

# Lieutenant Geoffrey Hugh Hadley

Geoffrey Hugh Hadley was born on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1895. He was the second eldest of nine children (three sisters and six brothers) born to Frederic Hadley and his wife Ellen. Frederic was hard working and industrious, and over time built up a successful machine and tool making business of which he was the Managing Director. They lived at 72 Cambridge Road, Moseley, Birmingham and, by 1911, at 'Oakfield', 18 Blenheim Road, Moseley.

Geoffrey was the first of his brothers to attend King Edward School at Five Ways, Birmingham. He was there from the age of eleven in 1906 until he was fifteen in 1910.

On leaving school, Geoffrey started work at 'S. A. Daniell Ltd, Lion Works' based in Edward Street Parade, Birmingham.

Shortly after war was declared on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914, Geoffrey enlisted as a Trooper in the 4<sup>th</sup> Queens Own Hussars.

Three months later, on 20<sup>th</sup> November, he was commissioned into the 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Warwickshire Regiment (Royal Warwicks) as a Second Lieutenant (see below left).



## The Roll of Honour at the Lion Works



ROLL OF HONOUR.

EMPLOYEES OF

**S. A. DANIELL LIMITED,**

LION WORKS, EDWARD STREET PARADE, BIRMINGHAM,

Who have joined His Majesty's Forces during the War.

FRANK S. PEARSON, LL.B., Lieut.-Colonel (Director).

GEORGE HUGH HADLEY, Lieutenant. 16th Royal Warwickshire Regt.

BODDINGTON, GEORGE, Gunner.	LEWIS, FRED.
CLARK, THOMAS.	MUTTON, FRED, Sergeant.
CLACK, HERBERT E.	NEWTON, ALBERT J.
COLLINS, EDWARD.	PARKER, JOHN H.
FOWLER, LEONARD.	PELOW, WILLIAM.
GREENSALL, CHARLES.	QUELCH, FREDERICK G.
GREENWAY, WALTER, Chief Mechanic.	REYNOLDS, ALBERT.
HALL, JOHN.	SIMMS, ARTHUR.
HICKLING, SAMUEL.	STOCKTON, JOHN.
HUGHES, ROBERT.	STRETTON, A.
JONES, S., Sergeant.	SHEARD, SIDNEY G.
JOHNSON, GEORGE.	TOWNSEND, ALBERT.
KEELEY, SAMUEL.	TURNER, ALBERT, Sergeant-Major.
KRIEGER, WILLIAM.	
LEFT, JOHN W., Gunner.	



He remained in Reserve with the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Warwicks until 10<sup>th</sup> February 1916 when he embarked France for active service. On landing he proceeded to Molliens-Vidame (Molliens-Vidame is west of Amiens. In 1972 it became merged with Molliens-Dreuil). Here he joined the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Warwicks where, on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1916, he was assigned to 'D' Coy.

WAR DIARY				Army
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY				(Erase heading not required.)
Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II and the Staff Manual respectively. Title Pages will be prepared in manuscript.				
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	
MOLLIENS-VIDAME	1916 20 <sup>th</sup> 13 <sup>14</sup>		<p>Refce map AMIENS - Sheet 12 Scale 1/80,000</p> <p>Strength Reinforcement of officers arrived and reported for duty from 12<sup>th</sup> (R) B<sup>n</sup> R War R</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. G. H. HADLEY            2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. P. H. ILES            2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. A. S. DEVINE            2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. W. E. PARK            2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. W. SEWELL            Lt. H. J. HAMMOND</p>	

