Private Harry Bunce

Harry's grandparents were William Allen Bunce, born in 1811 at Astley, Worcestershire and Ann Pickerel, born around 1821 in Claverley, Shropshire. On 12th April 1840 their marriage banns were read at Holy Cross church, Bobbington, Staffordshire and shortly after on 4th May they were married.[i]

Figure 1: Holy Cross church, Bobbington

The couple settled down to married life in Upper Whittimere, near the village of Bobbington on the South Staffordshire and Shropshire border where they lived and brought up their eight children Sarah (born 1841), Mary (born 1843), William Edward (born 1846), Anne (born 1849), Thomas (born 1851), Elizabeth (born 1856), Emma (born 1859) and lastly John (born 1862).[ii] William worked as an agricultural labourer and wagoner. When he retired, he moved to Halfpenny Green nearby where he remained till his death in 1890, aged seventy-nine.[iii]

Figure 2: St Edburgha Church, Yardley

On 18th October 1874, William's second eldest son, Thomas, (Harry's father) married Ann Elizabeth Eaton at Saint Edburgha Church, in the parish of Yardley, Worcestershire and settled down to live in Birchwood Road, Moseley, Birmingham. Thomas was a general labourer and Ann added to the family income by working as a laundress.[iv] The couple had eleven children of whom ten survived.[v] They were Annie Beatrice (born 1877), Ada Gertrude (born 1878), John Thomas (born 1880), William Thomas (born 1881), Frances Mary (born 1885), Eva May (born 1886), Lucy Evelyn (born 1888), Edith Kate (born 1890), Harry (born 1891) and Arthur Reginald (born 1896).[vi]

Harry was born on 27th September 1891. At the time of his birth the family lived at 47 Sadler Street in the Parish of Sparkhill, Birmingham.[vii] Little is known about his early life but by 1911, at the age of 19, he worked as a general labourer and lived at home with his parents at 87 Coldbath Road, Moseley from where they ran a coal merchants business.

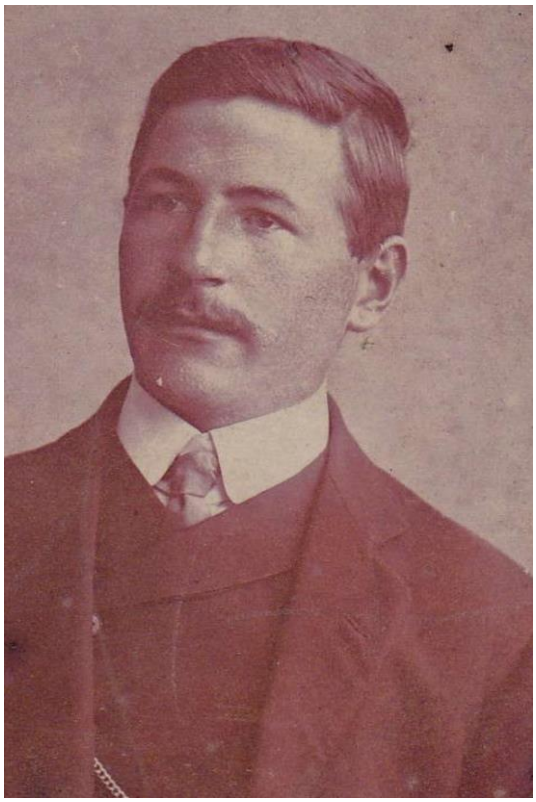


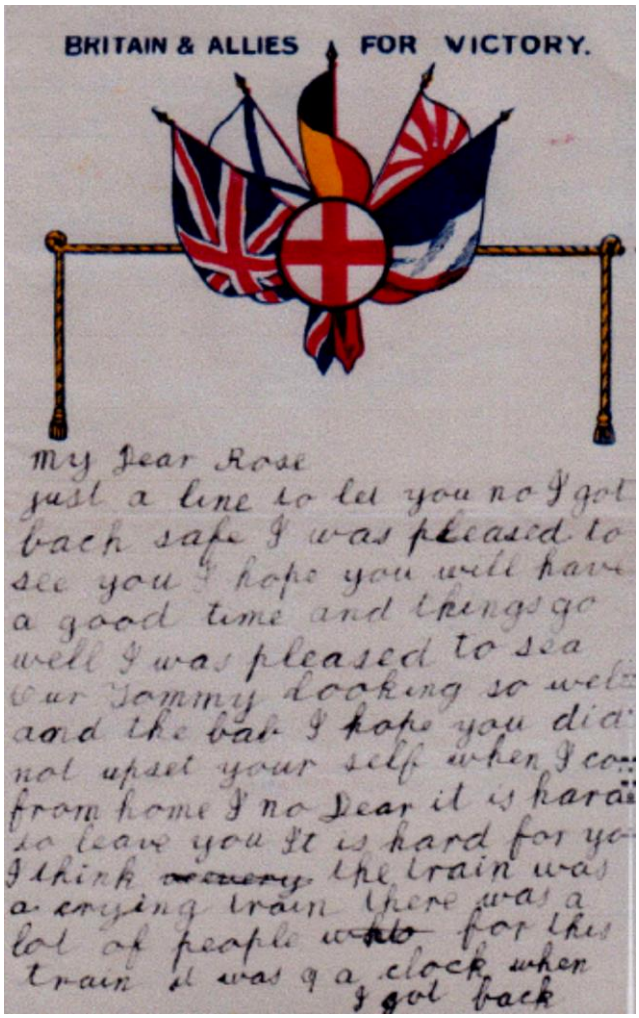
Figure 3: A young Harry Bunce

On 5th June 1911 not long after the census was taken, Harry married Rose Helena Paget and set up home at 80 Coldbath Road.[viii]

After his marriage, Harry gained employment with the Birmingham Corporation Tramways Permanent Way Department in Miller Street[ix]. This department had the responsibility of maintaining the infrastructure of the tram system.

On 17th August 1911, Harry and Rose's first child, Thomas, was born followed by Charles Edward on 25th April 1913 and lastly Harry on 11th July 1915.

Seven weeks after war was declared, Harry enlisted for three years with 'A' Company, 9th (Service) Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment (9th Royal Warwicks) and became Private Bunce, No 8848.[x] At the time of his attestation on 27th October 1914, Harry was twenty-three years old, 5' 4" tall with grey eyes, a fresh complexion and dark hair.[xi]The Battalion was formed in Warwick in August 1914 as part of Lord Kitchener's First New Army. It was based at Kandahar Barracks, Tidworth on the Salisbury Plain.[xii] It formed part of the 39th Brigade, 13th (Western) Division. Some of Harry's letters home have survived.

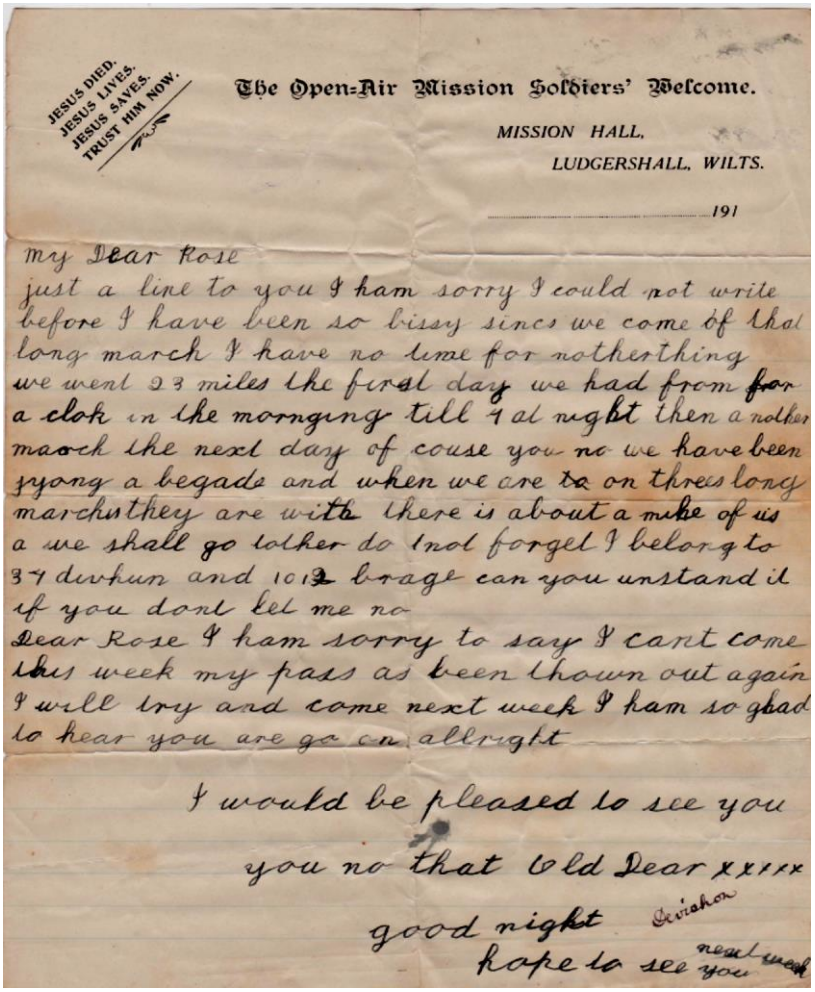


The letter on the left was written after a pass home to see Rose, Tommy and the 'bab'. As only two children are mentioned in the letter, the 'bab' is likely to have been Charles who would have been sixteen months old when Harry was mobilised. Note how poignantly Harry describes having to leave to go back to barracks as 'so hard' and the return train as a 'crying train'.

