

HADSTOCK HEROES

WW1



John Henry Barnes MC
Bennet Leopold Burgess
George Edward Lewis Burgess
Charles Edward Bye
Walter Bye
Ronald Clarke
James Cutter
Henry Nathan Fordham
Jonas Freeman

Walter Freeman
Jesse Mallyon
Laurence Mallyon
Sidney Mallyon
Peter Pearson
Samuel Pearson R N
Albert Henry Rowlandson
Sidney Robinson
Albert Edward Swann

To the Glory of God and in Honoured Memory of
the men of Hadstock who gave their lives in the Great War
AD 1914-1918

Their lives and deaths

A tribute to their courage

This booklet has been produced as part of the Millennium
Celebrations for St Botolph's Church, Hadstock 2020

The objective has been to bring their memory to life – by providing more than just the list of names on the Memorial – and in so doing to pay them the tribute which they so richly deserve.

The starting point was to look for these sons of Hadstock in the Census Returns for 1881, 1891, 1901 and 1911 to establish their family backgrounds and ages. References to these dates in this booklet, unless otherwise stated, are to information obtained from these census returns. Checks were then made on the Central Registers of Births, Deaths and Marriages and in the local Register of Baptisms at St Botolph's Church. Armed with rather more details than just their names, a check was then made in the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. This helped to identify the Regiments which each man joined, and the time and location of their deaths; in so doing it also gave some guidance as to the appropriate War Diaries in the National Archives to examine to gain as good an understanding as possible of the likely circumstances leading to their deaths.

The Regimental Museums, local Records Offices and the Saffron Walden Library were all further sources of useful information.

Every effort has been made to ensure the details on each man are as accurate as possible. But the loss of so many of the Service Records due to the bombing in 1940 did not make this task easy. Only one set of records, those for Peter Pearson, survived the bombing albeit with some water damage. Fortunately, however, the records for John Barnes, Sidney Robinson and Samuel Pearson who were in the Canadian and Australian Infantry and Royal Navy respectively were held in different locations and were therefore unaffected. So we have a clearer picture in respect of these four men.

Where the service records were not available, it was often impossible to pin point exactly when the men concerned enlisted or indeed what their subsequent movements were. (Although conscription for men between 18 and 40 years was introduced on 2 March 1916 for single men and extended to married men on 25 May 1916, some men may have volunteered earlier in order to enlist in a particular Regiment.) But such other information as is available made it possible to piece many of the bits of the puzzle together.

Throughout the research for this booklet it has been apparent that the tragic loss of so many brave men would have been devastating both for their families and for the village. It is right that their sacrifice is never forgotten.

Special thanks are due to the families of Jonas and Walter Freeman, Henry Nathan Fordham and Albert Henry Rowlandson who answered an appeal for additional information. Thanks are also due to Robert Pike for providing copies of the relevant memorial inscriptions and gravestones, and for consenting to the use of extracts from his excellent book entitled “The Victor Heroes” in the section on Jesse Mallyon; to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for agreeing to the reproduction of their pictures of the various memorials; and to Greatwar.co.uk for allowing us to use their pictures of the 1914 and 1914-15 Stars.

Roger Mance
husband of the Reverend Paula Griffiths, St Botolph’s Church.

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Note : Name in brackets shows how it was recorded on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records when different to that on the Hadstock Memorial.

Boy 1st Class Samuel Pearson. J/27890, HMS “Clan McNaughton”, Royal Navy who died on 3 February 1915, aged 16. Son of Mrs E Pearson, of Hadstock, Essex. Remembered with Honour – Chatham Naval Memorial.

Samuel was born on 27 June 1898 at Hadstock, either at Linton Road or 1 Moules Lane (where his parents, Andrew (labourer and later engine driver on a farm) and Elizabeth (nee Goodwin) Pearson were recorded as living in 1891 and 1901 respectively). He was baptised at the same time as his younger brother, Moses, at St Botolph's Church on 10 February 1901. His parents were to go on to have eleven children.

In 1910 both Samuel and his brother Moses were attending Hadstock School. By 1911 Samuel was sharing 6 rooms in Walden Road, Hadstock with his parents, six brothers and a Boarder who also worked on a farm. Another brother, Thomas, who was born in 1890 had died before he was one year old and one of Samuel's elder brothers, Peter Pearson, was also destined to die in the Great War. The circumstances are described later. So the Pearson family were to know much grief and sadness.

Little is known about Samuel's formative years before he joined the Royal Navy but his Service Documents show that by 1913 he was 5ft 6½ inches tall, with a 32½ inch chest, fair hair, grey eyes and a sallow complexion and had been a Labourer. Intriguingly, the War Memorial at Linton shows that another boy of similar age, Thomas Jacobs, the son of Joseph John and Maria Jacobs of Baker's Lane, Linton, also joined the Royal Navy and, after undertaking similar training to Samuel, was also posted to the same ship. He later shared the same fate as Samuel. Possibly they were friends or school mates and jointly decided to join the Navy but we will probably never know for sure.

Samuel reported to HMS Ganges, a Royal Navy training establishment, as a “Boy 2nd Class” on 3 October 1913. He was then just 15 years old. On 19 May 1914 he was promoted to “Boy 1st Class” and the next day transferred to HMS Royal Arthur for further training. On 1 December 1914 he was transferred to Pembroke 1 (a Training Centre at Chatham) but was only there until 10 December 1914 when he was posted to HMS Clan McNaughton.

No doubt Samuel would have been very excited at joining his first Royal Navy fighting ship. In reality this was a converted 4,985 ton cargo passenger ship which had been built for the Clan Line Steamers Company in Glasgow. See the picture below. She was hired by the Admiralty in November 1914 and fitted with eight 4.7 inch guns in London before going into service at Liverpool by 4 December 1914. So Samuel was in effect joining for her first venture out against the enemy.

The crew was made up of a mix of reservists, a RMLI detachment, mercantile sailors, some RN regulars and a large number of boys (50) straight out of training school of whom Samuel Pearson and Thomas Jacobs were two.

Sadly HMS Clan McNaughton went down with all hands (20 Officers and 261 ratings) during a severe gale off the NW coast of Ireland on 3 February 1915.

Both Samuel Pearson and his shipmate, Thomas Jacobs, are remembered on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Fittingly both Samuel and Thomas were awarded the Victory and British Medals and the 1915 Star.

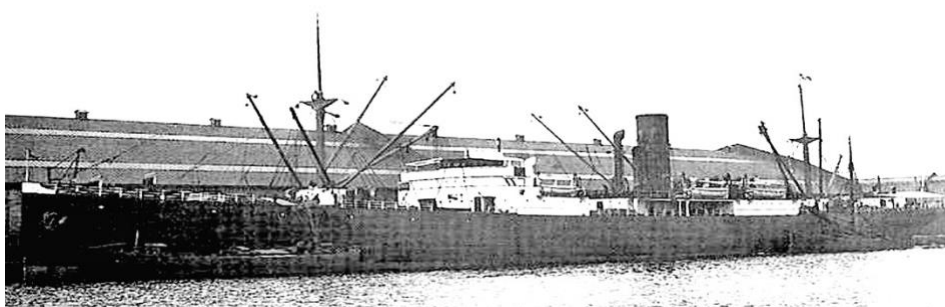
The true cause of the loss of their ship has never been established. There was no report of any enemy action in the area on that day; possibly she could have hit a mine. However, there was speculation at the time that the heavy guns mounted on the deck could have affected her stability in such a severe gale. This resulted in the following Question being raised in the House of Commons on 3 March 1915 :

***Mr FALLE** asked if His Majesty's ship "Clan Macnaughton" was surveyed after her guns were put aboard; and, if so, was she passed and by what authority?*

***Dr MACNAMARA.** The "Clan Macnaughton", a nearly new vessel of the Clan Line, classed by the British Corporation Registry, was fitted out for His Majesty's service at Tilbury under the supervision of naval, constructive, and engineering officers deputed to act for that purpose. The armament placed in the vessel was light in comparison with her size, and all necessary stiffening to take it was fitted. Investigations as to the loading and the stability of the vessel were made at the Admiralty, and instructions were issued to the commanding officer of the ship. The Admiralty are satisfied that the vessel was in good condition and seaworthy, and that she possessed ample stability.*

[Note: Dr Macnamara was Parliamentary and Financial Secretary to the Admiralty. Mr Falle was one of the MPs representing Portsmouth, later he became Sir Bertram Falle.]

The Clan Macnaughton



Reproduced with the kind permission of the Caledonian Maritime Research Trust.

**Private Rowland Clarke. 15599, 11th Bn, Suffolk Regiment who died on 1 July 1916.
Age 25. Son of James and Alice Clarke
of Townsend Cottages, Linton, Cambridgeshire.
Remembered with Honour – Thiepval Memorial.**

Although the name on the Memorial in St Botolph's Church is given as Ronald Clarke, no trace of such a person can be found in the local records. At a time of great confusion, increased sometimes by poor literacy, names often varied in the records. It is likely that the correct name should have been "Rowland", the son of James and Alice Clarke (nee Hills) of Townsend Cottages, Linton.

