

## THE HEREFORDSHIRE REGIMENT

### Their First World War 'Story' – December 1917

#### The 'Bigger' Picture

- Permanent Allied Supreme War Council inaugurated
- United States of America declare war on Austria-Hungary
- Panama declares war on Austria-Hungary
- Cuba declares war on Austria-Hungary
- Ecuador severs diplomatic relations with Germany
- British Government give the King of the Hejaz (see December 15th, 1916, and February 4th, 1918) written assurance of
- French Foreign Minister in speech outlines French War Aims
- Armistice (Truce of Focsani) signed between Rumania and Central Powers.
- Allied Conference in Paris resolve to establish an Allied Maritime Transport Council

#### Russia

- Armistice signed at Brest-Litovsk between Russian Bolshevik Government and Bulgaria, Central Powers and Turkey.
- Peace negotiations between Russian Bolshevik Government and Bulgaria, Central Powers and Turkey.
- Secret Convention signed at Brest-Litovsk between Germany and Russian Bolshevik Government concerning Poland.
- Constituent Assembly meet in Petrograd and dispersed by Bolsheviks.
- Finland declares independence.
- Independent Moldavian Republic proclaimed.

#### The Home Front

- Government issue Order in Council instituting the Air Council
- Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, First Sea Lord, Great Britain, resigns and is replaced by Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss.

#### The Western Front

- Battle of Cambrai ends.
- Second Offensive Battle of Verdun ends.
- Lt Gen BC Maxwell, QMG resigns replaced by Lt Gen TE Clarke.

#### Other Fronts

#### EASTERN FRONT

- **All hostilities on the Eastern front suspended**
- Hostilities between Rumania and the Central Powers cease

## BALKANS

- Gen Sarraill recalled from Salonika and replaced by Gen Guillaumat.

## PALESTINE

- 9th - Jerusalem surrenders to British Forces
- 11th - Gen Allenby makes formal entry into Jerusalem
- British defence of Jerusalem begins.
- Battle of Jaffa.

General Allenby entering Jerusalem – symbolically on foot as a liberator rather than on horse as a victor.

*..... I entered the city officially at noon, 11 December, with a few of my staff, the commanders of the French and Italian detachments, the heads of the political missions, and the Military Attaches of France, Italy, and America... The procession was all afoot, and at Jaffa gate I was received by the guards representing England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, India, France and Italy. The population received me well...*



Allenby's official proclamation of martial law following the fall of Jerusalem on 9 December 1917 read as follows:

To the Inhabitants of Jerusalem the Blessed and the People Dwelling in its Vicinity: The defeat inflicted upon the Turks by the troops under my command has resulted in the occupation of your city by my forces. I, therefore, here now proclaim it to be under martial law, under which form of administration it will remain so long as military considerations make necessary. However, lest any of you be alarmed by reason of your

experience at the hands of the enemy who has retired, I hereby inform you that it is my desire that every person pursue his lawful business without fear of interruption. Furthermore, since your city is regarded with affection by the adherents of three of the great religions of mankind and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of multitudes of devout people of these three religions for many centuries, therefore, do I make it known to you that every sacred building, monument, holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer of whatsoever form of the three religions will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faith they are sacred. Guardians have been established at Bethlehem and on Rachel's Tomb. The tomb at Hebron has been placed under exclusive Moslem control. The hereditary custodians at the gates of the Holy Sepulchre have been requested to take up their accustomed duties in remembrance of the magnanimous act of the Caliph Omar, who protected that church.

The Gates into Jerusalem:



#### EAST AFRICA

- Last German forces driven out of German East Africa into Portuguese territory

#### ITALY

- Twelfth Battle of the Isonzo ends

- Italian naval raid on Trieste harbor; Austrian battleship Wien (below) sunk



### At Sea

- United States Battleship Division (*including USS. Texas below*), under Rear-Admiral Rodman, joins Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow.



- German destroyers raid British convoy in the North Sea and sink HMS Partridge.

## U-BOAT WARFARE

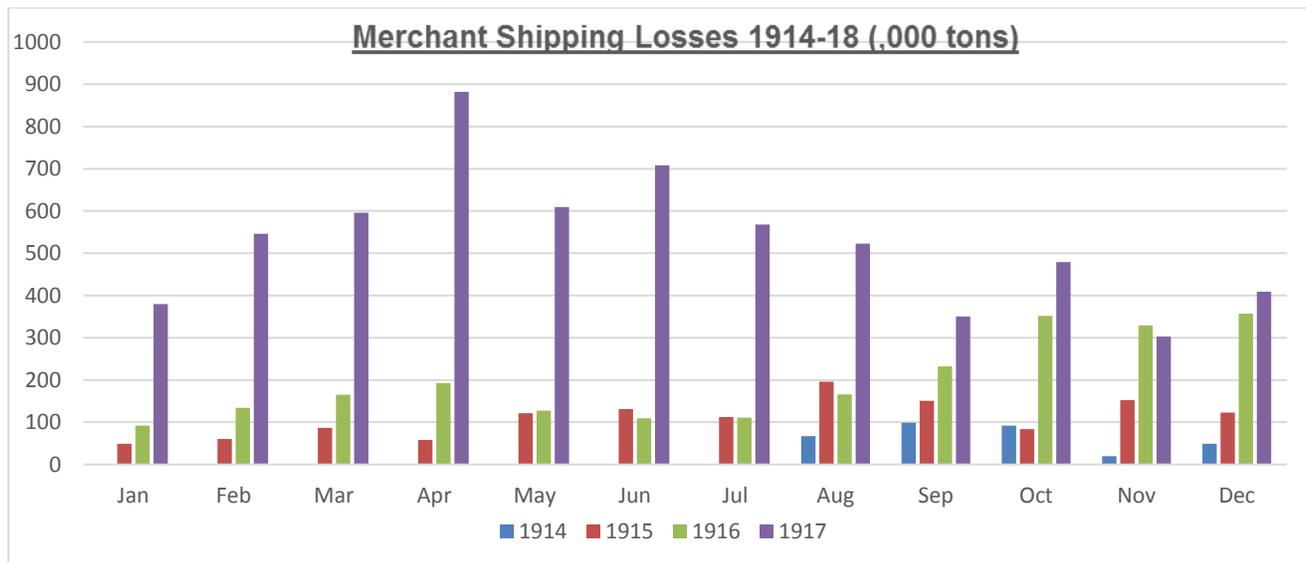
- Funchal (Madeira) shelled by German submarine.
- French cruiser Château Renault (below) sunk by submarine



## MINE WARFARE

## MERCHANT SHIPPING

- British, Allied and Neutral ships lost to enemy submarines, mines and cruisers etc in the month – 182 ships of 409,000 tons gross.



## The 'Herefords'

### Casualties (other than 1<sup>st</sup> Bn)

NAME	INIT	RANK	No1	No2	Date	How	Where	Hometown	Notes (Serving with)
BRIDGE	ROBERT JOHN	LCPL	1769		02 Dec	KIA	F&F	YIEWSLEY MSEX	BORDER 11
JONES	FREDERICK THOMAS	2LT			05 Dec	DOW	F&F	BALLINGHAM	INNS OF COURT
PARTINGTON	JOHN	PTE		237269	01 Dec	DOW	F&F	BURY	KSLI 6
POVALL	JOSEPH	PTE		239253	04 Dec	DOW	F&F	BIRKENHEAD	KSLI 6, awarded Military Medal.
POWELL	JOHN THOMAS	PTE	4272		01 Dec	KIA	F&F	PRESTIEGNE	BORDER 11
POWELL	ALBERT JAMES	PTE		236841	06 Dec	DOW	F&F	LEOMINSTER	KSLI 1
STOKES	WILLIAM ALFRED	PTE		238679	30 Dec	KIA	F&F	TARPERLEY	KSLI 1/4
SWINDELLS	ARTHUR	PTE		238707	30 Dec	KIA	F&F	MANCHESTER	KSLI 1/4
THOMAS	JAMES EDWARD	PTE		239017	31 Dec	D	SALONIKA	RADNOR	KSLI 2
TURBERFIELD	WILLIAM	PTE		238064	25 Dec	D	Home	PRESTON	LANC FUS