The first contingents from the 9th Warwick sailed from Avonmouth to Alexandria, Egypt on 17th June 1915 before embarking on a further sea journey to Mudros on the Greek island of Lemnos. They arrived there on 9th July in readiness to bolster troop numbers in Gallipoli.

Harry was not in this first deployment but remained in reserve on the Salisbury Plain attached to the 37th Division, 112 Brigade, whose training base was nearby at Cholderton, Hampshire.[xiii] The 37th Division remained on the Salisbury Plain area during June and July before proceeding to France. Harry believed that he would be going with the division to France and gave instructions to Rose in one of his letters not to mention this to his parents until he was there.

Figure 4: Private Harry Bunce



JESUS DIED.
JESUS LIVES.
JESUS SAVES.
TRUST HIM NOW.

The Open-Air Mission Soldiers' Welcome.

MISSION HALL,
LUDGERSHALL, WILTS.

191

my Dear Rose
just a line to you I ham sorry I could not write
before I have been so bissy since we come of thol
long march I have no time for notherthing
we went 23 miles the first day we had from for
a clok in the mornging till 7 at night then a nother
march the next day of couse you no we have been
tyong a begade and when we are ta on threes long
marchs they are with there is about a mike of us
a we shall go tother do Inot forget I belong to
37 divhun and 1012 brage can you unstand it
if you dont let me no
Dear Rose I ham sorry to say I cant come
this week my pass as been thown out again
I will try and come next week I ham so ghad
to hear you are go on allright

I would be pleased to see you

you no that old Dear xxxxx

good night Devishon

hope to see you next week

The letter relates to how gruelling the training was on the Salisbury Plain with a 23 mile march on the first day from 4 am to 7 pm, followed by another the following morning. He observes how being in a brigade made the marching line about a mile long. In this and a following letter, Harry reminds Rose about the importance of knowing that he is in the 37th Division and the 1012 Brigade (it should be 112 Brigade).[1]

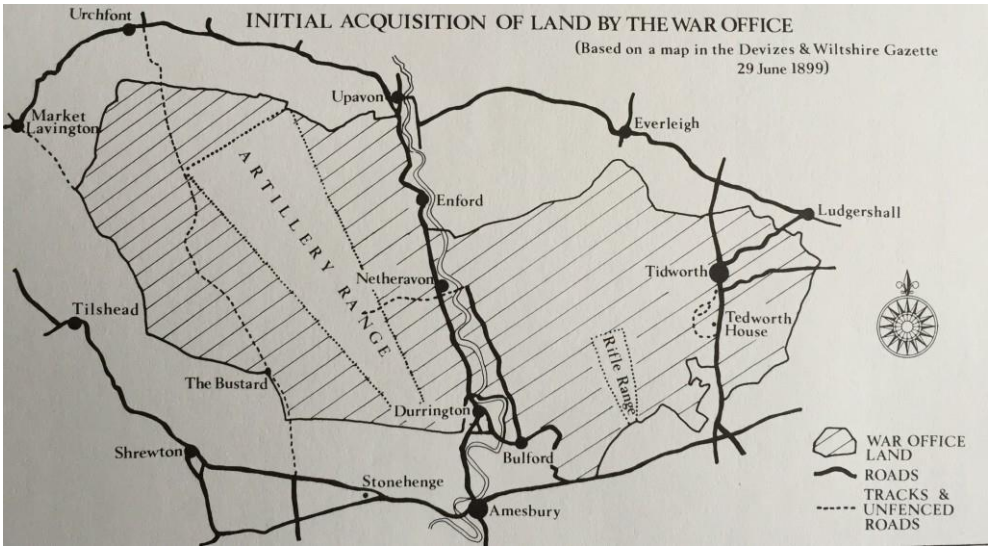
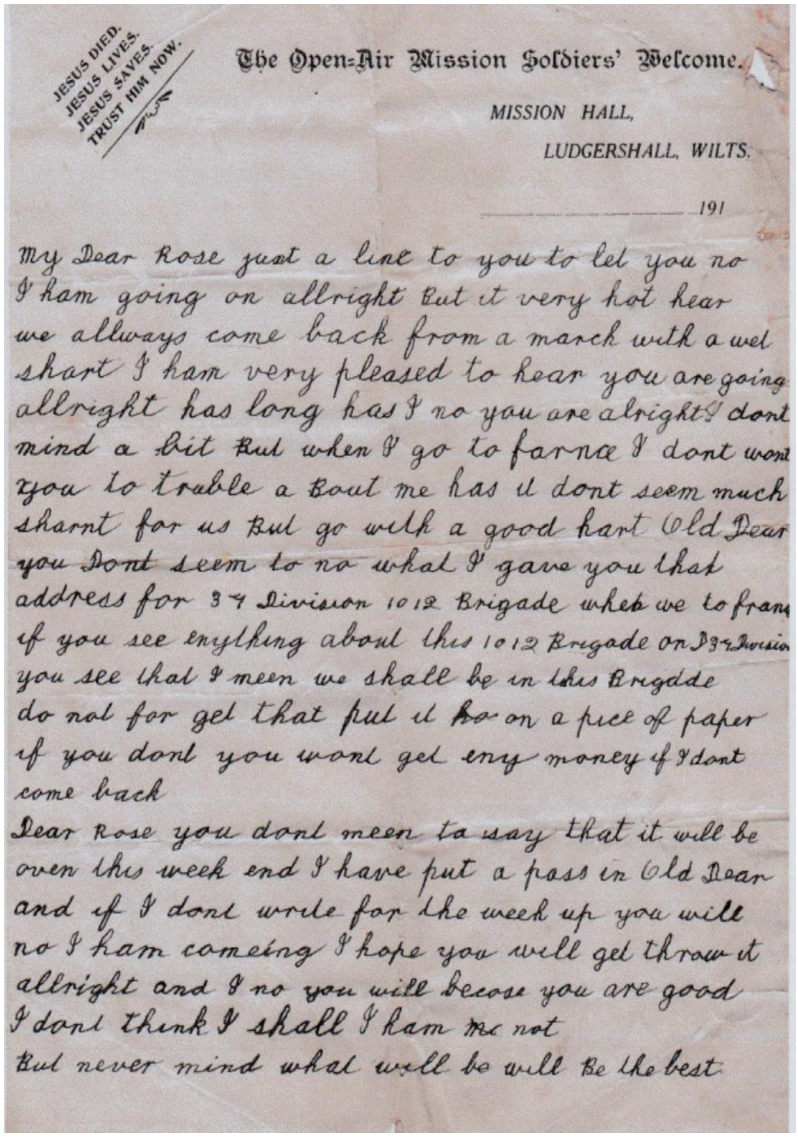


Figure 5: An 1899 map showing the location of Ludgershall in relation to Tidworth and the land owned by the War Office on Salisbury Plain

Figure 6: Methodist Church in Ludgershall known as the 'Soldiers Welcome'.

During the First World War the hall was opened up to all troops in the area and was known as the 'Soldiers' Welcome'. Refreshments, entertainments, games and writing materials were all provided free of charge.



JESUS DIED.
JESUS LIVES.
JESUS SAVES.
TRUST HIM NOW.

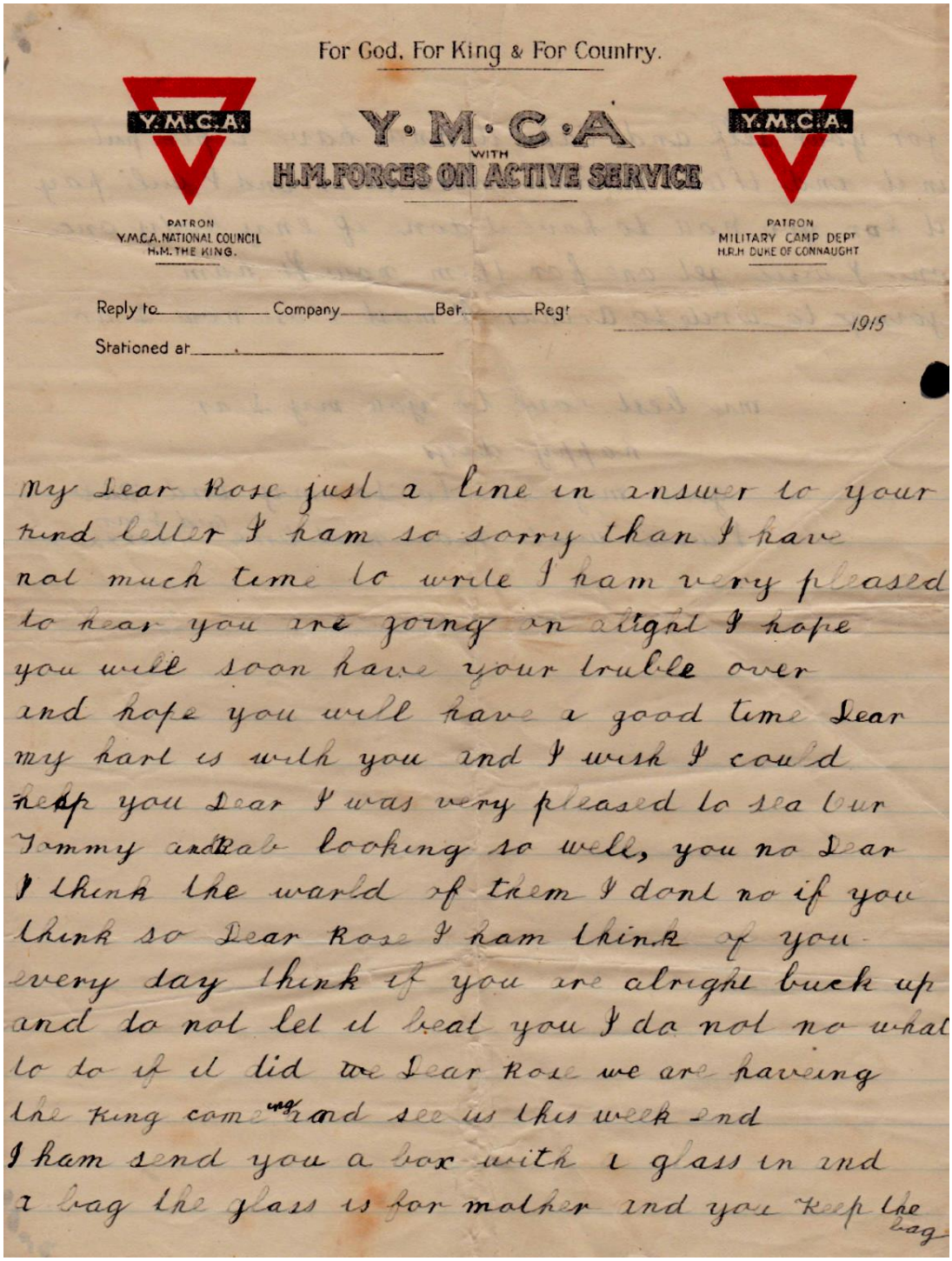
The Open-Air Mission Soldiers' Welcome.

