

# Great War Bulletin

No. 55...Newark...Monday 16 August 1915

## FROM ALSACE WITH LOVE... TO A NEWARK MILLINERY

MILLINERS and drapers Smyth & Merritt proudly made a display of goods from the part of Alsace recently reclaimed for France after being in the hands of the Hun since the Franco-German war of 1870.

The shopkeepers in Stodman Street, Newark, speculated that in years to come, the small but interesting exhibition would prove an interesting – perhaps even valuable – souvenir of an historic event inasmuch as they were the first goods from lands wrested from the Germans since the start of The Great War.

EVERY day brings dire news to the Newark area now that the local volunteers of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Sherwood Foresters are in the thick of the trench warfare on the Western Front.

Not only are families with men and boys in the Army fearing the knock of the postman. Increasingly, the postmen and telegram boys are becoming traumatised by the emotions evoked by the messages they are delivering.

These are the notifications received in the past week...

**Private Frank Walster**, aged 23, of 5 Depot Yard off Kirkgate, Newark, was killed on 30 July. A letter from an officer revealed that he was bayoneted while on patrol with the 8<sup>th</sup> Sherwoods. Educated at Lover's Lane Council School, he worked at Nicholson's. His parents Robert and Ann – who have had eight children – have another son, Richard Henry, 20, serving as a Private in the Royal Garrison Artillery (and he will survive to appear in the 1918 list of Newark's absent voters). Private 2185 Frank is remembered at the Menin Gate Memorial.

The men at T and W Bradley's foundry heard that one of their labourers, 22-year-old **Private Herbert Moore**, was killed when he was buried alive in his trench by a shell burst two Saturdays ago. Both of his parents are dead but he is still well remembered in the town, having attended Christ Church School. Private 2461 Moore is also remembered at the Menin Gate Memorial.

Official confirmation arrived on Thursday that 19-year-old **Private Robert Huckerby**, son of brewer's cellarman Charles of 13 Wright Street, was killed while on patrol with the 8<sup>th</sup> Sherwoods on 31 July. Educated at the Wesleyan Day School and a regular at the Charles Street Wesleyan Sunday School, he had worked for Simpson's until he marched out of Newark with C Company a year ago. His 17-year-old brother Charles is next for the fray: he is a Private with the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Sherwoods, training at Dunstable.

Nineteen-year-old **Thomas Frederick Gumsley**, one of four brothers who have answered the call, has been killed – after telling his mother Harriett in his recent letter: "Keep a sharp eye open. I might be home on leave at any time!" News of his death came in

# DEATH NEWS COMES DAILY

a postcard to his cousin, Lizzie Foster, 24-year-old daughter of the publican at the Malt Shovel beer house on Northgate, from Private Samuel Keyworth, who was alongside him when it happened five days earlier. She immediately rushed to 23 Parliament Street to tell Fred's parents Harriett, who had reared six of her eight children to adulthood, and her husband Thomas, a bricklayer. Fred worked at Ransome's, was an enthusiastic angler and a clever swimmer. Of his brothers, Walter, 29, is in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Sherwoods; Herbert, 31, marched out with the 1<sup>st</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> a year ago, and Corporal George, 26, is expected to go abroad with the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> any day now. Their father, though too old for service, is a member of the National Reserve. Private 2451 T F Gumsley is another Newarker remembered at the Menin Gate Memorial; and another of his brothers will be killed before the War is over.

**Lieutenant Hector Wilson Ridley**, 23, was killed only a few days after returning to the trenches. He was one of the wounded heroes who joined with Corporal Upton VC a few evenings ago to urge more Newark men to volunteer. And now his widowed mother Elizabeth and grandparents William and Sarah Mather are distraught that the boy reared to take over the family motor company will not be coming home. The War Office telegram is terse as ever:

**"Deeply regret to inform you that Lt Hector Ridley,**

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## Newark prisoners in Germany

THE small picture above appeared on the back page of last Wednesday's *Newark Advertiser* of seven prisoners of war in Doeberitz Camp, Germany.