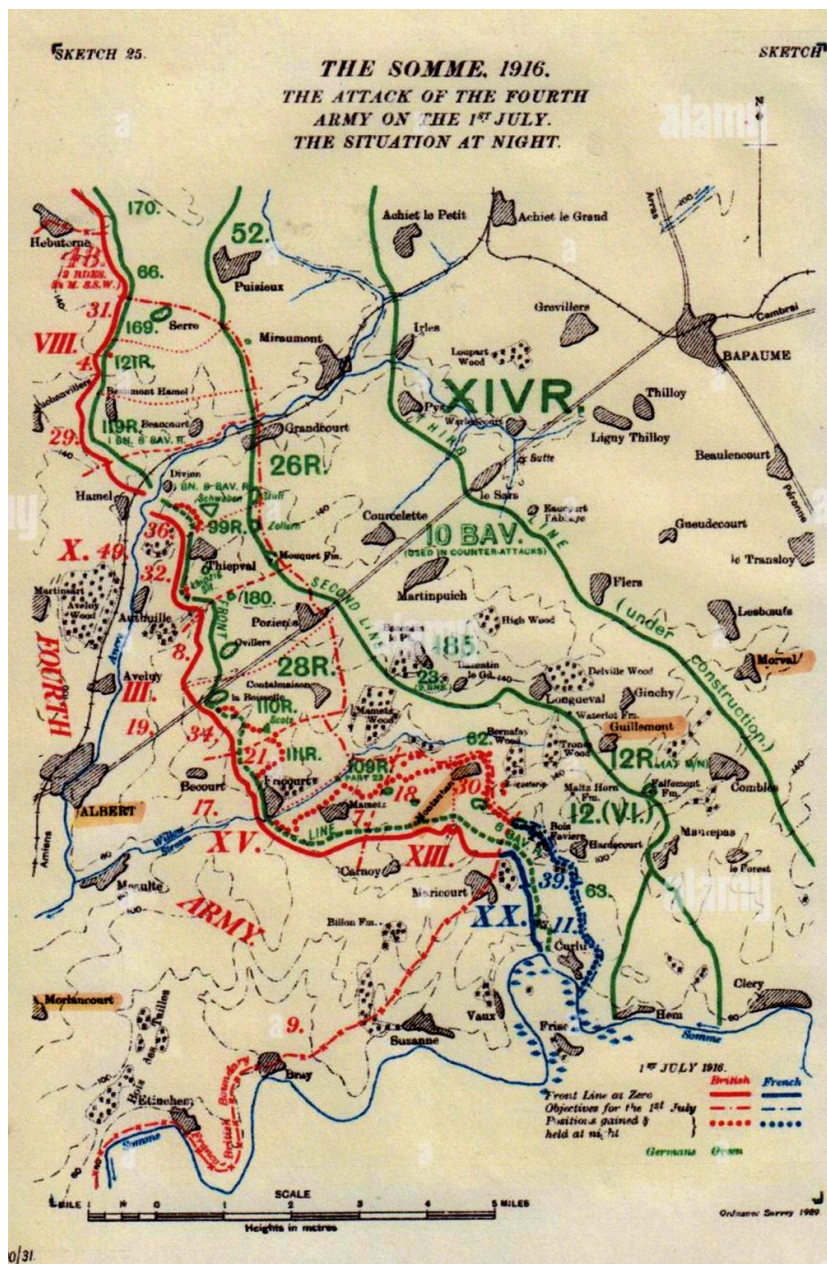
### The War Diary of 16<sup>th</sup> Warwicks lists 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. G.H.Hadley's arrival at Molliens-Vidame

From February, the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Warwicks, part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Division, 15<sup>th</sup> Brigade, were in training. In March 1916, the 5<sup>th</sup> Division took over a section of the front line between St Laurent Blangy and the southern edge of Vimy Ridge near Arras, Their experience of trench life was different from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Battalions. When not occupying frontline trenches, the majority of the men were used most of the time for mining fatigues, forming a human chain of thousands of men passing buckets of spoil down the line, to be disposed of out of sight from enemy observation. From June the weather improved and, although there had been casualties in the battalion during their time in the front line, the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion suffered the least number of the three Birmingham battalions. After four months in France, Geoffrey must have felt like others in his battalion, that the change in the weather was a chance to get out of the trenches, do some fighting and get the war over. On the 27<sup>th</sup> June the battalion marched to Wanquentin where they were deployed in burying cables alongside the Dainville-Waille Road while further south the 'Big Push' was about to begin - the Battle of the Somme.

It was in this battle that his brother, Cyril Vernon Hadley, a Second Lieutenant in the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment, was killed leading an attack on the German lines on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1916, the third day of the Battle of the Somme.



From the 15<sup>th</sup> July, after the disastrous first days of the Battle of the Somme, the 5<sup>th</sup> Division moved south to reinforce the depleted regiments. The 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion were made ready for supporting the ongoing battle for Longueval and Deville Wood. During the battle, the Germans pounded the British positions with howitzers and heavy shells and, by the time they were stood down at the start of August, the battalion had sustained 265 casualties. It is possible that Geoffrey was not present at the time due to the fact that, on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1916, he received a promotion to a temporary Lieutenant. The War Diary for 14<sup>th</sup> September at Morlancourt (4 miles south of Albert, where the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion were billeted) recorded 'the arrival of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut G H Hadley.' It is likely that his return was from a training course following his promotion.