He was born in 1892 at Balsham with the name recorded then as being "Roland James Clarke". By 1901 he was living, aged 8 yrs and still shown as "Roland", with his parents and a brother and sister in three rooms at Little Corner, Balsham. By 1911 he was shown as being "Rowland", sharing 3 rooms at Flam Dyke, Balsham with his parents and two brothers and two sisters. He was single and worked as a labourer on a farm. (This being the case, it is not clear why his name was included on the St Botolph's memorial.)

He enlisted at Linton and joined the 11th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment (No 15599). Initially recruits were sent to the Suffolk Regiment Barracks at Risbygate, Bury St Edmunds but were then moved around various other centres (eg Melbourn, Cherry Hinton, Ripon) for training.

In late August 1915 the Regiment were moved to Salisbury Plain in readiness to be posted into the conflict. The War Diaries show that on 13 December 1915 the Regiment was ordered to "mobilise for Egypt" but this order was cancelled on 26 December to be replaced on 31 December 1915 with an order to mobilise for France instead. By 15 January 1916 all the Regiment had arrived at Renescure in France. By 2 February they were in the trenches and spent a month on front line or back up duties. During this period they experienced their first casualties, including 11 fatalities. After further training, the Regiment moved on 5 May to Picardy, near the rivers Ancre and Somme. It was from here that they were to play their part in what became known as the Battle of the Somme.

To relieve the pressure on the hard pressed and demoralised French Army which had suffered heavy losses at Verdun, a fresh attack along a 14 mile length was to be opened in the area of the Somme. The Generals expected that a week-long bombardment by hundreds of British and French guns would decimate the enemy trenches and barbed wire defences leaving the way open for the Allied troops. The 11th Suffolk were directed to attack in the middle of the 14 mile front, to the south of the fortified village of La Boisselle.

Following the barrage and the explosion of mines deep under the enemy lines, the assault started at 7.30 am on 1 July 1916. It soon became apparent that the enemy defences were still intact. The enemy had sheltered in deep dugouts cut into the chalk hills and were quickly able to bring their machine guns into action. The War Diary for that day states that

“In spite of the fact that wave after wave were mown down by machine gun fire, all pushed on without hesitation though very few reached the German lines”.

Of the 850 soldiers of the 11th Suffolk who attacked that morning, 691 in total were killed, wounded or missing. Of these 189 were killed, almost 150 of whom, including Rowland Clarke, have no known grave. Rowland is commemorated with honour on the Thiepval Memorial. He is also remembered on the Linton War Memorial. He was awarded the Victory and British medals.

**Private James Cutter. 23878, 9th Bn, Essex Regiment who died on 3 July 1916.
Remembered with Honour – Thiepval Memorial.**

James Swan Cutter was born at No 1 Moules Lane, Hadstock in 1896. Both James, and his older brother Charles Swan Cutter were baptised in St Botolph's Church on 26 September 1897. Their mother was Emma Cutter who was born in Hadstock in 1862. In 1901 Emma, as a "single" woman, was living in 4 rooms with her 3 sons and 2 daughters in the house at 1 Moules Lane with Charles Swann who was a hurdle maker by trade. By 1911 James and two of his sisters were boarding with a widow, Sarah Thompson at Townsend, Downham. James was at that time a "Farm Boy labourer".

James enlisted (probably at Warley) and joined the 9th Battalion of the Essex Regiment as a Private No 23878. We can be sure that he volunteered, because if he had been conscripted after March 1916 there would not have been sufficient time for him to be trained and transferred to France in order to take part in the attack on 3 July 1916 which resulted in his death.

But he could not have been with the Battalion when it mobilised and landed at Boulogne on 31 May 1915, nor indeed before 1 January 1916 since he would then have been awarded the 1915 Star. Consequently, he would not have experienced the ferocious trench warfare at the Battle of Loos, where chlorine gas was used by the British for the first time. Nor would he have witnessed the disastrous result of the military planners' mistaken belief that a prolonged barrage before the attack would soften up the defences, which resulted in the advancing allies being met by murderous fire from machine guns. The offensive started on 25 September and ended on 13 October 1915 having failed to achieve its objective and by which time the British had suffered over 50,000 casualties, some 16,000 having been killed. Yet these events were to have a direct bearing on James's future. Especially so as the lessons from the Battle of Loos were not learnt for the Battle of the Somme which followed.

It is likely that James was sent out to France early in 1916 to help fill the Regiment's losses over the previous year in readiness for the forthcoming battle. At 3 am on 3 July 1916 the Battalion was ordered to move up to the front at the town of Albert to be ready to attack Ovillers in support of the 5th Berkshire and 7th Suffolk Regiments which would be leading the attack. Thus James and his comrades were to be thrown into the Battle of the Somme.

Once again the softening up barrage would fail to suppress the enemy defences. Although the attack was pressed home with great valour, too few troops survived to be able to hold any ground gained. The War Diary explains that

"The Bn suffered severely during the advance across the open from M G [machine gun] fire from either flank and from the village."

It is no wonder therefore that by the end of the day the 9th Battalion had suffered 398 casualties, one of these being James Cutter for whom there was no grave.

His death on 3 July 1916 is commemorated with honour on the Thiepval Memorial and he was awarded the Victory and British medals.

**Lewis Burgess. 17912, 9th Bn, Suffolk Regiment who died on 16 September 1916.
Remembered with Honour – Thiepval Memorial.**

George Edward Lewis Burgess was born in Hadstock in 1880 and was baptised at St Botolph's Church on 28 March 1880. His parents were George and Elizabeth Sarah Burgess (nee Bush). In 1881, aged one, Lewis lived with his parents at No 7 Church End, Hadstock. His father George was a painter.

By 1891 Lewis, aged 11, had three brothers and two sisters and all the family lived together in Hadstock village. (They were later to go on to have a total of nine children by 1911.) Although by 1901 the parents, one son and three daughters were still living at No 1 The Hill, Hadstock, Lewis, aged 21, was boarding at Creek Road, March and was working on the railway. By 1911 Lewis was back living in 4 rooms with his mother and one of his sisters in Hadstock and is shown as "Head" of the household and a farm labourer.

Answering the call to arms, he enlisted at Warley as a Private (No 17912) in the 9th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment. Following training the Battalion embarked for France and arrived at Boulogne on 31 August 1915. During 1915 the Battalion were involved in various actions on the Western Front, including going into action on 26 September in the Battle of Loos where they suffered heavy casualties.

By 13 September 1916 the Battalion, now well blooded in trench warfare, took part in an attack by the 6th Division on an enemy strongpoint known as the "Quadrilateral" during the Battle of the Somme. The 17th Brigade were on their left, and the 16th Brigade on the right. At 6.20 am the 9th Battalion attacked with three companies in the front line and one in support. Two lines of enemy trenches were captured but heavy casualties from artillery and machine guns prevented consolidation. A further attempt to capture the Quadrilateral was ordered but was driven back by heavy machine gun fire. One officer was killed, 11 Officers wounded, 185 other ranks were wounded and 15 killed during this engagement.

The remains of the Battalion manned their trenches until the offensive was resumed at 6.20 am on 15 September. Thus opened what became known as the Battle of Fler Courcellette. From the outset this renewed assault came under heavy machine gun fire from the Quadrilateral again causing further heavy casualties. The Battalion was forced to dig in. The War Diary records

"The enemy's barrage was extremely heavy and caused many more casualties."

The Battalion was eventually relieved at 11pm, having lost 5 Officers killed, 7 Officers wounded and 2 Officers missing; also 35 Other Ranks killed, 99 Other Ranks wounded and 93 Other Ranks missing.

As no further casualties were recorded for the days following the 15th, it is probable that Lewis was killed on that day but that his memorial reflects the date on which the diary recording the casualties sustained was written. He was awarded the 1915 Star, Victory and British medals and is remembered with honour on the Thiepval Memorial.

**Private Jesse Mallyon. 17109, 8th Bn, Suffolk Regiment
who died on 1 November 1916.
Remembered with Honour – Thiepval Memorial.**

Jesse was born in 1893 in Hadstock, probably in Hall Farm House since this is where his parents, William and Alice (nee Fitch) Mallyon, were living in 4 rooms with their 3 daughters in 1891. By 1901, Jesse aged 8 was living with his parents, two sister and one brother at Knox End, Ashdon. **He grew up and attended school at Ashdon and was a member of the Ashdon Baptist Church.** By 1911 Jesse, aged 18 and a horseman on a farm, had moved with his parents and two brothers to share 5 rooms at Little Walden Hill, Saffron Walden.

He enlisted at Saffron Walden **in early 1915 for General Service in the 18th. Hussars, before going to France on 25th July of that year with the Suffolk Regiment.**

The 8th Battalion had been involved in the Somme battle since its opening day on the 1st July 1916 (although they avoided the slaughter of the first day by being in Brigade reserve), but since then had suffered large casualties at Delville Wood, before being sent to the Armentieres section for six weeks in late July.