**DIED OF WOUNDS.**

**SEC.-LIEUT. F. T. AVERAY JONES,  
HEREFORD.**

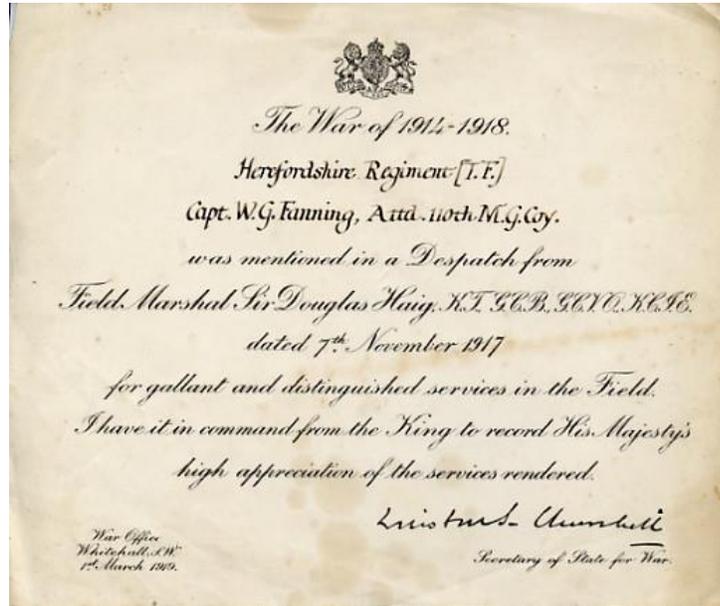
The musical world, both in England and America, is distinctly the poorer by the death of Sec.-Lieut. Frederick Thomas Averay Jones, of Hereford, who died of wounds at Rouen on Wednesday, December 5th. Particulars of the fighting in which he was mortally wounded are not yet to hand. His many friends must for the moment be content to know that this bright and gifted musician has in the "dust of conflict and through battle flame" made the supreme sacrifice for his country. He had indeed seen much fighting and was severely wounded just twelve months ago. Thirty-four years of age—he was born August 22nd, 1883, at Ballingham, where his father was Vicar there—he was the youngest son of the Rev. A. G. Jones, of Barton House, Hereford who was for 33 years Vicar of Yarkhill, a living which the rev. gentleman resigned less than twelve months ago owing to advancing years. Displaying a musical talent from childhood, the deceased officer was first a chorister at King's College, Cambridge, then went to Derby School, under Sterndale Bennett. He finished his education at Hereford Cathedral School, after which for several years he studied music under the late Dr. Sinclair, for whom on many occasions he deputised at the Cathedral organ. By Dr. Sinclair his abilities were held in high estimation, and it was on his late mentor's recommendation that Mr. Jones obtained an important position in America. Out of 100 candidates drawn from more than one Continent, he was appointed organist of St. Mark's, Philadelphia, and thus at the early age of 22 enjoyed the privilege of presiding at one of the finest instruments in America, during the Vicariate of Dr. Mortimer. In

1915, he relinquished music for the sterner work of war. In May of that year he joined the Inns of Courts O.T.C., and after training at Berkhamsted, was gazetted to the 3rd Herefords and went overseas in October, 1916. In a month he was severely wounded in the chest, being picked off by a sniper on a Sunday night while in a communication trench in France. He, happily, recovered from this injury, and returned to the Western front at the end of last June, and was there up till the time of his lamented death, which was notified by cable on Thursday. By a pathetic coincidence yesterday (Friday) his aged father received a letter from him, dictated to a chaplain in hospital, stating that he was wounded in the chest, the injury being very much of the same character as that he sustained last year, and asking his relatives not to be alarmed as he was "going on nicely." The family are assured of widespread sympathy in their bereavement.

The London Gazette

Honours & Awards

Publication Date			Detail	Remarks
17/12/1917	Fanning	WG	MC	Attached MGC
24/12/1917	Fanning	WG	MID	Attached MGC. Incorrectly attributed to Hertfordshire Regiment



Promotions & Appointments (extracts from the London Gazette)

Publication Date			Detail	Remarks
04/12/1917	Beakbane	CF	resigns commission	Volunteer Bn
11/12/1917	Pigou	H LaT	to be lieutenant TF reserve	
12/12/1917	Duggan	LB	to be second lieutenant	
21/12/1917	Fuller	F	to be captain and coy comd Cheshire Regt	

HEREFORD

Depot functions continue, including the administration of sick and wounded soldiers and those awaiting disciplinary procedures.

Discharges consisted of a mixture of categories; those wounded and no longer fit for service, those ill and no longer fit for service, and those failing their initial medical examinations. Thus there were men who had served at Gallipoli and the Middle East, soldiers from the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions and Supplementary Company. Some of those discharged were:

NAME	INIT	RANK	No1	No2	Date	Why	Hometown	Notes
BARTER	COLIN WILLIAM	PTE	1377	235242	22 Dec		ROSS	Served Suvla Bay
BASSETT	THOMAS	PTE	4908		13 Dec	xvi	Worcester	
DAVIES	WILLIAM HENRY	PTE	4652		15 Dec	xvi	Weobley	
GREENING	WALTER	PTE	2055	235576	21 Dec	xvi	TARRINGTON	
KELLY	JOSEPH	PTE		238658	20 Dec	xvi		
NEAL	ARTHUR JAMES	SGT	615	235044	12 Dec	xvi	LEDBURY	ATTD 58 MG COY
TYLER	ALFRED WILLIAM	PTE	3565		18 Dec		HEREFORD	
WOODCROFT	RICHARD	PTE			13 Dec	xvi		
WOODYATT	RICHARD FREDERICK	PTE	2831		13 Dec		HEREFORD	

xvi - unfit through either wounds or sickness

iiicc - unlikely to become an efficient soldier

Pte CW Barter - Severely wounded in Egypt.  
Discharged as a result of wounds.



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

### Casualties

NAME	INIT	RANK	No1	No2	Date	How	Where	Hometown	Notes (Serving with)
PIKE	DOUGLAS HARRY	PTE	2221	235665	04 Dec	Died	MEF	ROSS	Recommended for DCM at Suvla Bay; awarded an MID.
WELLS	NORMAN ALBERT	2LT			29 Dec	DOW	MEF	BIRMINGHAM	

From the 53 Div Diary:

Capt Ashton's diary (quoted in 53 Div diary) gives an account of the activities of 158 Bde:

As the Division moved up the road (to Jerusalem), General Mott's headquarters got further and further away, till by the beginning of Dec the Bde was practically detached and on its own. We had attached to us a section of 11 Lt Armd Car Bty, under one Goldsack, with two armoured cars and three tenders with which to patrol the road. As the Div got further away, and our sphere of road mending enlarged, we had to send - first, detachments, and then whole battalions after them. By 6 Dec, 5RWF had moved up to a little spring called Ain el Unkur, and 6RWF to the neighbourhood of Dahariyeh, 7RWF, machine gunners and camels, to Sakati, leaving Bde HQ with the Herefords and various oddments at Beersheba. . . . Going up the road in a Rolls tender to inspect work, and incidentally to see life, was a great amusement. On the 8th I went with Francis, commanding our Fd Coy RE, to Hebron, where we called on Div HQ. It was a magnificently engineered road, all hairpin bends and corkscrew curves, through most wild and picturesque country. Hebron proved to be most beautiful, a city of gardens, with the square tomb of Abraham in the middle. On the 10th we went up to see Bethlehem, where the Div was installed in the Mar Elias Convent. We got our first view of Jerusalem, a mile or two further on, and saw heavy fighting going on on the Mount of Olives.'