Map of the Somme. Highlighted in orange are the locations of places mentioned in this article for 1916

It would have been a difficult journey to get there, as the roads were inches deep in mud and congested with traffic. During their time in this sector, the 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Warwicks were in the front line and reserve at the battles for Guillemont, Flers-Courcelette, Morval and Le Transloy.

On leaving the area in October, General Rawlinson sent a message to the 5<sup>th</sup> Division:

The conspicuous part that has been taken by 5<sup>th</sup> Division in the Battle of the Somme reflects the highest credit on the Division as a whole and I desire to express to every Officer, NCO and man my congratulations and warmest thanks.

At the beginning of October, the 5<sup>th</sup> Division moved to Festubert, to take over a section of the line called the La Bassée Front. The 16<sup>th</sup> Warwicks were billeted at Paradis, 10 miles north of Bethune. There was still a constant threat from enemy artillery and sniper fire in this sector, but in comparison with the Somme it was relatively tranquil. It was discovered that the 5<sup>th</sup> German Bavarian Division they had fought against in the Somme were on the opposite side of No Man's Land. Both sides had taken heavy casualties there and all everyone wanted was a peaceful life; but the British High Command had other ideas - to harass the Germans continuously to wear them down.

To this end, frequent sorties into No Man's Land and trench raids were organised. Geoffrey headed one of the first raids by his battalion on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1916:

At 12.25 am, a patrol consisting of Lt G.H. Hadley and 2 OR's left our trenches and entered the enemy's trenches at the BOARS HEAD map ref RICHEBOURS 36 SW3 1/10000 edition and remained in them over one hour without observing any sign of the enemy.

The next entry for him in the War Diary was on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 1916:

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant G H. Hadley and C. Alderson proceeded to England on leave.

By the time he had travelled home and back, it would have given Geoffrey a welcome break of around seven days at home over the Christmas period.

He returned from leave on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1917 to the left sector of Cuinchy. For the first few weeks of the year there were severe frosts, the temperatures going as low as minus 22°C, the worst in France for over thirty years. Casualties were fortunately low at this time.