On 14th October the Battalion arrived at Albert, going into trenches near Courcelette, before being relieved by the Norfolk on the 21st. The waning days of the battle were spent in and out of Fabeck and Regina trenches, alternating with periods of rest at Albert. Waning the battle may have been but the weather was atrocious – it rained most of October and November, the trenches were appalling with Regina trench knee-deep in clinging mud. Waning the battle may have been but the casualty rates never faltered. On November 1st Jesse was wounded in a frontline trench. Whilst his wound was being dressed a piece of shell hit him and he died immediately. In the mud his body disappeared like so many.

The Regiment's War Diaries record that during the month of November 1916 the 8th Battalion suffered only 13 Other Ranks wounded, 2 killed and 1 missing. By the standards of the "Somme" this was a low number of casualties but sadly Jesse was one of them.



He was awarded the 15 Star and Victory and British medals and is commemorated with honour on the Thiepval Memorial in France.

[**Note:** The sections highlighted in the above text are direct quotes from Robert Pike's excellent book entitled "The Victor Heroes" and are reproduced with his kind agreement.]

Gunner H N Fordham. 206002, Royal Horse Artillery who died on 15 March 1917 aged 29. Husband of Sarah Fordham of Moules Lane, Hadstock. Remembered with Honour – Hadstock (St Botolph) Churchyard.

Henry Nathan Fordham was born at Hadstock in late 1887 and was baptised at St Botolph's Church on 27 November 1887. In 1891, Henry aged 3 and his sister Mary aged 1 were living in 4 rooms at Woodfield Cottages, Woodfield Lane, Hadstock with their parents, Nathan Fordham, aged 43, an agricultural labourer, and his wife Lucy (nee Fordham) aged 30.

In 1901 the family were living in 4 rooms at No 12 Walden Road, Hadstock.

By 1911, Nathan Fordham, now 53 and a smallholder, was living with his wife Lucy in 7 rooms in Hadstock (no address given). With them was Henry, aged 23 and a horseman on a Farm. Also present was George Swann, their son-in law aged 24 and also a horseman on a farm, and Mary Ann, their daughter and now George Swann's wife, together with their 7 month old daughter Violet Swann. The Census shows that Nathan and Lucy had had 4 children of whom only Henry and Mary were then still alive.

On 6 April 1912 Henry Nathan, aged 24, married Sarah Swann aged 21 at St Botolph's Church. Between 1913 and mid 1916, they had three children (Kate Irene, Henry James Nathan, and Edna). It seems most likely in these circumstances that Henry waited until he was conscripted following its extension to married men in May 1916. So Henry may well have been called up at about the time that his third child was born, leaving his young wife to cope with three young children on her own.



In the absence of Henry's detailed service records it has been difficult to establish the events leading up to his death on 15 March 1917. Unusually, Henry is buried in this country, at St Botolph's Church, which raised the possibility that he had succumbed to a wound. But a surviving relative recalled that there was surprise in the family at Henry's enlistment because he had always had "a weak chest". So this raised another possibility.

No information could be found on Henry, either at the Regimental Museum or in the National Archives; not even an entry in the medal rolls, which was very unusual since such medals were awarded to every soldier who entered the Theatre of War. However, an entry in the War Gratuity records indicated that he died at the Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich on 15 March 1917. The Death Certificate issued then recorded that he died of Bronchitis and Broncho Pneumonia and gave his home address as "Backhill, Hadstock near Linton".

In the absence of the service records, it may never be known for sure what happened but it seems increasingly likely that the family's concerns about Henry's weak chest were sadly proved right. The absence of any reference to him in the medal rolls points to his never having left these shores. He may, like many others, have been posted to duties in this country. But equally it is possible that the harsh training to which recruits were submitted in order to get them fit for trench warfare took its toll. His death and the impact on his family was however just as much a tragedy of the war as any other. It is entirely right therefore that his grave at Hadstock has the headstone of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission so that his sacrifice, and that of his family, is not forgotten.

**Bennett Leopold Burgess. 31565, 13th Bn; Essex Regiment who died on 28 April 1917.
Remembered with Honour – Arras Memorial.**

Bennett Leopold Burgess was born in 1884 at Hadstock and was baptised at St Botolph's Church on 5 October 1884. In 1891 his parents, George and Elizabeth (nee Bush) were living in the village with their four sons and two daughters, ranging in age from 4 months to 11 years old. (They were later to go on to have a total of nine children by 1911.) Their father, George, who was born at Littlebury was then an agricultural labourer. By 1901, possibly due to accommodation pressures in the family home, Bennett aged 16 and also an agricultural labourer, was living with his uncle and aunt, Arthur and Mary Hills, in the village. His parents, together with one son and three daughters, were living in 4 rooms at 2 The Hill, Hadstock. By 1911, Bennett now aged 26, single and a Hall Porter at an Hotel, had been joined by his sister Salome, aged 20, at his uncle and aunt's house.

Perhaps encouraged by the fact that his elder brother, Leonard, had enlisted into the Essex Regiment in 1901 at the age of 19, Bennett also enlisted in the 13th Battalion of that Regiment as a Private (No. 31565) at Warley at some point after 1911.

The Battalion landed at Boulogne on 17 November 1915 and were quickly involved in action. It transferred to the 6th Brigade in the 2nd Division on 22 December 1915. But Bennett must have joined them in France later (possibly in late 1916 or early 1917) since he would have qualified for the 1915 Star if it had been before 1 January 1916 and there is no record of such an award.

We can be sure however that he was with the Battalion in France by April 1917 when they were preparing to play their part in the Battle of Arras, which envisaged a series of offensives to progressively capture each of the three lines of enemy defences along a 20 mile stretch of the front.

The Battle of Arras opened on 9 April with varying success along its length. But it was not until 28 April that it was the turn of the 13th Battalion of the Essex Regiment to enter the fray. The first wave went in at 3am under heavy fire but by 4.33am had crossed the enemy's front line trench, with the exception of a section on their extreme right where the attackers had been held up by uncut wire and had suffered heavy losses due to machine gun fire. The advance continued under heavy fire as far as the second of the enemy trenches, but they were unable to hold it in the face of a strong enemy counter attack. The captured length of the enemy's front trench was also now coming under heavy fire. The War Diary records

“ strong parties of German bombers were attacking our right flank ”

“ Heavy machine gun and rifle fire was enfilading the 13th Essex Reg from the direction of Oppy Village; machine guns were seen being placed in position on the roofs of the houses and firing through loop-holes in the walls, also enemy snipers were observed in the trees. ”

Every effort was made in the following hours to secure the position but with limited success. Small detached parties held on till dark but then had to retire to the British lines.

The following casualty figures bear testament to the ferocity of the fighting that day. 2 Officers killed, one wounded and 8 missing; 3 Other Ranks killed, 79 wounded and 240 missing. Bennett Leopold Burgess was one of those who lost their life that day.

He was awarded the Victory and British medals and is commemorated with honour on the Arras Memorial.

**Private Lawrence Mallyon. G/23588, 7th Bn, Queen's Own
(Royal West Kent Regiment) who died on 3 May 1917.
Remembered with Honour – Arras Memorial.**

Lawrence was born in 1880 at Walden Road, Hadstock and was the son of Lawrence and Martha Malyon (previously Bunn). His father died in 1887 aged only 55 yrs. In 1891 Lawrence (spelt Lorence) aged 10, was living in 4 rooms at Walden Road, Hadstock with his widowed mother, two younger brothers, and a son from her first marriage, Frederick Bunn, aged 18 and an agricultural labourer.

In 1901, Lawrence (Lorence) aged 20, was living in 4 rooms at No 9 Walden Road, Hadstock again with his widowed mother, two younger brothers, and Frederick Bunn, aged 30, and an agricultural labourer. By 1911, Frederick Bunn had moved away, leaving Lawrence (Lorence) aged 29, single, and a stone digger in a stone pit on a farm, sharing 3 rooms at Halfway House, Hadstock together with his mother and two younger brothers.

He later enlisted in the 7th Battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment which in April 1915 was based at Colchester. The Battalion was mobilised for war on 27 July 1915 and landed at La Havre and was soon engaged in various actions on the Western Front including during 1916 on the Somme in the Battle of Albert where they successfully captured their objective near Montauban, in the Battle of Bazentin Ridge involving the capture of Toynes Wood, in the Battle of Delville Wood, in the Battle of Thiepval Ridge, in the Battle of the Ancre Heights and in the Battle of the Ancre. It is fair to say therefore that the Regiment were in the thick of the action.

In May 1917 the Battalion saw further action on the Ancre front. After a month out of the battle area, resting and training, the Battalion formed part of the force ordered to attack the enemy line in front of Cherisy at 3.35am on 3 May 1917. After some early successes the Battalion had to contend with a strong counter attack. The War Diary records

*“ a German counter attack was developing; the enemy's barrage was very heavy on our front and support lines ”,
“enfilade machine gun fire from the right was playing on all troops moving about on the crest and the Cherisy slope.”*

Various attempts were made to hold captured positions but each failed. The Battalion were forced to retire, assisted by some courageous rearguard actions on the part of others. By about 11pm they were back in their original front line trench. The casualties from this engagement were heavy : Killed 2 Officers, 22 Other Ranks; Wounded 6 Officers, 89 OR, Missing 1 Officer and 50 OR.

