



Scouts

The Birth of Scouting in Abbots Langley

***A history of the group and
those boys who went to fight
in the Great War
Vol I - 1909-1918***

1st Abbots Langley
3rd North Watford Scout Group

Formerly the 44th S.W. Herts
1st Abbots Langley Scout Group

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1. Introduction

Early on in 2018 Roger Yapp approached the Abbots Langley Scout Group to see if we would like to take part in the Back to the Front www.backtothefront.org community-based Project to research, record and remember the men and women from Abbots Langley, Hunton Bridge, Langleybury and Leavesden who served during the Great War (1914-18). Over one thousand men from the four Hertfordshire villages served, some never to return, all with a story to tell and some as yet not remembered on the village War Memorials. The Project aimed to uncover and record these stories and commemorate and remember these individuals a century on from the conflict.

We are fortunate enough to have a copy of Harold Robert Overy's note book, one of the first Abbots Langley Scouts, that he kept during 1909 to 1910 aged 14. The original book is kept by the County Archivist, Frank Brittain as it is very delicate, but Frank diligently photocopied all the pages, and a fat envelope arrived through my letter box one morning. So I was able to work through the copy and identify names to be able to piece together the boys in the troop at the time, and the humble beginnings of our Scout Group. Rachel worked on the war records and genealogy and together we spent many hours on the project recording information about village life, Scouting at the time, where the Scouts would have lived, and their regiments.

We are proud to have uncovered information to enable the Scout Association to add names to their Role of Honour.



On 28th May the Back to the Front project held a War Walk around Abbots Langley visiting the homes of men who went off the 1st World War, which were commemorated with Tommies displayed in their windows. At the Scout Headquarters afterwards Rachel and I put on a display of the information we can collated, and the rest of the team provided tea and cake. A second walk covering the other part of the village was held on 9th September, where we again

exhibited our work and had more cake! Altogether we raised £328 and saw over 250 people.



It was

lovely to discover that a local resident and her daughter who attended the walk were amazed to find out a lot about four of their family, one of whom was one of our Scouts. She took some photographs of the exhibition and discovered another lady doing the same and when they got talking they found that they were relatives of the same boy/man!

So, in order to reach a few more people who might not know of their relatives' participation in the auguration of the Scout movement in Hertfordshire, and the Great War, I have collated all of our project work to be read at leisure and also appears on our website www.abbotslangley Scouts.org.



Pauline Styles and Rachel Drake

Our thanks go to Roger Yapp for his enthusiasm and background information. We are indebted to Harold Overy for his diligent recording, and all the Abbots Langley Scouts who fought so that we could all have a better life.

The Scouts Beginning of the Day

Now don't think it's surprising,
To see the Scouts arising,
At half past five they're all alive,
And getting breakfast ready.

They gather wood as all scouts' should,
And then they light the fire,
Then pots got out by every Scout,
Without a look of tire.

Before the meal they all feel,
That they would like a tub,
So with a run they all but one,
Go and have their dip and rub.

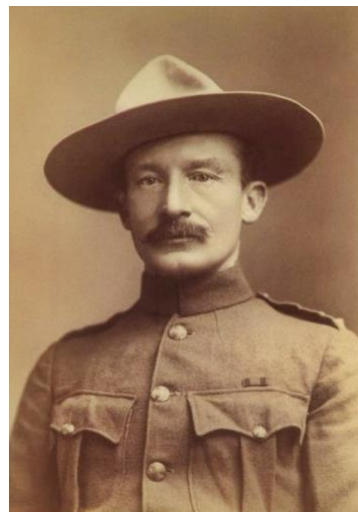
Then back they come with a rum tum tum,
All eager for their 'grub',
After breakfast, billies away,
And every one clears for the day.

**H Overy
1909**

2. ROBERT STEPHENSON SMYTH BADEN-POWELL

Born 22nd February 1857, Paddington - 8 January 1841 Nyeri, Kenya

Called Stephe (pronounced "Stevie") by his family, Baden-Powell's Godfather was the railway and civil engineer, Robert Stephenson. He was the son of The Revd Baden Powell, Savilian Professor of Geometry at Oxford University and Church of England priest and his third wife, Henrietta Grace Smyth, who was the eldest daughter of Admiral William Henry Smyth, and from who BP got his third name.¹



When he was only 3 his father died, and his mother brought up 14 children with virtually no income. Being number twelve, Robert soon found out how to survive.

At 13 he went to Charterhouse School. He did not do well but the Head, Dr Haig-Brown saw some promise and his remarks spurred B-P to do better. Outside the school there was a copse where Robert used his imagination to be a backwoodsman, trapper and scout. He used to creep about looking for "spoor" and signs. He learnt to observe rabbits, squirrels, rats and birds at close quarters by keeping still and avoiding the quarry catching his scent. Setting his own snares he also taught himself to gut, skin, clean and cook the animal over a non-smoky fire that masters could not see. If he heard them coming he would climb a tree as he found they did not often look up. During holidays he hiked and camped, learning more about observation and noting the small detail of animal habits, making him a comrade rather than an interloper in the family of Nature.

His older brothers introduced him to sailing and they went out at every opportunity. With no money, they devised and made the things they could not afford by building their own boat, fishing tackle, traps, nets, cooking and camping equipment.

At age 19 B-P passed the Army exam. Out of 700 candidates he achieved second place for the Cavalry and was appointed a sub Lieutenant Thirteenth Hussars. His early army career took him to India, Africa and Afghanistan. He learnt to shoot, hunt and kill big game, track and spy and became an acknowledged expert in all these fields. He wrote many books based on his experiences as a soldier and military campaigns. It is clear when reading these in detail that as a schoolboy and soldier he missed death by inches on several occasions and it was only luck and his life skills that saved him.²

In 1900 Robert Baden-Powell participated in the Second Boer War in Africa on the border with Transvaal at Mafeking. Then a Colonel, Baden-Powell had raised two regiments of local forces amounting to about 1,200 men in order to attack and create diversions if things further south went amiss. Instead of being the aggressor Baden-Powell and Mafeking were forced to defend when 6,000 Boers attempted a determined assault on the town. This quickly subsided into a desultory affair with the Boers prepared to starve the stronghold into submission, and so, on 13 October, began the 217-day Siege of Mafeking (October 1899 to

¹ Wikipedia

² Frank Brittain, County Archivist, Milestone of 105 years of Hertfordshire Scouting

May 1900). After a succession of defeats, the Boers realised that against such overwhelming numbers of troops, they had little chance of defeating the British and so became demoralised. The Relief of Mafeking on 18 May 1900 provoked riotous celebrations in Britain coining the Edwardian phrase mafficking.³

After the war, Baden-Powell put his thoughts to developing the character of boys to become good and useful citizens, and in 1904 he announced his ideas of teaching “scouting” to boys. B-P’s first article on Scouting for Boys appeared in *The Boys’ Brigade Gazette* in 1906 and a series of lectures was organised.

During the Boer War in Africa, we have learnt that [Charles Bonaker](#) was at nearby Transvaal and there is no doubt he would have been immensely influenced by him Baden-Powell, so much so, that he became the **First Scout Master** of the Abbots Langley Scout Group in 1909.

³ www.angloboerwar.com

3. The Start of the Boy Scout Movement

After his defence of Mafeking from the Boer troops, Lord Robert Baden-Powell returned to England a national hero. His book *Aids to Scouting*, which was intended as a military training manual, teaching soldiers techniques such as observation, tracking and initiative, he discovered, was also being read by many boys and young men.



So he met with various influential people in youth movements across the country, and was persuaded to write a version of *Aids to Scouting* aimed at teenage boys. *Scouting for Boys* was published in 1908, after an experimental camp on Brownsea Island, Poole Harbour, Dorset, where B-P. tried out his ideas on four patrols of boys from London and Bournemouth. *Scouting for Boys* was initially printed in six fortnightly parts, and sold very quickly.

Baden-Powell had originally intended the scheme outlined in *Scouting for Boys* to supplement the programmes of youth organisations that were in existence at the time, like the Boys Brigade and the Boy's Clubs. But boys who were not already in youth movements also bought the book, and set themselves up as Patrols of Scouts, and quickly found themselves leaders to train them. It soon became apparent that some form of organisation was required to support these Scouts.

Originally he had envisaged Scouting as a movement for boys between the ages of 11 and 18 but as early as 1909 Scoutmasters were facing the problem of younger brothers wanting to join in the fun. Some just turned a blind eye to the age of some of the boys, others formed Patrols and Troops of Junior or Cadet Scouts.

4. The Birth of Scouting in Abbots Langley

With the introduction of Scouting by Baden-Powell and his publication "Scouting for Boys" many boys across the country started to band together to form their own troops.

From a record of registered troops issued by Imperial HQ compiled by County Commissioner Percy Everett for 1909 it lists the troop as having 27 Scouts and 3 Leaders. These were:

[Charles Huntingford Bonaker](#), was the first Scout Master for the Abbots Langley Scout Group and he lived in Lawn House, Hunton Bridge. This is now the Hunter's Lodge and they have a plaque on the wall commemorating him. The inaugural meeting of the first scout group was on 19th June 1909. Charles was 35, and had been stationed in a nearby region of Africa whilst Baden-Powell was in Mafeking. There is no doubt that he would have been inspired by the vision of Scout Groups forming across the country.

The Assistant Scout Masters who joined at that time were [Charles Whittaker](#), aged 17, who lived in Yew Tree Cottage, Abbots Road (a house that sat between numbers 90 to 96 today) and [Frederick Bennett](#) aged 19, who lived at No. 8 Garden Road.

Another influential person at that time was Lieutenant [Bramwell Henry Withers](#), who lived at Mill House, Hunton Bridge. He founded the Kings Langley and Langleybury Scout Troops and had an illustrious military career. He assisted in the First Class examinations at Abbots Langley Scout Group where he marked map reading, signalling and rescue work.

On **15th June 1909** a group of boys, namely B.E. Hill, R. Welland and H.R. Overy, met in Abbots Langley and formed a Patrol of boy scouts under the leadership of the 1st Scout Leader, Mr H C Bonaker, assisted by C. Whittaker and F. Bennett and by Mr Overy of High Street, Abbots Langley. Mr Overy was the village recorder and lived where the Doctor's surgery is now situated and became the leader of the Home Guard in Abbots Langley during the Second World War. An extract from the Owl Patrol is reproduced below which was the 3rd patrol of the Troop at that time so the probable strength of the Troop was 24 Scouts.



THE OWL PATROL

15th June 1909

The first boys noted as forming the Owl Troop together are:

B E Hill (Bertram Ernest) Scout No. 2 and Corporal

Son of William Hill the Draper

whose shop was double fronted in the High Street where Alexandra's and Your Move are today

Living in the Limes, Abbots Road, now the present day Post Office

H R Overy (Harold Robert) Scout No. 1

W A Overy (Wilfred Arthur) Scout No. 3

Son of Robert Overy, Rate and Tax Collector

Living in Linden Villas, Abbots Road, two doors down from Bertram Hill

R Welland (Ralph John Hibbert)

Son of Louise Welland, School Mistress and Robert (deceased)

Living next door the Harold in Linden Villas, Abbots Road

1st July 1909

C E Glenister (Clement Edward) No. 4

Son of E Glenister, the Green Grocers

Living at the Green Grocers in the High Street

22nd July 1909

F C Coleman (Frank Charles)

Living at Homefield, Abbots Road

(redeveloped with houses both sides of exit road from car park

This house would have been opposite the three boys above

12th August 1909

H K M Kindersley (Hugh Kenyon Molesworth)

L N (Beau) Kindersley (Lionel Nassau)

(Sons of Sir Robert Molesworth Kindersley, Governor of the Bank of England)

Living at Langley House

From Harold's notebook we know that they learnt and practised knots, a fireman's carry, shooting, the Scout Laws, secret signs and signalling. They each paid in 1d/2d a week to subscribe to a copy of Scouting for Boys, and they also contributed money so that they could buy their uniform – belt, hat, shirt, jersey, haversack and billy cans.

Extract from the Owl Patrol log book of 1909

Meeting Thursday 17th June – Patrol to be called the Owls. Knots learned and practised. Fireman's carry practised and Scouts pace done.

Meeting Tuesday 29th June – Shooting, knots, secret signs, signalling up to H.

Thursday July 22nd - A meeting was held this day. F. Coleman, joined July 26th. New leader takes his duties. Marched to Goods Station, posted sentries, practised ambulance and A.R.

On **Thursday July 22nd 1909** they marched to the goods station and posted sentries and whilst there practised ambulance duties and artificial resuscitation.

At the meeting on **Saturday July 31st 1909** at 5.30pm, it was agreed to buy 5 hats, 5 haversacks and 5 jerseys, and the boys concerned were measured up. Scout Nos. 3 and 6 went to Watford in the evening and purchased the articles and another meeting was held at 8.30 pm when the two Scouts returned where they had a **parade in uniform for the first time**.

Tuesday August 3rd they met at 3.30 pm and obtained shoulder knots and garters. Nos. 2 and 4 biked to Watford and changed No. 4's hat, then met Leaders and Nos. 3 and 6 at Munden. They put their bikes up, bought eggs, went in the wood and made a shelter and posted sentries. No. 4 and a Leader went to fetch drink from 'Fox with his tenth drawn', then lit a fire, cooked eggs and had dinner at 1 o'clock. They tidied up, went to river, paddled, drilled and marched home.

Thursday August 5th The Patrol marched to Bricket Wood and camped. They had a similar outing to Tuesday, but didn't build a shelter. Nos. 3 and 6 each lost a mark.

Wednesday August 12th They met at 9 o'clock and marched to Chipperfield, arriving there at 11.15. They posted a sentry and prepared dinner. After dinner they paddled in the fish pond and saw Mr Cave and his son. Whilst playing they met Messrs Hill and Davis, who had brought the Patrol 2 bottles of ginger beer each. They returned to camp and had tea there thanks to Mrs Davis and Mrs Hill. Scout No. 4 and Corporal were sworn in by the Leader. They arrived home at 7 pm. This was the first time that the two new members B. Kindersley and H. Kindersley were with the Troop. Their Nos. were 5 and 7.

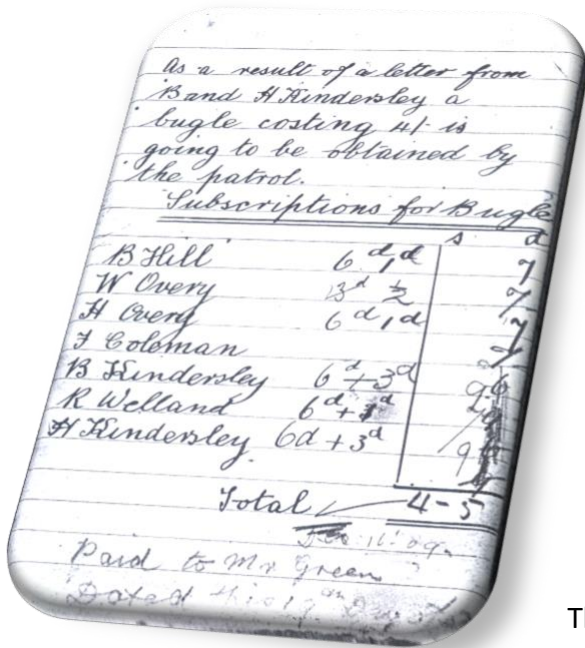
The patrol is now the 3rd Patrol of the 1st Abbots Langley Troop. For a week the Corporal and No. 3 spent their time in camp with the Primrose League Troop at Birchington-on-Sea. They had a fine time, while in the 1st Abbots Langley the members of the Owls have been to Chipperfield where No. 2, 3, 6 ran their mile for Second class tests.

