he was at Stonebridge school where his father had briefly run The Volunteer inn. From February 1907 Frederick attended Rudgwick school with his brother, however they only stayed until 16/10/1907 when the family moved to Slinfold. By 1910 they had all arrived in Hurst and Charles and Emily's last child was born here at the end of 1910. The 1911 census shows them all living in the High Street, near Church Cottages by the cross roads with Charles listed as a blacksmith for an ironmongers.

Frederick was called up, aged 17 years and 9 months and signed on in Brighton, on 31/05/1917, giving his occupation as a shoeing smith and his address as Baden Villa, Hurst. His army papers are very badly water damaged and almost impossible to decipher in places. Frederick was placed in the 27<sup>th</sup> Training reserve battalion of the Bedfordshire regiment who were based at the time at Clipstone. From other sources we know that he was numbered 44635. Following reorganisations of the reserve battalions the 27<sup>th</sup> became the 52<sup>nd</sup> Graduated Battalion and Frederick seems to have been briefly with them before transferring the 53<sup>rd</sup> Graduated Battalion on 20/02/1918. They were based at Bocton camp on Cannock Chase. From here he was mobilised and landed in France on 06/04/1918 joining the British Expeditionary Force. The following day he was transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby). The CWGC give his number as 103360.

The battle of Amiens was the start of what became known as 'The Hundred Days', a series of battles on the Somme which ultimately led to the end of WW1. While considered successful it came with a huge loss of life. The 10<sup>th</sup> Sherwoods suffered a major gas attack on 15/08/18 with large numbers of those that survived being taken by the 51<sup>st</sup> Field Ambulance Station to 2 Can. Gen. hospital. Frederick was admitted that day but died from the effects of the gas on 18/08/1918.

He is buried in the Mont Huon Military Cemetery at Le Treport in grave ref. VII. B. 12A. He is remembered on both local war memorials and also on the gravestone of his grandmother, June Mitchell, in the South Avenue Cemetery, plot C'101. His family put down roots in Hurst and in 1939 his parents were still living next to Church House and just six houses away from Baden Villa.



*Badge of the Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby)  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## James Edward Dadswell

James was born in Hurstpierpoint in April 1896 and baptised at the parish church on 05/07/1896. His father Edward farmed at Eastlands farm to the north of the village and all the boys in the family were encouraged to go into farming. His mother was Esther Sayers whose father was a game keeper. In both 1901 and 1911 all the family were living and working at Eastlands farm.

James' army papers are no longer available but it is known that he signed on to the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Sussex regiment as a private no. G/1161. Regimental records state that the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed at Chichester in September 1914 and James was among the first cohort, denoted by having the letter G in front of his number. The battalion trained on the downs and were billeted in Portslade until moving to Shoreham in April 1915. During training the men were encouraged to write wills. For James his will was brief. Dated 15/01/1915 he stated his name, number and regiment and, as most soldiers did, left any property and effects to his mother. Further training including trench digging and preparations for gas attacks took place followed by a move to Woking. The men were also involved in recruitment work in Brighton. The Battalion boarded the *SS La Marguerite* on 31/08/1915 arriving in Le Havre the following day. The men faced long and gruelling marches in appalling conditions to get them to the front line and life in the trenches. They faced the Battle of Loos in late September where there were heavy losses. Further long marches over the winter took them to an engagement at Hooge, Ypres Salient on 14/02/1916 where James was killed. His brother, who had joined up the same day as James, was also injured in the same battle, but survived.

James is buried, with a large number of his comrades, at Menin Gate South Military Cemetery, with grave ref. I.G.4. He is remembered on both local war memorials.



*postcard showing B Company of the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion on a recruiting parade.  
James could well be here.*

## Walter Frederick Dunstone

Walter was born in Hurstpierpoint and baptised at the parish church on 02/03/1890, the son of Alfred William Dunstone, the local postman who was always referred to as William. His mother was Annie Elizabeth Dunstone, nee Parsons. Throughout Walter's life the family lived with his maternal grandparents at 3 Hampton Cottages, sometimes referred to as Hampton Terrace. He had three siblings and his father, who had been invalided out of the navy in 1879, died when he was just five years old. By 1911 Walter was working as a grocer's assistant and continued in this job when he moved to Worthing sometime before the end of 1915.

Walter's army papers no longer exist but the newspaper report of his death says that he enlisted in Worthing in January 1916 as a private in the 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion the London Regiment (London Scottish) numbered 6209. The battalion landed in France on 6<sup>th</sup> June and formed part of the massing of troops along the upper reaches of the Somme river. Walter was injured on the first day of fighting and records show that he died of his wounds at the No. 12 ambulance station on 02/07/1916. Some reports refer to him being killed in action. He is buried in the Doullens Communal cemetery Extension no. 1 in grave IV. B. 7.

He is listed on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion the London Regiment  
known as London Scottish  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## William Seafield Dyer

William Seafield was raised as the son of James and Elizabeth Dyer, born in 1889 in Preston, Brighton. The 1891 census lists him as their grandson, but later records refer to him as their son. The family lived in Chester Terrace, Preston. By 1911 he was working for, and lodging with, the Bishop family at North Lodge Cottages, Hurstpierpoint. He was listed as a warehouseman for a grocer. William married Edith Wadey Smith by licence on 12/05/1915 in Aldershot. Edith was the daughter of Albert Wadey Smith of Hurstpierpoint. The marriage register records a large number of soldier marriages in Aldershot by licence during May suggesting the men were about to be sent overseas. William and Edith had no children.

William's army papers have not survived and he has been a particularly challenging man to trace. If anyone can add to this record it would be appreciated. From CWGC records, the medal rolls and various other military databases we know that he served as a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion the Sussex Regiment and was numbered G/986. This is a very early number and the 'G' indicates that William was amongst the first to volunteer for service at the outbreak of war. He retained his number throughout his service which would usually indicate that he was not transferred to another battalion. However, records exist showing him in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion during 1915. The medal rolls show that he entered France on 31/05/1915 which entitled him to the 15 star, War and Victory medals. The war diaries for 7<sup>th</sup> battalion state that 31<sup>st</sup> was the date that some of them entered France. 3 officers, 102 men, 79 horses, 24 vehicles and 9 bicycles left barracks at Farnborough on 30<sup>th</sup>, entrained for Southampton and boarded the *SS City of Dunkirk* landing at Le Havre the following day. They were joined by A, B, C and D Company over the next two days. The war diary for 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion has no movement to France at that time as they were already entrenched at Bethune. The next difficulty is that William is reported in some records as 'died of wounds' and in others as 'killed in action' on 30/06/1916. At that date the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion were near Le Touquet and their war diary has no deaths recorded for about a week either side of 30<sup>th</sup>, while the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was under heavy fire and bombardment near Marseilles. The CWGC record William as a member of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion and list him in Bay 6 of the Arras Memorial. He has no marked grave.

William's death is recorded on his wife's family grave, B'32, in the South Avenue cemetery as well as both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## John Richard Fuller

John Richard was born in Lindfield at the end of 1897, the eldest of four boys born to John William Fuller and Annie Fuller nee Mockford and should not be confused with his father. In 1901 the family were still living in Lindfield but by 1911 had moved to Western Road, Hurst. From the dates and places of birth of their four children we can estimate that the move to Hurst was probably during 1908. John Fuller snr was a grocer's porter and their address in Western Road was next door to Gladstone Cottage, near Williams the bakers and the grocers shop which once operated in lower Western Road.

John jnr enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment and was numbered 4/1792. Since John's army papers no longer survive other sources suggest that his service number equates to an estimated enlistment date of early February 1914. The 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion was a territorial force and John would have joined B Company based in Hurst with drill stations at Burgess Hill and Henfield. The territorial battalions were renumbered in 1917 but the numbers related back to the soldier's original enlistment date. John's new number, TF 200277, confirms his enlistment in early to mid February 1914. The 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion were part of the Home Counties Division but on 24/05/1915 they were moved to Cambridge and later the same month to Bedford. The battalion war diaries start on 15<sup>th</sup> July and record a very wet day for train transport to Devonport and an embarkation on *HMT Ulysses* the following day. Their journey via Alexandria, Port Said and Mudros to Suvla Bay took 3½ weeks. From the moment they landed, on 09/08/1915 at 4.15 am, they came under fire and casualties were high. Fighting in Gallipoli was always fierce and John would have fought through the Battle of Romani in August 1916. By March 1917 the battalion were near Gaza and became part of an ill-fated attempt to invade the south of Palestine. The attack started on 26<sup>th</sup> and by the end of the day the battalion had lost 5 officers and 24 men killed with 10 officers and 154 men wounded and a further 57 men missing. There were insufficient men left to maintain the line. John was presumed killed that day but he has no known grave. The Red Cross enquiry list reports that John was a member of VII platoon of B Company.

John is remembered on the Jerusalem Memorial on panels 25 and 26. The memorial is within the Jerusalem war cemetery. He was entitled to the 15 Star and the War and Victory medals, which were sent to his mother Annie. John is also listed on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Albert Edward Gander

Albert was baptised at Hurst on 27/08/1899 the son of Henry Edward Gander, a journeyman bricklayer, and his wife Ellen Elizabeth Gander nee Tullett. In 1901 the family were living at 3 Pitt Cottages but by 1911 had moved to Fairview, Cuckfield Road. Albert was the third child of seven born to the couple. Albert would almost certainly have attended the local school and was still at school in 1911.

Albert's army papers are not available to view but from other sources it is known that he enlisted in Brighton in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Queens Own (Royal West Surrey) Regiment as No. G/68525. The 'G' in his number indicates that this was a General service battalion. It was formed in Maidstone in September 1914, although based on his number and his age it is likely that Albert enlisted in early 1916. Following training he would have arrived in France and been involved in much of the fighting around Passchendaele in 1917 before the regiment was moved nearer to Amiens. During 1918 they were consolidating positions on the Western Front. At the beginning of August a major offensive, later known as the "Hundred Days Offensive", was planned in an effort to bring the war to a close. All four companies of the Queens were in position in trenches near Morlancourt by 6<sup>th</sup>. Early in the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> tank support was expected but did not arrive and a heavy enemy barrage came down around 4.10 a.m. causing many casualties. There was heavy fighting throughout the day with the commanding officer killed by a sniper. Albert was presumed killed in action that day but he has no known grave. The British Red Cross enquiry list notes that Albert was in V Platoon of B Company.

On enlistment Albert had named his mother as his next of kin and his War and Victory medals were ultimately sent to her. He is remembered on panel 3 of the Vis-en-Artois Memorial and on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Queens own (Royal West Surrey) Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Charles Gander

Charles, but always known as Charlie, was baptised at Hurst on 12/09/1897, the son of James Gander and his wife Annie Gander, nee Burchell. He was the second of three children born to the couple. Charlie's father was listed on the 1901 census as a shepherd on a farm and in 1911 as a farm labourer. The family lived at Russells Farm, but by the mid 1920's they had moved to 3 Wickham Terrace. Charlie would have attended the local school but in 1911, aged 13, he was working as a carrier's messenger.

Private 1795 Gander took the oath as a member of B company of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment in Hurstpierpoint on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1914. He gave his address as Russells Farm and his occupation as grocer's porter for Masters and Tulley. His recruiting officer was Lieutenant Arthur Weekes. This was a Territorial Force and records show that Charlie undertook two annual training sessions before being transferred to E company of the 70<sup>th</sup> Provisional Battalion in April 1916. This was another Territorial Force and following his becoming available for enlistment under the terms of the Military Service Act of 1916 he was discharged in June of that year at Southend. He subsequently enlisted in the newly formed 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion East Surrey Regiment, numbered 25707, but his papers are no longer available to view. Following training in Southern England the 13<sup>th</sup> landed in France on 04/06/1916 and had a relatively quiet year until their involvement on the Somme. Recently published medical reports show that he was treated at the 34<sup>th</sup> Casualty clearing station on 23/12/1916 and later transferred to the 24<sup>th</sup> General Hospital by number 5 Ambulance train suffering from 'inflammation of the connective tissue to his left toe' - trench foot. These papers also record that he was a member of D Company and had served with the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion for six months, of which two had been in the field. This would tie in with his arrival in France in June 1916. He was still listed as wounded on 02/02/1917 but was clearly recovering as he rejoined his battalion later that year.

Charles would have fought at the Battle of Arras in April but was killed in action during the Battle of Cambrai on 26/11/1917 aged 20. He has no known grave and is remembered on panel 6 of the Cambrai memorial at Louverval. His name is also listed on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the East Surrey Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## George W Gaston

George was born in 1878 in Burgess Hill, the son of George Gaston, a gardener, and his wife Frances Lucy Gaston nee Stoner. George was their middle child and eldest son. In 1881 the family were living in Keymer. They moved to 2, Pitt Cottages in Western Road some time between 1881 and 1891 when George's father took on a position as gardener to William Wood jnr. of Stanhope Villas. George snr died suddenly in 1898, while watching a local cricket match, and Frances opened a sweet shop at the house. George jnr was the only other member of the family still at home in 1901. He joined the local fire brigade around this date eventually rising to become the foreman, and worked for the Danny estate as a woodman.. He married Catherine Ellen (Kate) Gander in 1906 and they moved to 5 Wesley Terrace. They had three children.

George had been a member of the Territorial regiment of the Royal Sussex Regiment based in Hurst, and numbered 3852. At the outbreak of war he joined the Royal Defence Corps serving in both the Haywards Heath and Balcombe districts. In October 1915 the Mid Sussex Times includes his name in the list of 'Men serving King and Country' as part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Supernumerary Company of the 2/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment. Although George was serving the list is a little out of date. George's name appears on a wounded list on 16/10/1915 but is not clear where this was. He was subsequently drafted into the Rifle Brigade doing duty in India before being sent to Egypt. During his period abroad he was transferred to the 1/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) and numbered 241969. He survived the fighting and returned home on 30/03/1919 where he almost immediately developed pneumonia from which he died on 07/04/1919.

As the second most senior fireman on the roll he was given a full fire brigade funeral. His coffin, draped in the Union Jack, was carried on the brigade's motor engine with his helmet and belt placed on top. Men from several surrounding brigades escorted the coffin to the parish church. Sergeant W W Tulley, who had served with George in the Defence Corps, was also in attendance. George is buried in grave C.189 in the South Avenue cemetery where there is a CWGC headstone. Catherine was buried with him in 1954. George is listed on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Ernest Charles Goff

Ernest was born in 1889 at Emsworth, the son of John Goff and his wife Ruth Goff nee Hall. His father John was an agricultural labourer and the family moved around quite a bit. In 1901 they were living in Climping but some time before 1911 they moved to Hurst living at 1 Park Cottages. We must assume that Ernest moved with his parents as he enlisted at Hurstpierpoint.

His army papers are not available to view but the 1911 census lists him as a gunner in the 93<sup>rd</sup> Company, the Royal Garrison Artillery then based at Echelon Barracks in Colombo, Ceylon (Sri Lanka). On this record his place of birth is given as Hassocks but no other records exist with this place of birth. However what this tells us is that he had joined the RGA well before the start of WW1 and that he was intending to become a career soldier. He was numbered 31095.

Ernest's company returned to the UK during 1916 for further training, before being sent to form part of the British Expeditionary Force. He married local girl Margaret Blanche Mansbridge in late 1916, almost certainly at Hurst, and her address was then given as 2 Stanley Villas. He joined the newly raised 206<sup>th</sup> siege battery, the Royal Garrison Artillery in October 1916 arriving in France on 16<sup>th</sup> where he took part in the Somme offensive. The role of a siege battery was to lay down destructive fire behind enemy lines as well as attempting to neutralise enemy artillery. They were set well back from the front line but as the equipment was heavy and not very mobile they were also vulnerable to enemy fire.

Ernest was admitted to the 11<sup>th</sup> General Hospital at Etaples on 12/06/1917 suffering from 'flu. Following his recovery he was transferred, as an acting bombardier, to the 179<sup>th</sup> siege battery the Royal Garrison Artillery. He was injured and died from his wounds at the 17<sup>th</sup> casualty clearing station on 26/09/1917 and is buried in the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery in grave plot XXIII.C.14.

Ernest is listed on both local war memorials.