Although it is not known precisely what happened to Lawrence, it is likely that he was killed during this offensive. He was awarded the Victory and British medals and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

**Private J Freeman. 35942, 6th Bn, Bedfordshire Regiment who died on 26 May 1917.
Husband of Annie Freeman, of Queens Head, Hadstock, Essex.
Remembered with Honour – Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun.**

Jonas was born early in 1885 and was baptised “Jonas Freeman” at St Botolph's Church on 15 February, 1885. His parents were recorded at the baptism as being Edward and Eliza Freeman.

However, when Jonas's father had been baptised at St Botolph's Church on 17 January 1858, his name was shown as being Edward **Fordham** and that of his mother as being Emma Freeman (no father was shown). Later that same year Emma had married Joseph Fordham and thus her married name then became Fordham. Sadly Joseph died in 1870 aged only 35.

When Edward married Jonas' mother late in 1877, the marriage was recorded as being between **Edward Fordham Freeman** and Eliza Hills. Perhaps the Fordham name had been included in memory of the deceased Joseph Fordham. But this was the start of some confusion over the surnames used in the years ahead.

In 1891 Edward and his wife Eliza were shown in the census, under the surname of **Fordham**, living with their four sons (one being Jonas aged 6) and a daughter in four rooms at Horse Fair Hill, Hadstock. By 1901 the parents (still using Fordham as their surname) were living at 2 Bartlow Road, Hadstock with their daughter and seven sons, one being Jonas aged 17, single and an agricultural labourer. However, all the children had been baptised with the surname of **Freeman** at St Botolph's Church. In 1911 they were still living at Bartlow Road and still using the Fordham surname but only five sons were still at home including Jonas, aged 26, single, and a gardener by trade.

On 7 October 1912 Jonas married Annie Barker who at some point occupied the Queens' Head in Hadstock. The following year they had a son, Edward Francis Freeman, who was baptised on 31 August 1913 at St Botolph's Church.

Jonas was enlisted at Warley using his surname of Freeman. He was posted as a Private No 35942 in the 6th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment. Given that he had a young son, it is likely that he waited to be called up when conscription was introduced in May 1916. In that case, allowing for time for medicals, induction and training, he was unlikely to have gone to France until the beginning of 1917 at the earliest. The fact that he was not awarded the 1914-15 Star later certainly confirms that he had not crossed the channel during 1915 but it does leave open the possibility of his having done so in 1916 when his Battalion were in the thick of the fighting. During 1916 the Battalion fought in The Battles on the Somme, specifically at the Battle of Bazentin Ridge (where they lost 330 officers and men during their St. Swithin's Day assault against Pozières), the Battle of Pozières Ridge in August and at The Battle of the Ancre in November. Whether Jonas was involved in any of these actions may never be known for certain.

However, we can be sure that he was with his Battalion when it was deployed on 20 May 1917 in the front line trenches at Cojeul about 8 kilometres SE of Arras. The War Diary records that there was heavy enemy shelling on both the 21st and 22nd resulting in 9 killed and 22 wounded but that they nevertheless continued to repair and improve the trenches they occupied. Both the 23 and 24th were quieter days but the enemy artillery took up action again on the 25th although the Diary does not mention that any casualties were suffered.

The War Diary for 26 May 1917 records

“A quiet day. A string party was sent out at midnight 26/27 to obtain a prisoner if possible and get information about the line of shell holes held by the enemy in O>14.b. Before reaching the objective, a covering party was encountered who were protecting a large party of the enemy who were wiring in front of the line of shell holes. Further progress was impossible as our party were considerably outnumbered but a lively encounter with bomb (and) rifle grenades took place. Several Germans were killed and the whole enemy party appeared considerably frightened and surprised. Fire was opened all along the line and our party withdrew, all men, except three, regaining our trenches. Casualties were 1 officer and 3 men wounded and 3 killed. The whole operation was conducted with great determination and was highly successful considering the opposition that was met with.”

It is known that Jonas died of his wounds on 26 May; almost certainly whilst in the Casualty Clearing Station by the cemetery at Duisans. It is most likely therefore that he was fatally wounded during the exchanges on 21 and 22 May, as the only casualties on 26 May itself appear to have been suffered after midnight had passed. He was awarded the Victory and British medals and is buried with honour in the Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun.

**Private Walter Bye. 18518, 7th Bn. Suffolk Regiment who died on 8 August 1917. Age 39. Husband of Mary Ann Bye, of Hildersham, Cambridge.
Remembered with Honour – Arras Memorial.**

Walter, the son of Samuel and Louisa (nee Fitch) Bye, was born in 1878. He had a private baptism, possibly due to concerns about his health, by the Rector of St Botolph's Church.

In 1881 he was living, aged 2, with his parents and 4 brothers at No 12 The Hill, Hadstock. His father was shown as being an agricultural labourer. Sadly his father died in 1888 when Walter was only eight years old.

By 1891, his widow, Louisa, was bringing up her five sons, including Samuel, in 3 rooms at Woodfield Cottages, Woodfield Lane, Hadstock. Walter, then 12 years old, together with three of his brothers was working as an agricultural labourer. The youngest son, Charles, aged 6, was still at school.

By 1901, Walter aged 23 was living, with his brother Arthur aged 25, as boarders with the Fitch family at No 73 Herbert Road, East Ham. Both boys were working as Coal Porters on the railway (Tyne Main & Co). So it is likely they moved to London to seek work.

By 1911 Walter aged 32, single and a farm worker, had moved back to Hadstock. and was lodging with John Swann Cutter (aged 25) and his brother Charles Swann Cutter (aged 16) in 3 rooms. In that same year Walter married Mary Ann Ison of Hildersham. And the following year they had a son called Walter J Bye.

Later Walter enlisted at Bury St Edmunds as a Private (No 18518) in the 7th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment and was posted to France on 19 October 1915. At this time the Battalion were regrouping after the fierce Battle of Loos which had resulted in heavy casualties.

On 10 December 1915 the Division took over the front line north of La Basse canal at Givenchy and by 12 February 1916 had again returned to the front trenches at Loos. From then on they were in the thick of the fighting at Ovillers-la-Boisselle, the Battle of Pozieres, the Battle of Arras, the second Battle of Scarpe, the Battle of Arleux and the third Battle of Scarpe interspersed with periods of training etc. By 31 July 1917 the Regiment were spending several days at Beaurain Camp practising for a forthcoming raid. The following extract from the relevant War Diary sets out the orders for this action:

“1. On August 8th, there will be a heavy bombardment of the enemy's front system, between the Cambrai Road and Bit Lane, combined with counter-battery work.

2. Towards the end of this bombardment, combined raids will be carried out by the 35th and 37th Infantry Brigades and the Right Brigade, 4th Division. The object of these raids is to kill any survivors, obtain identifications, and so destroy any dugouts or machine gun or Trench Mortar emplacements.

3. On the 35th Infantry Brigade front the 7th Suffolk Regt. will carry out raids within the limits marked A, B & C on the attached map, mopping up all German trenches within these limits."

The War Diary for 8 August records :

"At 4.0 am shelled with gas shells. 15 men gassed only 6 seriously. At 4.15 am withdrawal in preparation for the bombardment commenced."

"Withdrawal completed by 6.0 am. At 10.20 am attack postponed, reoccupied front line. Several casualties sustained owing to T.Ms [trench mortars] not receiving the order that attack was postponed and carrying on with original programme. Enemy barrage not heavy. Rest of the day quiet."

It is not known what exactly happened to Walter; possibly he was one of the gas casualties, or he was killed by an enemy shell but the above also raises the possibility that he could have been hit by one of our own trench mortars. The above extracts demonstrate the harsh realities of the fighting and the many dangers that the soldiers faced. What is certain is that Walter, a brave son of Hadstock, was killed in action on 8 August 1917, aged 39.

He was awarded the 1915 Star, Victory and British medals and is commemorated with honour on the Arras Memorial.

**Private Walter Freeman. 48122, 11th Bn, Royal Fusiliers who died on 10 August 1917.
Age 31. Son of Edward F and Eliza Fordham Freeman,
of Bartlow Road, Hadstock, Linton, Cambridge.
Remembered with Honour – Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial.**

Walter Freeman was born in 1886 and was baptised at St Botolph's Church on 12 December, 1886. His parents were recorded at the baptism as being Edward and Eliza Freeman. However, in subsequent census returns their surname was recorded as "**Fordham**" - See the earlier entry about Jonas Freeman for further details about this confusion.

In 1891 Edward **Fordham** and his wife Eliza were shown as living with their four sons (one being Walter aged 4 and another being Jonas aged 6) and a daughter in four rooms at Horse Fair Hill, Hadstock. By 1901 the parents (still using Fordham as their surname) were living at 2 Bartlow Road, Hadstock with their daughter and seven sons, including both Walter aged 15 and Jonas aged 17, both being single and agricultural labourers. In fact, all the children had been baptised with the surname of Freeman at St Botolph's Church. In 1911 they were still living at Bartlow Road and still using the Fordham surname but with only five sons still at home including Walter, aged 24, single, and a horsekeeper of a farm and Jonas, aged 26, single and a gardener by trade. Both Walter and Jonas were destined in a few years' time to die in the service of their country.