By 31st October 1909 we have a record of the Owl Patrol as:

1	B Hill	Leader 1st Class
2	W Overy	Corporal 2nd Class
3	H Overy	Buglar . Hon Treas. 1st Class
4	F Coleman	

- | | | |
|---|--------------|------------------|
| 5 | B Kindersley | |
| 6 | R Welland | 2nd Class Buglar |
| 7 | H Kindersley | |
| 8 | H Aldridge | |

In the November of **1909** the Troop was inspected by Mr P W Everett, who assisted Baden-Powell with his first Camp in 1907.



By **1910** the Scouts had all subscribed money to buy a Bugle which was finally obtained for 4 shillings and 5 pence and Patrol Leader R. Welland was voted to be the Bugler.



That same year saw the

first census of over a hundred thousand Scouts in the UK and in less than three years, Scouting had reached a firm footing, in which the Abbots Langley group were a part. In **1911** the Group was amongst 800 who went to a rally attended by Baden-Powell at Kendell Hall, near Elstree. In the September of that year Abbots Scouts had two groups who attended a Rally at The Grove. They were also represented at the Imperial Rally in Windsor Great Park in July.

Scout Awards

New scouts were enrolled as a **Tenderfoot** and were between the age of 11 to 18 (1911). In order to gain seniority they had a series of tests to undertake – First Class, Second Class, King's Scout and Silver Wolf. Most of the time when the Patrol met they would have been practising for these tests and the Examiners were: **Mr Withers** - Maps, Signalling, Bandaging, Rescue Work, Distance Judging, Carpentry, Walking; **Mr Bonaker** -Swimming; **C Whittacker** – Cooking.

During this time work was underway to practice for their 1st class tests.

Second Class Tests. Issued 8th September 1909. Used until 6th October 1909.

1. Each second-class scout must understand the composition of, and how to fly, the two flags of the British Empire: The Royal Standard and the Union Jack.
2. At least four of the following knots must be tied and untied rapidly, and four knots are to be recognised and untied blindfold. The knots are: reef-knot, sheetbend, half hitch, clove hitch, bowline, sheepshank, overhand knot, middleman's knot, fisherman's bend, and rolling hitch.
3. The Morse alphabet must be known sufficiently well to enable the candidate for the second-class badge to transmit the whole of it in five minutes.
4. Certain tests will be made, the lad being told to report on some incident which he is required to observe in company of his Scoutmaster. The subject matter of the report, and the manner in which the report is given, must be satisfactory. As a suitable test the candidate might be taken along a street or road, not less than a quarter of a mile long, and he must report on what he has observed during that walk.
5. The boy's powers of observation will be tested by giving him a tray containing twelve articles. He is allowed to look at this for thirty seconds, and must then write down all that he observed on the tray after this has been removed. If three quarters of the articles are correctly described he is considered to have satisfied the examiner in this test.

First Class Test. Issued 15th September 1909. Used until 6th October 1909.

1. To find the points of the compass by means of a watch and observations on the position of the sun.
2. To be able to swim 50 yards and ride a bicycle with confidence to the satisfaction of the examiners.
3. To be able to read and send 15 letters a minute by both Morse and semaphore signalling, with flag or lamps.
4. To have a good knowledge of cooking, with ordinary camp utensils, viz., billy, camp kettle, and wood fire. Cooking to include eggs (three ways, boiling, frying, and poaching), to cook potatoes and stew of meat and vegetables thickened with flour and seasoned; also to prepare tea, coffee, and cocoa.
5. To have a good general knowledge of first aid to the injured.

6. To give the proper methods and to illustrate them for saving life when endangered by drowning; suffocation due to gas, or smoke; fire and exposure. Two of these to satisfy the examiners. He should also be able to describe how to stop a runaway horse.
7. To be able to drill a squad in elementary infantry movements, picking out any faults in the drill positions, etc.⁴

Second Class Test issued 6th October 1909

1. Have at least one month's service as a tenderfoot.
2. Elementary first aid and bandaging.
3. Signalling, elementary knowledge of semaphore or Morse alphabet.
4. Track half a mile in twenty-five minutes; or, if in a town, describe satisfactorily the contents of one shop window out of four, observed for one minute each.
5. Go a mile in twelve minutes at 'scouts pace.
6. Lay and light a fire, using not more than two matches.
7. Cook a quarter of a pound of meat and two potatoes without cooking utensils other than the regulation billy.
8. Have at least sixpence in a savings bank.
9. Know the sixteen principle points of the compass.

First Class Test issued 6th October 1909

1. Swim fifty yards. (N.B.-This may be omitted where the doctor certifies that bathing is dangerous to the boy's health, in which case he must run a mile in eight minutes or perform some equivalent selected by the Scoutmaster.)
2. Must have one shilling at least in the savings bank.
3. Signalling. Send and receive a message in either semaphore or Morse, sixteen letters per minute.
4. Go on foot, or row a boat, alone, to a point seven miles away, and return again; or, if conveyed by any vehicle or animal, go a distance of fifteen miles and back, and write a short report on it. It is preferable that he should take two days over it.
5. Describe or show the proper means for saving life in case of two of the following accidents (allotted by the examiners); Fire, drowning, runaway carriage, sewer gas, ice-breaking; or bandage an injured patient, or revive apparently drowned person.
6. Cook satisfactorily two out of the following dishes, as may be directed: Porridge, bacon, hunter's stew: or skin and cook a rabbit, or pluck and cook a bird. Also make a 'damper' of half a pound of flour, or a twist' baked on a thick stick.
7. Read a map correctly, and draw an intelligible sketch map. Point out a compass direction without the help of a compass.
8. Use an axe for felling or trimming light timber, or, as alternative, produce an article of carpentry or joinery or metal work made by himself satisfactorily.
9. Judge distance, size, numbers, and height within 25% error.
10. Bring a tenderfoot trained by himself in the points required for a tenderfoot. (This may be in special cases be postponed when recruits are not immediately desired, but must be earned out within three months, or the badge withdrawn.¹

Second and First Class Tests Issues October 1911

⁴ <http://www.netpages.free-online.co.uk/sha/tests.htm>

Tenderfoot.

1. A boy on joining the Boy Scouts must be between the ages of 11 and 18 and pass the following tests before making the promise:
Know the Scout Law, Signs, and Salute.
2. Know the composition of the Union Jack and the right way to fly it.
3. Tie the following knots:- Reef knot, sheet bend, clove hitch, bowline, fisherman's, sheepshank.
4. He is then enrolled as a Tenderfoot, and is entitled to wear the buttonhole badge in buttonhole of coat or left pocket buttonhole of shirt when in uniform.

Service Mark.

For each year's service a six-point star may be worn above the cuff on the left arm.

A King's Scout is one who has qualified by efficiency badges to help in defence of the country.

To be a King's Scout a boy must be a First class Scout and Pathfinder, and pass three of the following efficiency tests - Ambulance, Bugler, Cyclist, Marksman, Seaman, Signaller.

He received a crown as badge to wear on the left arm above his First class Badge surrounded by the qualifying badges.

Silver Wolf

Silver Wolf, a King's Scout who has passed 12 tests for efficiency, and who has performed some special piece of Scout work.

First Recorded Boy Scouts in Watford

In mid February 1908 Alan J Emery had got his friends together in a Patrol for a start on the preliminaries of forming a Troop. They decided to call themselves the *Kangaroo* Patrol. This was the first Patrol of BP Scouts to be formed in Watford, or anywhere else in the geographical area of South West Herts, and their names were:

Alan Emery (Patrol Leader)
Marchant Scrivener
Stanley Dixon
Eddie Davies
Charles Burr
Allan King
Denis Emery

Alan Emery wrote a series of articles on Hertfordshire Scouting in the Woodsmoke copies of 1963 onwards. He recorded that the villages of Abbots Langley, Kings Langley and Langleybury (Hunton Bridge) were early starters in the game of scouting, but as these places were incorporated in a separate local association called the Langley Association they were not absorbed into the SW Herts Association until the early 1930's.

H M King Edward VII gave permission in 1909 to the institution of "Kings Scouts" but unfortunately he died in May 1910 he could see his wish fulfilled. In August of 1910 Patrol Leaders Alan Emery and Harold Collins were each awarded the Kings Scout badge. These MAY have been the first in the District but as yet has not been proven.

In 1910 the villages of Flaunden and Sarratt came under review by the Local Association Executive Committee when it was reported that the scouts in these two villages were beginning to break up as they had been attached to the Kings Langley Committee but were being looked after by the 1st Rickmansworth Troop (Mr Galley). The Langley Scout Association were approached on the matter but as they had intimated that they wished to retain these two villages in their Association the matter was allowed to drop.

At the Local Association Executive Committee Meeting on 22nd June 1914, it was unanimously agreed that all Troops in the Local Association of S W Herts should have an official number and be known by such. They were registered by seniority as the 1st, 2nd, 3rd South West Herts, but they may, if so desired, retain the title by which they were previously known in addition to the new regulation number. There were nine Troops operating in South West Herts at the time, but as already mentioned, the 1st Abbots Langley did not join that alliance until later.

1912

It is interesting to note that during the year of 1912 the South West Herts Local Association Executive Committee met seven times and the average attendance was six made up of four Scoutmasters and the Chairman and Secretary. Very little of importance was dealt with at these meetings but for the record the affairs of the 1st Watford Troop were investigated which resulted in the final winding up of that Troop.

1916

To address the problem of what to do with the younger brothers, B-P. introduced a new scheme under the title Wolf Cubs based around the Jungle Books of his close friend Rudyard Kipling, the Cubs had their own distinct uniform, badges, motto, sign, salute, etc. But if Wolf Cubs dealt with those too young to be Scouts, what was to be done with those too old to be Scouts? The first Cub Pack in Abbots Langley was formed in 1930.

1917

So just before the end of WW1 B-P. set up a scheme for Senior Scouts, which changed its name to Rover Scouts the next year, for anyone over the age of 18, with Outdoor Adventure and Service as the main part of its programme. This was not introduced into the Abbots Langley Group until 1940.

We have no record of where the Scout Group would have met, during this early time but it may well have been either the Wesleyan Church (now the Methodist Church) or Baptist Chapel (now the Parish Council Office) in Chapel Alley (Langley Road).



Original frontage of the Wesleyan Chapel, circa 1910.

5. Abbots Langley Life at the Turn of the Century

The boundaries of Abbots Langley encompass a total of 5445 acres, making it one of the largest parishes in England.

Beating of the Bounds

This ancient custom dates back to the middle ages, and was also recorded in H R Overy's notebook of 1909 when they took part. Originally an ecclesiastic practice, the custom later changed to reaffirm the limits of the parish land.

Abbots Langley High Street remained a dirt and sand surface repaired with broken flints, until after the 1st World War.

The first car was recorded in Abbots Langley is 1901. This was a yellow automobile which broke down outside the village saddlers (Mr Bonaker, the Scout Master, next to the present day library).

For others to get about, there was **Emmet's cycle shop** in Marlin Square from 1906 and much frequented by Harold Overy with his many punctures.

The first transformer for **electricity** in the village stood on the corner of **Langley Road and Chapel Green**, by today's Methodist Church. Electric lighting for widespread domestic use was not available at Abbots Langley until after the Second World War.

The line of lime trees by Manor House Grounds, planted at the side of the road were replanted in 1892 in celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

From 1900 there were a lot of local shops and traders on its High Street, and also a cluster of businesses around Marlin Square and others in Adrian Road, and Breakspear Road.

STORES AND BUILDINGS OF NOTE IN ABBOTS LANGLEY VILLAGE AROUND 1909

LOCATION	HOUSE	ROAD NAME	SHOPKEEPER	SHOP TYPE
		Marlin Square	Mr Emmet	Emmet's cycle shop from 1906
Middle cottage	39	Breakspear Road	Tommy Quarman (brother of Scout Lewis)	Tailor
On the corner with Breakspear Road	1	Garden Road	Horace Palmer	General Store 1910 – 1947
Opposite		Garden Road	Masie Ragget	Small wool shop run from the front room of her cottage
Mid		Adrian Road	Mrs Munt	Cake shop
Corner Adrian / Breakspeare Road. 1 window looking down each road and a door on the corner	61	Adrian Road	Mr Parson	Butcher Shop from 1904-68
Land from the corner of the Crescent to the Pin Wei		High Street	Homer Busby (father of Mary, the village undertaker)	Busby's Builders Yard
Next to the Pin Wei		High Street	Mr Mitchell	The Village Forge and the last blacksmith who worked here during the 1 st World War
		High Street	The Boys Home (originally the Rose and Crown)	Established around 1842. It is thought possible that the pub fronts the site of what could have been the village's eighteen century workhouse.
Far side of the Boys Home	17 and 19	High Street	Mr Simons	Simons the Butchers, one of the villages oldest businesses, established in 1832
	9	High Street	Mr Austin	Grocer from 1886 - 1919 This building is one of the oldest in Abbots Langley, half-timbered with a jetted front, original doorways and dates from the sixteenth century

LOCATION	HOUSE	ROAD NAME	SHOP KEEPER	SHOP TYPE
Now the library		High Street		The old village school
Two cottages next door		High Street		Date from the 17th century
Rear of the Abbots house		High Street	17th century maltings barn. Mrs Armstrong	It was used as sleeping quarters for the soldiers in the 1 st World War. Later it was used by the painter Sir Eric Kennington who painted a large mural there depicting the battlefields of France.
	4	High Street	John Bonaker (father of first Scout Master Charles)	Sadler from 1845 John became the Registrar of Births, Death and Local Tax Collector from 1854-88
Now Alexandra's and Your Move	12 and 12a	High Street	William Hill (father of Scout Bertram)	Draper shop established in 1886 in a double fronted shop
	16	High Street	Mr Cave (father of Scout Herbert)	The Fishmongers 1886-1934
next cottage along	18	High Street	Mr Thomas Turner	1 st village Post Office
Now the Noor Mahal	20	High Street	Mr Daniel Seabrook	Abbots Langley Supply Stores 1890 – 1920
Martin's newsagents	22	High Street	Mr Funnell	Funnell's Shoe Repair Shop 1906 – 1952
	24	High Street	Mr Carter	Carter's newsagents from 1904 which later became Dazeleys from 1911 – 1967
Ansell's Bookmakers		High Street	Lew Tap's	Shoe Repair Shop 1890-1930
	30	High Street	Lloyds Bank	first site of the bank in the Village from 1914-1968
	32	High Street	Edwin Glenister (father of Scout Clement)	Glenister's Greengrocer's established by him in 1896
Langley Travel / Swift Dry Cleaners	36	High Street	Bricklayers Arms Landlord Phillip White 1900 who also ran a coal business from the rear	High Street pub dating from 1866 till 1966. One of the first three gas lamps in the village was attached to a corner of the premises.
		High Street	Henderson Hall	Built in 1902 by Mr W. H Henderson of Serge Hill, Bedmond as a gift to the village in Memory of his wife, Elvira, who died in childbirth aged 23.

LOCATION	HOUSE	ROAD NAME	SHOP KEEPER	SHOP TYPE
Next to Henderson Hall		High Street	Barclays Bank	Established in 1914.
Railings / garden of the house that stretches up to the corner of Abbots Rd	The Limes	High Street	Mr & Mrs Hill	Residence. Built by Homer Busby in 1929
			The Royal Oak. Bought by Edmund Fernley Whittingstall (a wealthy local brewer, who lived at Langleybury House in 1846)	Local pub. Run by George Wiffen from 1890 to 1899, then his wife, and from 1902 it was kept by Lew Wiffen until the First World War.

