

BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

# HISTORY IN BEDFORDSHIRE

VOLUME 7, NO 12, AUTUMN 2017

[www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk](http://www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk)

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*History in Bedfordshire* is published by the  
BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

[www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk](http://www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk)

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ISSN 0968–9761

## Notes and news

**New book.** *Dorothy Clotilda Shuttleworth, Her life & Times at Old Warden*, written by her granddaughter, Charlotte, shares not just an insight into Dorothy's personal life, but also the story of her role in shaping Old Warden as we know it today. Dorothy Clotilda Shuttleworth was a woman of vision and strength, surviving widowhood and the tragic loss of her beloved son, a passionate racing driver and aviator killed in 1940 at the age of 31. Dorothy was born during the late Victorian era and was actively involved in Edwardian society. For over three-quarters of a century her life centred round Old Warden. She shaped the future of Shuttleworth as the educational Trust it is today, preserving the history and heritage of automation, agriculture, and of course early aviation. Written by her granddaughter, this is the personal story of her life and challenges, and on the role she played at the heart of the Shuttleworth family and the Old Warden estate. For more information contact:

kayleigh.fitzgerald @shuttleworth.org

**Portrait of Dorothy Lady Monoux (1684–1758).** Richard Morris, an historian based in Essex, has contacted us about the provenance of a portrait of Dorothy, Lady Monoux, who was a daughter of William Harvey (1663–1731) of Rolls Park, Chigwell, Essex. Richard is the author of the history of the Harvey family, *Merchants, Medicine and Trafalgar*, published in 2007. Famous members of the family were the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, William Harvey (1578–1657), and Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey (1758–1830), commander of the *Temeraire* at Trafalgar.



Lady Dorothy married Sir Phillip Monoux (3rd baronet) of Wootton in Bedfordshire in May 1701. He died in November 1707, and was buried in the church at Wootton. Dorothy died in probably May 1758, and was also buried in the church at Wootton. They had children but the Harvey genealogy of 1889 gives no details. The portrait of Dorothy, Lady Monoux, painted when she was about 21, has been attributed to the circle of Kneller and is now in the ownership of Chelmsford City Council and on display in Hylands House. It was acquired by the Council in 1962 from a Mr D H S Standish, but Richard knows nothing more of its provenance and would like to know anything of the history of the Monoux family and their descendants from Sir Phillip and Lady Dorothy, and particularly of the history of the portrait and whether it was painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723) or his circle. Please contact the Editor if you can help. \_\_\_\_\_

# From ploughboy to missionary: The life of Arthur Hills – Part 2

*[Langford & District History Society received Arthur's memoir from Amanda Hills Podany, Arthur's descendant. In the last issue we printed Amanda's overview followed by the first part of Arthur's memoir. Amanda used Langford's books in her research found from the Langford Society's website. This reinforces the importance of local research and publication, and websites, not only for ourselves but for the descendants of emigrés. Editor.]*

## Farm work and food



*(Above: Langford High Street in 1900.<sup>5</sup>)*

Owing to the weakening of the straw plait industry and the inability of my mother to help in this, through her constant ill-health, my father became a farm labourer and received the incredible sum of two shillings a day in the winter and two shillings and two pence in the summer. I have known weeks, in wet weather, when his wage was not more than six shillings.

What a hope for food for a family of six!<sup>6</sup> There were onions about when no money could be found for suet to make a pudding. This was eaten with brown sugar. Meat was scarce, and rarely came our way, but my mother had great skill in coaxing vegetables to do duty for this luxury – and very nice, too. Potatoes cut into small squares, with a piece of pickled pork the size of a walnut, or less, placed in the centre, with a thick crust of dough, made an excellent dumpling. Many men took a dumpling of this sort into the fields and ate half for breakfast and the other half for dinner. I got so used to onions that when I was hungry and nothing else was available I would often go into a field and enjoy myself, much as a boy does eating apples in an orchard. Dinner sometimes consisted of a piece of hard bread put into the oven to soften, and some vegetables; and for tea some bread and sugar, moistened with a few drops of tea.

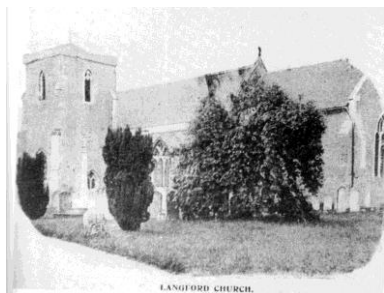
On one occasion, when no dinner was available, my mother asked me to tell her the number of trees there were in the fields at the back of our house, and kept asking me questions till it was time for her to say, 'Arthur, it's time you started for school'. The schoolmaster was, I thought, very kind, because he allowed me to do work in the garden out of school hours (and sometimes in) in return for a meal.