MISSION HALL,
LUDGERSHALL, WILTS.

_____ 191

My Dear Rose just a line to you to let you no
I ham going on allright But it very hot hear
we allways come back from a march with a wet
shart I ham very pleased to hear you are going
allright has long has I no you are alright I dont
mind a bit But when I go to farnce I dont want
you to truble a Bout me has it dont seem much
sharnt for us But go with a good hart Old Dear
you Dont seem to no what I gave you that
address for 34 Division 1012 Brigade when we to franc
if you see enything about this 1012 Brigade or 34 Divisio
you see that I meen we shall be in this Brigdde
do not for get that put it Bo on a pice of paper
if you dont you wont get eny money if I dont
come back
Dear Rose you dont meen to say that it will be
over this week end I have put a pass in Old Dear
and if I dont write for the week up you will
no I ham comeing I hope you will get throw it
allright and I no you will becose you are good
I dont think I shall I ham Mr not
But never mind what will be will Be the best

Harry had just got back from a march on a hot day when he wrote this letter. He was expecting to go to France imminently and told Rose not trouble herself as he is going with a good heart. He is making sure Rose knows the Division and Brigade he is in so if anything happened to him she would get some money. Rose was hoping against all hope that the war would all be over that week. Harry adds that if she does not hear from him that week it would mean that he was coming home to see her.



For God, For King & For Country.

Y·M·C·A

WITH

H.M. FORCES ON ACTIVE SERVICE

PATRON
Y.M.C.A. NATIONAL COUNCIL
H.M. THE KING.

PATRON
MILITARY CAMP DEPT
H.R.H. DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

Reply to_____ Company_____ Bat._____ Regt_____ 1915

Stationed at_____

My Dear Rose just a line in answer to your kind letter I ham so sorry that I have not much time to write I ham very pleased to hear you are going on alright I hope you will soon have your truble over and hope you will have a good time Dear my hart is with you and I wish I could help you Dear I was very pleased to sea our Tommy and Bab looking so well, you no Dear I think the warld of them I dont no if you think so Dear Rose I ham think of you every day think if you are alright buck up and do not let it beat you I do not no what to do if it did we Dear Rose we are haveing the King coming and see us this week end I ham send you a box with a glass in and a bag the glass is for mother and you keep the bag

In the letter above, Harry mentions that the king is coming to see them. On 23rd June 1915, George V arrived by train at Ludgershall Station to pay a three day visit to inspect the large numbers of troops in training there. On the last day, 25th June, the king inspected the 37th Division at Tidworth.[xiv] Harry tells Rose that his heart is with her and he is thinking of her every day and hopes her troubles will soon be over, possibly a reference to, Rose being heavily pregnant at the time.

The 37th Division started leaving for France on 22nd July 1915 but Harry remained in reserve on the Salisbury Plain.

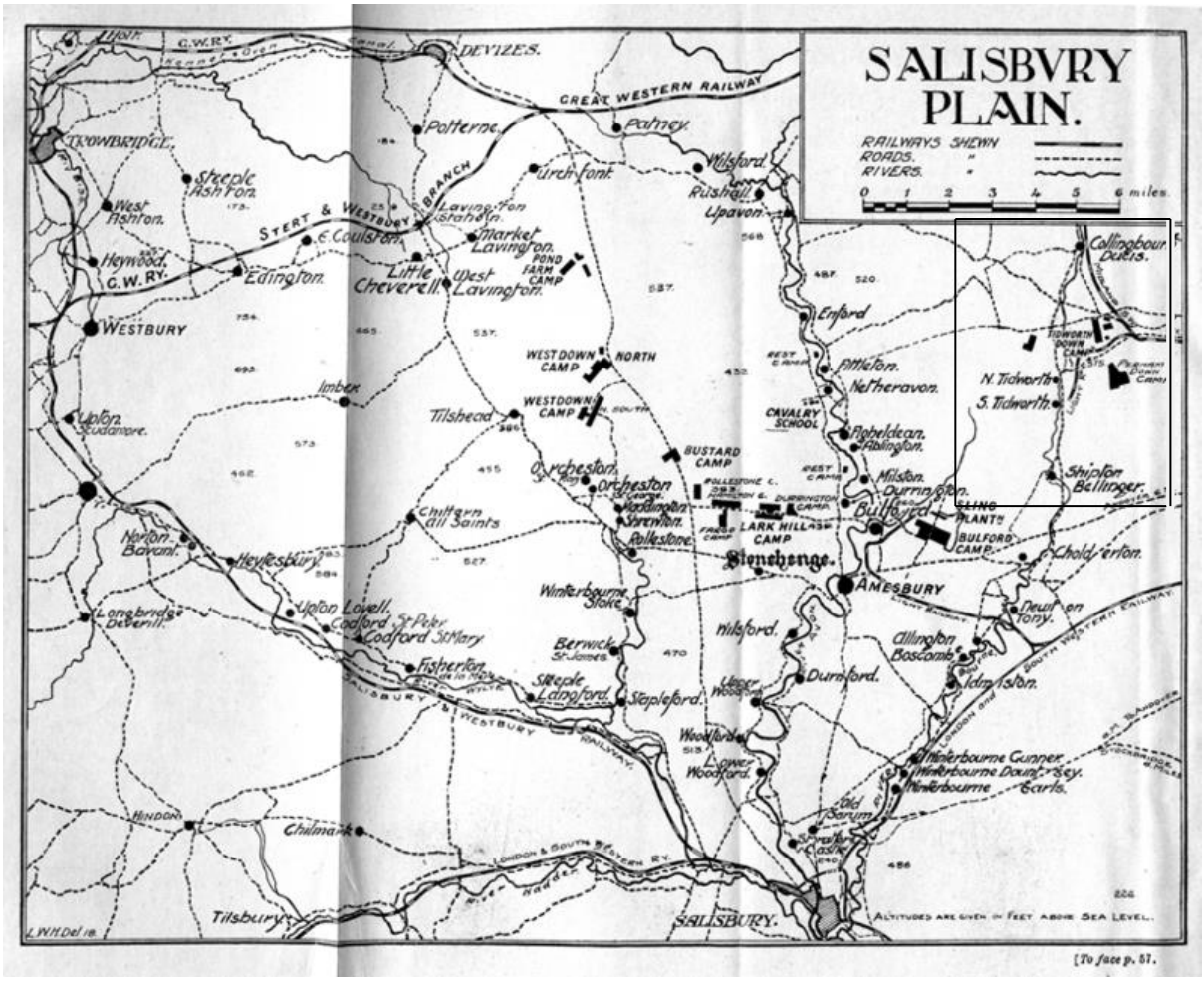
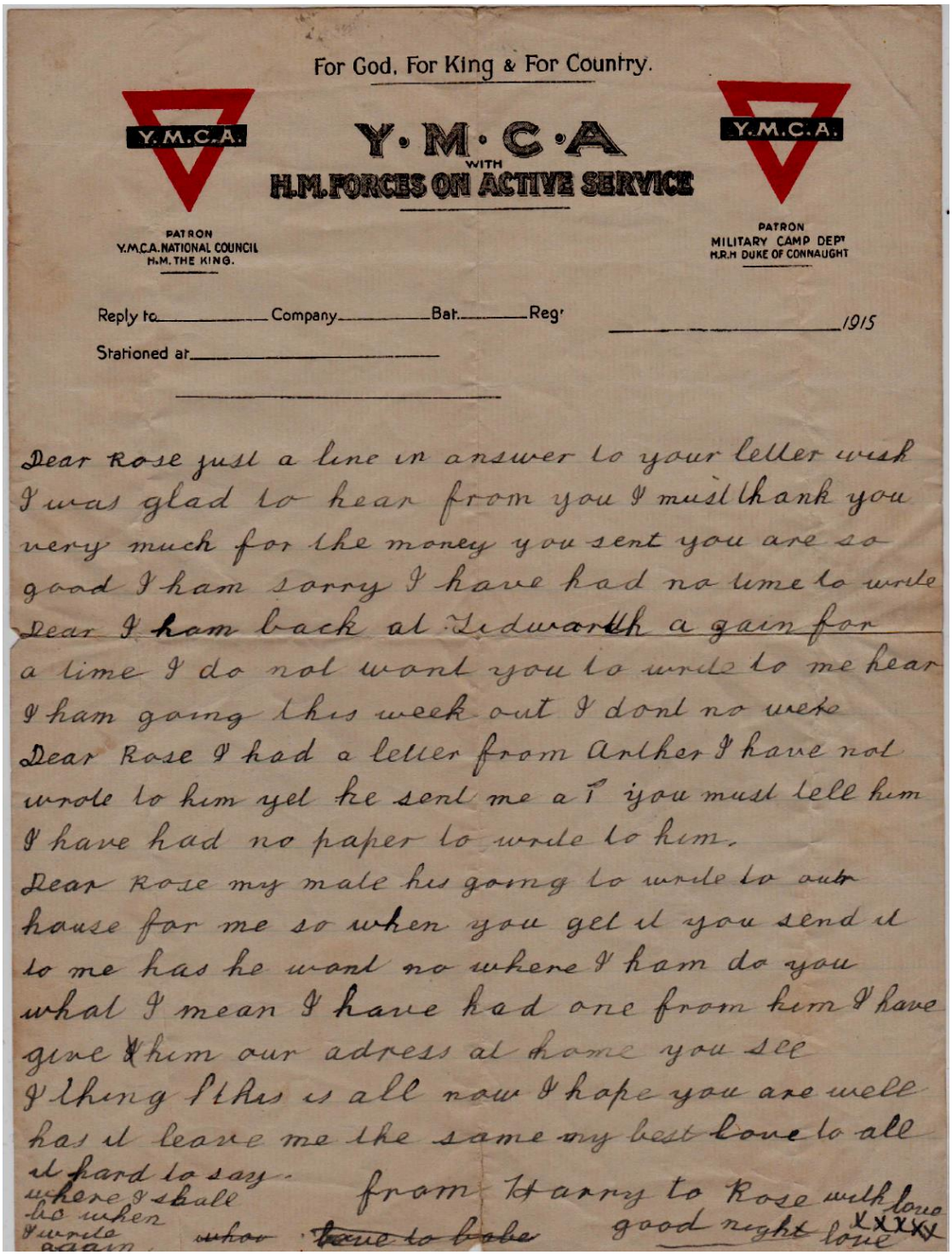


