

Great War Bulletin

No. 41...Newark...Monday 10 May 1915

Worshippers at war

THE NEWARK UNITED Methodist Church in Barnbygate is having a battle to be heard now a big Wesleyan Chapel has gone up next door. "We can't sing without hearing each other across the way," said a worshipper. "But that isn't the fault of the United Methodists. We were here years before the Wesleyans."

Worshippers aid War

DIOCESAN SUNDAY was a success for the Church of England. The Newark Deanery was asked to raise £155 19s for the Church Extension Fund. The Parish Church offertory amounted to £54 16s 9d, Christ Church £10 0s 5d and St Leonard's £7 17s 2d.

YET MORE HORROR

IT TRANSPIRED on Wednesday that five more Newark Territorials in the 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters were killed when a German mortar exploded in their trench on 24 April.

The victims were finally named as...

Private Richard East, 23, a moulder at Nicholson's, who lived with his widowed mother Fanny Louise at 21 Chatham Street.

Private Charles Ernest Red-mile, who also worked at "Nicky's" and lodged with his married sister, Mrs A Mathews at 42 Vernon Street.

Private William Godfrey, 22, who was a maltster's analyst in the offices of Bishop and Sons and lived with his parents, wheelwright William Henry and Annie Elizabeth at 41 Bowbridge Road.

Private Walter Hunt, only 20, an iron moulder in James Simpson and Company's Lowfield Works, who had written to his parents Martha and George, a joiner, at 31 Grove Street, New Balderton, only two days earlier saying he was "all right" and about to go into the trenches.

Private Bert Sketchley, of Alliance Street, who most

Mortar kills 5 local boys

likely had a premonition.

He had asked Lance-Corporal William Hurt only a few hours earlier: "If anything happens to me, will you make sure my sister hears it first so that she can break it gently to Mum, who is so ill."

His mother Charlotte is a widow in her 80s and lives in Brant Broughton.

Private 1859 Herbert Sketchley and his mates have eternal resting places a century later in the Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery.

Son killed – and shock kills his Mum

ONE OF Newark's best-known anglers, William Markwell, endured a double tragedy. He discovered his 20-year-old son was killed eight days ago – and the shock as good as killed his wife.

Colonel Fowler, Commandin Officer 8th Battalion Sherwood Foresters wrote to him:

"Lance-Corporal Ernest Markwell (No. 7387) was shot in the head on Friday while on sentry go and died at once. You have my deep sympathy in this sad loss but I can assure you that he died like a true Englishman should, fighting for his King and country with his face to the enemy. He was buried last night in the military cemetery by our Chaplain (the Reverend Hales). He has many comrades by him, as in life. I cannot say how sorry I am for you in this trouble."

Ernest, one of seven siblings of William and Mary Markwell of 24 Albion Street, had gone to Christ Church Day and Sunday Schools, was apprenticed to Wakes and Lamb as a turner, and played football for Farndon and Beacon Hill.

His grieving mum, who had been in delicate health for some time, suffered a fatal heart attack after hearing the news. William will survive to 1941 and reach the age of 77.

LANCE CORPORAL Fred Priestley, 19, was killed – on his wife's birthday.

The former Ransome's apprentice recently promoted to lead a group of 1st Battalion Sherwood Foresters despite his youth, was showing them how to throw a hand grenade when it exploded.

It is only five days since his wife Ellen, living in Egglestone's Yard with their son, received an affectionate letter from him saying the contents of a parcel she had sent him "went down a treat" and revealing he had already had a narrow escape:

"It was about 7 o'clock in the morning. The Germans were sending a few shells over. I went up and drew the bacon for my section and called my men to fetch their bit. They were standing each side of me when a shell dropped at the back of me, killing one man and

Father, 19, dies on wife's birthday

wounding three more. Thank God I escaped with only being buried with sandbags, which were soon removed."

Of her birthday: "I am sending you a card as this is all I can get, but I wish you many happy returns of the day and I pray God will keep you and my son from all harm and bring me safely home to you so that we can live happily together again."

Frederick Priestley is remembered in Loker Churchyard in Belgium. Ellen will remarry and move to Halifax.

Our Queenie survives Lusitania sinking

A GERMAN U-boat torpedoed the British liner *Lusitania* in the Atlantic, killing 1,201, 159 of them Americans. Amazingly, Miss Queenie Benjamin, 30-year-old daughter of mine host of the Cross Keys, London Road, Newark, was among the 761 passengers saved despite being a non-swimmer. She was returning

home after 15 months at Roland Park in the USA and described her nerve-wracking escape:

"I had just gone to my cabin when the boat was struck. I went to switch on the light but there was no response and I thought I had damaged something. I heard a terrible commotion and ran up on deck, and

went to the high side of the vessel. When the order was given we all got into the boats, and somebody yelled to cut the boats away.

"It was a good job this was not done or the wooden boats would have dropped 30 feet into the water and we would all have been smashed up. The vessel seemed to

be floating all right and we all got out of the lifeboat again.

"She would have been all right, but then another torpedo struck us.