## Clothes and games

In the matter of clothing it is certainly true to say that the men and women who went to church or chapel were the best dressed. Sunday clothes were a precious possession and they were worn with great care, put away in the 'Clothes Box' every Monday morning till the next Sunday. I admired my grandfather's Sunday boots, and told him so. He explained in detail how he looked after them, and that he bought them after a good harvest 20 years before. He never used them except to walk to chapel on a Sunday afternoon, and only then if the weather was fine.

There was no provision whatever for recreation, and no building for this purpose, either for children or grown-ups. There was, however, an occasional function at the church and chapel, but these were rarely attended by the outsiders. Two, and perhaps three families beside the Vicar, had a pianoforte. These we regarded as very superior people. One of these families lived near our house, and I often earned a slice of cake by turning the mangle there.

## Joining the church choir



When us boys were at our games, such as 'Leap Frog, etc, on a dark winter's night, I heard this piano going. I found myself crouching near the window to listen. I was caught doing this one night when, to my surprise, I was invited inside. The result of this was that I was taught to sing a song, which, a little later, I was invited to sing at a village concert arranged by the Vicar. This was the beginning of things for me, for the lady who

taught me to sing this song was the church organist. I was soon in the church choir, and liked it. (*Above left: Langford Church.*<sup>7</sup>)



When the usual church festivals came along another boy and myself headed the procession in a surplice from the belfry to the chancel, singing as we went down the aisle. We felt the dignity of it all, and life had a new meaning. Folks now seemed kind to me, and actually called me Arthur instead of the usual nickname. (*Left: Rev Ewbank, vicar in Langford from 1868-1933.*<sup>8</sup>)

There were dangers, however, in being a little songster, for I was once taken to a public-house where men had been drinking heavily and had become boisterous, and they at once lifted me on the table to sing. I sang 'I Wish I Was I Fish With A Great Long Tail',<sup>9</sup> 'Home Sweet Home', etc, after

which I had to sip beer out of so many pots that I had difficulty in reaching home, and actually had to have some help to do so.

### **Starting work at Hill Farm**

My school days came to an end on my 12th birthday<sup>10</sup>; for although school-leaving age was 14, I had qualified to leave at 12, having passed the 'Third Standard', my education was complete.<sup>11</sup> I started work as soon as I left school, at Hill Farm,<sup>12</sup> about a mile from home, where I had helped among the horses during harvest time on previous occasions, and my wage was three shillings a week.

The hours were from six in the morning to half past five, both winter and summer; but at harvest time we started much before six, and worked till dark. Twelve heavy horses were usually kept, three light ones, and several young colts being broken in, or too young for this. There was quite a large number of cows and fat-stock, a bull, pigs in abundance. Many dogs were kept for coursing, shooting and rat-catching. It was considered quite a large farm.

For the first year or so I was a general help among this livestock and the three light horses. These horses were often used for work with light carts, and for greyhound coursing, while one of them actually did some hunting.

I was sometimes sent to the village and elsewhere on the back of one of them, but whenever I was on a job of this sort my mother, if she knew about it, would go upstairs at once to see if my bed was in order, for she fully expected that one day I should be brought home with broken bones.

To reach the farm, a mile away from our house by six in the morning in the winter months was no joke, for a part of the way was by a narrow footpath across fields, and it was sometimes ploughed through. I lost my way here one frosty and very foggy morning. When I yelled out in case someone might hear me, an answer came from a man in the same predicament, but when I hurried in the direction from which I thought the voice had come, I found myself in a ditch in which was some water, and cut my face on the stumps of a hawthorn hedge which had just been cut down. I walked about as afraid as boys can be, and eventually crossed the railway line onto a better path. I knew that the hedge had damaged my face somewhat because it smarted a great deal, but did not know its colour till I was told, when I presented myself at the place of assembly at the farm where a wood fire was burning.