It is likely that Walter was conscripted. He joined the 11th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers as a Private No. 48122.

The Royal Fusiliers were early entrants into the Theatre of War. After a period of training, the Battalion embarked on the ST Ceriol at Folkstone on 26 July 1915 bound for France. They arrived at Boulogne at 1.30am on 27 July 1915. Over the next 19 days they marched, interspersed with periods for further training, and entered the trenches at Suzanne on 15 August 1915. The harsh reality of trench warfare was quickly brought home to them as they suffered their first casualties the following day. From then on the Battalion were in the thick of the fighting, taking part in battles on the Somme, such as Albert, Delville Wood and Thiepval Ridge.

We know from the Regiment's list of medal awards that Walter joined the Battalion in France on 30 May 1917, no doubt a much needed replacement given the heavy casualties suffered in previous actions. By July/August the Battalion were in the Steenvoorde area preparing for the Third Battle of Ypres, later known as Passchendaele. The offensive was preceded by the usual prolonged bombardment which alerted the enemy that an attack was imminent. Unfortunately, unseasonal weather meant that it had rained heavily for several days in the run up to the battle. The soldiers had to contend with appalling ground conditions from the moment they left their trenches and in the face of a fierce reaction from the enemy who were ready for them. Early successes came at great cost in terms of casualties and the battle soon literally became bogged down.

On 7 August, Walter's Battalion formed part of the 54th Brigade which was given the task of taking and holding three objectives; Inverness Copse, Glencorse Wood and the southern end of Westhoek Ridge.

The offensive started on 9 August and initially had some success. But the appalling ground conditions made it impossible for the line to move forward in a united and coordinated way which left them exposed to fire from several directions. The report in the Regiment's War Diary for the operations on 9/10 August records that

“ The objective was reached in good order and close behind the barrage, but came under destructive frontal machine gun fire. The position remained about the same until about 6 am by which time all the Officers and many of the NCOs were casualties. The enemy then developed a well planned counter attack from INVERNESS COPSE supported by strong Machine Gun fire. The attack took the form of bombing up trenches from the southern flank and also took our company in rear. The effect was the uncovered flank of the Battalion was rolled up and driven back to the crest line of the strong point in J.14.a which was consolidated and held until the battalion was relieved by the 8th Norfolk Regt. ”

In all 158 men were killed, 1033 were wounded and over 100 were missing. The Battle of Passchendaele would continue until the 10th November 1917 by which time the Allies' casualties would top 500,000.

Initially Walter was reported as being missing, but soon any lingering hope that his family may have had was dashed when it was officially concluded that he had been killed in action. His body was never found. Walter was awarded the Victory and British medals and is remembered with honour on the Ypres Memorial, known otherwise as The Menin Gate.

**Private Albert Edward Swann. 34011, 1st/7th Bn, Royal Warwickshire Regiment who died on 4 October 1917. Aged 28. Son of Mr and Mrs Arthur Swann of Hill Farm, Hadstock, Essex; husband of Mrs Bertie King Olley (formerly Swann), of 8 Hut, Longfield Avenue, Romford, Essex.
Remembered with Honour - Tyne Cot Memorial.**

Albert Edward Swann was born in Hadstock in 1889 and was baptised at St Botolph's Church on 25 May 1890. His parents, Arthur Swann and Sarah (nee Malyon), were married at St Botolph's on 2 November 1878 and in both 1891 and 1901 were living in 4 rooms at 13 Walden Road, Hadstock, so this is almost certainly where Albert was born.

By 1891 Albert aged 1 was sharing this accommodation with his parents, three elder sisters and two elder brothers, all of whom had been born in Hadstock. His father was then an agricultural worker.

By 1901 Albert aged 11, together with his two elder brothers, was also an agricultural worker. However, his father by then had become a horse keeper on a farm. Two of Albert's elder sisters had left home but another sister, aged 7, had been born. Albert's parents were also looking after a 2 year old granddaughter meaning that eight people were still sharing the four rooms at No 13 Walden Road. Sadly another daughter born in 1908 died after only a few months.

By 1911 none of the children were still living at home. Albert's parents were living in 4 rooms at Hill Farm, Hadstock and had James and Harley Willingham and their four young children boarding with them. By this time Albert Edward Swann, aged 21, was boarding with Herbert and Emma Rutland in 5 rooms at 24 Langley Road, Luton and, like his landlord, was employed as a Carman on the Great North Railway.

In 1912 Albert married Bertie King Taylor at Luton and the following year they had a son, Norman Edward Swan, who was baptised at St Botolph's Church on 13 July 1913. In 1914 they had a second son, Aubrey Herbert at Luton. With the responsibility of such a young family, it seems unlikely that Albert would have volunteered, although this cannot be ruled out. It is more likely that he waited until called up. This being the case, and allowing time for medicals, training etc, it is unlikely that he would have been considered ready for service in the field much before the end of 1916 at the earliest. He was posted to the 1st/7th Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

Certainly the Regiment were in serious need of reinforcements by then following the heavy casualties it had suffered during the Battles of the Somme and Pozieres that year. By the summer of 1917 Albert would have been ready to play his part in The Battle of Broodseinde during the Third Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele. Following successful advances in late September 1917 at the Menin Road and Polygon Wood, an attack was planned to capture German positions on the Broodseinde Ridge and the ruined villages of Zonnebeke, Gravenstafel and Poelcappelle.

At 6 am on 4 October 1917 the attack was started with troops advancing behind a creeping barrage. Ground conditions were bad; very wet with numerous shell holes. Although initially the enemy appeared to have been taken by surprise, fighting was very fierce. Nevertheless all the objectives were successfully taken. But at some point, Albert was lost. It says much about conditions in the field of battle that on 20 November 1917 Albert was reported as "Missing" and that it was not until 12 December 1917 that this was changed to "Killed". His body was never found.

The Regimental War Diary gives the following casualty totals for this action: Killed 2 Officers, 23 Other Ranks (OR); Wounded 3 Officers, 140 OR and Missing 14 OR. Clearly, Albert was one of those missing. He was awarded the Victory and British Medals and is remembered with honour on the Tyne Cot Memorial.

**Private C.E Bye, 41956, 9th Bn., Suffolk Regiment who died on 30 November 1917
Age 18. Son of George and M Bye, of Linton Rd, Hadstock, Cambridge.
Remembered with Honour – Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-Le-Grand.**

Charles Edward Bye was born in 1898 at which time his parents, George and Maria (nee Ellis) Bye and a daughter aged about 5 years were living in three rooms at No 7 Bartlow Road, Hadstock. George Bye was then an agricultural worker. Charles was baptised on 25 December 1898 at St Botolph's Church.

By 1911, his parents were living in 4 rooms in Hadstock with their three daughters, ages ranging from 5 to 15 years, and their son, Charles. His age was recorded in the Census as being only 10 but he must have been at least 13 by then and he was at school. His father George now aged 41 was by then a traction engine driver on a farm.

Charles enlisted at Warley initially as No. TR/9/2435 in the 25th Battalion but later becoming Private No 41956 in the 9th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment. Allowing for his youth and the usual lead time for training etc it is unlikely that he would have been posted to France until mid 1917 at the earliest.

By 1 am on the cold 19 November 1917 he would certainly have been at the assembly point preparing to attack, with tank support, the Hindenburg Line north of Beaucamp. The men wrapped themselves in blankets and slept in their trenches until 6.20 am when the Battle of Cambrai was set to begin. The War Diary records

“Tanks and Bn moved forward at 6.10 am and our Artillery barrage opened at zero.”

Thus began the first large-scale use of tanks in such an offensive. Learning the lessons from the failed tactics from previous battles, there was no preliminary bombardment which previously had served only to alert the enemy and done little to destroy their defences. Instead the lines of advancing infantry followed the tanks, which punched holes through the barbed wire and attacked the enemy in their trenches. Despite some tanks being disabled and others going off their intended course, the attack went well and by 3.30 pm the Battalion was consolidating its position in the captured trenches. The Diary records that 3 Officers and 8 Other Ranks were killed and 56 Other Ranks wounded.

On 21 to 25 November 1917 the Battalion had been taken out of the front line to regroup. But they returned to the front line trench on the 26 November. This remained a dangerous place as is evident from the War Diary which records 1 OR wounded on 27th, 9 OR wounded on 28th, 1 OR killed and another wounded on 29th and 1 Officer and 4 OR killed and 2 Officers and 12 OR wounded on 30 November.

It is known that Charles died of wounds on 30 November but it is impossible to determine whether he became a casualty during the main battle, which had the highest casualty rate, or later in defending the captured trenches.

He was awarded the Victory and British Medals and is buried with honour in the Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-Le-Grand.

Note: As happened all too often, the trenches were quickly retaken by the enemy following a counterattack. But the battle had decisively demonstrated the power of tanks and altered the course of future warfare.