Figure 7:
Map of all the camps on the Salisbury Plain in WW1

31 Camps were established in Wiltshire, 25 of them within the Salisbury Plain Training Areas. Each was like a mini-town. It provided shelter and storage of equipment and employed many Wiltshire civilians in support jobs, as well as military personnel.

The location of Tidworth and Cholderton (the 37th Division's camp locations) are shown on this enlarged section from the above map indicated by the rectangular area marked.



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Y.M.C.A. NATIONAL COUNCIL
H.M. THE KING.

Y.M.C.A.

PATRON
MILITARY CAMP DEPT
H.R.H DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

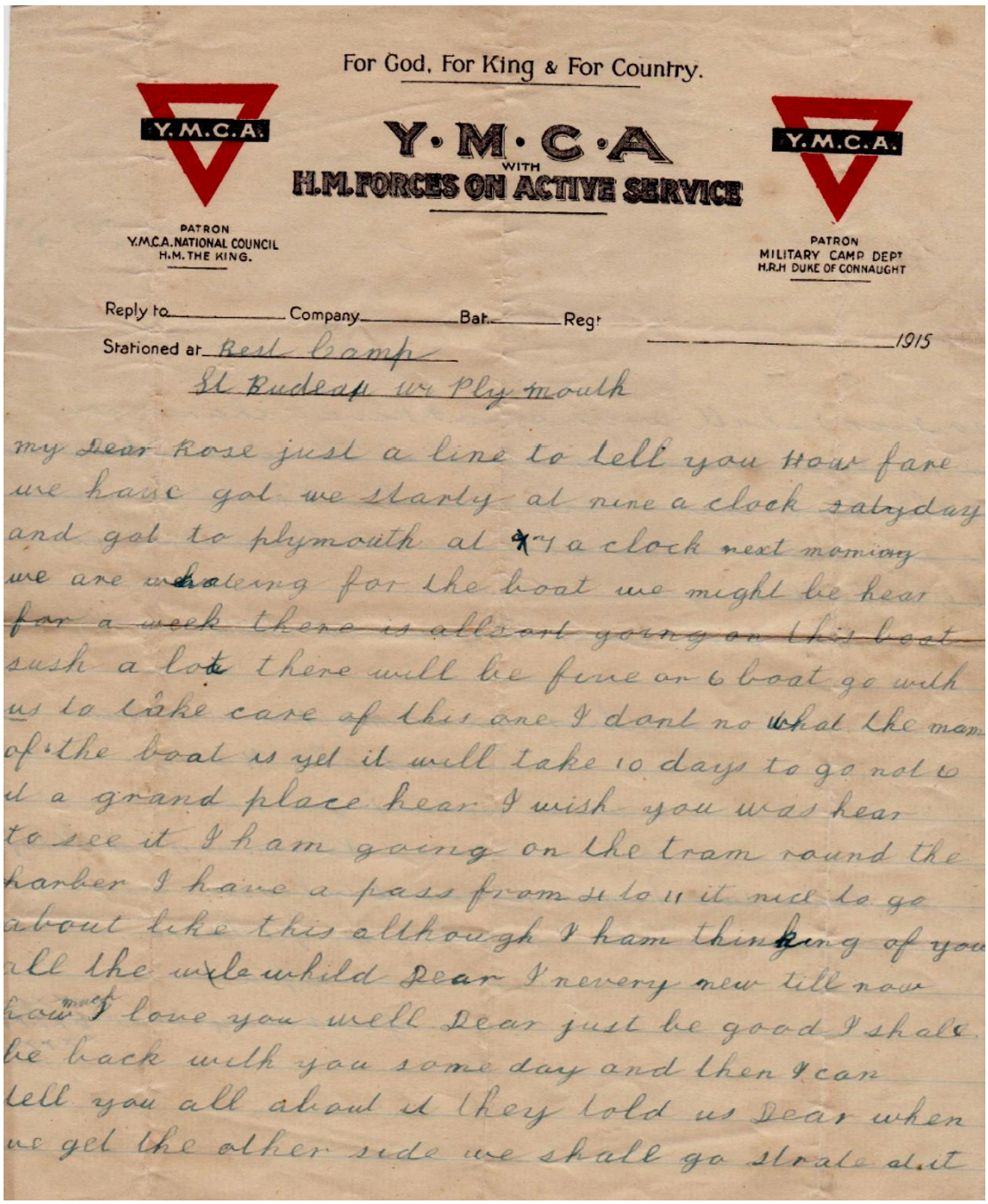
Reply to _____ Company _____ Bat. _____ Regt _____ 1915

Stationed at _____

Dear Rose just a line in answer to your letter wish I was glad to hear from you I must thank you very much for the money you sent you are so good I ham sorry I have had no time to write Dear I ham back at Tidworth a gain for a time I do not want you to write to me hear I ham going this week out I dont no wete Dear Rose I had a letter from Arther I have not wrote to him yet he sent me a I you must tell him I have had no paper to write to him. Dear Rose my male his going to write to our house for me so when you get it you send it to me has he want no where I ham do you what I mean I have had one from him I have give him our adress at home you see I thing this is all now I hope you are well has it leave me the same my best love to all it hard to say where I shall be when I write again. from Harry to Rose with love xxxxx good night love

The letter above was written after the 37th Division left for France on 22nd July 1915. Harry thanks Rose for the money she sent him and to say that he is back at his camp in Tidworth again for a time. He asks Rose not to write to him again at this address because he is about to be moved to another camp but does not know where. He has asked a mate to write to her on his behalf to let her know his new address. It is likely that when this letter was written, Harry's battalion was being made ready to go to Gallipoli.

The letter below locates Harry at St Budeaux, near Plymouth. It would have been written around 14th October 1915, the week before he embarked for Alexandria, Egypt on 21st October 1915[xv] From his letter we know that the journey from Tidworth started at nine o'clock on a Saturday (most likely in the evening) and was completed at seven o'clock the following morning. Although Harry does not know the name of the boat he is to sail on, he knows the journey will take ten days to a 'grand place' (Alexandria). He has been given a pass to travel locally and wishes that Rose was with him to see the sights when he takes the tram for a trip around the harbour. He ends by telling Rose that he is always thinking about her and that he never knew how much he loved her till now. "I shall be back with you some one day and then I can tell tou all about it.""



For God, For King & For Country.

Y.M.C.A.