*An unidentified siege battery unit of the R G A showing the type of weaponry in use  
(Note the lack of ear defenders, just fingers in ears.)*

## Ernest William Green

Ernest was born in 1885 and baptised at Ovingdean on 17/05/1885 as Ernest Edward Green, however his birth was registered as Ernest William. His family were living in Rottingdean at the time of his birth having moved there from Brighton around 1884. Ernest's father was John Green, an agricultural carter, and his mother Mary Rebecca Green nee Bishop. His mother seems to have always been known as Rebecca. They moved to Hurst around 1887 and the 1891 census lists them living at Little Park Cottages with Ernest's father listed as a farmer's carter. Ernest was the fourth child of seven born to the couple. By 1901 they were living at Fairfield Cottage in Cuckfield Road and John was a domestic gardener. In 1911 Ernest's parents and the two youngest boys were still living at Fairfield Cottage but the rest of the family had moved away. At this stage I cannot positively identify Ernest on the 1911 census. I do not believe he married as he listed his sister Lilly as his next of kin. She had married Isaac Farrow and her address was given as 3 Bedlam Street.

Ernest's army papers are not available to view but it is known that he enlisted as a private in the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Nottingham and Derbyshire (Sherwood Foresters) regiment. Army history says that the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed in Derby in September 1914 and Ernest's number, 12437, was among the early numbers issued to the battalion. One record suggests he enlisted in Derby. The battalion landed in Boulogne in July 1915 for service on the Western Front and Ernest had risen to the rank of Lance Corporal by June 1916. Recently published medical records show that he was treated at the 51<sup>st</sup> Field Ambulance Station on 6<sup>th</sup> June that year and transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital suffering from rheumatism. His duration of stay is not given but would not have been long. The battalion saw action at Ypres and the Somme, being involved in the battles for Fricourt and Delville Wood at the beginning of the Somme offensive. During this particular action the battalion lost 381 men, including Ernest. His date of death is given as 15/07/1916 but he has no known grave.

The battalion is remembered on the Thiepval memorial on panels 10C, 10D and 11A and this includes Ernest's name. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Nottingham and Derby (Sherwood Foresters) Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## **Jack and Bert Grover**

Joseph Grover, born in Danehill in 1860, married Margaret Staplehurst in 1880 and they went on to have nine children, of whom seven were still alive in 1911. Their eldest children were born in Lindfield but the family moved to Hurst between 1891 and 1892 and initially lived at Kents Farm where Joseph was a labourer. They later moved to Bedlam Street. At Joseph's death in 1942 the newspaper recorded that he had worked for many years as a cowman for Mr Hole of Wanbarrow Farm. Margaret died in early 1914. Their eldest son, William, enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery as a career soldier around 1900. He served with distinction for over 18 years being mentioned in despatches in 1917 and accepting a commission the following year. Their second son Joseph enlisted in the Royal Sussex Regiment in September 1914 but was rejected as he had deformed feet. Their remaining two sons, Jack and Bert, also enlisted at around the same time and their details are below in age order although Bert died before Jack.

### Jack

Although known as Jack he was actually baptised privately as Walter John on 18/04/1892 in Hurstpierpoint. His private baptism may be a reflection on the early deaths of two elder siblings. Jack lived at home and in 1911 was listed on the census as a gardener.

Jack's mother died in early 1914 and Jack enlisted on 31/08/1914 at Hurst having previously served for four years in the local TA, although he had apparently failed their education test. His enlisting officer was Arthur Weekes and his enlistment in 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment is just a month after the declaration of war and only two weeks after the formation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion. He was numbered G/526, which is a particularly low number, the 'G' meaning he was one of the original recruits.

The 7<sup>th</sup> battalion landed in France on 31/05/1915 following training in Colchester, Shorncliffe, Folkestone and Aldershot. They fought through the Battle of Loos and actions at Hohenzollern Redoubt in September and October 1915. They remained in the Hohenzollern Redoubt area for some months. The battalion war diary for 15<sup>th</sup> February 1916 records '... enemy active for a short while with Trench Mortars... Casualties 1 killed 3 wounded.' Other ranks are never named in the diaries but the above entry means that we can pinpoint Jack's death. He is buried at Quarry cemetery, Fermelles, with grave ref E2. His gravestone is additionally inscribed 'buried near this spot'.

Note the following quote from the CWGC site. "Quarry Cemetery was used from July 1915 to June 1916. Its existence is due chiefly to the fighting at Fosse 8 and at the Hohenzollern Redoubt, and it contains many graves of the dismounted Cavalry who occupied this sector in 1915-16. The cemetery, was severely damaged by shell fire. There are now over 100, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, 10 are unidentified and many of the graves, identified as a whole but not individually, are marked by headstones bearing the additional words 'Buried near this spot'."

### Bert

'Bert' was actually Albert Henry born in 1894 but not apparently baptised at Hurst. He was the next younger brother of 'Jack' above and the youngest son of Joseph and Margaret.

No army papers survive for Bert but it is known that he also joined the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Sussex regiment, enlisting at Hurst, and was numbered G/2723. This too is an early number and suggests a probable enlistment in August or September. Bert's training would have been the same as for Jack and they arrived in France on the same day. By July 1915 they had arrived at Houplines and were alternating between occupying the trenches and being held in reserve. The battalion war diary entry for the 6<sup>th</sup> August, the day of Bert's death, records that it was a quiet day and the Germans could be heard singing and celebrating the fall of Warsaw. Casualties were 2 killed and one wounded. One of these killed was Bert.

The CWGC record that Bert was killed in action on 06/08/1915 and buried initially at the Houplines Old Military Cemetery in grave F14 which was marked with a regimental cross. After the war the CWGC took the difficult decision that these smaller cemeteries were difficult to maintain in the correct manner so between mid December 1924 and early January 1925 all the bodies interred there were exhumed, identified and reburied in the Houplines Communal Cemetery Extension in order that they could be properly commemorated. Bert was reburied in plot III B.44. Two of his Sussex comrades, are buried in adjoining graves.

Jack and Bert are both remembered on their mother's grave, C116, in the South Avenue cemetery as well as on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex regiment  
as depicted on a GWCC gravestone*

## Harry Heaver

Harry was baptised at Hurst on 03/06/1894 the youngest son of William Heaver and his wife Minnie, or Winnie, Abigail Heaver, nee Taylor. William was born in Isfield and had moved to Hurst with his parents just before 1881. In 1901 the family were living at 2 St George's Terrace. William was a house painter and died in March 1910. By 1911, aged 16, Harry had left home and was working as a house boy in London at 32 Prince's Gate, for Henrietta Baden-Powell. Also at the house were three of Henrietta's children which included daughter Agnes and son Robert, a retired army man. These names will be instantly familiar as Robert Baden-Powell started the Scout movement and his sister Agnes the Girl Guide movement a few years later. The first scout camp was held at Brownsea Island in Poole harbour in 1907. The following year a camp was held in Northumberland and one attendant was R A Piper from Brighton. This was Roger Piper, son of the local solicitor, whose name also appears on the local war memorials. While at this stage I cannot connect Harry with Roger Piper or scouting it is an interesting coincidence.

Possibly Harry was influenced by hearing Baden-Powell's stories, maybe he was encouraged by him. For whatever reason Harry enlisted in D Company, of 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the King's Royal Rifle Corps in Chelsea, initially as a rifleman, and was numbered A1719. The 'A' indicates that he was initially placed in the Army Service Corps and his low number suggests an enlistment during late 1914. Harry was part of the signalling section. He rose to become a lance corporal, probably around May 1915. His army papers are not available to view but we know that the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed in Winchester in August 1914 and following training in Aldershot, Grayshott and Bordon final preparations for moving to France took place back at Aldershot. The battalion landed in Boulogne in July 1915 intended for action on the Western Front. Harry wrote home regularly describing what he was doing, in guarded terms of course. He had a brief home leave in November 1915 but on his return to France was wounded in early December. He hastened to write to his mother to warn her that his name might appear on a wounded list but that his injuries were slight.

The battalion were involved in the Battle of Delville Wood at the beginning of the Somme offensive followed in September by the battle of Fleurs-Corcelette. It was this battle that saw the first use of tanks in warfare. The Mid Sussex Times recorded that Harry had been reported missing on 15/06/1916, the first day of the battle, and later reported that it had been assumed that he had died of his wounds the same day. He has no known grave and is listed with his comrades on the Thiepval Memorial on panel 13A and 13B. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Maurice John Hollingdale

Maurice was baptised at Hurstpierpoint on 07/02/1897, the son of Austin Richard Hollingdale and Louisa Agnes Ann Hollingdale, nee Routledge. The 1901 and 1911 censuses show Maurice and his younger brother Arthur living at Washbrooks Cottages. His father was a road labourer working for the County Council but at the time of Maurice's death was working overseas on road building. Maurice was an early member of the Hurst scout troop set up by Miss Borrer in 1909. He was the troop leader in 1913. Maurice was very active in parochial events in Hurst. He sang in the church choir and was also a Sunday school teacher. Prior to his signing up he worked at Albourne Place.

Details of Maurice's army career are scarce as his army papers no longer exist, being part of the records destroyed in an incendiary hit on the repository during WW2. From other sources we know that he enlisted as a sapper in the 1/3<sup>rd</sup> Home Counties Field Company of the Royal Engineers. Maurice was part of the Sussex Fortress. The Fortress Companies were formed in September 1914 and all dealt with coastal defence. The Sussex Fortress was based in Seaford and additionally had a works unit. From his number it seems likely that Maurice joined up very early. Although a Territorial Force the regular forces who made up the original fortress companies were gradually released as those soldiers no longer fit for overseas duties returned home. Maurice is recorded in the Mid Sussex Times as still with them in April 1916 when a list of those serving their country was published. He was numbered 239 although other records suggest his number may have been 359.

It is unclear when Maurice went overseas as the published newspaper lists of men stop after April 1916. In his obituary it was suggested that he had gone 'out there' in late September. Maurice joined the 19<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers as a private numbered 46268. From this number it seems very likely that he did not go overseas until September 1917. He wrote home on 16/10/1917 but died of wounds on 18/10/1917. He is buried in the Nine Elms British Cemetery, Poperinghe, Belgium with grave ref VI.C.8.

He is mentioned on his parents grave, no B32, in the South Avenue cemetery and also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the 19<sup>th</sup> Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Alfred Holman

Alfred, known as Fred, was born in the third quarter of 1893 to Alfred Holman and his wife Esther Holman, nee Bradford. They had five children but Alfred was their only son. Alfred snr. was a market gardener who ran a business from Box House Farm, employing several people. In both 1901 and 1911 the family were listed at the farm but by the latter date Alfred jnr was listed as a market gardener working for his father.

Alfred's army papers are not available to view and he has been a difficult man to trace. From various sources we know that he initially enlisted in Finchley into the London Regiment, the Royal Fusiliers, and was numbered 3660. By comparing other known dates of enlistment with Alfred's number a deduced date of enlistment is 09/02/1915 however this is not confirmed. Alfred's medal roll gives his date of arrival in France as 03/05/1915. As he arrived the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Ypres, which saw the first mass use of gas warfare by the German forces, was in full swing. Only a representative sample of soldiers medical records were kept after the war but there is one record for Alfred. Suffering from the effects of gas poisoning his ambulance convoy left the 4<sup>th</sup> Stationary hospital on 25<sup>th</sup> May that year. It is unclear where he was taken or on what date he was gassed. At the time the 4<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital was based near St Omer. It is most likely he was returned to the UK but I have been unable to find a record of this. He was still included on a casualty list in October. He eventually recovered sufficiently to be sent back to the front but on his return he was transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry and renumbered 22003. This battalion was operating in the Middle East at the time and was heavily involved in the fighting to protect the garrison at Kut-el-Amara in April 1916. Alfred was killed there on 06/04/1916. The remains of the battalion were captured after the surrender of the garrison and became prisoners of war. Clearly this was a very confusing time and Alfred has no known grave.

Alfred is remembered, with his comrades, on the Basra Memorial on panels 26 and 63 and on both local war memorials. His name is also included on his parents grave in the South Avenue cemetery, grave no.E77.



*Badge of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Claude Gerald Hudson

Claude was born in 1894 in Brighton, the son of Mary Jane Hudson, and baptised at Sayers Common on 22/07/1894. In 1901 he was listed in Hurstpierpoint living with his mother at his grandparents address of 1 Alma Villas, Cuckfield Road. His grandfather Henry was a farm labourer from Albourne. His grandmother died shortly after this and his mother married Denis John Parsons in 1910 and had another son, Denis. They all continued to live at Alma Villas with Claude's grandfather.

Much of the information about Claude, below, is deduced from a variety of sources as his army papers no longer exist. What is certain is that when he died he was a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment and numbered 2130. His number is sometimes shown with the prefix of 'S' and sometimes with 'LSR'. Numbering of the RSR is not straightforward and it would seem that the number 2130 was issued in late May or early June 1914. The 'S' and 'LSR' prefix are usually applied to members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> (special reserve) battalion. Men from this battalion were generally posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion as reinforcements were required. Men also seem to have enlisted into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion from local militia regiments and in many cases retained their militia number. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion landed in August 1914 and were heavily involved in the First Battle of Ypres in November 1914, where they lost a significant number of men.

The most likely scenario, so far as Claude is concerned, is that he joined the local militia in May or June 1914, was later transferred to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion. He would have received some training there, but following the losses at Ypres he was transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion and sent to France. Records show that he arrived in France on 29/11/1914 and the battalion war diary entry for that day notes that 2 lieutenants and 189 men joined the strength. The next two days were taken up with training and route marches then on 2<sup>nd</sup> December the King visited, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion lining the streets of Hazebrouck. The battalion moved on and by the week before Christmas were based at Le Touret near Bethune. Between 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December they came under heavy fire in the L'EpINETTE area. The diary entry for 23<sup>rd</sup> records several officers and 28 rank and file killed, wounded or missing. Claude was reported missing that day but not confirmed dead until some months later. A report in the Mid Sussex Times says that his mother received a letter from the authorities in July 1915 saying that her son had 'fallen in action some time towards the close of 1914'. The letter also suggests that his death was instantaneous judging from the 'nature of the wound'. I suspect that the letter was written to give Mary Jane some comfort after that length of time as its contents are somewhat at odds with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission official listing that says he has no known grave, and gives a date of death as 23/12/1914. His effects and medals were sent to his mother.

Claude is listed on the Le Touret Memorial on panel 20. He is also remembered on both local war memorials. A newspaper report from 1920 tells of flowers being laid on 'graves and monuments of the fallen' by the Hurstpierpoint Comrades of the Great War. Claude's name is mentioned, so flowers would have been placed on a family grave in the South Avenue cemetery. Sadly the location of this grave is not certain. It may be C190, however there is no grave stone to confirm this.



*Badge of the The Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## Peter Kemp

Peter was born in Brechin, Scotland on 23/11/1869. His parents were Andrew and Elizabeth Kemp nee Heggie. Peter left home at a fairly young age, moving to London with his brother and working as a provision merchant's clerk, and subsequently to Sussex. By 1901 he was working as a drapers assistant to his brother in law Robert McLellan in Horsham. He married Katie Eliza Taylor on 27/12/1904 at her home town of Holmwood St Mary in Surrey, giving his occupation as draper. A son Andrew was born in 1906 and a daughter Doris in 1908 at which point the family moved to Hurstpierpoint. They lived at Holthye Villa in Hurst Wickham and Peter had a shop in the High Street where he was included in the Kelly's Directory for 1911 as a wine and spirit merchant. Somewhat confusingly the local paper records that Peter was granted the licence to sell wines and spirits in November 1910 but that it was transferred to Mr Pearman in October 1911. It also records a similar transfer of the licence to Mr Pearman in January 1912. The family are listed at Holthye Villa on the 1911 census. A third child, Margaret, was born in 1914.

Peter seems to have had a very varied working life. In May 1915, aged 45, he enlisted in the Army Veterinary Corps and was numbered SE/7925. He landed in France on 21/05/1915. Records for the Army Veterinary Corps are few and far between so it has been impossible to find out where Peter was working. The suffix 'SE' attached to his number stands for Special Enlistment and was applied to those men working as horse keepers. They were paid 1/2d per day. Peter rose to the rank of acting sergeant, and when he was demobbed in May 1919, he returned to Hurst and Holthye Villa and worked at a local market garden. In July 1920 he was admitted to the Royal Sussex County hospital in Brighton suffering from a 'painful illness' from which he died on 06/09/1920, the seventh anniversary of the death of his father. The funeral report in the Mid Sussex Times suggests that prior to enlisting Peter had worked as a roadman, but this seems at odds with the Kelly's directory entry.