As the Bde was now very much strung out, with HQ at one end of the line, the Brig moved HQ to Hebron on 14 Dec, where we opened up in a hideously cold stone house in the main street, that had, I understood, been somebody's harem. . . . On the 16th we were ordered to concentrate the whole Bde forward at a place called the Wadi el Arab, about half-way to Bethlehem, by the 19th. The Herefords, RAMC, and sundries, were still in Beersheba, and had 39 miles to go, so we got them as far as Makruneh the first evening. . . On the 18th, we moved Bde HQ forward to the Wadi el Arab, sitting down in a big, bare Russian hospice on the top of a hill. By the night of the 19th, the whole Bde was concentrated there, less one company of the Herefords temporarily dropped in Hebron for the Military Governor, till some Indian troops should arrive. .... After a day's rest we moved on again to join the Div, through Bethlehem, and finally bivouaced in the North West quarter of Jerusalem, troops in the valley of Jehosaphat, and Bde HQ at St Georges School, opposite the Church of England cathedral.

We were not destined to spend long in idleness. The other 2 Bdes had borne all the burden during the last six weeks, fighting over intensely difficult country in intensely atrocious weather, so on the 22nd we despatched the 5RWF to take over part of the front line, and come under the orders of Brig Money, 159Bde. 159 and 160 Bdes were holding an outpost line round the east and north-east sides of the city. The valley of Jehosaphat, starting at the north-west corner of the city, passes across its northern face; then, getting deeper and broader, down its eastern face, till it finally turns east itself, a little way south of the city. To the north of the town the

ground is practically flat, rising to a ridge. This ridge runs east and then south, forming the far side of the Valley of Jehosaphat and at the point opposite the turn, east of it, becomes the Mount of Olives. The Garden of Gethsemane is half-way up the western face of the Mount, facing across the Temple area. The only road for wheels, at that time, ran north to the ridge, and then east and south to the Russian Hospice at the end, whence it fell down, at a precipitous angle, to the Jerusalem-Jericho road. This ridge formed the line of defence, with the actual outpost line pushed well down the far slope, which was rocky, rough, and very steep. Both Bdes had their HQs in the palatial Kaiserin Augusta Viktoria Hospice, on the Mount of Olives. It was a magnificent building, luxuriously furnished, with a German housekeeper and cooks, with a chapel, banqueting hall, and all the rest, ornamented with statues, frescoes, and paintings - chiefly of the Kaiser - and with wonderful views all round.

The relief by 5RWF was very steep and difficult, and was not completed till next morning. Christmas Day dawned in the usual torrents of rain, and the Valley of Jehosaphat, in which the Bde was bivouacked, became a rushing torrent. It was, of course, a most ridiculous place to put troops in anyway, and to our annoyance we couldn't get any help from the Q Staff at the Div, beyond a grudging permission to make what arrangements we could. There were in our area various large monasteries, which we tackled. . . . we got the whole Bde under cover by nightfall. In the evening, the Gen and I and a good many more from the Div, dined with the American Mission at their big common living house, run by Mr Vesper and his wife. The whole Mission lived together in this large house, as far as I remember six families, and two or three old ladies. The men each plied a trade. The Vespers kept a shop, where we bought carpets, amber, wonderfully coloured photographs, etc., and all put their profits in a common pool - communists in the finest sense. The ladies ran a school for children of any and every religion, and also taught the native women needlework and housekeeping. They were really very charming and simple folk, living the lives of real saints. We had a large, solid, Christmas dinner, and then an entertainment, at which the children danced and sang, and the ladies, too, and no one smoked, and the whole evening was, of course, severely teetotal - a sore trial to some of us.

The Bde did not have long to enjoy its billets (unwillingly given), for the next day we were ordered to take over from 159 Bde entirely, which we did after dark. 6RWF and Herefords took over the right and left sections of the line, with 5RWF in reserve at the Russian Hospice (south of the German Hospice), and 7RWF in reserve at Sir John Grey Hill's house (north of the German Hospice). Bde HQ joined 159 and 160 Bde HQs at the German Hospice itself.

#### THE TURKISH ATTACK.

The whole Div was now assembled, with the exception of one half company of the Herefords. On the left the Div was in touch with 60 Div at Ras el Kharrubeh, the 60th line running through Tell el Fal, across the Jerusalem-Nablus road to Neby Samwil ; thence 74 Div carried it through Beit Izza, Beit Dukku, and el Tireh, where they joined with 10 Div through Tahta to Sulfa, which marked the extreme left of the Corps. Suffa was on the right of the Australian Mtd Div, also under the orders of XX Corps, and then came XXI Corps to the sea, north of Jaffa. All was ready, for the general action on the 24th, but the weather had for some days been wet and cold, and the troops had suffered much hardship. Heavy rain, accompanied by a gale of wind, continued all Christmas Day, and the whole country became water-logged, and the roads half a foot deep in mud. The date of attack was postponed, until the weather improved. The rain ceased on the night 26/27th, and at 11.30 pm the Turks launched their great attack to recapture Jerusalem. They drove in the outpost line of 60 Div about Ras el Tawil. As soon as Gen Chetwode realised that the Turks were committed to an attack on Jerusalem, he ordered 10 and 74 Divs to carry on with the offensive previously ordered at dawn.

Dawn on the 27th Dec broke to find the weather fine but misty. The night attack on 60 Div had spread to 53 Div front, and White Hill and Zamby were submitted to a furious bombardment. A feeble advance against 6

RWF was easily checked; and the Herefords captured a patrol of ten men. Towards evening 158 Bde was ordered to take over all that part of the 160 Bde line which lay north of the Jericho road. This meant the recapture of White Hill, and Colonel Harker, 7RWF was ordered to reconnoitre the position before it was dark.

As a preliminary to the Corps advance, 158 Bde was ordered to capture Ras Arkub es Suffa, and the high ground beyond Anata village. Gen Mott went down to the German Hospice and talked over the attack with Brig Vernon. It was then about 11 in the morning, and the advance was to be made as soon as preparations were completed.

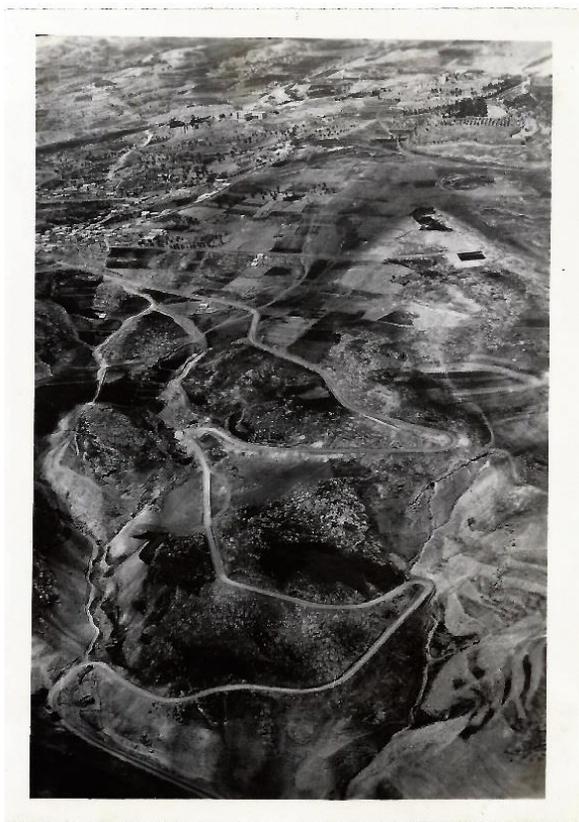
At 3.45 pm the advance commenced. It consisted of three distinct operations. The Herefords, assembled behind the hill of Kharrubeh, advanced in two waves round the sides of it and made straight for the village. Well supported by the artillery, they passed through the village, leaving parties to bomb the cellars, and on to the high ground beyond. 6RWF led by Capt Emrys Evans, took their objective, a hill called 'Grey Hill,' on the right of the Herefords. But the attack on Suffa, by 7RWF, failed at first, owing to heavy machine gun fire on the flanks. Suffa was joined to White Hill by a saddle, about a mile long. Col Harker directed the attack along the length of the saddle, and the Turks held the low ground on either side with machine guns: the men on the skyline above provided an easy target. 'From the summer house,' Captain Ashton says, 'we watched the attack getting slower and slower till at 4.50 pm it stopped altogether, and reported itself unable to get on. Only 1 ½ companies had been used, but it was decided to wait for darkness before pressing the advance. Zamby and White Hill, held by 7RWF, with the responsibility of the Jericho road, was taken over by two companies of 5RWF; the artillery opened short bursts of fire on Suffa during the night, and at midnight 7RWF assaulted and captured the hill. Two hours later the Herefords occupied a hill near Khirbet Amit.

