

MERSHAM



The Great War
1914 - 1919

BARHAM S.A.L

G/89298 Sidney A.L BARHAM. 4th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. Died 22nd August 1918. Born Cheriton, Folkestone. Enlisted Canterbury. Resided Park Cottages, Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Abbeville Communal Cemetery Extension, France. Grave reference IV.D.5.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Ransley Cottages, Mersham

Private 27593 Victor BARHAM. 12th Suffolk Regiment.

Park Cottages, Brabourne

Private 1869 Frederick Arthur BARHAM. 2nd Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

Rifleman 202923 George Thomas BARHAM. King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Private 13768 John Harry BARHAM. The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

Private 2211 William Henry BARHAM. 8th Royal Sussex Regiment.





GODDEN E.W

Private 7126 Edward William GODDEN. 8th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). Died 24th March 1916 aged 24 years. Born Mersham, Kent. Enlisted Epsom, Surrey. Resided Mersham. Son of Alfred and Jane Godden of 12, The Street, Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Vermelles British Cemetery, France. Grave reference II.N.23.

The CWGC list his parents address wrongly as – 12 Mersham Street, Ashford.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

12, The Street, Mersham

**Driver 182773 Alfred GODDEN. 107th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.
Private 240980 John Gower GODDEN. 436th Agricultural Coy, Labour Corps.**

Hatch Park Gardens, Mersham

Private 265251 John Henry GODDEN. Royal West Kent Regiment.

HOWLAND W.G (Brother)

Dover Marine

Petty Officer Stoker 312028 W.G HOWLAND. HMS "Botha". Royal Navy (RN). Died 21st March 1918 aged 27 years. Son of Walter John and Louisa Howland of "Broad Oak", Mersham, Kent. Husband of Flora Howland of 18, Mill Crescent, Tonbridge, Kent. Buried in the Dunkirk Town Cemetery, France. Grave reference IV.B.17.

Before the outbreak of war this man was working for the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company. His name does NOT appear on the Ashford Railway Works Rolls of Honour. His name does however appear on the Dover Marine Railway tribute.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Plough Inn, Brabourne

Lance Corporal 1918 Frank Ernest HOWLAND. 3rd Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

Additional information provided by Dave Dixon at <http://www.fadedgenes.co.uk> –

2. **Walter John HOWLAND**, born Abt 1856 in Willesborough (Kent), census 1871 at South Stour, Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), occupation 1871 Bricklayers Apprentice, occupation 1881 - 1901 Bricklayer. He married (1) **Louisa RUCK**, 1st January 1878 at St John the Baptist, Mersham (Kent), born Abt 1857 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), died Sep 1898 in Mersham (Kent). He married (2) **Sarah THORNBY**, 16th January 1901 at St John the Baptist, Mersham (Kent), born Abt 1857 in Brabourne (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).

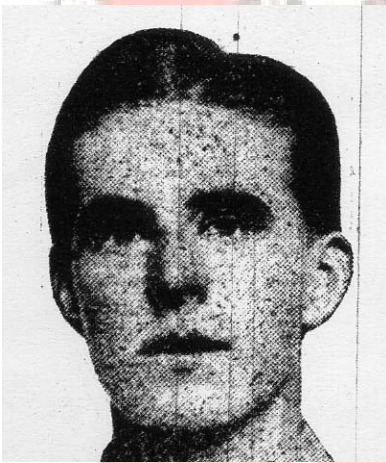
Children by Louisa RUCK:

- i **Edward John HOWLAND**, born Dec 1878 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), occupation 1901 Bricklayer.
- ii **Arthur William HOWLAND**, born Sep 1880 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent).
- iii **Mary Louisa E HOWLAND**, born Mar 1883 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), occupation 1901 Assists at Home.
- iv **Alice HOWLAND**, born Abt 1886 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent).
- v **Kate Janet HOWLAND**, born Mar 1887 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent).
- vi **Fanny HOWLAND**, born Abt 1888 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).
- vii **Walter George HOWLAND**, born 11 Jul 1890 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), died 21 Mar 1918 Aged 27, buried IV.B.17 in Dunkirk Town Cemetery,

Service number 312028, Petty Officer, Stoker - RN - HMS Botha. He married **Flora**.

- viii **Bessie HOWLAND**, born Mar 1893 in Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).
- ix **Margaret HOWLAND**, born Mar 1895 in Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).
- x **Elgar Henry HOWLAND**, born Dec 1896 in Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), died 7 Jan 1916 Aged 19, buried in Amara War Cemetery - XXXI.C.5, Service number T/1729, Private - 5th Btn - The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

3. **Louisa RUCK**, born Abt 1857 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), died Sep 1898 in Mersham (Kent).



