

## **Beyton World War 1 Dead – commemorated in Beyton Church**

There are 12 names commemorated on the war memorial in Beyton Church to the fallen of the First World War. I have done some research and have prepared the following brief biographies of these servicemen of Beyton.

*Richard Martin, Brook Farm, Beyton.*

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### **Lance Corporal Arthur W Austin**

Arthur Austin served in the Eastern Ontario Regiment, part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. His parents were from Stone Cottage, The Planch in Thurston. He died, aged 23, on 15 April 1917, shortly after the bloody battle of Vimy Ridge, near Arras in France. This was one of the most famous battles in Canadian military history. The Canadians lost over 3,500 dead in 4 days fighting the Germans, but they succeeded in taking the ridge.

### **Private Hector C Borley**

Hector Borley served in the Suffolk Regiment. His parents were from Bridge Yard, Beyton. He died, aged 30, on 30 September 1915, shortly after an attack on German positions at Bellewaarde, Belgium. His division failed to break through enemy lines, due to the barbed wire and the emplaced machine guns and suffered nearly 1,700 casualties in one day.

### **Private Hugh Bridges**

Hugh Bridges served in the Suffolk Regiment in 1914 as a regular (ie professional) soldier. His parents, who predeceased him, were from Pakenham but Hugh lived in Beyton. He would have been sent to France in August 1914 with the British Expeditionary Force, who saw fierce action against the Germans at the battles of Mons, Le Cateau, the Marne and the Aisne. These actions by the BEF in August and September 1914 helped the French Army hold off the German attacks of 1914 and save France. Hugh was wounded in one of these actions and invalided back to Beyton, where he died, aged 35, on 28 December 1914.

### **Private Frederick Grimwade**

Fred Grimwade served in the Suffolk Regiment. His parents were from Hadleigh but he lived in Beyton. He died on 28 April 1917, during an attack by his division on the village of Arleux, France. This was part of the enormous Battle of Arras against the Germans where in 5 weeks of fighting, British and Commonwealth troops incurred

160,000 casualties without achieving a decisive breakthrough. Fred's regiment was subjected to heavy flanking artillery and machine gun fire and he died that day. Fred had previously fought and been wounded at the Battle of the Somme in 1916, where the British and French Armies had attacked the German lines but failed to achieve a breakthrough whilst incurring 650,000 casualties.

### **Sergeant Major Arthur W Hatton**

Arthur Hatton served in the Northamptonshire Regiment. Originally from Bedfordshire, Arthur and his wife lived on The Green, Beyton. He was killed in action on 22 August 1915, aged 42, at Gallipoli in Turkey. The Gallipoli Campaign had been devised by Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, as an amphibious invasion of Turkey, Germany's ally, to knock them out of the war. 500,000 British, French, Australian and New Zealand troops invaded Turkey's Gallipoli peninsula in the Aegean Sea, but after 9 months of fighting and fierce resistance by the Turkish Army, the Allies were forced to withdraw, having suffered 300,000 casualties in fighting and sickness. Arthur Hatton was probably killed at the Battle of Hill 60, the last major offensive of the Gallipoli campaign, alongside ANZAC troops. The Allies attempted to capture the hill to link their separated beachheads but were repulsed. This eventually forced their decision in the following January to evacuate in full.

### **Private Harry J Jackson**

Harry Jackson served in the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment. He was born in Thurston but lived in Beyton with his wife. He died of his wounds on 25 October 1918, only 17 days before the Armistice. His wounds were probably sustained in fighting around Lens in France in October 1918 when his division attacked the retreating German Army and drove them out of France and towards Germany. The British Army's campaign between August and November 1918 against the Germans in France, though little known today, was probably the most successful campaign in British military history.

### **Private Harry Last**

Harry Last served in the Suffolk Regiment. He was born and lived in Beyton, although his mother had moved to Newmarket by the time of his death. He was killed in action, aged 25, on 9 June 1915, probably near Ypres, Belgium. The Second Battle of Ypres had just concluded. The Germans had tried to penetrate British and French lines defending the town of Ypres, using poison gas for the very first time. After a month of fighting, the Allies held them off, but incurred some 80,000 casualties, twice as much as the Germans. Although there was no recorded battle on the day of Harry's death, just being in the front line trenches was very dangerous, subject to sniper fire, random artillery shells and gas attacks.

### **Private Percy Lock**

Percy Lock served in the Suffolk Regiment. He was born in Beyton and lived in Bury St Edmunds. He was killed in action on 19 April 1918 near Saint-Jans-Cappel on the French/ Belgian border between Ypres and Armentières during the Battle of the Lys. This was part of the German Army's Spring Offensive. Following the surrender of Russia, the Germans moved hundreds of thousands of troops to the Western Front and launched a series of enormous attacks on the British and French Armies in March and April 1918. The Battle of the Lys was one of those, with the Germans attempting to capture the British-held town of Ypres. Percy's division held onto their positions atop Kemmel Ridge, South West of Ypres, despite repeated German attacks. This played a crucial part in the successful defence of Ypres, which never fell. Both the Germans and the Allies suffered over 100,000 casualties each in this one battle alone.

### **Private Sidney M Melton (RAF)**

Sidney Melton joined the Royal Fusiliers (London Regiment) aged 19 in 1915 and was posted to France, where he was wounded twice, in December 1915 and in May 1917 (Battle of Arras, where Fred Grimwade was killed). Sometime after that he was transferred to the Balloon Section of the Royal Flying Corps, where he worked as a cook. Balloons were a vital part of military observation. In April 1918 the Royal Flying Corps was incorporated into the newly-formed Royal Air Force. Sidney must have been killed after this date but the record of his death has been lost.

### **Private William J Newport (Royal Marines)**

William Newport joined the Royal Marine Light Infantry. His widowed mother lived in Beyton. In those days Royal Marines often served on board ship, providing armed security and manning certain guns. William was killed, aged 32, on 15 October 1914, when his ship HMS Hawke, was torpedoed by a German submarine, U9. HMS Hawke was a 25 year-old out-of-date cruiser. Her squadron was serving in the North Sea and was protecting Canadian troop transports from attack by German warships. U9 had previously sunk three British cruisers only three weeks before and picked off Hawke when she was detached from her convoy. 524 officers and men were killed in the sinking, leaving only 70 survivors.

### **Sergeant Herbert Pallant**

Herbert Pallant is commemorated in Beyton Church, although he was born in Ipswich and his wife lived in Ipswich at the time of his death. His connection with Beyton, although unknown, must have been strong to warrant his name being on the list in Beyton Church. He served with the Lancashire Fusiliers as a regular soldier and was therefore sent to France and Belgium with the British Expeditionary Force

as soon as war broke out in August 1914. Like Hugh Bridges he would have seen action at all the key battles of the early months of the war. He was killed in action, aged 35, on 2 November 1914 at the Battle of Messines, in Belgium. The BEF successfully protected the Channel ports from German advances and shortly after this battle both the Allies and the Germans dug into entrenched positions, creating the line of trenches from the North Sea to the Swiss border that became the Western Front until 1918.

### **Private Harold Phillips**

Harold Phillips joined the Suffolk Regiment. He was born in Beyton and lived in Bury St Edmunds. He was killed in action on 18 June 1917 in actions following the Battle of Arras in France where Fred Grimwade was killed. Harold had previously been gassed in June 1915 during the Second Battle of Ypres, when Harry Last had been killed, and gassed again in March 1916 in fighting around Ypres.