All organised resistance ceased, and at daybreak on the 30th only a few snipers remained.

During the three days' fighting the XX Corps captured 39 officers, 711 other ranks, 17 machine guns, 3 automatic rifles, and 1,006 enemy dead were counted. Of the latter number 271 dead were buried on the front of 53 Div.

A rearrangement of the front had been foreshadowed, and on the 31st, Brig Vernon accompanied by his Bde Maj reconnoitred the area round Beitin. 'The country was like that we had come through, south of Jerusalem - very steep and precipitous planted where there was enough soil to plant anything, with here and there terraced hill sides to save the precious soil all being washed to the bottom in the rains. As soon as one got off the Jerusalem-Nablus road the country was impossible for wheeled transport. The natives don't use wheels, using donkeys or camels in single file; their tracks are merely narrow lanes, about three feet wide, with stone walls on either side. A further trouble lay in the fact that the only map was one made by Lord Kitchener, in 1878, and it was rather sketchy. (Ashton.)

*The Jericho Road:*



*The Nablus Road:*



## From The War Diary:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Detail</b>
1 Dec	Specialist training 100 ORs on road work with RE.
2 Dec	Sunday: Divine Service, Bn had use of Turkish shower bath.
3 Dec	Specialist training; all companies on salvage work on Turkish defences. Lt JIR Paulson from England. Lt Hopkin from hospital.
4 Dec	All companies of salvage work' specialist training.
5 Dec	Two companies on salvage work, 2 coys specialist trg.
6 Dec	Kit and equipment inspection by CO. CO proceeded to Hebron by car.
7 Dec	Bn route march on Auja Road, extended and closed from column on return journey; heavy rain during evening.
8 Dec	Coy trg. Maj E A Capel MC to senior officers course. Four GS limbers on RE road works.
9 Dec	Sunday. One coy road woek0800-1200, 1 cot 1200-1600. 4 GS limbers; 3 GS limbers sent on convoy.
10 Dec	200 ORs and 4 GS limbers on road work 0800-1600; specialist training. Use of baths.
11 Dec	As for 10th
12 Dec	As for 11th
13 Dec	As for 12th
14 Dec	Two coys on road work. 47 ORs marching 'cat c' from 160 Bde attached or ASC working parties.
15 Dec	2 coys and 4 GS limbers on road work under RE.
16 Dec	Sunday B & D Coys on road work under RE at Sakaty 1200 – Bn received orders to move to Bir Mackruneh 1400 – A & C Coys moved off at 1700 B & D Coys moved off. Deficient of 26 camels which were on convoy north. 4 GS wagons ordered by Bde to be used in lieu, these reported at 2000hrs. 1 pl remained to load and escort Bn HQ arrived at Bin Makrenuh at 2030hrs. Bivouaced for night.
17 Dec	1100 - Battalion less A Coy marched to Beer El Alaka arriving 5pm, bivouaced for night. A Coy captain, Capt Linzell remained.
18 Dec	1115 – Bn (less A Coy) marched to Hebron, billeted in Russian Monastery, heavy rain during night. A Coy marched in rear of 267 Bde RFA to Bir El Alaka.
19 Dec	0600 – D Coy (Lt P Parker) tool over guard duty from 1/5 RWF 0800 - Bn less A & D Coys marched to Wadi El Arab O30b and joined remainder of Bde. A Coy marched to Hebron and relieved D Coy who then rejoined Bn 2000hrs.
20 Dec	0900 – Bn marched to Burak, cold driving rain, all ranks wet through; continual rain during night.
21 Dec	Battalion marched through Bethlehem to Jerusalem to bivouac north of city. All transport sent back to Beer El Alaka. Still raining.
22 Dec	1000 - Battalion remained in bivouac and cleaned up. 50% of officers and 12 ½% of men allowed to enter city.
23 Dec	Sunday. Raining. Battalion attended Divine Service at St Georges' Cathedral – the first service held there for 3 years.
24 Dec	Passes as per 22nd. One officer (Lt Mogridge) 14 ORs C Coy detailed for city guard. Bn found 2 Offrs, 19 NCOs and 90 men for guards 24/25 inst. Draft of 85 arrived; 41 from England. Heavy rain all day and night.
25 Dec	Christmas Day – still raining. 16 Offrs, 66 ORS attended DS in Cathedral. 1600 - Battalion moved to Dominican monastery, billeted in corridors and cellar. All ranks thoroughly wet through.
26 Dec	0515 – Bn stood to as inlying [?] battalion to Bde. 0930 – Orders from Bde for CO & Coy Comds to view the line to relieve 1/5 RWF. 1700 – Bn moved out of billets and relieved 3 coys 1/5 RWF in front line and 1 Coy & Bn HQ 111/5 Welsh Regt. Posts from South to North – B Coy (Lt P Parker), Tower Hill (Ras El Kharubeh), C Coy (Capt FG Barker) Z20 central, D Coy (Capt Wilmot) Z14c52, A Coy (Capt Linzell) in reserve at Bn HQ Z20 central. 1/6 RWF on the right, 179 Bde on left. Relief completed 2000hrs. Six MGs in Bn sector..

27 Dec	Enemy heavily attacked 179 Bde on our left, but were repulsed, fighting lasted all day. A party of Turks attempted to advance up the wadi between C & D Coy posts but were cut off by D Coy; 12 being captured (5 wounded), one man from B Coy wounded. 18 ORs from hospital. Trench wire erected in front of D Coy during night 27/28. Bn stood to all day.
28 Dec	<p>Kh Almit – patrol under Lt Rooks pushed out and found it unoccupied by Turks.</p> <p>Battalion moved forward and captured village of Anata by 4.15pm, objective taken and village clear by 6pm.</p> <p>B &amp; C Coys both with 2 platoons in front line and one in support, consolidated on forward slope of Welsh Hill. A Coy had one platoon on left flank and one down in village and one in reserve. Difficulty was experienced in gaining touch with 1/6 RWF who were not on their objective.</p> <p>1000 – 1/6 RWF came up into the line and the position greatly improved. Our casualties 2 officers wounded, 2 Lt Wells died on 29 Dec and Lt Rogers and 25 soldiers wounded. Two unwounded and 3 wounded prisoners taken. Fifteen enemy dead counted in Battalion sector.</p> <p>Battalion HQ at 3.45pm was outside 21R20 then to Tower Hill and finally to Anata village.</p> <p>2300 – Under orders brigade HQ, an officers' patrol advanced and reced Almit; patrol under Lt Rooks pushed out and found it un occupied by Turks.</p>
29 Dec	<p>A Coy ordered to occupy Almit; this was completed without opposition at 1am. Patrol under Lt Willmott reced forward to Hizmeh and found it un occupied.</p> <p>0300 – Battalion ordered to be ready to move and occupy Hizmeh, which would be taken by 1/4 Cheshires at dawn.</p> <p>0730 – Battalion less A Coy who remained at Almit moved north to Hizmeh and took over line from 1 /4 Cheshires.</p> <p>Battalion disposed – right to left – A, D, B, C, Battalion HQ on central. Track from Anata to Hizmeh very bad, all stores for A,D, C Coys had to be taken up to this position on mules. Some enemy MG and sniping at long range.</p> <p>1400 – A Coy relieved by 1/5 RWF moved in support of D Coy, LMG and 4 stokes guns attached to Bn front. 3pls oat work on camel road to Anata.</p>
30 Dec	Slight sniping; one platoon of A Coy in Battalion HQ as reserve. C Coy relieved by ¼ Cheshire Regt, moved to Z4b33. Our artillery registered on enemy MG emplacement about Maseirah. Three pls working on camel road; D Coy took one prisoner.
31 Dec	Situation normal. CO 2/20 London Regt inspected line with a view to taking over. 3 Pls working on camel road.
	<p>Operational Order By Lt Col Drage DSO</p> <p>Map – Palestine 17.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1/1st Herefords less D Coy will advance and capture the village of Anata and the ridge Rasmarikleh.</li> <li>2. The advance will be covered by a creeping barrage of artillery and machine guns.</li> <li>3. B Coy will pass to the right, east of Anata and C Coy to the west.</li> <li>4. A Coy will have as its objective the village of Anata; which it is to clear up.</li> <li>5. D Coy will remain in position to protect left flank of advance and give all possible assistance by long range LG fire.</li> <li>6. B &amp; HQ will primarily be at L221A12 where all updates will be sent and reserve of small arms ammunition and bombs will be established.</li> <li>7. RAP will be established at Tower Hill at B Coy.</li> <li>8. Special instruction – plentiful supply of bombs to be carried.</li> <li>9. Telephone communications to be established between companies and Battalion HQ.</li> </ol> <p>Issued at 2.15pm Signed – W F Chipp Captain - Adjutant</p>

