

Great War Bulletin

No. 56...Newark...Monday 23 August 1915

STORMS RUIN HARVEST

HEAVY RAINS recently have damaged the prospects of a good harvest around Newark – which could have serious consequences for every dinner table in the Newark district over the next 12 months.

With U-boats drastically reducing the chances of imports reaching Britain and inexperienced youngsters joining the elderly and unfit tilling the land, it appears to be inevitable that there will be shortages of vital provisions such as bread, which in turn will do nothing to slow the rise in inflation.

The absence of drying winds over the last few weeks has exposed the ripe corn to depreciation, and the risk of ruination has been intensified ten-fold by the crops being continuously sodden.

DEATH AND GLORY IN THE DARDANELLES

Isaac wins a bravery medal for crew rescue

WORD finally got through to Newark on Friday, explaining why 27-year-old Signalman Isaac Overton has been awarded a Distinguished Service Medal for his work in the Dardanelles.

The citation simply stated the award was...

"For services on 18th March."

It turns out that Isaac was serving on *HMS Weir* when *HMS Irresistible* struck a mine.

Captain Christopher P Metcalfe took *Weir* alongside the stricken ship and rescued nearly all of her crew under heavy fire, which caused several casualties.

If only the censor would let us know what Isaac did to deserve such a high bravery award!

What we can reveal is that he is the eldest son of Isaac and Sarah Overton of 13 Bowbridge Road, Newark, went to the Wesleyan School, and worked in Halstead's coal office before joining the Navy almost 12 years ago.

His dad also works on water, as a steam tug driver for Trent Navigation.

His young brother Cyril, 20 and a solicitor's clerk pre-war, is a cyclist-signaller with the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters who are having such a torrid time on the Western Front.

And this won't be the last time Isaac's heroics are recognised...

Shelton aids Italy

COLONEL Francis Vere Wright JP and his wife held a garden party at Shelton Hall on Saturday to raise funds for wounded Italian soldiers – 30 years after he fought in a war for a united Italy, and lost two fingers when he was wounded.

Slaughtered at Suvla Bay

DREADFUL NEWS is filtering back to Nottinghamshire of local regiments suffering huge losses in the arid battle zones of Gallipoli, Turkey.

The Battle of Scimitar Hill, Gallipoli, on Saturday failed with the loss of 5,000 men. The Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry, parted from their horses and prepared as an infantry unit during training in Egypt, had landed on Wednesday at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula off the Dardanelles Straits, an historic waterway that links the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea.

The terrain is inhospitable: rocky and scrub-covered area with little water. The hills are steep-sided and are cut into deep gullies and ravines.

The Turkish Army was entrenched above the Bay, determined not to allow the Allies to use the Straits to reinforce Russia's effort against Germany.

On Thursday news from the War Office reached lime and stone merchant Charles Kirton at Long Bennington that his youngest son, Arthur, 22, a Private in the 6th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment, died in the Dardanelles on 28 July from "wounds received at a place not yet known".

It came only a couple of days after Charles received a letter from Arthur saying: "...I've been a week in the trenches and am still all right..."

It will emerge that Hill 70 was the venue. The Lincolns went in with 1,200 men. Only 240 returned. Private 13047 Kirton, one of the first to perish, lies in the Lancashire Landing Cemetery.

More horrifying details emerged on Saturday ... Sir John Peniston Milbanke, 10th Bart, Lieutenant-

Sherwood
Rangers
suffer in
'Last
Charge of
England's
Yeomen'

LINCOLNSHIRE REGT CASUALTIES, TOO

Colonel, Nottinghamshire Yeomanry (Sherwood Rangers) was killed leading what went into history as a spectacular but futile "final charge of England's Yeomen".

According to Richard Holmes, author of *Soldiers: Army Lives and Loyalties from Redcoats to Dusty Warriors*, when Sir John announced the regiment was to attack a redoubt blandly named Hill 70, he commented:

"I don't know where it is and I don't think anyone else does, either. But in any case we are to go ahead and attack any Turk we meet."