HOWLAND E.H (Brother)

Private T/1729 Elgar Henry HOWLAND. 5th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 7th January 1916 aged 19 years. Born Mersham. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Mersham. Son of Walter John and Louisa Howland of "Broad Oak", Mersham, Kent. Buried in the Amara War Cemetery, Amara, Iraq. Grave reference XXXI.C.5.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Plough Inn, Brabourne

Lance Corporal 1918 Frank Ernest HOWLAND. 3rd Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

On the 6th January 1916 a signal came from Kut saying that large numbers of Turkish troops were moving downstream of the River Tigris towards Sheikh Saad. An aircraft spotted the troops entrenching both sides of the river. The Tigris Corps of which the Buffs was part of moved to meet the enemy. The 5th battalion attacked the Turk positions head on and by nightfall it became obvious the attack could not succeed. The next day 7th January the Buffs alongside The Black Watch and The Seaforth Highlanders were again ordered to attack in strength. As the British moved forward under heavy fire the Turks attempted to encircle the Tigris Corps. By nightfall the position remained stalemate. It was later discovered that the Turks had withdrawn upstream. British Army casualties at Sheikh Saad were over 4,000 men.

Additional information provided by Dave Dixon at <http://www.fadedgenes.co.uk> –

2. **Walter John HOWLAND**, born Abt 1856 in Willesborough (Kent), census 1871 at South Stour, Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), occupation 1871 Bricklayers Apprentice, occupation 1881 - 1901 Bricklayer. He married (1) **Louisa RUCK**, 1st January 1878 at St John the Baptist, Mersham (Kent), born Abt 1857 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), died Sep 1898 in Mersham (Kent). He married (2) **Sarah THORNBY**, 16th January 1901 at St John the Baptist, Mersham (Kent), born Abt 1857 in Brabourne (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).

Children by Louisa RUCK:

- i **Edward John HOWLAND**, born Dec 1878 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), occupation 1901 Bricklayer.
 - ii **Arthur William HOWLAND**, born Sep 1880 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent).
 - iii **Mary Louisa E HOWLAND**, born Mar 1883 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), occupation 1901 Assists at Home.
 - iv **Alice HOWLAND**, born Abt 1886 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent).
 - v **Kate Janet HOWLAND**, born Mar 1887 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent).
 - vi **Fanny HOWLAND**, born Abt 1888 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).
 - vii **Walter George HOWLAND**, born 11 Jul 1890 in Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), died 21 Mar 1918 Aged 27, buried IV.B.17 in Dunkirk Town Cemetery, Service number 312028, Petty Officer, Stoker - RN - HMS Botha. He married **Flora**.
 - viii **Bessie HOWLAND**, born Mar 1893 in Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).
 - ix **Margaret HOWLAND**, born Mar 1895 in Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent).
 - x **Elgar Henry HOWLAND**, born Dec 1896 in Mersham (Kent), census 1901 at Budge House, Mersham (Kent), died 7 Jan 1916 Aged 19, buried in Amara War Cemetery - XXXI.C.5, Service number T/1729, Private - 5th Btn - The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
3. **Louisa RUCK**, born Abt 1857 in Mersham (Kent), census 1881 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), census 1891 at Broad Oak, Mersham (Kent), died Sep 1898 in Mersham (Kent).



LEE C.S

Corporal L/8154 Charles Sidney LEE. 2nd Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 30th April 1915 aged 29 years. Born Woodchurch. Enlisted Canterbury. Resided Mersham. Son of William Lee of Long Row, Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension (Nord), France. Grave reference I.E.160.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Monday Farm, Mersham

**Private 51159 George Reginald LEE. 1st Section, Machine Gun Corps (Cavalry).
Corporal 59645 William LEE. 1206th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.**

Long Row, Mersham

L/4612 James LEE. HMS Carnation. Royal Navy.

On the 27th April 1915 the 2nd battalion was in trenches at St Jean. Persistent shelling continued all day and on the 28th the battalion received orders to join the 85th Brigade at Verlorenhoek. The

30th April was a quiet day for the battalion at Verlorenhoek. It is recorded that Sidney was killed in action however it seems likely that he was wounded near St Jean on or about the 24th April and recovered to a base hospital in Bailleul. He probably died of wounds in hospital and his body was buried nearby.

McCLAREN A.L

Private M/339407 Andrew Liddell MACLAREN. 10th Company, Army Service Corps (Mechanical Transport) (ASCMT). Died of Blood Loss consequential to a Stomach Ulcer 1st March 1918 aged 46 years at Fargo Military Hospital, Durrington, Amesbury, Wiltshire. Enlisted London. Resided Stone Gate, Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Fargo Hospital Cemetery, Durrington, Amesbury, Wiltshire. Grave reference: not known. Durrington Cemetery contains burials of both wars. The 204 First World War burials were mostly from nearby Larkhill Camp. Many of the graves are of Australian servicemen and there is a separate Australian memorial in the cemetery. The Second World War burials number 22. In addition to the war graves, there are a number of post-war service graves in the cemetery, mostly of the Royal Air Force.