7<sup>th</sup> Bedfordshire Regt.  
Appendices to the War Diary.  
December - 1917.

Appendix I - Reinforcements

	From Engld.		From Hosp.		Various		Total.	
	C.	C.R.	C.	C.R.	C.	C.R.	C.	C.R.
3. 12. 17.		7	1	20	2	1	3	28
10. 12. 17			1	8			1	8
17. 12. 17.				1				1
24. 12. 17.				10	2		2	10
31. 12. 17.		45		75				120
		52	2	114	4	1	6	167

Appendix II Casualties.

	Killed		Wounded		Missing		Lick Admitted	
	C.	C.R.	C.	C.R.	C.	C.R.	C.	C.R.
3. 12. 17.								7
10. 12. 17							1	22
17. 12. 17.							1	19
24. 12. 17							1	20
31. 12. 17.				2		16	2	28
				2		16	5	96

## From the Diaries of:

Capt Wilmot

Dec 16<sup>th</sup> The Herefords being the only battalion left in Beersheba were called up to rejoin the rest of the brigade. (On Dec 9<sup>th</sup> Jerusalem was captured)

Dec 16<sup>th</sup> Marched to Mak? Hebron and Wadi El Arab by 19<sup>th</sup> December.

Dec 21<sup>st</sup> Jerusalem. Pouring rain, I and others officers slept in cellar of St George's School (which was flooded by the morning)

Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday service in the cathedral.

Dec 25<sup>th</sup>. Owing to pouring rain troops were moved into billets, monasteries etc.

Dec 26<sup>th</sup> Into the line.

Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>. The Turks attacked and failed.

Dec 28<sup>th</sup> Anata? Attacked by Herefords from hill of Kharrubeh? Wills killed [*died of Wounds*]  
Herefords occupied Khirbet, Almit, then Hiz???????

Maj Yates

The 158 Bde had no part in the taking of Jerusalem although the other brigades of the 53 Div seem to have made it possible. We had quite settled down to spend a comfortable Christmas at Beersheba but about 20<sup>th</sup> Dec we suddenly got orders to move in 3 hours time. Two days later we billeted in Hebron. It was estimated that there were 300 Turkish deserters in the town but I don't think that any attempt was ever made to round them up.

Next day it rained heavily and well soaked us on the march. We bivouaced on saturated arable ground near Bethlehem.

? Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>. We reached Jerusalem and bivouaced on a refuse tip near St George's Cathedral. Dead donkeys and dogs were lying around and it was generally very filthy, moreover the weather was vile.

Dec 25<sup>th</sup> We managed to get a few extras for the men. Battalion paraded for service in St Georges Cathedral in afternoon. Still heavy rain and in late afternoon accommodation was found for Battalion in St Stephen's Monastery.

Dec 26<sup>th</sup> Battalion moved out at dusk to relieve Battalion of Cheshires. Rather a tedious business as the road to the Mount Of Olives was choked with troops and transport. Our position was along some low hills NE of the Mount Of Olives and looking down on Anata.

Dec 27<sup>th</sup> The Turks made their great effort to retake Jerusalem. The fighting on our right was very determined, but only a very small attack was made against our front and D Coy captured a few prisoners.

Dec 28<sup>th</sup> Orders were received to make a counter attack. A Coy was to advance through Anata with B Coy on the right and C Coy on the left. D Coy remained in its position on the extreme left. After a short artillery preparation we advanced down on the village covered by MG fire. Hostile MG fire from the right and rifle fire from the left was encountered and Lt Wells fell mortally wounded as soon as the advance commenced; it was his first action. So determined and dashing was the advance that we suffered few casualties and easily drove the Turks beyond the village. It was expected that the enemy would take cover in the houses and so the cellars were bombed as we passed through. Unfortunately the villagers had taken shelter there and suffered a number

of casualties. These we patched up as best we could and sent the wounded to hospital. Most of the rest were sent back to our old position until the fighting was over.

We could not get touch with 2 Coys of the 6 RWF who cooperated on our right and late that night found that they had retired under the impression that we had retired. They came up again later. During the night D Coy rejoined and was sent out to occupy a hill in the direction of Hismeh. Next day we came to the conclusion that they had occupied the wrong hill but it was quite an easy mistake to make in such country in the dark.

Dec 29<sup>th</sup> We moved further North and took over Hismeh from a Battalion of Cheshires. Our stay there was uneventful – ‘Johnny had evidently had enough on this front. The weather was bad and some lucky people managed to find caves, which were really old sepulchres to live in.

Capt Rogers

Sat Dec 1 to Dec 24 1917.	From Dec 1st to 5th I remained with the battalion at BEERSHEBA doing Lewis gun Training and on Dec 6th I left to go on a course.....
CHRISTMAS DAY.	The battalion, which during my absence had marched the entire way from BEERSHEBA to JERUSALEM along the Hebron Road in very bad weather, moved from the bivouacs in the mud outside Jerusalem, into billets at St Stephen's a Monastery, in the city. Our P.H. gas helmets were handed in here and we never had any other gas protection after this until we were on our way to France. There was a historic service In St George's Cathedral, the first for some time past.
Wed Dec 26 1917.	I rejoined the battalion, which, having paraded about 4pm, moved up into the line In front of and south of ANATA (or ANATHOTH) North of Jerusalem, reaching the line about 7pm, and completed the taking over of it by about 11pm.
Thu Dec 27 1917.	The battalion 'stood to' all day, while our guns were firing incessantly over our heads, the sound of them echoing through the wadis. From the ridge on which we were we could watch through our field glasses a considerable battle swaying to and fro on the hills below us on our right called RAS ARKUB ES SUFFA, WHITE HILL, and RAS EZ ZANBY. I believe the RWF and Queen's had a very bad time of it there and the hills changed hands more than once. We were able to look down on the scene and watch with great interest. In the evening we began to dig sort of trenches on the forward slope of the hill, but the ground was of course very hard and stoney and we were only able to dig them deep enough to lie In.
Fri Dec 28 1917.	We stood down for the first time since we had come into the line. At about 2.50pm we had orders to attack ANATA RIDGE at 3.45pm. At about that hour we went forward in platoon waves with a barrage, and successfully took the ridge with very little loss and dug ourselves in. We saw very few Turks, for most of them had fled. It was very difficult to get any idea of where our new line ran and from what quarter to expect the enemy counter attack especially as darkness came on soon after we reached the objective. At any rate we had now left the village of ANATA behind us and were well established in our new positions. 2nd Lieut N A WELLS was wounded and died In hospital In Jerusalem the next day, but we had very few other casualties.
Sat Dec 29 to Jan 5 1918.	Having been wounded myself on Dec 28th, I was In hospital at this time, but the battalion advanced to HIZMEH and thence northward to a few miles south of BETHEL(or BEITIN).