### **Employment as a plough-boy, 1882**

I must confess to some pride when I was installed as a real plough-boy, and attached to a ploughman with a team of big and lively horses. I felt quite important when, with a long whip in my hand, I walked up and down the field beside three horses in tandem, and had control of the first and second. When

not at plough I often had charge of a horse and cart conveying loads between the fields and the farm. When I did this my age was just over 13 years. I usually enjoyed my job immensely. There were some very awkward and unpleasant experiences, but in some of these even the horses seemed very kind and sympathetic. When the weather was very cold one of these would allow me to stand with my back to his front legs, and my knee to his neck to get warm. We carried our ration of tea for the day in a tin can. This, at times, got frozen and when this was the case, and there were no sticks about to make a fire, we hung it across the horse's back to thaw before we could get a drink.

My most unpleasant ploughing experience was when we were 'Ploughing In' some mustard which was grown as manure for the land. This mustard was more than a foot high, and there had been some rain. It was November, and my boots were none too good. As we trudged up and down the field through this long mustard my legs and feet were sodden with wet, and the water oozed out of my boots at each step.

Farm lads are often looked upon as a very hardy lot but it was, surely, a case of 'the survival of the fittest'. A study of the mortality among children about that time might explain. We were a cheerful lot of boys who had to do with the horses, often up to our pranks, and all coveted the honour of driving for the head horse-keeper because he had the pick of these spirited home-bred animals. They were *very* lively at times, and could be dangerous. The 'Breaking-in' or training of these young horses was very interesting and quite exciting. To be the first to get on the back of one of these required nerve, for it was not without risk, and it was necessary to ride with care for some months.

Many of these animals were sold to brewers and millers for heavy work in their drays and wagons. I became very fond of horses, and one of the smaller sort who attempted to bite anyone within reach, allowed me to harness him in the dark, even when I had to feel about for his head.

### **A journey to Southill, 1883**

It now seems incredible that a boy, about his 14th birthday, and none too big at that, should be sent on a considerable journey in charge of an almost oversize and sprightly young mare, four years old, while she had a foal but partly weaned. This was my case when I had to take a full load of beans to Southill, a village about six miles away.

The outward journey was quite good, and I stopped at an inn – 'The Marquis of Granby',<sup>13</sup> like a man, to give my mare a little rest and some food. I had some refreshment here, too, and felt quite important. Two men came in while I was there, and I was astounded to hear one of them call out to the landlady: 'A couple of Sea Pheasants please, missus', and wondered that there should be such

creatures. I watched with immense curiosity to see them, but when they appeared I found them to be two large bloaters.<sup>14</sup>

I reached my destination quite safely and was soon unloaded.

The fun began as soon as we started for home. My steed was in a mighty hurry to get back to her offspring and, to her, nothing else seemed to matter. She seemed a giant to control. When we passed cottages where the washing was hanging on the hedge to dry, or when we passed anything unusual on the road, or passed through a village, she snorted and jumped so much that although I was lucky to have had a second bit put in her mouth and had the curb chain well arranged, it was with much effort that I persuaded her to keep from the ditch or colliding with other things. She seemed to have gone mad. To stop her was impossible. Fortunately for me, when we reached the road leading to the farm my predicament was seen by some men at work in a field who came to the rescue. What a relief!

I had no need of the cinema for thrills and excitement, for some of us had these most days.

### **The harvest**

Although the harvest days were long ones – about 4 am till dark – and most of us were dead tired when night came, there was, also, much fun, and we enjoyed it all. There were relays of three horses for the reaping machine, and us boys vied with each other as to who would ride the leading horse, although there was much soreness of legs through the constant rubbing against the chain attached to this leading horse. The carting of the corn, too, was an exciting time for us; for we felt very important to be alone with a big horse, and a big load driving through field after field, and along bad farm roads to our rick-yard.

Beer was much in evidence, and there were three kinds: The first brew was for the Master. The second was for the men. The third – ‘small beer’ – was for anybody, and the boys were allowed to help themselves.

The boy felt himself lucky if he were taking the empty cart to the harvest field for a load when it was ‘beer time’, for we were sure of a ringing cheer from the loaders. The containers were miniature barrels. We did not use the usual long reins but managed the horses from the ‘Copsis’ – an extension of the cart over the horse’s back – and sitting on this, with the beer beside us, would sing out to the top of our voices, all the way to the harvest field, ‘Bo-o-t-l-e O, B-t-l-e O!’ This seemed a great time to us, and we enjoyed the fun.

Which boy should bring home the last load was a great question, and there was much speculation amongst us. The last load – if the men could so arrange it – was usually a very small one, and in this case the harvesters would ride, and, waving their pitch-forks high in the air would yell: ‘Harvest ho-ome, Harvest ho-

me'.<sup>15</sup> When we reached the rick-yard there would be beer in plenty, and we would all sing ourselves hoarse, 'Harvest ho-ome'.

