

## **Parish Notes For Meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

**Public Forum :-** Parishioners raised concerns in regards to the following topics. Disposal of dog waste. It was suggested that one of the two bins that are located in Stoneyfield could be relocated to Webbs lane.

Again concern was raised over the A4/Beenham Hill junction.

Concern was expressed over a Planning Application in regards to Church View that has been re-submitted . The concern was that privacy would be compromised.

**Presentation made from Spitfire Homes.** The meeting was addressed by members of Spitfire Homes. The plans were made available for the public to view and comment on. Again there were varied opinions expressed both in favour and against. It should be noted that at this time there has been no formal planning application made by either developer that has presented at the Parish Council Meetings.

**Parish Councillor Vacancy.** Please be aware that there is a vacancy that exists. If you feel that you would like to know more about this or how you could get involved with the Neighbourhood Development Plan please come along to a couple of the Parish Council Meetings ( the first Monday of each month , excluding Bank Holidays ) or contact Mr Bowsher The Chair of the Parish Council for more information.

**District Boundary Changes.** Please be aware that as from May 2019 Beenham will be under Aldermaston Ward .

**Councillor Comments.** Mr Keith Chopping raised the matter of the increase in Council Tax that parishioners will be facing this year. It was felt that it was important to highlight the fact that 2.99% of the 5.99% raise will be going directly to Adult Social Care.

Mr Chopping will be requesting a' members bid 'to attempt to bring in additional funding to get the footpaths completed.

Concern was expressed about how long there would be road closures in regards to Harts Hill. Beenham Parish Council will write to express concern over the length of the delay and to enquire whether the period could be reduced at all.

**Defibrillator.** Both Beenham Parish Council and Beenham Events Committee have made donations towards the cost of purchasing and installing a defibrillator and it is hoped that we will soon be in a position to have them in situ.

**Planning Applications.** No applications for consideration

This series by Chris Curry commemorates the men of Beenham who gave their lives during The Great War. Each article is published both on the village website and with the Parish notes, in the same month as they died 100 years ago. St. Mary's church bells will be rung on the anniversary of each man's death. A copy of these biographies is held in The Six Bells.

**EDWARD SMITH**

**Private**

**5th (Service) Battalion, Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Royal Berkshire) Regiment**

**Service No: 19596**

**Died: 05 April 1918**

Edward Smith was born in Beenham the second son of Thomas and Jane Smith, his birth being registered at Bradfield in the last quarter of 1888. He was baptised in Beenham on 4 November 1888. Edward's father, Thomas was from Frilsham, born 1847 and his mother Jane nee Garrett was born in 1866 and came from Bucklebury; they had married in the second quarter of 1885, again registered at Bradfield. Several of Edward's siblings were baptised in Beenham, including Edith Harriet (bp 4 Apr 1886), Alfred Thomas (bp 6 Nov 1887) and Arthur (bp 1 Nov 1891). Interestingly, Edward's father had been married previously to Ann Knight in 1873 and had had two other children, Charles Frederick and Mary Jane.

The 1891 census shows the family to be living in Paradise Lane, Bucklebury. Thomas 44 years, was an agricultural labourer, Jane, 35 and their children then included Charles F. 9, born Bucklebury, Mary J. 7 born Beenham, Edith H. 5, Alfred Thomas 3 and Edward 2.

Ten years later in 1901, the family have moved to Mount Pleasant where Thomas 54 is a carter on a farm, Jane 43, brother Charles F. 19 is also a carter and Alfred T. 13 a carter's boy. Edward is 12 and his younger brother, Arthur 9.

By 1911 Edward's parents and brothers Alfred Thomas 23 and Arthur 19 are living at 11 Mount Pleasant but Edward is a lodger of Ellen Carter, housekeeper aged 68 at The Stocks, Beenham. Edward is shown as born Beenham aged 22, single and a domestic gardener. Two other boarders were Doris May Gray, aged 6 from Clapham and Francis Gray, aged 2 from Chiswick.

