

# LEST WE FORGET

The Story of Lemsford Parish  
1913-1919



by  
Andy Chapman



# FORWARD

Since its inception in 2003, Lemsford Local History Group has produced a Display at Lemsford Fete. In 2014 like many Local History groups we decided to mark the 100-year anniversary of the Start of WW1 in 1914.

We based our display on the records of the original articles from the Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine. We extracted all the articles between 1913 to 1919 which related to the War. This gave us an understanding of life in the Parish of Lemsford in those dark years of the Great War and an insight into how the war was a great patriotic celebration in the first few years to the horror that it became including the dark 11 days in July 1916 when 4 men from Lemsford died on the Somme.

The facts are horrific; around 100 men went to war, twenty were killed. This sacrifice was commemorated on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1919 with a ceremony on a wet and dark summers day to unveil the Lemsford War Memorial, a Celtic Cross made of Cornish granite, by Lieut. General the Earl of Cavan. The names of those who died in World War I are engraved on the plinth and those who died in World War II on a tablet at the base of the cross.

## **To the Glory of God and in memory of those who gave their lives in the Great War 1914 - 1919**

I was asked to read during the November 2014 remembrance service. My reading started 'Ninety-six years ago the Lemsford parish War Memorial was unveiled' I thought at the time this was the wrong time to mark this event. For the past five years I have planned to pay a tribute to the Parish that lost so much during those dark years. On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2019 LLHG and the local community came together to mark the unveiling 100 years on, to the day. I cannot imagine what that day 100 years ago was like. It would be packed with all in the Parish attending. The mates and sweethearts of the dead, the siblings, aunties, Uncles, Grans and Grandads, the proud fathers and grieving wives and, of course, the heartbroken mothers who would never recover from their loss. It incredible to think of the men who went to war and returned standing there to say goodbye to their comrades with images of the Battlefields and the horror that occurred, possibly with injuries that would scar them for life, both body and mind. The parish of 1913 was a distant memory and life going forward in 1919 would be so different. Unfortunately 'The War to end all wars' did not live up to it name, this book tries to show you life in the parish from 1913 to 1919 but, more than this, I hope it makes the words 'Lest We Forget' stay with you forever.

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LEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

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**St John's Church, Lemsford**

By Barbara Taylor

The church was erected over 150 years ago as a memorial to George Augustus, the sixth Earl Cowper, who died before he could realise his publicly declared intention to build a church at Lemsford for the benefit of his tenants. His widow and children ensured that his wish was fulfilled, and the church, designed by David Brandon, was built and dedicated in 1859.

### **St John's Church - Lemsford Village**

In 1858, Queen in Council approves the Ecclesiastical Commission's request to create the new Parish of Lemsford out of the Parish of Bishop's Hatfield, diocese of Rochester, on the 3rd February. 1859 Consecration of St. John's, Lemsford by Lord Auckland, Bishop of Bath & Wells on the 27th May.

### **The Brocket Chapel**

In 1930 the Brocket chapel was built in memory of Florence Nall-Cain, who died in 1927, at a cost of £7,000 by Sir Charles Nall-Cain. As you enter the chapel, to the left of the door is her stone effigy lying on a canopied marble tomb, finished in mediaeval style and complete with heraldic cats at her feet. The ceiling displays the armorial bearings of several families associated with Brocket Hall. Oxford architect F.E. Howard was commissioned to build the chapel in the Perpendicular style by Florence's husband Sir Charles Nall-Cain, Great Grandfather of Charles Brocket. The private chapel was dedicated by the Bishop of St Albans in 1930 and is thought to be the last of its kind to be built in England. The nave and tower are Early English Gothic, the chancel decorated, and there is a fine East window which was created, again, in memory of the Earl Cowper.

### **Effects of WW1 on the life of Lemsford Church**

During the Great War, St John's provided comfort during the dark days. From the Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine 1914 to 1919:

With a full time Vicar involved in all aspects of village life, Church, School and Parish were united in their support of the war efforts and maintenance of morale. Lady Mount Stephen of Brocket Hall and Mrs & Miss Holdsworth of Lemsford House were benefactors to all, but especially the children. As war progressed Sunday School and other treats were stopped and the money given to help provide parcels for 'our boys on the front'. The annual choir outing was also discontinued.

The Vicar was sometimes seconded, the sexton and organist joined up, some service times were changed and the wounding and death of so many of Lemsford's young men affected everyone.

The Revd. A. E Ward was Vicar from 1905 to 1920, apart from Jan 1917 to April 1918 when he was given leave of absence to enable him to be domestic chaplain to the new Bishop of Exeter, Lord William Cecil, formerly Rector of Hatfield. (The Revd. H K Moore took over the running of Lemsford Parish with much support from his wife).

As many clergy as possible were involved in some form of National Service and in 1918 the Revd. Ward was appointed to the Admiralty War Staff. He was in London all week except Saturday afternoons. 'He very much hopes to be able to take a half day now and again for visiting. The Services will be carried on as usual, except that it may be found necessary to have only one sermon on a Sunday. The only alteration will be to hold the weekly Intercession Service at 7.15 on Wednesdays instead of at 7 o'clock. The Hatfield Clergy will be responsible for occasional services at Lemsford during the week.

W. J. Horn of Handside was a church warden for over 50 years and his son W. C. Horn of Brickwall for 40 years. During the 1920s, W. C. Horn was also the first Chairman of the newly formed Welwyn Garden City urban district council. William James Horn (L) was Vicar's Warden and his son William Cooper Horn (R) Peoples' Warden throughout the war as they both farmed in the parish.

### **Easter 1915**

The Church looked more than usually beautiful this Easter thanks to the efforts of those who kindly helped in the work of decoration. Five services were held on Easter Day, and the number of communicants was over a hundred. Never scarcely have Good Friday and Easter Day come home to our hearts with such force as this year, with their comforting message, "That God can and did die, and that man can and will live for ever".

### **November 1915**

Harvest Festival –The war deprived us of the assistance of the Brocket Gardeners in the decoration of the East end, but thanks to the labours of a willing band of helpers the Church was made to look very beautiful. The collection during the day amounted to £60 6s. 4d. (equivalent to £2,597 in 2005).

### **November 1915**

The Zeppelin – which passed over our parish the other week has made certain changes to the hours of service advisable. The Evening Service on Sundays will be at 6 o'clock instead of 6.30, and the Intercession Service will be on Thursdays at 4. It is perhaps not altogether a bad thing that we should feel a little – a very little – of the fear and danger which is weighing so heavily on thousands of our fellow creatures. "The Terror which flieth by night" ought to make our evening prayers, both public and private, more real and necessary to us, and to bring home our need of casting ourselves on God's protection.

### **January 1916 Organist**

Geoffrey E. Gartside has been appointed Organist at the Church in the absence of G.M. Panter, who has enlisted. (The church used a pedal organ, pumped by hand by an organ blower, often a child.)

### **March 1916**

Owing to the Lighting Restrictions it will not be possible to hold our Week-night Services in Lent.

### **September 1916 The Sexton**

We greatly miss our sexton, Mr. John Sear, who has joined up. The services hardly seem to be the same without him. We take this opportunity in thanking those who have come forward to do his work – Mrs John Sear, Mr William Horn jun. (a farmer), Mrs Cotterell, and Mrs Hale' - the first time any ladies have undertaken this role at Lemsford.

### **February 1917 Letter from the Vicar**

'I feel that I should like to write a few words to the people of Lemsford, more especially as I was unable to say good-bye to you all before I went away. The delivery of the Message of the National Mission was not over till the end of November, and that left little time for farewells. The bad weather, illness, and the temporary lack of a bicycle complicated matters still further. I hear from Lemsford pretty often..... The churches are well attended here as far as I have seen. I have been to two parish Churches in the town as a member of the congregation and found both full from end to end. The other Sunday I was at a church in Plymouth, which can seat over two thousand people. Every seat was taken, every available chair was taken too, and there were some who stood in the aisle through the whole service. It was, of course, a special occasion, but I am told this Church is nearly as full every Sunday evening. All this is vastly encouraging to those who like to see due honour paid to the Lord's Day and the Lord's House'.

### **February 1918 Lent Services**

Owing to the difficulty of lighting and heating the Church in war time, there will be no special week-day lectures during Lent. There will, however, be a series of special sermons on Sundays at Evensong.

# **Lemsford News 1913/14**

## **Lemsford News April 1913**

Church Army Van – During Holy Week the Parish was visited by the Church Army Van in the charge of Captain Cowland. On Palm Sunday afternoon, Captain Cowland held a special service for men, at which there was an excellent attendance. He preached in the evening to a full church. During the week a Mission Service was held every evening, and on Good Friday there was a Lantern Service in the Schools. We all hope we shall see and hear Captain Cowland again. Among the many excellent addresses he gave, the one which he delivered at the evening Communion Service on Maundy Thursday was perhaps the most striking; we trust it will be remembered by all who heard it. The very good attendance at the Easter Communion, the best on record, is evidence that Captain Cowland's teaching was not without result.

## **Lemsford News August 1914**

Choir Outing – This year Littlehampton was chosen for the annual outing of the Choir and Sunday School Teachers, which took place on Monday July 27th. The party left Hatfield soon after 7, crossed London by bus, and got down to Littlehampton well before 11. The magnificent Castle of Arundel, which was passed on the way down, excited much interest. The fine stretch of sand at Littlehampton was much appreciated by the children; an excursion by motorboat up the river Avon was part of the afternoon's programme. Hatfield was reached on the return journey at half-past ten. We are all delighted to have the company of Mrs William Horn on the expedition and we are most grateful for her kind help.

## **Lemsford News September 1914**

Boy Scouts in Camp – Through the kindness of Lord Verulam, the Boy Scouts again camped in Gorhambury Park. On Saturday morning, part of the troop set off with the new trek cart to St. Albans, L. & N.W. Station to fetch the tents and tarpaulins. The remainder with the goods set off in the horse and cart kindly lent by Mr Strong. We had a long spell of very dry weather, so we were looking forward to another glorious week. The daily papers were eagerly read for the latest War news, and the boys were very keen as to what they would do if they were called upon. On Saturday morning the goods were packed – in the rain of course – when news came that our horse that was to have come had been commandeered by the Army Officials. Lord and Lady Verulam had, however, visited the camp during the week and given the boys some excellent advice. To them we turned in our misfortune, and they promised to help us if it was possible. About 2.30 p.m. a horse and cart appeared and we were thankful that it had come to cart our goods for us. We arrived at Lemsford about 6 o'clock.

## **Lemsford News October 1914**

The names of the parishioners and their relations serving in the colours have been posted up in the church porch. Mr Ladbury has kindly written out the names, and Mr John Sear has provided the frame. Of those in the district whose names appear on the list, Harry

Adams, Henry Baldock, John Sams, Francis Spriggs and Albert Wallis are at the front. Others may be there by the time this appears in print. George Flitney, whose time on the Reserve was up, has rejoined his old regiment, the Bedfordshires, and the following young men have enlisted: F. Wren, A. Wren, (images below - Nurse is a fellow soldier) R. Goodge, O. Reynolds, F. Spriggs, P. White, G. Rosher, S. Skeggs, H. Freeman, Sidney Walby, B. Finney and G. Pucknall. It is a pleasure and a pride to know Lemsford man, F. Bunnidge R.M.L.I. is on HMS Birmingham and another Lemsford man, Leonard Rosher, is on HMS Lance, both of which vessels have greatly distinguished themselves in the North Sea.



Augustus Cecil Wren  
(on the right)



Augustus Cecil Wren  
(with his nurse)

#### Lemsford News December 1914

Three more men have enlisted since our last issue, Albert Wilmot in the Hertfordshire Territorials, George Holton in the Royal Engineers, and Frank Mardle in the Royal Field Artillery. There are now 30 men from Lemsford and Stanborough serving in the Army and Navy, a very good record. Those at the front now are: Harry Adams, 5th Royal Irish Lancers; George Flitney, Bedfordshire Regiment; Francis Spriggs, 12th Lancers; Albert Wallis, R.F.A.; Ernest White, 7th Dragoon Guard. We are glad to say that Harry Baldock is getting on well in the 1st General Hospital at Camberwell. He was one of the ten survivors of the famous L. Battery R.H.A. to which no less than 3 Victoria Crosses have been awarded. The Battery was surprised at Nery, near Compeigne, early in the morning of September 7. The severity of the action may be judged from the fact that out of 218 horses only 16 were left but not a gun was lost to the enemy. We at home can do no better service to our Country than to daily commend our soldiers and sailors to the care of God, and to pray that He would give them victory over their enemies. Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, writing to his brother, who is a clergyman, says: 'We need your prayers, and it is good to know we get them'. Let us see that our brave defenders get our prayers.



## St John's School, Lemsford

During WW1 the headmaster of St John's was Mr Ladbury. His tenure was 1902 - 1936. He lived in the school with his family. Lord Cowper, who at the time owned the Panshanger and Brocket Estates, had the school built in 1872 and which he supported financially until 1903. Mr Ladbury can be seen in image below dated 1907. Many of the small boys in this image were destined to go to war.



On the 4th May 1872, the first entry in the Head Teacher's Log Book was made by Mrs Mary Seaman, the first Head Teacher. On that day, seventy-seven children, ranging in age from three to thirteen, were enrolled. They were divided into two classes - one being taken by Mrs Seaman and the other by her husband Walter, her assistant.

### First pupil Teacher in 1874

When the school first opened, the staff consisted of the head teacher and one assistant. Miss Digby's sister was employed as the first pupil teacher in 1874. Emma Binns served as a pupil teacher and then proceeded to Hockerill Training college in Bishop's Stortford later the same year. Later, intending teachers were drawn from the ranks of the pupils at the age of thirteen if they showed promise. They would receive special tuition from the head teacher before the school opened at 9am. The pupil teachers received an annual grant of one sovereign each (in 1890 £1 was worth nearly £60.00). In addition to these intending teachers, monitors were also employed to help look after the infants.



## The Mill at Lemsford

There has been a corn mill on the River Lea at Lemsford since the 12th century and maybe even earlier as it is probably one of the four mills in Hatfield recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. In 1788 the mill must have been very profitable as, according to estate accounts in the Panshanger Papers, the miller paid £50 in rent (well over £3000 in today's money).

The old wooden clad mill collapsed in the mid-1800s; it is said due to an over energetic young miller working it too hard. A stone plaque showing a lion holding a star and beneath the word 'Rebuilt 1863' is set in the wall behind the Mill.

The Mill was powered by a wooden water wheel and after the mill stopped grinding corn in 1911 the wheel was adapted to provide electricity to the Mill House. Eventually the wheel was removed, and the wheel-pit stood empty until Ramblers Walking Holidays bought the property in 2004 and installed a metal wheel with wooden paddles to generate electricity.

Ramblers Walking Holidays is still located in the Village and over the years has supported the parish and village.

Ramblers Walking Holidays are the original walking holiday experts, who have been offering small group guided holidays for over 70 years. The company's mission is to generate funds for walking charities by the provision of outstanding outdoor activity holidays. Offering more than 250 holidays in over 60 countries worldwide. In addition, it funds Heart & Sole - an initiative managed by company staff, with the aim of reaching into the heart of the communities visited on the holidays, both in the UK and overseas.

Originally based in Welwyn Garden City the company renovated and moved into Lemsford Mill in 2004. Since then it has been welcomed into the community and is delighted to be associated with the 100-year anniversary commemoration of the unveiling of the Lemsford war memorial. It is also proud to be supporting the Lemsford Local History Group with the distribution of 'Lest We Forget' to a number of schools and churches in the local area.

For more information telephone 01707 331133 or go to [www.ramblersholidays.co.uk](http://www.ramblersholidays.co.uk)





## The Long Arm & The Short Arm

'The Long Arm & the Short Arm' was originally a cottage and blacksmith's shop and dates from 1734. In 1853 the buildings were described in an auction catalogue as a brick built and tiled beer house, baker and grocer's shop, bake house and premises.



In 1859 the beer house was apparently owned by George Timms (who had acquired the Cress Cottage in 1854 from Emily Clark). The 1861 census gives Amos Young as beer retailer, he had a wife, Sarah a son and three daughters. In 1871 James Lawrence was beer retailer. He had a wife, Mary and five sons. Other occupants of the building at the time was the Drapper family.

It is thought that 'The unobtrusive little beer house' was first licensed as a public house in 1875 by Elizabeth Lattimore of Wheathampstead. In 1881 Lattimore's were the landlords. The household now includes Henry Lawrence with his wife, Elizabeth and a son. Also present in the 'two cottages about the public house' at the time of the census were the Hornett family, Mr & Mrs Spriggs and a lodger. The cottages were owned by the Hon H. Cowper M.P. of Brocket Hall. By 1891 Thomas Lawrence, the fourth son of James, and now aged 26, had taken over as the beer retailer. He is also described as a shoemaker; his wife Eleanor was also present.

