

**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. 68...Newark...Monday 15 November 1915

## BATTERED SHERWOODS VISITED BY THE KING

A MONTH after being decimated at the Hohenzollern Redoubt during the Battle of Loos, the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Sherwood Foresters have three pieces of good news for the folk back home in Newark and district.

Grenade-throwing hero Harold Tyne DCM is over his wounds and back with them; they are resting in the relative comfort of a French town; and the King has been across the Channel to review them. It rained on the parade but, that apart, all went well.

REMINDERS arrived in Newark last week that the Western Front is not the only battleground in which our men are serving and suffering

A Newarker in the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry, whose A Company has drill stations at Collingham and Sutton-on-Trent, got a heavily-censored letter from the Dardanelles to his parents, who refuse to have their names revealed.

Saying they are about to be withdrawn from the firing line for rest and to be reorganised, he adds that during the nine weeks since they first went into action, they have never been out of rifle range and have been subject to incessant gun fire...

Their numbers have been "greatly diminished" by death, wounds and sickness.

On 21 August xxx men marched into attack. Now less than xxx await the ship that will take them to rest and recuperation in Egypt...

(Exactly how many officers and men have been lost and wounded was censored out of the plaintive letter; but it was obvious to all that the horsemen who were retrained as infantry before being massacred, were a beaten force.)

The Regiment will be transported to Egypt next month – and will be awarded a King's Colour in recognition of its gallantry in the infantry role.

There was a reminder on Thursday that the Turkish climate could be as lethal as its Army.

News reached Mrs Emma Robb at 2 Whitfield Street, Newark, that her son Archie, 23, had died of dysentery.

He had given up a good job in a shipbuilding yard in Barrow-in-Furness to join the 6<sup>th</sup> King's Own Lancasters.

He fell ill amid the flies and filth on the Gallipoli Peninsula. He was shipped across the Mediterranean for medical treatment but passed away in the 19<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, Alexandria, on 23 October.

Private 14814 Robb is remembered at the Chatby Cemetery, Alexandria, among 3,680 Allies.

# OUR MEN ARE ROASTING IN TURKEY, TOO

## And it's still hell on Western Front

**THERE** is growing evidence that the action on the Western Front is giving Newarkers grief in many varied ways.

Deaths are still prevalent, of course. But many families are suffering the agony of not knowing what has happened to their loved ones who have been posted "missing". And then there are the poor men who have been so adversely affected by the sights and sounds of War that their minds and bodies can take no more...

### Veteran deserts

BOER WAR veteran Albert Squires of Chatham Street, Newark, whose leave from the 1<sup>st</sup> Scottish Rifles ended last Tuesday, pleaded guilty before Newark Magistrates two days later to being absent without

leave and was remanded in custody to await a police escort.

Soldiers in such a situation tended to be returned to their unit and sent overseas to fight. In some cases, deserters were shot. Albert survived to appear in the 1918 list of absent voters.

### Fire boss's worry

Newark Fire Brigade Captain Thomas Harrison and his wife Emma, who have had 19 children in their 41-year marriage, are desperate for more news of their son Cyril, a Private with the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Sherwood Foresters who was posted missing on 14 October.

Much sympathy is felt for them in their suspense, not least because they have another son, Corporal Ernest with the Lincolns in the Dardanelles.

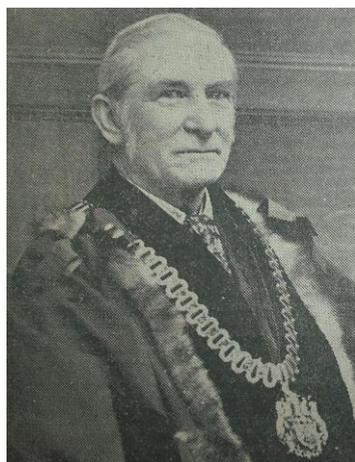
### Widower's grief

JAMES ROBINSON of 55 William Street, Newark, who lost his wife Ann in March, learned on Tuesday that his youngest son had been killed in action on 29 October. Sapper Albert Edward Robinson, 35, left a widow and three young children.

Commonwealth War Graves records a century on reveal that Sapper 97892 Robinson was with the Royal Engineers' 171<sup>st</sup> Tunnelling Company when he lost his life. He is remembered in the London Rifle Brigade Cemetery less than 10 miles south of Ypres.

Albert had been born in St Neots, Huntingdonshire, but spent his childhood in Newark when his dad found a job as a bricklayer and moved the family, initially, to Vernon Street.

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## 'Father' is Mayor

ALDERMAN WILLIAM EDWARD KNIGHT, the 'father' of the Council, was formally made Mayor of Newark last week, succeeding Councillor Kew.

In accordance with ancient custom, the new Mayor and his large entourage attended in State at the Parish Church on Sunday morning.