The real 'Harvest Home' celebration followed on the appointed day, for which arrangements had been made, at Busby's Inn, Biggleswade.<sup>16</sup> There was supper, beer, singing and the usual merriment. Boys would have to smoke a cigar. I well remember doing this, and the unpleasant consequences. Beer was the chief thing, however, and both lads and men were often degraded by this harvest home.

At the time of my first 'Harvest Home', I had never been in a railway train and felt a little ashamed of this when other boys who were a bit older boasted that they had done so. To get level with these boys, two of us walked to Arlesey station, and rode to Biggleswade, passing through our village. We were both proud of this accomplishment.

I recall one or two harvest episodes with mixed feelings. There was a large 'Brewhouse' and a room over, at the farm house, and seven or eight of us boys who finished work last, and had to be up very early to help with the livestock, were allowed to use this room in which to sleep.

Seeing there was only one bed of the usual size, and that on the floor, all of us assayed that most nights the accommodation was none too good. I sometimes preferred to sleep on top of an old box mangle, rather than sleep four of us at each end of the bed. The scratches and kicks from each other's legs and feet were none too pleasant.

There were worse things, however, than kicks and scratches, for if we were not out of this bed when the head horsekeeper came to call us he would come up the ladder quietly with a suitable long stick in his hand, get hold of a corner of our coverlet, and use this stick rather freely.

On one occasion when I tried to avoid this experience I had a worse one. I meant to go home to sleep one night, but as I had to put two horses to bed and it would be dark to go home alone I avoided my work and crept into a shepherd's hut close by to hide away till the men went home so that I might have their company to the village. There were shouts for me to put my horses away, but I kept silent.

While waiting there I fell asleep, and did not wake till work had ceased and it was dark and all was quiet. It must have been past midnight. I was too frightened to move out of the hut. I heard the grunt of a pig, the bark of a dog, and knew foxes were about though I had not seen one. I trembled and cried with fright, but at length I fell asleep again.

The next thing I heard was my father making enquiries for me. I had not been home, and was not to be found at the farm. Not only had I had the worst night of my life, but was in trouble for not doing my work.



## Drinking



Beer was the great scourge of our village, and I grieve that I was encouraged to like it, and think it quite manly to drink as others did, and make fun of those few who did not. Part of the week's wage was usually mortgaged for beer by the men as it was for food by the women. (*Left: 'The Steamer', Langford.*<sup>17</sup>)

Very few men passed The Steamer public-house on pay night without going in to pay up and have drinks out of a paltry 12s, if there had been no wet and workless days, while the women waited, sometimes in vain, to buy food.<sup>18</sup> The only picture (*left*) on the wall of the tap-room of the public-house was significant.



## Moving to London, 1884

We were a family of nine – seven children.<sup>19</sup> What a handful for my mother, who although she was finely built, was hardly ever able to walk about like other women. My mother had a brother in London, and he had some pity for us. He knew what kind of a struggle we had to live on the meagre wage any of us were earning. Mine was three shillings and sixpence. Out of this had to come food, clothes and pocket money.

My uncle secured work for me in London. This was at Phippen's Nursery, Highgate, and he intended to make a gardener of me.<sup>20</sup> I left home on my 15th birthday – 1884 – and started work the next morning at 6 am.

*[The rest of the memoir pertains to Arthur's life in London and is omitted here.]*

## References

5. *Langford Then and Now* (Langford & District History Society, 2006).
6. At this time, around 1875 or 1876, the family consisted of parents Edward and Mary Hills, and children Lizzie, Arthur, Simeon, and Clara, as pictured on p 11 of the last issue (Summer 2017, No 7.11). This must have been before Minnie was born in 1877.
7. *Langford Through the Lens, Vol. I* (Langford & District History Society, 2014), 19.
8. *Ibid.*, 3.
9. Lyrics: <http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/songster/17-i-wish-i-was-a-fish.htm>
10. June 1881.
11. After 1878, the Third Standard was considered to be the end of education for girls, but boys usually finished the fifth standard: I Mahood, *Policing Gender, Class, and Families in Britain, 1800–1945*, p 65.