No Trace on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website which is surprising because his name DOES appear on Soldiers Died Great War!

We have checked the GRO indexes of Great War Deaths (1914-1920) and can't locate his name on the registers! His name was however recorded on the normal civilian GRO death indexes –

DEATH CERTIFICATE

March Qtr, 1918, AMESBURY, 5a, 230 (aged 46 years)

Andrew Liddell MACLAREN

Private, 10th Coy, Army Service Corps (MT)

1. Ulcer of Stomach
2. Hematemesis
3. Exhaustion

Death reported by Private E Fort on 4th March 1918 (causing the body to be buried Fargo Hospital, Durrington).

Occupation – Serving soldier in the 10th Company, Army Service Corps (MT).

We have seen his surname spelt in 5 ways (correct spelling is in fact MACLAREN) –

Maclaren A.L
McClaren A.L
MacClaren A.L
MaClarren A.L
McClarren A.L

His name was possibly forgotten because he died in the UK. We have found that sometimes men's deaths were not always properly recorded by the authorities when a man died of wounds or of attributed illness on the UK mainland. We are confused however by the fact his name DOES appear on Soldiers Died Great War and on the civilian GRO death indexes his occupation is clearly and prominently recorded as a SERVING SOLDIER!

Kyle Tallett

" This man had a stomach ulcer, he also had Haematemesis, which means vomiting blood. This would occur if the ulcer was bleeding heavily, basically you would chuck up blood until you collapsed and your heart packed up. (nowadays you would have a

transfusion). The fact he was a serving soldier when he died means that this man is entitled to a CWGC commemoration."

This soldier was entitled to have his name registered as a war casualty. He died of Exhaustion whilst still serving which means he caught the disease whilst serving in the British Army. The fact his name does appear on Soldiers Died Great War also supports this case.

Durrington is somewhat unusual community in that it is small village that has grown to the size of a town because of a large army camp that has been in the parish since the early 20th century. Perhaps, however, it would be fairer to say that it is Larkhill Camp that has the appearance of a town while the original village has been extended so that it now covers a similar area of land, between the Netheravon Road and the river Avon, as is occupied by Amesbury, further south. Larkhill Camp lies to the west of the village on the downs. Although the parish has the population of a small town the separate communities, lack of cohesive infrastructure and no centre means that this is not really an urban development. Without the army presence Durrington would probably have developed into a medium sized village based on an ancient settlement in the Avon valley. The changing epoch began in 1898 when much of the parish was acquired by the army. From 1899 the part of Salisbury Plain to the north west of the village was used for artillery practice and a camp was set up on Durrington Down. By the beginning of the First World War there were three tented camps known as Durrington, Larkhill, and Fargo Camps. In 1914 the Larkhill light military railway was built from Ratfyn in Amesbury to Fargo Camp **and a large military hospital was built at that camp**. During the war the tents at Larkhill Camp were replaced by huts and in 1916 the Stonehenge Inn was rebuilt by the Portsmouth United Brewery, who had acquired it. The war memorial was built on the base of the ancient cross. From 1920 Larkhill Camp became the headquarters of the School of Artillery and permanent brick building were put up. Fargo Military Hospital was demolished between 1985 and 1993. Nothing now remains of it. At the present time we don't know what happened to the hospital cemetery and the graves.

We feel this case is quite straightforward and fully expect the MoD to APPROVE this case for a belated comemoration.

REID J.H

Driver T4/232189 John Henry REID. 11th Field Ambulance, Royal Army Service Corps (RASC). 12th August 1918. Born Battersea, London. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Long Row Cottages, Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Buried Tourgeville Military Cemetery, Calvadds, France. Grave reference IV.B.14.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Long Row Cottages, Mersham

Driver 232189 John Henry REID. Army Service Corps.

The Calvadds area housed a Base Hospital during the Great War. John probably died in one of these hospitals of wounds that he received on the battlefield.



ROLFE G

Guardsman 25335 George ROLFE. 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards. Died 17th January 1917 aged nearly 24 years (his birthday would have been on 20th January). Born Mersham. Enlisted Nottingham. Son of Daniel Richard and Annie Jane Rolfe of 16 The Street, Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Boulogne, France. Grave reference VIII.C.175.

This mans death was reported in the Kentish Express briefly. The report confirmed this man was from Mersham. It stated that he died whilst being treated in Hospital at Boulogne, France. He had been in France since August 1916.