OTHER NOTABLE PARTS OF THE AREA

Trowley derives its name from the old folk name Trolls'ley, meaning mischievous fairy meadow and dates back to medieval times. In the dip of Tibbs Hill Road, just beyond the Compasses, was Trowley Bottom. Here at right angles to the main road, stand four houses called Kings Field Cottages. These date back to the seventeenth century and are likely to have been one single barn when first built. They are now red bricked with some timber framing.

Model Cottages

At the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park in 1851, the architect Henry Roberts designed, at Prince Albert's request, some model cottages for the 'society for improving the conditions of the labouring classes'. In 1856, a sample of these houses were erected in Abbots Langley, in what is now Tibbs Hill Road. Their rather distinctive Victorian structure still survives and they now form three separate dwellings facing onto the main road.

Parsonage Farm was run by William Breed in 1901, and during the 1st World War the farm was kept by Fred Aldridge, and then Bill Honour until it was sold to Wonder.

The **Lych Gate of St Lawrence's church** was built in 1902 by local craftsman Edwin Glenister (Scout Clement's father). Arthur Parnell was the Vicar of St Lawrence's Church from 1893 to 1925.

Matthew Timberlake was born in Nash Mills in 1845 and was the founder figure of the local Methodist community. He married and following the birth of his daughter, Elizabeth Anne in 1871, he brought his family to live in Abbots Langley. There was no church in the village and members used to meet in each other's houses, with open air services on the Green in front of the present day church and in the 1870's in the Bricklayers Arms. In 1878 a committee was formed to secure a site for a new Wesleyan Church, and consequently the plot was bought from Mr Chalk who had a builders yard where the church was built in 1881. There were occasional visits from Reverend Hillier who took an interest in the church's

development. In 1896 the **Baptist Chapel** was also built in Langley Road the road became known locally as **Chapel Alley** and the Methodists and Baptists had a strong bond of friendship. At the beginning of the 1st World War the Methodist School Room was again used, this time as a Day-School for children evacuated from London.

A boys school was built 1853 on the site of the current day library, which was a church school for up to 90 pupils a week. It was initially run by a Headmaster, supported by a pupil teacher. The boys had to bring in 2d a week to help supplement the charity funding. Mr High was the headmaster from 1866 – 1906 and then Mr Wells took over from 1906-1912.

The Abbots Langley Water Company installed fire hydrants along the village road after they were formed in 1886 and we know from Jelly's Trade Directory that the Abbots Langley **Volunteer Fire Brigade was formed in 1909**. It consisted of village men, often shop keepers and traders.

During the 1st World War there were several regiments of soldiers billeted in Abbots Langley for training and exercise. **The 1st/13th Kensington Battalion** were here in 1914 and were visited by Princess Louise when on parade at Cecil Lodge. Many of the 1st/13th were camped on farmland off Toms Lane. **The London Scottish Regiment** were also billeted in the Watford area. Some of the men arrived in Abbots Langley on August 17th 1914, having marched from London. These soldiers were part of the 4th London Brigade which was then made up of men from the Civil Service Rifles, Queen's Westminsters and the Kensingtons. Some of the London Scottish camped out in farmhouses, barns and other outlying buildings around Abbots Langley. Another company was billeted at Leavesden Hospital. Battalion headquarters were at Bucknalls House in Garston now occupied by the Building Research Station and Battalion Parades were held at Fortunes Farm. The London Scottish left for France on 15th September 1914. In the autumn of the same year the 1st Battalion of Princess Alexandra's Post Office Rifles were also in the village. Many local householders helped to accommodate these fighting men. We know that 6 soldiers from the **Post Office Rifles** were billeted with the village butcher, Mr Parsons in Adrian Road. Princess Alexandra's regiment finally left to join the British Expeditionary Forces in Flanders on 17th March 1915.⁵

⁵ *Abbots Langley A Hertfordshire Village, with supplementary information from Abbots Langley Scout Group*



Abbots Road, circa 1908.



William Cave, fishmonger, circa 1910.

FISHMONGER'S SUICIDE
West Herts and Watford Observer
5th September 1931,

It was disclosed at the inquest at Abbots Langley on Thursday evening, on Arthur William Cave, Fishmonger, of High Street, Abbots Langley, that on the night of his death he posted to a Watford firm of solicitors two letters, one dated May 1, 1930, and another dated May 11 this year, the latter had been re-dated to August 31. The letters were directions for bequests.

The Coroner (Mr R A Godman) held an inquest in the Village Room, sitting without a jury. Mr Cave who was found drowned in a tank of water in a room at the rear of his shop, had lived in Abbots Langley for ay years. He was a sidesman at the Parish Church, and a School Manager. He was formerly a member of Abbots Langley Parish Council.

Mrs Emily Cave, High Street, who gave evidence of identification, said that her husband was 68 years of age. She last saw him about 8.30 pm on Monday night, when he said goodnight to her. He was going to Watford to sleep and to market the next morning; this was his usual custom. He was in his usual state of health. On Tuesday morning she got up about 7.20 am and after dressing, stripped the bed. On the mattress she found her husband's wallet with a letter inside. He usually kept it there, and she thought he had forgotten it. She read the letter and took it to her daughter, who sent for the police. The policeman found the body in the room deceased used to clean the fish. Her husband was worried about money affairs, but apart from that she did not know of anything else.

“Unpleasant References”

The Coroner: Your husband made some very unpleasant references in the letters he left.

Witness: I don't think the letter was quite sane.

The Coroner: I don't think it quite right to read what he says about some other person without giving him the opportunity of refuting the statement himself. I don't conceive it my duty to sit in judgement over matters which are irrelevant to this enquiry, which is into the cause of death. Therefore, I don't propose to read all the letter.

The Coroner then read the following extract

“Love to dear mother and all my loving daughters. Sorry to have to leave you all after working all these years. From your loving husband and father. It had better come now than when there is nothing left – Sorrowful Dad.

The Coroner: You think he is referring to money matters?

Witness: Yes, I am Sure

Ethel Elizabeth Cave, daughter of the last witness, said that her father spoke to her the night before in an ordinary manner. He said, “Goodnight” and then “Goodbye”.

The Coroner: Was that usual?

Witness: Well I don't think so.

Witness added that she heard the door close, and she did not hear her father return. The next morning her mother brought her the letter she found, and witness sent for the police.

“I thought he was worried about business but save for that he was his normal self,” Said the witness. “He was trying to be cheerful, and keep business matters from us.”

The Coroner: With regard to the statements made in this letter, they are exaggerations, not merely hallucinations.

Witness: I think they are exaggerations

The Coroner: He has been on unpleasant terms with the person mentioned in the letter.

Police Constable Sherwood stated that he found the body in a room adjoining the shop, which was kept for the purpose of cleaning fish. It was lying on a wooden slab with his head and shoulders in water in the water tank. The water was 2ft 6in deep and the tap was still running. Deceased was lying on his back, and the trunk from the waist up was lying in the water. The right hand was in the trousers pocket. Rigor mortis had set in.

Dr Thomas Britton said that the cause of death was suffocation from drowning.

Letters to a Watford Solicitor

The Coroner said that the deceased also left two letters. One was dated May 11 1930 and was addressed to Mr Riggall, the late Coroner, who was also his solicitor at the time. That communication was in the nature of a will or testamentary disposition. It also made reflections on the same person as in the previous note to which he (the Coroner) had referred. The other letter was dated May 1, 1931, and repeated part of the communication, and asked that everything should be seen to one behalf of his wife. There was a fresh date on the top of this communication. This letter was dated August 31, 1931 and. He had written another letter on the back of it. Those two documents were received by a solicitor in Watford the following morning, September, 1. They were posted at Abbots Langley on August, 31. He was not able to see the time on the postmark, but he thought it was a.m. He had not called the solicitor as Mrs Cave had identified the handwriting.

“From the two documents which I have partly read and partly referred to” added the Coroner, “it seems to me quite clear that the unfortunate man had it on his mind for some time to put an end to his life, and on this day he sends testamentary writing to a solicitor, and also writes the note I have read to his wife, and referring to his daughters, and puts it with his wallet, where he knew his wife would find it next morning by the time he would have ended. His life. I have no evidence whatever that he was insane at the time he committed this tragedy and so I must find from the evidence that he killed himself.

A verdict of *felo de se* was accordingly returned.



Breakspeare Road, 1914.



Adrian Road, 1914.



Langley Road, 1914.



Marlin Square, 1914.



Douglas and Derrick Flowers at Flowers Garage, Marlin Square 1947.

**SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM, AROUND 1910
OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE SCHOOL, WHERE THE LIBRARY STAND NOW**





Wedding of Joseph Timberlake, September 11th 1900. Matthew Timberlake (bearded front row left).



The Glenister family, circa 1910.

Scout Clement Edward Glenister seated right, aged 15 in 1910

Photo reproduced from Abbots Langley, A Hertfordshire Village ©David Spain



Mr. Edwin Glenister standing at the door of his shop, 1910.

THE LIMES, NOW THE CURRENT DAY POST OFFICE



Corner of Abbots Road, showing Henderson Hall and shops, circa 1914.

6 RESIDENCES OF 1ST ABBOTS LANGLEY SCOUT MEMBERS FROM THE 1911 CENSUS

No.	First Name	Age in 1909	Surname	No. or House Name	Address
1	Arthur Ernest	14	Aldridge		Adrian Road
2	Herbert Joseph	12			
3	Frank George	12	Allaway		Kitters Green
4	Charles R	12	Atkins	5	Adrian Road
5	Stanley Arthur	13	Austin	99	Breakspeare Road
6	Henry Edward	15	Austin	101	Breakspeare Road
7	James George Matthew (John Edmund	11 7)	Barnes	63	Breakspeare Road
8	Charles Julian	12	Baton	8	Asylum Road (now College Road)
9	Ernest James	14	Bennett	18	Adrian Road
10	Frederick George (Scout Assistant)	19	Bennett	8	Garden Road
11	Charles Huntingford (1 st Scout Leader)	35	Bonaker	Lawn House	Hunton Bridge (now Hunter's Lodge)
12	Clifton Harold	12	Bourne		Marlin Square
13	Arthur William	11	Briers	17	Adrian Road
14	Frederick	12	Carter	90	Marlin Square
15	Herbert Bushby	14	Cave	The Fish Mongers	High Street
16	Arthur William	13	Chalk	Rose Cottages	Asylum Road (now College Road)
17	Frank Charles	14	Coleman	Homefield	Abbots Road (now redeveloped with houses both sides of exit road from car park) ⁶
18	Richard Douglas	14	Coombes		Mansion House Cottage Farm
19	Mr & Mrs		Davis (Helpers)	The Police House	Bedmond
20	Arthur Albert	12	Diapar	37	Adrian Road
21	Thomas	14	Dickinson	113	Breakspeare Road ⁷
No.	First Name	Age in 1909	Surname	No. or House Name	Address
22	Arthur	16	Downer		Popes Road
23	Harry Charles	13	Flowers	Asylum Terrace	Asylum Road (now College Road) ²
24	Clement Edward	14	Glenister	The Green Grocers	High Street
25	Edwin Edward	15	Hart	Keepers Lodge	Long Wood
26	Percy George	16	Hedges		Trowley Bottom (now part of Tibbs Hill Way)

⁶ Abbots Langley History Society, House names project

⁷ 1901 census shows Thomas Dickinson & Harry Flowers living next door to each other in the Model Cottages at Trowley Bottom

27	Bertrand Ernest	15	Hill	The Limes	Abbots Road (The Limes was redeveloped with the Post Office, hairdressers & dentist) ²
28	Henry (Harry) Clifford	17	Hook	4	Louvain Way
29	Joseph	11	Timberlake (Kimpton)	56	Adrian Road
30	Lionel Nassau (Beau)	12	Kindersley	Langley House	Abbots Langley
31	Hugh Kenyon Molesworth	10			
32	Percy Frederick George	13	Mitchel		High Street
33	Leonard Wilfred	13	Munt	59	Breakspeare Road
34	Harold Robert	14	Overy	Linden Villas	Abbots Road (Now No. 10) ²
35	William Arthur	12			
36	Lewis Stanley	13	Quarman	5	Garden Road
37	Charles Thomas	15	Ridgeway	27	Breakspeare Road
38	Percy Charles	12	Robins	4	Garden Road
39	Frederick Herbert	14	Scott	48	Breakspeare Road
40	Thomas Alfred	12	Shepherd	80	Marlin Square
41	Ralph John Hibbert	13	Welland	Next to Linden Villas	Abbots Road (Now No. 12)
42	Charles (Scout Assistant)	17	Whittaker	Yew Tree Cottage	Abbots Road (2 large plots on 1924 OS map but in 1911 just one house between 90-96) ²
43	Bramwell Henry (1 st Class Examiner)	21	Withers	Mill House	Hunton Bridge

7. A TESTAMENT TO SCOUTING

Harold Overy noted in his book on Sunday 13th June 1909:

“spent the afternoon rifle shooting till 4 o’clock, when Yeomanry appeared in village followed them to Langleybury Park and saw them drilling.”

Many of these Scouts would have joined the Yeomanry when they were old enough and then joined up in the 1st World War as soon as they could. You can **read their stories** on the separate pages. We have identified **40 Scouts and Scout Leaders** who went to war – that is **everyone** in Overy’s notebook we have managed to trace.

4 were Killed in Action, or died from their battle wounds

9 were wounded/invalided out

and Wilfred Overy, the brother of Harold was a Prisoner of War – but in true Scouting spirit even managed to write an article whilst in captivity on “the only Englishman who ever became Pope” which was printed in the British Prisoners of War publication *The Rennbahn*⁸.

**It is a true testament to Scouting
that gave them the grounding on which to survive
the harshness of war,
and amazing that so many of them survived**

We have no records between 1910 and 1927 to help us find out much more. We only assume that the Abbots Langley Scout Group continued until the outbreak of The War in 1914, at which time most enlisted and the Group would have disbanded, until 1927 when Alan MacDonald restarted it.

Just before the end of the War in **1917 Baden-Powell** set up a scheme for **Senior Scouts, which changed its name to Rover Scouts** the next year, for anyone over the age of 18, with Outdoor Adventure and Service as the main part of its programme. We have not been able to establish if some of these men came back into Scouting as Leaders/supporters after the war. Our first record of a Rover Scout unit in the Abbots Langley Scout Group was 1940, although they had an active Executive Committee and Leaders from 1927 onwards. What we do know is that R Overy (Harold) was elected onto the reformed 1927 Group Executive committee on 8th November 1927, and that he presented the Rover Crew in July 1962, with the gift of books, maps and his set of pre-1914 Patrol Leaders Badges, but at the time of writing, we cannot locate their whereabouts.

⁸ 12 August 1916 Parish Magazine

Lest We Forget

Abbots Langley Scout Group
Roll of Honour
World War 1 - 1914-1918

Herbert Bushby Cave
France
13th November 1916, Aged 21

Thomas Dickinson
Ypres
29th April 1918 Aged 23

Henry Clifford Hook
Died 1st March 1918 of wounds received
18th February Menin Road, east of Ypres,
Aged 26

Lionel Nassau (Beau) Kindersley
Burlon Wood, France
25th November 1917, Aged 20

8. The Territorial Force in Hertfordshire

Many of the Scouts in Abbots Langley served in the Territorial Units in Hertfordshire later either serving full time in the Hertfordshire Yeomanry or the Hertfordshire Regiment.

