

The Extraordinary and the Everyday

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

Newsletter No. 8 August 2015



Private Bloxham is buried in Larchwood Cemetery, Ypres. The cemetery is the resting place of many of the men who fought and died defending the nearby Hill 60.

His commanding officer wrote to his widow: "Your husband was killed on 21st September while attending to a comrade's wounds" and to his mother: "He was killed doing his duty as a stretcher-bearer, and my company has to mourn the loss of another fine fellow. Your son was a favourite in the company and the absence of his genial presence has been felt by all his comrades."



The Victory Medal and the British War Medal

Death of Ernest Edward Bloxham

Private Bloxham was the second man of Avon Dasset to die in the war. Below is his entry in the 'County of Warwickshire Roll of Honour 1914-2005'

Bloxham Ernest Edward 17779 Private 10th (service) Battalion the Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (Kent County) 123 Brigade, 41 Division. Killed in Action at Tower Hamlets Ridge during the battle of the Menin Road on Friday 21st September 1917 aged 33. The son of George and Ann Bloxham, Hill View, Avon Dasset. Husband of Ethel Lacey Bloxham nee Wood, 1 Hamlet Cottages, Tudsley Road, Belling, Paddock Wood, Kent. He was born in Avon Dasset on 10th May 1874 and was educated there. He was married at Peckham, London on 7th June 1912 and had two sons, Allan Raymond born Thursday 27th November 1913 and Maurice Gordon born Wednesday 27th September 1916. He enlisted in Paddock Wood on Monday 19th June 1916 and took part in the attack on Hill 60. He formally served as 3218 Royal Fusiliers. He was wounded on Thursday 7th June 1917 and when he re-joined his regiment he became a stretcher bearer. He was killed in action whilst attending to a wounded comrade. Buried in Larchwood (Railway Cutting) Cemetery, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. British War Medal, Victory Medal.

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THE VILLAGE MEN ENLIST

As the war progressed into its second year more of Avon Dassett's young men enlisted. Many of their service records were destroyed in WWII. Below are the men we have found some records for:

Walter George Cooper: groom, aged 22 enlisted 25th August 1914, Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Thomas Bernard Checkley: groom, aged 21, enlisted 3rd November 1915, Royal Regiment of Artillery.

Henry Sealey: chauffeur, aged 23, enlisted in the field 27th November 1915 from the British Red Cross Society to the Army Service Corps as an ambulance driver.

Clarence Golder: groom/gardener, aged 31, enlisted 2nd December 1915 Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Lewis William Spike: labourer, aged 29, enlisted 11th December 1915, Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Reverend Neville Inge: enlisted 13th April 1916, aged 44, British Red Cross Society and Order of St John.



The SS Wayfarer, a merchant ship carrying over 750 horses and 200 men from the Warwickshire Yeomanry that was hit by a German torpedo off the Scilly Isles in April 1915



LOTTERY FUNDED



CAPTAIN THOMAS JOSEPH WELD MC.

Thomas Weld was the last man of Avon Dassett to die in the war. Thomas was born at Orchard Lodge, and today there are still residents who share a family connection. Below is Thomas's mention in the Warwickshire Roll of Honour.

Weld MC and Bar Thomas Joseph Wilfred, 1st Lovat Scouts. Died in Nairobi Hospital of Pneumonia following gunshot wounds on Monday 18th November 1918 aged 25. The eldest son of Wilfred Joseph Weld, a land proprietor and Jessie Weld 'Orchard Lodge', Avon Dassett. He was born on 10th March 1893. He was educated at Wimbledon College and had emigrated to South Africa where he was employed as a farmer. He enlisted on 1st December 1914. He was awarded the Military Cross (London Gazette Saturday 27th July 1918) in December 1917 and a bar to that medal in July 1918. He received gunshot wounds to his left arm and was taken to Nairobi Hospital. At the time of his death he was attached to the 2nd Kings African Rifles. Buried in Nairobi Cemetery, Kenya. MC and Bar, British War Medal, Victory Medal.



There is a tablet in St Joseph's Catholic Church, Avon Dassett dedicated to Thomas and he is also commemorated on the East Lulworth, Dorset and Fort William, Scotland, War Memorials.

