

**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. 65...Newark...Monday 25 October 1915

## RECRUITING DRIVE INTENSIFIES

A JOINT meeting of the Mayor's Recruiting Committee and the Newark Parliamentary Recruiting Committee was held in the Town Hall on Thursday evening. The committees merged in order that Lord Derby's Recruiting Scheme can be worked. The three political parties – Conservative, Liberal and Labour – are cooperating and a canvass of eligible men will be promptly engaged upon. This is the final effort to make the voluntary system supply the men needed for our fighting forces. The only alternative is conscription.

The omens are not good: a public meeting in Balderton schoolroom was abandoned after only two people turned up. One said he favours conscription. The other was the school caretaker. One of the speakers had made a special journey from London.

## TERRIBLE TOLL OF



DEAD!



WOUNDED!



DEAD!



DEAD!

## HOHENZOLLERN

BY PIECING TOGETHER news that is slowly filtering through to Newark, it is possible to ascertain that the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Sherwood Foresters have covered themselves in glory with a brilliant bayonet charge, but at a terrible cost, at the Hohenzollern Redoubt in the Belgian town of Loos.

The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Herbert Fowler, has been killed.

The second-in-command, Major John Pickard Becher DSO, is severely wounded.

His wife's young brothers, Captain Henry Basil Strutt Handford, 21, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Edward Francis Sale Handford, 20, are also dead, as is 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant E S Strachan.

Lieutenant B W Vann was wounded twice. Lieutenant W M Hemmingway, grenade officer, is missing. Casualties among the rank and file number hundreds.

Describing the Hohenzollern Redoubt as one of the great German strongholds, the Newark Advertiser last Wednesday reported:

*"A thrill of pride must surge through the hearts of all in the county when it is realised*

## Bayonet charge devastates our local Terriers

*that it was the intrepid territorials from this district who, in face of a withering fire from machine guns, doggedly fought their way to the front the Germans thought impregnable and, at the point of the bayonet, ousted the enemy from its lair."*

What the report did not immediately reveal was that the Sherwoods had to charge across 300 yards of open countryside at the start of the action, giving the German machine gunners clear sight of a massed target. Such unimaginable bravery and self-sacrifice is commonplace in this unprecedented conflict.

Major-General E Stuart-Wortley, General Officer Commanding the 46<sup>th</sup> Division, of which the Sherwoods are a part, lost no time in turning the

episode into a recruiting advertisement, writing home:

*"I trust that their example may arouse enthusiasm ... and that the result of their gallant efforts may be to bring every able-bodied man into the ranks."*

It transpired that Lieutenant-Colonel Fowler, a director of his father's coal mining company in Civvie Street, was killed by a sniper while looking for Major Becher, who lay helpless on the battlefield for 48 hours before being found and carried away for treatment.

The Commanding Officer was thus hailed by his many admirers as having brought to life the cliché that greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends.

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# HOHENZOLLERN HEROES

LANCE SERGEANT Thomas Turgoose (right) had to wait until after the end of the War to receive his reward for the prominent part he played in organising the defence of the Hohenzollern Redoubt and thus ensuring that the sacrifice of the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters had not been entirely in vain.

The *Newark Advertiser* of 1 January 1919 reported on the "Belated Honour" of the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal and revealed that Thomas had suffered 17 wounds in his legs and neck during the action but had bravely stood his ground in the face of relentless enemy attacks. He eventually required hospital treatment back in England.

He was later promoted to full Sergeant. Although his injuries did not permit him to return to active service, he continued to serve as a Recruiting Sergeant in Newark.

The Mayor, Alderman W E Knight, presented him with the Distinguished Conduct Medal and a cheque for £5 and noted that the award was "...for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in holding for 24 hours the right barricade, which was under continuous rifle and bombing attacks, in which he showed marked courage and determination."

Thomas remained in Newark after the Great War and worked for Ransome and Marles eventually becoming Mayor's Officer and Town Hall Keeper for 25 years.

He died in 1952.



BOMB-THROWING Corporal Arthur Sam Kettle, 26, a tinsmith pre-war, arrived home at 10 New Street, Newark, this weekend having taken part in the great attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

He told his dad John, a cow-keeper and dairyman, and mum Sarah Ann about the "magnificent work" of our artillery ... Our Territorials were in support but their turn came to move forward and they had a very stiff job turning the Germans out of a trench in which they were securely set with machine guns, trained onto the advancing British.

As a result of the strenuous work they had to carry out, the "Terriers" lost a comparative few killed but a good number were wounded or gassed.

Among the killed were the young sons of Major Henry Handford, the 60-year-old county Medical Officer of Health who has joined the Royal Army Medical Corps, and the Honourable Mrs Mary Emily Handford, of Elmfield, The Burbage, Southwell: Captain Henry Basil Strutt Handford and 2nd Lieutenant Everard Francis Sale Handford.

Among the rank and file killed was 23-year-old Sergeant Charles Cox, whose wife of a year Florence (nee Oliver, a dressmaker) lives in Bleasby and widowed mother in Lowdham. A local man named Spencer was also killed, but Arthur did not know which village he came from.