The Territorial Units in Hertfordshire were made up of the Hertfordshire Yeomanry and the Hertfordshire Battalion. The cavalry unit was the Hertfordshire Yeomanry and the Hertfordshire Regiment provided the infantry.

Hertfordshire Yeomanry

The Hertfordshire Yeomanry had its roots in the 1790's as a county based cavalry unit tasked with civil defence. It went through various changes in the 19th century and at the time of the Boer war was a volunteer service and supplied troops to the newly raised Imperial Yeomanry which took part in many conflicts in South Africa. In April 1908 it became the Hertfordshire Yeomanry Regiment and upon the outbreak of war many men serving in the Yeomanry volunteered for imperial service overseas and as a result the Herts Yeomanry was split into 2 the 1/1 and 2/1 Hertfordshire Yeomanry.⁹

When war broke out the 1/1st Hertfordshire Yeomanry mobilised on 14th August 1914. The 1/1 was the fighting arm of the Hertfordshire Yeomanry and this was men who had volunteered to fight overseas, the 2/1 remained at home as a service unit. The 1/1 Hertfordshire Yeomanry served in Gallipoli, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Regimental Numbers issued from 1908 onwards

Number	Joined on
1090	20th Feb 1909
1297	23rd March 1910
1315	31st Jan 1911
1413	13 Feb 1912
1570	1st Nov 1913
1649	July 1914
1681	3rd Aug 1914
1772	2nd September 1914
2118	3rd October 1914

When the territorial service was renumbered in 1917, men from the Hertfordshire Yeomanry were issued numbers in the range 105001 to 110000, the lowest number being issued to the man with the lowest number from the first issue.

In 1913 one of our scouts Arthur Downer asked to be transferred from the Hertfordshire Yeomanry to the City of London Yeomanry as he cannot get away from his business at the time of year that this Regiment normally go to camp. The Hertfordshire Yeomanry held their summer camp between 13 to 27th May 1911 in Broxbourne and 18th May to the 1st June 1912. A reason he gave for his request was that the City of London held their camp in August.

Hertfordshire Territorial's

⁹ Hertsatwar.co.uk

Many of Hertfordshire's men served with the Hertfordshire Regiment. The Hertfordshire Regiment was formed on the 1st April 1908 from 2 battalions of volunteers then existing in the County. They were named the Hertfordshire Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment; this became the 1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment the following year.¹⁰

D Company was based at Watford. It restructured in 1915 and under the new Battalion composition Watford came under No 3 Company although Hemel Hempstead was No 2 Company. It is reasonable to assume up until September 1916 any man enlisting in the 1st Herts would find themselves in the relevant Company based on their enlistment location

As a pre war "Territorial Unit" the men of the Herts were part-time soldiers from all walks of life, training together at weekends and annual summer camps.¹¹

Before war broke out these units were looked down upon by the soldiers in the regular army however with the outbreak of war in August 1914 many men volunteered. The 1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regt. (T.A.) was one of the first "Terrier" Battalions to see active service and covered themselves in glory throughout the war.¹²

The 1/1st was the only battalion to serve abroad. It joined the BEF IN France on 6th November 1914, serving in the trenches at the closing battle of Ypres. In 1915 they saw action in the Battle of Festubert and the Battle of Loos. Notably in 1916 they were involved in the Battle of the Somme and the Battle of Ancere and in 1917 spent the first half of the year holding the line near Ypres.

¹⁰ Armyservicenumbers.blogspot.co.uk

¹¹ Hertsatwar.co.uk

¹² hertsmemories.org

Regimental Numbers issued from 1908 onwards

Number	Joined on
640	28th April 1908
1196	11th May 1909
1359	14th Feb 1910
1598	13th Jan 1911
1786	26th Jan 1912
2092	27th Jan 1913
2630	1st Jan 1914
2709	5th Sept 1914
3697	4th November 1914
4223	13th Dec 1914
4479	11th Jan 1915
4660	22nd Feb 1915
4762	22nd March 1915
4853	19th April 1915
4967	24th May 1915

When the territorial service was renumbered in 1917, men from the 1st Hertfordshire Regiment were issued numbers in the range 265001 to 290000, the lowest number being issued to the man with the lowest number from the first issue.

Scouts who joined Hertfordshire Yeomanry or Hertfordshire Battalion

Name	Original Service Number	Issued Between	Reissued Service Number from 1917	Additional Info
Arthur Ernest Aldridge	1597	Nov 1913 – July 1914	105156	Yeomanry
Frank Allaway				Nov 1914 with Herts Territorial
James Barnes	4341	December 1914- Jan 1915	266292	Hertfordshire Regiment
Charles Batten	2618	After October 1914	105856	Yeomanry
Herbert Cave	4291	December 1914- Jan 1915		Hertfordshire Regiment
Fred Carter	3227	September - Nov 1914		Hertfordshire Regiment
Arthur Chalk			266439	Hertfordshire Regiment
Frank Coleman	4292		266651	Hertfordshire Regiment
Thomas Dickinson	3834	Nov – Dec 1914	266151	Hertfordshire Regiment

Arthur Downer	1279	March 1910 – Jan 1911		Yeomanry Transferred to City of London Yeomanry prior to the war
Lewis Quarman	3165	September - Nov 1914	235481	Hertfordshire Regiment
Percy Robins		Joined September 1914	265880	Hertfordshire Regiment

9. Regiments Joined by the 1st Scouts of Abbots Langley

Name	Regiment	Rank /Regimental Number	
Arthur Aldridge	Hertfordshire Yeomanry Dragoons	Yeomanry Dragoon Sergeant - 105156 - Previously 1597	Survived the Great War
Herbert Aldridge	Army Service Corps	Regimental Number - S/4 090164	Survived the Great War
Frank Alloway	12th Battalion – Kings Royal Rifle Corps	Regimental Number- 56470	Survived the Great War
Charles Atkins	8th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment	Private – 3227	Survived the War – Discharged Wounded
Henry Austin	8th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment	Regimental Number - 17176	Survived the War – Taken Prisoner of War
James Barnes	Hertfordshire Territorials 1 st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment 4 th Battalion Tank Corps	Private - 4341: 266292	Survived the Great War
Charles Batten	Hertfordshire Yeomanry Dragoons	Private - 2618:105856:505856	Survived the Great War
Ernest Bennett	Royal Army Service Corps Dorsetshire Regiment	Private – 105224 L/Corporal- 20085	Survived the Great War
Name	Regiment	Rank /Regimental Number	
Frederick Bennett	Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Royal Field Artillery – Gunner		Survived the Great War
Clifford Bourne	A/Cyc Co, 11 Royal Sussex Regiment 11th Royal Sussex, 1st Royal Sussex.	Private – 5545 39 D, Private SD/3941	Survived the Great War

Arthur Briers	8th East Surrey Regiment Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex) Regiment – Regimental Number	Regimental Number G/36003, later G/106301	Survived the Great War
Leonard Busby	Machine Gun Corps, (Motor Branch) – Previous Units: 45 M.M.G.S. RA GNR, 45 M.G.C.	Regimental Number – 46	Survived the Great War
Fred Carter	1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment Labour Corps	Private – 3227 Regimental Number - 588535-	Survived the War – Discharged Wounded
Herbert Cave	1 st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment	Private - 4291	Killed in Action 13th November 1916
Arthur Chalk	1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment 5th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment	Private - 266439	Survived the Great War
Frank Coleman	1 st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment 6 th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers 13 th Battalion West Riding Regiment	Private – 4292:266651 Lance Corporal/ Corporal - 238077	Survived the Great War
Name	Regiment	Rank /Regimental Number	
Richard Coombes	Royal Naval Air Service 2 nd Squadron, 61 st Wing, RAF	Regimental Number F7166:207166	Survived the Great War
Arthur Diaper	Bedfordshire Regiment 11th Battalion Cheshire Regiment	Private- 32924 Regimental Number 50656	Survived the War – Discharged Wounded
Thomas Dickinson	1/1 Hertfordshire Regiment 8th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment	Private -3834:266151 Private – 235587	Killed in Action 29th April 2018
Arthur Downer	Hertfordshire Yeomanry City of London Yeomanry	Private -1279 Corporal - 2144	Survived the Great War
Harry Flowers	2/4 th ,12 th , 13 th York & Lancaster Regiment	Private- 33557	Survived the Great War

Clement Glennister	Royal Navy	Paymaster Lieutenant	Survived the Great War
Edward Hart	3rd Battalion County of London Yeomanry	Private - 39212	Survived the Great War
Percy Hedges	Gloucester Regiment	Private – 26156	Survived the Great War
Bertrand Hill “Ken”	13th Battalion, (Territorial Force), County of London (Kensington’s)	Private - 490831	Survived the Great War
Harry Hook	6th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment	Private - 17787	Died of Wounds -Killed In Action 1st March 1918
Name	Regiment	Rank /Regimental Number	
Hugh Molesworth Kindersley	Scots Guards	Lieutenant	Survived the Great War
Lionel Nassau Kindersley	15 th The King’s Hussars	Lieutenant	Killed in Action 25th November 1917
Percy Mitchell	4 th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment; 3 rd Battalion 1 st Army Cyclist Corps	Private - 381.	Survived the War – Discharged Wounded
Leonard Munt	1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment; Royal Flying Corps & Royal Air Force	Private; Air Mechanic (3rd Class) - 406469	Survived the Great War
Harry Robert Overy	Surrey Yeomanry & 12 th Battalion East Surrey Regiment	Private- 30820	Survived the Great War

Wilfred Arthur Overy	13 th Battalion London Regiment (Kensington's)	Private - 490583	Survived the Great War
Lewis Quarman	1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment 1/5 Battalion Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment	Private; 3165 235481	Survived the Great War

Name	Regiment	Rank /Regimental Number	
Charles Ridgeway	1 st 2 nd 4 th & 5 th Battalions Bedfordshire Regiment 3 rd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment	Corporal – 14274 2nd Lieutenant	Survived the Great War
Percy Robins	Hertfordshire Territorials - 1 st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment 4 th Reserve Battalion 443 rd Agricultural Labour Company Labour Corps	Private – 457905	Survived the Great War
Frederick Scott	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment	Private – 16960	Survived the Great War
Thomas Shepherd	Royal Navy and the Royal Naval Air Service	Regimental Number F17870:217870	Survived the Great War
Ralph Welland	13 th (County of London) Battalion (Kensington) 3 rd , 7 th & 8 th Battalions Seaforth Highlanders 4 th Reserve Veterinary Hospital, Army Veterinary Corps; Royal Garrison Artillery	Lieutenant	Survived the Great War
Charles Whittaker	Motor Transport Army Service Corps	Acting Corporal/Fitter M2/022008	Survived the Great War

Detailed Information on Members

Of the

1st Abbots Langley Scout Group

ARTHUR ERNEST ALDRIDGE

Born 26th April 1895 - Abbots Langley
Hertfordshire Yeomanry - Service Number – 105156
Previously 1597 Hertfordshire Yeomanry Dragoon Sergeant
Survived the Great War

Arthur Aldridge joined the Scouts with his brother Herbert Aldridge, better known as Bert. He was 14 years old when he joined in 1909.

In 1911 he was living in Adrian Road with his parents George and Emily. He had a sister called Edith and brothers George, Bert and Edward. Aged 16, in 1911, Arthur is working as a Railway Clerk and his father is shown as a Butcher. The Aldridge family later lived at Home Park Farm and Arthur lists that as his address in 1918.

The Scout notebook lists several local farms and Kelly's directory shows that Frederick Aldridge, his uncle is registered at Gammons Farm, Leavesden in 1914 and also Parsonage Farm, Kings Langley in 1926. He is also known as running it in 1914.¹³ His father George is listed in 1929 and 1933 at Home Park Farm.

Arthurs Regimental number for the **Hertfordshire Yeomanry** indicates that he volunteered somewhere between November 1913 and July 1914. He would have been 18 years old.

He is recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour from September 1914, as serving with the Hertfordshire Yeomanry, and is listed with this unit right through the War.¹⁴ His unit, Hertfordshire Yeomanry Dragoons mobilised between in August 1914 and January 1915 for Egypt, later serving in Gallipoli and Palestine and on the Western Front in France. In December 1915 the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine notes that Arthur and his brother George, who is also listed with the Hertfordshire Yeomanry, were both suffering from dysentery and typhoid. On 15th June 1918 the Hertfordshire Advertiser reported that Arthur had been awarded the Croix du Guerre with Palme, indicating that it was won in action.²

"Sergt Aldridge, Herts Yeomanry, son of Mr and Mrs G Aldridge, Home Farm, King's Langley, has been awarded the Croix du Guerre for gallantry in the field during operations at the end of 1917. In a letter to Sergt Aldridge's parents, Capt Reginald Abel Smith, his commanding officer, writes – "He has always shown himself absolutely fearless under fire and all the work he has had to do in the field, and there have been one or two difficult jobs he has done in the way that proves that I shall be able to place perfect reliance in whatever he does. The special work for which he has gained this distinction was on November 18th, 1917 (Ed. presume not 8th – illegible), when he accompanied his troop officer, Lieut Newman, in a difficult patrol, which kept them under machine gun and shell fire most of the day, and the result of the patrol proved of considerable value to the later operations. I may add that Lieut Newman was awarded the Military Cross for the same work".²

¹³ Abbots Langley – A Hertfordshire Village – Scott Hastie p53

¹⁴ Information From Roger Yapp Back to the Front Project

Reginald Herbert Macaulay Abel Smith, his commanding officer, served with the 1/1st Hertfordshire Yeomanry from August 1914- December 1915 with B Squadron in Egypt and the Dardanelles and the 2nd/1st Hertfordshire Yeomanry from January to July 1917.

All three brothers served in the war and all returned home after the war and Arthurs Medal Record shows that he received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

HERBERT JOSPEH ALDRIDGE

Born 1897 -Abbots Langley. Baptised 3rd October 1897 – Abbots Langley.

Army Service Corps - Service Number – S/4 090164

Survived the Great War

Herbert Aldridge joined the Scouts with his brother Arthur Aldridge, who was 2 years older. He was 12 years old when he joined. The Scout records refer to him as B Aldridge, probably Bert. The first mention of Bert is on 9th August when the Bugler is being voted for it states “this will be paid by B Aldridge, No 8 the new member”. Bert was Number 4 Scout in 1910 and is later referred to as Corporal on 15th June 1910.

In 1911 he was living in Adrian Road with his parents George and Emily. He had a sister called Edith and brothers George, Arthur and Edward. In 1911, Bert is living at home and his father is shown as a Butcher. The Aldridge family later lived at Home Park Farm and in 1918 he lists this as his address.

The Aldridge family were closely connected to farming. Herbert’s uncle, Frederick who was 3 years younger than his father George is shown in Kelly’s Directory as registered at Gammons Farm, Leavesden in 1914 and also Parsonage Farm Kings Langley in 1926. It is also recorded that Parsonage Farm is being kept by Fred Aldridge in 1914.¹⁵ In the 1891 Census Frederick is shown as a farmer and in 1901 he is shown as being a Farm Bailiff. Herbert’s father, George, is listed in 1929 and 1933 in Kelly’s Directory at Home Park Farm. The Scout Note book lists several local farms and shows all the animals kept at them.