Peter was buried in the South Avenue cemetery in grave C'30 which is marked by a CWGC stone. Note the numbering of his grave as C'30 not C130, or C1 30, as is listed on some sites. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Army Veterinary Corps  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Cornelius George King

Cornelius George King was born in Hurstpierpoint and baptised at the parish church on 02/02/1890. He was the fourth child of Joseph King, a local bricklayer, and his wife Sarah Ann King nee Marchant. Joseph and Sarah lived at 5 Ribbetts and Cornelius followed his father's occupation being listed on the 1911 census as a bricklayer. He married Matilda Agnes Hemsley from Ditchling in 1909 and they moved to live next door to Cornelius' parents at No 7 Ribbetts. Matilda was known in the family as Dolly. A son George Joseph John was born in 1909; a second son Arthur in 1911 who sadly died soon after his birth; a daughter Doris in 1912; a third son Charles Walter in 1914 and a final son William in 1920. From his obituary in the local paper we know that Cornelius was a member of the Hurstpierpoint Oddfellows Lodge and a local fireman.

Cornelius had an interesting military career. He was a member of K Company of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment which were based in Hurst under Major William Henry Campion. Aged 18 Cornelius tried to join the regular army but was rejected as underweight. However on 17/05/1906 he joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion the RSR signing on for 6 years. At the time he was working as a bricklayers labourer for Mr Packham of Burgess Hill. He was numbered 9681 and although passed fit his service lasted just 24 days when he bought himself out. He returned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> VB. With the Haldane reforms of 1908 the 2<sup>nd</sup> VB became the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion RSR and Cornelius would then have been in B Company based at the drill hall in Hurst. We do not know his number in either of these battalions.

Shortly after the outbreak of war on 16/11/1914 he enlisted at Haywards Heath as a private in the 4<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. His army papers are amongst the 'burnt papers' and are both fire and water damaged and not easy to read. He was numbered 6369. He seems to have served at home being transferred to the 24<sup>th</sup> Rifle Regiment at its formation on 30/10/1915 and numbered 550 being re-numbered in early 1917 as 206647. On 12/01/16 he was embarked on *HMT Euripedes* leaving Devonport for Bombay arriving there on 13/02/16. Records for the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion in India are notoriously sparse and there is no war diary but Cornelius would have been involved in internal security duties and probably based at Sailkot in Pakistan. On 25/03/17 he was transferred to the North Staffs Regiment Territorial Force in India and re-numbered 203677. At the time they were based near Bilgaum. For Cornelius this was a brief stay as just 2 months later he boarded an unnamed vessel for transportation to Basra arriving there on 05/06/1917. A month later he became a member of B Company. From here we start to see mentions on his papers of form B213 which was an army form containing information about the loss of strength of a unit through injury or illness and sent to HQ but not one that was included in a soldier's papers.

On 03/02/18 Cornelius' record then notes that 'in the interests of the service' he was transferred to Bagdad. He became a sapper in the Royal Engineers transportation branch and was posted to the Railway Troops being re-numbered yet again as WR/109160. His pay record says that he was placed on the 'skilled rate of Engineers Pay as a bricklayer'. On 24/01/19 he was struck off the strength of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force at Basrah and invalided back to the UK on 24/03/19 via AT Syria. He was said to have suffered impairment since entry into the service. On his return he was examined and his disability was assessed at 100% and listed as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. He was re-examined on 27/03/21 and the diagnosis confirmed.

ALS is a progressive neurological disease relating to the control of voluntary muscle movement such as chewing and walking and is the most common form of motor neurone disease. There is no cure and no effective treatment and death usually occurs from respiratory failure between 3 – 5 years from the onset of symptoms. It is more common in men and is a recognised service connected disease with service men twice as likely to contract it, possibly from exposure to lead and environmental toxins. A letter from him dated 1921 shows a strong hand, but may have been written for him. Cornelius was

officially discharged on 02/11/1919 having served a total of 4 years and 352 days since his enlistment in 1914. He was awarded a pension and entitled to the War and Victory medals.

Cornelius died at home, aged 33, on 27/03/23 with ALS as the primary cause and bronchitis as the secondary cause of death. The Mid Sussex Times for 03/04/23 gave a full account of his funeral from which it is clear that he was a well respected member of the parish. He is buried in the South Avenue cemetery in grave C 19. Matilda remained living at Ribbetts and died in 1979.

Cornelius was initially not recorded on the parish war memorial as his death occurred after the cut off date for inclusion, but he has since been added. He is also recorded on the church memorial.

## John Richard King

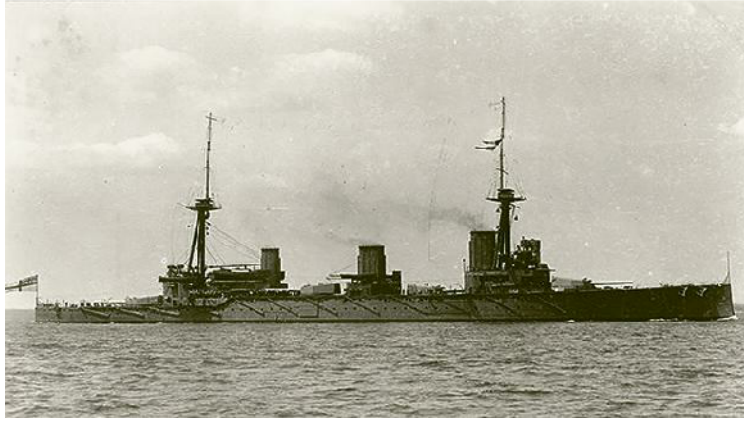
John was born in Devonport on 09/10/1898 and baptised at St Paul's, Devonport on 06/11/1898, the son of Walter Frederick King and his wife Annie King nee Walsh. At the time his parents were living at 21 Morice Square, Devonport and his father was a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy. This area of Devonport has been much developed over the years and the house is no longer there. From census records it appears that number 21 housed a number of RN personnel.

John's father Walter was a career naval man. He retired from the navy as a Chief Petty Officer in 1908 and is listed in 1911 living at St George's Cottage, Hurst where he was listed with Annie and their three younger children. His occupation was given as caretaker. It can be no coincidence that Admiral Beaumont, recently retired from the service and ex Commander-in-Chief Plymouth, was living at St George's House. At the outbreak of war he served a further 2½ years based mainly at Scapa Flow and the Shetlands before he was invalided out with sever rheumatism. He returned to Hurst and died here in 1924.

John appears to have attended secondary school in Tunbridge Wells but transferred to Devonport from April to September 1905 and then returned to Tunbridge Wells. His father Walter had come originally from Tunbridge Wells and still had connections there. It seems likely that Annie may have stayed in that area while Walter was away at sea as John's two brothers were both born in Tunbridge Wells. John attended St James school, Tunbridge Wells up to mid 1909. He was admitted to St Michael's school in London with his brother Walter on 23/08/1909 with his address being given as 3 Sloane Gardens. This was a very brief stay as at the start of September that same year he transferred to the Greenwich Hospital School, then housed in the impressive buildings which now house the National Maritime Museum. The school was established for the education of sons of serving and retired naval personnel. John stayed for five years and was listed there on the 1911 census. Aged, nearly 16, he joined the Royal Navy direct from the school. His papers show his enlistment at Portsmouth on 12/06/1914. He entered as a 'Boy 2<sup>nd</sup> Class', as he was not yet 16, and was numbered J/31673 (Po). The 'J' indicating that he was a general seaman and the 'Po' that he had signed on at Portsmouth. He entered the boys training establishment on *HMS Ganges*, based at Shotley. The navy calculates your period of service from the date of your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday meaning John's formal period of service was scheduled to start on 09/10/1916 and last for 12 years from that date. He was rated a 'Boy 1<sup>st</sup> class' from 01/02/1915, and following another year of training was posted to *HMS Indefatigable*, on 01/02/1916.

*HMS Indefatigable* had been fitted with further armaments around this time and she sailed to Edinburgh to form part of Admiral Beatty's battlecruiser fleet early in the year. She formed part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> battlecruiser squadron at the Battle of Jutland on 31/05/1916. She was tasked to intercept a German sortie and at around 4 pm she was hit by several shells fired from the German battlecruiser *Von der Tann* and immediately listed and started to sink. She was hit by further shells and her magazine exploded ripping the ship apart. The action, from first hit, lasted around 15 minutes. Of the approximately 1000 crew only 3 survived. The site of her sinking has been designated as a protected war grave site. John's body was not recovered for burial.

There are a number of memorials to the fallen at Jutland, not least the impressive Jutland Memorial Park in Denmark near Thyborøn where each person killed will eventually be commemorated by an individual stone placed around a larger stone commemorating the ship lost. John is listed by name on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial with reference 14 and on both local war memorials.



*HMS Indefatigable*

## Frederick Knight

Frederick was born in January 1881, the fourth child of seven children born to Charles Knight and his wife Celia Knight nee Turner. Frederick's place of birth is recorded on early census entries as Keymer, and later as Burgess Hill. The confusion lies in the boundaries of Keymer parish which at this date covered large parts of what is now Burgess Hill. Charles was a tailor and the family moved to Hurst sometime between mid 1882 and late 1884 living initially at Park Cottages and later at Fairfield Cottages. Frederick, his immediately elder sister and next two younger siblings were all baptised at Hurst on the same day, 29/10/1885. His youngest sister was born later that year. By 1901 Frederick was working as a grocer's assistant. He married Beatrice Annie Moore in September 1902, probably in Henfield. A daughter Minnie was born in Croydon in 1903 and they moved to 41 Queen's Street, Wick near Littlehampton where Frederick was now working. A second daughter, Ena, was born there. Frederick's parents remained in Hurst.

Frederick enlisted in Worthing and was listed as private M/336363 of the 648 Motor Transport Company of the Royal Army Service Corps. The 'M' denotes that he was part of the Motor Transport section, as opposed to horse transport. His papers no longer exist, and as a member of the RASC he has been very difficult to trace. What is known is that he served in what was then called Tanganyika, now called Tanzania. We do not know when Frederick enlisted but since he was only entitled to the War and Victory medals he was a conscripted man who did not enter a theatre of war until after December 1915. This is also borne out by his six figure number. The role of the RASC was in supply and transport and in keeping open the lines of communication. 648 MT Company and the 84<sup>th</sup> auxiliary MT Company supplied maintenance services in East Africa. They received new recruits in March 1916 and it maybe that this is when Frederick went overseas. Around 400,000 servicemen and 600,000 African bearers were involved in the fighting in the East Africa campaigns. It has been suggested that of these nearly 3500 servicemen were killed in action and over 6500 servicemen died from disease. Figures for the native bearers are not available and there is a huge lack of sickness records or war diaries so these figures may well be inaccurate.

Frederick died on 05/03/1918 and some sources suggest he may have died of disease but this cannot be confirmed. He was initially buried on the Mingoyo cemetery in plot II. B. 3. where there was a headstone erected by the Imperial War Graves Commission. By the 1920s it was realised that such small cemeteries were hard to maintain in the proper manner, and in some cases access was impossible. The decision was taken to exhume and rebury these servicemen, with honours, into more established cemeteries and in 1925 Frederick was exhumed and reburied in the Dar Es Salaam War Cemetery in plot 7. A. 8. His headstone, the wording of which had been chosen by Beatrice, was re-erected on the new plot. In addition to this grave Frederick is remembered on the Littlehampton roll of honour, but he is not listed on their war memorial. He is also listed on both local war memorials as his parents still lived in Hurst and he had been brought up here.



*Badge of the R A S C  
as depicted on a CWGC  
gravestone*

## William Henry Knight

William was born at Newhaven in the third quarter of 1899 to George Alfred Knight and his wife Ann Knight nee Chapman. William was the youngest of ten children born to the couple, of whom three died young. By 1911 only William and his immediately elder sister, Bessie, were still living at home at 6 South Road, Newhaven. His father George was a furniture restorer and french polisher and in 1901 had premises in Elphick Road Newhaven.

William's army papers no longer exist and information on his military career is very scarce. Although we know that he enlisted in Hastings we do not know when. He was first numbered as 13/55810 of the 18<sup>th</sup> TR. (Training Reserve) and was later transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion the Prince Consort's Own Regiment (the Rifle Brigade) as a rifleman numbered 46291. The 18<sup>th</sup> TR were based in Seaford and members trained in readiness for sending to France as reinforcements for the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion. The Military Service Act of 1916 imposed conscription on all single men aged between 18 and 41. William would not have been 18 until mid 1917 so it would seem unlikely that he joined up until then. The battalion war diaries note how many reinforcements arrived at the front line every month with the largest arrival, 333 men and 18 officers, in April 1918. The date of William's transferring to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion following training is not known

William was killed in action on 02/06/1918 in the build up towards the second battle on the Somme but has no known grave. The war diary records 2 other ranks and 3 men from the reinforcements were killed that day. He is remembered on the Loos memorial on panel 129.

It is unlikely that William married as he gave his father as his next of kin and his effects were returned to his father. 'Lives of the Great War' states that William was resident in Hurstpierpoint. At this stage no other evidence has been found for this. He is not included on the Newhaven War Memorial but is remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Rifle Brigade  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

If you are able to add to this record we would be pleased to hear from you.

## Ernest Lewry

Ernest Lewry was born in 1893 and baptised at Hurst on 02/04/1893. His parents were Alfred Lewry, a general labourer, and his wife Lucy Lewry nee Collins. The couple had eight children, seven of them boys. Of these one joined the navy as a career naval man, another joined the navy in 1917 but transferred to the RNAS, the fore runner of the RAF in 1918. A third joined the Lifeguards. All survived the war. The two youngest boys were too young to serve in WW1.

In 1901 the family were living at 3 Alice Terrace in Hurst Wickham. By 1911 their address was given as 1 St George's Terrace. Ernest was now working as a wine merchant's assistant, and reportedly had a good voice, being a member of the parish church choir for a number of years.

Ernest, like his brothers, decided on a career in the services, following the family tradition. His father and uncle had both previously fought with the Royal Sussex Regiment in Egypt. Ernest's army papers are no longer available but he is known to have been a trooper in the Household Cavalry, the 1<sup>st</sup> Life Guards, numbered 2965. Cavalry records suggest that he enlisted in Brighton on 23/06/1913, and this lines up with his official number. Up to August 1914 the Life Guards were stationed at Hyde Park so they were ready for the many ceremonial duties they were required to perform. It should be remembered that they were, and still are, an active service unit. They were the first soldiers to see action in France in 1914. Soon after the declaration of war a composite squadron of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Life Guards were sent to France arriving at Zeebrugge on 08/10/1914 followed by another group who landed on 15th. Ernest's medal record suggests that he was probably in that second group. They marched across France seeing action at Mons, the Marne, the Aisne and the 1<sup>st</sup> Battle of Ypres.

The battalion war diary was censored before it was deposited at the National Archives and amongst other items the lists of casualties were removed. Surgeon Major Cowie kept a private diary and his entry for 31/10/1914, the day Ernest was killed, notes that the regiment were "...in trenches E of Wytschaete ... There are a few casualties in the evening-trooper Lewry being killed..." The CWGC record that Ernest has no known grave. He is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial on panel 3. He is also listed on both local war memorials.

Ernest was the second man from Hurst to be killed during WW1, Charles Miller was killed the day before, but news of Ernest's death reached the village first, and was reported in the Mid Sussex Times on 10<sup>th</sup> November.