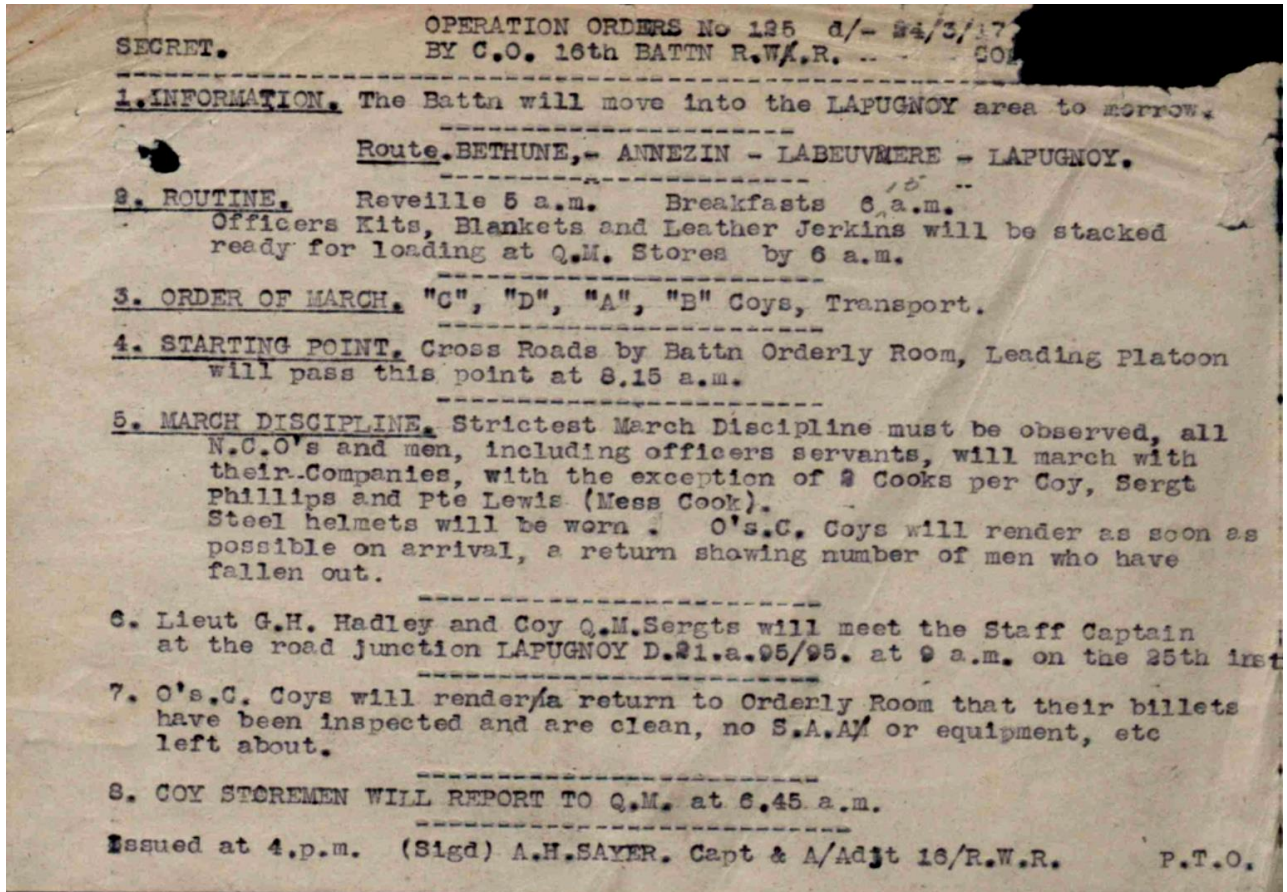
With better weather in Spring, the well-laid plans for the 1917 offensive commenced. The British 5<sup>th</sup> Division, were under orders to take the seemingly impregnable Vimy Ridge under the command of the Third Canadian Division.

In preparation for the assault, the 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Warwicks were to move from Bethune via, Annezin and Labeuvrière to Lapugnoy on 24<sup>th</sup> March, Reveille was at 5am and after breakfast at 6 am, the battalion was to march out in order of 'C', 'D', 'A' and 'B' Coys.



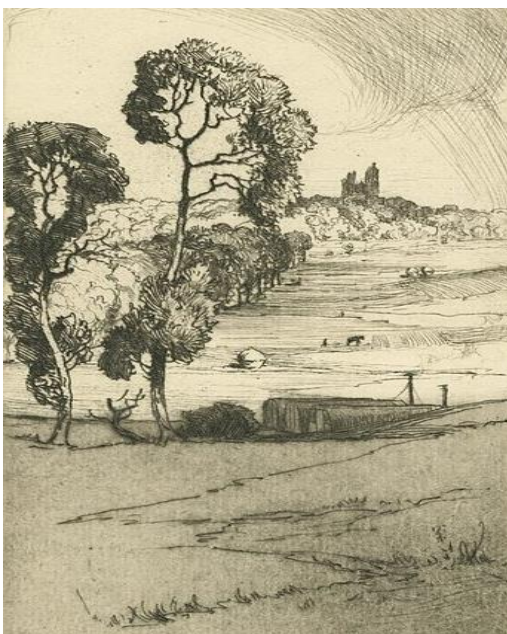
The strictest march discipline was to be observed with all NCO's and men, including officers servants, marching with their companies. The War Diary recorded that:

Lieutenant G.H. Hadley and Coy Q.M. will meet the Staff Captain at the road junction Lapugnoy at 9am on the 25<sup>th</sup> inst