Among them are Newarkers George E White, a shunter on the Great Northern Railway and cricketer for the Wesley Guild before he joined the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment, who was captured at Mons; Private E Bullard, formerly an insurance agent who lived at Barnby Crossing; and Private A Stevenson of 7 Trent Villas, Farndon Road.

USA Ambassador James W Gerard will write in his book *'My Four Years in Germany'* in 1917: "The first privates, prisoners of war, came to the camp of Doeberitz near Berlin ... In the beginning of the war the Germans were surprised by the great number of prisoners taken and had made no adequate preparations for their reception.

"Clothing and blankets were woefully wanting, so I immediately bought what I could in the way of underclothes and blankets at the large department stores of Berlin and the wholesalers and sent these to the camps where the British prisoners were confined.

"I also sent to the Doeberitz camp articles such as sticks for wounded men who were recovering, and crutches, and even eggs and other nourishing delicacies for the sick."

Long before that, on 1 June 1916, the *Cork Examiner* newspaper will report that the

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## DAILY DEATHS AND A LETTER FROM THE PALACE!

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Sherwoods, Notts & Derbys Regt, is reported killed. Lord Kitchener deeply sympathises with you."**

What set this loss apart, though, was that there was also a letter from Buckingham Palace:

**"The King and Queen deeply regret the loss you and the Army have sustained by the death of your son in the service of his country. Their Majesties truly sympathise with you in your sorrow."**

Second Lieutenant William Hector Mather Ridley is remembered among his townsmen on the Menin Gate Memorial.

Worshippers in Kneesall discovered yesterday that their former vicar's son, **Lieutenant Harold Chell**, died on 10 August from wounds received while fighting with the 8<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers the previous day. Harold, who was born in Kneesall Vicarage in 1889, had studied for a medical career.

He was caught in a two-hour German bombardment in which 1,000 shells were concentrated on 250 yards of trenches. He was trying to dig out a comrade buried by a shell when another explosion buried him and exposed the entire trench to German marksmen only 80 yards away. Colleagues spent 20 minutes clawing away the soil so that he could be rushed for treatment but he proved to be too badly injured. A brother officer wrote to his 79-year-old father the Reverend George Russell Chell, who is now Vicar of Ealing in west London: "He was a gallant comrade and exceptionally excellent soldier. It is no exaggeration to say the men of his Company fairly idolised him and are sadly cut-up at his loss."

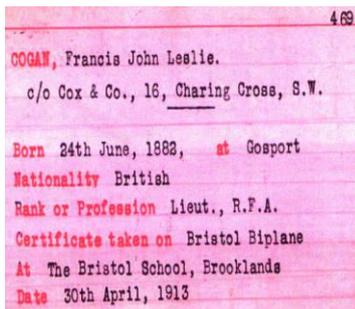
## Eggs cheer for the defiant

**MOTHER-of-11 Charlotte Fox, a farmer's wife who has helped Rolleston School send 296 eggs to wounded soldiers in the last 14 weeks, received a moving letter from a bloke who signed himself 'One of the Mad Irish'.**

He wrote: "You have four lads in the Army, which I was pleased to hear ... I am wounded in hospital and have had three brothers killed in France. My father is an old soldier, but now past the age limit, else he would try to do his bit. I came back from the Dardanelles a week since and never knew anything of my brothers

## 13<sup>th</sup> scary but lucky for Muskham pilot

**FLYING ace Major Francis Cogan, whose mother has turned Muskham Grange into a Red Cross Hospital for wounded soldiers, had an amazing escape on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. He was leading Royal Flying Corps No.4 Squadron over the Channel when engine failure forced him to land in a ploughed field in France. Several pilots followed their leader down, with the result that their aircraft were damaged. But no lives are lost.**



*Pilot Francis Cogan's flying licence dating from 1913*

## The patriotic Tacey family

**IF ONLY families could all gather round the Sunday dinner table again..! For example, Henry Tacey, who has worked at Bishop's maltsters for 23 years and resides at 102 Northgate with his wife, has five sons in the British Army.**