McMullens was founded in 1827 by Peter McMullen and since then we have continued brewing in Hertford without a break. The heritage of AK, for example, can be traced back to 1833. We have protected the company's brewing history throughout that time by acquiring and investing in the public houses.

In 1928 'The Long Arm and The Short Arm' was one of several pubs in the Hatfield area which had its licence renewal temporarily refused. Although two in Hatfield were closed for good at this time. 'The Long Arm and The Short Arm' licence was afterwards regained. About this time the old building was pulled down and a new public house was built and opened in 1929.

1937/38 saw the end of James 'Will' Smith's occupancy and Percy, his younger brother, took over helped by his wife Lilian (nee Hatton). Their son Lew and his wife also lived in the pub and in 1942 their son Brian was born there. In 1950 Joe Wackett became landlord. Lew Smith, his family moved to what is now known as No 7 Lemsford Village. In 1953 they moved to the Chequers (Now The Crooked Chimney) where Lew became the landlord.

The name 'The Long Arm and The Short Arm' would seem to refer to different lengths of the two roads leading out of the village either side of the pub up to the Great North Road i.e. Brickwall Hill and Lemsford Mill Lane. Other suggestions have been put forward over the years and the reason for the name remains a riddle to this day.



The image above was taken outside the Long & Short in 1924, five years after the end of the war. The house in the background is there today. L to R: Will Smith Landlord no record of age, Charles Tims, 32 Bert Wilmot ,30 Stan Bunnidge, 26, George Crawley, 42 Charles George Taylor, 32. Records suggest all these men fought in WW1.

The Long Arm & The Short Arm is still in the centre of the village and as popular as it has ever been, serving great food and a good selection of real Ales. Check out the website [www.mcmullens.co.uk/longarmshortarm](http://www.mcmullens.co.uk/longarmshortarm)

# **Lemsford News 1915**

## **Lemsford News March 1915**

Sunday School Treat -The Sunday School Treat was held in the Schools on Saturday, February 20th, having been delayed first by the War, and then by an outbreak of scarlet fever. After tea, a magic lantern entertainment was given by Mrs Ladbury.

Roll of Honour. - The following from Lemsford district are now at the front: - Sergt. J. Cochrane (2nd Northumberland Fusiliers); 2nd Lieut. Guy Kinnell (West Yorkshire Regiment); John Sams (R.F.A.); Charles Taylor (Northumberland Fusiliers); Albert Wallis (R.F.A.) and Ernest White (7th Dragoons) which last named regiment was mentioned in Sir John French's last dispatch as having taken part in the severe fighting at Givenchy, near La Bassee. Soon after Christmas, Herbert Young joined the Army Ordnance Corps and Robert Sear, the Bedfordshire Regiment. We are glad to hear that Henry Baldock (L. Battery R.F.A.) is making good progress towards recovery. Harry Adams (5th Royal Irish Lancers) has also recovered sufficiently to rejoin his regiment. We congratulate Frank Spriggs on having been promoted to Sergeant.

## **Lemsford News May 1915**

Roll of Honour - We are glad to be able to announce that Guy Kinnell, 2nd Lieut., West Yorkshire Regiment is progressing as favourably as can be expected, considering the nature of his wounds.

Parcels for the Boys at the Front – are still being sent off at frequent intervals. Thanks to a cheque for £2 being received from Mrs W. Horn, which arrived when the "Parcels Fund" was greatly in need of help, we were able to keep up our despatch. Mrs Horn is also very kindly providing each parcel with a pair of socks. Grateful letters are still being received, showing that our boys appreciate and value the few goods sent to them.

## **Lemsford News July 1915**

We regret to announce that Sergt. A. Hornett of the Northumberland Fusiliers has been wounded and taken prisoner, but we are glad to say that his wound is healing and he writes cheerfully. Our thoughts and prayers will be with him and all others who are in captivity.

## **Lemsford News September 1915**

Sale of Work – On Friday, July 10th, a very successful Sale of Work was held in the School in aid of the Cripples' Branch of the Waifs and Strays Society. The stalls included plain needlework (made chiefly at the evening classes held during the winter for the girls, and also work made by them in the school during the year), fancy stall, pound and sweet stall, boys stall, including mats, dishcloths, garden tables, writing pads and glove boxes etc., and miscellaneous stall. Teas were served from the dining hall at a small charge. At 5 o'clock a Jumble sale was opened in an adjoining room. The articles were quickly cleared. A bran tub and hoop-la caused a good deal of fun in the afternoon and the rifle

range was also a great attraction. The receipts from the Sale amounted to £18 8s. 6d. From this £1 13s. 6d. was deducted for the sale of the school needlework, £14 was sent to the W. & S. Society and after 16s.1d. was taken out for expenses the remainder was put towards buying material for our next winter classes. The weather before the 30th had been very stormy indeed and as we were favoured on Friday with quite a lovely summer day, we know that the prayers of all our members were answered more ways than one, for we had numbers of purchasers and nearly everything was cleared away by 7 o'clock. We should like to thank all helpers, especially Mrs and Miss Holdsworth, who always contribute so largely to our sales, for without their effort each year they could not be the success which they are.

### **Lemsford News November 1915**

The Zeppelin – which passed over our parish the other week has made certain changes to the hours of service advisable. The Evening Service on Sundays will be at 6 o'clock instead of 6.30, and the Intercession Service will be on Thursdays at 4. It is perhaps not altogether a bad thing that we should feel a little – a very little – of the fear and danger which is weighing so heavily on thousands of our fellow creatures. “The Terror which flieth by night” ought to make our evening prayers, both public and private, more real and necessary to us, and to bring home our need of casting ourselves on God's protection.

War items - Since our last issue George Holton, R.E., Robert Sear and Frederick Spriggs of the Bedfordshires and Ernest Joyner of the Hertfordshire Territorials, have gone to the Front. Albert Wallis R.F.A. who has been at the Front since October last year had to undergo an operation and has had a four day leave at home. Corporal Skeggs has been wounded at the Dardanelles but is going on well. A very interesting letter from Frank Mardle R.F.A. appeared in the St. Alban Times (Herts Advertiser and St. Albans Times, Saturday June 24th 1916) Harry Chapman has gone to the Dardanelles. William Blackstone has been on Admiralty service in the Mediterranean and has had some exciting adventures.

Egg Collection – Miss Holdsworth has received an urgent request from the Director of the “National Egg Collection for the Wounded” for eggs or help in money to obtain them. She has already forwarded many dozens of eggs contributed by the school children and other Lemsford friends. See next page for full report.

# National Egg Collection for the Wounded

By Marion Cleveland

In October 1915 Miss Holdsworth, of Lemsford House, received an urgent request from the Director of the 'National Egg Collection for the Wounded' for eggs or money to obtain them.

Eggs were scarce, but she asked those who kept poultry to spare one egg a week, or one penny. They could be sent to her or to the School. She gladly packed and forwarded eggs to the local collection point. (There were over 200 collection points nationally) The gift of eggs was a real self-sacrifice, but Miss Holdsworth was able to send 103 eggs and 14/6 in the first 2 months. Collection continued throughout the war, but when donations became low, children wrote out and delivered an appeal and collected the eggs.

The scheme, started in August 1915, was very successful nationally achieving an average of one million eggs a month. By January 1918, over seven million eggs had been sent to hospitals at home and over 25 million to hospitals abroad. But by then the shortage had grown - some people had disposed of their chickens as they didn't think they would be able to get food for them.



"There are more wounded than ever and less eggs to give them." A Soldier wrote: -

"You people in your comfortable homes have not the remotest idea what the eggs mean to us out here, to say nothing of the pleasure they give. A chap's been out in the trenches for a year, eighteen months, perhaps 2 years; he's never seen an egg! He wakes up one morning and finds himself in a clean and comfortable hospital bed. Someone comes along with one of your fine newly laid eggs. I should just like your girls to see the delight on that fellow's face."



# **The Sun Inn**

## **The Sun Inn - Landlord 1914: George Halsey**

1717 is the first mention of this house as an ale-house. The licensee was the widow Ann Gilbert, her husband John Gilbert had died in 1716. However, trouble was brought about by disorderly customers and in 1718 she and her son, also John Gilbert, were forbidden to use the house 'the signe of the Sun' as an ale-house as apparently they were not licensed to do so. From about the mid-1700s The Sun or 'Rising Sun' as it was known, was a hostelry and for some time was also the village butcher's shop.

### **1780 - 1850**

From about 1780 to 1850 it was the family home of the Clark and then the Allen families (1883). In 1824 the actual owner was a Mr Crabb and in 1838 John Marshall. By 1855 it had been acquired by the Hatfield brewery. At this time the landlord was a Mr John Males who was also the village wheelwright. He had a wife and son living at the pub. Later it became the home of the Halseys. In 1882 Pryor Reed an offshoot of the Hatfield brewery, were the owners. Thomas Halsey was the publican and lived there with his wife Hannah and three children. Noah Wallis, a farm labourer and his wife Emily (nee Halsey) with two children also lived there at this time. They kept cows in the adjoining field and milk could be purchased at the back door of the pub from Emily Wallis.

George Halsey acquired the pub in 1901 and stayed there with his sister Sophia Noah and Emily Wallis and her 4 children until 1940 when Arthur Moyes took over. The brewery that owned the pub in 1914 was Pryor Reid an offshoot of the Hatfield brewery

### **Defence of the Realm Act of 1914**

The war years in the pub trade were difficult mainly due to the Defence of the Realm Act of 1914. This act intervened in British drinking habits. By the spring of 1915 claims were made that war production was being hampered by drunkenness, leading to pub opening times being reduced and alcohol strength reduced. And in July 1916 DORA Regulation 40b was passed making possession of cocaine or opium, other than by authorised professionals such as doctors, a criminal offence.

As World War One evolved, so DORA evolved. The first version of the Defence of the Realm Act was introduced on August 8th 1914. This stated that:

- No-one was allowed to talk about naval or military matters in public places
- No-one was allowed to spread rumours about military matters
- No-one was allowed to buy binoculars

- No-one was allowed to trespass on railway lines or bridges
- No-one was allowed to melt down gold or silver
- No-one was allowed to light bonfires or fireworks
- No-one was allowed to give bread to, horses or chickens
- No-one was allowed to use invisible ink when writing abroad
- No-one was allowed to buy brandy or whisky in a railway refreshment room
- No-one was allowed to ring church bells
- The government could take over any factory or workshop
- The government could try any civilian breaking these laws
- The government could take over any land it wanted to
- The government could censor newspapers

**As the war continued, the government introduced more acts to DORA.**

- The government introduced British Summertime
- Opening hours in pubs were cut
- Beer was watered down
- Customers in pubs were not allowed to buy a round of drinks

Press censorship was introduced and the freedom of movement curtailed. People were forbidden to loiter near bridges and tunnels, and even whistling for London taxis was banned in case it should be mistaken for an air raid warning. Conditions of work were strictly controlled, and a blackout introduced in certain towns and cities. In May 1916, British Summertime was instituted, a measure that is still in practice today.

The pub had been sold in 1920. Later in the 1970s the office of fair trading decreed that no one brewery should have a monopoly of trade in any one area. Benskins had a monopoly at this time in the Hatfield area and they were obliged to release 'The Sun' to Ind Coope. At this time the landlord was Graham and with his wife Shirley one of the most popular pubs in the area. The next landlord in the early 1980s was Louis Smith who became one of the most popular landlords to run the pub. Today it's still worth a visit, a warm welcome awaits you.

# **A Brief History of the Waifs and Strays' Society**

By Marion Cleveland

This is a brief description of the Waifs and Strays' Society. The reason for this article is the society is mentioned in the 1914 -1918 Parish Magazine.



## **The Founders**

The Waifs and Strays' Society was founded in 1881 by Edward de Montjoie Rudolf (1852 -1933). He was a civil servant. He also worked with his brother, Robert, as a Sunday School teacher, in the parish of St Anne's, South Lambeth, London. This was a poor area with many needy children.

The brothers (Robert and Edward Rudolf) began running the Sunday School in 1871 when they were quite young. Edward was 19, and Robert was 15. Edward was the Superintendent of the Sunday School.

One day in 1881, two brothers who attended the Sunday School suddenly stopped coming. They were later found in a neglected state begging for food from workers at a local gasworks. Their father had died, leaving their mother with seven children to look after. She was unable to support the boys, but she did not want the family to go into a Workhouse. The boys had to fend for themselves.

## **The Society's Birthplace: St Anne's Church**

The Rudolf brothers tried to find a Church of England Home for the boys to go into, but they could not find one that would take them without requiring payment. The boys were eventually admitted free of payment into a Home which was not allied to any particular Church. Edward Rudolf decided that there was a need for Church of England Homes for destitute children that didn't necessarily require payment. He thought it was important that children in these circumstances could receive the teachings of the Church of England.

## **How the Society was established**

Edward wrote letters to many people, mostly members of the clergy, who he thought might be interested in helping establish the children's homes. On 31 March 1881 an inaugural meeting took place. It was attended by Edward and Robert Rudolf, members of the clergy and other interested people. They set up a committee and began making plans for fundraising for the newly formed organisation.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Archibald Tait, was asked to become the President of the Society. He formally agreed to this on 24 August 1881. From this date on, the Society became an officially recognised organisation of the Church of England. It was known as the Church of England Central Home for Waifs and Strays'.

## **The first homes and children**

In December 1881 a house in Friern Road, East Dulwich in South London was rented with the intention of it becoming the first home. In January 1882 a house in Clapton, London was rented and set up as the first boys' home. The first children were received into the Society's care on 14 February 1882.

## **Development**

The Society grew very rapidly. By 1890, just 9 years after the inaugural meeting, the Society was running 35 homes. It was also arranging foster care for children. In October 1890 there were nearly 1600 children in its care. By 1905 it had 93 homes throughout England and Wales. There was a total of 3,410 children in the Society's care. 2,406 of these lived in Society's homes, 259 in affiliated homes, and 745 were fostered.

## **Changes of name and role**

In 1893 the Society took on the official name of the 'Church of England Incorporated Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays'. In 1946 it was renamed the 'Church of England Children's Society'. From 1982 it adopted the informal title of 'The Children's Society', as it is known today. In the 1970s, the Children's Society refocused its work with children and young people. It moved away from its work with children's homes, adoption and fostering. The Society no longer runs any children's homes. Instead, it works with children and young people in need in local communities, with Local Authorities and in the youth justice sector

# William Henry Gardiner

By Doreen Wright

William was born on 6th August 1889 his mother was a domestic servant in London earning 4/7 per week. On 26th September 1889 he was boarded out by the Waifs and Strays Society to Mrs Susan Tulley aged 54 who lived along with her husband John aged 58, their daughter Louisa and Harriet Hill (daughter by Susan's 1st marriage) in a Clapboard House in Cromer Hyde. She already had two other Waifs Arthur Seymore and Roland Rouse. William went to St John's Lemsford on 13/6/1894 and left 8/1/1904 to work as a Gardener at Brocket Hall

William remained with his foster parents even after the Society removed him from their books in 1903 as he was considered old enough (14years old) to take care of himself. He married Susan Tulley's granddaughter Mabel Hill on 4th Nov 1911, they all lived in the Clapboard Cottage in Cromer Hyde. The cottage had two double bedrooms, a large front room (used as a bedroom by Susan and John Tulley), a big living room, a narrow scullery and a dairy lean to at the back. Outside was a large washhouse with a copper and a baker's oven.

William at one time worked at Hatfield House, then employed at Brocket Hall. At the time of his marriage his pay rose from 15 shillings to 17 shillings 6pence a week on his wedding day. This was followed by 2 shillings 6 pence on the birth of each child. Anne Louise was born in 1912, William George in 1914, Lily Rose 1916 and Lucy in 1931. Susan Tulley died in July 1917. She was born, lived all her life and died in the same cottage; she was one of the oldest parishioners in the village.



**William Henry Gardiner - Sitting down on the left**

The following information was taken from William's military records on Ancestry: 6th June 1916 William first joined for duty at Woolwich; in March 1917 was called up for service,

where he became Gunner Gardiner W.H. Army No. 206280. After basic training he was posted to 'W' Battery R.H.A. He served in India and Mesopotamia.