Y·M·C·A
WITH
H.M. FORCES ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Y.M.C.A.

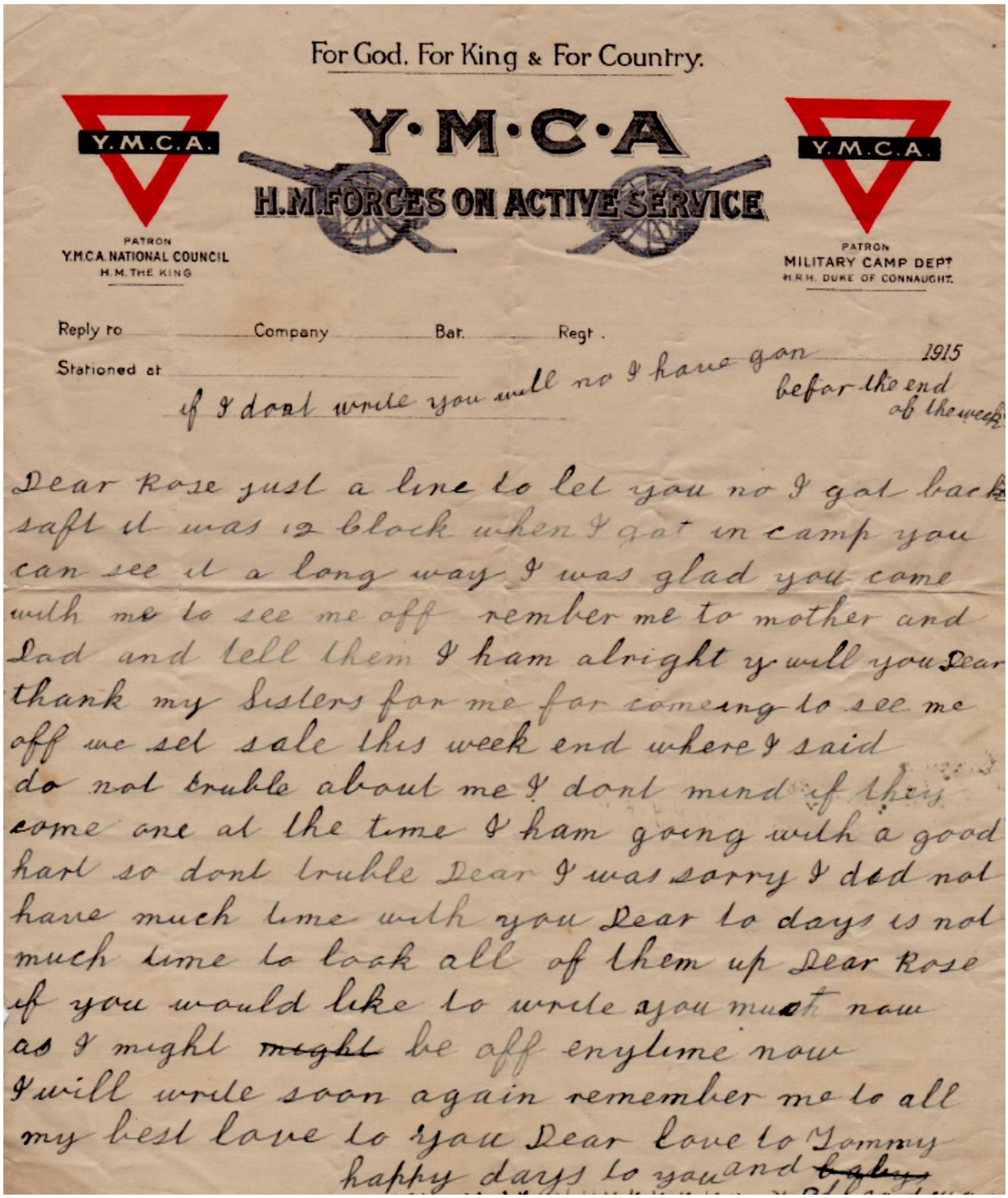
PATRON
Y.M.C.A. NATIONAL COUNCIL
H.M. THE KING.

PATRON
MILITARY CAMP DEPT
H.R.H DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

Reply to _____ Company _____ Bat. _____ Regt _____ 1915

Stationed at Rest Camp
St Budeaux wr Plymouth

my Dear Rose just a line to tell you How fare we have got we starty at nine a clock saturday and got to plymouth at 7 a clock next moming we are waiting for the boat we might be hear ~~for a week there is all sort going on this boat~~ sush a lot there will be fine an 6 boat go with us to take care of this are I dont no what the man of the boat is yet it will take 10 days to go not a grand place hear I wish you was hear to see it I am going on the tram round the harber I have a pass from 2 to 11 it nice to go about like this although I ham thinking of you all the while Dear I never new till now how I love you well Dear just be good I shall be back with you some day and then I can tell you all about it they told us Dear when we get the other side we shall go strate at it



For God. For King & For Country.

Y.M.C.A.

Y·M·C·A

H.M. FORCES ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Y.M.C.A.

PATRON
Y.M.C.A. NATIONAL COUNCIL
H.M. THE KING

PATRON
MILITARY CAMP DEPT
H.R.H. DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

Reply to ____ Company ____ Bat. ____ Regt.

Stationed at ____

1915

if I dont write you will no I have gon befor the end of the week

Dear Rose just a line to let you no I got back saft it was 12 block when I got in camp you can see it a long way I was glad you come with me to see me off rember me to mother and Dad and tell them I ham alright y will you Dear thank my Sisters for me for comeing to see me off we set sale this week end where I said do not truble about me I dont mind if they come are at the time I ham going with a good hart so dont truble Dear I was sorry I ded not have much time with you Dear to days is not much time to look all of them up Dear Rose if you would like to write you must now as I might ~~might~~ be off enytime now I will write soon again remember me to all my best love to you Dear love to Tommy happy days to you and ~~baby~~

Before Harry sailed to the Mediterranean he was given leave to see Rose and the children. The letter above was written shortly on his return to base and was his final letter to Rose before he sailed. He adds, as an afterthought, at the top of the letter, 'if I don't write, you will know I have gone before the end of the week'.

Harry arrived at Alexandria on 31st October.[xvi] He would have been part of a contingent of additional men sent out from England to bring the battalion up to fighting strength, as a result of devastating losses from combat and disease in

Gallipoli. One action, in particular, on 8th August, at the Aghyl Dere water course which leads up to the highest point on the Sari Bair mountains, left 57 men dead, 227wounded and 117 missing leaving only 248 men in the battalion. Following this action the 9th Warwicks were transferred from Anzac to Suvla Bay.[xvii]

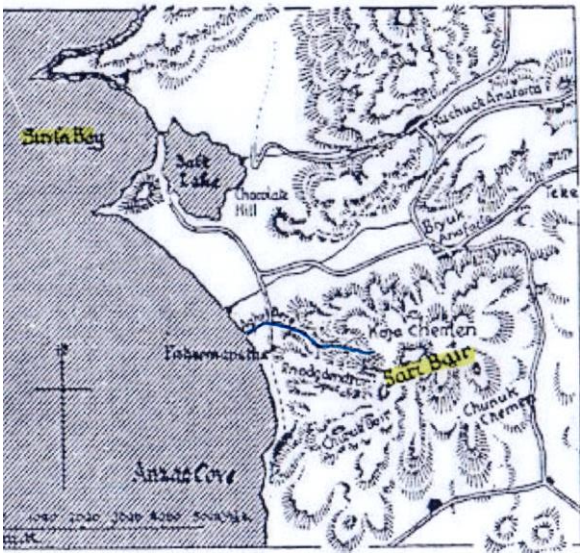


Figure 8
(Left) Map of Gallipoli
(Above) Map showing Aghyl Dere (blue line) and the Sari Bair mountains

In Gallipoli on 26th November, there was a fierce thunderstorm lasting 6 hours. The heavy rain caused flash flooding of the trenches, mudslides and left the men drenched to the skin. Fires could not be lit as it would have alerted the enemy to their positions. To compound the catastrophe, the wind shifted to the north and brought a piercing frost. After the frost came a blizzard of snow, and in the storm and bitter cold sentries were found frozen to death at their posts.

After the blizzard came the evacuation and on 19th and 20th December 1915 the battalion sailed for Mudros on the island of Lemnos where they were billeted at Portinos Camp.[xviii]

Figure 9:
Position of Mudros on the island of Lemnos in relation to Gallipoli

After ten days rest, the 9th Royal Warwicks were sent to help in the evacuation of the rest of the troops at Helles which was completed overnight on 8th/9th January 1916 bringing the Gallipoli Campaign to an end.