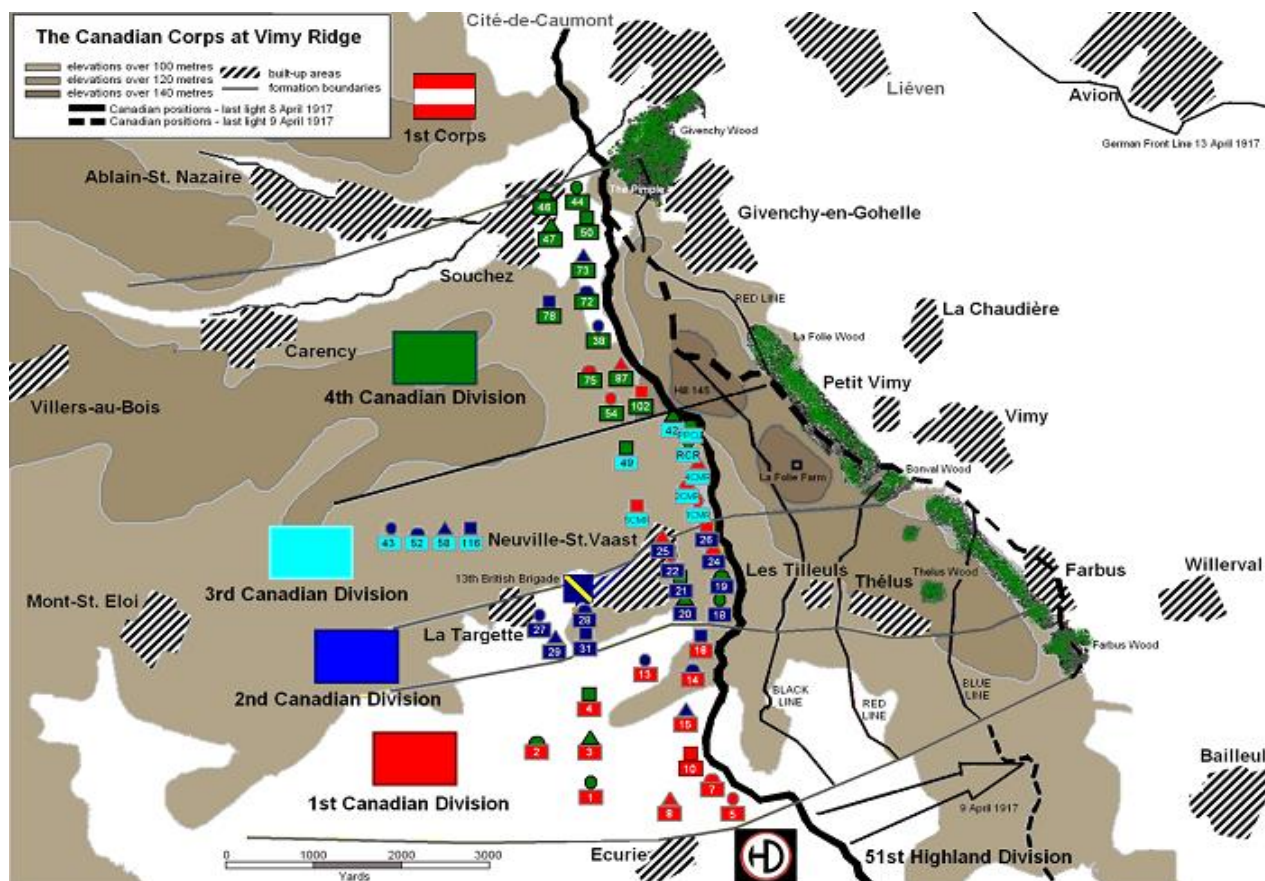
(Above) War diary instructions for 24<sup>th</sup> March 1917

(Below) A drawing by Cyril Henry Barraud of a view from Mont St. Eloi from Camblain L'Abbe



For the forthcoming offensive there was to be a large scale assault upon a fifteen mile section of the Arras Front, to begin on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1917. The 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Warwicks marched to Cambigneul early on 8<sup>th</sup> April, where they met up with the Canadian Corps Reserve. At 9.45 am on 12<sup>th</sup> April, the battalion set off, marching via Camblain L'Abbe and Villiers au Bois to the road junction NW of Mont St Eloi. After a halt for lunch the battalion marched to Berthonval Farm.

On 13<sup>th</sup> April, the battalion relieved the 11<sup>TH</sup> Canadian Brigade at Cyril Trench in front of La Coulotte together with the eastern side of the Lens to Arras road.



Map of the attack at Vimy Ridge. It shows the location of Mont St Eloi, the position of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division

The advance commenced on 14<sup>th</sup> March. Word was received that the Germans were falling back and, as a result, the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion were to move forward with 'B' and 'D' Coys leading an Advanced Guard with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division at 5.15 am towards their objective at La Coulotte. However, the Germans put up fierce artillery resistance and by 8.30 am the 'B', 'C' and 'D' Coys were forced to withdraw and start digging a line of defence. Patrols only were to be in front of outpost lines. It is not known in what circumstances it occurred, but during the offensive Geoffrey was posted 'missing.'