The following account is taken from an article by embedded war correspondent Ashmead Bartlett in *The Globe* newspaper on 4 September 1915: "The Yeomanry

moved forward in a solid mass, forming up under the lower western and northern slopes. It was now almost dark and the attack seemed to hang fire, when suddenly the Yeomanry leapt to their feet and, as a single man, charged right up the hill.

"They were met by a withering fire which rose to a crescendo as they neared the northern crest, but nothing could stop them. They charged at amazing speed without a single halt from the bottom to the top, losing many men and many of their chosen leaders, including gallant Sir John Milbanke.

"It was a stirring sight, watched by thousands in the ever-gathering gloom. One moment they were below the crest, the next on top. A moment after many had disappeared inside the Turkish trenches, bayoneting all the

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

More fall on the Western Front

MORE men from Newark and district have been killed in action on the Western Front as the Germans continue their attempt to break through to the coast of France and prepare to invade England.

Farm labourer Edward and mother-of-nine Fanny Crampton of 11 Barnby Crossing, discovered last Monday that their 22-year-old son **Charlie** has been killed. The news came in a letter from Private George Barks, also of the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters, whose parents used to be neighbours of the Cramptons but now live at 11 Private Street, Newtown. Charlie had attended the Wesleyan Day School and then worked for eight years in the plaster pits for their owner, Richard Almond, at Lowfields before enlisting last November. He had been at the Front for just eight weeks. Private 3000 C Crampton died on 5 August and is remembered at the Menin Gate Memorial. George Barks will be killed in Dublin next Easter.

Defiance in the trenches

NEWARK'S 'other' Pte Fred Parker – the one who was not killed – got a letter overflowing with dignity and defiance in the *Advertiser* on Wednesday, composed on his 16th day in the Western Front trenches: "We have been up against it pretty hot but we have repulsed every German attack. The Huns have made five or six attacks on our positions just lately, and one was very severe. They tried to get through our lines by sending us some of that liquid fire they so often use against the French, and we withstood the bombardment very well under the circumstances. If that liquid fire drops clean on the parapet, it not only sets the sandbags on fire but the men as well. A few odd Germans managed to get in one of our trenches but they didn't reign very long, I can tell you. Our bombers bombed them out quickly with their own bombs, which they were throwing at our chaps. Some of our men were picking them up and throwing them back again before they exploded. It was a fine feat and very plucky..."

"It was here that the Barnbygate Parker got killed. I saw in the paper that it was thought to be me who had gone under but, thank God, I am still alive and well and am able to get a bit of my own back for those poor Newark chaps. The Germans have tried their utmost to break through to the coast, but they can't do that – they've got to get past us first before they can get to England. Our chaps hang on and stick to it too well to let them through. We had General Sir Charles Ferguson to speak to us one day and he told us that he couldn't wish to have any better troops ... We have earned some fame since we have been here and I hope we shall bring it back to Newark with us some day – when the war is over."

Private 305886 Fred Parker of 113 Bowbridge Road will be registered an absent voter when Newark set about finding out where its menfolk are in the spring of 1918. Private 305116 Fred Parker, the wife of Emma Parker of 2 James Row, Millgate, will be killed on 26 August 1918 while fighting with the 10th Sherwoods near Arras.

On Thursday came news of the death in action of father of four **Richard Gill** [first featured in this diary on 1 February 1915]. His wife Mary Ellen received letters of sympathy from two fellow Privates in the 2nd Battalion Sherwood Foresters. Ever since he emerged from hospital in November, he and Private G Day made a pact that each would give the other's next of kin any bad news.

So Day wrote to Blyton's Yard "with the deepest sympathy to inform you that your husband was killed in action on Monday 9 August ... I can tell you that it did make me feel queer when I saw him drop to the ground, but I think it will be heart-rending to you to hear the fateful news."

Mary Ellen was understandably disbelieving – especially since he appeared to be indestructible when he survived being buried alive and paralysed only a few months ago. But another letter from another soldier soon confirmed the shattering news. Private 9496 Gill is remembered at the Menin Gate Memorial.