Herbert served with the Army Service Corps during the First World War. Two of his brothers also served and but in the Hertfordshire Yeomanry. The Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour first listed him in May 1915, and indicated that he was serving with the Army Service Corps (ASC).¹⁶

The Army Service Corps were the unsung heroes of the Great War. Soldiers cannot fight without food equipment and ammunition and it was the ASC’s job to provide them.¹⁷ The Army Service Corps were responsible for keeping the British Army supplied with provisions.

Herbert has the prefix of S4 in front of his Army Service number which indicated that he served in the supply section of the ASC. It is possible that Herbert enlisted as he had a particular trade, for example a butcher. He is recorded as receiving the British War Medal and the British Victory Medal.

Herbert and his brothers survived the war. Herbert returned to the area and is living locally in 1960.

¹⁵ Abbots Langley – A Hertfordshire Village – Scott Hastie p53

¹⁶ Information From Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

¹⁷ Longlongtrail.co.uk

FRANK GEORGE ALLAWAY/ALLOWAY

Born 1897 - Abbots Langley. Baptised 6 June 1897 – Abbots Langley.

12th Battalion – Kings Royal Rifle Corp - Service Number 56470

Survived the Great War

In 1901 Frank was living in Kitters Green with his parents George and Sarah. He appears to be an only child however he is living close to his extended family next on the 1901 Census in Kitters Green are relatives likely to be his grandparents and aunts and uncles. **Frank joined the Scouts in 1909 when he was 12.** In 1911, Frank is living at home with his mother and father who is employed as Carman for the Railway Company. He is working as a Grocers Errand Boy. Frank is registered with the surname Alloway for his birth registration and his baptism in 1897.

Frank served with the **12th Battalion Kings Rifle Corp** during the Great War as a Private. He is first recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in November 1914, serving with the Hertfordshire Territorials. It is not certain when he transferred to the 68th Provisional Battalion of the Territorial Force but he is recorded as serving with them in January 1917.¹⁸

A number of Territorial Battalions were made up during the summer of 1915, these were known as provisional battalions and were often made up of men who were not available for service overseas and used as Coastal Defence Battalions. In January 1917 the 68th Provisional Battalion became the 18th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment. The 68th Battalion had been formed in Southwold in June 1915 from “Home Service only” personnel. It was based at Parkfield near Lowestoft from January 1917 to the end of the war.

From January 1918 Frank is recorded in the Roll of Honour as serving with the 11th Bedfordshire's, but it is not known the exact date at which he transferred.¹

The 11th Battalion (TF) was raised within the Territorial Force in December 1916/January 1917 to replace the 68th Provisional Battalion. The battalion comprised mostly of men over the age for active service or those who were not fit for active service it provided drafts for frontline service for soldiers that had regained “A1” fitness, although many were assigned to their battalion purely on paper.¹⁹

His Medal Roll Card confirms that he was with the 12th Battalion KRRC, noting that he received the British War Medal and Victory Medal. Frank survived the war and relocated to Suffolk near Lowestoft where he married in 1919.

¹⁸ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

¹⁹ Bedfordshireregiment.org.uk

CHARLES ATKINS

(Richard Charles Atkins)

Born 1897 -Abbots Langley. Baptised 7th March 1897 – Abbots Langley.

8th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment – Private - Service Number – 3227:

Survived the Great War – Discharged Wounded

Charles Atkins lived at 5 Adrian Road with his father Richard, mother Emmeline and 6 brothers and sisters. Charles joined the Scouts in 1909 when he was 12.

In 1911 his father is working as a General Labourer and his eldest sister Ethel, 24, is working as a Mental Nurse, presumably at Leavesden Asylum. He is aged 14 and working as a Garden boy. In 1920 he is shown to be a Mental Nurse. He was christened Richard Charles Atkins in 1897.

In 1901 he was living in Adrian Road and is listed as Charley.

Charles served with the Bedfordshire Regiment. Charles Atkins was first reported in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in October 1914, where he was listed serving with the Bedfordshire Regiment. By April 1915 he was listed as having been posted to the 8th Battalion, and he remained with this unit for most of the War. In the October 1916 Parish Magazine he was reported wounded. Whilst recovering from his wounds Charles was posted to the 3rd Bedfordshire's. He was reported sick/wounded again in the July 1917 Parish Magazine, and once again was posted to the 3rd Bedfordshire's. By January 1918 he was back with the 8th Bedfordshire's, but by March 1918 the Parish Magazine reported that he had been discharged wounded.²⁰

The 8th (Service) Battalion was formed in Bedford in October 1914 as part of Lord Kitchener's 3rd call to arms. After training in Surrey they embarked to France. They served entirely in France and Flanders and fought in every major battle including the Battle of Loos, 1915, The Battles of the Somme, 1916 and in 1917 The Battle of Cambrai.

During his service Charles was posted to the 3rd Bedfordshire's, this was a reserve battalion of the regular army and operated as a Training Battalion. It remained in the UK throughout the war. It was possible that Charles was posted to aid his recovery following illness.

Charles survived the Great War being discharged as wounded.

²⁰ Information From Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

HENRY EDWARD AUSTIN

Born August 1895 -Farnborough. Baptised 9th May 1909 – Abbots Langley.

8th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment - Service Number – 17176

Survived the Great War

In the 1901 Census Henry is living with his grandparents Daniel and Martha, their daughter Lily Clark and her husband Charles Clark at 101 Breakspeare Road. He has a younger sister called Ethel Clark and listed as a grandson to the head. **Henry joined the Scouts in 1909 aged 14.**

In the 1911 Census he is living at the same address and working as a Butcher. Charles worked as a labourer and Lily as a launderess. He was christened, aged 14, on 9th May 1909 in Abbots Langley. Was this as he needed to attend church to be a Boy Scout and could not be a Scout if he had not been christened?

Henry had a cousin called Stanley, who lived at 99 Breakspeare Road who was the same age Henry. Stanley could also have been a scout although the Scout notebook only lists one Austin and gives no initial. Maybe the scout was Stanley not Henry!

Henry served in the same Battalion, **8th Bedfordshire**, along with his fellow scout Charles Atkins. In October Henry is recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour as having joined Kitchener's Army. By December 1914 he is recorded in the Roll of Honour serving with the 8th Bedfordshire's, and each month is recorded with the same unit until January 1918. In October 1916 the Parish Magazine notes that Henry has been wounded, and this is reported in the 21st October 1916 Hertfordshire Advertiser. In January 1918 he is listed with the 2nd Bedfordshire's, and in June 1918 the Magazine reports that he has been taken Prisoner of War and is in Germany, and in October 1918 more information is provided

"We are glad to say that Henry Austin, who was announced in the June Magazine to be a wounded Prisoner of War in Germany, is now back in England by exchange, and home in Abbots Langley on a month's leave. He had six months of most trying experiences, and we are glad to welcome him back".²¹

When the 8th Bedfordshire's disbanded in February 1918 following reorganisation of the depleted British Army they were absorbed into the 2nd Bedfordshire's. During the Spring of 1918, when Henry was probably captured the 2nd Bedfordshire fought in the Battle of St Quentin, Battle of Rosiers and the Battle of Kemmel Ridge, they almost fought to the last man stand to stem the German advance. Henry survived along with his cousin Stanley.

²¹ Information From Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

JAMES GEORGE MATHEW BARNES

Born October 1898 -Abbots Langley.

Baptised 6th November 1898 – Abbots Langley.

Hertfordshire Territorials - 1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment - 4th Battalion Tank Corps -

Service Number – 4341: 266292

Survived the Great War

James was part of a family of 4 boys and had 1 sister Ada. He lived at 63 Breakspere Road with his father James and mother Hannah. It appears that his father is working as a Bricklayer. **James joined the Scouts in 1909 aged 10.** In the 1911 Census, he is listed as George, perhaps to remove confusion with his father James and he is listed as 12 years of age. There is some discrepancy over his birth date, as other records indicate it is 1896, which would make him 12 when he joined the scouts not 10.

James appeared to have been in trouble with the probation service. The Watford Observer's Children's Court Report of 17th February 1912, under the title "No Improvement" reported the case of James G.M. Barnes from Abbots Langley who had been summoned for disobeying a probation order. *"William Mundin, Probation Officer, reported that on August 22nd last, the defendant was charged with stealing growing apples. He was placed under witness's supervision for one year. On January 3rd it was alleged that he stole a puppy. He was forgiven, but on January 31st he stole two jars of marmalade from a local grocers. The father said that he had thrashed the boy well. The witness was afraid, however, that the father took little notice of the boys, and the mother went out to work. It was evident that the lad was exercising a very bad influence over other boys. The mother said that the defendant admitted taking the puppy, but he was not guilty in regard to the jam, and had witnesses to prove it. The Bench inflicted a fine of 5 shillings."*²²

James' service in the First World War was as a Private in the 1st Hertfordshire Regiment. He is recorded in The National Roll of the Great War volunteering in December 1914. This would be supported by his service number for the Hertfordshire Territorials of 4341 which would have been issued between December 1914 and January 1915. His service number is very close to fellow Scouts Herbert Cave and Arthur Chalk did they enlist and serve in the Territorial's together?

After his training he was sent to France and fought in several important engagements, including those of Ypres, the Somme, Arras and Cambrai and despite being wounded was demobbed in 1919. He received the 1914 – 15 Star and the General Service and Victory Medals.

James may have already have joined the Tank Corps by the time of the Battle of Cambrai which took place in November 1917, as in the Parish Magazine of January 1918 he was listed serving with that unit. ¹

James survived the war and returned to live at 63 Breakespere Road.

²² Information From Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

CHARLES JULIEN BATTEN

Born October 1897 - Abbots Langley.

Baptised 7th November 1897 – Abbots Langley.

Hertfordshire Yeomanry Dragoons - Service Number – 2618:105856:505856

Survived the Great War

Charles was baptised as Julius Charles Batten. In the Scout Log Book, by Overy, he is referred to as Baton.

In 1901 he is living in Kings Langley with his father Charles who is a Domestic coachman and his mother Amy, but he was born and baptised in Abbots Langley.

In 1911 they are living at 8 Asylum Road and his father is working as a carter and his mother is a general shopkeeper. He has a sister Kate and a brother Arthur. On his British Army WW1 Medal Rolls Index Card he is referred to as Julius C. Batten; however his Army Service Record shows him as Julias Charles Batten.

His Territorial Force Attestation shows him enlisting in the 3/1 Herts Yeomanry Dragoons for 4 years Service in the Territorial Force. His unit was D Squadron. It shows that he enlisted on 6 October 1915 at Hertford aged 19 years and 6 months and is employed as a Fishmongers Assistant. Was he working for Mr Cave, the local fishmonger whose son was also in the Scouts? He is recorded as being 5 feet 8 inches tall with 36" chest. His vision is normal and his physical development satisfactory.

From 6th October 1915 it lists he was on "campaigns" it appears at "home", then showing him being posted to Egypt on the 16th September 1916. Later records show that from 20th April 1919 he was attached to the 12th Special Service Battalion. He "joined on formation (Deolali) – Calcutta". In 1919 the British colonial rulers were grappling with rising unrest and as a result Special Battalions were formed in April and May 1919. This included men returning from Mesopotamia. Churchill told parliament on 2nd June 1919 that soldiers awaiting embarkation were invited to volunteer to remain in India and all including details from Mesopotamia have unconditionally volunteered. Deolali was a transit camp for British troops in India. It was a training camp and point of embarkation containing a barracks and military hospital. It was used as a transit camp for troops arriving or waiting to go home. It was notorious for its unpleasant environment, high level of boredom and psychological problems of those who went through it hence the term "gone doolally". Charles returned to the UK on 31st August 1919 embarking in Bombay on the troopship H.T. Himalaya being demobbed on 23rd October 1919 returning to Asylum Road. His records show that he was a Private in the Hertfordshire Yeomanry Dragoons and received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Charles survived the war and returned home to Abbots Langley.

ERNEST JAMES BENNETT

Born 26th September 1895 -Abbots Langley.
Baptised 1st December 1895 – Abbots Langley.
Royal Army Service Corps – 105224 – Private.
Dorsetshire Regiment – 20085 – L/Corporal
Survived the Great War

Ernest Bennett was one of the Scouts in Owl Patrol. In the Scout notebook written by Overy it says “*new recruit E Bennett paid 1d. Meeting Monday 7.45 sharp*”. However underneath it states, “*Bennett struck off*”. Ernest would have been 14 years old when he joined Abbots Langley Scouts. His elder brother Frederick is believed to have been a Scout Assistant with the troop.

The 1901 Census shows Ernest living at 18 Adrian Road with his father John and mother Edith. His father was employed as an Asylum Attendant. He was the youngest of 6 children, Rose, Walter, Flora, Frederick, Edith and Ernest. In 1901 his maternal grandfather Richard Grant is also living with the family. In the 1911 Census the family still live at 18 Adrian Road.

Ernest enlists for service in the Great War on 10th June 1915, joining at the Mechanical Transport Division at Grove Park. His civilian occupation is recorded as Motor driver. On enlistment he was 19 years old and 5 feet 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ tall. It appears that he was posted to Chatham in June 1915 then to France in May 1916. His Casualty Record shows he arrived in Rouen on 31st May 1916. On 27 June 1917 he is awarded the 1st G.C. Badge, gained after 2 years good conduct.

During 1917 he is temporarily posted to 316 Road Construction Company and then to 1st B.M.T.D., (Base Motor Transport Depot). This would indicate that he was serving with the Army Service Corps Mechanical Transport Companies.

On 24th September 1917 he is “*COMPULSORILY TRANSFERRED in the interests of the service under A.O.204/1916 to the DORSETSHIRE REGIMENT, for posting to the 6th Battn. In the rank of PrivateTO RETAIN A.S.C. RATE OF PAY.*” He was allotted a new service number. This often happened to soldiers when a Battalion needed additional reinforcements following a period of heavy fighting.

After Ernest joined the 6th Battalion Dorsetshire Regiment, in late summer, they returned to Flanders and fought in the First and Second Battles of Paschendaele. In 1918 they fought at the Battles of St Quentin, Bapaume, Amiens, Albert and Cambrai and were involved in the pursuit of the German Army to the Selle.

When Ernest was discharged on 3rd July 1919 he held the rank of Lance Corporal. He returned to Abbots Langley and trained as a nurse qualifying on 19th June 1925, Cert, M.P.A. He married in 1923 and remained living in Abbots Langley. He survived the Great War and was entitled to receive the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. His brothers Frederick and Walter also survived.

FREDERICK ARTHUR BENNETT

Born 11th May 1892 - Abbots Langley. Baptised 3rd July 1892 – Abbots Langley.
Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Royal Field Artillery – Gunner
Survived the Great War

Frederick Arthur Bennett was one of the Scout Assistants when the Abbots Langley Scout group was formed in 1909.

Frederick lived at 18 Adrian Road with his father John and mother Edith. His father was employed as an Asylum Attendant. They had 6 children, Rose, Walter, Flora, Frederick, Edith and Ernest. It is believed that Ernest was also a scout.

In the 1911 Census the family still live at 18 Adrian Road and aged 18 Frederick is listed as an Ironmongers Apprentice.

Frederick is recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour from September 1914, serving with the Bedfordshire Royal Field Artillery (RFA). In the December 1915 Magazine Frederick is listed with the Hertfordshire RFA, and remains with that unit throughout the rest of the War. Frederick's Service Record has been lost, and his name is not recorded in the Absent Voter Records, so little is known about his time in the Army, or when he returned from the War.²³

Frederick and his two brothers, Ernest and Walter, all survived the War.