**William Henry Gardiner**



On 21st April 1918 he was admitted to the Field Hospital where he remained until 19th May 1918, he then re-joined his troop. Unfortunately, he was re-admitted to the Field Hospital 7 days later on 26 May 1918 and remained in there until 24th August 1918. William had to remain in India for most of 1919 to help with the civil unrest. He was demobilized on 15th September 1919 and embarked on-board the 'MARGHA' on the 16 September 1919 for the U.K.

#### **Lemsford News August 1917**

Obituary – On Tuesday, 24th July, the funeral took place of Mrs Tulley of Cromer Hyde, who passed away on the 19th after an illness of many weeks. In her we have lost one of our oldest parishioners, her long and useful life of 83 years has been spent in the house in which she was born, and in which she died. We should like to add a word of sympathy for William Gardiner, who was brought up by Mrs Tulley; he is now in India with the R.H.A. We are sure he will feel his loss very keenly. In Dec 1918 John Tulley died in the Union Infirmary, Hatfield he had been ill for quite a while.

A family album held a collection of post cards of views sent from such places as Bombay, Kirkee, Poona, Musoorie, Cawnpore, Umballa, with scenes of the British Cemetery at Meerut, few carried a date and postmarks were blurry.

On his return to Cromer Hyde his 8-year-old daughter Annie ran from the gate to her mother shouting "Daddy is coming up the lane" quite remarkable in the circumstances as she hadn't seen her father since she was 4 years old.

### **An extract from his grandson's family history**

These three years away fighting had changed grandfather, he was always reticent about his military service, at times however hints at being in a midnight engagement proved to be more than a mere moonlight saunter than he would have the family believe. The records show that on the 5/6th March 1918, 'W' battery was covering the Aleppo Road from the Wadi Hauran, on the Euphrates River. It was acting in close support of a cavalry charge which rounded up a thousand or more Turks from a force attempting to make a fighting retreat north. He was in the thick of things in October, on the banks of the Tigris River and was at Mosul when it fell without a fight.

### **Some of the memories of Annie Louise Gardiner**

During the war we would get a lot of the people from the village up our old house, as they thought it was 'safe' from the Zeppelin's particularly if there was moonlight, they thought our house was the only one whose windows didn't show up. Whether or not this was correct I really don't know. I recall watching from the garden on the 3rd September 1916 the airship coming down over Cuffley; it was like a flaming cigar. We also saw the reflection and heard the explosion of the Silver Town Munitions Factory in West Ham on the 19th January 1917 blowing up.

On Armistice in 1919, the big girls at school (Lemsford) rang the school bell and broke the rope (it never got mended) and I was heaved up to grab the end. Our family belonged to the "Children's Union". (Part of the Waifs and Strays Society). We used to attend meetings and help raise funds. In September some of the fields belonging to the farm used to have lots of mushrooms, the women from the bottom of the lane used to come up about 5 am with clothes baskets to pick them and take them to St. Albans market. The journey to school used to be fun as we used to run behind a milk cart (with churns for Hatfield Station) or a Foden lorry, doing the same job. There was no school uniform the only thing we had was a little pill box hat, kept on by elastic. We had to take our dinner to school and in the dinner hour used to go down to Lemsford to the little shop which sold everything from tallow candles to bacon, sweets and cottons, to get anything wanted at home.

In October we had two weeks off from school for potato picking, and most children were expected to earn enough to buy their winter boots.

# Lemsford News 1916

## Lemsford News January 1916

War notes - Up to the time of writing, as far as is known, all our men at the Front are safe and sound. We ought to be very thankful to God for the wonderful way in which He has hitherto preserved them. Few parishes from which so many men have gone can have escaped so lightly, but how can we expect a continuance of God's mercies unless we humbly thank him for these that he has already shown. Cecil White has enlisted in the Royal Fusiliers, Christopher Wren in the Bedfordshire Regiment and Alfred Skeggs in the Royal Engineers. Armourer Sergeant Herbert Young has gone to the Front since our last issue.

## Lemsford News February 1916

War notes - Gunner A. Wallis is again on the sick list and is in hospital in Cheltenham. Pte. R. Sear has returned from the Front to undergo an operation in London; this has been successfully performed and he is going on well.

## Lemsford News July 1916

We regret to announce that the following have been killed in action. 2nd Lieut. W. J. Strong of the East Lancashire Regiment, elder son of Mr and Mrs Strong of Water End. Lance Corporal James Halsey of the 49th Canadians, a former resident of this parish and brother of Mrs Cochrane of Church Hill, Lemsford. Bomber. Frank Mardle R.F.A., youngest son of Mr and Mrs Mardle of Cromer Hyde. Artificer-Engineer Thomas Cole R.N. who went down in the Black Prince in the naval battle off Horn Reef. He was the son of Mr and Mrs Cole of Brocket.

## Lemsford News August 1916

War notes - Since the last issue of the magazine casualties among our boys have been very heavy. Our sympathy is with Mrs Freeman of Stanborough in the loss of her son Herbert, who was in the Bedfordshire Regiment and was killed on July 7th. Cecil White was wounded by shrapnel, in the face, but has now recovered. Percy White, a younger brother, was wounded in the shoulder, and is now in hospital at Newport, Monmouth. Gus Wren was wounded severely in the hand and leg, and at present is in hospital at Edenbridge in Kent, and is going on satisfactorily, after two operations. Fred Wren was wounded in the hand and is at present in hospital in France. Chris Wren, we are sorry to hear, is officially posted 'Missing', not a very cheering announcement, but there is still hope that we may hear from him. Ernest Wilding, another old boy, is in hospital in Dundee, and although shot through the chest, we are glad to know that progress towards recovery is satisfactory. We are also very sorry to hear that our organist, Mr G. Panter, is officially recorded as 'Missing'. We sincerely hope that better news may soon be forthcoming. Other recent departures are: Frank Lines, Royal Fusiliers; Henry Smith, 3rd Essex; Alfred Nash, Bedfordshire Regiment; John Halsey, Kings Royal Rifles.

## **Lemsford News September 1916**

Herbert Freeman – By the kindness of Mrs Freeman, we are enabled to print the following letter from Private Freeman's captain. We offer our deepest sympathy to them in their heavy trouble in the loss of so gallant a son.

**“Dear Mrs Freeman. I have received your letter of the 20th inst. and regret I can only confirm the news of your son's death, as reported by the War Office. He was killed by a bullet in the attack on the German Trenches on the 1st July, death being instantaneous. He was buried with a number of his comrades on the battlefield, about half a mile north-west of Carnoy, which is a little village about four miles east of Albert, his name being written on the cross over his grave. All his private possessions have been forwarded to the base and should reach you in due course. Your son, Private Freeman, was one of the most useful members of my Company, and has, on several occasions, done most excellent patrol work during the winter. It may be some consolation to you that he died most gloriously in the foremost of the attack, which commenced on the 1st, and which our Battalion had the honour to lead. Please accept the sincerest sympathy of the Officers of his Company and myself in your sad loss. Yours truly, A.E. Percival, Capt.”**

War news - No further casualties have occurred among our soldiers from the village so far as we are informed up to date. A. C. Wren is in hospital in Edenbridge, Percy White at Newport, Monmouth and George Rosher at Cambridge, all these are doing well. We may indeed be thankful to God that the Great Advance was not more costly in lives to us at Lemsford. Of those whose homes are actually in the village, Frederick Spriggs, who has endeared himself to so many of us, is the only one whom we know definitely to have laid down his life for his Country: though Herbert Freeman, whose home is only just outside the parish and who attended our school as a boy has also given his life. No news has yet been received of Chris Wren and of our organist, G. M. Panter. Our sympathy and prayers are with these upon whom this great burden of anxiety rests. Sergeant A. Freeman has returned from South Africa and is shortly going to the Front in France. James Cochrane, A. Smith and T. Rhodes have gone there since our last issue. We greatly miss our sexton, Mr. John Sear, who has joined up.

The following pages show the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Memorial Certificate for the following:

**2nd Lieut. W. J. Strong**

**Corporal James Halsey**

**Frank Mardle R.F.A**

**Gordon Malcolm Panter**

In Memory of

Lieutenant

## James William Strong

18th Bn., Lancashire Fusiliers who died on 11 June 1916 Age 23

Son of William and Annie Strong, of "Moorhayes", London Rd., St. Albans.

Remembered with Honour

Rue-Des-Berceaux Military Cemetery, Richebourg-L'avoue



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# William Strong

Born 1892 – Died 11th June 1916

## Personal History

William James Strong was born in London in late 1892, the eldest son of William and Annie Strong. By 1911 William, aged 18, was living in Waterend House, Wheathampstead and acting as assistant farm manager for his father, a farmer and cattle dealer.

No record of attending St John's School.

## War Record

### 18th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers

He enlisted into the 18th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers. This was a 'Bantam Regiment' raised in January 1915 in Bury and formed from men who were under the regulation height of 5ft. 3 ins., mainly miners and farm workers, who were physically strong. We have no details of William's height. The Battalion landed in France in January 1916 and was involved in holding the Allied line. William, by then an acting Lieutenant, was killed on the 11th June 1916 near Bethune. He was 23.

## War Memorial

He is remembered with Honour in the Rue-des-Berceaux Military Cemetery, Richebourg-l'Avoue, Pas de Calais, and France.1. F.7.

From the Herts Advertiser and St. Albans Times, Saturday June 24 1916 'In reference to the death in action on June 11th of Second Lieut. William J. Strong of the 18th Lancashire Fusiliers, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Strong of Waterend, Wheathampstead, which was announced in last weeks **"Herts Advertiser"** *the following letter has been received by Mr Strong from the Colonel of his son's battalion:- "It is with a sad heart that I write to tell you that your dear son was killed last night when returning to our lines after a raid. I cannot express on paper how much I feel for you and yours in your great sorrow. He was the most popular officer in my battalion with all ranks, and without exaggeration, I may say that he was loved by his men. Always so cheerful and full of humour, he has done excellent work since his arrival, and I had only recently recommended him for promotion. He was my best patrol officer, being absolutely fearless, and always so cool and collected. During a recent bombardment he showed exceptional courage and initiative, and for his service on this occasion was personally thanked both by the Divisional and Brigadier-Generals. Had he lived he would most certainly have been awarded the Military Cross for his work last night. I feel his loss both as an officer and a friend more than I can express on paper."*

In Memory of  
Lance Corporal  
**J Halsey**

435211, 49th Bn., Canadian Infantry who died on 02 June 1916

Remembered with Honour  
Divisional Collecting Post Cemetery and Extension



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# **James Halsey**

**Born 11th February 1875 - Died 2 June 1916**

## **Personal History**

James Halsey, the sixth child of Thomas and Sarah Halsey, was born on the 11th February 1875 in the Old Toll House on Ayot Green Hertfordshire. By 1901 James Halsey was employed by as a footman by Edward Chester, a mining engineer at 'The Priory', Bletchingley, Surrey.

In 1909, James set sail from Liverpool to Quebec in Canada on board the Empress of Britain arriving on 17 September 1909. He never married. No record of attending St John's School.

## **War Record**

### **Lance Corporal, 49th Bn., Canadian Infantry**

On 19 May 1915, James, now age 40, enlisted at Calgary into the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force and joined the 49th Battalion, Canadian Infantry, Alberta Regiment, Service No 435211. By June 1918 he had been promoted to Lance Corporal.

The handwritten War Diary of the 49th Canadian Edmonton Regiment, 3rd Canadian Division records that the Battalion, led by a brass band, set out at 2pm on the 2nd of June 1916 to march to Belgian Chateau where they came under heavy shell fire. Over this period 6 Officers were killed, 9 wounded, 45 other ranks were killed, 257 wounded and 69 missing.

## **War Memorial**

James was killed on the 2nd June 1916 and is buried near Ypres in the Divisional Collecting Post Cemetery Extension, Belgium Plot II F 7.

In Memory of

Bombardier

**F Mardle**

17691, "D" Bty. 5th Bde., Royal Field Artillery who died on 11 June 1916 Age 25

Son of Mrs. E. Mardle, of Cromer Hyde, Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour

**Railway Dugouts Burial Ground (Transport Farm)**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

**Frank Mardle**

## Born 12th April 1891– Died 11th June 1916

### Personal History

Frank Mardle was born on the 12th April 1891, the youngest child of George Henry and Elizabeth (née Smart) Mardle of Cromer Hyde He was baptised at St. John's Lemsford on July 12th 1891, attended Lemsford school from 1894 to 1905 when he left to work on a farm. By 1911 he was working as a domestic gardener at Byrkley Gardens, Burton on Trent for Harmar Bass, the brewer and living in a cottage with eight other under gardener. Attended St. Johns School July 2nd 1894 - 12th May 1905.

### War Record

#### Royal Field Artillery

Frank Mardle enlisted in London in 1914 and joined the Royal Field Artillery as Gunner 17691, By the time he was killed he had been promoted to Acting Bombardier.

In a letter to his parents he wrote:- ***“We are in action again, same place, and we have had the most exciting time since we came out here. We relieved another battery last Tuesday week, and it was fairly quiet until last Friday . . . Fritz started shelling our trenches about nine o'clock last Friday morning and from then until almost midnight Sunday were at it night and day; in fact we have not had a decent sleep since, as we have had to replenish our ammunition store in readiness for another attack. We were firing so fast that ammunition had to be brought up in daylight, and Fritz was shelling the road heavily at the time. The shells fell all around us, but luckily nobody at the guns was hit. We had two direct on our pit, but we were so busy sending them over that we took no notice at the time. The guns got so hot that the paint peeled off the muzzle. The Germans got into our first line trenches, but suffered very heavy losses in doing so. . . Fritz paid very dearly for the little ground he gained, and we are still worrying him. I am expecting to be relieved for a rest this week-end, but would rather stay here if there is anything doing.”*** Acting Bombardier 17651R.F.A. was part of D Battery, 5th Brigade when he was killed on the 11th June 1916 aged 25 during the Third Battle of Ypres. He was in the battery when one of the shells burst in the muzzle of the gun he was laying and pieces flew back into the gun pit. One large piece went into the right side of his neck and he was killed instantaneously.

### War Memorial

He is buried in grave VI E 10 in the Railway Dugouts Burial Ground, Ieper, (Ypres) West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

In Memory of

Private

## Gordon Malcolm Panter

5311, "C" Coy. 1st/14th Bn., London Regiment (London Scottish) who died on 01 July 1916 Age 19

Son of Albert E. and Ada Elizabeth Panter, of 2, Glebeland, Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour

**Thiepval Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# **Gordon Malcolm Panter**

**Born 1897 – Died 1st July 1916**

## **Personal History**

Gordon Malcolm Panter was born in Hatfield in 1897, the younger son of Albert Edward and Ada Elizabeth Panter. His father was a railway clerk on the Great Northern Railway and at the time of his birth they were living in the Great Northern Station House, Hatfield.

In 1914, at the age of 17, Gordon became the organist at St. John's church, Lemsford. The Lemsford Notes of the Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine for October 1914 record that he played the organ for the Harvest Festival Services that year. 'There was no anthem and every effort was made to bring the services into close connection with the war.' Geoffrey E. Gartside was appointed organist in January 1916 after Gordon had left to join the army.

No record of attending St John's School.

## **War Record**

### **14th County of London Battalion, (London Scottish)**

Gordon enlisted in December 1915 and joined the 14th County of London Battalion, (London Scottish) as Private 5311. He died on the 1st of July 1916 aged 19. The Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine for August 1916 reported that he had been officially recorded as missing and there was still no news of him by the time the September magazine was issued.

The 1st of July 1916 was the first day of the Battle of the Somme. Gordon's battalion formed part of the 56th Division which was involved in the fighting at Gommecourt Wood, about eight miles north of Albert. This was a 'supplementary' operation with the aim of eliminating a German stronghold in the wood as well as diverting German troops from the main Somme offensive further south. Although some gains were made the losses cancelled them out.

## **War Memorial**

Private, 5311 Gordon Malcolm Panter of the London Regiment (London Scottish) C Coy. 1st/14th Battalion is remembered with honour on the Thiepval Memorial Pier and Face 9C and 13C. The Memorial commemorates 72,191 missing British and South African men who died in the Battles of the Somme with no known grave. Thiepval is a village a few miles north-north-east of Albert.

# Lemsford News October 1916

## Lemsford News October 1916

We regret to have to record the death in action of Private Cecil White. After being twice wounded, he returned once more to his duties, and fell, gallantly upon the field of battle. Our other loss this month is Private Christopher Wren, who has long been reported 'Missing', but is now reported 'Killed in Action'. We are proud of these two brave young fellows who have laid down their lives for their Country. We shall never forget them, and we pray that the memory of what they have been and what they have done may make us all better. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Mr. and Mrs White, and Mr and Mrs Wren in their great loss.