**Private Sydney Arthur Robinson. 132, 8th Bn, Australian Infantry, AIF
who died on 16th April 1918. Aged 24. Son of Dennis and Annie E Robinson,
of 20 Tomlins Terrace, Limehouse, London, England.
Remembered with Honour – Villiers-Bretonneux Memorial.**

Sydney Arthur was born in January 1894 in Hadstock, the son of Dennis and Elizabeth Annie (nee Brown) Robinson. In 1891 the family had been living in 4 rooms at Walden Road, Hadstock at which time they had 3 sons and 1 daughter. The father, Dennis, was then an agricultural labourer.

By 1901, Sydney, now aged 7, was living with his parents and two elder brothers at Gibson Terrace, Hockley, Rochford. Dennis, his father, was still a farm labourer.

By 1911, Dennis had died (1906) and his widow, aged 57, was living with Sydney aged 17 and his elder brother John W, aged 20, at No 14 Osborne Road, Westcliffe on Sea. By then the census records show that she had been married 33 years and had 9 children of whom only 5 were still alive. So the family had already known much sadness.

At some point between 1911 and 1914 Sydney enlisted in the Norfolk Regiment but after only ten months he “bought himself out”. Subsequently he travelled to Australia, possibly under the “assisted” scheme being run then by the Australian Government to attract young people needed to develop their vast country and its economy. But even being on the other side of the world did not prevent him answering the call when War loomed.

On 17 August 1914, Sydney enlisted at Melbourne as a Private (No 132) in the 8th Battalion of the Australian Infantry. He was then 21 years and 7 months old, 5 feet 4 inches tall, weighed 9st 8 lbs, had a 34-37 inch chest, clear complexion, blue eyes and brown hair. His address in Australia was recorded as being 15 William Street, Melbourne, Victoria and his occupation as “Steward”. So possibly Sydney had worked his passage to Australia. His enlistment papers show that he had 4 vaccination scars from his childhood on his left arm and 3 on his right arm from 1912, so possibly that is when he enlisted for his short time with the Norfolk Regiment.

After a period of training he embarked with his Battalion to join the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force for the Gallipoli Campaign arriving at Alexandria on 7 June 1915. Clearly he was a spirited lad, as he was reported as being missing from the camp that same night; seemingly he could not resist the temptation of seeing the local night life in Alexandria. The reports do not say whether he was punished for this absence. He was then transported to Gallipoli, landing there on 3 July 1915. He was immediately in the thick of the fighting. The Battalion was ordered to attack at midnight on 6 August in order to destroy any communication trenches between the German Officers’ trench and a snipers’ trench. However, the troops had great difficulty moving through broken trenches in the dark which slowed the attack and resulted in them coming under heavy rifle and machine gun fire as they emerged.

They suffered heavy casualties and forward movement was obstructed by the wounded and dying making their way back, causing the attack to be stopped. Once the casualties had been cleared from the trenches, a further attack was attempted but with the same outcome.

The War Diary records:

“ Bomb, rifle and machine gun fire made the ground between our trench and that of the enemy impassable. Again the wounded crawled back into the recesses almost as soon as they left them. In fact a large number were hit before quite clear of the recesses.”

The attack was then cancelled. The following casualties had been suffered : 1 Officer died of wounds, 3 wounded and 1 missing; 17 Other Ranks killed, 68 wounded, 60 missing.

Sydney was one of those injured in the second attack that day having been badly wounded in his back by a bomb. He was passed through various Casualty clearing stations before being evacuated to Malta on 13 August 1915. He was treated there until 5 September before being sent on a M.O. Ship to England where he was admitted to the Military Hospital in Fulham on 12 September 1915. Clearly his wound was very serious. It was not until 17 July 1916 that he was fit enough to report for duty at the AIF HQs at Salisbury.

On 5 September 1916 he was posted to France where he again saw active service. He was transferred to the 3rd Infantry Brigade HQs in France on 4 December 1916 and remained at the front until he was granted leave on 26 January 1918 and returned to England. Possibly his mother had been able to see him when he was being nursed back to fitness in the Hospital in Fulham in 1915, but sadly this spell of home leave would be her last opportunity to see her son again before his death. On 11 February 1918 he returned to France from leave and on 22 March was transferred to the 8th Battalion of the AIF.

On 30 March 1918 the Germans opened an offensive along a 50 mile front. Its objective was to force the British and French back across the River Somme and to capture Villiers Bretonneux so as to bring their artillery within range of a strategically important road/rail junction close to Amiens. Initially they gained much ground but by 5 April a determined defensive action had halted their advance short of the objective. But the Germans reopened the offensive later that month after having laid down a heavy bombardment (including mustard gas shells) which caused 1000 Australian casualties. The situation was so critical that it caused Haig to issue his famous Order of the Day on 11 April:

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY
By FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG
K.T., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E.
Commander-in-Chief, British Armies in France

“To ALL RANKS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS

Three weeks ago to-day the enemy began his terrific attacks against us on a fifty-mile front. His objects are to separate us from the French, to take the Channel Ports and destroy the British Army.

In spite of throwing already 106 Divisions into the battle and enduring the most reckless sacrifice of human life, he has as yet made little progress towards his goals.

We owe this to the determined fighting and self-sacrifice of our troops. Words fail me to express the admiration which I feel for the splendid resistance offered by all ranks of our Army under the most trying circumstances.

Many amongst us now are tired. To those I would say that Victory will belong to the side which holds out the longest. The French Army is moving rapidly and in great force to our support.

There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man: there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the Freedom of mankind alike depend upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment.”

**(Signed) D. Haig F.M.
Commander-in-Chief
British Armies in France
General Headquarters
Tuesday, April 11th, 1918**

Literally, a call to fight to the death or face defeat. Five days later Sydney was killed in the fighting. He was awarded the 1914/15 Star and the British and Victory Medals.



This brave son of Hadstock, who answered the call to serve his country from afar is honoured on the Villiers-Bretonneux Memorial, France.

Following his death, the fighting continued until 27 April by which time a determined defence had forced the Germans back more or less to the original front line.

Note: This offensive was notable because three tanks used by the Germans were met by three British tanks; the first time tanks fought against one another.

**Driver P Pearson. 42469, "A" Bty. 14th Bde, Royal Field Artillery
who died on 9 August 1918.
Remembered with Honour – St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen.**

Peter Pearson was born at Hadstock in 1894 and baptised at St Botolph's Church on 3 June 1894. His parents, Andrew Pearson and Elizabeth Goodwin, had married in 1887. They quickly started a family, having a daughter Ethel in 1888 and a son, Thomas, in 1890. Sadly Thomas did not live long.

By 1891 Ethel and her parents were living in 4 rooms at Linton Road, Hadstock but were shortly to be joined by twin girls, Lilla and Rose. Andrew Pearson (labourer and later engine driver on a farm) and Elizabeth (nee Goodwin) were to go on to have a family of eleven children. All the children were born at Hadstock and were baptised in St Botolph's Church.

By 1901 Peter aged 7, his twin sisters aged 9, and his 3 younger brothers, including Samuel who also lost his life during WW1 (see separate entry) were living with their parents in 4 rooms at 4 Moules Lane, Hadstock.

By 1911 Peter aged 18 and a farm labourer was sharing 6 rooms in Walden Road, Hadstock with his parents, six brothers and a Boarder who also worked on a farm.

At some point after 1911 Peter moved to 34 Speedwell Terrace, Staveley near Chesterfield, Derbyshire to take up employment as a miner. We do not know for sure what prompted this move but it is significant that his elder sister, Ethel, who married Frederick Mynott in 1906, was by 1911 living in Staveley and that Frederick was also a colliery worker. Whatever prompted Peter to move there, whether to be near his sister or for employment, it would nevertheless have eased the accommodation pressures for the rest of the family back in Hadstock.

On 26 August 1915 Peter enlisted in the 188th Nottingham Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery. His service record survived the bombing in 1940 including his Army medical examination documents which gave his height as 5 feet 5 inches, weight 120 lbs, girth 35 inches (with 3 inch expansion range), with 6-6 vision, and as being of "fair" physical development. It noted that he had been vaccinated in his infancy; had had a couple of operations eg for a hernia, and that some dental treatment was necessary. But the Medical Officer concluded that he was "Class A fit for service at Home and abroad". Such was Peter's determination to join up that he immediately signed a declaration confirming that he was willing to undergo such dental treatment as the Military Medical Authorities considered necessary.

On 1 September 1915 Peter was posted as a Driver in A Battery of 188th (Nottingham) Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery. No doubt he then undertook an intensive period of

training before being posted on 29 February 1916 to the 371st Battery, quickly followed by a further posting to the new A Battery in the 188th Brigade on 11 March 1916. On 4 June 1916 his Brigade embarked at Southampton and arrived at Le Havre the next day. Further training and familiarisation probably followed. On 14 January 1917 his Battery was transferred to the 14th Army Field Artillery Brigade RFA, which was at the front, as part of a general reorganisation designed to improve the coordination between artillery and ground troops.