*Badge of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion the Life Guards  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Reginald Thomas Loop

Reginald was born in Charlton, Northamptonshire and baptised at Newbottle on 02/11/1887. His father Thomas was a schoolmaster working at the local school. His mother Mary Ellen Loop nee Freeman was also a teacher. Somewhat unusually for this time period she seems to have continued working after their marriage and while she was having children. The family moved to East Rushton, Norfolk in late 1890 and by April 1891 they were living in the school house there. Reginald was their eldest son. Thomas Loop had been born in Brighton and in 1911 Reginald, now an assistant teacher, was visiting his aunt Elizabeth and her family in Mighell Street, Brighton. Reginald was listed as visiting not lodging so we cannot be certain where he was actually living. However, he started working at Hurstpierpoint Boys school, probably, around 1907. At this period boys and girls were still taught separately and both schools occupied what is now St Lawrence School. His actually date of starting is not known but the first mention of him in the local newspaper as a teacher at the school was in 1908. We can be sure it was this school and not the college as other reports refer to him at the church school. There are several mentions of him in the Mid Sussex Times; a glowing reference from the school inspectors and taking the boys to take part in the Empire Day celebrations amongst others. He married his cousin Florence Alma Markwick on 26/12/1914 in Brighton and they had a son Reginald Geoffrey who was born on 01/07/1915.

The report of Reginald's death in the local paper loosely says that he left the boys school to join the army, however, the date of his joining the army is not known. The Military Service Act of January 1916 imposed conscription on all single men aged between 18 and 41. From May 1916 it was extended to cover married men, however at least initially teachers were exempt. Reginald joined the 3/1<sup>st</sup> Sussex Yeomanry numbered 3449. This number seems to equate to a date of joining in mid 1916. The Yeomanry trained recruits for the service battalions and Reginald was subsequently transferred to the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment and numbered G/16606. The battalion war diary notes the arrival of several drafts of men during September, October and November, nearly 150 men in total as reinforcements following the Battles of Delville Wood and Guillemont on the Somme. Reginald would have been in one of these drafts. December and the beginning of 1917 was relatively quiet while they trained in the build up to the attack on Bois en Hache, also known as Vimy Ridge. For the 9<sup>th</sup> battalion the attack took place over 2 days, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April. The weather was appalling with blizzard conditions and particularly heavy mud. Reginald was killed on 12/04/1917 and has no known grave.

He is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial on panel 20, in the St Peter's Brighton Memorial Book and on both local war memorials. He was entitled to both the War and Victory medals. Reginald's only brother was killed in action just a month after Reginald.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## Alfred and Frank Mansbridge

Alfred and Frank Mansbridge were brothers with Alfred almost twenty years older than Frank. Their father, Thomas, is described on various census returns as either a shepherd, gardener or market gardener. His family had moved to Hurst in the 1860s and they lived at 5 Washbrooks Cottages. Their mother was Alice Davey. Alfred was the second and Frank the ninth child of ten born to the couple. At least two other brothers, Edward and Ernest, served throughout the war in the Navy, and another joined the army. All three survived. Alfred was the last in the family to join up.

### Alfred

Alfred was baptised at Hurst on 02/03/1879 and can be found at home with his parents on the 1881 and 1891 censuses. He followed his father and became a gardener and in 1901 was lodging with Mr Hole in Mill Road Hayward Heath. He married Mary Stringer at Hurst on 26/04/1902 and a daughter Alice Caroline was born at Hurst in 1905. They later moved to Newham Cottage in Steyning where Alfred was employed as a gardener.

Alfred's army papers are no longer available to view but from other sources it is known that he enlisted in the Royal Sussex Regiment as a private and was numbered 6/3013. The date is unknown but this number suggests that it was probably in late June 1916. He was subsequently transferred to the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Fusiliers (The City of London Regiment) as number G/60722, the G denoting that he had signed on just for war service. The Battalion war diary does not specifically note when reinforcements arrived at the front but they had suffered large losses at the Battle of Pozieres in July. By October the battalion had moved on close to Agny and were part of the attack on Le Transloy, which formed part of the 1916 Battle of the Somme. Alfred's death is registered as 27/10/1916 however the battalion war diary only records one man wounded that day. Entries for 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> also only record one man wounded each day and no deaths. The entry for 28<sup>th</sup> reads "... Casualties 1 man killed 2 wounded. The man killed was buried at 3 pm today ... in the cemetery here." This must refer to Alfred. War diaries do not name Other Ranks, only officers.

Alfred is buried in Agny Military Cemetery in grave plot F41. He is additionally remembered on both local war memorials as well as the memorial in Steyning parish church. A private family grave at C43 in the South Avenue cemetery mentions both him and his brother.



*Badge of the Royal Fusiliers  
as depicted on a GWCC gravestone*

### Frank

Frank was baptised at Hurst on 06/09/1896 and was listed at home in Washbrooks Cottages on both the 1901 and 1911 censuses. In the latter he was described as a milk boy. He did not marry.

As with Alfred, Frank's army papers are not available. From other sources we know that he attested at Hurst into the Royal Sussex Regiment as number 1798. This number means he joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion in 1913. This was a Territorial Force based in Hurst and Frank would have been in B Company who drilled there and also at Burgess Hill and Henfield. The Mid Sussex Times of 8<sup>th</sup> September 1914 published a list of serving men and includes him in the list of 1/4<sup>th</sup> battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment. At mobilisation Frank was transferred to the 2/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and re-numbered 241846. Based on this number, and the fact that he was not awarded the 1915 star, this probably occurred in late 1915. The 2/6<sup>th</sup> completed final training on Salisbury Plain on February and March 1916 followed by final leave in April and May before arriving in France on 28<sup>th</sup> May. Their first engagement was an attack at the Battle of Fromelles in July but due to bad handling casualties were very high and the rest of 1916 saw them in support roles. The start of 1918 saw the German Spring Offensive near St Quentin. The battalion came under heavy fire in late March and it is likely that this is when Frank was injured. He would have been taken to one of the field hospitals based in Le Treport ready for returning to the UK. Sadly Frank died from wounds on 01/04/1918 and is buried at the Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport in grave V.F.6B.

He is also remembered on both local war memorials and a private family grave at C43 in the South Avenue cemetery.



*Badge of the Royal Fusiliers  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Charles Antonio Marona

Charles Antonio Marona was the only child of Francisco Antonio Marona and Sarah Foyle Marona, nee Whitmarsh. His birth was registered in the Marylebone district at the beginning of 1857. However he was not baptised until 21/09/1859 at Cann in Dorset. This was where his mother came from and continued her family tradition of late baptisms. She had been one of 10 children all privately baptised and subsequently admitted to the church in a block ceremony. Sarah was 15 at the time.

In 1861 Charles was living with his maternal aunt in Shaftesbury but by 1871 he had returned to Marylebone where his mother was working as a housekeeper. His father had died in early 1871 and Charles was working, aged 14, as an engineers clerk. It is not clear where he went following his mothers death in mid 1871 but between then and 1879 he gained a theology degree at King's College entitling him to append the letters AKC to his name.

He was ordained deacon in 1879 and became the curate at Rye that same year. He remained there for 10 years moving to become the vicar of St Andrew's Portslade in 1889. He was only the second vicar to take office there. The 1901 census lists him living at the vicarage in Portslade. In 1902 he became the acting chaplain for the Royal Garrison Artillery Sussex Volunteers and by 1914 chaplain, 3<sup>rd</sup> class. He also had the honorary title of Major. He became the vicar of St Saviours church, Ditchling Road, Brighton in November 1902. He was a very popular vicar at St Saviours and the congregation were particularly sad to see him move on. He 'read himself in' as the rector of Holy Trinity Hurstpierpoint on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1910.

On 28/02/1915 he preached at Christ Church, Newhaven, a mission church in the harbour area of Newhaven. Following the service he complained of feeling unwell and collapsed and died in the vestry before medical assistance could reach him.

The Rev. Marona was buried in the churchyard at Hurstpierpoint with full military honours. His private gravestone is registered with the CWGC. At St Andrew's Portslade there is a stained glass window given in his memory and erected in 1915. This was made by Morris and Co and the receipted bill for £38.3.0 still exists. He is also remembered on both war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Garrison Artillery  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## John and Thomas Maskell

John and Thomas were brothers, the sons of William Maskell and his wife Annie Maskell nee Allen. William, a shepherd, and the family lived in Pyecombe where both John and Thomas were born. Their parents eventually moved to Beard's Folly, New Way Lane between 1901 and 1911.

### John

John, who was also known as Jack, was baptised at Pyecombe on 04/07/1880. He was listed at home with his parents on both the 1881 and 1891 censuses. He joined the navy, enlisting at Portsmouth as a 'Boy 2<sup>nd</sup> class' on 03/02/1898 giving his birth date as 22/04/1881, and was numbered 198464. Since the navy reckons your service time from age 18 his twelve year service period officially started on 22/04/1899. His training started on *HMS Northampton*, an ageing wooden hulk used as a boys training ship. Much of John's early naval service was spent in Portsmouth or as part of the Channel Fleet. He became an ordinary seaman on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and an AB less than a year later. He took several courses at the torpedo and gunnery schools before joining *HMS Orion*, which was a depot ship for torpedo boats in the Mediterranean and based in Malta. He returned to Portsmouth for a period of ceremonial duty and further torpedo courses before joining *HMS Exmouth* the flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet where he served for 3 year. During this period there was a major earthquake in the Messina area with huge loss of life. The navy immediately offered practical help. A commemorative medal was issued to those men who went on land to offer assistance. This included John. A return to Portsmouth and the Home Fleet followed and another period at the torpedo school of *HMS Vernon*. Since he was there for 8 months in the lead up to the completion of his twelve year term it seems likely that he may have been instructing. John's conduct was always listed as VG.

At the outbreak of war John was recalled to the Royal Fleet Reserve joining on 02/08/1914 and being numbered PO/B/2402. He was immediately sent to *HMS Glory*. She served in Nova Scotia as a guard ship and was the flagship of the North American and West Indies cruiser squadron. She acted as escort for a Canadian troop convoy in December 1914. In May 1915 she was moved to the Dardanelles where she offered support to the troops in the Gallipoli campaign. Many of the crew spent time on shore. In October John was moved to *HMS Implacable* in Salonika following her refit. She was in Athens for the abdication of King Constantine of Greece calling briefly at Port Mudros where John transferred to *HMS Blenheim*, who was operating as a depot ship. In late March 1918 John was taken ill and returned home to Haslar hospital. He was there for 5 months before he died from broncho-pneumonia on 02/09/1918.

As a serving naval man John's death is recorded on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission site (as Jack). He is buried in the South Avenue cemetery in grave C193 with his grave registered with the CWGC as a private grave. He is also remembered on both local war memorials. He was entitled to the 1915 Star, War and Victory medals.



*HMS Exmouth in 1908*

### Thomas

Thomas was baptised at Pyecombe on 04/11/1883. On the 1891 census he was listed as living at home and still at school. At that date there was still a small village school in Pyecombe. By 1901 Thomas had left home and was working as a gardener and living in Mill Green Road, Haywards Heath. He returned to the village where he was an active member of the Foresters from 1902 and also a prominent member of the gymnastics club. He started work at Danny as a gardener around 1903. He married Kate Barnett on 31/05/1909 at St Wilfrid's, Haywards Heath, after banns, and they moved to 6 Alice Terrace, Hurst Wickham. A son William Thomas was born in late 1909. William was their only child. Thomas and the family moved, first to Abbays Farm and later to Bedlam Street while Thomas continued to work at Danny.

Thomas signed on to the Royal Garrison Artillery on 17/11/1915 as a gunner giving his address as Bedlam Street. He was numbered 90218, and served at home until June 1916 when he was transferred to the 182<sup>nd</sup> Siege Battery of the RGA and sent to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force, landing at Le Havre on 29/09/1916. He was reported sick on 01/03/1917 but returned to duty a week later. He was then admitted to the No.1 Canadian General Hospital at Etaples on 14/05/1917 suffering from bronchitis. He was invalided back to the UK on the hospital ship *Cambria* four days later. He was taken to the military hospital at West Bridgeford, Nottinghamshire where he died on 19/06/1917, with the cause of death given as bronchitis and anaemia. Kate, who had moved to 12 Manor Cottages, was awarded a pension for herself and William.

Thomas is buried in the South Avenue cemetery in grave C159. Like his brother, this is a CWGC registered private grave. He is also listed on both local war memorials. Although Kate remarried in 1922, at her death in 1953 she was buried with Thomas.



*Badge of the Royal Garrison Artillery  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## Walter Horace Mewett

Walter Mewett, sometimes listed on records as Horace, was born in Ealing on 28/03/1888 with his birth registered in the Brentford district. His mother was Elizabeth Rose Mewett but at this stage I have been unable to positively identify his father. Elizabeth married Job Golds at Hurst on 15/10/1893 and had another son in 1894. Elizabeth and Job were both born in Hurst and it has been suggested by others that Job was Walter's father but the 1901 census clearly lists him as a stepson. At that date the family were living at Cowdrays Cottage.

Walter joined the navy at Chatham as a Boy 2<sup>nd</sup> class in May 1903 and was numbered 226521. The navy reckons your service time from age 18 so his 12 year service period started on 28/03/1906 by which time Walter had already trained on three different vessels, all static ageing wooden hulled ships. The last one, *HMS Boscawen*, was based at Portland. Walter progressed through ordinary seaman to becoming an AB in October 1907. Although his conduct is usually listed as 'Very Good' he did have a couple of periods in the cells. One of which was around the time he married Clara Annie Brotherwood in 1913 in Tonbridge. Their son Walter John was born in January 1916.

Walter's papers make it possible to trace all his vessels, and through their log books where they were operating. One vessel in particular stands out. Walter is recorded as serving on *HMS Natal* from 25/07/1915 to 20/01/1916. At this time *HMS Natal* was assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cruiser Squadron of the Grand Fleet. In November 1915 she had a brief refit at Campbell Laird's yard in Birkenhead, rejoining the fleet at Scapa Flow at the beginning of December. She sailed to the Cromarty Firth where she anchored over the Christmas period. On 30/12/1915 at around 3.30 pm she was rocked by a series of internal explosions and sank within 5 minutes. 390 crew were killed but Walter had a lucky escape. According to a report in the Mid Sussex Times he jumped overboard and 'swam about until picked up'. Following this lucky escape he spent about a week in Hurst before returning to duty. Most of his next six months were spent in shore establishments until he joined *HMS Almanzora* in July 1916.

During his time on board he was raised to Leading Seaman. *HMS Almanzora* was originally a liner but had been converted to an armed merchant cruiser for war service. Having spent a week at her base in Birkenhead she left for a 10 day voyage to Sierra Leone, one of her usual convoy routes at that time, on 18/12/1918. Many of the crew went down with the 'flu and numbers on the sick list were rising rapidly. On 20<sup>th</sup> October a record 130 men were reported as on the sick list. Less than a week later the first fatality was recorded in the log, even though numbers of sick were falling. In all nine men died and this included Walter who died on 29/10/1918 at 7.45 pm from broncho-pneumonia. The log records that his funeral was held at 8.55 pm and he was buried at sea about 12 hours out from Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Walter is recorded on the Royal Naval Memorial at Chatham on panel 20, the Tonbridge war memorial and both local war memorials. The photograph below was taken from the Kent & Sussex Courier of 18/11/1918.



## Charles Lambert Miller

Charles was born in Brighton on 20/03/1878, the son of Charles Lambert Miller and Sarah Amelia Miller. His father was listed as a bricklayer. Charles had an elder sister Rose born the year before him and another sister Ellen born in 1880. Following Ellen's birth the family moved to 14, Manor Cottages in Hurst and all three children were baptised in Hurst in 1881. Sadly Charles' mother died in January 1881. The census returns show the family together in Hurst in 1881 and 1891 although the latter one lists Charles snr. as a fishmonger.

Charles jnr. attested into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment as a private on 01/02/1897 a month after his eighteenth birthday. He was numbered 7353. This was a militia regiment. His papers say that at that time he was working for Mr Couchman as a labourer. When it came to completing the forms the enlisting officer filled in everything, including part of his signature, except for Charles Christian name. Charles was able to write 'Charles', but it is not well formed. After his initial training he was transferred to 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion and renumbered L5359, the 'L' denoting that he was now a career soldier and not a member of a militia.