12. This farm still exists: Stanford, Langford, Biggleswade SG18 9JE.
13. There was a pub called the Marquis of Granby in Shillington, Bedfordshire, but it wasn't on the route to Southill from Langford:  
<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Shillington/TheMarquisOfGranbyPublicHouseShillington.aspx>
14. A type of cold-smoked herring.
15. Traditional English harvest festival. Arthur spells Harvest as 'Harvist' throughout the memoir, but it is corrected here.
16. I can find no record of a Busby's Inn in Biggleswade, though there was a prominent family named Busby in that town: [http://www.biggleswadehistory.org.uk/Roads/shortmead\\_street\\_east.htm](http://www.biggleswadehistory.org.uk/Roads/shortmead_street_east.htm)
17. *Langford Through the Lens*.
18. The Railway Steamer pub was 'the first house that greeted the traveller entering Langford along Edworth Road, over the railway bridge': *Langford Through the Lens, Vol. 1*, 69.
19. In 1884 the Hills children were Lizzie (17), Arthur (15), Simeon (13), Clara (9), Minnie (7), Joshua (4), Maurice (2), and Annie (newborn).
20. A web search shows that this was actually the Eli Phippen Rose Nursery in Highgate, mentioned in the *Law Times*, 16 April 1898, p 564. The uncle's name was Joshua Jordan, according to family memories.

## Appendix

### DEATH AND FUNERAL OF MR ARTHUR HILLS

From *Kilburn Times & Willesden Chronicle* 9 August 1940

We deeply regret to announce the death of Mr Arthur Hills, of 34 Liddell Gardens, Kensal Rise. We express on behalf of the great number of people who knew him, our sympathy with his wife and family.

Mr Hills was actively engaged until within a week or two of his death as the secretary of the Paddington Wharves Mission Thrift Society of Unwin Place, Paddington, which now has over 10,000 members, mainly resident in Paddington and NW suburbs of London.

He was born at Langford, Bedfordshire, on 1 June 1869, and commenced work on a farm at the age of 10 [*sic*], and four years later came to London. On reaching the age of 25 he became a London City Missionary. In this capacity he ministered not merely to the spiritual needs of the people, but also to their material needs. Moreover, he did not wait for people to come to him for help, but went out to find people in trouble, sought a method of securing for them the best possible aid, and looked after them until their troubles were cured.



Arthur and Lydia Hills c 1930

### Served with Expeditionary Force

From 1914 to 1916 he served in the Soldiers' Christian Association with the British Expeditionary Force in France. Since 1917 he has filled the position of secretary of the

above-mentioned Thrift Society. It is largely owing to his efforts that the Society has achieved the sound and prominent position it now holds. He was, for some time, Missioner at Bosworth Hall and Clifford's Inn, North Kensington, under the aegis of the Westbourne Park Baptist Church.

He always fostered mutual understanding between man and man. When engaged as a missionary to the London Coal Trade, he conceived the plan of bringing the large number of employees in social contact with the employers. By courtesy of the Bishop of London he organized combined sports and social fete days in the grounds of the Bishop's Palace, Fulham, which were attended by thousands of people.

### **A self-educated man**

Mr Hills' success in life was due to the fact that he educated himself. He was interested in, and encouraged others to be interested in, knowledge of all kinds, with a view to ensuring the maximum individual capacity for life as a useful Citizen of this world and in preparation for citizenship of the world to come. His interests and hobbies embraced many subjects, from philosophy and theology to horticulture and music, and he filled many positions: Leader of the London City Mission Male Voice Choir and Vice-Chairman of the LCC West London Education Committee, to name only two of them.

He was a man of great energy, devotion to duty, and kindness of heart. His great aim in life was to help anyone in trouble or difficulty.

As a man of many parts, never daunted by difficulty, who was renowned for an upright mind, a helping hand and a ready smile, he will live long in the memories of all who knew him.

### **The funeral**

He was laid to rest on Tuesday, in Highgate Cemetery, after a service in the cemetery church, attended by relatives and by many who have regarded it as a privilege to be his friend. There was a beautiful profusion of flowers which he had always loved. The things he considered important in life were expressed by the singing of his favourite hymn, 'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds'.

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## **The Fallen of Gravenhurst in the Great War**

As we are still commemorating the centenary of the First World War, I thought it would be appropriate to carry out some research of those casualties of the Great War who are mentioned on the War Memorial in the grounds of St Giles' Church.

I did a similar exercise for Lidlington where the pupils of the lower school created a 'stained glass window' depicting the loss of life, with soldiers, crosses and a ribbon banner with all the names of those men who sacrificed their lives for our freedom! (See HIB, Spring 2016, No 7.6.)

It has been very rewarding and enlightening and I set out below some of the facts surrounding the lives of most of the casualties.

