

Follow Newark's trauma in The Great War as it happened 100 years ago this week

Edited by Trevor Frecknall, author of *Newark in The Great War*

Great War Bulletin

No. 9...Newark...Monday 28 September 1914

'It is a terrible War, Mum'

AN EARLY hint of the realities of the conflict arrive in Newark last Tuesday. Mary Squires and her husband George, a 64-year-old groom and coachman, received a letter at home, 111 Baldertongate, from their son, Herbert, a Corporal in the 18th Hussars with the British Expeditionary Force. He wrote: "I am still one of the lucky ones, thank God. It is a terrible war, I can tell you. We never know whose turn it is next. We are at it night and day. Give my love to them and all and keep up heart. We are not allowed to say anything as regards the War." George and Mary had had 16 children in their 45-years together. Five were already dead. Herbert survived the War and returned home as Sergeant No. 47225.

OUR FIRST VICTIMS

Father of four from Claypole is torpedoed

WIDOW Ellen Lloyd, 59, a charwoman living at Claypole Mill, discovered on Saturday that her 34-year-old son Francis was killed when HMS Aboukir was torpedoed, along with HMS Cressy and HMS Hogue, by the German U-boat U9 at 6.25am last Tuesday.

Launched in May 1900, Aboukir was a Cressy Class cruiser with displacement of 12,000 tons and a top speed of 21 knots.

It was armed with two 9.2-inch guns, twelve 6-inch quick-firers in a central battery and many more small quick-firers and machine guns.

It was meandering along at 10 knots when a single torpedo sank it.

A century later, the website <http://www.worldwar1.co.uk/cressy.htm> records:

"The patrol by these elderly ships was much criticised, they were too old and slow with inexperienced crews to put up a decent fight against modern German surface ships.

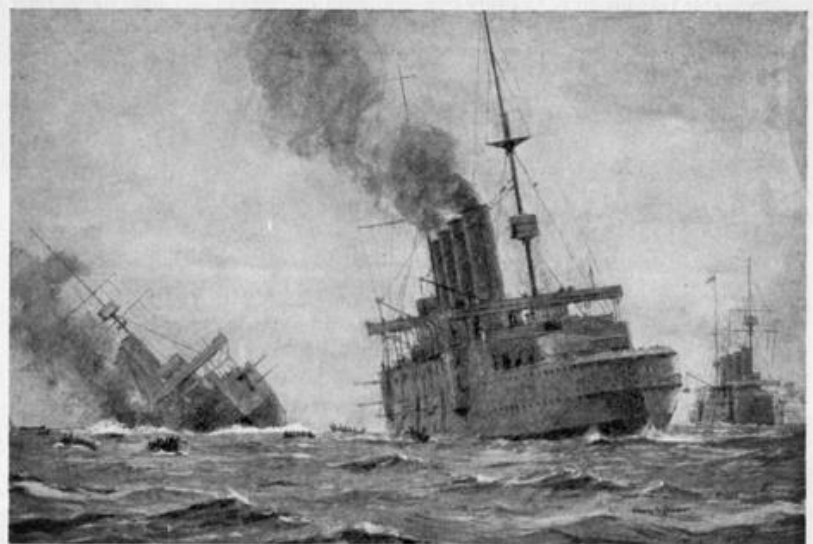
"Although the submarine threat at the time was not considered, even by critics of the patrol, the fact that the three ships didn't zigzag was criticised by the board of inquiry, a practice that was widely ignored at the time and even by some ships after the loss of the three cruisers."

Gunner Francis John Lloyd had been a railway porter before becoming hailed as "a fearless Jack Tar".

He and his wife Lizzie had four children: Leslie in 1896, Annie in 1898, Francis in 1899 and Stephen in 1909.

To add confusion to heartbreak, the Lloyd family were called 'Louth' in the Newark Herald report of Francis' death.

And the report stated he had been in the Navy for 12 years. In fact, he was still portering on the railway, based at Claypole but living in Carlton-on-Trent at the time of the 1911 census.



THE SINKING OF ABOUKIR.

Blister kills one of our marching Foresters

THE local Territorial soldiers of the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters suffered their first death today – while they were still training to face the foe.

Drummer Rowland James Baker, aged 22, from Albert Street died in hospital in Luton of blood poisoning, sparked by a blister on his heel.

It flared-up while he marched from Newark to Derby and then went on fitness-proving route marches.

Determined to avoid being sent back home, he did not report for medical attention until his pain became unbearable at Harpenden,

where the Foresters have joined many other Regiments in a training camp.

Drummer Baker will be buried next Saturday in Newark Cemetery. Because the Territorials being drilled in Newark do not have full equipment, a firing party will be provided by the Royal Engineers and the bugles supplied by members of the Parish Church Company of the Church Lads' Brigade, to which young Rowland had belonged as a boy.

Mourners will line London Road and the Cemetery will be thronged by mourners.

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TOWN CASH-IN ON ENGINEERS

NEWARK'S economy is set for a boost of upwards of £1 million now that the town has been selected as one of nine training depots for Royal Engineers

In the most welcome invasion imaginable after the worries of the past few weeks, 400 Royal Engineers arrived in Newark under the command of Majors Walker and Brunner.

Chief Constable Albert Wright, a 39-year-old Lancastrian, has arranged their billeting in the Appletongate area and the streets off London Road.

