

CHARING HEATH



The Great War
1914 – 1919



BURCHETT W

Private SD/143 William BURCHETT. 11th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. Died 3rd September 1916. Born Hurstmonceux, Sussex. Resided Charing Heath. Buried in the Ancre British Cemetery, Beaumont Hamel, The Somme, France. Grave reference VIII.B.17.

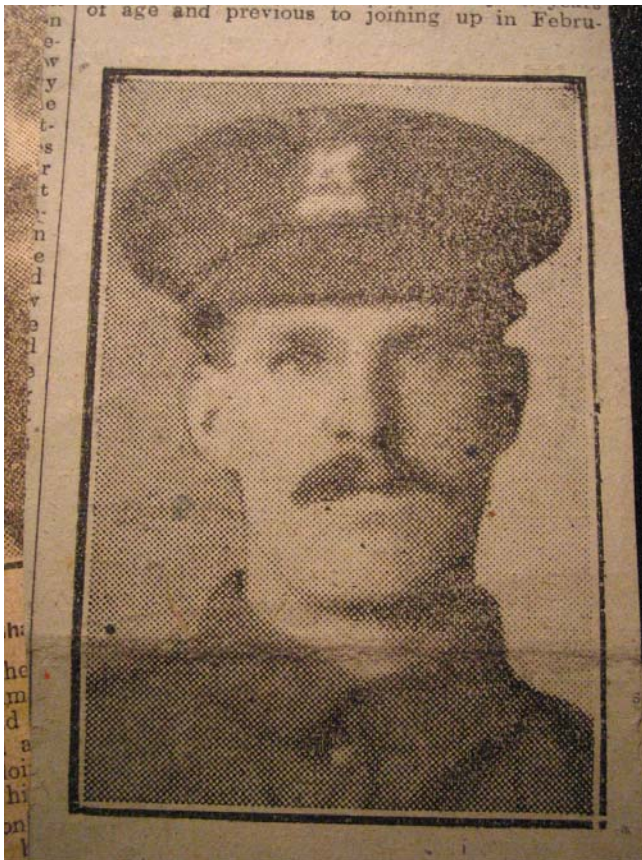
On the 27th August 1916 the 11th battalion took over front line trenches in front of Hamel. On the 2nd September the battalion was engaged in extremely heavy fighting. The enemy first line trenches were captured but the battalion lost heavy casualties due to enemy shelling in no mans land. On the 3rd September the battalion once again attacked at Hamel. The battalion withdrew at 18.30 hours and marched to Englebelmer. The war diary states the battalion sustained 299 battle casualties between the 27th August and the 3rd September.

CHAMBERS G

Private G/44065 George CHAMBERS. 17th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. Died 28th April 1917 aged 34 years. Born Lenham, Kent. Resided Lenham. Son of T Chambers of Chapel Mill House, Lenham, Kent. Buried in the Roclincourt Military Cemetery, France. Grave reference III.B.1.

Roclincourt is a village a little to the east of the road from Arras to Lens. Take the N 17 from Arras until the junction of this road and the D 60 (first CWGC sign here). Travel along the D 60 into Roclincourt village, for approximately one kilometre, to a right turn (direction St Nicholas). Take this road for approximately 175 metres to a lane on the right. The cemetery lies 100 metres away at the foot of this lane. Historical Information: The French troops who held this front before March 1916 made a military cemetery (now removed), on the south-west side of which the present Commonwealth cemetery was made. It was begun by the 51st (Highland) and 34th Divisions in April 1917, and contains many graves of 9 April, the first day of the Battles of Arras. It continued in use, as a front-line cemetery, until October 1918 and after the Armistice graves, mostly from the battlefield north of Roclincourt, were brought into Plot IV, Row F. Roclincourt Military Cemetery contains 916 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 32 of them unidentified. There are also four German war graves. The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.





CHAPMAN B

Lance Corporal G/8975 Bertie Friend CHAPMAN. 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Monday 2nd July 1917 age 26 years. Born Lenham. Enlisted Herne Bay. Resided Ashford. Son of Albert and Ellen Chapman of East Lenham near Maidstone. Buried in the Bethune Town Cemetery, Bethune, France. Grave reference VI.F.30.