²³ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

CHARLES HUNTINGFORD BONAKER

born 19th July 1874 Kings Langley, Died 1946 Australia
Imperial Yeomanry – 13601

Second Boer War (11 October 1899 – 31 May 1902)

The **1881** census shows Charles, aged 6 is living with the family at Temple Villas, Abbots Langley. And by the **1891** Census he is aged 16 and has moved from the family home and was lodging with Ambrose and Annie Bridgeman, at 332 Kennington Road, Lambeth, working as a Butcher's Apprentice.²⁴

In 1900 Charles enlisted in The Imperial Yeomanry, as a Trooper and his service number was 13601. The existing Yeomanry regiments at the time were asked to provide service companies of around 121 men each on a county basis with the core being the men of the existing volunteer units.

The remaining numbers were to be recruited from individuals that met the necessary service criteria. Simultaneously with the establishment of the Imperial Yeomanry, Volunteer Service Companies, each of which contained 116 men, territorially affiliated the Infantry, were also established. The Hertfordshire Company was the 42nd Company of the 12th Battalion.

During his time in Africa Charles Bonaker gained his war medal with the bands for Transvaal and Orange Free State, and there was no doubt that whilst in the vicinity of events surrounding Baden-Powell, he would have been immensely influenced by him.

On returning from the war, In August 1902 the UK Railway Employment Records show that he was employed by the Great Western Railway, at Paddington Station. We know that there was a recorded crossing for him from Canada to Chicago in the USA on the Canadian Pacific railway in 1904. It states he is a student aged 30.

After that we know that he returned to Abbots Langley, and it was no wonder then that he became involved in Baden-Powell's vision of Scout Groups across the country. In 1909 we can place **Charles Huntingford Bonaker** in Abbots Langley as **he became the first Scout Master for the Abbots Langley Scout Group**, at their inaugural meeting on 19th June 1909, at the age of 35.

In the 1911 Census summary a "Mr Bonaker" is recorded as living at Lawn House, Hunton Bridge. This is the 15th century inn, rebuilt in 1642 as a Hunting Lodge for Charles I, which is now known as The Hunters Lodge.

Around the corner in the Mill House Mr Withers is recorded to be living, and he was the founder Scout Master of Langleybury Scouts and also the local examiner for First Class tests, who is recorded in Harold Overy's note book. He has an interesting story and illustrious military career that is described in a separate account.

Charles married his wife Constance in 1916 in New Zealand where he had emigrated. He was enlisted with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, and was transported to Plymouth



²⁴ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

aboard the HMNZT "Turakina". He sailed from Wellington on 26th April 1917 and was part of the 25th Reinforcement, Specialist Company, and was a member of a Machine Gun Company. His roll number was 42025 and he was a Sadler. He arrived at Plymouth on 20th July 1917 and served on the Western Front.¹

Charles Bonaker survived the War and returned to live in Australia, where he died in 1946.

CLIFTON HAROLD BOURNE

Born 1897 -Abbots Langley. Baptised 18th April 1897 – Abbots Langley.

A/Cyc Co, 11 Royal Sussex Regiment – Service Number – 5545 39 D, Private SD/3941 11th Royal Sussex, SD/3941 1st Royal Sussex.

Survived the Great War

Clifton Bourne was born in 1897 in Abbots Langley and baptised in the spring of 1897. In 1901 he is living at Asylum Terrace with his father John, who is employed as an assistant cook in Leavesden Asylum, and his mother Bessie. They later moved to Marlin Square and in 1911 his father is now a cook.

Clifton joined the 6th Cyclist Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment, which was initially a part of the Territorial Force formed in 1911. It appears that this was around April 1915. It was intended as a home defence force and its members could not be compelled outside the country, however on the outbreak of war many members volunteered to serve abroad. In the main they served on Coastal Defences in the UK providing reconnaissance and message carrying service.

Men from the Cyclist Corp served both at home and abroad with many being absorbed into battalions at the front as the number of soldiers killed and wounded increased. Clifton was transferred to the 11th Battalion. The Royal Sussex Regiment - 11th (1st South Downs), hence the SD prior to his service number.

On the website <http://armyservicenumbers.blogspot.com> it states that the army service numbers SD/3875 to SD/3868, Clifton's is 3941; were issued to men joining the 11th Battalion number from the Army Cyclist Corps.

A notable battle that the South Downs Brigades served in was the diversionary raid on the Boars Head salient at Richbourg on 30th June 1916. This was an attempt to draw the attention of German forces away from the main fighting in the Somme. It is not known if Clifton served with the battalion at that point, however this day is known as "the day the Sussex died" as in this battle the Southdown's brigades lost over 365 soldiers and over 1000 were wounded or taken prisoner.

His records show that he was a Private in the Royal Sussex Regiment and received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Clifton survived the war and returned home to Abbots Langley working within Leavesden Hospital the Asylum as a Registered Nurse.

ARTHUR BRIERS

Born 28th November 1898 – Barnet.

Baptised 4th December 1904 – Abbots Langley.

**8th East Surrey Regiment - Service Number G/36003, Duke of Cambridge's Own
(Middlesex) Regiment – Service Number – G/106301**

Survived the Great War

Arthur was born in 1898 in Barnet and baptised in December 1904 when he was 6, the same day as his sister Hilda and brother Herbert. In 1911 he was living at 17 Adrian Road with his father Harry who was a housepainter and his mother Ellen. He was part of a large family being the eldest child of 7 siblings

Arthur enlisted in April 1917 and served as a Private in the **8th East Surrey Regiment** later transferring to the **Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex) Regiment**

His records show that he was a Private in the East Surrey Regiment and later the Middlesex Regiment and received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.
He survived the war and returned home to Abbots Langley.

LEONARD RAYNOR BUSBY

Born August 1895 – Watford. Baptised 3rd March 1895 – Watford.

Machine Gun Corps, (Motor Branch) – Regimental Number 46 Previous Units: 45

M.M.G.S. RA GNR, 45 M.G.C.

Survived the Great War

It is not confirmed that Leonard Busby was one of our scouts. His family however had extremely close links to Abbots Langley. His father, also, Leonard Raynor Busby was born in Abbots Langley and was the brother of Homer Busby. Both siblings were carpenters. His mother was Jessie Eldred. His parents were married in Abbots Langley in 1887 and his elder sisters Elizabeth and Ellen and brother Benjamin George were all born in Abbots Langley. It appears that the family moved to Watford between 1891 and 1895.

In 1899 his father, unfortunately, passed away leaving a young family. It is believed that he died of Tuberculosis. The ties to Abbots Langley remain as the Probate shows it in favour of his widow Jessie and John George Chalk, a Tailor, who lived next door to the Busby family in Abbots Langley.

Leonard's widowed mother is shown in the 1901 Census as a Licensed Victualler at the Wellington Inn in Teddington, but the family have been split up. In 1901, soon after the death of his father, Leonard, aged 6, is living with his uncle, John Eldred, who is also a licensed Victualler in Clifton Road, Kingston upon Thames. His 8 year old brother Benjamin is boarding with Louise Eldred at the Royal Hart Pub in Ashford in Middlesex, his 3 year old sister is boarding with a family in his mother's home town in Essex and his 2 year old brother Harry is boarding with his aunt in East Ham.

Interestingly, in the 1911 census she is still working as a Licensed Victualler in the Duke of Wellington in Teddington, and the family, apart from Benjamin, who remains with his aunt, are living with their mother. Leonard is 16 and working as a commercial clerk. Between the ages of 6 and 16 he may well have lived in Abbots Langley with his father's family. During the Great War Leonard Busby was an Acting Company Sergeant in the Machine Gun Corps, the sub unit being the Motor Branch and appeared that he was a driver.

He survived the war and returned home to live with his brother in Spelthorne, Surrey, but travelling to Calcutta in March 1919. His records show that he received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Sadly his brother Harry Eldred Busby, 2nd Lieutenant (T), from the Royal Flying Corps was killed at the Flying School, Hendon Airfield, on 11th September 1917 in an aeroplane accident. It is suggested that his rank would mean he was a gunner/observer and he had been given the probationary rank on 12th August 1917. It is thought he was killed during training.

FRED CARTER

Born August 1898 -Abbots Langley. Baptised 22nd March 1900 – Abbots Langley.

1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment – Private - Service Number – 3227:

Labour Corps - 588535

Survived the Great War

Fred was born on 25th February 1897 at Abbots Langley and baptised on 22nd March 1900. **He would have joined the scouts when he was 12.** In 1901 Fred is living with his mother Maria, a widow, in Asylum Road. His mother appears to be working as a parish nurse (sick). She has 6 children living at home with her, Mabel, 13, Jane, 11, Robert, 9, Annie, 7, Jessie, 5 and Fred, 4. Frederick was christened in March 1900. In 1911 they have moved more centrally in Abbots Langley and are living at 78, Marlin Square. Maria still has four of her daughters living at home. She also has 3 boarders, including 2 boys of 9 and 6. Fred is working as a working in a paper mill factory.

Fred signed up in September 1914, in Watford, for 4 years in the Territorial Force of the Herts Regiment. His address was 28 Adrian Road and he would have been 17.

His Military History Sheet records his service. It records that he was home from September 1914 to January 1915 and then posted to France until May 1915, when he was wounded in his right leg on 18th May 1915. He was sent home, presumably recovering, until 27th March 1917 when he returned to France and was then on 7th May 1917 wounded in his right shoulder. He was subsequently wounded in his knee right back on 21st September 1917. He however remained in France until December 1917 when he returned home until his discharge. He was discharged as "Being no longer physically fit for war service". His service records show that he had gunshot wound to his right elbow. These also show his character as "very good". Fred received a weekly pension from September 1918 to be reviewed in 48 weeks.

In January 1919 Fred writes to his commanding officer requesting he is sent the Kings Certificate, to which he believes he was entitled, as he was discharged from active service in the 1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment due to wounds received. This certificate would have been evidence that he had been honourably discharged and not shying away from war duties. He may have also been entitled to the Silver War Badge that was issued to those unfit for war service this also showed that the soldier had been honourably discharged. The National Roll of the Great War notes that he volunteered in August 1914, and the following year was drafted to the Western Front. It indicates that he took part in numerous, engagements including those at Hill 60, Ypres, Arras, Passchendaele, the Aisne, the Marne, Cambrai, and St Quentin and that he was four times wounded. It says he returned home and was discharged in February 1919 as medically unfit. Fred returned to live at 25 Breakspeare Road and received the British War Medal, Victory Medal and 14/15 Star.

HERBERT BUSHBY CAVE

Private. #4291

1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment

Killed in Action 13th November 1916

Herbert Bushby Cave was the son of Arthur William & Emily Cave, and was born in Abbots Langley in 1895 and baptised on 4th August. His father was a fishmonger and fruiterer and they lived above the Fishmonger's shop at 16 High Street, Abbots Langley in the 1911 census, where Herbert is recorded as a fishmonger, working for his father.

We think that **Herbert joined the Abbots Langley Scout Group, towards the end of 1909**, from the list of information we have.²⁵ He would have been part of the second or third troop in existence by the end of that year, and **he would have been 14 years old.**



Herbert enlisted on 14th December 1914 and joined the Hertfordshire Regiment on 26 June 1915. Following his initial training he embarked at Southampton to join the 1st Battalion at Bethune, France, on the 14th July 1915. His Casualty Record noted that he spent ten days at the No 2 London Casualty Clearing Station between 21st March to 31st March 1916, suffering from bronchitis. He re-joined the battalion on 1st April 1916.

He served continually with the Battalion as they moved in and out of the front line, across the Western Front. He was with them at the Battle of Loos, where Corporal Alfred Burt was to win the Victoria Cross, and marched with them as they travelled from Bethune to the Somme sector in July 1916 and fought with the Battalion during the Summer of 1916.

On 13th November the 1st Herts attacked the German defensive "Hansa" Line, with their specific objective being a series of enemy strong-points 200 yards close to the infamous Schwaben Redoubt. At 05.45 the Battalion moved forward. It was still dark and a heavy mist hung over the shell pocked battlefield. By 07.20 the objectives were taken. Over 250 prisoners were captured and many Germans were killed. The 1st Herts were then subjected to heavy artillery shelling and an enemy counter-attack. They held on and were relieved later on the night of 14th November. The Battalion War Diary recorded that 25 men were killed or missing and another 122 wounded in the action. Herbert Cave was "Killed in Action" on the 13th November at the Battle of Ancre, the last major action of the Battle of the Somme, on the outskirts of St. Pierre Divion.²⁶

Herbert Cave is buried in the Connaught Cemetery, Thiepval on the Somme, and commemorated on the Abbots Langley War Memorial.. **He was 21 years-old.**

In December 1916 his death is recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine *"Herbert Bushby Cave was killed in action in France on November 13th. He was known by everyone, and by all by whom he was known he was loved. He became a member of our Choir as a small boy, and still continued to be up to the time of his death. He was a regular*

²⁵ H Overy's notebook of 1909

²⁶ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

Communicant, and had for a short time been, a "Server". Ready, willing and fond of fun and sport, and yet regular and devout at his worship, he was a fine type of an English youth, and was one of the first to join the Army at the outbreak of War. He leaves a sweet memory and a good example behind. May God, the Consoler of the widow, the orphan and the mourner, grant to the relatives and friends who are left behind, his gracious consolation."

On 2nd December 1916 the Hertfordshire Advertiser reported
"We regret to record the death of Pte Bert Cave of the Hertfordshire Regiment, killed in action in France. The deceased was only 21 years of age. The news of his death came as a great blow to his parents, who are in business in Abbots Langley, and to whom much sympathy is extended. Pte Cave was previously employed with his father, and was much respected by all who knew him"

ARTHUR WILLIAM CHALK

Born 1896 - Abbots Langley. Baptised 4th October 1896 – Abbots Langley.
1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment – Private - Service Number – 266439
5th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment
Survived the Great War

Arthur Chalk was born in Abbots Langley in 1896 and **would have joined the scouts when he was 13 years old**. His father George was a chimney sweep and in 1901 he was living in Asylum Road with his father, mother Sarah, three brothers and two older sisters. They are listed next door to the Carter family, Fred Carter also joined the scouts and it is likely that the two boys were good friends. In the 1911 census he is still living in Asylum Road, with his widowed mother and brothers' Leonard, Alfred and Royal and younger sister, Elsie, aged 5.

Arthur was first recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in March 1915, and was listed serving with the Herts Territorials. He was recorded with the Herts Territorials through to January 1917, but at some point probably earlier he transferred to the 1st Hertfordshire's. In August 1917 he is reported wounded in the Parish Magazine. It is most likely that he was wounded on 31st July 1917, when the Hertfordshire's lost over 450 men in an action near St Julien, Ypres. Several other men from the village, serving with the 1st Hertfordshire's were either killed or wounded in this action. At some point before the end of the War in November 1918 Arthur transferred to the 5th Bedfordshire's. ²⁷

Interestingly, Royal's British Army Pension Records show that he served only between 29th May 1915 and 16th August 1915 as having "made a mis-statement due to age on enlistment", he was discharged after his mother had written, on July 15th 1915, to the 3rd Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment stating "he is under 17 as you will see by the certificates I have sent you". Harry served with the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force enlisting in September 1914 but being medically discharged in September 1915.