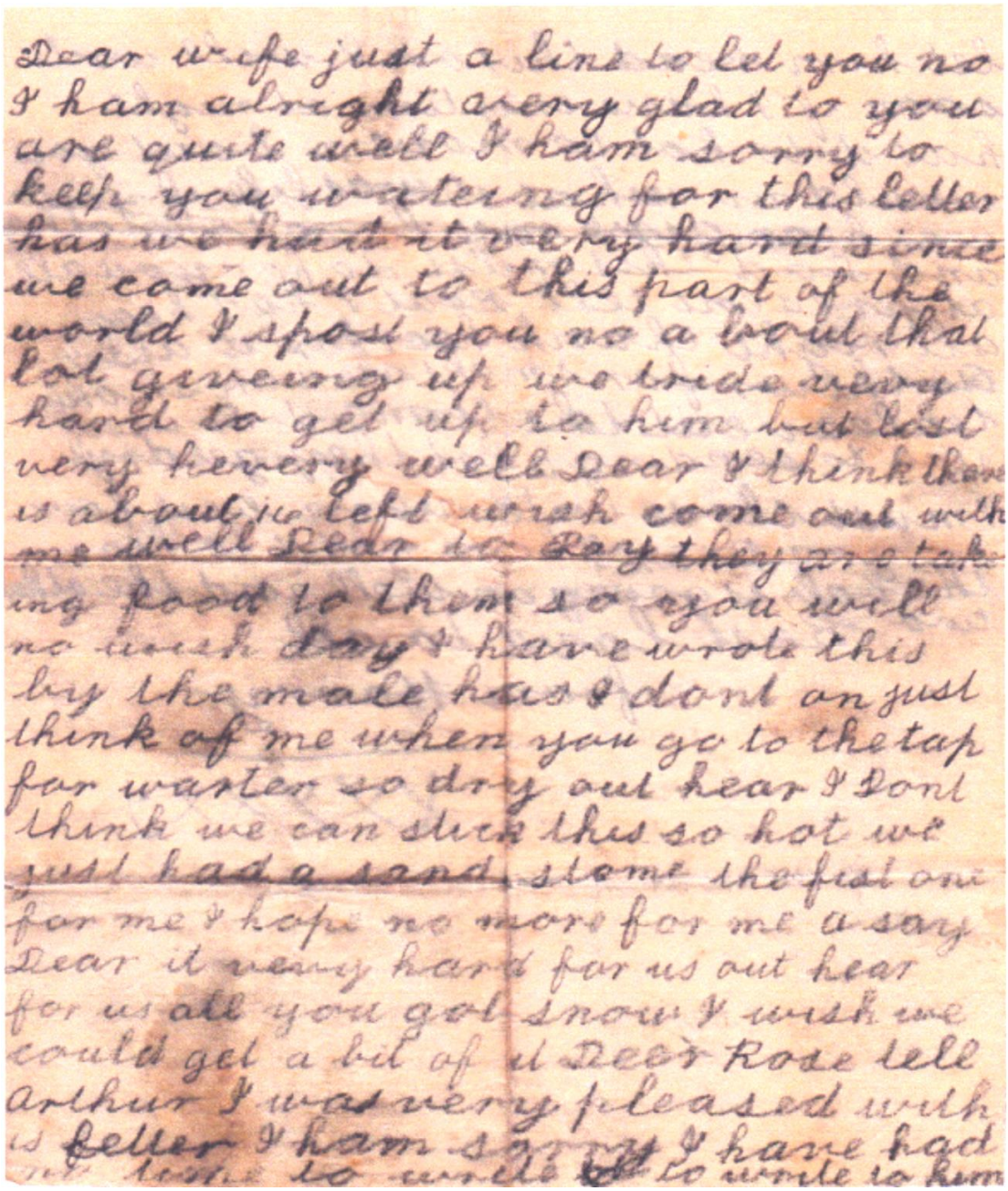
Figure 10
(Above) The beach at Cape Helles on 7th January 1916 prior to evacuation

On 19th January the regiment left Lemnos arriving at Alexandria on 23rd January and Port Said in Egypt the day after, where they remained for over three weeks.[xix]

From there, the 13th Division were sent to Mesopotamia, where Major-General Townshend, after his fruitless victory at Clesiphon, had been besieged by the Turkish Army in Kut-el-Amara since 5th December 1915.[xx]

On February 16th, the 9th Royal Warwicks left Port Said reaching Koweit Bay (modern day Kuwait) in the Persian Gulf, thirteen days later, before finally disembarking at Basra. On 15th March, the battalion began its journey up the Tigris to Sheikh Saad, behind the British Front, a voyage of six days.

After several attempts, some successful, to capture Turkish held strongholds around Kut-el-Amara, a final attack on 23rd April proved impossible and the attempt to relieve Kut failed. On 29th April General Townsend was forced to surrender the town.[xxi]



Dear wife just a line to let you no
I ham alright avery glad to you
are quite well I ham sorry to
keep you wateing for this letter
has we had it very hard since
we come out to this part of the
world I spos you no a bout that
lot geveing up we tride very
hard to get up to him but lost
very heavy well Dear I think there
is about 10 left wish come out with
me well Dear to day they are tak-
ing food to them so you will
no wich day I have wrote this
by the male has I dont an just
think of me when you go to the tap
for water so dry out hear I Dont
think we can stick this so hot we
just had a sand stome the fist one
for me I hope no more for me a say
Dear it veny hard for us out hear
for us all you got snow I wish we
could get a bit of it Dear Rose tell
Arthur I was very pleased with
is letter I ham sorry I have had
no time to write to him to write to him

This letter to Rose reflect Harry's observations in Mesopotamia at that time, stating that it had been very hard since he came out to this part of the world and supposed that Rose had heard about them giving up (relief of Kut, 29th April 1916) and that they had tried very hard to relieve the siege but lost very heavily. He also pointed out to Rose how scarce water was and asked her to think of him when she went to the tap for water. Harry also comments on the extreme temperatures and his difficulty in coping with the heat and also the sand storms. Harry must have received a letter from Rose when he wrote this letter, as he wished that he could have some of the snow they were having back in England. Rose's letter referred to the worst snow storm in Birmingham since January 1912 when fourteen inches of snow fell ceasing on 25th February 1916.[xxii]

In less than a month's fighting the 9th Royal Warwickshire Regiment had lost nearly all its officers, and its total strength was down to around 200 men. They were not engaged in any further action, but stationed near Deltawa (36 miles NE of Baghdad) constructing a defensive line.[xxiii]

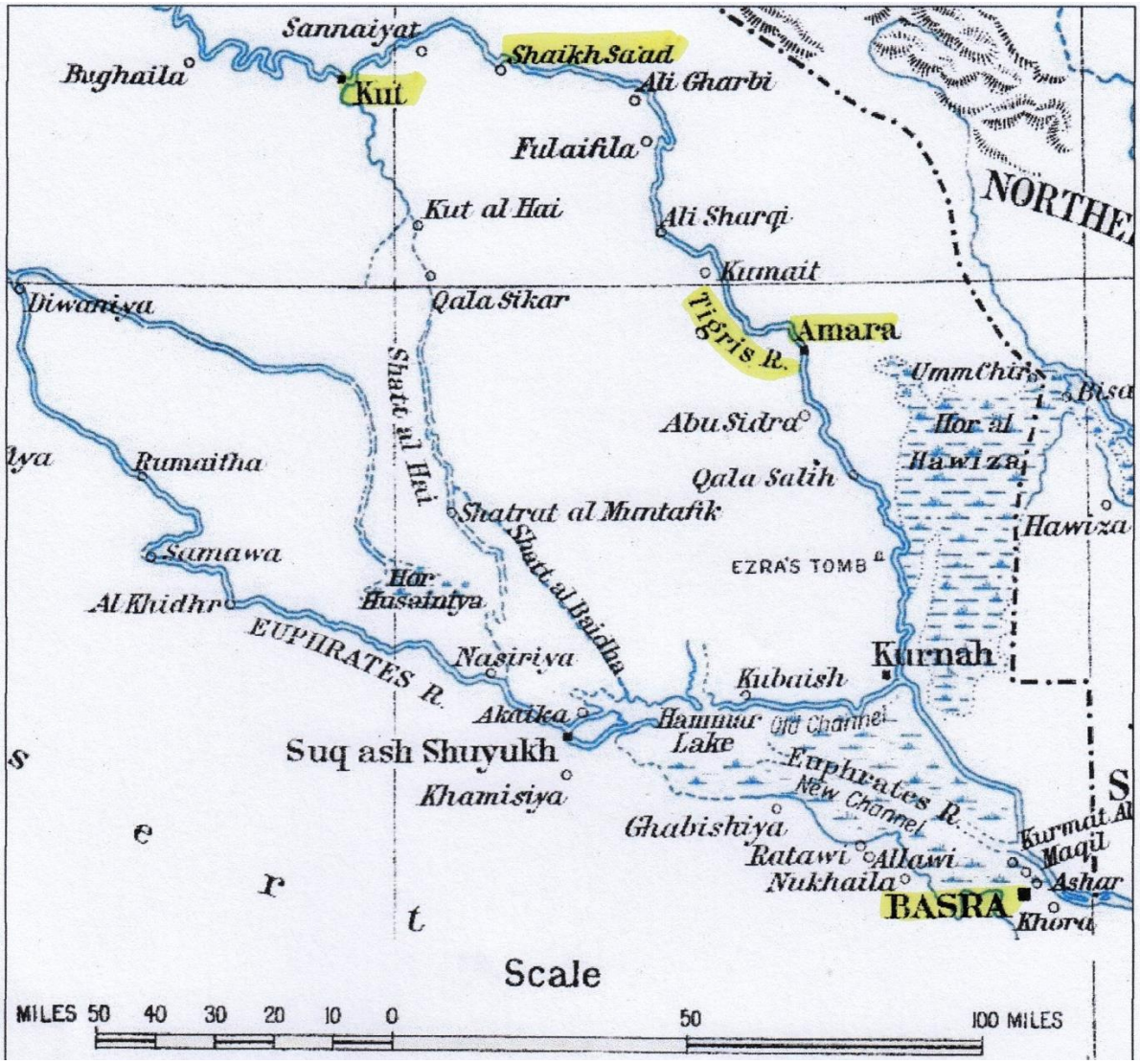


Figure 11: Map of lower Mesopotamia highlighting locations mentioned in this article