But instead of giving refreshments to the VIPs in the Town Hall afterwards, as is a tradition of Mayor-Making, Alderman Knight donated £10 to the Parish Church Reparation Fund, £10 to the Newark Company of the Volunteer Training Corps, £10 to the Mayoress's Ladies' War Working Party, £5 to the local YMCA, £5 to Newark Hospital, £5 to the Lombard Street Red Cross Hospital, £5 to the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry Comforts Fund, and £5 to the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters Fund.

To applause, Alderman Knight explained that he hoped the money would "relieve some of the suffering and discomforts of the war."

## German brutalities in Mons recalled

JOHN W GIBSON, invalided out of the 1st Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment, took time out from his new job as a drayman with grocers Garratt and Hemming in Newark Market Place to say of the fighting in August 1914:

"With my own eyes I saw the Germans shoot women and children in Mons because they would not walk down the street in front of them as a shield."

Of the fighting on the Aisne when he was wounded, he said: "We had got the Germans on the run and they were retiring towards Lille.

"We were in a tobacco field and the Germans started to shell us. I got the bones in my right foot crushed and was hit in my back and arm."

John was in various hospitals for six months before being allowed to continue his recuperation at home.

# Musical humour in the trenches

PROVING that wry humour is still alive and well in the trenches, Private Arthur Cox of the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters has penned parodies of two popular ditties and defiantly sent them to his mother Elizabeth at 126 Northgate, Newark...

And there's his version of another of Alma Gluck's hits, *Little Grey Home in the West*...



The first is a re-write of *Sing Me to Sleep* by soloist Alma Gluck and violinist Efram Zimbalist...

*Sing me to sleep where the bullets fall.  
Let me forget the Kaiser and all.  
Damp is my dug-out, cold are my feet.  
Nothing but bully and biscuits to eat.*

*Sing me to sleep where the bombs explode  
And shrapnel makes sad work with the road.*

*Over the sandbags, helmets you find;  
Corpses in front of you, corpses behind.*

*Far from old Ypres I long to be  
Where German snipers can't pot at me.  
Think of me crouching where the worms creep  
Waiting for someone to sing me to sleep.*



*Sing me to sleep in some old shed  
Where rats are running round my head,  
Stretched out upon my waterproof,  
Dodging the rain drops through the roof.*

*Sing me to sleep where the camp fires glow;  
Full of French bread and coffee, I know,  
Dreaming of rest and night in the West  
With home and mother and all I love best.*

*Far from the starlights I long to be.  
Lights of Newark I'd rather see.  
Think of me crouching where the worms creep,  
Waiting for someone to sing me to sleep.*

*I've a little wet home in a trench  
Where the rain storms continually drench.*

*There's a sky overhead,  
Clay and mud for a bed  
And a stone that we use for a bench.*

*Bully beef and hard biscuits we chew.  
It seems years since we tasted a stew.  
Shells crackle and scare,  
Yet no place can compare  
With my little wet home in this trench.*

*Our friends in that trench o'er the way  
Seem to know that we've come here to stay.*

*They shoot and they shout,  
But they can't get us out,  
Though there's no dirty trick they won't play.*

*They rushed a few nights ago  
But they found the old Sherwoods, and so  
Some departed quite sore,  
Others left never more  
Near my little wet home in the trench.*

*So hurrah for the mud and the clay  
Which leads to der tag – that's The Day –  
When we enter Berlin,  
That city of sin,  
And make that fat Berliner pay.*

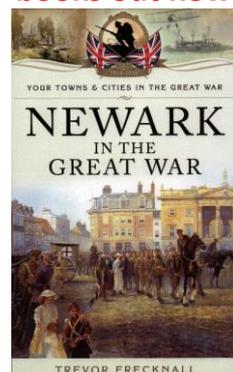
*As we lay with the Belgian and French  
Yes we'll think of the old slush and the stench.*

*There'll be shed then, I fear  
Redder stuff than a tear  
For my little wet home in the trench.*

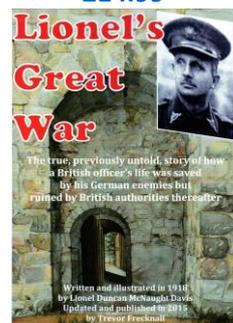


It was a reminder that, savaged though our Terriers have been of late, those who have survived the horrors remain spiritedly defiant. Alas Jokey poet Arthur Cox will be killed in April 1917...

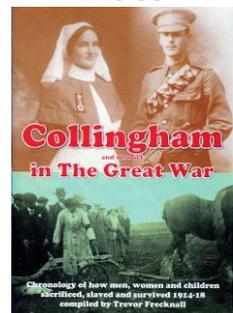
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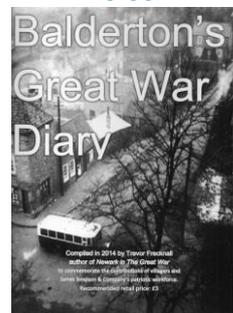
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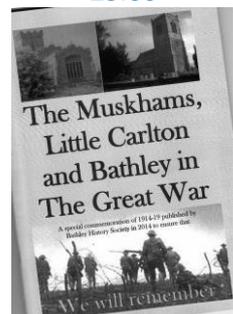
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