At some point Edward enlisted in Reading and by 1918 was a private in the 5th (Service) Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment. The 5th Battalion, was a Kitchener Battalion, raised at Reading on the 25th August 1914 undergoing training at Shorncliffe, Folkestone and Malplaquet Barracks at Aldershot. They proceeded to France on the 31st of May 1915 and served with 35th Brigade in 12th (Eastern) Division on the Western Front. On the 6th of February 1918 they transferred to 36th Brigade still with 12th (Eastern) Division. In March 1918 they moved by motor lorry from Busnes to Albert and were in action in The Battle of Bapaume and spent the spring engaged in heavy fighting as the enemy advanced across the old Somme battlefields.

Just before Edward was killed, the Regiment were at Warloy near Albert. An account of operations April 2nd - 8th reads "The 5th Royal Berkshire had a quiet day in front of Albert on the 3rd, but shelling increased on the 4th. At 4 am on the 5th April the Battalion was warned of imminent attack. At 7am the enemy barraged front lines, and battery positions around Bouzincourt. Infantry attacks were launched on the whole of the 36th Brigade front but were repulsed. The enemy made 3 attacks on the left and centre companies of the 5th

Royal Berkshire but each was beaten back with the help of the 9th Royal Fusiliers on the left. By 10 am everything had quietened down but at noon a new barrage was opened and the Germans en masse succeeded in entering the left and centre trenches held by the battalion. The right Company and 1 platoon of D Company held firm. At 2.30pm the remainder of D Company was sent up by the CO. As they advanced up the slope they came under intense machine-gun fire and lost 50% casualties. 2 Companies of the 7th Royal Sussex counter-attacked at 8.15 pm and regained part of the lost trench and at 4 am on the 6th the other 2 companies of the Royal Sussex relieved the right Company of the 5th Royal Berkshire and consolidated. Few of the left and centre Companies survived and the Battalion was formed into 2 Companies. "A" & "B" was about 100 strong and "C" & "D" about 90 strong.

The 6th was quiet until 5.30 pm when 35th Brigade outposts were driven in. At 11 pm the 37th Brigade took the place of the 36th Brigade and the 5th Royal Berkshire was attached to the 35th Brigade. Its trench strength at that time was 231. Casualties in those first days of April: Officers 7 wounded 5 missing, ORs: 243 Killed



Edward Smith is commemorated on Panel 56 and 57 at the Pozieres memorial. Pozieres is a village 6 kilometres north-east of the town of Albert. The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom and 300 of the South African Forces who have no known grave and who died on the Somme from 21 March to 7 August 1918. The Pozieres memorial relates to the period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme

battlefields, and the months that followed before the Advance to Victory, which began on 8 August 1918.

For his sacrifice, Edward Smith was awarded the Victory Medal. His half-brother, Charles F. Smith (b 17 Apr 1881 d 30 Dec 1962) married Amy Freemantle of Kingsclere (1874-1951) in 1910; in 1911 they were living at Wickens Corner, in 1939 High Street, Bradfield and more latterly, Church Street, Theale.

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## **FREDERICK CHARLES WEBB**

**Private**

**2nd/8th Bn. Worcestershire Regiment**

**Service No: 263047**

**Died: 31 March 1918. Killed in Action, aged 35**

According to some sources, Frederick Charles Webb was born and baptised in Beenham on 2 December 1883 but other references suggest he was born on 10 October; either way his birth was registered at Bradfield in the last quarter of that year.

Frederick's parents were George (b1848 Fareham, Hants) and Sarah Webb (née Usher, of Wickham, Hants) and he was one of at least seven children all born and baptised at Beenham: George (bp 7 Jan 1872), Kate (20 Jul 1879), Lydia (bp 3 July 1881), Frederick, Sydney (bp 2 May 1886), Ellen (bp 5 Aug 1888) and Rose (bp 3 Aug 1890).