A short memorial Service was held on Wednesday September 20 in memory of these men belonging to this parish and neighbourhood, who have fallen in the war: - Thomas Cole, Herbert Freeman, James Halsey, Frank Mardle, Frederick Spriggs, James Strong, Cecil White and Christopher Wren.



SOLDIER'S NAME AND DESCRIPTION ON ATTESTATION. (REGULAR FORCES).		THE SOLDIER'S NEXT-OF-KIN NOW LIVING. Any change becoming known is to be duly noted, with the date of such change.	
Name <u>Cecil Bertram White</u>		Note.—No entry on this page has any legal effect as a Will.	
Enlisted at <u>Gt. Scotland Yard</u> in the County of <u>London</u> on the <u>2nd</u> <u>Nov</u> 19 <u>14</u>		Nearest degrees of relationship.	NAMES.
at the age of <u>24</u> years <u>3</u> months for the <u>30th Royal Fusiliers</u> duration of war for <u>1</u> years in the Army and <u>0</u> years in the Reserve.		1st.	Latest known address to be given in full.
Born in the Parish of <u>Byot</u> in or near the Town of <u>Hertford</u> in the County of <u>Herts</u>		Wife.	
Trade or calling <u>Tailor</u>		Children.	
Last permanent residence <u>2nd Rd. Lemsford</u>		2nd.	Father. <u>J. White</u> <u>Roch Road Lemsford</u> <u>Bagfield Herts</u>
Height <u>5</u> feet <u>3</u> inches <u>Half</u> <u>Herts</u>		Mother.	
Complexion <u>Fair</u>		3rd.	Brothers † and Sisters.
Eyes <u>Grey</u> Hair <u>Brown</u>		Nephews and nieces, if children of deceased brothers or sisters.	
Marks		4th.	Other relations.
* Religion <u>Church of England</u>		Signature of Soldier. <u>Cecil Bertram White</u>	
† Signature of Soldier <u>Cecil B White</u>		Regimental number. <u>4335</u> Date of Signature	
* This should be described under one of the following denominations, viz.— "Church of England," "Catholic," "Methodist," "Baptist," or "Congregationalist," "other Protestant denomination" (name of denomination to be noted), "Roman Catholic," or "Jew."		Signature of Company, etc., <u>W. J. ...</u>	
† Whenever a Soldier who cannot write makes his mark in acknowledgment of having received pay or allowance, etc., such mark is to be witnessed by the signature of a witness (other than the pay-serjeant).		† State whether brothers are younger or older.	

After being wounded twice Cecil returned to the front and took part in the Battle of the Somme. Private 4335 Cecil White of the 24th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers died on Wednesday August 16th 1916 aged 25

## **Lemsford News January 1917**

Lantern Lecture – A very interesting Lantern Lecture, entitled “The Great War and the Little Waifs,” was given in the Schools on Monday December 6th, by Miss Sydney Pinchard. Most of the Associates and Members of the Children's Union were present and also a good gathering of friends. After the lecture, the Earl Roberts collecting boxes were opened. The sum taken amounted to £2 16s. 0d. This was sent to the Home at Pyrford to help towards making new workshops for crippled boys.

Children's Tea – On Wednesday, Decembers 22nd, Lady Mount Stephen gave her annual tea to the children attending Lemsford School and gave away the gifts of clothing. Afterwards the children gave a short entertainment.

Christmas Parcels for the Boys at the Front – As announced last month, the subscriptions for the school prizes would this year be devoted to parcels for our old boys, the present scholars took up the cause with great zest. These consisted of sweets, chocolates, tobacco, cigarettes, cocoa, soap, candles, apples, oranges, cakes, magazines or papers, and a sprig of holly. On Tuesday, December 21st, our first reply came. To show how the boys appreciated the contents I have quoted an extract from one of the letters received. “. . . Just a few lines to thank you and the children for the splendid parcel received on December 15th, in excellent condition. Some of the contents are luxuries and some are just what we want for we cannot get anything here just behind the trenches, where we are now resting before going up again. It seems nice to think we are not forgotten and anything from home is always appreciated. “Our thanks are due to the following ladies and gentlemen for kindly subscribing to our prize fund this year – Mrs Holdsworth, Colonel Fellows, Mrs Sear, Mr Horn. Ten letters have already been received full of grateful thanks.

If we take a moment to reflect how devastating this was to the parish. All losses were wretched but the four lads, Christopher Wren, Herbert Freeman, Gordon Panter, Fredrick Spriggs, were all killed in a period of eleven day during the Battle of the Somme. Two on the first day; how must the other two felt going into battle day after day until they suffered the same fate. One twenty year old and three nineteen year old lads who would have spent evenings in The Sun Inn and The Long and Short together after a hard days work, four lads walking out with their sweethearts, Four lads playing for Lemsford F.C. wide eyed, and occasionally legless doing the things all young lads growing up would have done, with their lives in front of them, their future dreams were cruelly taken away from them. The broken-hearted mothers on the home front who would never hold their sons again.

The following pages show the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Memorial Certificate for the following:

**Herbert Freeman**

**Frederick Spriggs**

**William Rhodes**

**Cecil White**

**Christopher Wren**

In Memory of

Private

# Herbert E. Freeman

16466, 7th Bn., Bedfordshire Regiment who died on 01 July 1916

Remembered with Honour

**Thiepval Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Herbert Freeman

**Born 16th January 1897 – Died 1st of July 1916**

## Personal History

Herbert Edward Freeman, the second son of Alfred and Ada Freeman, was born on the 16th January 1897 in Newton Purcell, Oxfordshire. He attended Lemsford school from 1902 to 1910 when he left to work on a farm.

Attended St Johns School November 25th 1902 – December 21st 1910

## War Record

### 7th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment

By October 1914 he had enlisted at St Albans and joined the Bedfordshire Regiment and was at the Front before October 1915. Private 16466 Herbert Freeman of a Company the 7th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment died, aged 19, on the 1st of July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

## War Memorial

His name is recorded on Pier and Face 2C, Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France. The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave.

The Bishops Hatfield Parish Magazine, Lemsford News for September 1916 contains a copy of the letter Mr & Mrs Freeman received from Herbert's captain. It reads:- ***'Dear Mrs Freeman. I have received your letter of the 20th inst. and regret I can only confirm the news of your son's death, as reported by the War Office. He was killed by a bullet in the attack on the German Trenches on the 1st July, death being instantaneous. He was buried with a number of his comrades on the battlefield, about half a mile north-west of Carnoy., which is a little village about four miles east of Albert, his name being written on the cross over his grave. All his private possessions have been forwarded to the base and should reach you in due course. Your son, Private Freeman, was one of the most useful members of my Company, and has, on several occasions, done most excellent patrol work during the winter. It may be some consolation to you that he died most gloriously in the foremost of the attack, which commenced on the 1st, and which our Battalion had the honour to lead. Please accept the sincerest sympathy of the Officers of his Company and myself in your sad loss. Yours truly, A.E. Percival, Capt.'***

In Memory of

Private

# Frederick William Spriggs

14200, 2nd Bn., Bedfordshire Regiment who died on 11 July 1916

Remembered with Honour  
Serre Road Cemetery No.2



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Frederick Spriggs

Born 27th June 1897 – Died 11th July 1916

## Personal History

Frederick William Spriggs, the youngest of the five sons of William and Elizabeth née Hewson Spriggs was born on the 27th June 1897 in Lemsford and baptised on the 28th November 1897 at St. John's church, Lemsford. He attended Lemsford School from June 1901 to March 1911 when he left to work on the Brocket Estate.

Attended St Johns School June 4th 1901 to March 31st 1911.

## War Record

### 2nd Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment

By October 1914 Frederick Spriggs had enlisted at Hertford and joined the 2nd Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment as Private 14200. The Bishops Hatfield parish magazine reported that he was at the Front in November 1915.

Frederick, aged 19, was killed on the 11th July 1916 during the Battle of the Somme at Trones Wood, a wood near the village of Guillemont, about 6½ miles east of Albert. The wood, which formed part of the German second defence line, needed to be cleared of Germans before the British could advance on Longueval, a heavily fortified town. On the 11th July the 2nd Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment was part of a pre-dawn attack force which attempted to capture the wood. They suffered many casualties trying to enter the wood which was strongly held and full of trenches and dug-outs. The fighting was fierce within the wood, several units had to withdraw and regroup, it was not finally cleared until the 15th July.

## War Memorial

Frederick Spriggs is buried in the Serre Road Cemetery No. 2 XXIX J 5. The cemetery is situated just off the D919 on the Arras to Amiens road, south of the village of Pusieux.

The Bishops Hatfield parish magazine reported that a ***short memorial Service was held on Wednesday September 20 1916 in St. John's Lemsford in memory of these men belonging to this parish and neighbourhood, who have fallen in the war:- Thomas Cole, Herbert Freeman, James Halsey, Frank Mardle, Frederick Spriggs, James Strong, Cecil White and Christopher Wren. Frederick's older brother George Spriggs was killed on the 29th October 1917 during the second battle of Passchendaele.***

In Memory of

Private

# William Rhodes

27864, 2nd Bn., Bedfordshire Regiment who died on 02 August 1917

Remembered with Honour  
Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# William Rhodes

**Born 1880 – Died 2nd August 1917**

## Personal History

William Rhodes was born in 1880 at Bitteswell, near Lutterworth, Leicestershire to William and Harriet Rhodes, their youngest child and only son. William senior was a gardener and at that time was working in the gardens of the Manor House, Bitteswell. By 1891 he had returned to his wife's birthplace and was working in the gardens of Cuckfield Place, Sussex.

William became a footman. In 1901, aged 22 he was a footman for Ralph Vivian at 15 Grosvenor Square, London. By 1911 he was working for Lord and Lady Mount Stephen at their London house, 17 Carlton House Terrace as well as at Brocket Hall. He never married.

No record of attending St John's School.

## War Record

### 2nd Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment

In 1917 he enlisted at Bedford and joined the 2nd Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment.

He was killed in action on the 2nd August 1917 aged 37. The battalion on that day was involved in the Battle of Pilckem Ridge, the opening attack of the main part of the Third Battle of Ypres. Heavy rain had fallen for the previous three days on ground battered by shelling. It was a mud-bath. The results were mixed, some ground was taken, some lost and casualties were heavy on both sides.

## War Memorial

He is remembered with Honour on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial., panel 31 and 33, one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders. Each night at 8 pm the traffic is stopped at the Menin Gate while members of the local Fire Brigade sound the Last Post in the roadway under the Memorial's arches.

The entry in the Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine, Lemsford News for September 1917 reads:- ***"His friends in Lemsford will be grieved to hear that Private Rhodes, Bed Regt., is reported "Missing". He was a valued servant of Lord and Lady Mount Stephen, who hope to hear news of him that he is still alive, even if a prisoner.'***

In Memory of

Private

## Cecil Bertram White

4335, 24th Bn., Royal Fusiliers who died on 16 August 1916 Age 25

Son of James and Emily White, of North Rd., Lemsford, Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour

**Carnoy Military Cemetery**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Cecil Bertram White

**Born 15th July 1891 – Died 16th August 1916**

## **Personal History**

Cecil Bertram White was born in Ayot St. Peter on the 15th July 1891, the second son of James and Emily (née Perris) White. His father was the coachman at Ayot Bury for Mrs Holdsworth who later came to live at Lemsford House. By 1911 the family had moved to North Road, Lemsford. Cecil worked as a tailor, ran for Hertfordshire and in 1910 was Captain of the Lemsford Football Team. He was engaged to be married to Grace Wren, the sister of Christopher Wren. She died on the 22nd September 1918 aged 29, reputedly of a broken heart.

No record of attending St John's School.

## **War Record**

### **24th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers**

On the 6th November 1915, aged 24, Cecil enlisted at Great Scotland Yard, London and joined the 30th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, also known as the City of London Regiment. By the time of his death he had transferred to the 24th Battalion (known as the 2nd Sportsman's). His Army Small Book describes him as being 5ft 3 ins tall, with fair complexion, grey eyes and brown hair.

## **War Memorial**

After being wounded twice Cecil returned to the front and took part in the Battle of the Somme. Private 4335 Cecil White of the 24th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers died on Wednesday August 16th, 1916 aged 25 and is buried in grave B 9, Carnoy Military Cemetery, Somme, France. Captain Finnie of the 4th Fusiliers in a letter to Cecil's parents wrote: ***“You have already been informed that your son was sniped on the 16th August. His equipment, along with many other sets, was blown to pieces, after it had been taken off his body. Your son was buried by men of his own company. He was a splendid soldier and liked by all in the company. He died doing his duty, a thing I know you will be proud to hear. His comrades sympathise with you in your great loss”***. (Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine, Lemsford News April 1917).

In Memory of

Private

# Christopher Wren

23378, 2nd Bn., Bedfordshire Regiment who died on 03 July 1916 Age 20

Son of Mrs. E. Wren, of Lemsford, Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour

**Thiepval Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Christopher Wren

Born 7th November 1896 – Died 3rd July 1916

## Personal History

Arthur Christopher Wren was born in Lemsford on the 7th November 1896, the son of George and Lizzie (née Campkin) Wren. He was baptised on the 14th February 1897 at St. John's Lemsford and attended Lemsford School from 1900 to 1910. He left school to become a baker. No record of attending St John's School

## War Record

### 2nd Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment

In January 1916 Christopher enlisted at St. Albans in the Bedfordshire Regiment and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion - but he had a very short war. The Battle of the Somme commenced on July 1st 1916 when the 2nd Battalion advanced at Maricourt, a village about 7 miles east of Albert, coming under heavy shell fire. By the 4th July they had consolidated their position. Private 23378 Christopher Wren was officially posted as missing on the 3rd July. In October it was confirmed that he had been killed in action. He was 20 years old.

## War Memorial

He is commemorated on Pier and Face 2C of the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme. The inscription on the Memorial reads: "Here are recorded names of officers and men of the British Armies who fell on the Somme battlefields between July 1915 and March 1918 but to whom the fortune of war denied the known and honoured burial given to their comrades in death."

Christopher's mother received a letter about her son's death from a Corporal in another regiment. ***"We started in the front line at half past three in the morning; during one of our halts, I was at the head of our section, I met your dear boy, he had been wounded, and I helped him to a place of safety: we made him quite comfortable, and gave him necessary attention until further aid came. I had to go further up the line: about an hour and a half later, we had to retire, and we stayed just where your son was, and I went and saw how he was. Our doctor was there: he was quite cheerful at the time, and our platoon stretcher bearers took him away to a large dressing station. At night, I was asked to go to the dressing station, and there was your son laid out. I took his personal belongings, and we buried him in a soldiers cemetery near Albert. I must tell you that he was quite prepared to die; he asked me in the early morning to write to you if anything should happen to him, if I came through alright. Our Captain gave me permission to write to all the Boy's people who I had anything for."*** (Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine, Lemsford News for April 1917)

## Mrs & Miss Holdsworth

The Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine mentions Mrs & Miss Holdsworth on many occasions - helping distribute prizes to the school children, decorating the church, giving tea parties, arranging concerts where Alice Holdsworth performed, general charitable work, arranging for the National Egg Collection for the wounded etc. A few facts from our archives:

Alicia Fielding Holdsworth, born 1835, Roehampton, married George Thomas Holdsworth 1860, 5 children, son and 4 daughters, widowed June 1870, died 27 January 1919.

### North Aisle of St. John's Lemsford church, Brass wall plaque:

To the glory of God and the / dear & honoured memory of / ALICIA FIELDING HOLDSWORTH / a worshipper in this church who / entered into rest 27 January 1919 / aged 84. / This tablet is dedicated by her children

George was a partner in the Wine & Spirits merchants, Holdsworth and Blackburn, of 40 Pall Mall. After George died in 1870 Alicia carried on until the partnership was dissolved in 30 Sept 1890.

In both the 1891 and 1901 Censuses she was living at Ayot Bury, Ayot St. Peter. In the 1911 census she was living in Lemsford House with her unmarried daughter Alice Marion Lewis Holdsworth, aged 46, plus lady's maid, cook, parlour maid, housemaid, groom, kitchen maid.



In Lemsford she is mentioned March 1919, Lemsford News "It is with the deepest sympathy that we record the death of Mrs Holdsworth, which took place at Lemsford House on January 27th, at about 8 o'clock in the evening. Her long connection with the neighbourhood, first at Ayot and then at Lemsford, makes her death a great severance with the past; she will be greatly missed. Mrs Holdsworth took a real personal interest in the affairs of the place in which she lived, and always lent her support to everything that was designed and done for the welfare of Lemsford. She was a woman of great powers and gifts, a real artist, a wide reader, and most capable in business. The measure of our sorrow should at the same time be the measure of our thankfulness that we had Mrs Holdsworth with us at Lemsford for so many years. The funeral took place on Saturday February 1st at Brixham, South Devon (her husband came from this area). A memorial service was held in Lemsford Church, on the Thursday before at 7 p.m., the coffin being taken from the Church to the train.

