

## THE HEREFORDSHIRE REGIMENT

### Their First World War 'Story' – November 1914

#### The 'Bigger' Picture

The Western Front The 2 sides continue to engage with each other and settle in for the winter. Fighting about Messines, Armentieres and Ypres continues.

Other Fronts On the Eastern Front again the 2 sides are settling in for the winter with bitter fighting on the Serbian front and about Warsaw.

Engagements were taking place at sea around the globe: the RN lost HMS Good Hope and Monmouth, with all hands at the battle of Coronel in the South Atlantic, the North Sea was declared a Military Zone by the British, the German navy bombarded the East Coast about Yarmouth, A mixed Allied fleet bombarded the Turkish forts at the approaches to the Dardanelles, HMAS Sydney sunk the German Cruiser Emden in the area of the Cocos Islands.

20 Allied merchant ships at 20,000 tons were sunk in the month by U Boats.

#### The 'Herefords'

The Depot at Hereford continued to function, receiving soldiers returning from both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalions for a variety of reasons; illness, inefficiency with many soldiers being discharged under King's Regulations paragraph 392 xvi as 'unfit for military service'; as a result of the rigours of hard military training and more stringent medical examination. Included amongst these were:

2614 Private George Preece	
enlisted 19/10/1914	discharged 25/11/1914 aged 48 years and 37 days.
2426 Private Arthur Walters	
enlisted 13/9/1914	discharged 23/11/1914 aged 21 years and 38 days.
2569 Private George Bagley	
enlisted 12/10/1914	discharged 27/11/1914 aged 17 years and 46 days.

Recruits continued to be enlisted, and after basic administration posted, generally to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion for basic training. Included amongst these were:

2793 Private William Davies who went on to serve in Gallipoli	
2839 Private Jack Mills of Berkeley who served at Gallipoli and was discharged 'ill' on 6/9/1916	
2840 Private Harry Groves of Hereford who was wounded at Gallipoli, but served all through the war with The Herefords and was discharged 7/1/1919.	

Drafts were also being formed up from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion to bring the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion up to strength and the administration for these moves fell to 'the Depot'.

Further reports are also made:

A band has been brought into being and bids fair to be extremely popular with the troops.

Widemarsh Common is being used for drill, as this affords a larger scope for drill instruction than Castle Green.

A section of men under Mr Arthur Davey were engaged in trench work at Whitecross, where they were instructed in the making of every known type of firing trench, shelter and cover.

The signallers under 2Lt Hamilton carried out operations.

On 27 November 2207 Charles Wright died of pneumonia; he had enlisted 14 September; he is buried in St Michael's Churchyard, Little Marcle. His grave is administered by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

139/16359

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

BRISTOL AREA Command.

Name of Cemetery LITTLE MARCLE (ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS) CHURCHYARD Report Number BRISTOL 1000 1835  
Parish LITTLE MARCLE Certified Correct and Complete Schedule Number 1  
County HEREFORDSHIRE Signature J. B. Davey Category of Graves "D"  
Area Inspector. 7.X.1926

Unit	Regt. No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Number or letter of			Type of Memorial	Type of Grave	Remarks
					Plot	Row	Grave			
<u>Herefordshire</u>	<u>Regt. 2207</u>	<u>WRIGHT</u>	<u>Pte C</u>	<u>27</u> <u>28.XI.14</u>				<u>M.W.</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>Mr C. W. Wright</u> <u>65 Adolphus Road</u> <u>Minster</u> <u>Swindon</u>

Certified that a plan of this churchyard is not necessary.

J. B. Davey  
Area Inspector. 7.X.1926.

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LITTLE MARCLE (ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS) CHURCHYARD, HEREFORDSHIRE

8910

Whitbra Portland

Official Copy

J. A. King & Co  
Victoria St  
Swindon

Cont. 10/10/21

8 48

1065/1A 2207 PRIVATE C.S. WRIGHT HEREFORDSHIRE REGIMENT. 27th NOVEMBER 1914 HOME CROSS 1

## The Volunteer Training Corps (VTC)

**THE HEREFORD  
VOLUNTEER TRAINING CORPS**

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**A  
PUBLIC MEETING  
OF CITIZENS**

WILL BE HELD ON  
**Thursday, November 19th, 1914**  
At **8** o'clock p.m., at the  
**S. OWEN'S COUNCIL SCHOOL, BATH STREET**  
(By kind permission of the City Education Authority).  
UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF  
**THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF HEREFORD**  
(GEO. B. GREENLAND, ESQ.)

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The question of the affiliation of the above Corps with the Central Association Volunteer Training Corps will be discussed and the objects of the movement will be explained.

It is hoped that the Meeting will be addressed by  
**A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.**

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The **OBJECTS** of the Central Association Volunteer Training Corps (of which Lord Desborough is President) are as follows:—

- (1) To encourage recruiting for the Regular and Territorial Army.
- (2) To encourage men who are not of age for service in the ranks or are otherwise disqualified for service, to **DRILL AND LEARN THE ELEMENTS OF MUSKETRY IN THEIR SPARE TIME.**
- (3) To co-ordinate all existing organisations with similar objects and to promote uniformity in their rules and regulations.

Particulars of the movement may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary (pro tem.),  
**Mr. T. WHEELER MEATS, 39, Broad Street, Hereford.**

WILSON & PHILLIPS, PRINTERS, BATH STREET, HEREFORD.