I have used the order of the names on the Memorial which happens to be alphabetical.

**Evelyn Ernest Arnold Collisson: 2nd Lieutenant, A Company, 2nd Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment**

Evelyn was the son of Rev Thomas Collisson and his wife Florence. He was born at The Vicarage, Haynes, on 19 July 1893 and the 1901 census gave his age as seven, whilst the 1911 census gave his age as 17, a pupil and 'away at school'. He was educated at Boxgrove School, Guildford, and Aldenham School, Hertfordshire, where he excelled in Classics, History and Sports.

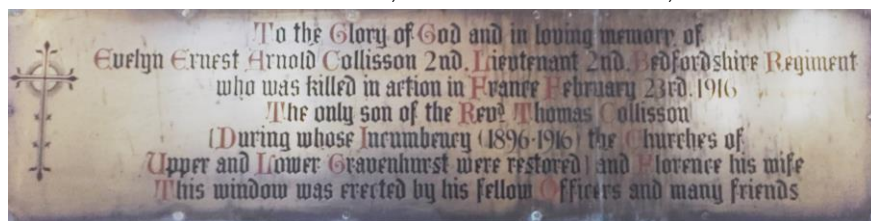


He declined a university place and joined a firm of merchant and foreign bankers, Antony Gibbs and Sons in Bishopsgate in the City from where he was sent to Chile.

Evelyn joined the Bedfordshire Training Depot at Ampthill on 13 February 1915 and joined the 2nd Battalion in the field on 24 November 1915. He died on 23 February 1916 in the Departement de le Somme, Picardie and was originally buried in Méricourt. In the 1920s he was moved and buried in the Cerisy-Gailly Military Cemetery, 10 kilometres from Albert. Some reports state he was buried in St Mary's Churchyard, Lower Gravenhurst, but there is no record in the Burial Register. A Memorial service was held in St Giles' Church, Upper Gravenhurst.

There is a beautiful stained glass window in the chancel of St Mary's Church (*left*) erected by his fellow officers and friends and there is an inscription on a brass plaque to the side. The wording on the plaque is as follows:

To the Glory of God and in loving memory of  
Evelyn Ernest Arnold Collisson 2nd Lieutenant 2nd Bedfordshire Regiment  
who was killed in action in France February 23rd 1916  
The only son of the Revd Thomas Collisson  
(during whose Incumbency (1896-1916) the Churches of  
Upper and Lower Gravenhurst were restored) and Florence his wife  
This window was erected by his fellow Officers and many friends



The memorial window was unveiled during a service at St Mary's Church, Lower Gravenhurst. On this occasion the church was filled to overflowing whilst the window was dedicated by the Duke of Bedford.

Local reports say that Evelyn did not die as a result of combat and the Battalion War Diary states 'he was killed by a sniper on a very quiet, cold, snowy day'!

There are no known descendants of Evelyn's family in Gravenhurst today.

**Wilfred Fisher: Private G/12611, 8th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)**

Wilfred was the son of Charles and Emily Fisher of Chapel Road. Chapel Road is now known as High Street and they are thought to have lived at what is now No 65. On the 1911 census, Charles was said to be a market gardener, but this is not what we know as a 'market gardener' today. No 65 has a large garden and Charles probably sold produce from his 'garden'.

On this census, Wilfred was aged 16 and his occupation given as 'Farm Labourer'. He was born in Gravenhurst, and the census indicated he was born in 1884.

He was killed in action on 14 June 1917 aged 23. He has no known grave and is 'Remembered with Honour' at the Menin Gate on the Ypres Memorial, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

There are no known descendants of Wilfred's family in Gravenhurst today.

**William Samuel Jordan: Gunner 101468, 262nd Siege Bty, Royal Garrison Artillery**

William was born in Gravenhurst and was the son of Samuel (a woodman) and Fanny Elizabeth Jordan of Campton Road, No 13 today. He was previously employed on the Wrest Park Estate as a Gamekeeper's Assistant but in May 1916 Mr Green his employer at the time, appealed for William to be exempted. Because of his failing health, he needed William's help in the business or it would close. In addition, William indicated that he financially supported his parents. The appeal was refused.

He died in Belgium on 6 July 1917 aged 28 and is 'Remembered with Honour' at the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery.

In the *Bedfordshire Times and Independent* on 29 June 1917 it was reported that William had been in hospital in France with a severe attack of measles but was now fit again. In the same publication, after William's death, it was reported an 'impressive memorial service [was] held in St Giles on Sunday, 15 July 1917 led by the Rev H Bayliss'.