Prior to enlisting Bertie was employed as a Lorryman by Mr Wacher of Herne Bay, Kent.

At the time of his death he had been in France for Fourteen months. He had been wounded at least twice but recovered from his wounds.

The first eight days of June 1917 were spent in the trenches at Hulluch in France. They remained in this area for the whole month taking steady casualties from shelling and the occasional trench mortar. On the 29th June 1917 the 1st battalion was in trenches at Mazingarbe. It appears that Bertie must have been wounded near Hulluch and then recovered to a Military hospital in Bethune where he sadly succumbed to his wounds.

HOGBIN A

Corporal G/771 Albert HOGBEN. 6th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Friday 30th November 1917. Born Lenham. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Lenham Heath. Albert has no known grave. His name appears on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France. Panel reference 3.

On the 30th November 1917 the 6th battalion was in trenches at Pam Pam Farm, La Vacquerie near Cambrai in France. A great German offensive was launched. The 6th Buffs suffered severely on this day. The enemy penetrated through the battalion's line at a number of points. On counter attack was launched on Pam Pam Farm and this location was recaptured. By the days end the battalion had suffered 317 casualties. Albert must have been one of those men killed at or near Pam Pam Farm.

HOPE G

Private G/3541 George William HOPE. 8th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Sunday 26th September 1915. Born High Halden. Enlisted Bexhill. Resided Bexhill. George has no known grave. His name appears on the Loos Memorial, Loos, France. Panel reference 15 to 19.

On the 1st September 1915 the 8th battalion was near Boulogne. The next day it went into billets at Maningham near Etaples and remained there for 14 days. On the 21st September the battalion prepared for the forthcoming Battle of Loos. On the 25th September the battalion marched to Bethune. Col Romer was the battalion's commanding officer. On the 26th September the battalion went into captured German second line trenches. At 10.30 hours the battalion attacked enemy positions east of Hulluch alongside the 8th West Kent's. The battalion was in action all day and suffered terrible casualties – 24 officers (including Col Romer) and no less than 610 men! The battalion had been decimated in the main by murderous German Machine gun fire.

Or

Private G/11445 George David HOPE. 10th (Yeomanry) Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). Died 31st July 1917. Born Goudhurst. Enlisted Maidstone. George has no known grave. His name appears on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Leper, Belgium.



LILLY C

Private G/11723 Charles Lilly. 1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). Formerly Rifle Brigade (1899-1902). Died 22nd July 1916 aged 31 years. Born Kingsnorth. Enlisted Maidstone. Resided Barnfield, Charing. Second son of Charles Lilly of "Barnfield", Charing, Kent. Charles has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 11C.

Charles was an experienced soldier having served in the Boer Wars of 1899-1902. He rejoined the army on the outbreak of war and was married shortly before he was killed.

On the 20th July 1916, the 1st battalion was in High Wood on The Somme. On the 22nd July the battalion was in action all day attacking the enemy at Wood Lane. The attack was bought to a stand still by heavy German machine gun fire. On the 23rd July 1916 the battalion withdrew to Pommiers Redoubt.

MILGATE J

Private 631492 John Edwin MILGATE. 20th Battalion (Blackheath and Woolwich), London Regiment. Died Sunday 1st October 1916 age 22 years. Enlisted Blackheath, London. Resided Lewisham, London. Son of Mr S.L Milgate of 15 Glenview Road, Lewisham, London. John has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 9D,9C,13C,12C.

On the 27th September 1916 the 20th battalion was at Mametz Wood on The Somme. It held frontline trenches at Cough Drop and Drop Alley. On the 30th September strong points were taken 100 yards of the Flers line. The day that John died the battalion was in action all day. It attacked at Eaucourt L'Abbaye. The battalion followed tanks into Flers and on to the Le Barque Road. On the 4th October the battalion withdrew to Black Wood nearby Flers.

RUMBOLD W

Private 26607 William Charles RUMBOLD. 23rd Battalion, London Regiment. Formerly East Surrey Regiment. Died 22nd August 1918. Born Folkestone. Enlisted Ashford. Resided The Nook, Charing Heath, Kent. William has no known grave. His name appears on the Vis-En-Artois Memorial, France. Panel reference 6.