### Casualties from 14th.- 15th.

Officers.  
 Lieut. G.H. Hadley. Missing.  
 Snd. Lieut. E.R. Childe. Wounded.  
 Snd. Lieut. G.M. Bark. Wounded.  
 Snd. Lieut. H.E. Blaiberg. Wounded.



It was later confirmed that Geoffrey was taken prisoner by the Germans(see right).

He was marched to the town of Douai and from there entrained for the Officer's POW Camp at Karlsruhe where a great number of newly captured British officers were sent. It consisted of wooden huts erected in the grounds of the schloss. It must have been a relief for his family when they received a communication dated 29<sup>th</sup> May 1917 from Karlsruhe POW Camp that Geoffrey was a Prisoner of War and not a casualty.

Hadley, Geoffrey  
Lieut. Royal Warwick  
Reg. Wakefield, Marley  
Birmingham (contd)

P.A. 10214. 1.5.17. H. Geoffrey:  
Lieut. Royal Warwickshire  
D. Coy. Born 16-2-95. Warwick  
shire, taken 14.11.17 Avion, as  
killed from Douai at Officer  
Gef. Lager Karlsruhe  
Communiqué famille 15.5.17  
P.A. 10.5.17. 29.5.17. A. Geoffrey

Lieut. G. H. Hadley, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, who is reported missing, is the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hadley, of Oakfield, Blenheim Road, Moseley. He was educated at King Edward's School, New Street, and prior to the war was a member of the staff of S. A. Daniell, Ltd., Lion Works, Birmingham. He is 22 years of age.

(Above) The Birmingham Daily Post on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1917 reporting Geoffrey as missing  
(Below) The notice on 2<sup>nd</sup> June immediately posted after receiving news that he was a POW

Lieutenant G. H. Hadley, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, reported missing in April, is a prisoner of war in Germany.

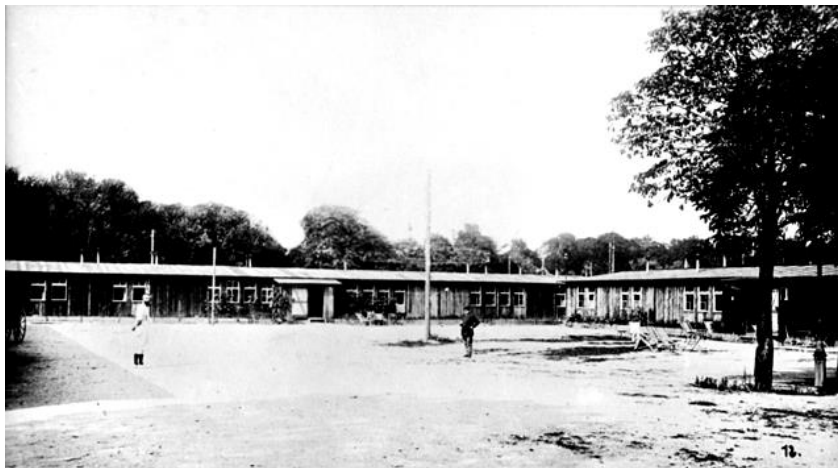
In a book by Captain Donaldson, '*The Amazing Cruise of the German Raider Wolf*' published in 1941, there is a small chapter that describes what would have happened to new POWs on arrival at Karlsruhe after they had been marched there under strong guard from the station. This has been paraphrased below:

The POW camp at Karlsruhe was near the centre of the town. Prisoners were taken first to what appeared to be hotel. Here they were put four per room that was described as 'quite comfortable', except for the fact that the doors were locked and the windows had been painted over from the outside. The 'hotel' was in fact a fumigation centre. The prisoners were told that they were to have a bath but would have to wait their turn. After a long train journey and a march, this would have been warmly anticipated. However, because of the number of prisoners being processed, the captured men were told they would have to 'wait their turn' and it was said in such a manner as to imply that a bath was a terrible ordeal to go through. The wait turned out to be four days during which they were kept in their rooms. The bathroom turned out to be not baths but four showers, both hot and cold, so the prisoners had the 'time of their lives' and 'did not in the least want to come out when ordered to do so'. Following this cleansing process, the men were taken back to

their rooms and found that their beds had not been changed so, had they been covered in lice on arrival, the fumigation and bath would have been wasted!