"In a second I scrambled back into the lifeboat and others came on the top of me. In a very little while the vessel went down with the lifeboat

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Follow Newark's trauma in The Great War as it happened 100 years ago this week

INSIDE RANSOME'S FIRST BALL-BEARINGS SHOP



The hectic scene in the first Bearings Shop at Ransome's Stanley Works, which was revealed in last week's Bulletin to be working at full capacity to turn the wheels of a growing number of aircraft and 'other machines' powering the Great War effort.

RE tents flooded

ANOTHER 300 Territorials of the West Riding RE's arrived in Newark on Wednesday and were billeted in a field opposite the cricket ground on Kelham Road.

Their first night was somewhat trying. A severe storm of lightning and thunder swamped their tents.

Tallents wounded

NEWARK Town Clerk Mr Godfrey Tallents of Coddington received a wire on Tuesday to inform him that his 31-year-old son Captain Godfrey Edward Tallents was progressing satisfactorily after being wounded while serving with the Lancashire Fusiliers in the Dardanelles

Hero's brothers

DAYS after the announcement of Major Gervase Thorpe's DSO, his brother Captain J S Thorpe of the Scots Guards returned to the battlefield. A third brother, Major Harold Thorpe of the Sherwood Rangers was in Alexandria awaiting service in either Egypt or the Dardanelles.

'No' to motor man

JOHN MATHER, 47, son of the founder of Newark mechanical engineers Mather & Co, has had his request for a commission turned down! He served the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry and wished to join the Motor Transport Section of the Army Service Corps. But a War Office letter informed him that owing to the long list of candidates already registered, the waiting list is closed at present.

Lusitania escape

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fastened to it. *I went down in the lifeboat with somebody holding me down and I wondered if I should be drowned.*

"Yet presently I came to the top of the water. Chairs and trunks and all manner of things had been thrown overboard and I clung to something which kept me afloat. I could see a boat but between us were numerous things floating.

"I shouted to a man in the boat, *'Do you mind picking me up? I can't swim.'* He replied, *'Hold on, girlie, you're not dead yet!'* Eventually they got to me and pulled me into the boat. The American in the boat said, *'You are a brick. Can't you swim?'* I said I could not and he replied, *'You're more than lucky'* and I really I think I was." After two hours, they were picked up by a fishing smack and landed at Queenstown. It took her another three hours in darkness to find a hotel.

MUSTN'T GRUMBLE BUT THE BEER'S RUM

EGERTON HARSTON, of the ASC (Mechanical Transport), sent a letter to his parents – painter and decorator John and Jemima – at Abbeywood, London Road on Thursday:

"We get rather a little too much bully beef, but taking everything into consideration we can't grumble. What I should like most of all would be a nice glass of water. I have not had one since coming over here. The tea is doctored and the beer is very rum stuff. It only costs a penny a glass and is certainly not worth more. It is muddy in colour, non-alcoholic and very unsatisfactory. Light French wines are the only drinks that can be obtained at the cafes, all spirits and intoxicating liquors being prohibited. I haven't seen a single drunken soldier over here.

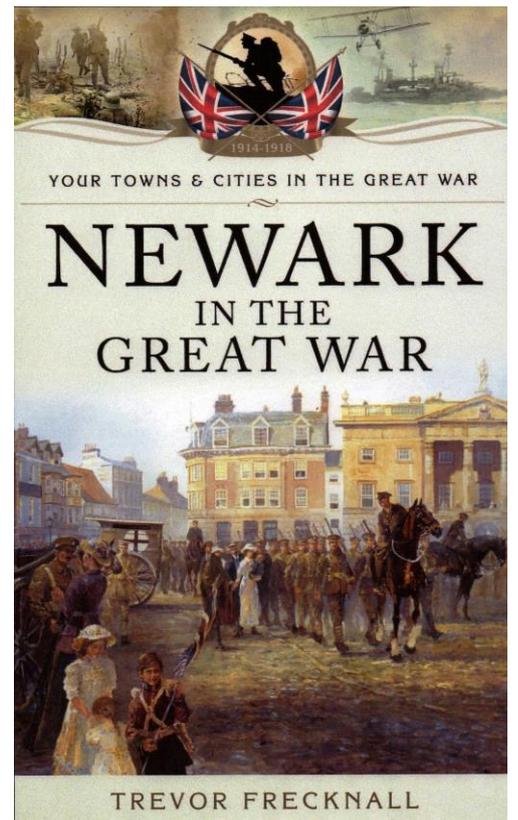
"The fighting round here has been very severe this past week, and it is very sickening to see the wounded being brought in. A lot of local men have been in the thick of it.

"Our work is very safe; we are too valuable to run any risks, and although we go extremely near the line, we are well protected by hills. Our only danger lies in aeroplane attacks, and perhaps in the case of a sudden retreat, the chances of which are both very remote.

"The firing tonight is exceptionally heavy. Some batteries of artillery are stationed less than three miles from here and the noise is terrific. They often keep me awake through the night, although I am getting more used to them now.

"What I want more than anything is cigarettes ... People in England seem to forget the MT. They wouldn't if they were to come over here where the fighting is taking place. I see quite a lot of Newark faces where we dump our loads ... It gives quite a home atmosphere to the place."

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