The CWGC and Soldiers Died Great War wrongly record William's unit as the 23rd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment. There were only 15 battalions in the East Surrey Regiment. It is possible that he was attached to the East Surrey's (but still in the London Regiment) when he was killed which may have led to the confusion. The Absentee Voters List (below) backs up this explanation -

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

The Nook, The Heath, Charing Heath

Private William Charles RUMBOLD. 23rd Battalion, London Regiment.

SAGE F

Private 206372 Frederick Charles Bertie SAGE. 6th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). Formerly (4438) The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Tuesday 2nd July 1918 age 18 years. Born Charing Heath. Enlisted Canterbury. Son of Mrs W. Sage of Acton Farm, Charing, Kent. Buried in the Bouzincourt Ridge Cemetery, Bouzincourt, France. Grave reference II.F.11.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Hurst Cottages, Charing

Private 31102 Frederick Bertie Charles SAGE. Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).

Wind Hill, The Heath, Charing

Private 300277 Bertram William SAGE. Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

Private 203605 James SAGE. 4th Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

Private 21427 James SAGE. 307th Company, Royal Engineers.

On the 30th June 1918 the 6th Buffs were in action north west of Albert on The Somme. Five men were killed in this attack and 30 wounded. On the 3rd July 1918 the battalion was in action again near Albert. The 6th Buffs repulsed a determined German attack on their trenches and this heavy fighting continued all day until 1945 hours. At the end of the day the battalion withdrew into the Divisional reserve at Senlis where they remained until the 10th July.

SWAFFER W

*** This casualty did not have an official commemoration until 2006 when we submitted his case to the MoD (See Batch 2 of our Non-Coms). The Charing Parish Council refused to help us with our work which is quite remarkable bearing in mind this man is one of their village sons!**

Driver 40138 William Glazier SWAFFER. Royal Field Artillery (RFA). Formerly 84th Brigade, RFA. Died T.B 28 June 1918 aged 28 years (only 5 days after discharge from the army)! Son of Emma Swaffer of Rose Cottages, Lenham Heath, Maidstone, Kent. Born December 1889 at Charing, Ashford, Kent. Buried locally in the Holy Trinity Churchyard, Charing Heath, Ashford, Kent. It took us 3 years to find the grave. We wrote to the Charing Parish Council 3 times but all were ignored. Eventually Carl Liversage from the CWGC managed to find the burial site.

This man had close links to Charing Heath and Lenham.

DEATH CERTIFICATE

William Glazier SWAFFER

June Qtr, 1918, Hollingbourne, 2a, 1064 (aged 28 years)

Late Driver, Royal Field Artillery (RFA),
Grocers Assistant

1. T.B

Death registered by Kate Swaffer (sister) – Rose Cottages, Lenham, Kent

Prior to the outbreak of war William was working in the Charing area as a Grocers Assistant.

Upon the outbreak of war William voluntarily enlisted on 7 October 1914 into the Royal Artillery at Bury St Edmunds. On 17 October 1914 William was posted to 84th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. On 11 May 1915 William was posted to another unit. On 26 July 1915 William landed in France with the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). He remained in France on active service until 23 October 1917 (2 years 90 days active service). On 24 October 1917 William returned home to the UK where he continued to serve in the RFA. On 23 June 1918 William was discharged from the army unfit for further service. Total service 3 years 260 days (nearly 4 years wartime service). William died only 5 days later of T.B!!!!

The Swaffer family is a well known and long established Ashford family. Many members of this family are buried in Great Chart Churchyard.