# Lemsford News 1917

## Lemsford News March 1917

War Notes – We are glad to hear that those of our local soldiers who are, or have been in Hospital, Private E. Brown, E. Joiner, A. Wren, and P. White, are getting on well. Private E. Mardle and F. Wren have gone abroad again. Our congratulations to Sergt. Cochrane, 12th Royal Sussex Regiment, on his promotion to his present rank. W. Blackstone has arrived safely in England after an adventurous voyage from New York.

## Lemsford News April 1917

War Notes - Letters have at last been received, giving particulars of Cecil White and Christopher Wren, who lost their lives in the first months of the Somme battle. Captain Finnie, of the 4th Fusiliers, who is not unknown in Lemsford, writes to Mr & Mrs White: "You have already been informed that your son was sniped on the 16th August. His equipment, along with many other sets, was blown to pieces, after it had been taken off his body. Your son was buried by men of his own company. He was a splendid soldier and liked by all in the company. He died doing his duty, a thing I know you will be proud to hear. His comrades sympathise with you in your great loss."

A Corporal in another regiment has written to Mrs Wren about her son: by some mischance the letter written last July, was only received last month. It says: "We started in the front line at half past three in the morning; during one of our halts, I was at the head of our section, I met your dear boy, he had been wounded, and I helped him to a place of safety: we made him quite comfortable, and gave him necessary attention until further aid came. I had to go further up the line: about an hour and a half later, we had to retire, and we stayed just where your son was, and I went and saw how he was. Our doctor was there: he was quite cheerful at the time, and our platoon stretcher bearers took him away to a large dressing station. At night, I was asked to go to the dressing station, and there was your son laid out. I took his personal belongings, and we buried him in a soldiers' cemetery near Albert. I must tell you that he was quite prepared to die; he asked me in the early morning to write to you if anything should happen to him, if I came through alright. Our Captain gave me permission to write to all the Boy's people who I had anything for." It must be a great consolation to those who loved them, to know that these two brave young fellows were spared prolonged suffering, and that all that was possible was done for them.

## Lemsford News June 1917

Roll of Honour: It is with great regret we have to add another name to our Roll of Honour. Bombardier R. Goodge R.F.A., son of Mrs Walter Goodge, died in France on April 23rd, of wounds received the previous day, when he was hit by a piece of gas shell.

War Note – Among those who were saved from a transport, torpedoed last month, in the Mediterranean, was Pte. W. Sear, N. Staffs Regt., son of Mr & Mrs Sear, North Road. Of his terrible experiences he writes to his parents: "I have only God to thank for saving me from a watery grave. The boat I was on got torpedoed Sunday night about 5.30, with

about 3,000 troops on board. How I was saved I don't know. I was drifting about for twelve hours in a swamped boat, up to my waist in water, expecting to down any minute. There were three of us in the boat, and two dead men; we sang hymns all night. I am in hospital with bruised legs where they got bashed against the boat, it turned over five or six times, and we had to cling on to the bottom of it; don't worry about me, I shall soon be alright again."

Potatoes – After considerable delay and it is to be feared, some disappointment, the seed potatoes obtained through the War Agriculture Committee arrived and were distributed last month. We have to thank Mr Horn and Mr A.F. Sherriff for so kindly arranging to have them carted from Hatfield, which saved the applicants some expense.

### **Lemsford News July 1917**

War Notes – The friends of Tempy. Captain B. Finnie will be glad to hear that he has been awarded the Military Cross for "leading his men with the utmost gallantry at Harpe on April 9th," when he was severely wounded with shell shock. We hear that Private E. Joiner has returned to France after several months in Netley Hospital; he was wounded in the autumn of last year.

### **Lemsford News September 1917**

Flag Day – Flag Day for Lady Salisbury's Comfort Fund was held at Lemsford on Saturday, July 28th. The arrangements were made by Lady Mount Stephen, who had many willing helpers. House to house collections were made, and the Boy Scouts collected from passers-by on the roads. Fortunately, the day was lovely, and the collections and sale of flags and badges amounted to the satisfactory sum of £14 15s. 6d. Lady Mount Stephen has received an appreciative letter from Lady Salisbury, in which she asks her to thank all those who helped to make the day a success. The collectors were Misses F. Cottrell and M. Rosher (Lemsford), Misses Horn and A. Wilmot (Handside), Misses R. Moore and Lines (Stanborough), Misses Blackstone and L. Bunnage (Cromer Hyde), Miss G. Wren (Brocket), Miss Capon (Water End), Scouts H. Hale, A. Tomlin, W. Wilmot and J. Eagles. Mr Jenkinson (Chequers Inn) and Mrs Morris (Bull Inn) also had collecting boxes.

Roll of Honour - News has been received by Mr & Mrs Cochrane of the death of their son, Private D. Cochrane, of the West Kent Regiment., killed in action on July 5th. Private Cochrane formerly lived in Stanborough. Much sympathy is felt for his parents, and widow who is left with four little children. Mr & Mrs Cochrane's eldest son died in South Africa, so this is the second they have lost in the service of their country.

Private S. Bunnidge (Cromer Hyde) and W. Saunders (Stanborough), have both been wounded; they are in Hospital in England and doing well. His friends in Lemsford will be grieved to hear that Private Rhodes, Bed Regt., is reported "Missing". He was a valued servant of Lord and Lady Mount Stephen, who hope to hear news of him that he is still alive, even if a prisoner.

## Lemsford News October 1917

War Note - We regret to hear that Sergt. James Cochrane has been seriously wounded. We gather that the bullet, after passing through his elbow, entered his chest. His escape was providential, and we sincerely hope that he will soon be restored to health again. He is at present in Hospital in Sheffield.

2/15th North<sup>d</sup> Fusiliers  
Salonica Force  
18-1-16

Dear Mrs & Miss Holdsworth,  
Please accept my sincere thanks for the Parcel sent by you to me which arrived safely and is greatly appreciated for its usefulness also for your congratulations on my promotion. I may say that they came as a great surprise to me and are the more valued on that account with all good wishes

Believe me to be  
Yours sincerely  
James Cochrane



## Lemsford News December 1917

The war has once again brought sorrow to Lemsford homes, Private Fred Bunnidge R.M.L.I. having lost his life at sea on November 6th.

Since the above was written news has come to Mrs John Hill that her youngest son was killed in action in France on November 6th.

The following pages show the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Memorial Certificate for the following:

**Private Fred Bunnage R.M.L.I.**

**Edward George Hill**

**Bombardier R. Goodge R.F.A.,**

**Private D. Cochrane**

**George Spriggs**

In Memory of

Private

# Frederick Bunnidge

PO/11207, H.M.S. "Puma.", Royal Marine Light Infantry who died on 06 November 1917

Remembered with Honour  
Portsmouth Naval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Frederick Bunnage

Born 8th November 1884 – Died 6th November 1917

## Personal History

Frederick Bunnage was born on the 8th November 1884. He lived with his family in a four room cottage in what is now Nos. 2-4 Cromer Hyde Lane. He was baptised at St. John's Lemsford and attended Lemsford School before leaving to work on a farm. He never married.

## War Record

### Royal Marine Light Infantry

On the 1st January 1901, shortly after his 17th birthday, he enlisted in the Royal Marine Light Infantry in London. His first ship was HMS Trafalgar which he joined on the 1st January 1902. HMS Royal Sovereign and HMS Invincible were among other postings. From the 14th February 1914 to the 20th November 1916 he served on the newly built HMS Birmingham, where he saw plenty of action. On the 9th August 1914 the Birmingham rammed and sank the submarine U15, the first U-boat casualty of the war.

On the 21st December 1916 he joined Q-ship 19, variously known as HMS Privet and SS Island Queen. On March 12th 1917 HMS Privet, Q19, was attacked by the German submarine U-85 in the English Channel. When the U-boat surfaced they saw the crew of the Privet appearing to be about to abandon ship. In fact they were uncovering their machine guns. The Privet opened fire at very close range on the submarine and sank it. He joined Q-ship 36, HMS Puma, on the 1st May 1917 but sadly this time his luck ran out. On the 6th November 1917 the ship was attacked off the coast of Gibraltar by U-Boat 63, the Otto Schultze, and sunk with the loss of all on board.

## War Memorial

Frederick Bunnage's name can be found, together with other members of HMS Puma, on the south face of the Naval Memorial, Southsea Common, Portsmouth. He is also remembered on his parents grave in St. John's, Lemsford north churchyard, row 3, plot 20:- ***' In loving memory of Mary Anne Bunnage, who died 21st April 1897, aged 45 years. also Edward, her husband, who died 29th December 1905, aged 57 years. also Robert Edward, their son, who died at Rawal Pindi. India, 22nd June 1906, aged 23 years. also Joseph, their son, who died 10th September 1910, aged 29 years. also our dear brother, Pte Frederick Bunnage R.M.L.I. who lost his life at sea 6th November 1917, aged 33 years. "Peace perfect peace.'***

In Memory of

Private

# Edward George Hill

26303, 1st Bn., East Surrey Regiment who died on 06 November 1917

Remembered with Honour

Tyne Cot Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# **Edward George Hill**

**Born June 3rd 1881 – Died 6th November 1917**

## **Personal History**

Edward George Hill was born in Lemsford on the 3rd of June 1881, the youngest son of John and Jane Hill. He was baptised at St. John's church, Lemsford on the 20th September 1885 together with two brothers, John and Henry Charles and his youngest sister Annie Elizabeth. The children attended Lemsford School. In 1901 George, aged 19, was living at home and working locally as a general labourer. By 1911 he was in lodgings in Manor Park, London and employed as a waterman, probably on the nearby River Lea. He never married.

In 1917 George, then aged 36 and living in Buckhurst Hill, Essex enlisted at Mill Hill and joined the 1st Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment as Private 25303. He was sent to France in the October.

No record of attending St John's School.

## **War Record**

### **1st Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment**

On the 1st November 1917 the writer of the 1st Battalion East Surrey Regiment War Diary complained about the problems faced by “men sent as reinforcements to units only a few days or even hours before they are sent into action. The men, through inexperience of milder forms of trench warfare have no idea of making the best of the rough conditions in which they suddenly find themselves.” George, who had only arrived in France the previous month, was such a man.

On the 6th November 1917, during the Battle of Passchendaele, the 1st Battalion faced a heavy barrage whilst deployed in sending smoke bombs from the front trenches. The Diary reports that casualties were light - 14 ordinary soldiers killed and 25 injured! Sadly George Hill was one of those killed that day.

## **War Memorial**

The Tyne Cot Memorial commemorates nearly 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died in the Ypres Salient after 16 August 1917 and whose graves are not known. George Hill's name is on Panel 79 to 80 and 163A.

In Memory of

Gunner

## Reginald Walter Goodge

82155, 50th Bde., Royal Field Artillery who died on 23 April 1917 Age 21

Son of Mary Ann Goodge, of "Riverside," Lemsford, Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour

Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# **Reginald Goodge**

Born 28th October 1894 – Died April 23rd 1917

## **Personal History**

Reginald Walter Goodge was born on the 28th October 1894 in Lemsford, to Walter John and Mary Ann (née Barr) Goodge. He was baptised at St. John's church, Lemsford on the 9th December 1894, attended Lemsford School from 1898 to 1908 when he left to work at Lemsford Mill where his father was a carter. By 1911 he was a railway porter on the Great Northern Railway.

In August 1914 he enlisted at Nottingham in the Royal Field Artillery, one of the first men from Lemsford to volunteer. By September 1915 Gunner 82155 Reginald Goodge of the 50th Brigade of the R.F.A. was at the Front.

Attended St Johns School 14th February 1898 - 30th July 1898.

## **War Record**

### **Frederick 50th Brigade Royal Field Artillery**

In August 1914 he enlisted at Nottingham in the Royal Field Artillery, one of the first men from Lemsford to volunteer. By September 1915 Gunner 82155 Reginald Goodge of the 50th Brigade of the R.F.A. was at the Front. Bombardier Reginald Walter Goodge was only 23 when he died of his wounds on April 23rd 1917 received during the Arras Offensive (April to June 1917) and is buried in grave II B 36, Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais, France. The Cemetery is about 10 miles north west of Arras and contains 2,771 burials of Commonwealth soldiers from the first World War and seven from the second, 225 French burials pre March 1916 and 64 German war graves.

## **War Memorial**

Bombardier Reginald Walter Goodge was only 21 when he died of his wounds on April 23rd 1917 received during the Arras Offensive (April to June 1917) and is buried in grave II B 36, Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais, France. The Cemetery is about 10 miles north west of Arras and contains 2,771 burials of Commonwealth soldiers from the first World War and seven from the second, 225 French burials pre March 1916 and 64 German war graves.

In Memory of

Private

**David Cochrane**

G/23264, 1st Bn., Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) who died on 05 July 1917

Remembered with Honour

**Arras Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# David Cochrane

Born 1883 – Died 5th July 1917

## Personal History

David Cochrane (the name can be spelt Cochran or Cockrane) was born in late 1883. In the mid-1870s his parents, Robert and Marion, moved from Wigton in Scotland to Hertfordshire in search of agricultural work. They found it first in Handside where David was born, then to Cromer Hyde and finally to Lemsford. He was educated at Lemsford School and left to work on a farm.

On the 25th December 1906 he married Ada Maud, the daughter of George and Ellen Taylor of Stanborough, at St. John's church, Lemsford. They had five children three boys and two girls, sadly the eldest boy died aged three. His two daughters are recorded as being pupils at Lemsford School. In 1911 he was living at 14 Ash Street, Hertford working as a miller's joiner. By February 1917 the family had moved to Hallingbury, near Bishop's Stortford.

Attended St Johns School.

## War Record

### 1st Battalion of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment.

We know little about David's war record except that he enlisted at Epping and joined the 1st Battalion of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment as Private G/23264 Cockrane. He died on the 5th July 1917. His name can be found on Bay 7 of the Arras Memorial. On this Memorial are the names of almost 35,000 servicemen from the British Isles, South Africa and New Zealand who died between the spring of 1916 and the 7th August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, in and around Arras and have no known graves.

The Bishops Hatfield parish magazine for September 1917 reported '**News has been received by Mr & Mrs Cochrane of the death of their son, Private D. Cochrane, of the West Kent Regiment, killed in action on July 5th. Private Cochrane formerly lived in Stanborough. Much sympathy is felt for his parents, and widow who is left with four little children. Mr & Mrs Cochrane's eldest son died in South Africa, so this is the second they have lost in the service of their country.**'

In Memory of

Private

**G Spriggs**

266609, 1st Bn., Hertfordshire Regiment who died on 29 October 1917

Remembered with Honour  
**Zantvoorde British Cemetery**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# **George Spriggs**

**Born 12th February 1893 – Died 29th October 1917**

## **Personal History**

### **Frederick 1st Bn. Hertfordshire Regiment**

George Thomas Spriggs, the fourth of five sons of William and Elizabeth, née Hewson, Spriggs was born on the 12th February 1893 in Lemsford and baptised on the 9th April 1893 at St. John's church, Lemsford. He attended Lemsford School from March 1897 to November 1906 and left to work as a horseman on a local farm.

## **War Record**

Private 266609 George Spriggs enlisted at Hertford giving his address as Wheathampstead and joined the 1st Battalion of the Hertfordshire Regiment. The battalion was involved in the second Battle of Passchendaele, the main aim of which was to capture the higher ground of the Passchendaele Ridge for its strategic importance and also to provide drier winter quarters for the troops. The battle commenced on the the 26th October and lasted until the 6th November 1917 when Canadian troops finally captured what was left of the village of Passchendaele. The Battalion War Diary gives the number of casualties sustained from the 28th October to the 31st October as 6 killed, 1 died of wounds, 1 of gas poisoning, 21 wounded and 9 gassed. George died on the 29th October 1917 aged 24.

## **War Memorial**

He is buried in the Zantvoorde British Cemetery, Zonnebeke, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium reference III E 25. Zonnebeke is a town 8 km south east of Ieper (Ypres) Frederick, his younger brother, was killed on the 11th July 1916 and is buried in the Serre Road Cemetery No. 2. Attended St Johns School March 8th 1897 to November 16 1906.