Lt WF Bushell was a school teacher at Rossall and wrote in the school magazine some time after the war of his experiences:

Some masters joined the Forces immediately ..... ultimately I got away to play a part and joined The Herefordshire Regiment. In all I was only away from school for 4 terms, but spent most of it abroad, some 9 months in Palestine and 6 months in France..... I have in mind too the hardships involved, and I shall never forget the Palestine winter in the hills with continual rainfall and lack of any shelter. Even dugouts, giving some sort of shelter, were unknown. There was no extreme cold as in France, and I only remember snow on Christmas Day at Bethlehem - it was difficult to believe that shepherds were in fields outside Bethlehem 19 centuries earlier. Sangars or stone wall barriers had to be used, as trenches could not be dug in the stoney soil.



#### Sgt Colley – ‘The Clock’

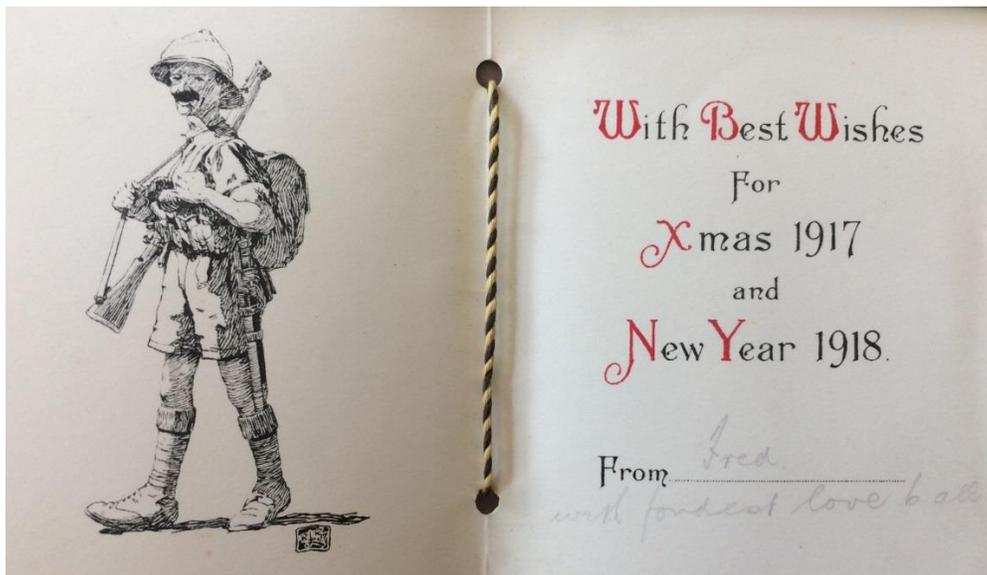
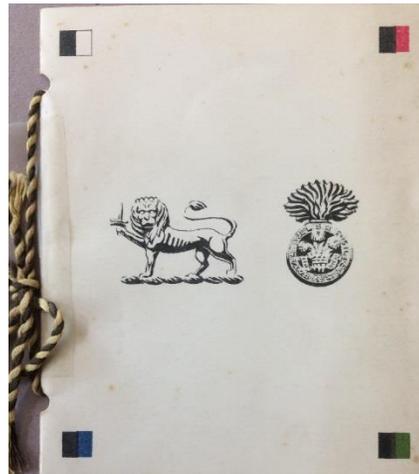
It was nearly midday on the 28 Dec 1917 when the Colonel was hurriedly asked to speak on the phone to the Brigadier. Shortly afterwards a special messenger arrived from Bde HQ with instructions to attack the village of Anata, which lay about a ¼ mile to our direct front. The village was heavily shelled by our artillery and within ½ hour the village was in our possession. The inhabitants were terror stricken from the shell fire, never before having suffered from shell fire. They came into our lines crying and weeping in hundreds, men women and children of all sizes but all looking very dirty, as the average native of Palestine is. When dusk came on, a friend visited one of the native houses, and great was our surprise when we discovered that it was furnished in a proper European style. A fine old wire bed stead, a dressing table and numerous lengths of silk tapestry etc. Several bottles on the table presented a great temptation, which we managed to resist.

At last our gaze rested upon an object that we knew would be useful for the Battalion Orderly Room – an English clock in what we thought was a silver case. We hurriedly hid this beneath our coats and quitted the house. On returning back to our bivouac we were greatly surprised to hear chimes emanating from the clock. It was then discovered that this was a neat and novel design of an alarm clock and found by winding up a spring the chimes would play at a set hour. Next morning the Battalion were hurriedly moved again for another attack and the clock was placed in one of the Orderly Room boxes for safety, and stored with the rest of surplus stores on a dump with the QM’s stores.

Next night when the respective CQMS brought the rations up, we were of an event on the previous evening which had caused quite a deal of excitement and nervousness. The RSM, CQMSs and CSMs, storemen and others left in charge of the dump, were all seated around the fire talking, yarning etc, when from the midst of the dump there suddenly commenced to play chimes of an eastern air – what was it? Many were the suggestions made, some said a musical box, and others with thoughts of eastern trickery said that probably it was an infernal machine. This idea held and then commenced a hurried search of the dump. Boxes were shaken and flung down in disorder, until they arrived at the small Orderly Room box, but the chimes had ceased, the spring having wound down, so the staff were unable to satisfy their curiosity over the locked box.

However in days to come people who visited the Orderly Room no doubt heard occasionally the chimes ring forth from the clock on the Adjutants table. The clock did marvellous service and stood the test of time well, but at last something went wrong and the attempts of amateur clock repairers did in no way tend to improve matters, but to the end the clock served a purpose and it was during our journey on board the Kaisr I Hind from Alexandria to Toranto, that the main spring of the clock was removed to replace a broken carriage recoil spring in the Orderly Room typewriter.

158 Brigade Christmas card 1917:



More accounts featured in The Hereford Times of the November engagement:

## THE HEREFORDS.

### HEROIC DEEDS IN PALESTINE.

#### 16 MORE CASUALTIES.

Happily the casualties among the Herefords in the Holy Land notified during the past week have not been so numerous as last week. Up to the time of writing 7 more had to be added to the list of honoured dead, six of these having been killed in action and one having succumbed to dysentery. The wounded newly notified number nine. Thus the total casualties since November 5th are: Dead, 45, wounded 40, missing 1, giving a total of 86.

Unless some new element has been introduced into the methods of warfare in Palestine of a nature to affect the usual proportion of wounded to killed, by no means is the list of wounded complete. The sanguinary battle of November 6th is responsible for nearly all the casualties, both in killed and wounded, and the intensity of the fighting is vividly reflected in the circumstances of the death of Pte. A. Gardiner, of Leominster. A comrade writing home, states that at four o'clock in the morning he was shot through the chest, twice near the heart, and afterwards bayoneted. The fighting, we may well believe, has been marked by acts of heroism by the men of our county regiment. Here is one incident worth recording in letters of gold:—

There were some wounded on a hillside swept by machine gun fire. Pte. Stokes, of Dolyhir, Kington, went out voluntarily to try to get them under cover, and was himself killed. "It was a brave act," writes his officer, "as every one who was there or went to the assistance of the wounded became a casualty."

Such heroism and self-abnegation are worthy of the best traditions of Herefordshire soldiers. An officer, too, i s, we are unofficially informed, to be decorated with the Military Cross for an act of gallantry, the details of which are not yet known here. This is Capt. W. F. Chipp, of Kington, who has risen from the ranks to the position of adjutant of the battalion. Capt. Chipp distinguished himself in Gallipoli, where he was complimented by the Divisional General for ability and resourcefulness. When all the officers were casualties he took charge of A Company, which was cut off at Anzac for five days after the first attack; he brought the remainder safely back to Suvla after being relieved by Gurkhas. In a later engagement there—on August 19th—he was wounded, and towards the end of the same year he contracted dysentery.

Appended is a list of the Palestine casualties reported during the past week:—

#### KILLED.

Lance-Corpl. Bertram Clifford, Eardisley.  
Corpl. E. J. Meek, Lydbrook.  
Pte. James Morris, Staunton-on-Wye.  
Pte. E. H. Lloyd, The Crofts, Ross.  
Pte. Stokes, Dolyhir, Kington.  
Pte. H. J. Mason, Hereford, formerly of the City Police.