The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> battalions saw action in South Africa in the Second Boer War, returning to the UK in August 1902. Charles worked his way up the ranks to become a sergeant. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion war diary starts on 02/08/1914 with the statement 'Owing to rumours ...' At the time they were stationed in Woking and plans were set in motion for mobilisation. Men, horses and equipment were inspected, travel plans made and on 12<sup>th</sup> August the battalion entrained to Southampton. The first group boarded the *SS Olympia* along with a large party of Coldstream Guards. The second group boarded *SS Agapenor*. Both groups arrived at Le Havre the following day around midday, disembarked and marched to Bleville Camp. A route march followed via Arras towards Mons arriving at Soissons on 31<sup>st</sup>. The battalion saw action at the Battle of Mons, the Battle of the Marne and the Battle of the Aisne where they came under heavy shelling. Towards the middle of October they were ordered to entrain for Ypres where they entrenched in Chateau Wood. Their position was poor and when fighting started on 30<sup>th</sup> casualties were high. Over the next two days 394 men were lost, most of them on the 30<sup>th</sup>, including Charles. He has no known grave. He is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial on Panel 20 as well as on both local war Memorials.

Charles' effects and his medals were sent to his father, who had moved to No. 8 Manor Gardens by the 1920s. Charles was entitled to the War and Victory medals and the 1914 star. His father applied for the clasp for the 1914 star on his behalf, and this was also awarded.

Charles has the unfortunate distinction of being the first man from Hurst to be killed in action in WW1.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Ernest John Mitten

Ernest was born in Hastings, the son of George Henry Laws Mitten and his wife Ellen Mitten nee Stenning. His birth was registered in the Hastings district in late 1887 but he was baptised at Woodmancote on 05/08/1888. He was brought up by his maternal grandparents James and Elizabeth Stenning. It is not clear how much contact Ernest had with his parents as they remained in Hastings where they had two further children who lived with them. Ernest's grandfather James was a shepherd and in 1891 the family were living in Blackstone near Woodmancote. By 1901 they had moved to Newtimber. All the family were involved in farm work in some way. Ernest's uncle Ernest was a stockman and his uncle Albert a farm carter. Ernest himself was listed as an under carter. His grandfather died in 1909 and his grandmother moved to the school house in Albourne with two of her children, Albert and Augusta, plus Ernest, now listed as a carter in his own right. His grandmother died in 1915.

Ernest's army papers are not available to view but it is known that he enlisted in Hurst, initially in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment but was later transferred to the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion. He was numbered G/3393. The 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion was the first Service Battalion to be formed as part of the Royal Sussex Regiment as part of Lord Kitchener's New Army. They started enlisting in Chichester on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1914 and were overwhelmed. Although all new recruits were nominally placed in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion once the limit of around 1200 was reached the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> battalions were formed and men were allocated according to number. Ernest's number indicates a probable enlistment in September. The 'G' indicates that he was an original member of the battalion. The 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion was officially listed as forming in September and most men have numbers in the 3000 range. The men immediately went into camps on the downs near Brighton and often took part in recruitment marches on the seafront. In December they moved to Portslade, in April 1915 to Shoreham and in June to Woking. The Battalion war diary starts on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1915 with the order to proceed overseas. They left Woking on the morning of 31<sup>st</sup> August, marched to Southampton and boarded the *SS La Marguerite* arriving at Le Havre the following morning. The weather was extremely wet and the diarist notes that the leather equipment they had been issued with did not seem to stand up to the rain very well.

The Battalion settled into life at the front, marching, entrenchment, billets and battles. During 1915 they were part of the Battle of Loos, in 1916 the Battles of Hooze, Ancre and two of the major battles of the Somme in August, Delville Wood and Guillemont. By April 1917 they had reached Arras and by July, Ypres. Ernest was killed in action on 03/08/1917 at the start of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele. The 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion were on the front line and exposed to shell fire night and day. A memo from the Brigadier General of the 73<sup>rd</sup> infantry Division wished to make it clear that "Difficulties were overcome with cheerfulness and everything was carried out with that thoroughness and soldierly spirit which is a special feature of the Battalion."

Ernest has no known grave and is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial on panel 20, on both local war memorials and also on the Albourne war memorial in the church, where he is listed as John.

He left a brief army will in which he left his effects to his aunt Augusta and these would have included his medals, the 1915 Star, the War and Victory medals.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*



## George O Norman

George was born to Alfred Norman and Elizabeth Ann Norman nee Simmonds in Plumpton at the end of 1896 and was baptised there as George Obed(iah). on 11/04/1897. The baptismal record states that the family were living in Streat at the time. Alfred had been a farmer and then a waggoner on a farm and George was named for his paternal grandfather Obediah Norman. In 1901 Alfred and Elizabeth were living in Worth. Also there was George, listed as Alfred, plus his brother Herbert and Alfred senior's sister Rosie. Elizabeth Ann was buried in Worth just a week after the census was taken so this was clearly a confusing time. By 1911 George had left home and was listed as a 'House Boy' at a girls boarding school in Selwyn Road, Eastbourne. His widowed father was a farm foreman at Mere Pond Farm, Hascombe near Godalming in Surrey and his brother Herbert was living in Hove. His father moved to Hurst, probably around 1915 and is known to have been living in Manor Cottages in 1936 when he died.

George's army papers are no longer available but 'Soldiers who died in the Great War' states that he enlisted in Eastbourne into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment and was numbered S/2117. Other papers list him as LSR/2117. This number actually relates to George joining the 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Reserve Battalion in early June 1914 as a man with no previous militia experience, and then being posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion at a later date. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was a depot/training unit remaining in the UK throughout the war but supplying men to other battalions when reinforcement were required. They had been formed in Chichester in 1914 and on mobilisation moved to Dover. In May 1915 they moved to Newhaven for duty as Newhaven Garrison. George's medal index card states that he entered France on 01/06/1915. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion were based in Cambrin at the time and their war diary notes the arrival of a draft of 30 men on 12<sup>th</sup> July. George joined a battalion that had fought together across France and suffered heavy losses at the ill fated Battle of Aubers Ridge in May. By 1916 the battalion had moved on towards the Somme and the many skirmishes that formed part of this major battle. They started August 1916 undergoing training near Menencourt and on the 14<sup>th</sup> moved to the front line at High Wood where an attack was mounted. Over the seven day period to 21<sup>st</sup> the battalion lost 3 officers and 56 men killed with a further 87 missing. George's death is recorded as 19/08/1916 but he has no known grave.

George is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial on pier and face 7C and both local Memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Ernest Henry Parsons

Ernest was born and lived all his life in Clayton. He was baptised at Clayton church on 20/11/1892, the son of Thomas William Parsons and his wife Sarah Ann Parsons nee Russell. The 1901 census lists the family at Wood Cottage, Clayton with his father listed as a corn merchant's store keeper. They were still there in 1911 with Thomas listed as a groom and domestic gardener and Ernest as a house and garden boy. Ernest sang in Clayton church choir for many years. Some time between 1911 and 1916 the family moved to Hurst.

Ernest enlisted in the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) on 07/07/1916, reportedly in London. He was placed in the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion and numbered G/24772, the 'G' denoting that this was just for war service and he was not a career soldier. Ernest's army papers are no longer available to view so we cannot be certain when he entered France, or where he was. The 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion were already serving in France in July 1916 and recently published medical papers show that when Ernest was admitted to the 8<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in June 1917 he had been serving in the field for 10 months suggesting he was sent overseas immediately following his initial training after enlistment. Ernest was treated for necrosis, the death of tissue, as the result of an injury he had previously sustained. No details of his treatment are given but he remained in hospital for six days before being transferred to a convalescent depot. The 8<sup>th</sup> General Hospital was in Rouen with a convalescent depot close by. However, although the medical reports do not say he was sent to England he was certainly back in the UK on 27/08/1917 as on that day he was married to Ada Blanks at Chelmsford cathedral. Ada was a red cross volunteer. Just seven days later he was transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion for a brief period before returning to France and joining the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion. The 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion were heavily involved in the Battle of Cambrai, a British offensive action which took place in November and December 1917. This was the first large scale effective use of tanks in warfare. Ernest was severely injured and died from his wounds on 15/12/1917. He is buried in the Mory Abbey Military Cemetery in grave II. F. 8. His captain writing to Ada said that Ernest was '... a very brave soldier ... who volunteered to hold a dangerous post...' There is a slight conundrum in that reporting his death the Mid Sussex Times records that Ernest was serving in the Royal Sussex Regiment. This is the only reference to the RSR in connection with Ernest.

Ernest is remembered on the civic centre Memorial in Chelmsford, Clayton War Memorial lych gate, and on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Fusiliers  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## William Parsons

William was born in Hurst and baptised at the parish church on 07/03/1886, the son of James Parsons and his wife Mary Parsons, nee Nye. James was a carter and Mary came from Sayers Common. In 1891 the family were living at Alders Cottage, and James was working as an agricultural labourer. Alders Cottages are on the Brighton Road and James could have worked at either Wanbarrow or Washbrooks Farms; both are close by. By 1901 the family were still in the same house and James was now listed as a carter, with William as a carter's mate, aged 15. William's mother Mary died in 1907 and James, now in his late 60s, moved to 6 Manor Cottages. The 1911 census lists both James and William as waggoners on a farm.

Details of William's army career are scarce. We know from newspaper reports of his death that he had joined the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment as a private, but the only other personal information available is the record of his death on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission site. He had been numbered G/2650 and was killed in action on 01/07/1916. The 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion were initially formed at Chichester in 1914 from recruits from across the county. They were mainly older men in their 20s and 30s, and William's age and assigned number would fit well with this date. When the battalion was sent to Colchester for further training it was still under strength and lacking equipment and uniforms. Final training was undertaken on Salisbury Plain in May 1915 before they landed at Boulogne on 01/09/1915 intended for action on the Somme. Things were relatively quiet until they were instrumental in the attack on Montauban on 01/07/1916, the date of William's death.

William has no known grave and is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial on pier and face 7. C. He is also listed on both local war memorials.



*This posed photograph shows the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion under canvas, training at Colchester in late 1914. It probably does not show William, but illustrates the lack of proper uniform.*

## George Henry Payne

George was born in Burgess Hill and baptised at St John's on 03/07/1887. He was the son of James Payne and his wife Rose Adelaide Payne, nee Peckham. By 1891 the family had moved to live at 3 Pickham's Cottages with James listed as an agricultural labourer, he had previously been a labourer in the brickyard in Burgess Hill. In 1901 the family had moved closer to the village and were living at 1 Fair View. James was now listed as a hay trusser while George was working as a telegraph messenger. George married Esther Turner in mid 1909 and they had a daughter, Marjorie Amelia Rose, who was born the following year. She was their only child. In 1911 George and Esther were visiting her parents, then living in Horsted Keynes. George was listed as a hay trusser, like his father. They lived in Cuckfield Road. George and Esther were involved with the Hurst Wesleyan (Methodist) church where George was a well respected teacher in the Sunday School. The foundation stone of the new church building, in Cuckfield Road, had been laid in 1909 with the building completed during 1910. He was also a member of the local court of the Ancient Order of Foresters.

I have been unable to locate any army papers for George but for a considerable time he was a member of Q company of the Army Service Corps in the Forage department. He was numbered F/24086, the F standing for Forage. The ASC were responsible for the supply and transport of supplies for the troops and George soon rose to become a much respected staff sergeant. He would have travelled across the south of England in this role and in 1918 was working in Bethersden in Kent. He succumbed to the 'flu which turned to pneumonia and he died on 24/11/1918.

His funeral was very well attended showing the respect the village had for him. The initial service was held at the Wesleyan church and his coffin was then transported through the village to the South Avenue cemetery. He is buried in grave D1 where there is a CWGC stone. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Army Service Corps  
as depicted on George's CWGC gravestone*

## John George Peskett

John was born in Hurst in 1882 and baptised here on 05/08/1883, the son of John Peskett and his wife Anne Roser Peskett nee Smith. In 1891 the family were living in Western Cottages, near the church on the West side and John snr. was a gardener. Anne Roser died in 1895 and by 1901 John snr was running the Oak Tavern in St George's Terrace, next to Howard Lodge. John jnr. was listed as a gardener, still living at home. He married Fanny Rosina Davey at Hurst on 17/04/1910 and by 1911 they were living at Court Bushes in Cuckfield Road. John was now listed as a furniture salesman and had been working for Masters and Tulley since around 1904. Their daughter Marjorie Alice was born in 1911. John was very involved in village life. He sang in the church choir at both the parish church and St George's, was a member of the Hurstpierpoint Institute and also of the Tunbridge Wells Friendly Society.

John enlisted in the 120<sup>th</sup> Company of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps on 04/08/1916. He was numbered 20751 and posted to AOC Chatham for training. He was sent to France, arriving on 23/10/1916 and was stationed in a base depot in Dieppe. Dieppe was the site for a number of base depots and it has not so far been possible to identify exactly where John was serving. He remained in Dieppe throughout the rest of the war, and being relatively close to the UK he was able to make regular short visits home. He was promoted to Lance Corporal and later Corporal. His commanding Officer was Captain S W Caldbeck who reportedly had a Hurst connection.

In November 1918, just as he had been put up for promotion to Sergeant and was expecting to spend a few days at home, John caught a chill. He was taken to the 5 Stationary Hospital in Dieppe where he developed 'flu followed by pneumonia. The matron of the hospital, in a letter to Fanny, said that he had died very peacefully at 9.30 am on 29/11/1918. His captain also wrote and gave Fanny details of John's funeral. This was a large, full military funeral with a salvo of rifle fire over his grave. The captain took it upon himself to purchase a large wreath of pink flowers, supposedly from Fanny, which were carried behind the procession and then placed on the grave. A very full report is recorded in the Mid Sussex Times for 10/12/1918. John is buried in the Janval Cemetery in Dieppe in grave I.Y.4. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Obadiah Pidgley

Obadiah (or Obediah) was born in Bolney on 13/12/1893 to William John Pidgely and his wife Ellen Pidgley nee Wickens. Obadiah was the fourth of their nine surviving children. The family moved from Bolney, to Albourne by late 1896 and finally to Hurstpierpoint by 1899 where they lived at 15 Manor Cottages. William had been employed as a bricklayer but in later life was a road man working for the county council. Obadiah started work as an agricultural labourer but on his attestation papers called himself a gardener.

Obadiah's army papers are among the 'burnt papers'. Damaged by an incendiary attack on the repository in WW2 and severely water damaged they are hard to decipher. It would appear that his army career was as below, but some areas are open to question, in particular his army numbers.

Obadiah apparently attested into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Reserve Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment at Hurst on 01/09/1914. The Attesting Officer was Arthur Weekes. He said he had previously been in the 4<sup>th</sup> Royal Sussex Territorials (his words) and had also previously been rejected for military service due to his toes. A medical examination at attestation records the fact that he had hammer toes. An RSR number of G/1009 was issued to him at some point and this would seem to agree with an enlistment into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion. The 'G' denotes that he enlisted for war service only. Men from 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion were trained and then posted as reinforcements to other RSR battalions and it seems likely that he was transferred to the 7<sup>th</sup> Service battalion who were based in Aldershot. He does not seem to have been a model soldier. Whilst in Aldershot he overstayed his period of leave just before leaving for France, but it is impossible to read what his punishment was. The 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion left the UK on 31/04/1915 and entered France the following day. The equipment and horses landed at Le Havre and A, B, C and D Companies travelled from Folkestone to Boulogne on the *SS Victoria* landing the following day. They were involved in the Battle of Loos at the end of September and saw further action at Hohenzollern Redoubt in mid October. Obadiah's behaviour was still giving cause for concern and on 19/12/1915, the last day of the action above, he was disciplined for 'irregular conduct in the trenches and making an [??] remark to an NCO'. Perhaps fortunately the relevant word is not readable on his papers. For this he was given 5 days Field Punishment number 2. This meant he was placed in handcuffs and fetters but could still march with his company. He would also have endured hard labour and a loss of pay.

Obadiah was posted to the depot on 19/11/1915 and appears to have been returned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion on 08/08/1916. By now he was in the UK but his date of return is uncertain. His papers report that on 15/09/1916 he was in the guard detention room awaiting trial. He was tried at a Court Martial hearing in Newhaven on 28/09/1916 charged with drunkenness and 'striking a person in whose custody he was placed.' He pleaded guilty to the first charge and not guilty to the second but was found guilty on both charges and sent to the barracks at Wandsworth for 28 days detention. At the end of this period he was returned to duty but was placed in the 102<sup>nd</sup> Training Reserve. Following a major revision of reserve battalions this was a centralised reserve and soldiers could expect to be transferred to any regiment if needed. The 102<sup>nd</sup> had originally been the 28<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment who were based in Aldershot. Obadiah would have been renumbered but it is unclear which of several numbers that appear on his papers he was assigned at this date, probably either 47332 or 70420. At a later date he was transferred to the 5<sup>th</sup> Labour Battalion and numbered 157877.