Another bomb-thrower, Lance Corporal Vick, who was in the Society of the Sacred Mission at Kelham pre-war, is missing, added Arthur. In fact Bernard C Vick, whose widowed mum lives in Chichester, had also lost his life at the age of 19. He, with Lance Corporal 758 Arthur Spencer, the Handfords and Charles Cox are remembered on the Loos Memorial.

## HOOGHE - UNCENSORED!

A LETTER from one of the Sherwood Foresters who experienced the Battle of Hooge on the night of 24 September has escaped the censors:

"15 of us were detailed off for a fatigue of carrying bombs and grenades to a disused trench about threequarters of a mile behind the firing line. We finished this about midnight and were then unexpectedly commandeered to stay there and carry the bombs up, as they were wanted. At 3.45am all our batteries started like one and I never heard any German shells for the noise which ours made passing overhead.

"At 4.30am we went to the officers' dug-out as it was time for us to take up our first box of grenades, but found the dug-out blown-in and portions of human anatomy on the opposite parapet.

"Myself and another fellow started out with the first box of grenades ... a mine went up and the trench bottom heaved up and sank again and the parapets rocked. As we got nearer to the firing line and to one of the high roads, the state of the trench got worse and worse and the shell fire heavier. Finally a bit of shrapnel hit the box we were carrying and ricocheted off so we got out of the trench and ran along the top in the direction we thought our destination lay.

"When I got back, I got into a dug-out with four others. Suddenly the dug-out filled with acrid smoke, and the roof and sandbags were dropping on me. After a struggle, I freed myself and got out. But the man inside who could speak begged me to help him out, and I had to stop. The first man was nearly gone with concussion and

couldn't speak. He sank in the bottom of the trench when I pulled him out. The next chap had been hit between the shoulder blades by the shell, and was obviously dead, so I left him. The third man was imprisoned by a beam, so I left him to be liberated by some from another dug-out who had just come up. I was unhurt and so was the first man to get out, but it was a marvellous escape.

"During the day another officer came to take charge and he let us go back to our Company for tea. We were under cover and, though they were shelling us, it wasn't nearly as heavy as that we had been through. I had my equipment and rifle smashed by a shell outside the dug-out.

"It was hard to have to go back to the bombs, but this time we were provided with food. The night seemed interminable. We shivered with cold. The water was over the boot tops and we couldn't lie down. This was the third night we had been without rest.

"I am utterly disgusted with the slackers and I am also convinced that we shall need all our men if we are to win soon and avoid a protracted struggle. No one suggests that life out here is all roses. But a little hardship is a small matter ranged against the horrors of a war on our own soil."

## Breakdown

TROOPER George West, 28, a popular member of the Newark Squadron of the Sherwood Rangers who has been at the Dardanelles for some time, has arrived in a Birmingham hospital suffering from breakdown and has unfortunately lost the use of his limbs; but there is still hope of improvement.

Prior to the War, he was living with his Uncle John and Aunt Flora at their boot making and repairing shop, 6 Bridge Street, Newark; was working as a draughtsman in the drawing office at Ransome's; and was a prominent footballer in the local league.

## Lost eye

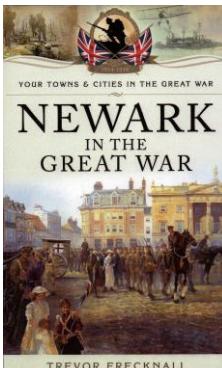
FARMER and carting contractor Seth Eason and his wife Eliza, who have already lost three of their eight children to natural causes, travelled from their home at 15 Victoria Street, Newark, to Manchester last week to visit their 24-year-old son, Albert, a Corporal who was shot in the head in France and has lost his left eye.

They found him "in the best of spirits and as well as can be expected under the circumstances".

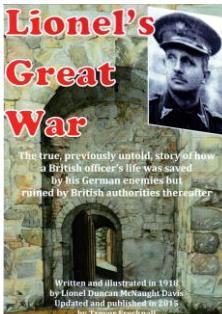
## Lunch break

Members of Newark Tradesmen's Association have decided that now shops are struggling to cope with so many staff in the Forces, they ought to close for an hour at lunch time.

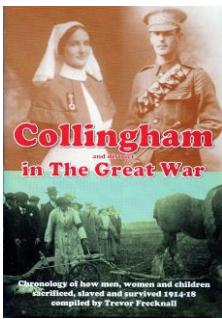
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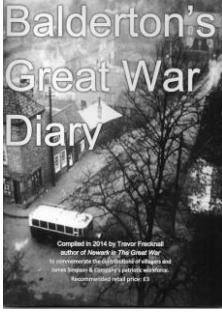
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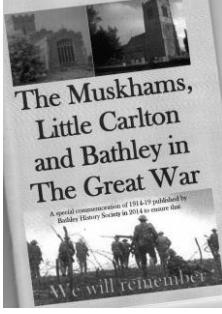
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