

The Extraordinary and the Everyday

A Year in the Life of a Rural Community, 1914-5

Newsletter No. 7: June 2015 Special Edition



Private Cooper's name is inscribed on stone D in Bay 5 of the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium which bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known. The memorial, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield with sculpture by Sir William Reid-Dick, was unveiled by Lord Plumer on 24 July 1927.



Private Cooper is also commemorated on Avon Dassett's War memorial. He was the first of the three village men to die in the First World War.

Death of Private Herbert Bernard Cooper

Private Herbert Bernard Cooper of The Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line, 18th (Queen Mary's Own Royal) Hussars was Killed in Action by shell fire at Wieltje on 13th May 1915, aged 25. He was the second son of George and Emma Cooper of Avon Dassett. Below is an extract from the memoirs of Brigadier General Charles Burnett, C.B., C.M.G. for 13th May 1915.

At 3.30 on the morning of the 13th, a day few of us will ever forget, just as it was beginning to get light, the enemy opened an intensely heavy shell-fire on the trenches held by the Brigade, that portion occupied by the 18th Hussars being particularly battered. The cross-fire from heavy howitzers was annihilating, and the bombardment was of such intensity that a black pall hung over the trenches occupied by the Regiment for long periods from 3.30 a.m. till 10.30 a.m., when intermittent shelling continued till dark. The noise was deafening and the place a veritable inferno. An inspection of the trenches in the late afternoon disclosed the fact that, commencing with the left of the 9th Lancers and right through the 18th Hussars lines the parapets had, in many places, been completely demolished, that it was impossible to distinguish where the original line ran, and only here and there were found little lengths of trenches remaining. Behind these were grouped, however, the heroic remnants of the squadrons, about a hundred men out of the three hundred who had occupied them the night before.

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LOCAL NEWS AND WAR NEWS

May 7th: Kineton Tennis Club decided to continue for the season but no matches will be played.

May 7th- A German U-boat torpedoed the passenger ship Lusitania with a loss of 1,201 lives.

May 8th: Henry Sealey married Mildred Mary Fisher at St Joseph's Church.

May 12th: The Banbury Depot for the National Egg Collection received eggs for the Military Hospitals at Bristol and Oxford from (among others) Fenny Compton 173; Avon Dassett 117; Arlescote 14; Warmington 200.

May 13th: Private Herbert Bernard Cooper Killed in Action.

May 14th: Mr. R. H. A. Holbech moved in to Warmington Rectory.

May 26th: The ancient custom of holding an outdoor procession on Rogation days was revived in Farnborough.

May 31st- The first aerial bombing of London by German Zeppelins killed 28 people.

End of Project Exhibition

Avon Dassett Local History Group will celebrate the completion of this year long project at the Dassett Country Show on Saturday 1st August 2015



LOTTERY FUNDED



PRIVATE GEORGE ALBERT HIRONS

George Albert Hirons was the grandfather of Audrey Butler. George was a soldier in the 11th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He died of his wounds on 25th September 1917 and was buried in Godewaersvelde British Cemetery about 16 miles south-west of Ypres. George was the oldest son of Joseph and Sarah Hirons of Combrook, Warwickshire. He left a wife and young son. Sadly this was not the only tragedy that his parents suffered. Mr and Mrs Hirons lost their third son Frederick in March 1915, their second son Joseph Henry in April 1917 and their fourth son Alfred Ernest in April 1918.



*Private George Albert Hirons (Left)
In Memoriam card inscribed with the names of the four brothers (Below)*



If you would like to include a family member in the newsletter please let Jill or Sarah know.