Several medical examinations are recorded in his papers. One in 1916 refers to deformed toes and varicose veins, and says that he complained of a cough and asthma, the result of being gassed while in France. He was sent to Cambridge for a further examination and in 1917 he was classed as category B2. Following this assessment his final transfer was to the 430<sup>th</sup> Agricultural Company on 27/05/1917. This company was for men who were unfit for front line duties. They undertook farming duties and he was based at the Infantry depot in Northampton and again renumbered as 241102.

Obadiah married Elsie Cook at St Nicholas, Leicester on 24/11/1918 after banns had been called. The marriage register records him as a gardener, not a soldier. Shortly afterwards he was taken to the military hospital in Northants suffering from bronchitis. This affected both his lungs and the medical examiner records that he also had a weak heart and was not responding to treatment. He died on his 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, 13/12/1918, at 11am. Elsie claimed his body for burial and he is interred in Leicester (Gilroes) Cemetery in grave DD 120 where there is a CWGC stone. The CWGC site lists him as private 1009, Royal Sussex Regiment, transferred to the Labour Corps as 241102. He is remembered on both local war memorials but not in Leicester or Northants.



Obadiah's CWGC headstone  
in Leicester (Gilroes) Cemetery

## Albert Pierce

Albert was baptised on 07/09/1890 at Hurstpierpoint, the son of Frederick George Pierce and Isabella Pierce nee Goddard. He was one of eleven children born to the couple. His father was a domestic gardener. In 1891 the family were living in Ribbetts, by 1901 they had moved to Sayers Common and by 1911 were living at 17 Manor Cottages. Albert, however, was working as an under gardener with Sydney Reeves in Binfield Hampshire. Sydney had previously been working in Hurst as a gardener since at least 1891.

No army papers can be found for Albert but from other sources we know he enlisted with the 1/6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Hampshire regiment, probably in 1914. The battalion was a territorial battalion had been formed in Portsmouth on 04/08/1914. It seems likely that Albert was an early recruit. His enlistment number was 6/1947. Following the declaration of war all four territorial battalions, 1/4<sup>th</sup>; 1/5<sup>th</sup>; 1/6<sup>th</sup> and 1/7<sup>th</sup> moved to Salisbury plain for further training centred around Bulford camp. On 09/10/1914 they all left Southampton for India arriving at Karachi on 11th November. At this point there was a rearrangement of men and Albert was transferred to the 1/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion and renumbered 280613. They were initially attached to the 4<sup>th</sup> (Rawalpindi) Division and later the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. They replaced the regular soldiers stationed in India with their role to protect 'The Jewel in the Crown' that was India. It was mainly garrison duty and policing.

With the fighting in Europe continuing and numbers of casualties rising the 1/4<sup>th</sup>, 1/5<sup>th</sup> and 1/7<sup>th</sup> battalions were moved to Mesopotamia landing in Basra on 18/03/1915 where they were based. Conditions were difficult and attacks by the Turks followed. Eventually the 1/4<sup>th</sup> arrived at Kut-el-Almara in early December 1915. Their position was thought to be easily defensible with supplies expected within a month. In the event the town was besieged and attacked daily. Eventually after five months with food supplies exhausted and no hope of relief in sight the commanding officer had no choice but to surrender on 29/04/1916. The treatment meted out to these prisoners of war was appalling. They were marched several hundred miles, expected to work and regularly beaten. few survived. Albert is recorded as dying from pneumonia at Yarbashi on 07/08/1916. The CWGC give his grave reference as plot 21 T 9 in the North Gate cemetery in Baghdad. With the current situation in Iraq it has been impossible for the CWGC to maintain this cemetery.

Albert is remembered on his parent's grave, C 16, in the South Avenue Cemetery as well as on both War Memorials. The regimental Roll of Honour of the Hampshire regiment is housed in Winchester cathedral.



*Badge of the Hampshire Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Roger Alan Piper

Roger, son of Frederick Piper and Alice Elizabeth Piper nee Knapp was born on 20/07/1894 at Kingston, in Surrey where he was baptised on 14/10/1894. He had an older brother Percival, also born in Kingston, who died in 1901. A much younger brother, Archibald was born in Preston, Brighton, Sussex in 1903.

Roger's father was a solicitor and in 1901 the family were living in Kingston but had moved to Brighton before 1903. In 1911 they were living at 57 Rugby Road. However Roger was already a member of the merchant navy and so was not listed at home. Local directories show the Pipers living in Hurstpierpoint by 1912.

While we do not know where Roger went to school the first scout troop in Brighton was raised at Cottesmore School in November 1907. It is very likely that Roger was a member as he was one of the 30 boys who attended the second scout camp led by Robert Baden-Powell which was held at Humshough in Northumberland in the autumn of 1908. The boys were selected by competition from thousands of entries across the country. There were many activities during the fortnight's camp including splicing and whipping ropes but one event probably peaked Roger's imagination as the group visited *HMS Calliope*, then a training ship used by the naval reserve and based in Newcastle. The camp closed a couple of days after this visit with a stirring address from Baden-Powell, in which he said a scout should 'always think of others and try to help them before thinking of himself.' A maxim Roger certainly followed.

Roger does not appear on the 1911 census as he was indentured into the Merchant navy as an apprentice on 03/10/1910. He was bound to Aberdeen based company George Milne and Co. for 4 years. They ran the Inver Line, and had 15 vessels at that time trading to the Far East, Australia and New Zealand. From accounts they do not seem to have been the best run ships and Roger would have had to work extremely hard, often in adverse conditions. There is no record of his merchant navy papers so it is not possible to say which vessels he sailed on or where he went. Following the completion of his apprenticeship he would have been free to move to another company.

The *Mekong* had been built as a luxury steam yacht of around 900 tons by Ramage and Ferguson of Leith in 1906. Originally named Maund and built for Adam Singer, of sewing machine fame, she travelled widely in the Baltic and Mediterranean. She was registered in Southampton with the official number 119732. Copies of her crew lists are held in the Southampton archives. She was sold in 1912 and re-named *Mekong* and the new owner embarked on a round the world trip spending a long time in the Far East. On his return to the UK in 1915 he reportedly gave the vessel to the Royal Navy for use as a patrol boat. Other sources suggest she was requisitioned. It is not clear whether the crew were also transferred to the navy en bloc, as often happened with other 'acquired' vessels. Certainly the Master became the navigating officer but other crew members are not named. The Mid Sussex Times notes that Roger was part of her crew in late 1915 and it would seem likely that he had joined her in the Far East the previous year. The picture shows him in naval uniform, possibly as a member of the Royal Naval Reserve. The *Mekong* was taken to Portsmouth, equipped with guns and painted grey. From early 1916 she was based in Grimsby patrolling the area from the Humber to Berwick.

Her Royal Naval career was short. In the early hours of 12<sup>th</sup> March 1916 while returning to Grimsby in very heavy seas, gale force winds and with limited visibility the *Mekong* struck rocks off Gristhorpe and was driven ashore under the cliffs at a place known locally as 'Chimney Hole'. The bad conditions made it impossible to put out a life boat. The ship's fireman attempted to swim ashore but drowned. Roger also tried to swim with a line round his waist but tragically he also drowned. A third crewman did get ashore to raise the alarm and eventually the rest of the crew were saved by breeches buoy. One other member of the crew also died and the bodies of Roger and the fireman

were later recovered from the shore. Roger's death was registered in the Scarborough district, but he is buried in Hurst churchyard and has a CWGC headstone.

Roger's gallantry was recognised by a citation from the Royal Humane Society, and by the Rear Admiral Commanding the East Coast of England defences who wrote to his father. This was reported in full in the Mid Sussex Times in June 1916.

As the *Mekong* did not sail through a war zone Roger was not entitled to the Merchant Marine Medal but he was awarded the War medal, Victory medal and 15 Star. His name is included in the St Peter's Brighton Memorial Book, on both local war memorials and also at St Andrew's Immingham.

He certainly lived up to Baden-Powells exhortation to think of others before himself.



*Roger in naval uniform*

## Frederick Blanchett Pitt

Frederick was born in Brighton in the middle of 1889, the only son of Frederick James Pitt and his wife Emma Pitt nee Turner. Frederick snr was a wine and spirit merchant and at Frederick jnr's birth they were living in Grand Parade Brighton. The 1891 census also records them there. By 1901 the family had moved to Glenthorne, (94) Wickham Hill, Hurst, and they were still there in 1911. Frederick jnr was apprenticed to his father but it is not known exactly where they traded. He married Lena Violet Ponting in Lewes in late 1913 and they moved to Friar's Walk, Lewes. Their only daughter, Marion Violet, was born there in January 1915.

At his attestation on 22/09/1914 Frederick said that he had previously been a member of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment for four years. This was a territorial battalion, originally formed in 1908 and by 1914 'B' company was based at Hurst. Frederick's number (641) would suggest he may have joined in late 1908 or early 1909. His army papers suggest that in 1914 he signed for one year as a Special Reservist of the RSR. He was initially placed in the 9<sup>th</sup> Service Battalion. They were billeted in Portslade in December 1914 moving to Shoreham in April 1915. Frederick spent two weeks in the military ward of Shoreham Infirmary in January 1915 with septic hands. He was promoted to corporal in February 1915 but was again wounded in May 1915. A medical board on 28/05/1915 recommended that he was fit for home service only. The 10<sup>th</sup> battalion had been converted to a reserve battalion based in Colchester in April 1915 and Frederick was transferred to them in June when he recovered from his injury. Men in reserve battalions could expect to be sent as reinforcements to any regiment and Frederick joined the Machine Gun Corps on 07/03/1916 being promoted to lance sergeant of 98 Company on 31/03/1916. He was renumbered 26539.

Frederick entered France on 25/04/1916 and was reprimanded for neglect of duty just 4 days later. He was injured by a gunshot wound to the neck in July 1916 and taken to Number 7 Canadian Stationary hospital in Le Havre on 31st. He was discharged to his home base to convalesce on 5<sup>th</sup> August. On 15<sup>th</sup> September he was admitted to the 26<sup>th</sup> General hospital at Etaples suffering from the flu. He was evacuated to the UK on the hospital ship *Dieppe* on 24<sup>th</sup> and taken to East Leeds hospital. He was considered fit for duty by 7<sup>th</sup> October and granted a week's home furlough. It is not clear on his papers, but it would seem that Frederick remained in the UK being transferred to 216 Company MGC in late December 1916. he landed at Le Havre on 17/03/1917 having been promoted to full sergeant the previous day. He was again in hospital for a week in May 1917. On 9<sup>th</sup> July he was working his way up to the front line to check on the guns and relieve a sentry when a 'whizz bang' flew over and burst beside him severely injuring his leg. He was evacuated to a base hospital but died of his wounds on 12/07/1917. He is buried in the Coxyde Military Cemetery in grave 1.I.32. He is also listed in the St Peter's Brighton Memorial Book, on the main Lewes war memorial as well as both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Machine Gun Corps  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Arthur Ernest Randell

Arthur was born in Hurst on 26/05/1889 and baptised here on 07/07/1889. He was the son of Henry Randolph Randell and his wife Sarah Ann Randell nee Du Lake. Henry ran a plumbing and decorating business in the High Street from a shop on the corner of Pitt Lane, sited where Lloyds chemist now stands. They lived over the shop and Arthur was at home with his parents in 1891 and 1901. His sister Eva Daisy, in her autobiography, *'Daisy: Growing up in a Sussex Village'*, recalls that Arthur was very keen on motor cycles and vehicles of all sorts, and by 1911 he had moved to Battersea where he was listed on the census as a fitter in a motor bus yard at Shepherds Bush. He also drove the buses. He married Gertrude Williams at St John's Fulham on Christmas Day 1912. A son, Arthur George, was born on 21/03/1915 and a second son, Charles William, in October 1916.

Arthur enlisted in the Army Service Corps in London on 03/09/1912 for one year's service. He was numbered CMT/421, the letters denoting that he was a member of the special reserves of the Motor Transport section. He was aware when signing that he could be called upon for further service in the event of 'National Danger'. In September 1913 he re-enlisted for another year. In fact he was mobilised in Liverpool on 06/08/1914, one of the first men to serve. He was sent to France at the beginning of October 1914 but was injured by the end of the month and repatriated to a hospital in Lincoln to recover. He remained in the UK and the ASC and was eventually discharged at the end of his third year of service on 04/09/1915.

Following the Military Service Act of 1916 Arthur was recalled and attested as private M/318522 of the Army Service Corps. His skills as a driver were recognised and he was sent to Grove Park for further training on army vehicles. On 24/06/1917 he left Southampton for Le Havre travelling overland to Marseilles where he boarded *MT Runtegreen* bound for Alexandria, arriving at the Base MT Depot on 09/07/1917. He was initially listed in 906 Company but following a course he was certified as a driver 1<sup>st</sup> class, qualified to drive caterpillar trucks and listed in 895 Caterpillar supply Company. His family found the idea of a Caterpillar company amusing. His army papers also refers to 951 Company who were responsible for heavy artillery ammunition supply.

It is unclear where he was when he caught the 'flu but he was admitted to Haifa hospital on 14/10/1918. He died a week later on 22nd. The cause of death was given as flu with complications of bronchitis leading to pneumonia. He is buried in the Haifa War Cemetery in grave A 25. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Arthur, as he first enlisted.  
Taken from 'Daisy: Growing up in a Sussex Village',  
the autobiography of his sister*

## John Sayers

John was baptised at Hurst on 06/11/1892, the eldest son of Richard Sayers and his wife Susan Elizabeth Sayers nee Morley. His father was a farm worker and at John's birth the family were living at Kent's Farm Cottages in Malthouse Lane. By 1901 they had moved to Hatches Cottages, Bedlam Street and Richard was working as a market gardener. Ten years later the family were temporarily split up. Richard was in Burgess Hill with his widowed mother and one of his sons, Susan was in hospital and John was lodging with the Rice family in Bedlam Street. John was listed as a farm carter.

John's army papers are not available to view and it has been difficult to find out where John served. What is not in doubt is that he joined the Royal Sussex Regiment, probably in mid 1915, and entered France on 31/8/1915 entitling him to the 1915 Star, War and Victory medals. His death is recorded on the CWGC website, and elsewhere, as a member of the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion. However his number, G/3394, is not one registered to that battalion. What seems likely is that John enlisted in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion and this would line up with his assigned number and his date of entry into France. During WW1 there was quite a bit of movement between battalions when reinforcements were required and this was often the case with the RSR, particularly after the disastrous events at Richebourg on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1916. The 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> battalions lost over 1000 men between them with the 13<sup>th</sup> all but wiped out..

By September 1916 the 9<sup>th</sup> were involved in the fighting around Delville Wood while the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> were both at Hamel. On 03/09/1916, the day of John's assumed death the 11<sup>th</sup> were involved between Hamel and Beaumont-Hamel. They recorded the loss of 5 men with 123 missing. The 13<sup>th</sup> were in trenches nearer to Hamel. Fighting was intense and, even by war diary standards, confusing. They recorded 8 men killed plus 3 who died later in the day of wounds plus 26 missing. While the 11<sup>th</sup>, who had suffered higher losses, were able to move to local billets the 13<sup>th</sup> were under constant fire and shelling for some days. The situation was clearly very confused and it wasn't until the Germans withdrew to the Hindenburg line that it was finally possible to bury those who had died. At least seven small cemeteries were set up and John was initially buried in the Royal Naval Division cemetery Q17 central. The largest site was the Ancre British Military Cemetery at Beaumont-Hamel and after the Armistice a decision was taken to enlarge this site and re-inter all those buried in the outlying cemeteries. The CWGC state that 'the concentration of cemeteries allowed otherwise unmaintainable graves to be moved into established war grave cemeteries where the Commission could ensure proper commemoration.' In John's case he was identified from the cross previously erected on his grave and re-interred in grave II.D.37. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Ivo Smith (Ernest)

Ivo has been recorded on both local war memorials as Ernest. However, all official records, from his baptism to his death, record him as Ivo.

