

# SHEPHERDSWELL & COLDRED HISTORY SOCIETY

The monthly newsletter for Members and Friends of S & C H S

VOL. 2020, ISSUE 2

30/09/2020

## Top stories in this newsletter



Members' Nights



September Report



Updates



This month's photo

## Members' Nights

Are still being held in a fashion, with the Committee meeting via Zoom most Thursdays.

## September Report

As with the previous month the work done by the Committee has been largely focused on Three Barrows Down. More news on this to follow soon.

## History Updated!

Whilst doing some ongoing research for our book on the First World War, Carol Howell came across a very interesting article from the *Dover Express*, dated 1 December 1944. It shows that the long held belief that the Shepherdswell Homeguard was part of that operating out of Wingham is incorrect. Read the article below to find out the truth.

### 600 AT BRIDGE.

Over 600 officers and men from the villages of East Kent attended the farewell parade of the 7th Batt. Kent Home Guard at Bridge on Sunday afternoon, were congratulated upon their efficiency, and were warmly thanked for their devotion to duty during the years they had stood ready to repel any invasion. And their womenfolk were thanked for the sacrifices they had made to enable the men to do their duty. The parade included the Shepherdswell and Sibertswold (B) Company, under Major W. H. Fox and Captain J. Pinches, and platoons from Adisham, Bekesbourne, Bridge, Barham, Denton, Kingston and Bishopsbourne.

The battalion formed up in Bourne Park and, in command of Major B. S. Collard, marched through the village, to the roll of the drums of the 12th I.T.C., and along the Bridge-Patrixbourne road to the football field. En route the salute was taken outside the village school by the Battalion Commander, Lieut.-Colonel O. D. Maxted, with whom were Major-General O. H. Delano Osborne, Brigadier H. E. Pickering, Colonel W. B. White, Lieut.-Colonel C. E. Wilson (representing The Buffs), Lieut.-Colonel S. Mildred, Major J. Smyth-Osbourne, Major R. T. Thornton, Major Brierly, Mr. J. W. Baker White, Sir John Prestige (Bridge-Blean Rural District Council), Mr. J. Cross (chairman, Elham Rural District Council), and Mr. P. F. King (chairman, Dover Rural District Council).

Large numbers watched a very smart march past and then attended a drumhead service conducted by the Rev. Isaac Williams (Battalion Padre and Vicar of Elham). The band accompanied the singing of "O God, our Help" and "Lead us, Heavenly Father." The Lesson was read by Major B. Spickernell.

The Padre, in a brief address said that although the Home Guard were standing down to some extent, they were not actually dismissed and they must still be on guard, still worthy and still ready.

Following the Blessing, the Adjutant and Q.M. (Captain J. L. Langer) read a message to the Kent Home Guard from Lieut. General Sir E. Schreiber, formerly G.O.C., S.E. Command, and now Governor of Malta, in which he expressed his thanks for the past and his best wishes to them for the future.

Colonel Maxted, in his address, said that, had the occasion arisen, he was quite certain that the Home Guard—and particularly that battalion—would have stood their ground and given a very good account of themselves. In those early days during the Battle of Britain, when they were called upon to perform operational duties such as guarding vulnerable points, there were a great many occasions when the only man in the house had to leave his wife or mother alone and unprotected although bombs were falling and planes were crashing. He, therefore, wished to tell those mothers and wives that they had played a very noble part. Paying tribute to his men, the O.C. said that they were prepared to sacrifice their time, when they were already doing a full-time job in production, to train themselves to fight the enemy should he arrive. There was not the slightest doubt that the country owed them a very great debt of gratitude for their devotion to duty and self-sacrifice, which had been an eye-opener to most people. Colonel Maxted especially thanked the Civil Defence Platoon from Elham, who, although doing two full-time jobs in production and Civil Defence, with one accord had joined the Home Guard—a great example of pure patriotism and the right spirit. After the war they had got to work hard to ensure that the same thing did not happen again in their or their children's time.

Brigadier Pickering congratulated and thanked the Home Guard for all they had done. They were a scattered battalion, and facilities were not easy, but all had done their duty well and efficiently, and this he attributed to the excellent relationship between officers and men and to the inspired leadership of Colonel Maxted.

Colonel White, on behalf of General H. S. Franklin, who was unable to be present, expressed his thanks.

After the National Anthem, Colonel Maxted dismissed the Battalion for the last time, and three hearty cheers were given for him.

Research in the *Dover Express* has shown that the following men were involved in the Home Guard in the village:

George Hugh Ball, Arthur Leonard Crascall, Cecil Clarence Gainey, Alfred John Hewitt, Thomas William Hewitt, Charles Jaynes, licensee of the Bricklayers Arms, John Arthur Meakin, who worked at Tilmanstone Colliery and J. Pinchers

Below is a brief biography of one of those that we know served in the village Home Guard.

William Henry Fox

William Henry, son of William Charles and Sarah Jane (née Sneller), was born in Shepherdswell on 12th July 1898, and baptised in the parish church on 14th August that year. He was one of at least 8 children. The 1901 Census showed the family living at Moon Hill, with William senior giving his occupation as hay binder. William senior died in 1908, when William would have been only 10. William sat the examinations for a scholarship offered by Kent County Council the following year and was successful in winning one. In 1911, Sarah was the head of the house; William's 25-year old brother, Albert, and twin sisters Ethel and Kathleen, aged 15, were all out at work at this stage but were living at home.