After six days in the palatial hotel the POWs were marched to the camp where they and their baggage were thoroughly searched. Any money and anything that was considered might help them escape was confiscated. One man who protested that his nail scissors had been taken away was told by a German officer that they 'might cut the wire.' A few days later in the canteen, the scissors were seen for sale for five marks!

The camp at Karlsruhe consisted of nine wooden huts or barracks. One of those was in use by the Kommandant and other officials and another for the prisoner's dining room off which were two rooms for reading and writing. A third barracks was for amusements. Each of the remaining barracks was used for prisoners' accommodation and was divided up into a series of rooms, the largest accommodating eight. Each room had a stove and there was an unlimited supply of coal (this was during the first two weeks of March 1918). The huts were surrounded by a barbed wire fence. Six feet beyond that there was a 10ft high wooden fence surrounded by barbed wire and beyond that yet another high barbed wire fence. The food supplied by the Germans was anything but plentiful and badly cooked. Breakfast at 8 am was a jug of coffee substitute (no sugar or milk) but no food. Dinner at noon was a plate of vegetable soup and rye bread (twice a week the soup might contain some meat). Tea at 6.00pm consisted of left over soup or a few potatoes in their jackets. Muster rolls were two per day at 9.45am and 8.45pm. Lights out was at 9.00pm but they were allowed to walk about till 11.00am. There was plenty of room for exercise.



**Figure 1 (above) & Figure 2 (below): Karlsruhe POW camp showing the wooden huts or barracks**







A photograph of British POW's at Karlsruhe, including Geoffrey

On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1918, Geoffrey was repatriated to England and returned to work at S A Daniel Ltd as a secretary to the company.



Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
HADLEY	R. War. R.	Lieut x Capt.	
G. H.			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
R. War. R. BRITISH STAR	OFF 150	450	IN x 9/19 d/7.10.14 NW/6/13365 1914-15 Star ineligible authy MIN. 13. NW/6/13365
Theatre of War first served in	France		
Date of entry therein	10.2.16		
		NW/6/13365	K. 1880

(Left) Geoffrey as a POW. (Above) His WW1 British Army Medal Index

Geoffrey's British Army Medal Index recorded that in 1921 he applied for his WW1 service medals and was awarded the British War Medal and the Allied Victory Medal.

In 1922 Geoffrey married Cynthia Mary Katherine Hudson and the couple set up home at 51, Russell Road, Moseley. Despite the trauma of his war time service, Geoffrey signed up in February 1925 in the 5<sup>th</sup> Territorial Army Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment and was appointed to a commission as Lieutenant.

**Lieut. G. H. Hadley, who during the war was a temporary officer of the 16th Service Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, has been appointed to a commission as lieutenant in the 5th (T.A.) Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.**

It must have been a happy day for Geoffrey and his wife when a son, Christopher John Hadley, was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1929, but this turned into a family tragedy ten days later, on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1929, when his mother Cynthia died. She was only 27 years old.

Late in 1936, Geoffrey found love again, and married Cecily Beatrice Taylor at a ceremony in Kensington, London, Cecily, known as Tiggie, was born in 1897 in Finsbury, South Africa. Her father, Dr Henry Shinglewood Taylor, had been a doctor in the army there during the second Boer War, 1899-1902 serving as a civilian doctor at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Field Hospital in Ficksburg. The family still retain the diary he wrote of his experiences at the time. By 1911, Tiggie and her parents had moved to Jersey on her father's retirement, where they remained during the course of WW1. The island was the base of a German POW camp at Blanchés Banque at St Brelade. Henry died in 1926 at 3 Westbourne Terrace, Jersey. How Geoffrey and Tiggie came to meet might be explained by the fact that Geoffrey was the commercial manager of a machinist and tool making company and although he lived at 44 Viceroy Close, Bristol Road, Birmingham, he had enlisted in the RAF Voluntary Reserve as a Pilot on probation, for the Administrative and Special Duties Branch at the War Office in London. At some point he must have met Tiggie who was doing unpaid domestic duties at the War Office.