From May 1916, the 13th Division began to be refitted and re-equipped in preparation for the drive northward to capture Baghdad.[xxiv] Major-General MacMunn brought in during mid April to rectify matters of a struggling supply organisation, lamented that, 'No one seemed able to think large' made worse 'by an absurd audit system'. After his first mission upriver to find out about the non-arrival of tinned milk to the front he found that it had been diverted to the hospitals and commented that, 'To keep the milk for the sick when hundreds were becoming sick for want of it was a medical mentality that he judged incomprehensible'.[xxv]

Harry's British Army Medal Index Card makes no reference to him being 'killed in action' but simply states that he 'died'. Having survived the most difficult of campaigns and weakened by the deprivations that came with them, it is likely that Harry succumbed to disease or heat stroke sometime in June, when the temperatures often reached 118°F (47°C). Cholera and bowel diseases of all sorts were rife. Coupled with very poor rations, it is unsurprising that there was a huge casualty rate.[xxvi] Harry died on 28th June 1916, aged twenty-four and was buried in Sandy Ridge Cemetery before being reinterred in Amara War Cemetery around 1922.[xxvii]

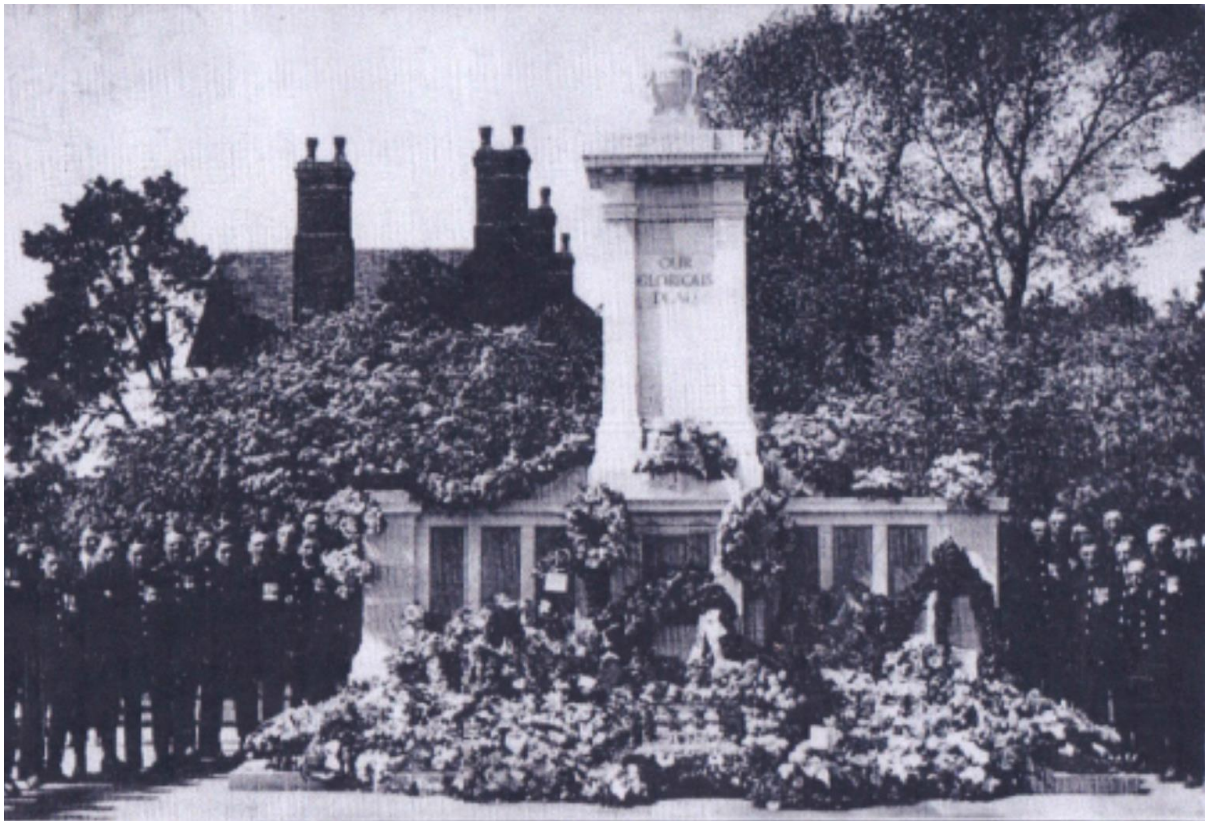
Figure 12: Amara War Cemetery, Iraq

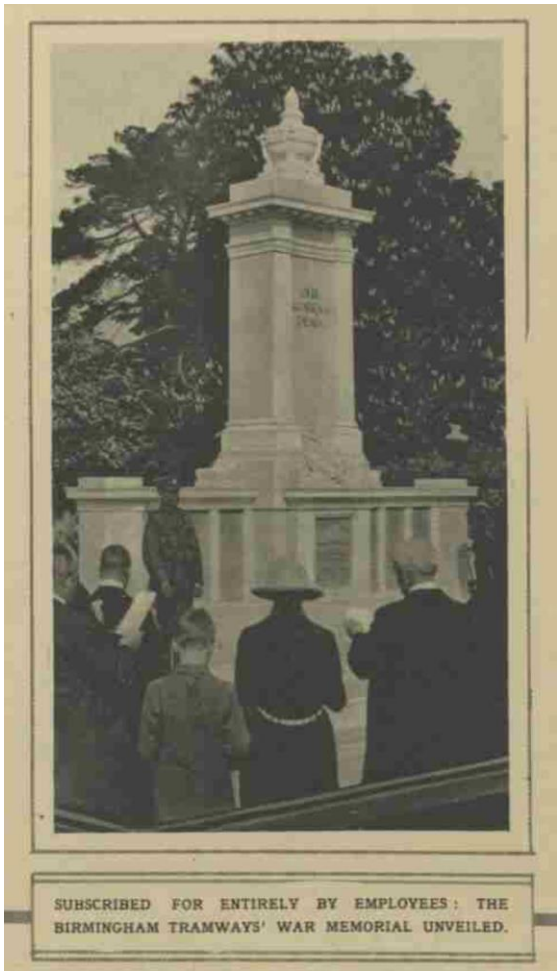
Amara was described by Major-General MacMunn in April 1916 as a place where many of the animals, wagons and oddments of divisional troops from brigades that were surplus to operational requirements had been left to lessen the drain on rations. There was no competent control or discipline. Improperly pitched tents had been erected over what was in effect a muddy plain. Men slept in the mud and were left to their own devices, as the young officers, almost all temporary with no experience, had little control over their men or any idea what to do. Every sort of sickness was about, nobody shaved, nobody dressed, odd horses, mules, ordure and horse litter lay in one unhappy confusion. After this critical report the organisation and the infrastructure needed to support the Allied troops here slowly improved and from the 3rd June a hospital centre was established at Amara.[xxviii]

Amara War Cemetery contains 4,621 burials from the First World War. In 1933, all the headstones were removed when it was discovered that saline salts in the soil were causing them to crumble. Instead a screen wall was erected with the names of those buried in the cemetery engraved upon it.
There is an interesting story on the BBC News website relating to the rediscovery of this grave yard by British troops in 2003 while on tour in Iraq. This can be accessed on this web site:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2958143.stm

Harry is commemorated at St Mary's Church, Moseley, the City of Birmingham, Tramways Department memorial, located on the right of the entrance to the Transport Stadium, off Wheelers Lane, Kings Heath, Birmingham and is named on the Roll of Honour at Birmingham's Hall of Memory.

Figure 13
(Top left and above) City of Birmingham, Tramways Department memorial
(Top right) St Mary's Church WW1 memorial Moseley
(Above right) Birmingham Hall of Memory, 1925





SUBSCRIBED FOR ENTIRELY BY EMPLOYEES: THE BIRMINGHAM TRAMWAYS' WAR MEMORIAL UNVEILED.

FALLEN TRAMWAYMEN.

OFFICER UNVEILS KING'S HEATH MEMORIAL.

A huge crowd was present at the Stadium, King's Heath, yesterday morning, when the imposing memorial to the 236 men of the Birmingham Corporation Tramways Department, who fell in the war was unveiled.

Some 2,000 tramwaymen in uniform, headed by their band, marched to the Stadium. The Lord Mayor (Alderman David Davis), the Bishop of Birmingham, the Town Clerk, the Chairman and members of the Tramways Committee, Mr Alfred Baker (general manager), and other officials, also joined in the procession.

Mr. Baker said that the department supplied no fewer than 1,800 men for the Forces, and among the distinctions gained were two M.C.s, 20 M.M.s, 11 D.C.M.s, one Italian bronze medal, and one Serbian medal. The whole cost of the memorial had been defrayed by the men themselves.

Lieutenant F. Clarke, M.M., of the Dorset Regiment, by popular choice of the men, performed the unveiling ceremony. He served throughout the war, won a permanent commission, was wounded seven times, and in the last month of hostilities had the misfortune to lose his left arm.