Finding War records for William has proved difficult; there are a couple of William Henry options although neither holds the right identifiers for our man, lots of Williams, and many men with the initials of W or WH. An Ancestry family tree suggested that he went to the Western Front and was at the 3rd battle of Ypres, with a photo showing him in Army uniform, taken in 1917. There appears to be a pith helmet in the photo, which was not usual uniform for France, so this information may not be correct.

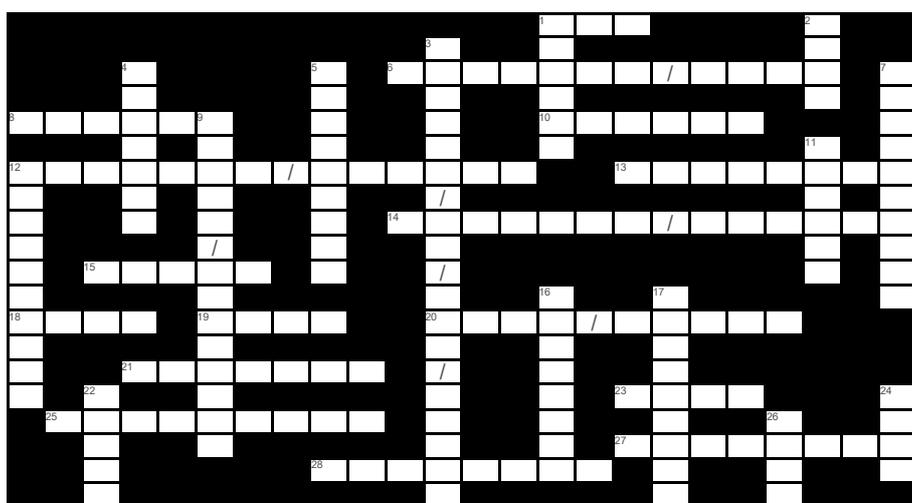


Following the War, he came back to the village, and a newspaper report in 1930 confirmed that he was working as a cashier at Tilmanstone Colliery. He married Alice Edith Emma Webster of King's Lynn in 1936. They don't appear to have had any children. In 1937, William was elected to the Parish Council, when it was noted that he was the only serving member who had been born in the village. The 1939 Register showed that William and Alice were living at Daneswold on Mill Lane. He was still working as a colliery cashier and was part of the ARP Rescue and Demolition team. A *Dover Express* article in December 1942 mentioned him as the commanding officer, a captain, of the Kent Home Guard 7th (Lyminge) Battalion, Shepherdswell (B) Company. This may indicate that he had reached an officer rank during WW1. By the time that the Home Guard had their Falling Out Parade at the end of 1944, he had reached the rank of Major. William was still living at Daneswold when he died at the age of 55 on 6th May 1954.

Does anyone know of any others? Or any background for those that we have found to date?

## Puzzles

This month a cryptic puzzle, all the answers have a connection to the local parish. First correctly filled in crossword sent in to keithbryanroberts@gmail.com or dropped through my letterbox at 47, Westcourt Lane wins a box of chocolates.



### Across

1. This was Green earlier but Eve still fancied it (3)
6. The Scandinavian fish mist was reversed (7,4)
8. Philbert preferred his Kentish seed (6)
10. This farm could have been made from lime wood (6)
12. Although you want to spread this it is better to walk it (7,6)
13. People used to smoke this cottage (8)
14. The red secret told of a place to dwell (7,6) anag.
15. We recently lost one but must press ahead and find our way through (5)
18. An officer of John Company lived in this house next to the steps (4)
19. This family had a naval tantrum (4)
20. This rough dame protected us (4,4) anag.
21. Trained in the military (7)
23. A paradise on Church Hill (4)
25. Mandarins refreshed here (8)
27. This mongol gotha bomber knew which cross to hit (8)
28. An ancient woodland that might have been owned by a Shakespearean character. (8)

### Down

1. A hot place to farm (6)
2. Eyeing something up in a shop (4)
3. You get this when anatidae collide (6,2,3,5)
4. This bricklayer liked a drink when building estates (7)
5. The first A.O.C. whose followers farmed the village fields (9)
7. Get your table fixed while you drank here (10)
9. A drunk horticulturalist (5,8)
11. The never was saint (6)
12. Where a deluxe fib was told (10) anag.
16. His yew leans against this place of worship (8) anag.
17. A noble craft crossing the river (9)
22. God can be found in this pit (5)
24. We used to fight our way to this shop after school (4)
26. You could fill your leather bottle on this road (4)

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## Projects

Are you doing any research at the moment or do you want to?

It would be great if you had something to share and if you want some help starting or along the way we have some gifted minds who might be able to help. So just ask.

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## This Month's Photo & Quote



This month's photograph shows the Shepherdswell CC team winning the Dover Charities Cup in 1948 having beaten Cosmopolitans CC (from Dover). The final of 1947 was also between these two teams but Shepherdswell CC were the runners up on that occasion. This Shepherdswell CC team also won the Dover District League in 1947 and 1948.

Players names:

Back Row L-R: Charlie Hall (?), Unknown, Les Makin, Jack Fletcher, Hogben, Wally Lawrence, B.Cash, Bill Blackman, Reg Deal Jnr., Reg Deal Snr.

Front Row L-R: Cyril Gainey, Johnny Wellard, Reg Knight, Les Wooldridge, Billy Causer, Alan Deal.

*"History is the witness of the past, the light of the truth, the living memory, the teacher of life, the messenger of antiquity."*

— Marcus Tullius Cicero

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Check out our website at [www.shepherdswellhistory.org](http://www.shepherdswellhistory.org) and our Facebook page *Shepherdswell & Coldred History Society*

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