Ivo was born in Holloway on 29/06/1896 with the civil registration of his birth recorded in the Islington district. He was the only son of George Sidney Smith and his wife Emily Jane Smith nee Gander. Both George and Emily were born in Hurst and lived in Manor Cottages, numbers 20 and 4 respectively, until moving to London where they were married. George was a bricklayer and followed the work. In 1901 they were living in Tottenham and by 1911 had moved to Hendon. Ivo also became a bricklayer.

Ivo enlisted in the Royal Marine Artillery as a gunner on 13/03/1916 and was numbered 1937/S, the 'S' denoting short service. He was promoted to Gunner 2<sup>nd</sup> class almost immediately achieving 96% on his final test. He arrived in France on 09/09/1916 and was raised to Gunner 1<sup>st</sup> class in October 1916. He was admitted to the field hospital in July 1917 suffering from the effects of gas but only stayed there for 5 days before returning to the field. As a member of the heavy Howitzer brigade he would have been involved in some of the heavy bombardment in the lead up to the Second Battle of the Marne. The howitzers the RMA operated were unusual in that they were 15" breech loaders. Weighing 10¾ tons each they operated individually and needed a crew of 60 men and three adapted steam tractors to move and fire them. Ivo was a part of the crew of howitzer No 12. He was killed in action on 10/07/1918, and is buried in the Lijssenthoek Cemetery in grave number XXVIII.D.20.

Ivo is remembered on the Hendon war memorial as Ivo and on both local war memorials as Ernest. His uncle Gilbert Smith, of the RAF, who died in Cairo in 1927, is remembered on a memorial stone in the South Avenue Cemetery in grave plot C 106 and Ivo is remembered on the same stone.



*Badge of the Royal Marine Artillery  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## George Ernest and William Sparshott

George and William were brothers, the sons of George Sparshott and his wife Selina Sparshott nee Smith. George snr is variously described as an ostler, bus driver, drayman and road man. In 1891 the family were living at School Row, High Street but had moved to Oak Villas before the 1901 census.

### George Ernest

George was their eldest son, born in Hurst in early 1890 and baptised here on 02/03/1890. He was listed at home with his parents on the 1891, 1901 and 1911 censuses, on the latter being described as a domestic gardener. He was briefly working at Court Bushes Nursery at the time but later took a job at Bottings the butchers.

George joined the Army Service Corps on 25/11/1913 on a short service contract and was numbered 349. On later documentation he says that he was a driver at the Divisional HQ ASC. He was discharged in order to re-enlist into 95 Company ASC on 27/11/1914. He gave his mother as his next of kin and his address as Oak Villas. George was sent to France arriving on 19/12/1914 but from his papers it is not possible to work out where he was or what he was doing. He may have been involved with a horse transport section. In 1916 he was renumbered T4/38634. T4 denotes that he was compulsorily transferred from a Territorial to an army unit. During December 1916 he had 3 spells of Field Punishment Number 2, being put in handcuffs and fetters but able to move around. He was given 5 days for being late on parade and with dirty footwear. Within a day of completing this he was given 3 days for neglecting to report an injury and then finally on 29<sup>th</sup> he received 14 days for making a disrespectful remark to an NCO.

Except for brief periods of leave he seems to have remained in France until returning to the UK at demob on 01/07/1919. One period of leave would have coincided with his marriage to Mary Oliver at Hurst on 26/05/1917. Her address on his army papers was given as Lilac Cottage, South Street, Chailey but they moved to 19 Brook Street, Lewes on his demob. George worked as a road man and a son Cecil Ernest John was born on 18/04/1920. He was baptised at St John sub Castro.

During his later army service George contracted phthisis (TB) and he died suddenly at home in Lewes on 10/09/1920 with phthisis being given as the primary cause of death. He is buried in the South Avenue cemetery in grave C' 29 where there is a CWGC stone and is remembered on both local war memorials. (Note the numbering of Ernest's grave as C'29 not C29 or C129 as listed elsewhere.) George's son Cecil died in January 1921 and was buried in Hurst. George was entitled to the War and Victory medals and the 1914 and 1915 stars.



*Badge of the Royal Army Service Corps  
as depicted on George's CWGC gravestone*

### William

William was the sixth child and fourth son of George snr and Selina. He was born at Hurst and baptised here on 04/06/1899. He is listed at home with his parents on both the 1901 and 1911 censuses being listed as a school boy in 1911.

There are very few records for William and his army papers are no longer available, but it is known that he enlisted in Brighton. The Military Service Act was passed in 1916 imposing conscription on those aged 18 to 41. William's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday was in early 1917 so unless he lied about his age and volunteered under the Derby scheme he could not have joined up until 1917. Conscripted men were placed in a general reserve and then allocated to a regiment. William was initially listed as private 10613, the Bedfordshire Regiment but no battalion number is given and I have been unable to put a date or battalion to that number. I believe his stay with the Bedfordshire's was brief as he was transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> battalion, the Essex Regiment and numbered 42893. This number dates approximately to a transfer, probably in the field, in June or July 1917. At this date the 10<sup>th</sup> were preparing for Passchendaele which started on 31/07/1917 and their fighting strength had dropped. Periods of fighting were interspersed with periods of training, reorganisation and rest. The war diary notes the arrival of a draft of 219 men and officers on 08/08/1917 while they were based at Roubrouck, and this almost certainly included William. The diary records training, preparations and attacks throughout 1917 and on to 1918. The 10<sup>th</sup> battalion were present at the battles of St Quentin, Avre and the actions of Villers-Brettonneux and by the beginning of August 1918 had reached Amiens. this saw the start of the '100 days of Offensive' intended to finally end the war. The attack at Amiens started at 04:20 on 8<sup>th</sup> in the mist, and large numbers of men and equipment were captured. Unfortunately the line could not be held and a small retreat was ordered. 56 men from the battalion had been killed, including William.

He is buried in the Beacon cemetery at Sailly-Laurette in grave VI. A. 4. His effects were returned to his mother Selina who was named as his next of kin.

William is remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Essex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## Hubert Arnold Squibb

Hubert was the sixth son and eleventh child of twelve born to George Shirley Squibb and his wife Elizabeth Squibb nee Moore. Hubert was born on 07/06/1890 and baptised at the parish church on 03/08/1890, although army records note this as Hurst Green. George was a coachman for the Danny estate and the family lived at Danny Lodge. In 1901 the family were still living at Danny Lodge but George was lodging temporarily in London, presumably still in the employ of the Campion family. Hubert showed an aptitude for chemistry and was trained by Mr Mitten, the local chemist with further training provided by Mr Balshaw from Hurst College. Hubert became a registered student of pharmacy winning prizes for his analysis work. In 1911 he was listed as chemist's assistant. His mother was now running a boarding house at Kinross, next to Clifford Lodge. They later moved to Caburn, London Terrace.

Hubert joined the Sussex Yeomanry, on 25/11/1915. and was numbered 3542. His papers do not say but this was likely to have been the 3/1<sup>st</sup> battalion who were reserves training and supplying men for the 1/1<sup>st</sup> and 2/1<sup>st</sup> battalions. He remained with the Sussex Yeomanry until 07/11/1916 when he was transferred to the Household Battalion Reserves. They had been formed in September and were an infantry battalion taking men mainly from the reserves of the Household Cavalry, the Life Guards and the Horse Guards. He was renumbered 1767 and this number fits neatly between other numbers issued between 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> November. The battalion left England from Southampton in two halves and Hubert arrived at Le Havre on 08/11/1916.

The CWGC and other records list Hubert's death as 23/06/1917 but the battalion war diary entry for 25<sup>th</sup> says, "Tpr SQUIBB No 3 Coy. runner was killed on Railway at 1 a.m." His company commander wrote to Elizabeth and said, "He was carrying important papers and was hit by a shell and killed instantly", the local paper reported that he was an efficient despatch carrier being much respected by his commanding officer for his speedy running. He is buried at Brown's Copse Cemetery Roeux in grave III. H. 22.

He is remembered on both local war memorials.



*Hubert's grave in the Brown's Copse Cemetery, Roeux*

## Reginald Arthur Stenning

Reginald, known as Reggie, was the eldest son of William (Bill) Stenning and his wife Emily Stenning nee Gander. He was born in late 1891 and baptised here on 01/11/1891. His father was a gardener and the family lived at Treeps Cottage. He is listed at home on both the 1901 and 1911 censuses when he was a baker's assistant.

Reggie's papers have recently been digitised but form part of the 'burnt documents' severely damaged in an incendiary attack on the repository during WW2. Reggie's papers are missing large sections. It is possible to work out that he joined the 1/1<sup>st</sup> Sussex (Fortress) Reserve of the Royal Engineers as a sapper on 16/11/1914 and was numbered T224, the 'T' indicating this was a Territorial unit. This unit was based in Newhaven and their role was local defence. As the dangers of invasion receded six engineer units formed the 1/1<sup>st</sup> Sussex Army Troops Company, RE. With their specialist knowledge they left England on board the *Empress of India* arriving at Le Havre on 20/03/1915 joining the British Expeditionary Force at Etaples. At some point Reginald was raised to Lance Corporal and, although the date cannot be read, it is most likely to have been before he entered France. The Company was employed building accommodation for the arriving troops and hospitals and roads around Etaples. They were moved to Vimy Ridge in May of 1916. Here their role was to extend the deep dugout and tunnel systems under the ridge. One of their innovations was to construct a ropeway slung from the roof to carry the spoil out to the surface. This system was later adopted by other units. They also built concrete machine gun positions, and if that were not enough, some of them, reportedly, helped the local farmers with their harvest.

In late 1916 a reorganisation of troop numbering of the Territorial Forces was undertaken. Six figure numbers were allocated and the Sussex Fortress men were given numbers starting at 545001 on 01/02/1917. Reggie was renumbered 545119. Just two days before this Reggie was hit in the leg by a shell splinter. He was taken to 45 Casualty Clearing Station based at 'Edgehill' near Dernancourt but died the following day. He is buried in the Dernancourt Communal Cemetery Extension in grave IV. H. 8. He is remembered on both local war memorials.

Grave B102 in the South Avenue Cemetery holds a member of the Stenning family. In 1920 an Act of Remembrance laid flowers on the graves of all servicemen who had died. Reginald is mentioned in the newspaper article and it is possible that flowers were laid here. There is no stone.



*Badge of the Royal Engineers  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Thomas Street

Thomas was born in Blackstone and baptised at Woodmancote on 15/04/1894, the eldest son of Thomas Street and Liliias Street nee Fairall. In 1901 the family were living in Woodmancote at Bilsborough New Cottages and Thomas snr. was a stockman on a farm. By 1911 they had moved to Pyecombe living at Warren Cottage. Thomas jnr was now employed as a domestic gardener. They moved to Hurst some time before 1915 as Thomas snr. was buried in the South Avenue cemetery in grave C 151 on 23/12/1915. Following Thomas' snr's death Liliias moved to East Ham.

Thomas junior's papers are no longer available but he reportedly joined the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment at the beginning of the war and rose rapidly to the rank of sergeant. He was numbered G/3066, the 'G' denoting this was a General Service battalion. The 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion was formed at Chichester in September 1914 and all men were numbered in the 3000 series. Thomas' low number indicates that he was one of the first recruits. They were billeted in Portslade in December 1914 and moved to Shoreham in April 1915. Further training was undertaken at Woking in June. They left Woking for Southampton and boarded the *SS Marguerite* arriving at Boulogne on 31/08/1915 for service on the Western Front.

The Battalion was involved in the Battle of Loos in 1915 and came under a gas attack at Wulverghem in early 1916. This was followed by the battle for Delville Wood. This latter was a series of engagements as part of the overall Battle of the Somme. Although the attack achieved its objective it was very costly. Thomas was killed leading his platoon on 31/08/1916. Letters written to his mother after the event speak of Thomas as a very popular leader of his platoon and leading by example.

He is buried in the Bulls Road Cemetery at Flers in grave II. D. 9. He is remembered on his father's grave in the South Avenue cemetery and on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Walter Frederick Talmey (Talmay)

Note that both spellings of Talmey have been found when researching this page. The parish registers also have both.

Walter was born in Hurst on 17/12/1876 and baptised at the parish church on 04/04/1877. He was the second son of William Talmey and his wife Elizabeth Talmey nee Burt. William was a coach painter, listed on some of his children's baptismal entries as a wheelwright's painter. In later years he was also a sign writer. In 1881 the family were living at 3 Spring Gardens. By 1891 they had moved to Church Terrace. Walter's mother was buried on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1892 and on 29<sup>th</sup> of that month Walter joined the Royal Navy. His father remarried, Caroline Slaughter, two years later.

When Walter joined the navy he was underage, and, as has been explained on previous pages, his twelve year term did not officially start until his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Up to that point he was listed as a Boy. He joined at Devonport, was numbered 170445, and joined his first 'ship', the boys training hulk *HMS Impregnable*. Freezing in winter and unbearably hot in summer he would have been pleased to move eventually to *HMS Pembroke* a 'stone frigate' boys training establishment in the barracks at Chatham. He was gradually approaching his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday when he joined the corvette *HMS Ruby* and 'officially' joined the Royal Navy as an Ordinary Seaman (OS). He was rated AB in 1899. He served on many different vessels, which can be traced through his papers, completing his twelve year term on 17/09/1906 while on the battleship *HMS London*.

He then applied for, and was accepted for, the Royal Fleet Reserve based at Portsmouth in May 1907. He was now numbered B2184 (Po) and rated as an AB. He served with the RFR initially for four years. During this period he would have had a civilian occupation but needed to undertake an annual training and be available for recall to the service at any time. He re-enrolled for a further 6 years in August 1911, a total of ten years from originally joining the RFR. He was recalled to service on 09/08/1914 and joined *HMS Egmont*, a depot ship based in Malta. He moved to *HMS Blenheim* at the beginning of 1915. She was another depot ship operating in the Mediterranean and Walter remained on board for 2 years. He joined *HMS Stephen Furness* on 01/03/1917. She was originally a passenger vessel designated as an armed boarding cruiser having been requisitioned by the Navy early in the war. Her role involved enforcing the blockade of German vessels and searching neutral ships. The advantage of her relatively small size, she had a crew of just 111, was that she could remain stationary while a search was carried out, but this also made her vulnerable.

She left Lerwick on 11/12/1917 en route to Liverpool for repairs, having just completed conducting searches in the Arctic. She was torpedoed by the German submarine UB-64 on 13<sup>th</sup> December, west of the Isle of Man. She sank very quickly before life boats could be lowered and only 12 men survived. Many of the casualties were never recovered. Walter's body was eventually washed up on a beach near Llanfairynghornwy, Anglesey. He is buried just outside the East window of the church in a CWGC registered private grave. He is remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Royal Navy  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Hubert William Walker

Hubert was born in Hurst on 25/07/1893 and baptised at the parish church on 13/09/1893 as Hugh William. However on every other record he is called Hubert. His father was William John Stacey Walker, the local boot and shoe maker who had premises in the High Street, and his mother was Emily Walker nee Newman. Hubert was the eldest of two boys. The family lived at Leck Villa on the Hassocks Road which they renamed Glenhurst. Hubert attended Hurst College as a day boy, then known as St John's College, and by 1911 he was a bank clerk. From 1912 to 22/09/1914 he worked at Barclays Bank in Preston Road Brighton.

Hubert's army papers are not available to view but it is known that he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps numbered 40251. From his work dates it would seem likely that he enlisted in late September or early October 1914. He served in France from 31/07/1915 entitling him to the War and Victory medals as well as the 1915 star. He had been promoted to sergeant by 1917.

In August 1917 he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps, and was sent to Farnborough for training. He completed his training at Boscombe Down on 24/12/1917 having shown aptitude and a good knowledge of French internal combustion engines. He also passed his aerial gunnery course. He joined the Royal Air Force at its formation on 01/04/1918 and was assigned to the 8<sup>th</sup> Squadron. Hubert was promoted first to 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant, being gazetted as a full lieutenant in early May 1918. He piloted an Armstrong Whitworth FK 8 two seater biplane whose main role was reconnaissance although it was capable of carrying up to 100kg of bombs either as two or four bombs. His plane had the reference number D5108. On 23/07/1918 he was reportedly flying over the Louvrechy area near Amiens with 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant GG Ashton as crew when they were both killed in action. No details of how they were killed are available although his listed injuries are, inevitably, consistent with a crash. He was buried three days later in an adjacent grave to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Ashton in the Louvrechy Field Military Cemetery in grave 64 where a cross was erected with the French inscription, "Walker Aviateur Anglais. Mort au champ d'Honneur", and the date of his death.