On 19 November a meeting was held to form the Hereford unit of the Volunteer Training Corps (VTC) with the objectives of:

- Encouraging recruiting
- Encourage those not eligible for military service to learn military skills.
- To coordinate similar organisations.

A 'Youths Platoon Corps' under the command of Mr Gus Edwards, of Alban House, was formed after consulting Major Morant, Commandant of the Hereford Corps. 'The primary object of the Youths' Corps was to train lads between 14 and 17, so as to enable them to take their place in the ranks, and become efficient soldiers at the earliest possible time.'

*'A beautiful spirit of comradeship was cultivated, and importance was laid on general smartness and discipline.'*

The VTC wore the Herefordshire Regimental capbadge.



John Alford, an ex regular soldier with the King's Shropshire Light Infantry (KSLI) was appointed Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) of the VTC.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

The Battalion continued to train and be billeted in the Irchester and Rushden area in Northamptonshire. Training was intense including personal fitness and musketry skills as well as low level (personal, section and platoon) tactics and field skills. Accounts tell of long route marches and 'schemes', how tired individuals were and the good food – perhaps the hard work made them more appreciative of 'ordinary' food! All talk of the high morale, the adventure and the camaraderie.

There continued to be losses and reinforcements as indicated by the diary of 2152 Thomas Paul BAUSER who had volunteered, aged 28 on 5 September 1914. His profession was shown as architect, his address as Wakefield and his next of kin his father who lived in Soham, Cambridgeshire. He was later Commissioned into The King's Shropshire Light Infantry and left the Herefordshire Regiment.

3 Nov	To Northampton to 1st Bn. Billeted at 17 Althorp St
13 Nov	Tfr'd to 138 St James Park Road
21 Nov	Doug Banks joined us at billet*
30 Nov	Moved to Woodbridge - empty house Church St

\* 2101 Private (later Sergeant) Douglas Gordon BANKS of Hereford who had enlisted on 4 September. He went on to serve with the Battalion throughout the war, including at Gallipoli.

On the 29 November it is reported that orders for the deployment of the Battalion to India were cancelled, but there is no indication when this order was published! In late 1914 there was an urgent requirement for trained troops in France, many trained (regular) troops were deployed throughout the empire, especially in India and there was a plan that these Regular units would be replaced by Territorial units, thus making them available for the Western Front. It is assumed this was part of this plan the reason for it not happening is not known.



1141 Private Frederick Hodges from Kempsey, who also acted as a trumpeter. He had enlisted in 1912 and served with the Battalion in Gallipoli.

He was discharged in August 1917 and awarded the Silver War Badge as he was no longer fit for military service due either to wounds or sickness incurred during his service.





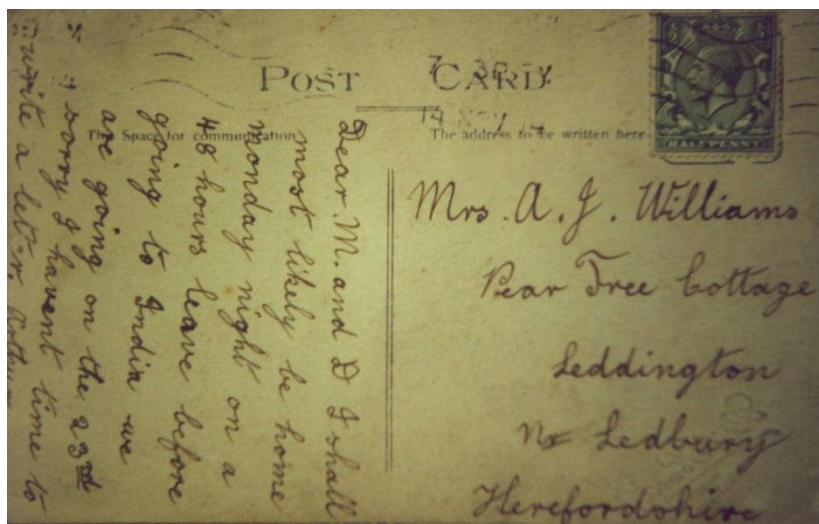
This card is a bit of a mystery! It is postmarked Northampton, but the photographer is from Transfynnyd (North Wales) and it looks as though it could have been taken on Castle Green Hereford!

The writer 'Will' asks the addressee 'Em' to 'send us a bunch of hops'.



2373 Pte Arthur J Williams from Leddington, who enlisted 10 September and went on to serve at Gallipoli, was injured and discharged from the Army in July 1916, and awarded the Silver War badge.

He had written a postcard home earlier in the month, informing them of the intended move to India (no issues with security/censorship!). I wonder if he got his leave when the move to India was cancelled!



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion remained in Aberystwyth throughout November. The winter weather was settling in and the realities of soldiering were beginning to be recognised.



The Battalion at Aberwystwyth – the purpose of the wood in the foreground is for speculation – a hutted camp, duckboards or firewood!

The anonymous extract from a contemporary personal account continues:

*The Battalion had packed up and travelled by train to a little town on the West coast of Wales. We could not have been further away from the seat of war if we had wished it. Here we sojourned throughout the winter months, steadfastly climbing the Welsh hills daily and usually taking part in Physical Exercises on the topmost summit, very often in the teeth of an easterly gale with snow falling at intervals to make things feel more cheery. Had we been training for an expedition to the Arctic region we could not have chosen a better spot. However, if we were lucky, we were able to get leave for week-ends at times.*