Three are actively engaged; one is a prisoner of war; the other has served his time and is physically unfit. The eldest, Private James Tacey of the King's Royal Rifles (the old 60<sup>th</sup>) who during 12 years' Army service went through the Boer War and had enteric, was declared unfit for further service and now works on munitions at Grantham. Corporal William Tacey, Scottish Rifles, also served in the Boer War and suffered enteric and dysentery, afterwards being in the guard which accompanied the present King (when Prince of Wales) to the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901. Private Harry Tacey has recently joined the Sherwoods and is now a second class shot, training at Braintree. Private Fred Tacey has been a prisoner of war in Germany since being shot in both thighs during the Battle of Mons a year ago and therefore gives his parents their greatest concern.

Mr and Mrs Tacey have heard nothing from him since Christmas Eve 1914; but he managed to send a postcard to confectioner C Robinson in Kirkgate asking for certain article, for which he would pay when he gets home. His parents were greatly cheered to know he is still alive. The fifth son, Sergeant-Farrier John Tacey, Inniskilling Guards, is home on leave and forbidden to talk publicly about the situation at the front.

It is understood, though, that he has told his mum and dad that when he was last keeping look-out in the trenches "a line of German heads popped up and, while I thought of our Fred, I killed 11 of them."

## wounded...

[deaths] until I was visited by my sister; and now, if I had heard of them when I was out, I would never have come back without avenging them or dying in the attempt. Wishing your sons the best of luck and prosperity, which I hope you will convey to them. Hope you will enjoy the time when your sons come home safely."

Amen to that, said thousands of readers!

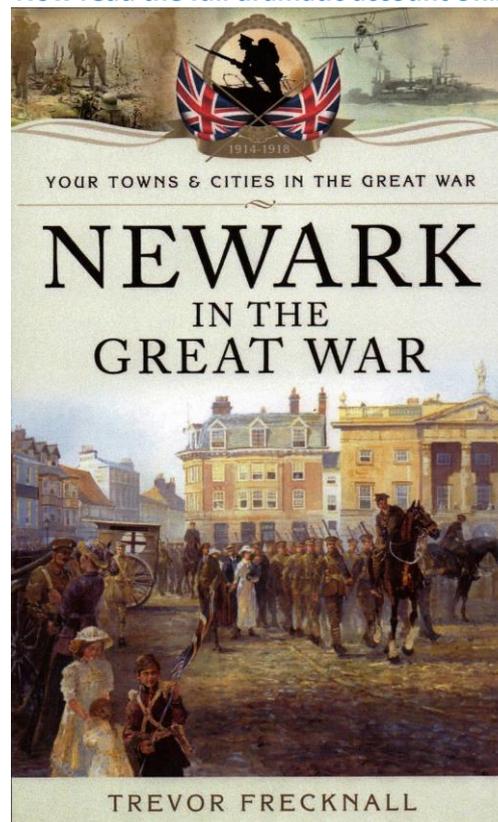
## Prisoners

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Doerberitz prisoners had begun producing their own monthly magazine: "The lot of the prisoners of war in most camps is exceptionally unhappy to judge by the statements of released men; therefore it is gratifying to find that in one camp there appears to be some form of pleasure and entertainment for them. The camp authorities at Doerberitz, where are interned British, French, Polish and Russian soldiers, has permitted the prisoners to bring out a magazine and within its pages is a good deal of fun, persiflage, and interesting little tidbits of life within 'the lager.' The first publication was in March, and the second number made its appearance in April, and that contained 52 pages. The prison magazine is a polyglot compilation, four languages being represented within its covers – French, Polish, Russian and English.

The editor in his inaugural article, stated: 'We hope that it will be taken in the right spirit, and that it will be understood that nothing personal is intended, or that such references are made with any other object than to cause harmless amusement.' There were reports of Rugby matches, an international shooting competition, interviews with camp notabilities, theatre and concert notes, boxing notes.

Now read the full dramatic account of...



£14.99 from WH Smith