Births Dec 1889 ASHFORD

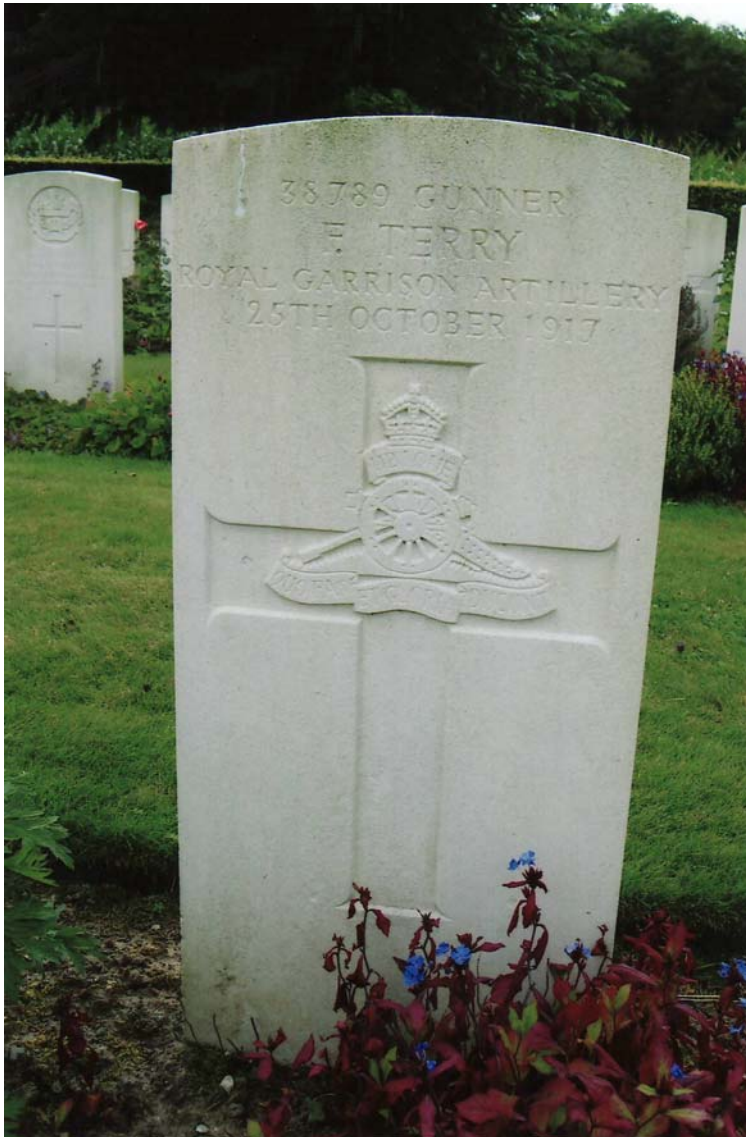
Swaffer William Glazier W Ashford 2a 780

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Belham Farm, Mersham

Corporal 140681 William Hubert SWAFFER. 208th Field Company, Royal Engineers.

How an earth could this mans death have been missed by the authorities? He died 5 days after being discharged from the British Army. At the time of his death he was being paid a full 100% war disability pension! His service papers state ATTRIBUTABLE (Exposure to wet and cold) Permanent disability. At the time of William's discharge he was already losing weight. It is patently obvious that he was in the final stages of terminal T.B when he was discharged.



TERRY H

Sergeant G/589 F Harry TERRY. 6th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 9th August 1917. Born Charing Heath, Kent. Born Charing Heath. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Lenham Heath. Son of George and Jane Terry of Cherry Farm, Lenham Heath, Kent. Harry has no known grave. His name appears on the Arras Memorial, Arras, France. Panel reference – Bay 2.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Hook Cottage, Charing

William TERRY. Royal Field Artillery.

3, Tile Lodge Cottages, Charing

Gunner 122345 William TERRY. Royal Field Artillery.

On the 6th August 1917 the 6th battalion went into Beaurains Camp near Arras. On the 9th August 2Lt Hunt and Mason-Springgay led 88 men on a raiding party. 80 German prisoners were captured. Two officers and 35 men were either killed missing or wounded. Harry was obviously one of these men who participated in this attack.

TERRY S

Corporal G/590 Stanley TERRY. 6th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Friday 17th March 1916 age 21 years. Born Lenham. Enlisted Ashford. Resided Lenham. Son of James and Mary Terry of Halloween, Rising Road, Ashford, Kent. Stanley has no known grave. His name appears on the Loos Memorial, France. Panel reference 15 to 19.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Hook Cottage, Charing

William TERRY. Royal Field Artillery.