#### DIED.

Pte. Wm. R. Hughes, Bilfield Farm, Hatfield, (of dysentery).

#### WOUNDED.

Sergt. Albert Tudor, Victoria Road, Kington.  
Lance-Corpl. S. Mailes, Ivy House, Hereford.  
Pte. I. James, Llandrindod Wells.  
Pte. J. Bayliss, Bishops Froome.  
Pte. J. Cooley, New Villas, Ledgemoor, near Weobley.  
Pte. R. Meredith, 2, Guildford Street, Hereford.  
Pte. J. S. Preece, Bishopstone.  
Pte. A. E. Taylor, Bromyard.  
Pte. T. A. Morgan, Ailensmora.

#### OBITUARY NOTES.

##### KILLED.

##### LANCE-CORPL. B. C. TRUMPER, EARDISLEY.

Lance-Corpl. Bertram Clifford Trumper, who was killed in Palestine on November 6th, aged 22 years, was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Trumper, the Green, Eardisley. At the outbreak of war he was a member of the Hereford Territorials, and mobilised with them. He took part in the landing at Suvla Bay, and went through the brunt of service in the Dardanelles and Palestine. This is the second son Mr. and Mrs. Trumper have lost in this war. The first, Sergt. John Trumper, S.W.B., died of wounds received in Mesopotamia on May 4th, 1917; he also served in the Dardanelles. The only surviving son, Pte. William Trumper, 1st Herefords, also participated in the Gallipoli campaign, in which he was wounded by shrapnel in the left hand, and sustained a fracture of the right arm and thigh. The eldest son, Arthur, who was in the K.S.L.I., died in India on service; he fought in the South African war. The war record of this patriotic family is not complete without mention of the fact that three daughters are engaged in munition work.

##### PTE. E. H. LLOYD, ROSS.

Pte. E. H. Lloyd (235773) Ross, was killed in action on November 6th. He was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Lloyd, The Crofts, Ross. He was 21 years of age. He was formerly employed by Mr. Chattock, of the Leysters, near Tenbury. Two brothers are still serving with the Herefords.

##### PTE. STOKES, DOLYHIR.

Pte. L. C. Stokes, of 12, New Cottages, Dolyhir, was killed in action performing an act of great gallantry. An officer of the regiment, in a letter home states: "There were some wounded on a hillside which was swept by machine-gun fire. Pte. Stokes went out to try to get them under cover and was himself killed. It was a very brave act, as every one who was there or went to the assistance of the wounded became a casualty."

#### PTE. H. J. MASON, HEREFORD.

Pte. Harold John Mason was killed in the action of November 6th, at the age of 21. He was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mason, of Hereford, and until joining the Army in May, 1915, was a constable in the Hereford Police Force. It was only a few days before his death that his mother received a letter from him, dated October 24th, saying he was just going into action for the fourth time and hoped to pull through all right. Mr. and Mrs. Mason and Miss Beatrice Smith, his fiancée, wish to thank all kind friends for sympathy shown them in their bereavement.

#### PTE. J. MORRIS, STAUNTON-ON-WYE.

Mrs. Morris, of Hinton Cottage, Staunton-on-Wye, has received official notification that her husband (236168), Pte. James Morris, C Co., 1/1st Herefords, was killed in action on November 6th at a place not mentioned. Pte. Morris, who was 28 years of age, went to Egypt about 18 months ago and fought in the battle of Gaza in March last, when he had a very narrow escape. Much sympathy is felt for the widow, father, and family in their bereavement. Before joining the Army the deceased soldier was waggoner to Mr. Lloyd, Hopton Sollers, Stoke Lacy. He formerly lived at Whitbourne. A younger brother, Pte. John Morris, is serving with the Imperial Camel Corps. A memorial service for the fallen hero was held at Norton Canon Church on Sunday, conducted by the Rev. H. B. D. Marshall. The hymns sung included "A few more years shall roll," deceased's favourite. There was a large congregation.

#### PTE. A. GARDNER, LEOMINSTER.

In reference to the death of Pte. A. Gardner, Herefordshire Regiment, his parents have received the following letter from a comrade, Pte. C. E. Cole, who also resides in Vicarage Street, Leominster, the home of the bereaved

parents: "It is with great sorrow that I have to tell you the sad news that your son, Arthur, has been killed in action on November 6th, about 4 o'clock in the morning. He was shot through the chest twice, close to the heart, and then bayoneted. He was buried two days after he was killed; he was buried very decently. The Turks had taken off his finger that silver ring which you gave him and also his boots off his feet and the cross he had round his neck. I know that it will be a great blow to you, but he died doing his duty for his country. He is very much missed in his platoon. We were all very sorry when we found that he had been killed; he was a very good fellow at his work, and we were all very sorry to lose him."

### THE WOUNDED.

#### SERGT. A. TUDOR, KINGTON.

Information has been received that Sergt. Albert Tudor (237028), Herefordshire Regt., son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Tudor, of Victoria Road, Kington, is in hospital at El Arish, Egypt, suffering from a gunshot wound in the hip received on November 10th. His wife and children reside at The Wyck, Kington.

#### CORPL. E. J. MEEK, LYDBROOK.

Corpl. E. J. Meek, of Lydbrook, Hereford, killed, had been on active service since 1913. He leaves a widow and two aged parents, with whom much sympathy is felt.

#### PTE. J. BAYLISS, BISHOPS FROOME.

Pte. J. Bayliss (236716), of Bishops Froome, who was wounded on November 6th, is in hospital at El Arish.

#### PTE. I. JAMES, LLANDRINDOD.

Pte. Ivor James, son of Mr. T. H. James, was formerly an apprentice at Messrs. Tom Norton, Ltd., Llandrindod Wells. He joined the 1st Herefords when only 17, and was in the early fighting at the Suez and also in the Gaza battles.

#### PTE. T. A. MORGAN, ALLENSMORE.

Pte. T. A. Morgan, who received a gunshot wound in the leg on November 6th, is the only son of Mr. and Mrs. George Morgan, Cryaley, Allensmore. In the Gaza battle he was wounded in the leg, arm, and nose. Before joining up he was with Mr. West, Bridge Farm, St. Deveraux.

#### PTE. J. S. PREECE, BISHOPSTONE.

Pte. J. S. Preece (236062), who was wounded on November 6th, is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Preece, Lena Cottage, Bishopstone. He is suffering from gunshot injury to the left side, and is now in hospital at Kantara, Egypt. Pte. Preece enlisted in January, 1915, and served through the Gallipoli campaign. Prior to the war he was in the employ of the then Rector of Bishopstone, the Rev. R. H. Willmot.

#### **PTE. A. G. EXALL, STOKE EDITH.**

Pte. G. Exall, son of Mr. and Mrs. Exall, of Hereford Lodge, Stoke Edith, is, it appears, wounded in the arm, not in the legs, as his parents were previously informed. In a letter home he states: "Johnny Turk has pipped me again and fractured my left arm in a battle on November 6th, about 4 o'clock in the morning." This is the second time Pte. Exall has been wounded, the first time being in the Gaza battle last March.

#### **PTE. J. COLLEY, LEDGEMOOR, WEOBLEY.**

Pte. James Colley, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Colley, of New Villas, Ledgemoor, near Weobley, is reported as wounded in Palestine on November 6th. Pte. Colley has been in Egypt 1 year and 8 months. His parents received a letter from him on December 1st, saying he was going on well in hospital in Cairo. His father, too, at the age of 54, joined the 2nd Herefords in October, 1914, and served 14 months, and he has another son serving in the Monmouth Regiment, which he joined August 11th, 1914.