By July 1918 his Brigade were countering the German's last major offensive of the war known as the Second Battle of the Marne. Mindful that American forces were steadily building up, the Germans decided to mount a major and hopefully decisive offensive to break the Allies' front and take Paris and beyond. Their offensive started on 15 July 1918. Although the allied defences held along the eastern section of the front, the Germans broke through the front to the west of Reims, crossed the Marne at Dormans Boehm and established a bridgehead nine miles long and four miles deep before being halted on 17 July. A counter-attack was quickly launched by the allies supported by 350 tanks and by 3 August the enemy were back where they had started from. But the Allies' counter-offensive against the now solidly entrenched Germans was not halted until 6 August by which time Peter Pearson had been fatally wounded. It is impossible to say exactly where and how he was wounded. However his service papers show that he was "Proelicas Ave" - a battle casualty – and had suffered "gsw to neck" - a gun shot wound in the neck- on 5 August (the very day on which King George made an unexpected trip to France). Peter died from his wound in the General Rouen Hospital on 8 August 1918.

And so his parents suffered the loss of yet another of their sons. Peter was awarded the Victory and British medals and is buried with honour in the St Sever Cemetery Extension at Rouen.

**Private Sidney James Mallyon. 36804, 12th Bn, Norfolk Regiment
who died on 18 August 1918, aged 19.**

Son of James and Sarah Mallyon of Hadstock, Cambridgeshire.

Remembered with Honour – Le Grand Hasard Military Cemetery, Morbecque.

Sidney was born in 1899 and baptised at St Botolph's Church on 24 December, 1899. Earlier, in 1891, his parents, James (an agricultural labourer) and Sarah (nee Ellis) Mallyon were living in 2 rooms at Walden Road, Hadstock with their 3 sons.

By 1901 the family now living in 3 rooms in Walden Road had grown in size to include 3 sons (one being 1 year old Sidney), 3 daughters and a 15 year old stepson, Fred Ellis.

By 1911, the family were living in 4 rooms in Hadstock (possibly still Walden Road although no address is given in the Census). By then the eldest son had left home but the household included 3 sons (one being Sidney aged 11) and 5 daughters. By this time, James and Sarah had been married 24 years, and had produced 13 children of whom only 8 were still alive.

Given his age it is likely that Sidney was conscripted into the 12th Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment and allowing for the usual period for medicals and training etc would have been unlikely to have been ready for active service until early 1917 or possibly later.

By then the 31st Division, of which the 12th Norfolk Regiment were part, had already been involved in heavy fighting on the Somme and at Ancre and had suffered heavy casualties. Although rested for a time, the Division were required to strengthen the defences against the German Spring Offensive of March 1918 where they incurred further heavy losses making them seriously under strength. At the beginning of April 1918, whilst resting in the Monchy-Breton area, they received a large number of reinforcements, mainly under the age of 19. It is possible that Sidney was one of them. Almost immediately the Battalion were involved in defensive actions against the German offensive known as the Battle of the Lys which opened on 7 April. Fierce fighting continued until 14 May by which time the attacks had been defeated and Hazebrouck secured. This would have been a harsh introduction to the horrors of war for young Sidney.

The Division were then taken out of the line to begin training for future offensive operations. These began in June 1918 and took the form of small advances, supported by artillery, to seize various strong points in preparation for a major coordinated offensive in August. These raids were successful, culminating in the capture of Vieux-Berquin on 13 August 1918, but then ran into serious opposition south of Ploegsteert in the days leading up to 21 August.

The War Diary does not mention any casualties on 18 August, the day that Sidney died, but it may well have been that he received a fatal wound a few days earlier. A raiding party that attacked the enemy trenches on 16 August ran into difficulty and had to withdraw

giving one another covering fire. At one point an attempt was made to deal with a group of up to 40 – 60 enemy troops seen gathering in a section of trench, but the raiding party was heavily bombed and suffered many casualties. The Diary records

“Strength of platoon going into action 1 Officer 30 OR. Casualties 1 Officer killed 11 OR wounded.”

It is possible that one of the wounded was Sidney and that he died from his injuries two days later.

He was awarded the Victory and British medals and is buried with honour in the Le Grand Hasard Military Cemetery, Morbecque.

**Private A H Rowlinson. 202948, 1st Bn, Essex Regiment who died on 23 August 1918.
Remembered with Honour – Achiet-Le-Grand Communal Cemetery Extension**

Albert Henry was born in 1895 and was baptised Albert Henry **Rowlandson** on 9 February 1896 at St Botolph's Church.

It was not uncommon then for literacy problems to result in some variations in how surnames were recorded. When Albert's parents married in St Botolph's Church on 28 February 1891, their names were recorded as being **Henry Rowlinson** and **Emily Cox** even though Henry's father's name was recorded quite clearly as being Stephen **Rowlandson**. But significantly both men signed the register with “**† his mark**”.

Albert Henry was probably born at The Corner House in Hadstock where his family were recorded as living in 1901 with the surname of Rowlandson. In addition to the parents, Harry and Emily, there were 4 sons, 1 daughter, Harry's father Stephen, widower aged 66 and lodger in the household. Both Harry and Stephen, were agricultural labourers.

It may well be that the family were still living at The Corner House at the time of the next census in 1911, but the address given was simply “Walden Road, Hadstock” comprising 4 rooms. At the time of the census, the daughter, Ivy, a domestic servant aged 19, was away from home. The surname was recorded as being Rowlinson and by now there were 6 sons including Albert (aged 15) and his elder brother, George William (aged 17) both recorded as being farm labourers.

Albert Henry enlisted as Private 270221 in the 1/1st Battalion of the Hertfordshire Territorial Regiment and at some point, possibly in early 1916, transferred to the 1st Essex Regiment at which time he was given the new number 202942. (Note: Although the Commonwealth War Graves Commission have recorded his number as being 202948 the medal rolls clearly show it as being 202942.) Given that he was already in the Territorial Army it is likely that he volunteered to join the 1st Essex Regiment rather than wait to be conscripted. But the loss of his service records means we cannot be certain about this or indeed about his precise subsequent movements. So we cannot say for sure when he first entered the Theatre of War in France.

Certainly by mid March 1916 the Battalion was in France and on 1 July 1916 took part in the first day of the Battle of the Somme. Almost immediately the men went over the top of the trenches they were met by heavy artillery and machine gun fire which caused heavy casualties which brought the attack to a halt. The Battalion's losses were such that they were withdrawn and their place taken by others. It is impossible to say whether Albert Henry took part in this battle or whether he was one of the urgent replacements that were then posted in to make up for these early losses.

However, he would almost certainly have been involved in the Battalion's various engagements during 1917 including the Battles of Arras and Ypres.

By August 1918 the Battalion had been transferred to the 112th Brigade in 37th Division and were involved in the Battle for the town of Albert. Encouraged by recent successes and by the arrival of replacement troops, including newly-arrived Americans, and new equipment, the Allied Command had decided to go on the offensive. The Third Army, which included the 1st Essex Regiment, was tasked with taking and holding the alignment of the Arras to Albert railway. The offensive opened at 04.55am on 21 August, with the support of the new Whippet and Mark V tanks and several artillery brigades. After capturing and clearing the villages of Ablainzeville and Bucquoy, there was a brief pause on 22 August to regroup before the 37th Division resumed the advance on 23 August. At various points they were held up by heavy machine gun and rifle fire which could only be overcome with the assistance of the tanks but nevertheless caused heavy casualties. The Division reached the railway cutting west of Achiet le Grand in the morning before clearing the enemy from the village in the afternoon. Between 21 and 23 August the Regiment suffered 4 Officers killed, 10 wounded and 78 Other Ranks killed, 197 wounded and 8 missing. At some point in the fighting Albert Henry was one of those killed.

He was buried with honour in the Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-Le-Grands. He was awarded the Victory and British medals which his family still have (see picture at page 42).

**Lieutenant John Henry Barnes. MC and Bar, 44th Bn; Canadian Infantry
who died on 2 November 1918. Age 23.**

**Son of Henry and Emily Barnes of 260 Washington Avenue, Winnipeg.
Remembered with Honour – St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen.**

John Henry Barnes was born on 22 June 1895 at Elmfield Road, Southall, Middlesex and was baptised on 25 August 1895 at St John's Church, Southall. In 1901 he was living at No 42 Featherstone Terrace, Southall, then aged 5, with his parents, Henry William and Emily Jane Barnes, 2 younger brothers and a younger sister. His father, Henry W Barnes was then a Draper. Also present were 3 female boarders who were Drapers Assistants and a female servant.

By 1911 the family had moved to No 30 Florence Road, Southall. Henry William, John's father, was still a draper and John, aged 15, was a "Scholar". In addition to John and his parents, there were 4 younger sons and 1 younger daughter in the household.

But in that same year, the family (now comprising 5 sons and 1 daughter) emigrated to Canada and settled at No 260 Washington Avenue, Kidonan, Manitoba. The Census for that District in 1916 shows that by then Henry William was a "Steelworker" rather than a Draper and son John, aged 20, was a Soldier.