George was educated at Mersham School. Before the outbreak of war George was a Police Constable in Faversham, Kent with the Kent County Constabulary.



SHRUBSOLE F

Private G/10667 Frederick SHRUBSOLE. 11th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). Died 7th October 1916. Born Lewisham, London. Enlisted Lewisham, London. Resided Chislehurst, Kent. Fred has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 11C.

On the 7th October 1916 the 11th battalion moved into Switch Trench near High Wood. The battalion consisted only 100 men and 4 officers. Over the next few days the battalion moved between La Barque and Flers.

SMITH P.L

L/8612 Percy L SMITH. 2nd Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 9th February 1915. Born Sellindge, Kent. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Mersham. Percy has no known grave. His name appears on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Ypres, Belgium. Panel reference 12 and 14.

The 2nd battalion arrived in France on the 21st January 1915. On the 5th February the battalion marched to Ouderdom. On the 6th February the battalion marched to the Ypres area to reinforce the 84th Brigade which found itself in serious trouble. The Buffs headquarters was located at Ferme Chapelle. The battalion took over frontline trenches from the French and these were found to be in a terrible condition. The men were forced to stand all day in waist high mud. The men started to suffer from swollen feet and frost-bite.

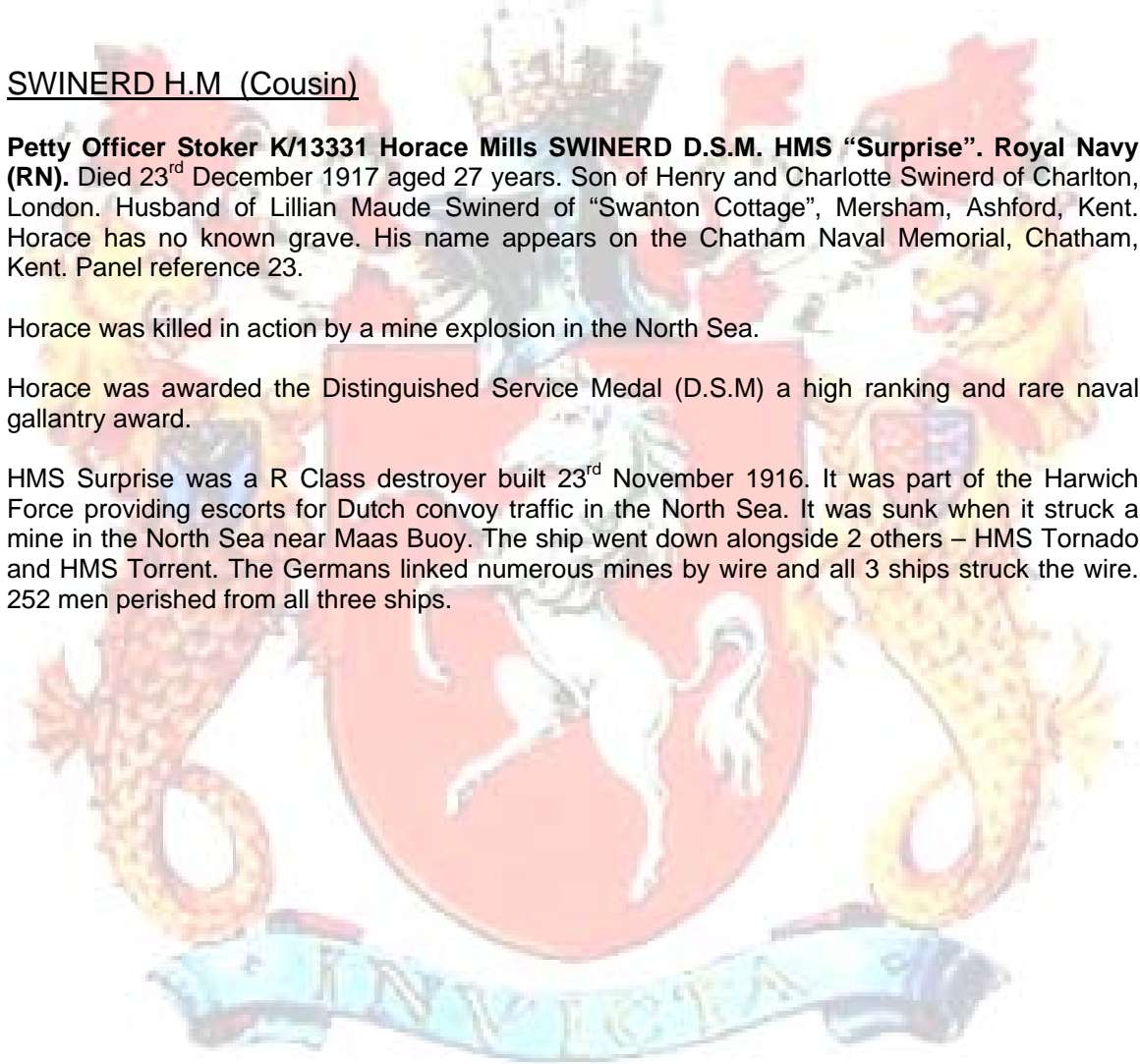
SWINERD H.M (Cousin)