At the time of the 1881 census the George and Sarah were living on The Green next to the Methodist chapel with six children: George 9, Sarah Ann 6, William Henry 5, Florence 3, Kate 1 and Lydia 1 month; George the elder is recorded as a gamekeeper.

Ten years later, the family were still living on The Green; George 40, now an agricultural labourer, Sarah 41, and their children George 19, Kate 10, Lydia 10, Frederick 7, Sydney 5, Ellen 2 and Rose 10 months.

The 1901 census shows Frederick aged 17 to be living on Beenham Hill with his mother, Sarah 41, now widowed, together with Kate 21, Sydney 15, Ellen 12 and Rose 10. Sarah is employed doing laundry work, Sydney a carter's boy on a farm, Frederick a domestic under gardener and the two younger girls still at school. Frederick's sister Sarah Ann, then 21 was a housemaid to Percy John de Paravicini, an English amateur cricketer and international footballer living in Datchet.

By 1911 Frederick had moved to Baughurst, near Tadley. Now aged 27 he is single and employed as domestic gardener at Heath End House, together with fellow gardener William Joseph Stroud. Four years later, Frederick married Dorothy Appleby (b1888), the marriage being registered at Kingsclere in the last quarter of 1915. Frederick and Dorothy went on to have a son, Frederick Jesse Webb (b 9 Aug 1916, registered Kingsclere, d1987).

When and where Frederick enlisted is not known but at the time of his death he was serving as Private 263047 with 2nd/8th Bn., Worcestershire Regiment. The 2/8th Battalion was a territorial force, formed at Worcester in September 1914 as a home service 'second line' unit. In February 1918 it was part of the 182nd Brigade, 61<sup>st</sup> Division.

Frederick was killed in action on Sunday 31 March 1918 although the specific details are lacking. He is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, Panel 41, Department de la Somme, Picardie. This location and the date of his death would suggest that Frederick was involved against the German spring offensive of 1918 known as Operation Michael, a major German assault that began on 21 March 1918. It was launched from the Hindenburg Line, in the vicinity of Saint-Quentin.

Its goal was to break through the Allied (Entente) lines and advance in a north-westerly direction to seize the Channel ports, which supplied the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and to drive the BEF into the sea. Two days later General Ludendorff, the Chief of the German General Staff, changed his plan and pushed for an offensive due west, along the whole of the British front north of the River Somme. This was designed to separate the French and British Armies and crush the British forces by pushing them into the sea.

Frederick's wife Dorothy, still living at The Laurels, Baughurst, Hants. was in receipt of his two medals, Victory, and British. As well as the Beenham war memorial, Frederick is commemorated on both Tadley and Baughurst war memorials.

Frederick Charles' elder brother George also served in the war and survived. He enlisted at Reading into 13th The Somerset Light Infantry on 30 July 1918 aged 46 and 9 months. At that time he was a bricklayer, married to Mary (née Fremantle) and had four children Elsie Rose 12, Nora Ellen 8, George Gilbert (b17 Jul 1906) and Lenna Kate (b17 Jun 1909).

The 1929 and 1935 Electoral Register for Beenham shows Frederick's nephew George Gilbert Webb and his wife Mary, living on Beenham Hill with Frederick's sister, Kate and bother, Sydney Webb and his wife, Mary Ann living at The Stocks.

Our most sincere apologies to the family of Mr Webb that this memorial was placed one month late.

**Your Parish Councillors are :**

Graham Bowsher, Field Barn Farm TEL: 07557 967 575

Peter Mc Ewen, The Old Vicarage, Picklepythe Lane. TEL: 07717 718 608

Glynis Harman, The Six Bells. TEL: 9713368

Jackie Johnson , Southdowns, Church Lane. TEL: 07922 068 646

Graham Bragg, Puffins, Picklepythe Lane. TEL: 9713688

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**The Clerk;- Mr Seif Morbi, 19 Stoneyfield. Beenham. Reading RG7 5ND Tel; 07926 858697**

**Date of the next Parish Council Meeting is Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018 @7pm. The Community Room. ( on the site of Beenham Primary School )**