On 25 August 1915 (exactly 20 years to the day from his baptism) John Henry enlisted at Winnipeg as Private 460449 in the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force. His enlistment papers record that he was 5ft 10½ inches tall, 37ins of girth (extension 5 ins), weighed 140 lbs and had blue eyes, fair hair and a ruddy complexion. Just under a year later (on 20 August 1916) and after no doubt extensive training, he was transferred to the 44th Battalion of the Canadian Infantry which had already crossed to France on 10 August aboard HMS Viper at Southampton and disembarked at Le Havre on 12 August. After a short period of familiarisation training the Battalion marched to the trenches at Vierstraat where they soon suffered their first casualties. By 7 September 1916 John Henry had joined them there. The Battalion remained in the thick of the fighting for the remainder of the war and took part in many of the major offensives which are remembered today (eg the Battles at Ypres, Artois, The Somme, Vimy Ridge, Arras, Passchendaele, Amiens to name but some). Their fighting spirit and steadfast courage came to be admired by friend and foe alike.

On 14 March 1917 John Henry was transferred to England to be considered for a commission. He was promoted to Lieutenant on 28 April and rejoined the 44th Battalion in France on 29 May 1917.

Although Lieutenant John Henry Barnes played his part throughout, it is not until the Battle of Arras that he is mentioned by name in the Battalion's War Diaries. Following an attack on the German trenches at Fosse St Louis on 21/23 August 1917, the Diary records casualties of 7 Officers and 253 Other Ranks either killed, missing or wounded; John

Henry was one of those listed as wounded. His medical report states that he “sustained wounds from bomb of the front of right shoulder, front of neck and scrotum”. Initially he was treated at the Casualty Clearing Station but was then transferred to a hospital at Etaples before being evacuated to the London General Hospital for treatment. By 11 September his wounds had healed and he was granted a three week period of leave to recuperate. He gave his contact address during that leave as being “c/o Lower Farm, Hadstock, Linton – Cambs”. On 5 October 1917 he was declared fit for active duty and rejoined his Battalion.

On 3 January 1918 John Henry led an 8 man reconnaissance patrol between the lines at Vimy at night to check enemy activity and to obtain the identification of enemy units for intelligence purposes. This dangerous enterprise was successfully carried out.

John Henry was ordered to take patrols out again into No Man’s Land on the nights of 11 and 12 January 1918 to find and mark gaps in the enemy's wire defences. Again this was carried out successfully.

Almost certainly it was these actions that resulted in his being awarded the Military Cross on 4 March 1918; the citation speaks for itself:

“For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He displayed great courage and perseverance in personal reconnaissances of the enemy wire, bringing back very valuable reports on wire-cutting operations. Later, he led parties of scouts and stretcher bearers in search of some men, who had been missing after a previous raid, penetrating beyond the enemy wire. He also organised, instructed, and took out three battle patrols. During all of these operations he was subjected to heavy enemy fire.”

He also led a further reconnaissance patrol out into No Man's Land on the night of 25/26 April 1918 designed to gather intelligence to help the preparations for a future attack. Although successful, two of his troops were wounded. The Brigadier General reported that:

“I consider that the operation reflects great credit on all concerned. I would particularly mention:.....

Great credit is also due to Lieut. J.H. Barnes, M.C for the valuable information obtained by patrolling on successive nights which enabled the plan to be arranged.”

On 16 May 1918, John Henry got leave to go to the Officers' Rest Club at Aubigny to have a well-earned rest where he stayed until 23 May. The Diary then records that on 20 June 1918 he left for 14 days leave in England (possibly this time was also spent at Hadstock) from which he rejoined the Battalion on 7 July.

By 10 August the Battalion was engaged in the battle to retake the Village of Foquescourt and it was almost certainly here that John Henry earned the Bar to his Military Cross that was awarded posthumously on 2 December 1918. Again the citation speaks for itself:

“For conspicuous gallantry while in charge of direction during an attack on a village. He accompanied the attacking parties, repeatedly assisting officers in working to positions indicated. He handled the battalion scouts in the final attack, and fought with great dash and courage. For the succeeding three nights he led patrols and helped to restore positions temporarily (sic) penetrated. He rendered valuable services.”

On 17 August 1918 John Henry was wounded. The War Diary for that day records :

“Battalion salvaging during the day. 200 OR digging trenches in forward area at night. Casualties – Lieut J H Barnes, MC wounded, 1 OR wounded.”

From his medical records it is clear that John Henry suffered a gunshot wound to his left groin and right buttock. On 20 August he was in No 47 Casualty Clearing Station from where he was transferred on 28 August, dangerously ill, to the General Hospital at Rouen. On 1 October 1918 the War Diary records that he, and others, had been awarded the Distinguished Service Order for “Operations at FouQuescourt”. His awards were clearly well deserved but sadly he died of his wounds on 2 November 1918 aged 23. He is remembered with honour in the St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen.

Note : It is not clear why John Henry Barnes was included on the memorial in St Botolph's Church given that he was born in Southall, emigrated to Canada and could only have stayed briefly in Hadstock. But it must surely be more than a coincidence that the Reverend William Henry Barnes was the Vicar at Hadstock between 1917 and 1932. Although no obvious family connection is apparent from looking at the census returns for both John Henry Barnes' father and William Henry Barnes, there must have been one. Otherwise the inclusion of John Henry's name on the memorial would make no sense whatsoever.

Others killed in WW1 who are not included on the Memorial in St Botolph's Church.

Lance Corporal Albert Hill.

0/6493, 81st N.A.D., Army Ordnance Corps who died on 13 May 1917 Aged 27

Son of Mr and Mrs A Hill of Coton, Cambs.

Remembered with Honour

St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen.

In 1891 Albert's parents, Addison and Henrietta Hills, were living in four rooms in Linton Road, Hadstock with their four sons, including Albert aged 1, and a daughter. This was almost certainly where Albert was born. He was baptised on 25 May 1890 at St Botolph's Church. By 1901 the family had moved to Whitwell Farm, Barton, Cambridgeshire and by 1911 were recorded as living in Whitwell Cottage, Coton, Cambridgeshire. Given the passage of time and the fact that Albert did not go off to war from Hadstock, it is not surprising that his name does not appear on the St Botolph's memorial.

Private Harry Morley

3/9509, 1st Bn., Suffolk Regiment who died on 24 April 1915 Aged 32

Son of Edward and Eliza Morley, of Bartlow Road., Hadstock, Cambridge.

Remembered with Honour

Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial.

Harry Morley was born at Linton in 1887. By 1911 he was a boarder at The Pear Tree in Hildersham, Cambridgeshire. There is no record that he or his parents had at any time lived in Hadstock previously. However, it would appear, from the address given to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission shown above, that his parents may have moved into the village between 1911 and his death in April 1915. Again it is easy to understand why his name does not appear on the St Botolph's memorial. More fittingly, he is remembered on the Linton War Memorial.

Albert Henry Rowlandson's Medals



On the left – **The British War Medal**

Awarded to those who had rendered service between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918 including those who had died on active service during this period.

On the right – **The Victory Medal**

Awarded to those who had entered a theatre of war (area of active fighting) and not those who had just served overseas.

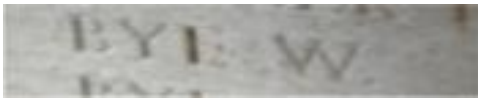


On the left, **the 1914 Star**. Awarded to British forces who had served in France or Belgium from 5 August 1914 to midnight 22 November 1914

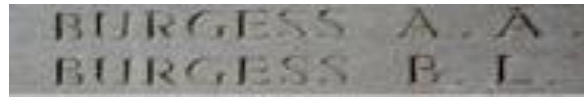


On the right, **the 1914 – 1915 Star**. Awarded to all who served in any theatre of war outside the UK between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915 except those eligible for the 1914 Star

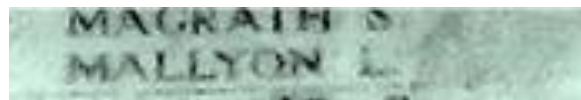
ARRAS MEMORIAL



Walter Bye



Bennett Leopold Burgess



Laurence Mallyon

CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL



Samuel Pearson





Achiet-Le-Grand Communal Cemetery Extension



Albert Henry Rowlandson



Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun



Jonas Freeman



Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-Le-Grand



Charles Edward Bye



Henry Nathan Fordham - Hadstock St Botolph's Churchyard



Le Grand Hasard Military Cemetery, Morbecque



Sidney James Mallyon



St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen



John Henry Barnes



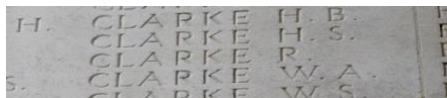
Peter Pearson



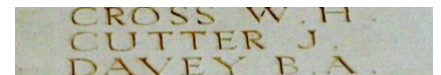
Thiepval Memorial



George Edward Lewis Burgess



Rowland Clarke



James Swann Cutter



Jesse Mallyon



Tyne Cot Memorial



Albert Edward Swann



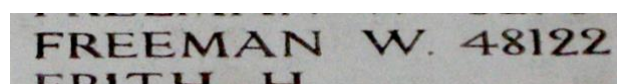
Villers-Bretonneux Memorial



Sydney Arthur Robinson



Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial



Walter Freeman



The Church of England
in Essex and East London
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