Petty Officer Stoker K/13331 Horace Mills SWINERD D.S.M. HMS "Surprise". Royal Navy (RN). Died 23rd December 1917 aged 27 years. Son of Henry and Charlotte Swinerd of Charlton, London. Husband of Lillian Maude Swinerd of "Swanton Cottage", Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Horace has no known grave. His name appears on the Chatham Naval Memorial, Chatham, Kent. Panel reference 23.

Horace was killed in action by a mine explosion in the North Sea.

Horace was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal (D.S.M) a high ranking and rare naval gallantry award.

HMS Surprise was a R Class destroyer built 23rd November 1916. It was part of the Harwich Force providing escorts for Dutch convoy traffic in the North Sea. It was sunk when it struck a mine in the North Sea near Maas Buoy. The ship went down alongside 2 others – HMS Tornado and HMS Torrent. The Germans linked numerous mines by wire and all 3 ships struck the wire. 252 men perished from all three ships.





SWINERD R.J (Cousin)

Private G/2765 Richard James SWINERD. 7th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 1st September 1915 aged 19 years. Born Willesborough. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Willesborough. Son of James and Anne D Swinerd of Swanton Cottage, Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Point 110 Old Military Cemetery, Fricourt, France. Grave reference C.13.

Throughout August and September the 7th batalion spent time in various frontline trench systems in the Carnoy area. This ties in nicely with the location of Richard's grave. The Buffs Regimental History (Moody) states that on the 1st September 1915 the Germans let off a massive mine under The Buffs position at Fricourt. D Company sustained casuaties – 9 killed outright and 5 wounded. It appears that Richard was one of these men from D Company killed in action.



LOST MEN

ATKINS R.R

Boy 1st Class Robert Reginald ATKINS. HMS "Pembroke", Chatham Naval Base. Royal Navy (RN). Died 21st April 1918 aged 18 years. Son of R Atkins of Swanton Mill Villa, Mersham, Kent. Buried in Woodlands Cemetery, Gillingham, Kent. Grave reference - Naval 28.1465.

Robert's name appears on the East Langdon war memorial near Deal. Kent.

BAILEY A.E (brother)

Lance Corporal L/9592 Archibald Ernest BAILEY. 2nd Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 28th September 1915. Born Mersham. Resided Willesborough Lees. Son of Samuel Bailey of 16, Blackwall Road, Willesborough Lees, Ashford, Kent. Archibald has no known grave. His name appears on the Loos Memorial, France. Panel reference 15 to 19.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

16, Blackwall Road, Willesborough

Private 18881 Reginald George Alfred BAILEY. The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

On the 28th September 1915 the 2nd Battalion was in action all day. The battalion had been tasked with attacking the Hohenzollern Redoubt and Fosse 8 nearby. The Buffs at 09.30 hours began to line up in trenches ready for the assault. When the battalion went over the top progress was very slow due to murderous machine gun fire and heavy shelling. At least 11 enemy machine guns infiltrated the battalion from a position known as Miners Cottages. B and C companies were held up at The Dump a heavily fortified enemy held position. The attack failed and The Buffs withdrew to their original start line. Over 100 men were left dead and dying on the battlefield but mainly at and on The Dump.

BAILEY R.G.A (brother)

Corporal 18881 Reginald George Alfred BAILEY. 8th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (MGC). Formerly (8993) The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 6th June 1918. Born Mersham. Enlisted Canterbury. Resided Ashford. Son of Samuel Bailey of 16, Blackwall Road, Willesborough Lees, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the La Neuville-Aux-Larris Military Cemetery, Marne, France. Grave reference B.43.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

16, Blackwall Road, Willesborough

Private 18881 Reginald George Alfred BAILEY. The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

BENNETT W.J

Ashford Railway Rolls

Private T/1227 William John Bertie BENNETT. 5th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Friday 7th January 1916 aged 17 years. Born Redhill, Surrey. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Ashford. Son of William Bennett and Sarah Ann Morris (formerly Bennett). Buried in the Amara War Cemetery, Amara, Iraq. Grave reference XXXI.B.6.

Soldiers Died Great War lists William Born MERSTHAM, Redhill, Surrey. This may be incorrect. It is likely that this is a mis-spelling and should read MERSHAM.