In 1923, following the decision of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to exhume and rebury those servicemen who had initially been interred in smaller cemeteries which were unmaintainable in the proper manner, Hubert and Lt. Ashton were exhumed, and reburied, with military honours, in the Heath Cemetery at Harbonnieres in graves IX. D. 6 and 7. They had been identified by the crosses on their original graves. In the case of Hubert both his RAMC and RAF service are inscribed on his new stone.

He is listed on both local war memorials and included on the memorial at Hurst College. Additionally he is included in the Barclays Bank Book of Remembrance which is held at their HQ in Canary Wharf. An inscription on the stone on the family grave, B83, in the South Avenue Cemetery also mentions him.



## Arthur Nelson Hampton Weekes MC DSO

Arthur was born in late 1888 and baptised at the parish church on 22/01/1889. He was the eldest son of Arthur Weekes JP and his second wife Jessie Nelson Weekes nee Ward. His father had been born in Hurst and having worked for some years in the Bengal civil service had retired back to the village a few years before Arthur's birth. Arthur was educated at Windlesham House school in Brighton followed by Harrow, and he subsequently went up to Oxford with a place at New College from which he matriculated in 1907. The family lived at The Mansion House and were involved in many activities within the village. Arthur jnr. became a chartered accountant.

Arthur gained a commission into the Royal Sussex Regiment in 1908. In 1914 he joined the newly formed 1/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion and served with them in Gallipoli, where he was briefly hospitalised in October 1915. He then served in Egypt the following year, where he was gazetted captain. He was in Palestine in 1917 where he was mentioned in despatches and awarded the MC in November of that year. The citation as printed in the London Gazette reads, "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. Having captured his first objective he held his position until dark, though exposed to enfilading machine-gun fire, which caused many casualties amongst his men. He showed the greatest coolness and determination." Arthur was mentioned in despatches on 15/01/1918 and was awarded the DSO on 18/02/1918.

He entered France on 22/06/1918 and continued to fight with bravery. While commanding the battalion he fell in action on 29/07/1918 at Ouchy le Chateau, aged just 29. He was buried close to where he fell, with a cross erected over his grave. In 1919, after the Armistice, a new cemetery was opened at Raperie and fallen servicemen who had been buried in at least seven very small burial plots, some containing just three men, were exhumed and reburied with honour at the Raperie British Cemetery, Villemontoire. Arthur is in grave IX. E 8 beside several of his men who fell the same day as he did.

Arthur's death was recorded at Harrow on their Founders Day the following year and he has an entry in their Roll of Honour. He is remembered on the two local war memorials and a plaque in his memory was placed on the wall close to the East window in the St Lawrence chapel that is dedicated to his father, who had died in 1917. He is also listed on the memorial in New College Oxford.



*Arthur at Harrow, in Egypt and in France*

## Sydney Wilson

Sydney was born in Hurst in 1890 and baptised here on 04/05/1890. He was the son of John Wilson and his wife Jane. John was the butler at Danny. Within the family Sydney was nicknamed 'Dick'. In 1891 Sydney and his mother and five other children were living at Randiddles. His father was listed at Danny. By 1901 they were living in rooms over Mr Harmes shop in Southdown Terrace in the High Street but only three of the boys were at home. Sydney's father died before the next census and his mother remained in Southdown Terrace. Sydney however was working as an under gardener at Melchet Court Gardens in Romsey.

Sydney's army papers are not available to view, but from newspaper reports we know that he enlisted in the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment and was numbered SD/3262. The 'SD' denotes that this was a South Downs company, recruiting only from within the county. His number gives a probable enlistment date of January 1915. Recruitment for the Battalion had started in November 1914 after the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Battalions had reached full strength, however the 13<sup>th</sup> took a while to reach their full strength and this was not achieved until mid 1915. They trained at Cooden camp near Bexhill and in July moved to Maidstone where they trained with 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> battalions. In September they moved to Aldershot and finally to Witley camp in early March 1916. On 5<sup>th</sup> they left camp for Southampton and boarded either *SS Viper* or *SS Australind* landing at Le Havre the following day where both groups were reunited at the rest camp. The battalion war diaries record a relatively quiet period as they moved across France until they reached Richebourg in late June 1916 where all three Southdown Battalions were based.

The Battle of the Boar's Head, which took place on 30/06/1916, has come to be known as the day Sussex died. Intended as a diversionary attack prior to the first day of the Somme it failed. Figures for the dead and wounded are not included in the war diary for that day, just a laconic entry the following day that reads 'Work of reorganisation commenced.' Official figures note wounded, killed or missing casualties from each battalion as follows 11<sup>th</sup>, 116men; 12<sup>th</sup>, 429men; 13<sup>th</sup>, 800men.

Sydney was one of those killed. He has no known grave and is remembered, along with so many of his comrades, on the Loos Memorial on panels 69 – 73. He is also remembered by name on the two local war memorials. There are memorials to the Battle of the Boars Head in Brighton and Worthing.



*Badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone.*

## Thomas Winter

Thomas was born in Pyecombe in April 1893 and baptised there on 07/05/1893, the son of Richard Winter and his wife Rose Winter nee Flint. His father died within a year of his birth and his mother and the family moved to Burgess Hill. In 1901 they were living at 1 Pretoria Cottages and four of his brothers were working at the local brickworks. By 1911 Thomas and his mother had moved to Grovelands Cottages in Burgess Hill and Thomas was a gardener.

Thomas enlisted in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment at Hurst on 03/09/1914, was numbered 7/1084 and following training was posted to France on 31/05/1915 arriving at Boulogne. He suffered several injuries during his service with the RSR. In October 1915 he spent a week in the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian General hospital at Etaples suffering with a chapped thigh and septic fingers. He returned to his unit but a week later received a gun shot wound near his right eye. It is unclear where he was treated but or where he convalesced but he did not rejoin his unit until 6 weeks after the injury, on 31/12/1915. Thomas had shown aptitude with machine guns and when the Machine Gun Corps was formed by Royal Warrant in October 1915 he was a prime candidate. He was transferred on 01/02/1916 and numbered 20309.

On 16/09/1916, while in the trenches, he was hit in the jaw by gunshot and was taken to the base hospital at Rouen. He remained there for two weeks before being evacuated to Netley hospital where he stayed for fourteen weeks. He was then transferred to the general hospital in Birmingham where he spent a further five months before being discharged unfit for further service on 02/04/1918 and awarded a silver war badge.

Medical reports explain the issues he had. He had lost all the teeth in his lower jaw, which was fractured, there was a large scar below his bottom lip and he also had some damage to his upper jaw. As a result his speech was limited and faint. He underwent several operations to remove the damaged bone and the remains of his broken teeth. To assess his pension he attended an initial medical board on 09/03/1918 which suggested that he was 50% disabled and this was attributable to his war service. He was reviewed at a second board on 27/10/1918 when this time his disability was assessed as 100%. It also records that he had active TB. A family report suggests that Thomas wore a leather mask as so much of his jaw was missing. On discharge he had returned home and he died there on 02/01/1919.

He is buried in grave C203 in the South Avenue Cemetery in a CWGC registered private grave. He is remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Machine Gun Corps  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Arthur George Withyman

Arthur was born on 11/11/1884 in Hurst and baptised at the parish church on 07/12/1884. He was the eldest son of George Withyman and his wife Annie Withyman nee Pearcey. George had moved to Hurst from Dorset to become a footman at Danny. He had a number of occupations, on Arthur's baptismal register entry he is listed as a bricklayer however by 1891 he was a plasterer. The family were living in the High Street, somewhere near Compton House and next door to Annie's brother Joseph who was a bricklayer. By 1901 the family were living at the small tobacconists shop next door to Compton House, probably the same location as where they were living in 1891. This shop operated as a sweet shop and tobacconists until well into the 1950s. However, George was listed as a brewer's agent, almost certainly for Mr Couchman. Arthur was listed as a grocer's apprentice. Arthur married Kathleen Florence Whitburn in Brighton in 1909 and they moved to Park Cottages, Manor Road. In 1911 Arthur listed himself as a house painter, and he and Kathleen had one child, Arthur James Albert who had been born in 1910. Another son Brian George Arthur was born in 1913. Arthur's father George was now listed as a traveller for a brewery, however, local trade directories still list him as a tobacconist. He and Arthur's mother were living at Stanley House, actually the same place as they had lived for 20 years but renamed..

Arthur's army papers are not available but he joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Sussex Regiment and was numbered 4/1243. This battalion was later numbered the 1/4<sup>th</sup>. From Arthur's number we can estimate his enlistment date as late 1911. The 4<sup>th</sup> was a Territorial battalion. B Company were based in Hurst at the Drill Hall in the High Street, behind the Co-op. The men of the Territorial force were renumbered in 1917 and Arthur was allocated the number TF200061. This was done in enlistment order and Arthur's number confirms his original enlistment as late 1911. In early 1915 he was listed in the local paper as the sergeant of B Company of the 1/4<sup>th</sup> battalion RSR. and Arthur and the family had moved to live next door to the Drill Hall. The battalion was moved to Bedford for war training and on 17<sup>th</sup> July they boarded *HMT Ulysses* at Devonport bound for Alexandria, Port Said, Gallipoli and finally Mudros Bay. They disembarked on 08/08/1815 at Suvla Bay. Arthur had been promoted to Company Sergeant Major of D Company, probably before they left England. The battalion war diary does not start in detail until they arrive at Suvla and the pages for August are missing. There is a note that during the move from Suvla to Egypt in December 1915 all battalion records had been lost. Arthur was apparently injured some time in August, probably during the landing at Suvla when it is known that 60 men were wounded. His injury was sufficiently serious that Kathleen received a letter from him in late August 1915 saying he was in hospital in Malta waiting for the next hospital ship home. We know that Arthur recovered from his injuries and returned to the Middle East but we do not know when.

He was killed in action on the first day of the First Battle of Gaza on 26/03/1917 and has no known grave. He is remembered, with his comrades, on the Jerusalem Memorial on panels 25 and 26. He is also listed on both local war memorials.



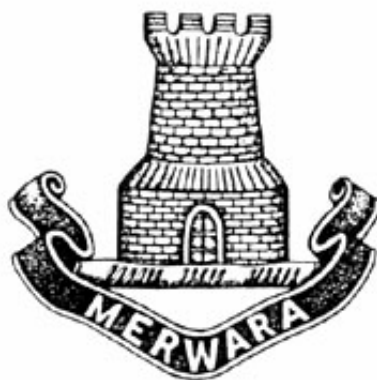
## John Sendall Wood

John Sendall Wood was the son of William Wood and his wife Eliza Jane Wood nee Sendall. The Woods followed a common practice of the time by giving their son his mother's maiden name as a second Christian name. John was born in Clayton, and baptised at Hurst on 15/08/1888. His father William was a farmer, corn merchant and miller and in 1891 the family were living at Stanhope Villa, near to Box House farm. By 1901 John was boarding at Steyning Grammar School and living there in Church Street. His younger brother Charles was also there, but he died in 1906 aged just 16.

I have been unable to locate John's army papers but it is known that he was a member of the Indian reserve of Officers (IARO). This was a staff college for Indian Officers and was just that, a reserve of officers who, although not necessarily career soldiers, were often called upon to supply officers to regiments depleted by war. The men usually lived and worked in India until called upon, and had some military background. A John Wood left Liverpool on the *City of Corinth* on 28/10/1909 bound for Calcutta. This may well be John as he does not appear on the 1911 census for the UK and the local newspaper records that he was unable to attend his grandfather's funeral at the end of 1911 as he was in the army in India. Other records suggest that John was working in India, 'in connection with his brewing interests.'

John was gazetted as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the IOAR in January 1915 when he was stationed in Quetta. During WW1 John was seconded to the 44<sup>th</sup> Merwara Infantry. They had taken a leading role in the capture of Amara and at the Battles of Qurna and Shaiba in 1914. They advanced and were successful against the Turks at the Battle of Nasiriya in 1915. This last battle in July 1915, although successful also left 533 British and Indian troops wounded or killed. While we cannot be certain it would seem likely that this is when John was sent to join them. Following the Battle of Nasiriya the Turks regrouped and surrounded Kut-al-Mara where they laid siege to the town, which housed a large garrison of British Forces. There were a number of skirmishes trying to relieve the town and John was killed on 07/02/1916. He has no known grave and is remembered with his comrades on the Basra Memorial on stone 43.

John's father was a churchwarden at Holy Trinity, chairman of the Parish Council and a JP, amongst other things. He was also very vocal about the plight of farmers losing workers to the military. In late 1916 a brass plate was unveiled in John's memory in the nave of the parish church. John is also remembered on both local war memorials.



Badge of 44th Merwara  
Infantry Regiment

## Michael and Thomas Wood

Michael and Thomas Wood were brothers. They were born in Shipley to Thomas Wood and his wife Fanny Wood nee Tidey. Thomas snr died in late 1891 shortly after the birth of Thomas jnr. The 1891 and 1901 censuses list the family in Coolham village which is part of Shipley parish. Fanny remarried, John Botting, in 1896 but he died just two years later. She later married Wallace Walter Jennings and they moved to Oak Vale in Albourne, and subsequently to Hurst where they lived at 2 Hampton Cottages in the High Street. Michael and Thomas' sister Annie worked at the Rectory in Hurst.

### Michael

Michael was the elder brother being born in 1884. He was listed at home in 1891 and 1901, on the latter census as a farm servant. By 1911 he had moved to Lower Beeding and was working at a livery stable as a stable helper. His mother was now married for the third time and living in Albourne. Visiting her in 1911 was Lily Lizzie Cox whom Michael married on 08/05/1911 at Sayers Common. He described himself as a groom in the marriage register.

Michael enlisted as a private in the Army Service Corps in London in early 1915. He was numbered M2/104388 and assigned as a driver to the Motor Transport section. His army papers are not available but it is known that he was sent to the St Albans area for training. He contracted scarlet fever and was hospitalised at the Sister's Hospital, St Albans. He died there on 13/07/1915 and was buried at St Mary's Redbourne where he has a CWGC headstone.

He is listed on both local war memorials since his mother was living in Hurst at the time of his death.



*Badge of the Royal Army Service Corps  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*

## Thomas

Thomas was born on 23/06/1891 and was baptised at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Horsham on 30/07/1891, although his army papers say he was C or E. In 1901 he was listed at home in Coolham but by 1911 he was boarding with Mr Eade at Brickyard Cottages in Capel, Surrey and listed as a farm labourer.

Thomas enlisted at Brighton on 05/09/1914, apparently into the Royal Sussex Regiment but was transferred to the newly formed 8<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion, the Buffs (East Kent) Regiment two days later. At the time they were based in Shoreham but later in Worthing. His army papers are among the 'burnt papers' and badly damaged, both by fire and water and difficult to decipher as large parts are missing. Thomas gave his occupation as gardener and was numbered G/5541. The 'G' indicating that this was a General Service battalion for war service only.

Extracting what information is possible from his papers plus a variety of other sources we know he completed his war training at Farnborough. From here the men of the regiment entrained to Folkestone where they boarded the SS *St Seiriol* landing at Boulogne on 01/09/1915. They marched to Montreuil where they were reunited with their transport and equipment, which had travelled from Southampton to Le Havre. The war diary over the next three weeks mentions long marches and poor billets, as well as poor weather, until they reached Bethune on 24<sup>th</sup> September. The battalion was heavily involved in the Battle of Loos and Thomas was reported missing on 26<sup>th</sup>, the second day of fighting. His date of death was assumed to be that day, 26/09/1915, although he has no known grave.

He is remembered, with his comrades, on the Loos Memorial on panels 15 – 19. He is also remembered on both local war memorials.



*Badge of the Buffs (East Kent) Regiment  
as depicted on a CWGC gravestone*