They will remain through the winter at Newark, which is extremely good news because the billeting allowance is 23s 4d per week per man.

It will be paid to the house occupiers who find room for the trainees and will, of course, be circulated, which will be of immense benefit to the town.

That said, the Licensed Victuallers' Association are asked not to serve the men in public houses after 9pm each night. (It must be added that the Chief Constable is no kill-joy really: he and his wife Agnes have had five children, of whom two have sadly died in their formative years of illnesses that are all too prevalent in the town.)

Town to welcome Belgian refugees

NEWARK Town Council agreed on Monday evening to house Belgian refugees in empty properties in Victoria Street and Middelgate – and resolved to close all hairdressers' and barbers' shops for the duration of The Great War.

The arrival nationally of refugees impacted hugely on Old Magnusian Thomas Matthew Blagg, who had taken up a post in the Civil Service as an Inspector of Immigration.

His efforts will be rewarded with an MBE in 1933, by which time he will also be revered as one of the county's foremost historians.

Schools celebrate good sporting year

NEWARK Elementary Schools' Athletic Association held its annual general meeting in the Town Hall and celebrates a successful year of football, cricket, athletics and hockey.

Officers elected were basically the great and good of the town's employers and councillors...

President, Mr W Mumby JP; vice-presidents, Messrs H E Branston, O Quibell, H A Sutton, W Tidd Pratt, J Tidd Pratt; honorary treasurer, Mr W Tidd Pratt; honorary secretary, Mr H Speight.

The only teacher among the officers was Herbert Speight, a no-nonsense Yorkshireman, the head of Mount School.

Newark is the Royal Engineers' No.8 Depot and they will have only nine throughout the country for the duration of The Great War. So the importance of our town to the War Effort can hardly be over-stated.

The War will increasingly rely on engineering. Without engineers there would be no supply to the armies, because the Royal Engineers will maintain the railways, roads, water supply, bridges and transport.

Royal Engineers will also operate the railways and inland waterways; maintain the telephones, wireless and other signalling equipment.

In the heat of battle, they will design and build the front-line fortifications to provide cover for the infantry and positions for the artillery.

Their technical skills will be needed to develop responses to chemical and underground warfare.

And the Engineers will maintain the guns and other weapons to literally keep the Army firing.

Little wonder that the Royal Engineers were growing into a large and complex organisation.

On 1 August 1914, the Royal Engineers consisted of 1,056 officers and 10,394 men of the Regular Army and Special Reserve, plus another 513 officers and 13,127 men in the Territorials.

By the same date in 1917, it will have grown 12 times bigger, to 295,668. Economists in 1918 will report that the RE's brought more than £1 million into Newark.

'Germany will reap what she has sown'

Newark Parish Church harvest festival celebrations ended on Sunday evening with a service at which the preacher, Magnus Grammar School head master, the Reverend Henry Gorse said that Britain was confident about the result of the war.

He was convinced that "Germany will reap what she has sown."

The Parish Church harvest festival had opened on Thursday evening with a service at which the special preacher was the Reverend C Carterel Gosselin, Vicar of St Luke's, Bromley Common.

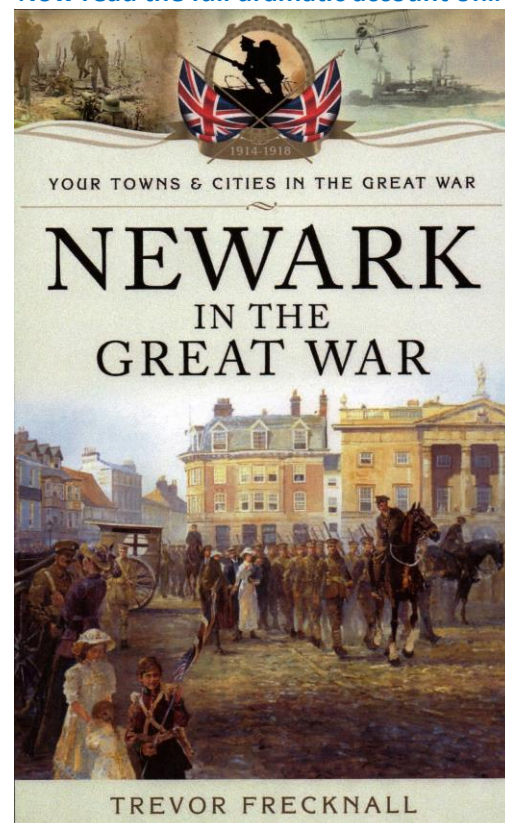
The celebrations continued with at least two services daily until Sunday.

Students advised: 'Prepare for peace'

PRIZE-giving at the Newark School of Science and Art features County Council Scholarships to 15-year-olds Harry Cottam of 95 Bowbridge Road; Matthew T Lee, 31 George Street; and Albert Fox, 27 King Street (art course); John Brown, 43 Charles Street; older teenagers William Dolphin, Thomas A Mansell, Arthur Branch, Joseph W Goodson and George R Walker (technical course); 17-year-old Mabel Jessop, 40 Bowbridge Road (commercial course).

The Chairman of the school's committee, Colonel E H Nicholson, warns the students that an unknown world of sorrow and suffering lies before us. There's an old saying: "In time of peace, prepare for war." His advice to the students is: "In time of war, prepare for peace."

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