# Chequers (Crooked Chimney)

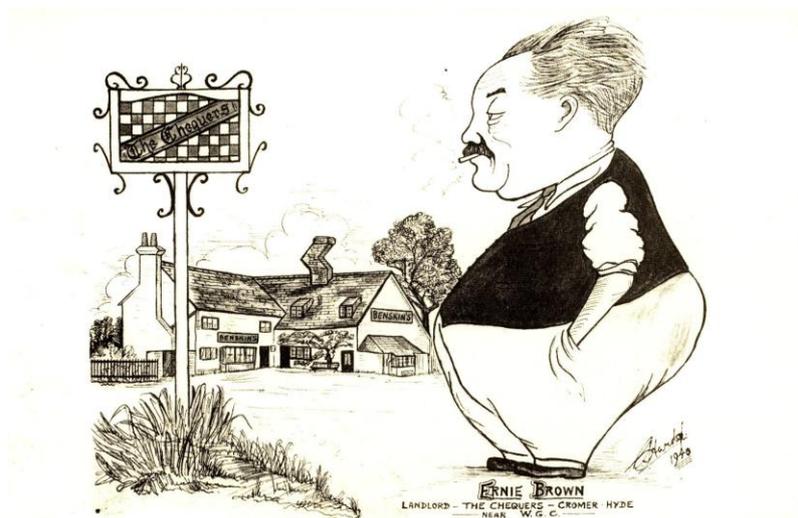
Landlord 1914: Joseph Totman

The building was formally Hornbeam Hall or Hornby and through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was owned by the Bassil family who farmed at Cromer Hyde. It is thought to have become a pub in 1756 whilst still being used as a farmhouse. Circa 1780 it was owned by the Searancke family of brewers (who had been brewing in Hertfordshire since 16th century) and become known as the 'Chequers' due to its reputation as a good gaming house. From 1815 it was taken over by the Hatfield Brewery. Before 1830 there was a draper's shop attached to the house and many of the old farm buildings remained. Circa 1860 Thomas Woodward was the publican (and also the local wheelwright). In 1882 Pryor Reed, an offshoot of the Hatfield brewery, were the owners, Thomas Palmer was the publican.

The brewery that owned the pub in 1914 was Pryor Reid an offshoot of the Hatfield brewery which was demolished in 1920 due to the owner losing a son in the Great War and not wanting to continue

## Cromer Hyde 1914-1918 by H.J. Brown

Chequers (Crooked Chimney) still stands on the corner of Cromer Hyde lane a mile or so north of Lemsford on the Hatfield to Wheathamstead road, and to Mary and I in our youth and to Eileen and I when we were courting it was a well-known spot, my main connection to the Chequers was my Uncle Ernie who was landlord from 1928 to 1952. The name goes back to the middle ages when a type of beer was made from the chequered bark of a woodland tree, but I don't think chequered beer was ever sold there. Still a popular Pub and has fine food and a great choice of real ales.



By the time of the Great War 1914-1918, the Brown family who lived in Cromer Hyde Lane had left their old Victorian cottages at the far end of the lane and moved to a new house, not so far up the lane, built for them by Lord Mount Stephen. It was larger with a bigger garden to grow all their vegetables and they must have been delighted, particularly

as it had a well of its own, thus releasing the oldest children from the long walk to the nearest pump. The oldest members of the family had already left home, but Grannie was still to have two more children, Stephen born in 1914 only to die in 1924 and Esme Jane born in 1918 and dies in 1919.

Ernest, the oldest son, born in 1891, had left home and gone into service and became a footman for the Lord and Lady Harrington of Elvaston Castle, Derbyshire. He had been highly thought of by the family and had travelled abroad with them. Frederick, born in 1896 had also gone into service and became a footman. Ern and Freds dad was Alfred Henry Brown. The two brothers together with their cousin Samuel Turner, son of my Grandfather's sister Edith, decided to volunteer and together they joined the Prince of Wales Rifles. They all served in France and tragically at the Battle of the Somme, Sam was killed, Fred was wounded in the head, arm and knee and Ern suffered shell shock.



Ernest Brown on the left -Fred Brown on the right and Sam Turner stands behind

My father Herbert born in 1892 had married my mother at Lemsford in 1913. Father left school at 13/14 he became a farmer's boy on Handside farm before joining Ebbens the butcher in Hatfield and learning the butchery trade until he joined the Police in 1914. In 1918 he joined the Machine Gun Corps, but the war ended before he went to France and he went back to the Police.

Auntie May, my father's sister, born in 1899 had gone into service and for some of the war years worked in the kitchens at Hatfield House, home of the Salisbury's. Her sister Eva born 1901 was a housemaid at Brocket, but the other children were still at home.

I expect that life in the district must have carried on much as usual, occasionally shocked by the war news or when a local man was killed or wounded. As it was in the last war, country folk had access to rabbits, pigeons and their own vegetables and did not feel the pinch of rationing as much as folk in the cities. One thing that did affect them all were the Zeppelin raids because although they were not the target, they could hear them overhead. When the Germans started to bomb London, their airships flew west of the North Sea and when they were over land, turned south, finally to pick up the Thames, clearly visible on moonlit nights. This meant that as they approached North London they often went over parts of Hertfordshire and the drone of their engines must often have been heard in the Hatfield area. On one occasion, bombs were dropped on the Essendon area and the two young daughters of the village blacksmith were killed, much to the anguish and anger of local people. I think they were relatives of the Flitney family who lived in Cromer Hyde.

Ern and Fred's dad was Alfred Henry Brown was born at Basingstoke, Hampshire on April 3rd 1867. He worked for Lord Mount Stephen at Brocket Park, Lemsford, Herts. Where he was again under keeper, although it was a much bigger place and famous for its game birds. The future King George the Fifth often went to Brocket on shoots and there is a

well known family story about an argument among the visitors after dinner about one of the hundreds of birds that had been shot. They asked for the bird to be found and brought to the drawing room but, of course, the keepers couldn't do this. Nevertheless, they found a bird that fitted the bill and this was sent up and nobody knew the difference.

### **A typical Rural dwelling in Lemsford parish during WW1**

The pair of cottages were identical, each with two rooms up and two rooms down, and were built of brick with tiled roofs. The front gardens were small with a white picket fence and gates, but the back gardens were large. The back-room downstairs was the kitchen with a small range for cooking and a large strong kitchen table with chairs. There was a meat safe on the wall, much used before the coming of refrigerators. In one corner was a simple flat stone sink, which emptied into a large bucket underneath. The front room downstairs was the parlour, containing the best bits of furniture. One of the bedrooms was used by the children with girls in one bed and boys in the other. The beds were large and strong with thick feather mattresses. The other bedroom was used by my grandparents and the youngest baby. Each room had a washstand with a large bowl on top and a jug standing in it

### **Food and Drink**

Like most country people, they had chickens in a run kept on scraps and chicken feed, and the children gave them all names. Eggs were always assured for the kitchen and as the hens grew old there was an occasional roast which was very welcome. When the pig had to be killed a local butcher came and cut it up and only the squeal was wasted. My grandmother then salted down joints by rubbing in salt petre and salt and then hung them up wrapped in old curtains in the outhouse. Relatives and friends shared in the abundance of meat and reciprocated when their pigs, in turn, were killed. Meat came from the butcher in Hatfield, who called twice a week in a pony and trap, as did the baker. Milk and butter came from the farm in Brocket and groceries were purchased at a little shop in Lemsford or in Hatfield.

### **Utilities and garden**

There was no water laid on and no pump in the garden, so when they were big enough this was a job the boys had to do and there was an old fashioned yoke so they could carry two buckets at a time, down the lane to the well. This meant that water was a very precious thing and not to be wasted--how different our attitude today when we get it at the turn of a tap. Naturally, there were no sewers either, and toilet arrangements were a shed in the garden with a seat and a large bucket underneath. The men and boys went behind the hedge most of the time and when the bucket was full it was taken to a midden at the end of the garden and in due course dug into the soil. The large garden provided, practically all of the family's vegetables and the adults worked to provide produce throughout the year. Potatoes, swedes and carrots were stored in clamps in the garden and onions in the shed. Heating was by coal or wood, the former being supplied by coal merchants in their horse drawn carts from Hatfield coal yards.

### **Education, Medication and Transport**

The children went to a village school at Lemsford, which is still there today. There were no school meals in those days, so having walked two miles to school the children stayed all day and took something for their lunch, although sometimes my grandmother would take it at mid-day. Discipline was strict at school, but it gave the children a good basic education of the three Rs.

In the case of serious illness, the doctor would come from Hatfield in his pony and trap, but for everyday illnesses and ailments old country remedies were used, passed on from generation to generation. Headaches were treated by dipping a rag in vinegar and tying it round the head, or if it was a summer headache my granny recommended crushing a bit of washing soda to powder, putting it on the thumb and sniffing it up the nose. I certainly forgot the headache! Iodine was always applied to cuts and abrasions, and for chest colds a piece of brown paper smeared with goose grease and then applied next to the skin, under the vest. Another remedy at that time for tooth ache was to smear a piece of brown paper with grease, shake on pepper and then apply this to the cheek where the tooth was painful and wind a scarf or towel round the head. This had the effect of making the cheek very hot and uncomfortable---so much so that the toothache became secondary. Rosehip syrup was used for sore throats and colds.

If the family went visiting it meant walking and they naturally went by the shortest route, be it lane, footpath or over fields and through woods. It was a common sight in those days to see a family strung out in a crocodile, parents and youngest in front and older children in the rear, all smartly dressed to impress those they were visiting

Most documentaries and articles on the First World war focus on the lives of the men who went to war, but the home front was a battle as well for the ones left behind. It was a hard life with no labour-saving devices, work that paid low wages and no benefit system and a diet that kept you alive, eating was to survive not for pleasure. I thank Jack for his memories and the for recording them for ever. To read more about his life and his family go to [www.hjbrownhistorian.co.uk](http://www.hjbrownhistorian.co.uk).



**Jack & Eileen**



**Ernie Brown's wedding at the Crooked Chimney**

# William James Horn

Churchwarden of St. John's, Lemsford for 53 years

William James Horn, the second son of William Cooper Horn and Mary Ann Woodhouse, was born at Lower Handside Farm on the 16th June 1837. Sadly, his father died the following year and his older brother, Thomas shortly after. His mother, then only 22, together with her mother, Ann Woodhouse, plus 11 labourers in 1851, ran the 280-acre farm.

She rented more land, so that by the time William married Sarah Cox in 1860, they farmed 130 acres at Upper Handside farm, and she farmed the remaining 280 acres at Lower Handside Farm.

In February 1897, William Horn purchased the freehold of some cottages he had acquired in Lemsford for £79 2s from the Salisbury estate. He later built the redbrick cottages with a distinctive pattern of yellow bricks at the first-floor level (Nos 2,4,6,8 10 and 21 & 23 Lemsford Village) for his farm workers. Numbers 6, 8 & 10, together with the old Chapel, were demolished in 1964 to make way for the car park for the Long Arm & Short Arm public house.



## The Horn's Golden Wedding

Apart from being a full-time farmer, William James Horn gave his time generously to the community. He was a church warden of St. John's, Lemsford for 53 years, serving from 1868 to 1923 with just a two-year break (1905 and 1907). He was a prominent member, and for many years treasurer, of the Herts Agricultural Society. In 1889 he was elected one of the original aldermen H.C.C. He became the first chairman of the Rural District Council and was a Justice of the Peace as well as a member of the Hatfield Board of Guardians. He was a director of the Hatfield Gas Co. for 25 years.

William James Horn died at Handside 14th April 1923 and is buried in the St. John's Lemsford South churchyard, row 2, plot 0 together with his wife Sarah, his sons William Cooper Horn and John Beasley Horn, daughter-in-law May, the wife of William Cooper, and his daughter Mildred Annie.

# The Cochranes

By Shirley Knapp (Nee Cochrane)

Shirley Knapp (nee Cochrane) is a leading member of Lemsford Local History group and has provided more memories and images for our archive than any other member. When we asked her for her memories of WW1 that were passed onto her, she produced comprehensive, personal and loving recollections of her family and brought them all to life for this generation.

During the 1st world war Robert and Marion Cochrane were living in one of the Riverside Cottages near Lemsford Mill. Their 2nd son John, a flour mill Waggoner with Lemsford Mill was living with his wife Lucy (nee Halsey) and family on Church Hill.

## Roll of Honour

**David Cochrane** 1884 – 1917: Born at Handside, David was the youngest son of Robert and Marion Cochrane. On the 5th of July 1917 aged 33 David was killed in action on the Arras sector and has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Arras Memorial in Fauberg – d’Amiens Cemetery near Arras. His wife Ada Maud was left with 4 little children when he died. Their eldest son, David William had already died at an early age.

**James Cochrane** 1881 – 1967: was born into a farming family, the 4th son of Robert and Marion Cochrane. In 1899 James enlisted into the Northumberland Fusiliers at Portland. He was promoted to Sergeant on 12th June 1912 and 3 years later in 1915 became Company Sergeant Major. He was discharged in 1920 upon the termination of 21 years military service.

**James Cochrane** 1898 – 1982: On the 1st of May 1915 James enlisted with the Hertfordshire Territorial Reinforcement at Hertford. Later as a corporal he took a contingent of 120 sixteen year olds to Etaples in France. He was transferred to the 12th Royal Sussex Regiment and was promoted on the battlefield to Sergeant (Somme 1917). A story is told of how he crawled into ‘No Man’s Land’ during a battle and pulled back a seriously wounded soldier to Allied Lines.

## Lemsford News October 1917

War Note: We regret to hear that Sergeant James Cochrane has been seriously wounded. We gather that the bullet, after passing through his elbow, entered his chest. His escape was providential, and we sincerely hope that he will soon be restored to health again. He is at present in Hospital in Sheffield.

**James Halsey** (brother to Lucy Cochrane) 40 enlisted into the Canadian Armed Forces in Calgary. On the morning of June 2, 1916, the Germans mounted an attack to dislodge the Allies from their positions at Mount Sorrel just north of the Ypres-Menin road. At Mount Sorrel Canadian troops suffered 8,430 casualties. On the first day of this attack, James Halsey as a Lance Corporal, of the 49th Canadian Infantry was killed and is buried in the Divisional Collecting Post Cemetery and Extension near Ypres (Leper).



**The Cochrane Boys during WW1**



**James Halsey**



**David & Ada Maud Before WW1**



**Ada Widowed with 4 Children**

# **Lemsford News 1918**

## **Lemsford News January 1918**

Christmas Gifts – On Wednesday, December 19th, Lady Mount Stephen, visited the Schools and distributed her usual and welcome gifts to the children: a dress length of warm material with lining to each girl and a jersey to each of the boys. After the distribution of the gifts Mr Moore addressed the children and led them in giving three hearty cheers for Lady Mount Stephen. This year, the tea usually given by Lady Mount Stephen to the children, was given up on account of the Food Controller's appeal, and the necessity for avoiding any unnecessary consumption of food, a necessity all must recognise. Lemsford children have shown a ready and willing spirit of self-sacrifice in giving up their school prizes in order that the money thus saved, may be spent in sending Christmas parcels to the Lemsford men at the various Fronts.

## **Lemsford News February 1918**

Once more, with great regret, we have to record bad news of one of our Lemsford soldiers, Rifleman Robert Tims, of the 2/18 London Irish Rifles having lost his life in action in Palestine on December 23rd.

The perils of the Sea at the present time have brought home to us in Lemsford, by the unexpected arrival of Archie Cowland, son of Mr John Cowland. His ship was one of the eighteen large vessels torpedoed in the first week in January, she was not only torpedoed but shelled, two of the crew being killed, the remainder were able to escape in the life boats – Archie Cowland escaped with a badly scalded hand and face, we are glad to hear that he is getting on well.

## **Lemsford News March 1918**

War Notes – on Sunday evening, February 17th, a Memorial Service was held in the Parish Church for Private Robert Tims, killed in action on December 23rd. Many of his relations and old friends were present, all anxious to show their sympathy with those who mourn his loss. Mr & Mrs Mardle of Cromer Hyde have received the sad news that their son Ernest was killed in France on February 1st. This is the second son they have lost in the war, their elder son Frank, having been killed last year. True sorrow and sympathy are felt for the bereaved parents, and their family

## **Lemsford News April 1918**

War Note - Since our last issue, yet another name has been added to our Roll of Honour, Quartermaster W. A. Waugh, Royal Irish Regiment was reported "found drowned" in France.

### **Lemsford News May 1918**

War Note – April has been an anxious month for all this year, especially for those whose relations were fighting on the Western Front. We have had several casualties among our Lemsford men. Private C. Tims, Middlesex Regt., Pte. E., Joyner, Herts. Regt., and Pte John Sear, Liverpool Regt., being wounded, and Pte H. Hill, Beds. Regt., suffering from gas poisoning; we are glad to hear that all are doing well as can be expected, though Pte. J. Sear has been injured in the eyes, and we fear has permanently lost the sight of one. Pte G. Hawthorne has been for some time in Hospital at Cardiff, suffering from shock, we hope to hear a better report of him.