3, Tile Lodge Cottages, Charing

Gunner 122345 William TERRY. Royal Field Artillery.

During March 1916 the 6th battalion Buffs were in the vicinity of the Hohenzollern Redoubt near Givenchy in France. The battalion made many raids on the enemy throughout March. A major attack took place on the 6th March in and around a strong point called Triangle Crater. The battalion alternated from billets at Bethune to trenches at Hohenzollern Redoubt until Easter 1916 when it withdrew to Lillers for a well deserved rest. Stanley was probably killed in the vicinity of the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

UNWIN T

Private TR10/171763 Thomas J UNWIN. 53rd (Graduated) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. Died Thursday 14th November 1918 age 18 years. Only son of Thomas James and A.E Unwin of 30 Denmark Street, Folkestone, Kent. Buried in the Charing Heath (Holy Trinity) Churchyard, Charing, Kent. Grave reference – East of the church.

The 53rd (Graduated) battalion consisted of young men too young to serve overseas. The young men underwent training before reaching the age of 18 when they were normally drafted to other operational overseas battalions.

LOST MEN

LEE P

Private GS/55 Percy LEE. 7th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. Died 10th February 1917 aged 35 years. Born Bury, Sussex. Enlisted Worthing, Sussex. Husband of A.K Lee of "The Forge", Charing Heath, Ashford, Kent. Buried in the Aveluy Communal Cemetery Extension, The Somme, France. Grave reference IV.B.3.

LUCKHURST W.E

Private L/9920 William Edward LUCKHURST. 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 20th December 1914. Born Charing Heath, Kent. Enlisted Chatham. Resided near Sittingbourne. Buried in the Y Farm Military Cemetery, Bois-Grenier, France. Grave reference E.50.

William was a professional soldier. He served with the 6th Division which was hastily sent from Ireland to France to support the B.E.F.

On the 24th November 1914 when relieved by the Shropshire Light Infantry, the 1st Buffs had been in the vicinity of Bois Grenier for 27 days. This whole period was spent in frontline trenches. Throughout December 1914 the 1st battalion remained in this area alternating between trenches and billets.





PATRICK F.H

Private G/5366 Frank Henry Amos PATRICK. 8th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died Thursday 4th November 1915 age 32 years. Born Shepherdswell, Kent. Enlisted Sandwich. Resided Ash. Son of Steven H Patrick of Charing Heath, Ashford, Kent. Husband of Mrs N.N Moore (formerly Patrick) of 63 Dudley Road, Southall, Middlesex. Frank has no known grave. His name appears on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Ypres, Belgium. Panel reference 12 and 14.

Frank's death was reported locally in the Kentish Express.

Before the outbreak of war Frank was employed in a market garden at Ash, Sandwich, Kent. After leaving Ash he went to work as a Gardener at The Moat, Charing. Frank left a widow and two children.

The 8th battalion fought extensively in the Battle of Loos (Hohenzollern Redoubt) during September and October 1915. The Buffs 8th battalion was almost wiped out suffering 670 casualties in a very short space of time. On the 18th October 1915 Major Truman took over command of the 8th and the battalion was moved into frontline trenches at an undisclosed location (the regimental history fails to give an exact spot).

WOOD G.W

Private 82429 George William WOOD. Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) (MGC). Formerly (17575) The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died between 10th April and 18th April 1918. Born Charing Heath, Kent. Enlisted Ashford. George has no known grave. His name appears on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Zonnebeke, Belgium. Panel reference 154 to 159 and 163A.

The exact date of George's death is not known.



TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN MEMORY OF THE BRAVE
1914 - 1919

WILLIAM	BURCHETT
BERTIE	CHAPMAN
GEORGE	CHAMBERS
ALBERT	HOGBIN
GEORGE	HOPE
CHARLES	LILLY
JOHN	MILLGATE
WILLIAM	RUMBOLD
FREDERICK	SAGE
JOHN	SAGE
WILLIAM	SWAFFER
HARRY	TERRY
STANLEY	TERRY
THOMAS	UNWIN

THEY FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT
AND ARE ALIVE FOR EVERMORE.