Educated at the New Town School, Ashford. William was employed briefly by the Kentish Express newspaper in Ashford. Just before the war he was working in the SE&CR Company Works (Wagon Department). His name appears on the Ashford Railway Works Rolls of Honour.

On the 4th January 1916 the 5th battalion was at Ali-el-Gharbi. The battalion moved up river towards Sheikh Saad. All surplus stores were carried by barges on the River Tigris. The battalion only marched about 8 miles due to inclement weather conditions. During the day it was extremely wet and at night the temperature dropped to less than freezing. On the 6th January the march was resumed and enemy outposts were reached. Firing commenced shortly after noon but casualties were light. On the 7th January 1916 the Battle of Sheikh Saad was fought. The Buffs advanced towards the enemy but came under extremely heavy artillery bombardment. As the day wore on the battalion started to suffer increasing casualties. The Adjutant Lt H.S Marchant was killed and Lt Col J Munn-Mace and Major E Clark were wounded. The weather remained wet and cold and soldiers rations consisted mainly bully beef and a few biscuits. British losses were 4,000 men!





GODDEN G.W

Private G/6923 George William GODDEN. 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. Died 16th October 1915 aged 27 years. Born Hailsham, Sussex. Adopted son of William and Ellen Godden of Herstmonceux, Hailsham, Sussex. Husband of Mercy J. Keat (formerly Godden) of Little Gill Farm, Mersham, Kent. Buried in the Bethune Town Cemetery, France. Grave reference IV.F.38.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

12, The Street, Mersham

Driver 182773 Alfred GODDEN. 107th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.
Private 240980 John Gower GODDEN. 436th Agricultural Coy, Labour Corps.

Hatch Park Gardens, Mersham

Private 265251 John Henry GODDEN. Royal West Kent Regiment.

GUILFORD W.H

Private 2356 William Henry GUILFORD. 6th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment. Died 13th February 1917 aged 24 years. Born Mersham. Enlisted Kingston, Surrey. Resided Weybridge, Surrey. Son of William and Agnes E Guilford of 1, Lansdown Villas, Dorchester Road, Weybridge, Surrey. Formerly Queen's Parade, Church Street, Weybridge, Surrey. Buried in the Baghdad (North Gate) Cemetery, Baghdad, Iraq. Grave reference XXI.Y.28.

The CWGC lists his regimental number as 2356 whereas SDGW gives 240566.

Volume 1 of De Ruvignys Roll of Honour lists William's death – Page 122.

Educated at St James Scholl Weybridge, Surrey. Upon leavi

William enlisted into the territorial force (East Surrey Regiment) in 1905. Upon the outbreak of war William volunteered for active service overseas. William arrived in India with his battalion on the 29th October 1914. He then moved to Mesopotamia (Iraq) with his battalion. On the 29th April 1916 William was captured by the Turks near Kut-el-Amara. He subsequently died of Typhus whilst in Turkish hands at Angora. His body was buried in the cemetery at Kurbaghali. It is not known why the CWGC do not list William's original place of burial. After the war his body was exhumed from Kurbaghali and brought to Baghdad for official burial.

William's platoon commander wrote (a junior N.C.O) –

"I take this opportunity of expressing on behalf of myself, officers, N.C.O's and men of the battalion our sincere sympathy in your loss and to assure you that we all feel that the regiment has lost a real good soldier in the death of your son and a comrade. He was my best chum from the time of landing in this country until after the Battle of Ctesiphon, where I left him to go into the Field Dressing Station. As he was of my section, I can say a better and braver man never was in the field than he".





MARSHALL A.E.D

Private G/13401 Arthur Ernest Dyer MARSHALL. 6th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 11th April 1917 aged 41 years. Born Mersham. Enlisted Canterbury. Resided Willesborough. Husband of Annie Marshall of 83, Christchurch Road, Ashford. Buried in the Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun. Grave reference III.C.10.

On the 9th April 1917 the Battle of Arras commenced. The 6th battalion was involved in fighting a sub-battle known as the Battle of The Scarpe. On the 11th April 1917 The Buffs went into captured German trenches near Monchy and spent the day clearing up the battlefield and burying the dead. Arthur was probably wounded on the 9th April 1917 and succumbed to his wounds 2 days later.

On the 9th April 1917 the Battle of Arras commenced. The 6th battalion was involved in fighting a mini battle known as the Battle of The Scarpe. On the 11th April 1917 The Buffs went into captured German trenches near Monchy and spent the day clearing up the battlefield and burying the dead. Arthur died of wounds that he received in an earlier battle.