### **Lemsford News June 1918**

War Notes – News has been received that Lce. Cpl.P. White, 6th Beds Regt., has been wounded in the arm on the 17th. He was in Hospital in France, and we hope to hear that he has been sent to England and is doing well. We regret to have to report that Pte. J. Sear, whose eyes were injured by shell concussion, has had to have the right eye removed, while the sight of the left eye is much impaired. We trust that his sight may be spared, and will improve with time, and that he will soon be once more in Lemsford, doing his usual work in the Church, where he has been so much missed.

### **Lemsford News November 1918**

War Notes - The war has again brought sorrow to a Lemsford home. Mr and Mrs Walby of Cromer Hyde have received the news of the death in action of their son, Sergt. Sidney Walby, 2nd Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment on September 21st.

### **Lemsford News December 1918**

War Notes – We regret to announce that Private H.G. Welch lost his life in action on September 19th. For some reason the official information of his death was not received by his relatives until the day the Armistice was signed.

The following pages show the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Memorial Certificate for the following:

**Rifleman Robert Tims**

**Quartermaster W. A. Waugh**

**Sidney Walby**

**Private H.G. Welch**

**Ernest Mardle**

In Memory of

Rifleman

## Robert Tims

591917, 2nd/18th Bn., London Regiment (London Irish Rifles) who died on 23 December 1917 Age 25

Son of Mrs. R. Tims, of Lemsford, Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour  
Jerusalem War Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# **Robert Tims**

**Born 16th July 1892 – Died 23rd December 1917**

## **Personal History**

Robert Tims, the youngest child of Betsy and Robert John Tims, was born on the 16th of July 1892 and baptised at St. John's, Lemsford on the 11th September 1892. His father, who ran the watercress beds at what is now Lemsford Springs Nature Reserve, had died six weeks earlier on the 3rd of June. He attended Lemsford School from 1896 to 1906 and left to help his widowed mother in the watercress beds. By 1911 he was working as a domestic hall boy at Little Barford House, St. Neots.

Attended St Johns School 7th September 1896 - 3rd August 1906.

## **War Record**

### **London Irish Rifles, 9th Regiment and 2nd/18th Battalion of the London Regiment**

On the 22nd March 1917 he enlisted at Hertford giving his address as Kensington Palace Gardens, and joined the 9th London Regiment as Rifleman 4239. He was discharged on the 30th November 1915 as being no longer physically fit for war service. On the 20th November 1916 he was issued with Silver War Badge No. 67427. The Silver Badge was worn on the right lapel of civilian clothes by ex-servicemen to show that they had been honourably discharged from military service because of wounds or sickness. It was a common practice for women to humiliate apparently able bodied men who were not in uniform by presenting them, with a white feather and branding them a coward.

After recovering from his illness Rifleman Robert Tims 591917 was assigned to the 2nd/18th Battalion of the London Regiment (London Irish Rifles). The Regiment, after serving in France and then Macedonia joined General Allenby's Army in Palestine fighting the Turks. They played a part in in the capture of Jerusalem and then the desert campaign. On the 23rd December 1917 the Battalion confronted a much superior Turkish force at Khurbet Adaseh, about 5 miles northeast of Jerusalem, and were wiped out - only one subaltern and one sergeant of the officers and NCOs survived. Rifleman Robert Tims died here.

## **War Memorial**

He is remembered with Honour in the Jerusalem War Cemetery. 26. His name is also inscribed on Irelands Memorial Records of the Great War. The inscription on his parent's grave in St. John's north churchyard, row 9, plot 9 reads: 'In loving memory of Robert John Tims died June 3 1892 aged 35. Betsy Tims died June 17th 1927 aged 73 Robert Tims killed Dec 23rd 1917 aged 25'.

In Memory of  
Company Quartermaster Serjeant  
**William Alexander Waugh**

1/6135, 1st Bn., Royal Irish Rifles who died on 17 December 1917 Age 34

Son of the late Mr and Mrs John Waugh of Rawalpindi, India; husband of Rose Waugh of Cromer Hyde,  
Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour  
**Zudausques Churchyard**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# William Alexander Waugh

Born 1883 – Died 17th-18th December 1917

## Personal History

William Alexander Waugh was born in India. His father, who had died before 1917, had lived in Rawalpindi. He was a cousin of Margaret Lockwood, the film actress, who was also born in India.

No record of attending St John's School

## War Record

### 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles

William became a professional soldier and enlisted in the Royal Irish Rifles. He played the trombone and was in the Regimental Band. At the time of his death he had risen to the rank of Company Quarter Master Sergeant.

Alf Chapman, the son of Thomas and Rose Chapman of Cromer Hyde, was in the same regiment and they became good friends. Alf talked so much about his beautiful sister Rose that William began to write to her. The correspondence blossomed so that when the regiment returned to England Rose travelled up to Liverpool to meet him off the ship. They married in 1915 and their daughter, Ethel Evelyn was born on the 29th of April 1916.

William died, aged 34, during the night of the 17th/18th of December 1917. In the morning he was found drowned.

## War Memorial

He is buried in Zudausques Churchyard, a small village six miles west of St.Omer, Pas de Calais, France. There are only three war graves in this churchyard. William Waugh and two airmen killed in 1940.

When Rose learnt of the death of her husband she went to France as a nurse leaving her baby daughter with her mother. In 1921 she married Percy Edward Catlin and they had two sons. From the Bishop's Hatfield Parish Magazine 1918 Lemsford News. ***'Since our last issue, yet another name has been added to our Roll of Honour, Coy. Quartermaster W. A. Waugh, Royal Irish Regiment was reported 'found drowned' in France. His wife, a daughter of Mr Chapman of Cromer Hyde, had recently settled in Stanborough; she is left with one small child. Much sympathy will be felt for her in her sorrow. On March 17th a Memorial Service was held in the church for the late Quartermaster Sergt. Waugh and for Private Ernest Mardle whose death was reported in our last issue. A large congregation was present; appropriate hymns were sung and an address given by the Rev. H. Moore.'***

In Memory of

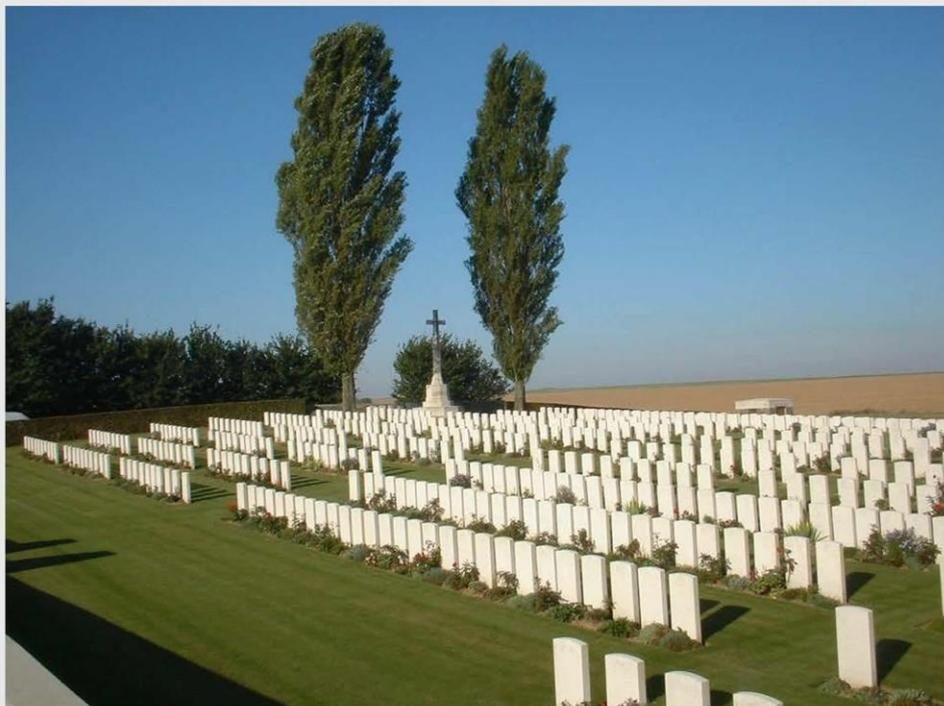
Serjeant

**S Walby**

M M

15023, 2nd Bn., Bedfordshire Regiment who died on 21 September 1918

Remembered with Honour  
**Unicorn Cemetery, Vendhuile**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Sidney Walby

**Born 12th May 1896 – Died 21st September 1918**

## Personal History

Sidney Thomas Walby, the youngest son of George Walby and his first wife Elizabeth née Brown, was born on the 12th May 1896 in Cromer Hyde and baptised at St. John's Church, Lemsford on the 17th November 1908. He was admitted to Lemsford School on the 11th June 1900 when he was 4 years old. By 1911 he had left school and was working on a farm.

## War Record

### 2nd & 7th Battalions Bedfordshire Regiment

Sidney enlisted at Hertford in the first week of September 1914, during the "K2" – Kitchener's 2nd "call to arms" for 100,000 recruits and joined the Bedfordshire Regiment. He went to France with the 7th Battalion in July 1915 as Private 15023. By the time that the 7th Battalion had been amalgamated with the 2nd Battalion in May 1918 he had been promoted to Sergeant.

In addition to the Victory, British and 15 Star medals he was awarded the M.M. (Military Medal) on June 10th 1918. From The Supplement to the London Gazette, 13 September 1918, p. 10775:- ***"His Majesty the KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the award of the Military Medal for Bravery in the Field to the undermentioned Non-commissioned Officers and Men:- 15023 Sjt S. Walby, Bed f. T. (Hatfield)". The citation reads:- 'owing to sniping, movement was very difficult, but Sgt S Walby volunteered to try and get back to battalion HQ with news, and succeeded. In all, this NCO made four journeys to the rear, under fire, two of them in broad daylight, and his information proved most valuable.***

## War Memorial

His grave (II.E.28) is in the Unicorn Cemetery, Vend'huile, Aisne, France. Vend'huile is a village about 20 kilometres north of St. Quentin on the D 28. In the cemetery are 536 British, 60 Australian, 1 Canadian, 3 Indian and 409 unidentified burials of the First World War.

Attended St Johns School 11th June 1900 to July 30th 1909.

In Memory of

Private

# Harry William Welch

45976, 2nd Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment who died on 19 September 1918 Age 37

Son of Alfred and Eliza Welch, late of Stanborough, Hatfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour

Vis-En-Artois Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Harry William Welch

**Born 1880 – Died 19th September 1918**

## Personal History

Harry William (Jack) Welch was born in Stanborough on the 12th December 1880, the second son of Adam Alfred and Eliza Welch and baptised at St. John's church Lemsford on the 12th December 1880. On leaving school he became a grocer's assistant and worked in Hatfield and later in Berkhamsted. He never married. No record of attending St John's School

## War Record

### 2nd Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment

He enlisted at Berkhamsted and joined the Bedfordshire Regiment as Private 27664. Later he was transferred to the Yorkshire and Lancaster Regiment as Private 54976. He died on the 19th of September 1918, aged 38. The War Notes of December 1918 in the Hatfield Parish Magazine read: - ***'We regret to announce that Private H.G. Welch lost his life in action on September 19th. For some reason the official information of his death was not received by his relatives until the day the Armistice was signed. The very deepest sympathy will be felt for his sisters, Mrs Fred Scott, Mrs Ernest Scott, and Miss Welch, who have been so long connected with Lemsford.'***

## War Memorial

Private Harry William Welch 45976. 2nd Bn., York and Lancaster Regiment is remembered with Honour on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Panel 9. This Memorial bears the names of over 9,000 men who fell in the period from 8 August 1918 to the date of the Armistice in the Advance to Victory in Picardy and Artois, between the Somme and Loos, and who have no known grave.

He is also remembered on his parent's grave in St. John's Lemsford north churchyard Row 11, plot 7. The inscription reads: 'In loving memory of Alfred Welch, died April 19th 1901 aged 60 years peace perfect peace. also of Mother, wife of the above who fell asleep March 11th 1915 aged 69 years God has wiped all tears from her face also of Jack, their son killed in action Sept 19th 1918 aged 38 years lead thou me on.'

In Memory of

Private

**E Mardle**

G/15596, 7th Bn., Royal Sussex Regiment who died on 01 February 1918 Age 29

Son of George Henry and Elizabeth Mardle, of Cromer Hyde, Halfield, Herts.

Remembered with Honour

**Croix-Du-Bac British Cemetery, Steenwerck**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

# Ernest Mardle

**Born 26th March 1888 – Died 1st February 1918**

## Personal History

Ernest and Charles Mardle, twin sons of George Henry and Elizabeth (née Smart) Mardle were born at Cromer Hyde on the 26th March 1888 and baptised at St.John's church, Lemsford the same day. This was George & Elizabeth's second set of twins - Harry and Alfred had been born in 1880. In the 1881 Census their older sister Eleanor, aged 13, is noted as being a mother's help and would have been much needed. They also had a younger brother, Frank, whose name is on the Lemsford War Memorial. Ernest and Charles attended Lemsford School from 1892 to 1902 when they left to work on a farm.

Attended St Johns School March 21st 1892 – May 29th 1902.

## War Record

### 7th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment

Ernest Mardle enlisted at Hertford in October 1914 and joined the 7th Bn. Royal Sussex Regiment as Private G/15596. The Battalion landed at Boulogne on the 31st May 1915.

Private G/15596 Ernest Mardle was killed on the 1st February 1918 and is buried in grave I. D. 8 of the Croix-du-Bac British Cemetery, Steenwerck, Nord, France which is about 5 miles south-west of Armentieres The 7th Bn. Sussex Regiment had been involved at Cambrai from the 30th November 1917 to the 3rd December repelling a German counter attack 30 Nov-3 Dec 1917 and then from the 24th to the 25th March 1918 at the First Battle of Bapaume.

## War Memorial

His obituary in the Herts Advertiser & St. Albans Times, Saturday March 9th 1918 reads:-  
***'Pte. Ernest Mardle, aged 29, Sussex Regiment, single, a twin son of Mr and Mrs George Mardle, Cromer Hyde near Hatfield and brother of Mr Harry Mardle, Alexandra Road, St. Albans was killed in France on February 1st. He joined the Army in October 1914, had been in France for over two years and had been twice wounded. His last leave was taken towards the close of last year and he returned to France on Christmas Day. He was formerly a farm labourer at Water End, near Wheathampstead. His younger brother, Bombardier Frank Mardle, Herts Artillery, was killed in France in June 1916.'*** Capt. Campbell in a letter to his relatives state that ***Pte Mardle was killed instantaneously while he was doing his duty like a good soldier. "I can only state" the writer adds "how much I sympathise with you in your loss and say that both the officers and men feel the same .... It may comfort you a little to think that no man can give his life better than your son did and I am certain he gave it willingly in the service of his country"***



## George Mount Stephen & Georgina Mount Stephen

George Mount Stephen was born 5 June 1829 near Dufftown, Banffshire, Scotland. He was the son of a carpenter, William Stephen, and Elspet Smith, a crofter's daughter. George's parents emigrated to Montreal, Canada in 1847, and George joined them in 1850. He married his first wife Annie Charlotte Kane (1830–1896) in Kent on 8 March 1853. Lord Mount Stephen (shown below) was involved in many ventures in Canada which made him an extremely wealthy man. He was also a financier and ran the company that built the Canadian Pacific. He gave much of his fortune away, funding major hospitals in England, Scotland and Canada.



In 1888, on his retirement, he and his wife Annie returned to England, living at 17 Carlton House Terrace in London. In 1893 Lord Mount Stephen leased Brocket Hall. His first wife Annie died in 1896, and is buried in the churchyard at St. Johns, Lemsford.

In 1897, Lord Mount Stephen married his second wife Georgina (known as Gian) Tufnell (1864–1933), who had been Lady-in-Waiting to the Duchess of Teck, the mother of Queen Mary. Through this connection, Gian became a lifelong friend and confidant of Queen Mary and she and Lord Mount Stephen regularly entertained her and her husband, George V, at Brocket Hall. In his private life Lord Mount Stephen was a retiring person: his one true passion was salmon fishing. He did not have a car or telephone at Brocket Hall.

The Mount Stephens took interest in local life and supported the village school, as well as building a nursing home opposite the church.