Neighbours of No 13 have said that the front room was partitioned by a curtain and within this partitioning, William's bicycle and cap was kept by his mother as a memorial.

There are no known descendants of William's family in Gravenhurst today.

**Lionel Grant Miller: Private 7289, 2nd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment**

Lionel was born in Newton Blossomville, Bucks, c 1887 and on the 1911 census it was recorded he was 'home on a visit'. His age on this visit was given as 24. His mother was Elizabeth Miller and recorded as a 'Widow and Licensed Victualler' of the Green Dragon, Gravenhurst.

Lionel was much loved in the village and was a keen cricketer. He played in the village team and was captain. He also acted as MC for the dancing at village social evenings.

He joined the army in September 1914 and went to France the following February. His mother had not heard of him until she received a telegram on 3 April to say he had been killed.

He was killed in action on 12 March 1915. He has no known grave and is 'Remembered with Honour' at the Menin Gate, on the Ypres Memorial, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Mrs Miller was quoted as saying she 'felt her son had done his duty for King and Country and died a soldier's death'. There were no Easter decorations in church on account of the sad news.

There are no known descendants of Lionel's family in Gravenhurst today.

### **Charles Redman: Corporal 22791, 8th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment**

Charles was the son of Reuben and Emily Redman of Hillside Farm, Gravenhurst, and was born about 1893. He joined the Bedfordshire Regiment on 15 October 1915 along with Stephen Redman and Sidney O'Dell. He carried out his training at the Duke of Bedford's training camp at Ampthill. Sidney was refused due to poor eyesight. Charles and Stephen Redman have service numbers following numerically, although they served in different regiments of the Bedfordshires.

The 8th Bedfordshires were in trenches around Givenchy-lés-la-Bassée when Charles was wounded, thought to be on 4 December as 'other ranks' were wounded on that day. He died of wounds on 5 December as he is recorded as being buried alongside another 8th Battalion officer, who was killed on the same day. This information was recorded in the Battalion war diary where only officers were named – other ranks were not.

Charles is buried in Gorre Cemetery which indicates he was fairly seriously wounded as the Gorre Chateau was only four kilometres behind the front lines. If his wounds were less serious, it is likely he would have made it further back from the front lines. Gorre is also known as the British and Indian Cemetery, Pas de Calais.

News of his death reached Gravenhurst on 20 December 1916 and a memorial service was held in the Methodist Chapel on 7 January 1917. Mr T Parrish, Charles' former Sunday School teacher, led the service.

It is recorded that he was engaged to a Miss O'Dell – does anybody know of a Miss O'Dell and if she married after Charles's death? Was she the sister of Sidney O'Dell recorded above?

Towards the end of his life Reuben Redman lived at No 13 Campton Road.

Descendants of Charles' family are the families of Rex and Geoff Redman of Upper and Lower Gravenhurst, who are the sons of Frank Redman, Charles's younger brother. Charles's other brothers were Frederick, late of High Street and Stanley, late of Campton Road.

### **Stephen Theophilus Redman: Lance Corporal 22790, 4th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment**

On the 1911 census it was stated that Stephen was born in Gravenhurst, he was 14, indicating he was born in 1897. His employment was a 'Ploughboy'. On the same census return, his parents were named as Walter and Agatha Redman. Walter was given as a 'Roadman for the County Council'. Just before he joined up Stephen was employed by the County Council, working on the roads with his father.

Stephen joined the Bedfordshire Regiment at Ampthill at the same time as Charles Redman on 15 October 1915. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on 24 November 1916 (*Bedfordshire Times and Independent*).

He was killed in action on 8 February 1917 aged 20 years. He has no known grave and is commemorated and 'Remembered with Honour' at the Thiepval Memorial, Somme.

Descendants of Stephen's family living in Gravenhurst today are Stella Gray, née Redman (half-sister to Stephen), Mavis Mann, née Redman (daughter of George, Stephen's brother) and Michael Stanley (son of Lilian, née Smith, whose mother was Daisy, Stephen's sister).

### **Walter Redman: Private 4022, 2nd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment**

Walter was born in 1885 to George and Jane Redman. George was a 'Traction Engine Driver' and they lived at 7 Mount Pleasant, Gravenhurst, which is now thought to be commonly referred to as 'Red Row' in High Street.