By 1943, Geoffrey was a Wing Commander in the Technical Branch of the Engineering Department. Geoffrey and Cecily, during this period, lived at 47, Bramham Gardens, Kensington.



Directorate of Organisation			
Director .. .. .	.. .. .	Air Commodore W. H. MERTON, <i>O.B.E., p.s.a.</i>	1Aug.44
Deputy Directorate of Organisation (1).			
Deputy Director .. .. .	.. .. .	Group Captain A. E. Taylor .. .. .	11Nov.43
Assistant Director .. .. .	.. .. .	Wing Commander H. J. Morrish .. .. .	13Apr.42
Wing Commanders .. .. .	.. .. .	T. A. Cunliffe .. .. .	16Nov.42
		V. R. Gibbs, <i>D.S.C., p.s.c.</i> .. .. .	13Sept.34
		J. C. Stevens, <i>O.B.E.</i> .. .. .	13May40
		R. C. G. Berks .. .. .	22July44
Squadron Leaders .. .. .	.. .. .	H. T. N. Christal .. .. .	10May43
		C. A. Cooke .. .. .	25Dec.44
		S. P. Grounds .. .. .	14Sept.42
		G. H. Hadley .. .. .	1Apr.42
		L. H. Harrison .. .. .	10June42
		P. R. Hatfield, <i>D.F.C.</i> .. .. .	9Dec.44
		L. C. G. Hewett .. .. .	10May43
		R. H. Kerrison .. .. .	12Nov.42
		Sir Richard H. Mathias, <i>Bt.</i> .. .. .	16June42
		F. Morton-Smith .. .. .	25May42
Squadron Officer .. .. .	.. .. .	J. A. Plowman .. .. .	20May41
		S. W. Slaughter .. .. .	4Mar.40
		J. M. Williamson .. .. .	6Jan.43

After the war, Geoffrey and Tiggie moved to Swanage, where they lived in Durlaston Cottage on a hill overlooking the Downs and Swanage Bay. Geoffrey worked for a firm called Hamworthy Engineering, possibly as a sales representative. He and Tiggie also enjoyed restoring run-down properties in the area. Tiggie was also a successful published author and illustrator of children's books.

In 1953, Geoffrey's son Christopher by his first marriage, married Claire Patricia Christine Taylor at St Mary's Church Guildford. The couple went on to have four children.

**HADLEY—TAYLOR.**—The marriage of Christopher John, only son of Mr. G. H. Hadley and the late Mrs. Hadley, formerly of Birmingham, to Claire, only daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Taylor, of Burma, took place on Saturday, September 19, at St. Mary's Church, Guildford.

*Birmingham Post*, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1953

Christopher went to Dunchurch-Winton Hall, a boarding school near Rugby and then to Oxford University, where he studied forestry and in the course of his career lived in the Solomon Islands and East Africa. He pioneered conservation long before this became part of our collective culture, although unrecognised at the time.

Cecily (Tiggie) died on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1980 and Geoffrey, just over a year later on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1981, aged 86.

Pictured below left is Geoffrey walking along the sea front at Swanage and below right is Geoffrey's son Christopher with his wife, Claire and four children, Mike, Jamie, Sally and Deborah. Christopher also retired to Swanage, where he lived at No 1, Dolphin House, Peveril Point until his death on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1993, aged 64.



**Researched and written by Edwina Rees, Moseley Society History Group  
with thanks to Sally Dhruv, Geoffrey's grand daughter**

To read more about the Hadley family and Geoffrey's brother Lieutenant Cyril Vernon Hadley go to: go to the Moseley Society website at:

<https://moseley-society.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Second-Lieutenant-Cyril-Vernon-Hadley.pdf>

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[www.midlandshistoricaldata.org](http://www.midlandshistoricaldata.org)

Figures 1 & 2 The Great War (1914-1918) Forum, posted by Steven 9<sup>th</sup> February 2008

Photos of Karlsruhe by F. Albrecht, sent to the UK in December 1917

<https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/29620-help-needed-karlsruhe-pow-camp/> -

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The War Diaries of the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment:

WO 95/1874/1 1<sup>st</sup> November 1915 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 1917

WO 95/1574/2 1<sup>st</sup> April 1918 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 1918

WO 95/1557/3 1<sup>st</sup> October 1918 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 1919

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Photographs of Geoffrey Hadley and the POW camp contributed by Sally Dhruv