Arthur Chalk survived the War, as did his brothers George Ernest, Alfred Henry "Harry", and Royal. However, his brother Leonard was "Killed in Action" on 22nd March 1918 and is buried at Pozieres Memorial in France. He received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. In the Citations of the Distinguished Conduct Medal it says "he has performed valuable work as an instructor out of the line and during the recent operations, when all the officers of the Company had become casualties, he gave proof of qualities of bold initiative and quick resource".

²⁷ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

FRANK CHARLES COLEMAN

Born April 1895 -Abbots Langley. Baptised 7th July 1895 – Abbots Langley.

1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment – Private – Service Number – 4292:266651
6th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers Service Number - 266651 & 13th Battalion West
Riding Regiment - Service Number - 238077

Survived the Great War

Frank Coleman was born in Abbots Langley in 1895 and joined the Scouts when he was 14 years old. He is shown in H Overy's diary as joining on 22nd July 1909. On Tuesday 3rd August he is also mentioned with Bertrand Hill, No 2. "No's 2 & 4 biked to Watford and changed No. 4's hat. Put bikes up, bought eggs, lit fire, cooked eggs and had dinner at 10 o'clock. Tidied up, went to the river, paddled drilled and marched home". He was Scout number 4 in the Owl Patrol. He became Scout number 3 when B Hill left.

In the 1901 census Frank is living in the High Street with his father Charles who is working as a stockman, and his mother Caroline and his 2 sisters. In 1911 they have moved to Homefield in Abbots Road and he is 15 years old and working as Telegraph Messenger.

Frank Coleman attested to the 1st Hertfordshire Regiment on 14th December 1914 at Hertford. It is evident that he attested with Herbert Cave as his Regimental number is next to Cave's and they enlisted on the same date. Cave was a fellow scout and it would appear they travelled to Hertford together to sign up. Frank lists his occupation as a farmer. His records show that Frank was 5ft 9" tall and weighing 152lbs, about 10 stone 9lbs.

The Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour from January 1915 listed Frank serving with the Hertfordshire Territorial's.²⁸ His Service Record notes that he was promoted appointed Acting Lance Corporal on 28th May 1915 transferring to the Northumberland Fusiliers on 1st September 1916.

In October 1916 he was treated for multiple abscesses, and a week later on 21st October had been admitted to hospital. His record shows "Admitted PUO", this is thought to indicate that he was suffering with "Pyrexia (fever) of Unknown Origin". It is thought that one of the most common causes of PUO was "trench fever" which was a louse born disease common amongst soldiers in WW1. The disease was passed between soldiers causing them to suffer from high fever, headaches aching muscles, diarrhoea and sores on the skin. Frank was at hospital in Rouen but then in November transferred back to a hospital in England, suffering from dysentery. It appears that he received treatment at the Manor War Hospital (County of London), at Epsom between December 1916 and March 1917 before being moved to Addington Park War Hospital on 27th March until 4th April 1917.

In June he was appointment as a Paid Lance Corporal on 23rd June 1917, and on 31st October 1917 he was promoted to Corporal, still serving with the 6th Northumberland Fusiliers. On arriving back in France he reverted to the rank of Private and was transferred to 13th West Riding Regiment on 24th June. On 2nd October 1918 he was promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal, but on the same day was sent back to the UK, and on 21st October was admitted to the Edinburgh War Hospital at Bangour being diagnosed with colitis. He remained at the War

²⁸ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

Hospital until 2nd December 1918, and did not return to France. He was sent for dispersal on 8th March 1919 and disembodied on 5th April 1919. ¹

Frank Coleman survived the War and returned to live in Abbots Road receiving the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. .

RICHARD DOUGLAS COOMBES

Born 19th September 1895 - Abbots Langley. Baptised 5th April 1896 – Abbots Langley.

Royal Naval Air Service – Service Number F7166:207166

2nd Squadron, 61st Wing, RAF

Survived the Great War

Richard Douglas Coombes was born in Abbots Langley on 19th September 1895 and baptised on 5th April 1896. He was the next to the youngest of 9 children. His father John Henry had been born in Tooting and was a gardener at Mansion House Farm in 1901. He and his wife Maria had travelled the country with their other children being born in places such as Sydenham and High Wycombe.

On 29th October 1908 in the school log it is noted that “Edith Bennett and Richard Coombes had had 303 attendances not once absent during 3 quarters of the year”.

In 1911 the family are still living at Mansion House Farm. Mansion House Farm was one of those listed in the scout notebook written by Overy. It says it was “a quarter of a mile south of Abbots Langley Church. He lists that the owner was Mrs Gleasby, the farmer Mr Robins and they had 10 ricks, 0 sheep, 30 fowls, 5 horses, 15 cows, barns, 5 pigs, 4 carts. Overy lists this detail for all the farms in the local area.

Richard would have joined the scouts when he was about 14 years old.

He was one of two Abbots Langley Scouts to join the Royal Naval Air Service. The other being Thomas Shepherd who enlisted in July 1916. Richard enlisted on 3rd August 1915 giving his occupation as a “Mechanic”. He was described as 5ft 3” tall with a 34” chest; he had light brown hair, blue eyes and a fair complexion. He would have been nearly 20 years old.

His Royal Navy Service Record records he first served with HMS President II, a shore station based at Dunkirk, from 3rd August 1915. On 31st March 1918 his Service Record lists Richard serving with the RNAS at HMS Daedalus, which was the Royal Naval Aircraft Engineer School.

In 1917 Muster Roll for the Air Force shows Richards details as follows:

Air Force No.	Name	RNAS or RFC Trade Classification	Remustered to Air Force Trade Classification	RNAS Rating or RFC Rank or Appointment	New Rank in Air force	Date of Joining
2017166	Coombes R.D	General	Labourer	AC. A. Mech 1	Private 1	30/4/17

Richard continued in Service after the Armistice in November 1918, serving as a Private with 2nd Squadron, 61st Wing of the RAF. ²⁹

He survived the war and returned to live at High Street, Abbots Langley.

²⁹ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

ARTHUR ALBERT DIAPER

Born 31st July 1897 - Abbots Langley. Baptised 3rd October 1897 – Abbots Langley.

Bedfordshire Regiment – Private – Service Number -32924

11th Battalion Cheshire Regiment - Service Number 50656

Survived the Great War

Arthur Diaper was born on 31 July 1897 in Abbots Langley. In 1901 Arthur is living with his father John Diaper was employed as an Asylum Attendant, mother Eliza and five sisters and a brother. In 1911 they are at the same address however three children remain at home.

Arthur joined the scouts in 1909 when he would have been 12 years old.

Arthur is shown to be deemed as enlisted on 2nd March 1916 although he was not called up for service until 24th November 1916. He is recorded as working as an Asylum Attendant. On joining he was 19 years and 4 months old and was 5 feet 8 inches tall with a 39 inch chest.

His Service Record shows that he was home from November 1916 to February 1917 when on 28th February 1917 he was posted to a Base Depot in France and 1st March was posted to 2nd Bedfordshire's and was in France until 22nd June 1917.

He was he was transferred to 11th Cheshire's on 18th March 1917. On 7th June 1917 Arthur received a Gun Shot Wound to his ankle, received on the opening day of the Battle of Messines. He is recorded as home from 23rd June 1917 to 21st June 1918 when he was discharged as "No longer fit for Military Service".

On 6th July 1917 he was recorded as a patient at the 2nd Birmingham War Hospital, where he remained until 23rd October, when he was sent to his Battalion Depot and was subsequently demobilised on 21st June 1918.

Arthur returned home and is listed as receiving the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

THOMAS DICKINSON

Born 1895 - Abbots Langley. Baptised 1st September 1895 – Abbots Langley.

8th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment - Private – 235587

1/1 Hertfordshire Regiment – Private – Service Number – 3834:266151

Killed in Action

Thomas was born in Abbots Langley in 1895, his parents were Edward, a farm labourer, and Louisa. In 1901 they are living at Trowley Bottom, however by 1911 they have moved to 113 Breakspeare Road. In 1911 Thomas is working as a farm boy also both his sisters are working, Mabel was an out of situation servant and Emily, aged just 13, as a worker in brush factory.

Thomas would have been 14 years old when he joined the scouts.

Thomas joined the Herts Territorial's in 1914 at 19 years old. The service number issued to Thomas in the Herts Territorial's, 3834, indicates that he joined between 4th November 1914 and 13th December 1914.

He is first listed in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in December 1914, as serving with the Herts Territorial's. He is regularly listed in the Roll of Honour each month throughout the War, but it is not until January 1917 that his record is updated to reflect him serving with the 1st Hertfordshire Regiment. The Parish Magazine reports that Thomas had been wounded, in the December 1916 edition, and later, in November 1917, he listed as "sick or wounded".³⁰ During 1917 the 8th Battalion served in some of the most terrible battles of the war, the 1st and 3rd Battles of the Scarpe, the Battle of Polygon Wood, the 2nd Battle of Passchendaele and the Cambrai operations.

Thomas was "Killed in Action" on 29th April 1918. The Battalion diary records that "*on 28th the enemy attacked and captured Voormezele and Lock 8 again exposing the right of the battalion*". It also states there was very heavy fighting on 29th April 1918 and heavy bombardment between Meteren and Vormezele followed by violent infantry attacks.

³⁰ Information From Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

The Abbots Langley Parish Magazine, in June 1918 reported:

*“Thomas Dickinson, of the Herts Regiment, was killed in action on April 29th, being at the time attached to the Leicester Regiment. He joined up at the outbreak of war, and has been in France for the greater part of the time, and has been wounded several times. At one time in hospital he gave blood to save the life of a fellow patient, and suffered severely in consequence. He was a most happy, cheerful, lovable person, and all will join with his mother and father in mourning his loss”.*¹

Thomas Dickinson is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, near Passchendaele, Belgium. The Tyn Cot Memorial bears the names of some 35,000 men of the British and New Zealand forces who have no known grave, nearly all of them died between August 1917 and November 1918.

Thomas is also remembered on the Abbots Langley War Memorial, he was 23 when he died. He is recorded in 1921 as being entitled to the Victory Medal and British War Medal.

ARTHUR DOWNER

Born 29th March 1893 -Abbots Langley
Hertfordshire Yeomanry - Private -1279
City of London Yeomanry – Corporal - 2144
Survived the Great War

Arthur was born on 29th March 1895, in 1895. His father Benjamin Downer who was a carpenter and Baptist preacher was from Abbots Langley and had been born and brought up here. Benjamin had been married twice and Arthur was the second son of his second marriage. Arthur's mother was called Minnie and he had a brother, Edward and step brother, William Pike Downer and step sister Sarah. In 1901 he lived in Popes Road, aged 8, with his parents, Edward and William. Abbots Langley School records show that Arthur left school on 19th December 1907 at the age of 14. The reason given is "Clerk at Apsley". His father passed away in 1909, and in 1911 he is living alone with his mother who worked as a secretary to a building society; Arthur is working as a clerk. Arthur's family were involved in the Baptist chapel at Hunton Bridge, Benjamin Downer was the Secretary and Treasurer and in 1908 his son William Pike Downer took over. **Arthur would have been one of the oldest scouts being 16 in 1909 when the scout group was formed.**

On 7th November 1910 Arthur signed attested to the Territorial Force for 4 years, he was 17 years and 8 months old. He gave his address as "Clovelly", Abbots Langley. He was 5 feet 8 inches tall with a chest measurement of 34^{1/2} inches; his vision is good as is his physical development. He is listed as working as Surveyors Clerk. At the end of his service he measured 5 feet 10^{3/4} inches tall with a chest measurement of 40 inches.

Arthur was a part-time soldier and took part in annual summer camps. He attended Annual Training in Broxbourne in May 1911 and 1912. In 1913 he asked to be transferred from the Hertfordshire Yeomanry to the City of London Yeomanry as he could not get away from his business at the time of year that this Regiment normally go to camp. The Hertfordshire Yeomanry held their summer camp between 13 to 27th May 1911 in Broxbourne and 18th May to the 1st June 1912. The reason he gave for his request was that the City of London held their camp in August. The transfer request was granted.

His service record shows that he served at home from the 5th August 1914 to the 10th April 1915, then being posted with the Expeditionary Force to Egypt until 13th August 1915 and then being posted with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force from 14th August 1915 to 26th January 1916. His Casualty Form shows him arriving in Alexandria from Avonmouth on 7th May 1915 and leaving on 14th August 1915 for Gallipoli. He left Gallipoli on the hired Troopship H.T Manitou.

Arthur appears to have served in Gallipoli campaign, where the 1/1 Hertfordshire Yeomanry acted as dismounted Cavalry, remaining in the theatre of war until the withdrawal of the British and Commonwealth forces, they returned to Egypt having suffered significant numbers of casualties. His Army pension records appear to show that he was promoted to Lance Corporal on 31st July 1914, then Acting Corporal on 4th November 1914 and then Corporal in 1916. He signed an agreement on 18th January 1915 stating that in the event of

a national emergency he would serve in any place outside the United Kingdom, hence his posting to Egypt.

Arthur was discharged on 11th February 1916 the reason being given as "Termination of Engagement". He had served 5 years and 97 days. His conduct is described as "very good" and his discharge document records,

"This non-commissioned Officers conduct is reported to have given every satisfaction to the Officers

And N.C.O's under which he has served during the period of his engagement in the Regiment. I have every confidence in recommending him to an employer".

It shows him returning to Langley House in Wembley where his mother now lived, and receiving the 1914/15 Star.

CLEMENT EDWARD GLENISTER

Born 23rd July 1897 in Abbots Langley – and survived the war
Lieut Paymaster
Royal Navy

Clement Glenister was born on 23rd July 1897 at Abbots Langley. He was one of four children (one son and three daughters) born to Edwin and Caroline Glenister. In the 1901 and 1911 Census the Glenister family lived at the High Street, Abbots Langley. Edwin worked as a Carpenter and Builder and he also ran the green grocer's shop in the High Street. Edwin's claim to fame is that he built the Lych gate for St Lawrence's church which famously has the roof on the wrong way round.



Clement joined the Scouts on 1th June 1909 and it was noted that on 22nd July C Glenister Scout No. 4 has paid in 6d for uniform, 2d for Scouting for Boys. Attended all meetings. Must learn his knots.³¹

Clement is first mentioned in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in March 1915, where as a Sub-Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, he was listed serving aboard the battleship HMS Princess Royal. An extract from a letter from Clement was printed in the Parish Magazine that month, showing how a battleship prepared for action –

“Every Friday we will have to go to general Quarters ie to our action stations – everyone is behind armour. The decks are flooded so as to prevent shells from causing fire, and so you can see what a state the ship gets into in action – both the ship's office and gunroom are no exception. My action station is on the lower deck, with the surgeon, behind 11 inches of armour I have been supplied with a swimming collar, in case I should be thrown into the water, also with a pad to put over my mouth, to prevent me from breathing in lyddite fumes, which are poisonous.”

In the May 1915 Parish Magazine, Clement was listed with the rank of Lieutenant, and was still listed in the Parish Magazine serving with HMS Princess Royal in May 1916, when the battleship took part in the Battle of Jutland. At some point late in 1916 he transferred to HMS Glory and in March 1918 the Parish Magazine reported

‘Clement Glenister, whom we have been glad to welcome home after his long absence, has been gazetted Assistant Paymaster. He holds in addition, the post of Clerk to the Senior Officer on HMS “Edgar”.’

