

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. 20...Newark...Monday 14 December 1914

French lessons to help make Belgians at home

WITH more and more Belgians arriving in Newark and the surrounding villages, an evening course in French began at the School of Science and Art last Thursday.

Twenty pupils enrolled for lessons which will last through the winter and enable them to communicate with our hapless guests, who are doing their best to integrate by finding work that will help the War effort.



NEWS arrived from the Western Front on Friday that a prominent Newark boxer had been killed in action.

Corporal Thomas Walster had served in the 2nd Battalion Royal Scottish Fusiliers (mounted infantry) since 1901, when he was 18, and saw much service in India.

On his demobilisation and return home, he continued boxing with some success.

He was so promising that he was trained by Jim Maloney, manager of the

British and Empire heavyweight champion Bombardier Billy Wells.

And Thomas won his last fight in Newark against Young Swanwick of Nottingham.

When war broke out, he enlisted at

Derby and was part of the Expeditionary Force.

When the chaos eased at the Front Line, it became apparent that Thomas had been killed on 28 October.

NEWARK BOXING HERO IS KILLED IN ACTION

Morals on trial: 'Bawdy' soldier's wife fined

SERVING soldier's wife Edith Blackburn, aged 23, was fined £3

– and told she would go to prison for a month if she defaulted – by Newark Borough Magistrates on Thurs-day after being found guilty of keeping a disorderly

house at her home, 10 Ward's Row.

She had been kept under observation since October by Sister Jutson, a Church Army worker, who was the chief prosecution witness as the

pressure grew on the town's females not to lead soldiers into temptation.

The case was heard only two days after the Bishop of Sherwood presided over a meeting called to discuss "social prob-

lems" arising from the military camps being established in the Diocese.

Their duty, he asserted, was to "assist in promoting temperance in the Army and in making the men happy in camp".

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ONLY 18 days after his sister mobilised Collingham to help Belgian refugees who have been given sanctuary in the village, 19-year-old Lieutenant Ronald Andrew Colquhoun Aitchison of the King's Own (Royal Lancaster) Regiment died of wounds near Armentieres.

Educated at Charterhouse, Ronald had passed into Sandhurst, and was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant to his regiment on 17 September 1913.

Despite his tender years, he had gained the devoted trust of his men by his cheerful bravery, was three times recommended to HQ for gallantry and had also been put forward for accelerated promotion.

The son of civil engineer Gowrie Colquhoun Aitchison and his wife Rose Mabel, had been in action with the British Expeditionary Force, struggling to slow the German charge through Belgium and France, since 26 August 1914.

He experienced the Battles of the Marne and the Aisne, was allowed home for a week's leave to 'celebrate' his promotion to Lieutenant and returned to action only six days before his demise.

Imagine the terror when the dreaded telegram arrived at the Burnt House: both father and son were fighting...

The Rector of South Collingham, the Reverend

Collingham teenage hero is lost

Albert James Maxwell, articulated the parishioners' grief: "We all felt so proud of Lieutenant Aitchison when he came home for a few days on furlough looking so well and strong, knowing as we did that he had been in the firing line from almost the beginning of the campaign.

"He worshipped with us in our parish church and received the Blessed Sacrament on what proved to be his last Sunday on earth.

"His clean courageous life and noble death will always be a source of inspiration to those who knew him."

A concert on Thursday 26 November,

"splendidly and successfully arranged" by 21-year-old Miss Annie Katharine Colquhoun Aitchison, had raised £10 4s 8d for the Belgian Relief Fund.

Half was handed over to the Reverend Maxwell to meet any "exceptional expenses" in connection with a Belgian family. Nobody at that happy occasion imagined that the next time Annie attended a public gathering, she would be mourning the death of her soldier brother.

Ronald is remembered among 35 regimental comrades in the Strand Military Cemetery near Ypres in the Belgian province of Hainaut.

SHERWOODS CAPTAIN IS INVALIDED HOME TO BRIDE

CAPTAIN HUGH B T HUME of the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters was invalided home from France on Saturday suffering from "an internal complaint".

He had been drafted to India shortly after his wedding a year ago to Miss Muriel Wright of Edwinstowe House; and was moved to the Western Front only a few weeks ago.

The gallant Captain is staying at Edwinstowe House and reported to be making a steady recovery.

Farmers' £160 jumble sale

AN AGRICULTURAL JUMBLE SALE organised by Newark branch of the Farmers' Union was an unqualified success in the Horse Repository and Cattle Market.

Fountain Picksley, the popular secretary and 38-year-old son of a Coddington farmer, set-up the event with rare energy; William Smith Bailey (of Edward Bailey & Sons) gave his expertise as an auctioneer; and £160 was raised to be shared between the Prince of Wales' Fund, the local Belgian Refugees and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Christmas Fund.

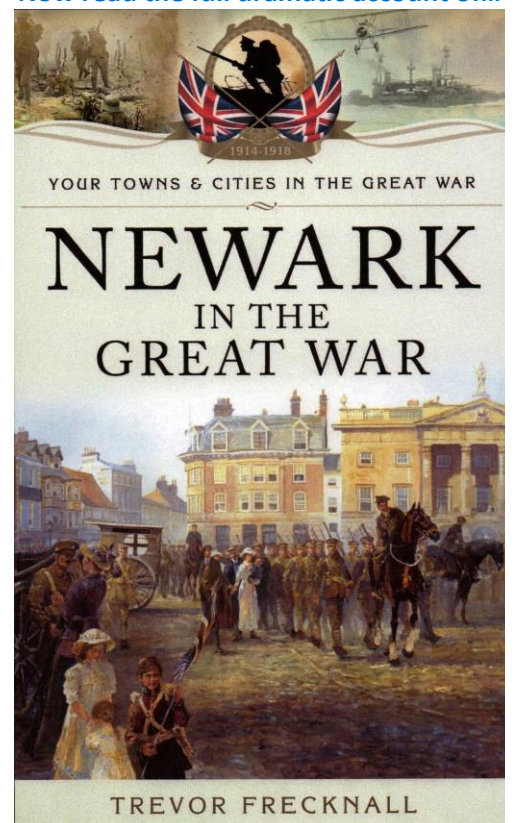
It was but the latest example of what a huge part voluntary effort is playing in the prosecution of The Great War – and the sportsmen soon added another...

Footballers' gifts for troops

THOUGH the Newark League fixture list is in chaos, local football staggered on with a match between teams representing the Royal Engineers in red and blue and the Sherwood Foresters in white on Saturday.

The corner flags were Union Jacks. The crowd was large and mainly in khaki. The game finished goalless. The money raised will go for Christmas presents for troops at the battlefield.

Now read the full dramatic account of...



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