In 1905 Lady Mount Stephen noticed the school children had nowhere to eat their dinner or play when it was raining so she had a canteen built for them. Each Christmas the school children were presented with school prizes also clothes by Lady Mount Stephens. In the summer she also provided treats for the children in Brocket Park. She presented a flag and flagstaff to the school in 1911 for visit of King George V and Queen Mary to Brocket Hall. The children sang the National Anthem as the flag was hoisted on the afternoon of the visit. She also presented the school with portraits of the King and Queen on the occasion of the Coronation in June 1911.

Before the first war, nearly everyone kept a pig and Lord Mount Stephen allowed villagers into the park to collect acorns to feed their pigs.

During the war years, Lady Mount Stephen continued to give her annual tea for school children and provide clothing. Later in the war she gave lengths of material for the girls and jumpers for the boys, and soup was provided from Brocket Hall at midday for the pupils.

In his later years, Lord Mount Stephen became almost completely deaf. He spent much of his time at Brocket Hall until his death in 1921.

Local woman **Annie Gardiner** remembered Queen Mary visiting Brocket Hall: "We had to line up in the drive to see her. Lady Mount-Stephen was a great friend of hers and left her all her jewellery when she died. Old Lord Mount Stephen would not have a car on the place and one had to be hired each time she came." Annie continued: "My father William Gardiner was in the army during the war. Lord Mount Stephen kept his job in the gardens at Brocket Hall waiting for him for when he returned."

### **H.J Brown's Memory of the Mount Stephens**

He would have had a powerful influence in the area and seems to have been liked and respected. He had several gamekeepers, and Brocket became famous for the quality of its shoots, often attended by royalty including the future George V and the Prince of Wales. At Christmas he gave every son of the estate workers a woollen jersey and every daughter a length of material for a dress. In the autumn he had crates of big red apples sent over from Canada and distributed

On a personal note, my Father suffered from deafness when he was young and when Lord Stephen, who himself suffered from deafness in his old age, heard about it he arranged for an operation by a specialist which was a complete success. I only heard this story sometime after my Father died when I was told it by my Auntie May.

On another occasion, Dr Thomas who used to come to Cromer Hyde Lane from Welwyn in his pony and trap decided that five of the children needed their tonsils done. My dad beat for Lord Mount Stephen. At that time, it was a day job and it was arranged that the five would go to Hertford on the same day. When Lord Mount Stephen heard of it he arranged for his coachman and coach to take them and one can imagine the stir it must have made with the cottagers in the old lane which was only a dirt track. When it was time to come home Percy was not too well and had to stay in hospital so his twin sister May stayed to keep him company. Next day all was well and the coach went again to bring them home. Unfortunately, Percy was sick in the coach and my Grannie was very worried about what would be said. Apparently, His Lordship dismissed the problem saying that the coach would be cleaned properly. About 1912 the Browns had a new house in Cromer Hyde Lane, still there today, to replace the old Victorian cottage and this have must been Lord Mount Stephens doing.

# Lemsford Football Club

By Andy Chapman & Ron Forsdike



Lemsford FC 1919 – 1920

Our records show no information about Lemsford FC during 1914 to 1918. Looking at the 1919 team we think most of the team from 1914 would have been at the front line.

## October 1910, Lemsford News

'At a meeting of the Football Club held in the Reading Room on Wednesday, July 27th, Mr Cecil White (see page 36) was elected Captain of the team, and Mr Frederick Reynolds, Vice-Captain. The Committee consists, besides the two named, of our indefatigable Secretary – Mr Welch, Mr Hale, Mr W. Flitney and Mr Wilmhurst. This year Lemsford has joined the Mid-Herts League (Division II) and have also entered for the Herts Junior Cup. The season opened on September 10th at Boreham Wood, when Lemsford lost to that Club by two goals to none after a really good game. Cecil White was killed in the great war at the Battle of the Somme. Private 4335 Cecil White of the 24th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers died on Wednesday August 16th 1916 aged 25.

## Sammy Welsh



Secretary of Lemsford FC in 1908. September 1908 - Lemsford News: We hear that a successful attempt has been made to restart the Football Club this season. Mr S. Welsh has been elected Secretary.



**Alf Tyler**  
 Born July 17th 1901  
 Trooper Regiment: 18th Hussars  
 Victory & British War Medal



**George Frederick Rosher**  
 Born 25th Feb 1895  
 Sergeant Regiment: 1st Beds Reg  
 Victory Medal - British War Medal



**Arthur Flitney**  
 Born February 15th 1889  
 No records found but we  
 think did go to war



**Reg Taylor**  
 Born: 26/11/1900  
 No records found but we  
 think did go to war



**Bill Cochrane**  
 Born: 1895  
 He was born with only one hand and  
 was rejected for military service in  
 WW1.



**Percy White**  
 Born: 28/03/1897  
 Rank: L-Cpl - Regiment: 6th  
 Bedfordshire Regiment  
 Victory Medal - British War Medal



**Bert Hornett**  
 Born April 14 1891  
 Sgt Regiment: 2nd  
 Batt. Northumberland Fusiliers  
 Victory Medal - British War Medal



**Fred Wren**  
 Born: 17/05/18  
 92Pte Regiment: 1/5 Battery  
 Bedfordshire Regiment:  
 Victory Medal - British War Medal



**Archie Cowland**

**Born: 15/01/1901  
Signalman Regiment: Royal Navy**



**Percy Wright**

**1911 Census: Unknown  
Attended St Johns: Unknown**



**Bob Sear**

**Born: 14/05/1893  
Bedfordshire Regiment  
Victory Medal - British War Medal**



**Arthur Eagles**

**Born: 21/7/1882  
142nd Labour Corps  
Victory Medal - British War Medal**



The author of this article, Ron Forsdike, played for Lemsford F.C. in the 1950s. Ron was a valued member of LLHG for many years. He is also the son in law of Sammy Welsh.

**Lemsford F.C. 1950s team: BR: Philip Runchman, Don Cordner, Ron Forsdike, (Boy) Brian Hussey, MR: Rodney Tufts, George Flitney, Ron Taylor, FR: Tony Berks, Fred Pugh, Arthur Dance, Ron Flitney, Bill Dance.**

## Mr Ladbury, Headmaster of Lemsford Village School 1902 - 1936

**Mr Ladbury** was headmaster at St Johns School from 1902 to 1936 and helped the children of Lemsford through the dark days of WW1. He lived in the school with his family. **Mrs Ladbury** took an active part in Village life. In the LLHG archives we have his essay on the 'History of Lemsford'. His wife is often mentioned taking part in Village life. Running a village school before and after WW1 was a more practical curriculum. Few of the children had any ideas of numbers or of letters, and the first task was to teach them to read and write and do simple arithmetic. The girls were taught needlework, and the boys gardening, and all the children learned to sing. The Vicar opened the school each morning with prayer. The children were admitted from the age of three upwards. Younger children were allowed to attend provided they were entered on a separate register. Image below shows Mr Ladbury with the older boys tending his garden in 1910. I suspect most of these boys went to war and some might not have returned.



**Mr Ladbury** (Left) in a school production – A charming and successful operetta entitled “The Enchanted Rose” was given by the school children on the evenings of February 13th and 14<sup>th</sup>. Full report see Lemsford News March 1919. All of these children had seen four years of war and many would have had fathers in the war and some would have lost their father.

### Lemsford News September 1917

Sale of Work – **Mrs Ladbury**, the Associates and Members of the Lemsford Branch of the Children's Union are much to be congratulated on the success of the Sale. The Sale was opened by Lady Mount Stephen at 3.30. There were numerous other attractions, such as Hoop-la, a lucky fish pond, and a Rifle Range, and a War time tea was provided at 6d. a head. The total proceeds of the Sale amounted to £21 11s. 11d., After deducting expenses £18 16s. 0d. has been sent to the Homes for Crippled Waifs and Strays.

### Lemsford News 1919

### **Lemsford News March 1919**

School Entertainment – A charming and successful operetta entitled “The Enchanted Rose” was given by the school children on the evenings of February 13th and 14th, to crowded audiences. The three acts of the play were splendidly staged; the gorgeous costumes of the king, queen and princesses were shown to great advantage before the background of soldiers in brilliant uniforms, and the white robed chorus singers; while the dainty fairy queen with her train of sweet little fairies in white, adorned with red roses on their hair and wands, made a realistic fairy scene. The wicked fairy was a vividly picturesque figure in her red and black costumes and the court jester was admirably dressed in green and red to suit his part. Seldom has a school entertainment so charmed its audiences, and the children are to be congratulated on the perfect rendering of solos and chorus. Not a hitch occurred during the intricate court dances of the chorus, the charming fairy steps of the baby elves, and the elaborate and eccentric antics of the jester. On each occasion the dances brought the house down and at the close of each act there were loud calls for the jester. Mr & Mrs Ladbury are to be heartily congratulated on the success of their work; the former for the training of the children and the latter for the making of the costumes, etc. Many thanks are due to Master Keith Ladbury for the able and sympathetic manner in which he accompanied the whole performance, and for the difficult and charmingly rendered solos he played during the intervals. Mr Harrison deserves our thanks for the part he took in the enjoyable duet with Master K. Ladbury and is to be congratulated on so apt a pupil.

### **Lemsford News April 1919**

Three meetings have been held during the last two months to discuss what form the Memorial to be erected in memory of those parishioners who fell in the war should take. At a meeting on March 13th it was finally decided that a Celtic cross in Cornish granite should be erected inside the churchyard, close to the road, so that it could be seen from the cross roads, the names of the fallen to be inscribed on the side facing the road. The position, it is hoped, will meet the views both of those who wished the Memorial to be at the roadside and those who wished it to be in the churchyard. The exact position and final arrangements were left in the hands of the Sub-Committee of five who were elected for that purpose.

### **Lemsford News May 1919.**

Military Award – Private Frederick Reynolds has been awarded the Military Medal for gallant conduct the last time he went into action. It is understood that he has also been recommended for the Meritorious Service Medal. This is the third Military Medal won by Lemsford men, the two other recipients of the honour being Sidney Walby and Robert Sear.



Fred Reynolds

*x Records* Awarded "The Military Medal." FRANCE

Surname REYNOLDS

Christian Name Frederick William

Rank Pte

Corps K Staff R. 1<sup>st</sup> Bn

Regimental Number 55215 25164x

Date of Gazette 24.1.19

Registered Paper 18/12/1888 Schedule Number 192697

68/Gen. No. 2780 (M.S. 2(D)) W8946(R) 2386 20,000 2/15 (K656b) W. & Co. K642

In order to avoid duplicate issues of Medals it is imperative that the cards be referred to before any names are gazetted.

### Lemsford News August 1919

Peace Celebrations – The Peace Celebrations were a great success. There was a large gathering for the Sports in the field behind Lemsford House, kindly lent for the occasion by Mr Sherriff. Tea was provided out of doors for all present, and Lady Mount Stephen gave a tea to the school children in the School. At the conclusion of the Sports Mrs Ward distributed the prizes. Fireworks and a bonfire concluded a most enjoyable day. Naturally all this meant a great deal of work, and the members of the Sports Committee and the Tea Committee and their helpers deserve our best thanks for their labours. Everyone was most helpful, Mr Ladbury especially being quite untiring in his exertions which contributed very largely to the success of the day.

### The Memorial

To those who gave their lives in the Great War, was unveiled on Sunday afternoon, July 20th, by General the Earl of Cavan, K.P. There was a large gathering for the memorial service in the Church in spite of the bad weather. Lord Cavan, standing on the Chancel step, addressed the congregation in a few striking words. He impressed upon his hearers the great perils from which they had been delivered by men like those glorious dead of whom they were thinking that day. If the trenches at Ypres had not been so magnificently held, large raiding parties might have landed in England. It was more than probable that, if that had happened, Lemsford, standing as it does on the high road to London, would have shared the fate of the numerous villages he had seen in other lands, so completely razed from the face of the earth, that it was necessary to set up boards indicating what place it might have been. At the conclusion of the service Lord Cavan unveiled the memorial to the Glory of God and in memory of the glorious dead of Lemsford.



# The Reading Room

The corrugated iron building resting on bricks and now sitting in the archery field was once the hub of village life. Everything happened in the Reading Room - library, meeting rooms, youth club, whist drives, jumble sales, dances, concerts, billiards etc. It was originally erected by the Revd. Frank Coggin, Vicar of Lemsford 1892-1905, in the grounds of Bridge House which he had rented and was run privately by him. He presented it to the village when he left in 1905. The new tenant of Bridge House did not want it in his back garden but happily Lady Cowper gave permission for it to be moved to the entrance of Roebuck Farm. However, when Roebuck Farm was sold in 1919 the new owner did not want it blocking his entrance. This time Lord Kerr came to the rescue and provided the current site on a 99-year lease at a peppercorn rent of one shilling per year. It served as the village hall until the present one in Brocket Road was built in the early 1970s. It is now the clubroom for an archery club.

**Its use during WW1 is well documented in the Parish Magazine.**

## **March 1917**

Smith's Charity – on Friday, January 26th, Smith's Charity, or the “Brocket Bread” as it is usually called was distributed in the Reading Room. The pile of loaves looked and smelt most appetising, and the quantity carried away by each recipient must have been a real Godsend to Mothers of large families in these bad times. The bread is provided by a charge left by a onetime owner, on the Brocket Estate, to pay the Vicar and Churchwardens of Lemsford 30/- annually, for ever, to distribute in bread to the poor of the parish. As the parish grew, the sum was found too small to supply enough bread to go around, so it is held by the Trustee until a sufficient sum has accumulated to supply each poor parishioner with a certain quantity. Mr W. Horn, who must have had considerable trouble in compiling the list, distributed the bread with assistance of Mrs & Miss Moore, Miss Horn and Mrs King.

## **November 1918 Lemsford News**

### **Obituary of Mrs Horn**

We shall think of her dear familiar figure on winter afternoons in the Reading Room at the Mothers' Meeting.

Just past the Reading Room, already mentioned, Mr Hale lived and had his workshop; looking after the carpentry needs of the Village or decorating and painting the School. The Reading Room with its billiards table, photographs of local football teams and its row of books (Dickens I remember) each covered in black calico.



# **The Lemsford War Memorial**

The Lemsford War Memorial, a Celtic Cross made of Cornish granite, was unveiled by Lieut. General the Earl of Cavan on Sunday July 20th 1919. The names of those who died in World War I are engraved on the plinth and those who died in World War II on a tablet at the base of the cross. Please visit LLHG WW1 website which remembers those who gave their lives.

**To the Glory of God and in memory of those who gave their lives in the Great War  
1914 – 1919**

**FRED BUNNAGE, R.M.L.I.  
DAVID COCHRANE, R.W.Kent.  
HERBERT. E. FREEMAN, Beds  
REGINALD GOODGE, R.F.A.  
JAMES HALSEY, 40 Canadian  
GEORGE HILL, E. Surrey  
ERNEST MARDLE, Herts.  
FRANK MARDLE, R.F.A.  
FREDERICK.W. SPRIGGS, Beds.  
GEORGE SPRIGGS, Herts.  
WILLIAM. J. STRONG, Lanc fus.  
ROBERT TIMS, Lond.Ir R.  
SIDNEY WALBY, Beds.  
HARRY. W. WELCH, York & Lanc.  
CECIL. B. WHITE, R. Fus.  
CHRISTOPHER WREN, Beds.**

**Base: and in the 2nd World War 1939 - 1945.**

**RICHARD C. ALDERSON. CDSM. CDS.  
ARTHUR J. EAGLES. R.A.  
ERNEST L. FLITNEY. Beds & Herts.  
DORIS M. FLITNEY. W.A.A.F.  
ALFRED A. WILLIAMS. R.A.M.C**

# **LEST WE FORGET**

## **Lemsford Local History Group**

The Lemsford Local History Group, formed in 2001, is interested in all aspects of the history and the people of this area - both ancient and modern. We welcome correspondence from anyone who shares this interest. The group archives now include a significant number of photographs and documents, as well as records of baptisms (to 1985), marriages (to 1970), burials (to 2003) and memorial inscriptions (to 2009) from the St John's, Lemsford parish registers. Records of baptisms, marriages and burials before the consecration of the church in 1859 will be found in the registers of the parish of St. Ethelreda, Hatfield. The archive also contains admission records for Lemsford school, now St. John's Church of England Junior Mixed Infants school. We hope that you will enjoy reading about the people and the history of the parish of Lemsford in our website and would be delighted if you would like to contribute to the site with your own memories, photographs or family history. We welcome your comments and are happy to search through our archives to try to answer your enquiries [www.lemsfordhistory.co.uk](http://www.lemsfordhistory.co.uk)

**To contact us and to purchase this book email  
[info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk](mailto:info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk)**



**Lemsford Village in the 1920's  
A village fit for heroes**