Farnsfield discovered yesterday that it had lost two more heroes, **Privates William Stanley and Thomas Kew**.

Former Grenadier Guardsman William, 37, whose father lives in Brickyard Lane, joined the 2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment last year, was wounded in the head by shrapnel in June, taken to hospital in Boulogne and later transferred to Chichester, where he died on 7 August and was buried in the Sussex town's cemetery.

Kew, 23, was killed the following day in the relentless Ypres battle while with the 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and is remembered at the Ypres Reservoir Cemetery.

League leader's leave
THE popular secretary of the Newark and District Football League, Charles Edgar Harrison arrived home in Farndon Road, Newark, on Friday morning on a week's leave. Private Harrison of the 8th Sherwoods brought with him souvenirs ... a German rifle and bayonet.

It will be Newark's last sighting of him.

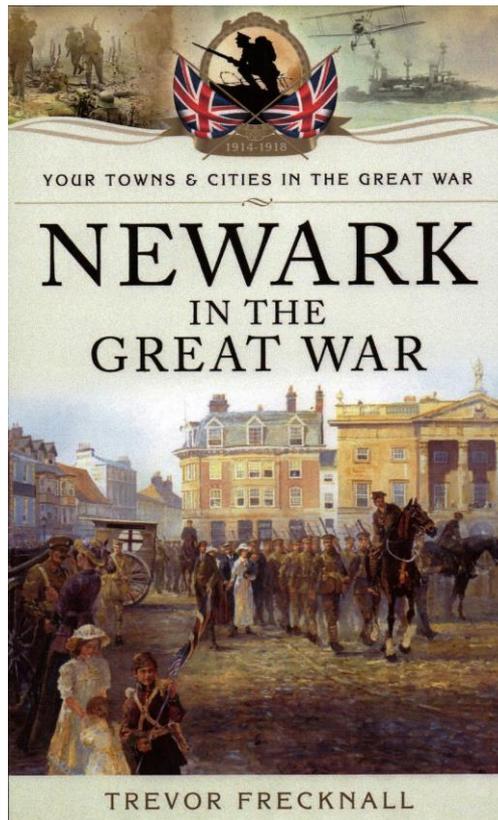
Slaughter at Suvla Bay

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defenders who had not fled in time, while others never stopped at trench-line, but dashed in pursuit down the reverse slopes. From a thousand lips a shout went up that Hill 70 was won. But night now was rapidly falling, the figures became blurred, then lost all shape, and finally disappeared from view. The battlefield had disappeared completely, and as one left Chocolate Hill one looked back on a vista of rolling clouds of smoke and huge fires, from the midst of which the incessant roar of the rifle-fire never for a moment ceased. This was ominous, for although Hill 70 was in our hands, the question arose: could we hold it throughout the night in the face of determined counter-attacks? In fact, all through the night the battle raged incessantly, and when morning broke Hill 70 was no longer in our possession. Apparently the Turks were never driven off a knoll on the northern crest, from which they enfiladed us with machine guns and artillery fire, while those of the Yeomanry who had dashed down the reverse slopes in pursuit were counter-attacked and lost heavily and had been obliged to retire. In the night it was decided it would be impossible to hold the hill in daylight, and the order was given for the troops to withdraw to their original positions. Nothing, however, will lessen the glory of that final charge."

Captain William Wedgwood Benn, 1st County of London Yeomanry, 4th Mounted Brigade, 2nd Mounted Division, would take a less charitable view in his memoir, *In the Side Shows* (published by Hodder & Stoughton, 1919): "The night of 21 August brought utter chaos to the British lines. The final attack ... had been a textbook example of how not to introduce troops into the line or to make an attack. It was extremely difficult for officers and NCOs to maintain any kind of good order with men tried beyond all endurance in a situation for which their meagre training had by no means prepared them. Soon something like panic was generated as the Yeomanry tumbled back."

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