#### **PTE. A. E. TAYLOR, BROMYARD.**

Official notification has been received from the War Office by Mr. and Mrs. S. Taylor, Coopers Green, Hereford Road, Bromyard, that their eldest son, Pte. A. E. Taylor, of the 1st Herefordshire Regt., was wounded in action on the 6th November, in Palestine. They have also received a letter from their son this week. He says that he has been wounded in both thighs, the left thigh being much the worst. He is going on as well as can be expected. He is in the 15th General Hospital, Alexandria, and is, he says, being well looked after. Pte. Taylor mobilised when war broke out, and went abroad with the 1st Herefords in July, 1915, taking part in the landing at Suvla Bay, and was for four months on the Gallipoli Peninsula, until he fell ill in the great storm, suffering with frostbite. He was in hospital for three months at Alexandria. On recovering he rejoined his regiment, and has apparently been in every engagement in the advance from Egypt up till November 6th, when so many were put out of action.

#### **PTE. R. T. MEREDITH, HEREFORD.**

Mrs. Meredith, 2, Guildford Street, Hereford, has been officially notified that her youngest son, Pte. R. T. Meredith (235206), was wounded on November 6th, place not stated. Employed at the Hereford Post Office, he is one of four brothers who mobilised when war broke out, and has taken part in all the battles in which the Herefords have figured in Gallipoli, Egypt, and Palestine, up till the severe engagement in which he was put out of action. Two brothers have already given their lives for their country; the other is now serving with the K.S.L.I. It will be recalled that Pte. Joseph Sidney Meredith, of the R.A.M.C., attached to the Gloucester Regiment, died of relapsing fever in Bombay at the age of 23, leaving a wife and twin babies; and that Pte. G. E. Meredith, K.S.L.I., was killed in action in the great battle of Ypres on May 25th, 1915. Mrs. Meredith, sen., is assured of the sympathy of all in her anxiety concerning her son just wounded, particularly as she has, so far, received no letter from him. He is in the signal section of the regiment, and is 19 years of age.

#### **LCE.-CORPL. S. MAILES.**

Lance-Corpl. Stanley Mailes (236084), 1st Hereford Regiment, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Mailes, Ivy House, Bewell Street, Hereford, has been wounded in the recent action in Palestine. No official communication has been received from the War Office, but he has written a letter from the British Red Cross and Order of St. John Hospital, at Nasrieh School, Cairo, in which he states that he has received wounds in both arms. The wounds were healing nicely. He considers it bad luck to get through the first four days of the battle without injury and then to "get it," as he describes being brought down. He does not say whether by machine or rifle fire or by shrapnel. He has lost all his belongings. The writer mentions that Pte. Fred (Tug) Wilson is also in hospital in the same town, but neither of them are allowed out. It was only last week we announced in our columns that Gunner Allen Mailes, of the Tank Corps, the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Mailes, had been wounded in France. He is going on very nicely. Another son, Felix, the second son, is an electrical fitter on the Queen Elizabeth in the Navy.

#### **DIED.**

#### **PTE. W. R. HUGHES, HATFIELD.**

Pte. Wm. R. Hughes, Hereford Regt., second son of Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, Billfield Farm, Hatfield, has been officially reported to have died in hospital at El Arish, Palestine, on November 16th, the cause of his death being dysentery. He had only just attained his 20th birthday. He attested and was called up about the end of last January and trained at Park Hall Camp. He sailed for Egypt at the beginning of July last. As a child he lived with his parents at New Mills, Little Birch, and attended Little Dewchurch School.

#### **MISSING.**

#### **MISSING SINCE FIRST BATTLE OF GAZA.**

Mrs. Taylor, The Ferns, Newnham Bridge, Tenbury Wells, is anxious to receive news of her husband, Sergt. George Reuben Taylor (236242), of the 1st Herefords, who was wounded in the first battle of Gaza on March 26th last, when he was also reported missing. No tidings have been obtained of him, inquiries

made through various channels having failed to furnish any trace of him. Any information from comrades or others would be gratefully

## SCENES AT BEERSHEBA.

Corpl. C. Richards, with the R.A.M.C. in Palestine, writing to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richards, 2, Windsor Street, Hereford, gives some graphic pictures of the attack on Beersheba. He says:—

I travelled by camel several nights in succession, and at last arrived at a little village lying in a basin among the hills, looking very pretty in the sunshine. It had been a Turkish garrison, but was now as busy as a hive with mounted British and Colonial troops. We had come over a score of miles of country which were, up to a few days previously, commanded by the Turks. Our troops swept over it swiftly, followed by a marvellous variety of transport—motors, tractors with caterpillar wheels for covering rough or soft ground, thousands of camels, horse and mule drawn vehicles, and donkeys. The whole army was moving, bag and baggage, and a striking sight it was in the moonlight. We remained in the village while the troops passed on ceaselessly for the last stage of the journey before opening the attack upon Beersheba.

At 3 a.m. on Wednesday morning I was awakened by the noise of the guns, which had then commenced the bombardment. It was a lively tune they played, and they kept it up almost till noon. Then there was silence, and we knew that where the Turk had determined to stand our men were at him with rifle and bayonet. In our camp we waited impatiently for news of the occupation of Beersheba. It did not arrive till next morning. At 5 a.m. I was pulled out of bed to go at once with the Desert Mounted Corps Operating Unit, to which I am temporarily attached, to Beersheba. We soon had our gear packed in the operation motor car and a spare Ford, and by 6 a.m. we were on our way. The Turks had made a good metalled road for their own military use, and it served us well. We did the 20 odd miles in an hour and a half, which was not bad travelling, because the road was broken in some places, and for the last few miles it was obstructed by vehicles and all manner of camp material, which the Turks had abandoned in what was very clearly a headlong flight. We passed an entrenched outpost position some five or six miles out of Beersheba. Australians and New Zealanders had been given the task of rushing this place quietly with the bayonet at 3 a.m., but the Turk must have got wind of their approach, because there were none of the grim relics which a fight would have produced, whilst the quantity of personal and camp equipment lying about showed that the defending Turks left without ceremony.

Beersheba, white and shining in the morn-

ing sun, looked charming and inviting as we approached, but when we got into it it was like a city of the dead. Not a soul was to be seen except a few Anzacs, tired and dirty, who were casting round for water. Stray dogs snarled and barked, shops and houses stood open and bare; some were burning, others were wrecked. The inhabitants had decamped with all their movable belongings. That was the reception we got—and it was good enough. We pushed on to the far end of the city, where we found quite a nice garden suburb, with handsome villas. Here was the Turkish hospital, and we at once took possession of it for our own purposes. It was full of wounded Turks, who, with the medical staff, were, of course, already prisoners of war. The soldiers were a wretched looking lot. Any decent English dog would regard the best of them as an undesirable tramp. But, poor devils, they had been through a terrible experience, and if one judged soldiers by their appearance after a stiff scrap, our own men, clean and strong as they are in quieter times, would not be called Beaux Brummels.

The operating unit had the distinction of being the first medical unit to enter the city, and we had got things going several hours before any other arrived. We conducted a number of operations that day, and have had an average of five or six cases a day since. The operating unit, as I think I have told you before, is a new thing on this front, and its purpose is to give a chance to men whose death would be inevitable if they had to wait for an operation until they got down the line. Already there is no doubt the results are good.

I know nothing about the actual fighting. I do know that our fellows have done wonderful things, and have pushed Johnnie well back. The crowning news is that Gaza has fallen. We have not done with the Turks yet, but Allenby has given him a nasty knock. The army here has great faith in Allenby. The organisation of this offensive has greatly pleased everybody.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Bn - Hereford (formerly the Volunteer Training Corps (VTC))

The Bn continued to parade and train.

**1st BATTALION HEREFORDSHIRE  
VOLUNTEER REGIMENT.**

**"A" Company.**

ORDERS FOR DECEMBER, 1917.

23. Sunday.—At 2.30 p.m., No. 3 Platoon,  
Birch School, musketry. 3 p.m., No. 4  
Platoon, Dormington, squad drill.

31. Monday.—At 7.30 p.m., Nos. 1 and 2  
Platoons, Drill Hall, squad drill. 7.30 p.m.,  
No. 4 Section, Drill Hall, Weobley, musketry.  
7.30 p.m., No. 4 Platoon, Mordiford, musketry.

(Signed) G. A. O. THYNNE, Capt.,  
Commanding "A" Coy., H.V.R.  
Headquarters, Hereford.