The Bishop of Birmingham formally dedicated the memorial.

Figure 14:
(Top) Unveiling of Tramways memorial, Kings Heath on 29th May 1922
(Above left and right) Unveiling of the Birmingham Tramway

Figure 15
Rose with Tom, Charles and the 'bab' Harry

When Harry died, Rose was left with three children under four to bring up alone. Harry's parents, who lived close by, would have been a very important source of help during this difficult time as Rose had to work during the day. Her eldest son, Tom, recollected that she always left two rice puddings in the oven every day for the children to eat for lunch. There was a large one that was split in two and a small bowl that the children took in turns to eat. [xxix]

All three of Harry and Rose's sons served in WW2.

The eldest son, Tom, was an aircraft press worker. He married Win (née Payton) in 1934. They had three children and lived at 81 Coldbath Road all their married lives. Before Win was married to Tom she had lodged with Rose at No 80. Win nursed Rose through what was believed to be stomach cancer. Rose died in 1937, aged forty-six. Tom served in the Royal Ordnance Corps in WW2

Charles (Charlie) was a builder's labourer. Like his father, he served with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was severely injured on a beach in France during the D-day landings on 6th June 1941 and lost a leg. There is a family story about an apparition that occurred on the night it happened. Win (Charles' sister in law, Tom's wife) heard Charles outside the house in Coldbath Road banging on the door to be let in. She opened the sash window and told him she would be down in a minute. Every time she went downstairs and opened the door there was no one there. This happened three times. Charles was actually lying in a bomb hole in northern France! Charles married Grace Wright in 1945. The couple had no children. He lived at his childhood home, 80 Coldbath Road, until his death in 1983, aged seventy.

The youngest son, Harry, made parts for aerial radiators. In WW2 he served in the RAF. Harry married Lillian Cole in 1953, a widow with a young son. Harry and Lily had one child together, a daughter. Harry died in 1987, aged seventy-four.

At 1.30 pm on 17th October 2019, a memorial service was held at St Mary's Church, Moseley led by the Reverend Duncan Strathie, to commemorate men from the area who lost their lives or had served in the Gallipoli Campaign.

Three generations of Harry Bunce's family attended the service: grandson, Ron Bunce, two of Harry's great-grandchildren, Charlotte Mason and her sister Ann Winder, together with Charlottes' children Edward and Fleur, Harry's great-great grandchildren. Edward placed a wreath at the altar on behalf of the family.

Figure 16: Harry Bunce's family
Back row from left to right: Andrew Mason, Charlotte Mason, Ann Winder, Ron Bunce
Front row: Edward and Fleur Mason

Researched and written by Edwina Rees, Moseley Society History Group with thanks to Charlotte Mason (Harry's great grand-daughter) and Ron Bunce (Harry's grandson) for copies of Harry's letters and photographs of the family.

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Endnotes

i Staffordshire Banns, Archive Ref D5148/1/3
Ancestry, Regan family tree, marriage certificate supplied by Jimminy 34

ii Children of William and Ann identified from the census from 1841 to 1871. It is possible they could have had more than eight children. The 1871 census has erroneously transcribed John as Idris

iii 1841 to 1881 censuses
England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, Wolverhampton, 2/4, 6b, 303

iv The 1911 census records Ann as having eleven children, ten of whom survived

v 1911 census

vi **Annie Beatrice** (known as Beatrice in the 1881 census). Select Births and Christenings 1538-1975, Baptised at St Andrew's Church, Bordesley, 24th January 1877. Parents - Thomas and Ann Bunce
Ada Gertrude. Select Births and Christenings 1538-1975, Baptised at St Andrew's Church, Bordesley, 3rd July 1878. Parents - Thomas and Ann Bunce
John Thomas Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915, Kings Norton, 3/4, 1880
The Ancestry 1891 census transcribed 'J Ths (son)' erroneously as 'Helen'
William Thomas Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915, Kings Norton,1/4 1882
Frances Mary Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915, Kings Norton, 3/4, 1885
'Frances' has been spelt erroneously as 'Francess' in the 1891 census.
Eva May (known as May in 1891 census) - Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915, Kings Norton, 4/4, 1886
Lucy Evelyn Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915 Kings Norton, 3/4, 1888, Evelyn is spelt as 'Eveline' in the Civil Registration Birth Index, but as 'Evelyn' in the 1908 Civil Registration Marriage Index
Edith Kate (known as Kate in 1991 census) Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915, Kings Norton, 3/4, 1890. Edith is erroneously spelt as 'Ever' in the 1891 census, but referred to as Kate in the 1901 census
Harry Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915, Solihull 3/4, 1891
Arthur Reginald Civil Registration Birth Index 1837-1915, Solihull, 4/4, 1896

vii 1891 census

viii England & Wales marriages, 1837-2008 transcription. 1911, Solihull, volume 6D, page 1222

ix City of Birmingham, Tramways Department memorial
Birmingham Post 18th June 1918

x Commonwealth War Graves Commission
http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/627675/BUNCE,%20H

xi Harry Bunce's Small Book, 1914 with thanks to Caroline Mason

xii 9th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment
http://battlefields1418.50megs.com/regiment012.htm

xiii Harry wrote the 1012 Brigade in his letter home. This was incorrect possibly arising from his attempt to write one hundred and twelve in numerals
The 37th Division consisted of four battalions one of which was from the Royal Warwickshire Regiment
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/37th_Division_(United_Kingdom)

xiv *Cheltenham Chronicle,* 3rd June 1915

xv Harry arrived in the Mediterranean on 31st October 1915. It took around ten days to sail from Plymouth to Alexandria the first port of call after perhaps a brief stop off at Malta, so a week before this date when Harry was put on standby would give the approximate date of 14th October for the letter to have been written

xvi British Army Medal Index

xvii War time memories project: 9th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment
http://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/battalion.php?pid=7351
The 9th (Service) Royal Warwickshire Regiment
https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/63794-9th-service-battalion-royal-warwickshire-regiment/

xviii War diary 9th Royal Warwickshire Regiment for November and December 1915.
pp 39-53

xix See xviii

xx Units that used the Vickers
http://www.vickersmachinegun.org.uk/units-rwarwicks.htm

xxi The Campaign in Mesopotamia: The Tigris Corps and the attempts to relieve al-Kut January – April 1916
http://www.winkleighheroes.co.uk/level3/kut.htm

xxii *Birmingham Mail,* 25th February 1916

xxiii The 9th (Service) Royal Warwickshire Regiment
https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/63794-9th-service-battalion-royal-warwickshire-regiment/

xxiv The 13th (Western) Division
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/13th_(Western)_Division

xxv Townsend, Charles. *When God Made Hell: The British Invasion of Mesopotamia and the Creation of Iraq.* Faber and Faber, London, 2010, pp 291-292

xxvi See xxv

xxvii From the family archive of Charlotte Mason

xxviii See xxv, p 300

xxix Birmingham, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937
Reminiscences of Thomas Bunce, from his granddaughter Charlotte Mason

Illustrations

Figure 1 By Roger Kidd, CC BY-SA 2.0,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=41441523

Figure 2 Watercolour - St Edburgha's Church Yardley and The Old Grammar School by Frank Taylor Lockwood painted c1943/44 presented to Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery by Presented by Arthur Lockwood and Jean Barnsby.
http://www.bmagic.org.uk/objects/1995V419

Figure 3 A young Harry Bunce, with thanks to Charlotte Mason

Figure 4 Private Harry Bunce with thanks to Charlotte Mason

Figure 5 Wiltshire at war
http://www.wiltshireatwar.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Image-2-SPTA-circa-1899.jpg

Figure 6 Wiltshire Community History
https://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getimage.php?id=2752

Figure 7 How Military Camps saved some Wiltshire towns from extinction
http://www.wiltshireatwar.org.uk/story/how-military-camps-saved-some-wiltshire-villages-from-extinction/

Figure 8 Map of Gallipoli. Kingsford, C. L.,1997. *The Story of The Royal Warwickshire Regiment.* D P & G Military Publishers

9th (Service) Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, 39th Brigade, 13th Division pp 196 to 208
Great War Forum
https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/63794-9th-service-battalion-royal-warwickshire-regiment/

Figure 9 Map of Lemnos to Cape Helles
http://www.worcestershireregiment.com/bat_9_1915.php

Figure 10 W Beach, Helles, on 7th January 1916 just prior to the final evacuation.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallipoli_Campaign

Figure 11 Map of Lower Mesopotamia
http://ww1blog.osborneink.com/?p=9108

Figure 12 Amara cemetery
http://www.winkleighheroes.co.uk/soldiers/harveyaw.htm

Figure 13 St Mary's Church. Moseley History Society
City of Birmingham, Tramways Department memorial. Photographs by Edwina Rees
Unveiling of Birmingham Tramway memorial with thanks to Charlotte Mason
Birmingham Live. Photograph by Paul Fulford, Carl Chinn
https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/whats-on/arts-culture-news/gallery/what-centenary-square-looked-like-16535282

Figure 14 Birmingham Tramways memorial
Illustrated London News 3 June 1922
Birmingham Daily Gazette, *29th May 1922*

Figure 15 Photograph of Rose and the children from the family archive of Charlotte Mason

Figure 16 Photographs of the service on 17th October 2019 taken by Jim Hone and Geoff Rees and Ray Tier