OVENDEN F.W

Private G/21416 Franklin Walter OVENDEN. 7th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 16th July 1917 aged 31 years. Born Mersham. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Ashford. Son of Edward and Audrey Ovenden of Ashford. Husband of J.E.V Ovenden of 4, Christchurch Road, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Perth Cemetery (China Wall). Grave reference I.L.12.

On the 12th July 1917 the 7th battalion moved to the Dickebusch Sector in Belgium from Doullens in France. The battalion went to the 2 Corps area and marched to Ouderdom a couple of miles west of Dickebusch. It remained here until 21st March 1917. It appears that Franklin must have been killed somewhere near to Dickebusch.

POST I.F

Bombardier 28320 Ivor Francis POST. 5th Mountain Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA). Died Wednesday 10th March 1915 aged 25 years. Born Mersham. Resided Swamp Cottage, Kingsnorth. Son of Herbert and Frances Mary Post of 14 Hamilton Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent. Formerly (1901) Swamp Cottage, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent. Ivor has no known grave. His name appears on the Le Touret Memorial, Le Touret, France. Panel reference 1.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Swamp Cottage, Kingsnorth

Private Algernon Reginald POST. Grenadier Guards.
Private Leonard POST. Mechanical Transport, Army Service Corps.

The 1901 Census gives –
Swamp Cottage, Kingsnorth

Herbert	POST	41	Railway Labourer	Bonnington
Frances M		39		Woodchurch
Mabel May		14		Ruckinge
Leonard		12	Cattle Boy	Ruckinge
Ivor		11		Mersham
Ernest		10		Mersham
Algernon		6		Kingsnorth
Violet		1		Kingsnorth
Margaret		2 months		Kingsnorth

THURSTUN H.W

Private 675099 Herbert Wallace THURSTUN. 168th Battalion, Canadian Infantry (Western Ontario Regiment). Formerly (3 years) 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. Died 3rd May 1917 aged 31 years. Born 27th August 1885 at Mersham, Kent. Son of Whitewick Ovenden and Mary Jane Thurston of Mersham, Ashford, Kent. Brother of Mr Thurston 26, Ashmead Road, St John's, London. Herbert has no known grave. His name appears on the Vimy Memorial, France.

Before the outbreak of war Herbert was living at 598 Adelaide Street, Woodetook, Ontario, Canada.

Commemorated on page 339 of the Canadian Book of Remembrance.

WHEELER H.J

Staff Sergeant 45684 Henry James WHEELER DCM, MM. 56th Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps (R.A.M.C). Died 2nd November 1918 aged 34 years. Born Hythe. Enlisted Hythe. Son of James and Susannah J Wheeler of The Grange, Mersham, Kent. Buried Maurois Communal Cemetery, France. Grave reference 59.

His name appears nearby on the Hythe civic war memorial.

This man was highly decorated for bravery. He held both the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) and the Military Medal (MM).

WOOD H

Private G/9388 Harry WOOD. 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Attached to the 2nd Battalion, Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment). Died Friday 1st September 1916 aged 31 years. Born Mersham circa 1886. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Aldington Frith. Son of Sarah Wood of Aldington Frith, Ashford, Kent. Harry has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 5D.

It is recorded that before the outbreak of war Harry was working locally as a farm labourer. He was not married. He enlisted on 11th December 1915 at Ashford.

Harry was apparently serving with the 2nd Battalion of the Queen's when he was killed. This battalion was on The Somme in France the day that Harry died. On 31st August 1916 the 2nd battalion was at Delville Wood in trenches. The battalion was in action for a period of 3 days during which time it took over Folly, Devil, Diagonal and Angle trench systems. On the 3rd September it withdrew to Montauban Alley. It appears that Harry was killed at or near Devil Wood on The Somme in France.

The 1st battalion The Buffs Harry's parent regiment was in Belgium at the time Harry was killed.



Mersham

Mersham Wesleyan Church and School

The chapel is now a private residence. The present owners refurbished the chapel a number of years ago and in the course of doing so, rescued the two large oak war memorials. Both memorials commemorate members of the chapel's congregation who served in the Great War. Both oak plaques were lovingly renovated at the owners cost by craftsman in London. Both memorials are now displayed in this now private residence. The present occupiers have very kindly ensured that these important historic monuments have survived.

The first plaque is to the men who served and the second plaque is of the men who served and died in doing so.