On the 1911 census Walter was given as 26 years old and his employment was 'Labourer'. It is thought he joined the Militia in 1902, but this has not been proven. His mother received word that Walter had been missing since 14 February 1915 and it was reported in the *Bedfordshire Times and Independent* on 15 March 1915.

It was eventually reported that Walter was killed in action on 14 February 1915, aged 30 years. He was killed along with 43 other men from the 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment, during an assault to recapture a lost trench on the south side of the Ypres-Combines canal.

Walter has no known grave and is commemorated and 'Remembered with Honour' at the Menin Gate, on the Ypres Memorial, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

There are no known descendants of Walter as he was not known to have married, although on the 1911 census he had a sister Emma aged 10 years. There may well be descendants of Emma in Gravenhurst.

### **George Smith: Private 31553, 3rd Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment**

George was born in Gravenhurst in 1897 and the 1911 census return states he was 14 years old and lived with his mother, Emma Smith, a widow. His employment was given as a 'Farm Labourer'. Incidentally, his mother's maiden name was Redman!

He enlisted at Ampthill and joined the Bedfordshire Regiment, the records do not say when. It is recorded that George was in hospital on 2 March 1917 suffering from frozen feet. On 8 June 1917, and able to walk again, he was in hospital in Macclesfield and visited by his mother and sister.

George was killed at Felixstowe (Landguard), during a Zeppelin bombing raid, aged 20. It is recorded he died 'at home' but it is understood home meant England rather than on foreign soil. He was buried at St Mary's Churchyard on 27 July 1917. The entry in the burial register for St Mary's states he was: 'killed at Landguard during a German air raid on Sunday, 22nd July 1917 at 8.00 am'. His grave is located to the rear of St Mary's church and is marked with a Commonwealth War Graves stone.

There are no known descendants of George's family in Gravenhurst today.

### **Frederick William Turner: Gunner 150745, 6th TS [Transport and Supply] Royal Field Artillery**

Research on this casualty proved difficult as he was not recorded on any census return (1901 or 1911) for Gravenhurst. A 1911 census return for 6 and 8 Park Street, Luton, found a Frederick William Turner aged 23, a 'Tailor's Assistant', born at West Ham. The same census return listed another person in the house as Louisa Anne Eilbs (potentially a spelling mistake when digitalised). Marriage records for Amptill show that a Frederick William Turner married Annie L Eells in 1912, which could explain how he came to be 'from Gravenhurst' as Gravenhurst marriages would be shown in Amptill records.

Frederick was discharged from the Army on 1 June 1917, after he was thought to have been gassed! He died of tuberculosis, probably his gassing was a contributory factor, on 11 April 1918 and was buried in St Mary's Churchyard on 16 April. The entry in the burial register for St Mary's states he was 29 years old and 'formerly in the Army, accidentally "gassed", died of consumption (formerly of London, his native place)'.

Frederick does not have a Commonwealth War Graves headstone at his grave in St Mary's, either because his service did not meet the criteria for one or it was at the request of his family. However, as he died as a result of injuries received on active service, his name warranted a place on the War Memorial at Gravenhurst.

There is a document from the Ministry of Pensions dated 30 April 1918 stating Frederick was awarded a pension from 2 June 1917. It was sent to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where it could be assumed Frederick died.

There are no known descendants of Frederick's family in Gravenhurst today.

### **Herbert Stanley Womwell: Lance Corporal 203987, 9th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment**

Although Herbert is not recorded as a casualty on the War Memorial at Gravenhurst, I thought he was worth a mention. He was very active in the Sunday School and choir at Gravenhurst and his parents were William and Emma Jane Womwell who lived at Shillington Mill in Gravenhurst.

Although gassed, Herbert was reported to be in hospital in England on 8 March 1918 – Rev Bayliss asked for 'special prayers on Sunday'. He was killed in action in France on 8 October 1918 aged 21 and is buried in Brancourt-le-Grand Military Cemetery, Aisne, France.

His name is recorded on the War Memorial at Shillington and there are no known descendants of Herbert's family in the Gravenhurst area today.

If there is anybody reading this article who has any further information and photographs of these casualties or indeed, of any other member of the armed forces who served in the Great War, I would appreciate receiving it. Who knows there might be other articles to follow!

I would like to record my thanks to those who have assisted me in my research and in the compilation of this article: Matthew Redman of Lower Gravenhurst who provided me with his personal research and Andrew Penn of Lidlington who carried out initial research on my behalf.

This article first appeared in the *Gravenhurst Grapevine*, November 2016, and appears here by kind permission of the Editor of the *Grapevine*.  
COLIN WEST