The Great War 1914 – 1919

SERVED

AUSTEN F
BATES E
BATES A
BATES B
BARLING S
BARLING J
BARLING F
BLACKMAN F
BURCH F
BURCH T
CLARK W
CRUNDEN T
CRUNDEN W
HORTON J.W
HORTON J.G
HORTON P
HARRIS F
HARRIS J
HARRIS A
LANCASTER P
LANCASTER T
MARTIN C
NEAME W
PLAYFORD H
PLAYFORD B
PLAYFORD J
PLAYFORD T
STONE S
SWAFFER G

SWAFFER H
SWAFFER P
STICKLES P
WOOLLEY F
WINDER C
WANSTALL J
WANSTALL G
WANSTALL T
WANSTALL H
WOODGATE H
WOOD J

SERVED AND DIED

COGGER J

Private 24324 John COGGER. 32nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (London Regiment). Died Friday 15th September 1916 aged 21 years. Born Bilsington. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Aldington Frith. Son of Fred and Laura Cogger of Court Lodge Cottage, Bonnington, Kent. John has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 8C,9A,16A.

LANCASTER J

Private G/9630 John LANCASTER. 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Wednesday 6th September 1916 aged 33 years. Born Aldington. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Aldington. Son of Mr H. Lancaster of Rock Cottage, Aldington, Ashford, Kent. John has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 5D.

PLAYFORD G

Stoker 1st Class K/21054 William George PLAYFORD. H,M Submarine "C34". Royal Navy (RN). Died Saturday 21st July 1917 aged 24 years. Son of Janan Playford of Aldington, Kent. William has no known grave. His name appears on the Chatham Naval Memorial, Chatham, Kent. Panel reference 24.



STICKELLS T.G (brother)

Private G/8915 Thomas George STICKELLS. 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 15th September 1916 aged 25 years. Born Ruckinge 1891. Son of Harry Robert and Harriet Stickells of 98 Church Road/ 2 May Cottages, Sevington, Ashford. Formerly Waterbrook Cottage, Sevington. Thomas has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 5D.

Before the outbreak of war Thomas was employed by Mr D Swaffer of Kingsnorth near Ashford.

The Ashford Absentee Voters List for 1918 gives –

Waterbrook Cottage, Sevington, Ashford

Private 2007712 Percy Arthur STICKELLS. 4th Reserve Battalion, Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment).

The day that Thomas was killed his battalion the 1st Buffs was in action all day. The battalion was between Morval and Le Sars holding frontline trenches on the Thiepval Ridge. The objective that day was the Quadrilateral a heavily fortified enemy redoubt on the edge of Bouteaux Wood. The Buffs went forward with the Bedford's but the attack was bought to a standstill by extremely heavy machine gun fire. On the 16th September the battalion withdrew to trenches running south east of Guillemont.

The two Stickells brothers were both remarkably killed in the SAME unit in the SAME place on the SAME day!



STICKELLS H.W (brother)

Railway
Dover Marine

Private G/9125 Harry William STICKELLS. 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Friday 15th September 1916 aged 23 years. Born Ruckinge in 1899. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Sevington. Son of Harry Robert and Harriet Stickells of 98 Church Road/ 2 May Cottages, Sevington, Ashford. Formerly Waterbrook Cottage, Sevington. Harry has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 5D.

Harry's name appears on the Mersham Wesleyan Chapel War Memorial Plaque located in what is now a private residence in Frith Road, Aldington. Apparently, the location of the former chapel comes under the administrative parish of Mersham.

Prior to the war Harry worked for the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company in the Ashford Railway Works. His name appears on the Ashford Railway Works Rolls of Honour and the Dover Marine Railway War Memorial.

BATES G

Private 2130682 George S.P. BATES. 1st Canadian Infantry (Manitober Regiment). Died of an illness on Wednesday 13th November 1918 aged 32 years. Son of William John and Elizabeth Bates of 3 The Poplars, Kenardington, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Brandon Cemetery, Manitoba, Canada. Grave reference L.12.B.H.S.16.

WOOD H

Private G/9388 Harry WOOD. 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Attached to the 2nd Battalion, Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment). Died Friday 1st September 1916 aged 31 years. Born Mersham circa 1886. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Aldington Frith. Son of Sarah Wood of Aldington Frith, Aldington, Ashford, Kent. Harry has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 5D.



WOODGATE E

Corporal MCG/101 Ernest John WOODGATE. Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. Eastern Ontario Regiment. Died 15th September 1916 aged 28 years. Born Bilsington in 1889. Resided Ruckinge. Son of Mr S Woodgate of "Hurst Hill Cottage", Hothfield, Ashford, Kent. Ernest has no known grave. His name appears on the Vimy Memorial, France.

WANSTALL J

The only J WANSTALL I could trace was this man but he has no obvious local connection -

Corporal L/14474 Joseph Thomas WANSTALL. D Battery, 159th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery (RFA). Died 23rd July 1916. Born Bow, London. Enlisted Poplar, East London. Buried Peronne Road Cemetery, Peronne, Somme, France. Grave reference – IV.D.28.