He remained with HMS “Edgar” through to the end of the War and is listed serving with this ship in the Autumn 1918 Absent Voter Records, but by the Spring and Autumn Absent Voter Records for 1919 he had transferred to HMS “Caesar”. He continued serving in the Royal Navy after the War and attained the rank of Captain. On 24th July 1924 he played his first First Class cricket match, representing the Navy against the Army. The match was played at Lords. He continued to represent the Royal Navy at cricket until 1929, playing four First Class

³¹ H Overy's notebook

games, scoring 104 runs (highest score 49) and taking 9 wickets. In the 1928-29 soccer season he represented England three times. Later in his career he was awarded the CBE.

Clement Glenister survived the War, as did his Cousin Francis, and his Uncle George.³²

³² Roger Yapp, Abbots Langley History Society's Back to the Front Project

HARRY CHARLES FLOWERS

Born 13th August 1898, Abbots Langley – Survived the War
Private
2/4th, 12th, 13th York & Lancaster Regiment
#33557

Harry Flowers was one of eight children (five sons and three daughters) born to Henry and Elizabeth. At the time of the 1901 Census the family lived at the Model Cottages at Trowley Bottom, Abbots Langley. Henry, who had previously been employed as an Asylum Attendant (1891) worked as a General Labourer. By 1911 the family had moved to Asylum Terrace, and Henry worked as a Roadsman for the County Council.



Harry Flowers joined the Abbots Langley Scout Group in the latter part of 1909 at the age of 13. He is first recorded in Harold's notebook as having paid 1 shilling.³³

Harry's brother Ernest was born in 1904 and married Gwendoline Emmett in 1928 in Abbots Langley. He was a Motor Cycle Engineer and they had 4 children. The two boys Derrick and Douglas ran the Flowers Garage in Marlin Square in 1947 (see separate photo) taking over No. 23 where Emmett's cycle shop used to be. The garage later moved to where The Grange stands today, and was there until it closed on 31st December 1983. Derrick was himself a scout in 1950, and his two sons Peter and Steve also followed in his footsteps. **This is currently the only known story of generations of the one family being in the Abbots Langley Scout group since its beginning in 1909 to 2018.**

Harry is listed for the first time in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in February 1917 serving with the Training Reserve. **He would have been 18 years old.** Sometime later in the year he was posted to the 12th Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment, and in 1918 moved on to the 2/4th Battalion of the same Regiment. He served with the 2/4th until the end of the War, and is listed in the Autumn 1918 and Spring 1919 Absent Voter Records serving with the 13th Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment. He gave his address in both Absent Voter Records as Asylum Road, Abbots Langley, and was listed in these records as Henry.³⁴ Harry Flowers survived the War and returned to Abbots Langley to set up the Flowers Garage in Marlin Square.

³³ H Overy's notebook

³⁴ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

(EDWIN) EDWARD HART

Born 20th December 1893 -Abbots Langley. Baptised 4th February 1894 – Abbots Langley.
3rd Battalion County of London Yeomanry – Private - Service Number – 39212
Survived the Great War

Edward Hart was one of 9 children born to George and Emma. Edward was baptised Edwin and on the 1901 Census he is recorded as Edwin, instead of Edward and is living at Keepers Lodge, Long Wood in Abbots Langley, three of his brothers are still at home Harry, Sidney and Jesse. His father is working as a Horseman on the farm, his elder brother Harry is working as an agricultural labourer and sister Maggie at the Paper Mill; however the remaining 4 children are still at school.

In 1909 when the first scout group in Abbots Langley formed he would have been 16 and probably one of the older boys.

In 1911 the family have moved to Alexandra Road in Kings Langley and Edward is working as a Paper stamper. Edward married Sarah Price in October 1917, was this prior to being posted ?

Edward Hart was listed in the Absent Voter Records for Abbots Langley in Autumn 1918, Spring 1919 and Autumn 1919. He was initially identified from the Absent Voter Records and was not recorded elsewhere in the Abbots Langley Parish records. In the Absent Voter Records Edward was listed serving as a Private with the 2/3rd Battalion of the County of London Yeomanry. Although the first line unit of the 3rd battalion served at Gallipoli, Macedonia, Egypt, Palestine and on the Western Front, the second line, in which Edward served, did not leave the United Kingdom. In the Absent Voter Records Edward's address was listed at Primrose Hill, Abbots Langley.³⁵

Edward Hart survived the War; however his brother Jesse, who was a year older than him, was killed in action on 12th April 1918. Jesse served with the 4th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment and is buried at Aveluy Wood Cemetery, Mensil – Martinsart.

³⁵ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

PERCY GEORGE HEDGES

Born 28th February 1893 -Abbots Langley.

Baptised 30th April 1893 – St Peters, St Albans

Gloucester Regiment – Private - Service Number – 26156

Survived the Great War

Percy Hedges was born in 1893 at Abbots Langley, one of two children born to George and Mary Hedges. In the 1901 Census the family is living in the High Street. They have a boarder living with them 9 year old Ernest Emery. His father is working as a labourer on a farm.

Ten years later in the 1911 Census they have moved to Trowley Bottom and Percy is working as a Carpenter, the family have a different boarder, Edith Duke, who is 2 years old.

Percy would have been 16 when he joined the scouts.

The Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour records Percy for the first time in May 1916 serving with the 11th Gloucester's. Sometime in 1917 he transferred to the 7th Gloucester's and is recorded with this unit through to the end of the War. ³⁶ This location is supported by the fact that in 1916 he was married in Cirencester.

The Absent Voter Records of Autumn 1918 and Spring 1919 record Percy still serving with the 7th Gloucester's and giving his address as Asylum Road, Abbots Langley.¹

Percy Hedges survived the War and was issued with the Victory Medal and the British War Medal,

³⁶ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

BERTRAND ERNEST HILL

Born 13th November 1894 -Abbots Langley.

Baptised 3rd March 1895 – Abbots Langley.

**13th Battalion, (Territorial Force), County of London – Private - Service Number –
3186:490831**

Survived the Great War

Bertrand was among the very first of Abbots Langley's Scouts. His name is first recorded on 15th June 1909, at the very start and he is recorded as Scout 2, Corporal in Owl Patrol. Scout numbers 1 and 3 were Harry Robert Overy and Wilfred Arthur Overy. **When he joined he would have been 15 years old.** He had paid 4d for an outfit and 2d for a book and attended all the meetings.

There are many mentions of him in H Overy's notebook, also of his brother Arthur who partnered H Overy in the Boys under 15 wheelbarrow race in May 1909. They came 2nd - the prize - one razor between them! Mention is made of Bertrand in July 1909 when it states in H Overy's notebook "the members of Owls have been to Chipperfield where No's 2 & 6 ran their second class test". On Tuesday 3rd August it refers to him with Frank Coleman No 4, "No's 2 & 4 biked to Watford and changed No. 4's hat. Put bikes up, bought eggs, lit fire, cooked eggs and had dinner at 10 o'clock. Tidied up, went to the river, paddled drilled and marched home". On October 31st he is listed under Owl Patrol as "Leader 1st Class" however in June 15 1910 it says that B Hill has left the Owl Patrol.

In the 1901 Census Bertrand is living with his father William and mother Frances Ellen in the High Street. His father is described as a Drapers shop keeper. Also living at the address are Francis aged 13, Dora aged 10, Arthur, aged 8 and Gwyneth aged 1. His aunt also lives there as does Edith Butterfield, who is a Drapers Assistant. At the address is a Domestic servant called Lois Munt. In 1911 the family are living at "The Limes" Abbots Road. Mr Hill is listed as an employer and his sons Francis and Arthur are working as Insurance clerks and his daughter Doris as a Drapers Assistant. Bertrand is a college student. The family are clearly involved in scouting as Mr and Mrs Hill are mentioned as providing tea at their Chipperfield camp and buying refreshments for the boys.

Soon after the outbreak of war, Bertrand attested on 3rd September 1914 for 4 years service in the Territorial Force of the 13th Battalion County of London at Kensington. He would have been 20 years old. The 13th London Regiment was in Abbots Langley following mobilisation and is perhaps then that Bertrand and also his brother Arthur were motivated to join them.

On 2nd August 1914 the 13th London Regiment had arrived for training on Salisbury Plain with the declaration of war they hastily returned to London they then marched to the training area at Abbots Langley. This battalion became the 1/13th because an overwhelming rush of troops necessitated the formation of a second –line Kensington Battalion the 2/13th. The 2/13th Battalion was formed with the intention of acting as the Regiments home training unit, sending reinforcements to the 1/13th in the field to replace losses, however this ended in by the close of 1915 when they were dispatched for active service to Ireland in 1916, the Western Front in France during 1916 and Salonika and Palestine in 1917/1918.

Bertrand's Statement of Services shows him being embodied as a Private in the 2/13th (Kensington) Reserve Battalion London Regiment. This is also known as 13th (County of London) Battalion (Princess Louise's Kensington Battalion). In 1916 he agreed to serve in any place outside the United Kingdom during his present period of embodiment.

His discharge forms showed that he had been a Transport Driver and he is considered to be sober, reliable and intelligent. Bertrand had served for almost the entire Great War, his service finishing on 27th February 1919.

Bertrand received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. His brother Arthur, who enlisted with the same regiment, died of his wounds in France on 13th May 1915. His regimental number was 3189, just 3 after his brother Bertrand's. He is buried in Merville Communal Cemetery in France.

HARRY CLIFFORD HOOK

Born 1892 -Sevenoaks

6th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment – Private - Service Number – 17787

Died of Wounds 1st March 1918

Harry Hook was born at Sevenoaks in the summer of 1892 and was christened Henry, but known as Harry throughout his life. In 1901 he lived with his parents John and Jane Hook at “The Stables” at “Edenhurst” in Sevenoaks, and his father was employed as a Coachman Domestic at “Edenhurst”. Harry was the youngest of five children – three sons and two daughters.³⁷

In the 1911 Census he is working a Bakers assistant and is a boarder in Watford.²**If he had joined Abbots Langley Scouts he would have been 17.**

It is unclear when Harry came to Abbots Langley or started working in the Asylum. His wife Mary is shown as working at Leavesden Asylum between 1913 and 1916 and then subsequently becoming a Registered Nurse. They married at St Lawrence’s in Abbots Langley on 10th April 1915 just before he left for France in June.

Harry enlisted early in the War and on 12th December 1914 he is listed by the Hertfordshire Advertiser in the Leavesden Asylum Roll of Honour. The Roll listed the men from the Asylum who had joined up at the outset of the War. In April 1915 the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour lists him as serving with the 3rd Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment, which was based at Bedford. He is recorded in the Parish Roll of Honour as serving with the 2nd Battalion of the Bedfordshire’s and it is not known when he transferred, or when later in the War he transferred to the 6th Battalion of the same Regiment. However, he was with the 6th Battalion when he was wounded and subsequently “Died of Wounds” on 1st March 1918.¹

In the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine for April 1918 it states

“We deeply regret to have to add the name of Henry Clifford Hook to those who have made the supreme sacrifice. He died of wounds received in action on March 1st. He was an Attendant in Leavesden Asylum, and served with the forces since the outbreak of War. He was married at Abbots Langley Church just three years ago, and leaves his wife, to whom we offer sincere sympathy, to mourn his loss.”

Harry is remembered with honour and buried at Bedford House Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium and is commemorated on the Abbots Langley and Leavesden Green War Memorials, All Saints Church in Leavesden, Leavesden Asylum (in Watford Museum),³⁸
He was awarded the British War Medal, Victory Medal and 1914/15 Star.

³⁷ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

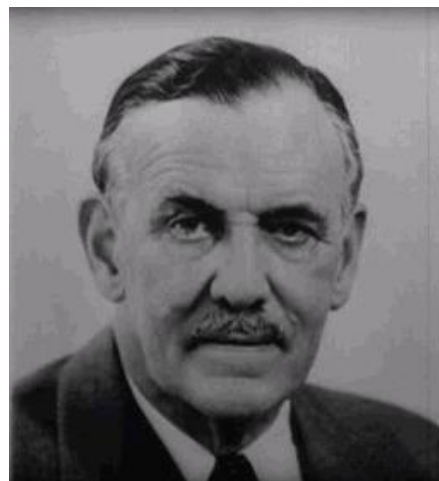
³⁸ Ourwatfordhistory.org

HUGH KENYON MOLESWORTH KINDERSLEY, 2nd

Baron Kindersley

Lieutenant, Scots Guards
Survived

Hugh Kindersley, was born on 7th May 1899 in Knightsbridge, London. He was the second son of Robert and Gladys Kindersley. Robert was a businessman, stock-broker, merchant banker and public servant who organised the National Savings Movement. Robert was Director of the Bank of England from 1914 to 1946 and was knighted in 1917³⁹



In 1905 Robert bought Langley House in Abbots Langley which is situated across the road from the library and is now the Breakspear Hospital. This large house was built in the 1770's by Sir John Cope Freeman for his retirement. Sir John later became County Sheriff of Hertfordshire and had previously been owner of a large slave plantation in Jamaica. In 1759 he had the road through the village diverted around a pond which stood in a field to the front of the house. This kept the road away from the house but created a sharp bend in the road at the top end of the High Street. The Kindersley family lived at Langley house until 1923.

On 12 August 1909 Hugh is recorded as being No 7 in the Owl Patrol, which was then the 3rd patrol of the Abbots Langley Scout Group. He was 10 years old. It was as a direct result of a letter from Hugh and his brother Lionel (known as Beau in the Scouts) that the famous bugle was bought for the Group and the Kindersley boys contributed 9d each. He is still recorded as No. 7 in the log book on 31st October 1909. In the 1911 census Hugh at a boarding school in Broadstairs, and he was later educated at Eton College from the age of 13 in 1912 so it would appear that Hugu managed to attend Scouts in between being away.

Huge was first recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in October 1917 at the age of 18, having been commissioned in the Scots Guards. In the January 1918 Roll of Honour he is listed with the rank of Lieutenant, and was awarded the Military Cross in 1918. He is listed in the Absent Voter Records for Autumn 1918 and Spring 1919, serving with the Scots Guards, and giving his address as Langley House, Abbots Langley.⁴⁰

³⁹ Wikipedia.org

⁴⁰ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

Hugh was awarded the Military Cross 15 February 1919:

For great gallantry and able leadership during October 11th, 12th and 13th, 1918. When sent by night to support the advance to the railway line west of St. Python, his platoon captured an obstinately defended machinegun post. Next morning, when leading two platoons in the western and southern half of the village, he handled the house to house fighting admirably, the ground was won and held with few casualties largely through his work. His gallant conduct was a fine example to all ranks.

Hugh survived the War and after a distinguished career in banking re-joined the Scots Guards at the outbreak of the Second World War. At 03.30 hours on D Day, 6th June 1944 he commanded 6 Airlanding Brigade during the Normandy Landings.²

He later commanded a tank battalion of the Scots Guards in the Guards Armoured Division. He completed a parachute training course and qualified as a glider pilot; in May 1943, promoted to acting Brigadier, The Honourable Hugh Kindersley was appointed Commanding officer of the 6th Airlanding Brigade. It was on his recommendation that Major John Howard and D Company 2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (the 52nd) were selected to lead the coup de main operation at Pegasus Bridge and Horsa Bridge before the Allied invasion of the Normandy beaches began. Kindersley commanded 6 Airlanding Brigade, part of 6th Airborne Division, during the Normandy landings on D Day, 6 June 1944, landing at 03.30 hours with 6 Airborne divisional headquarters. He was later wounded during the Battle of Bréville, and evacuated to England.⁴¹

As the attack was due to begin Brigadier Hugh Kindersley was in conference with Brigadier Lord Lovat, commander of 1st Special Service Brigade, at the entrance to a farm in Amfréville when the spot was hit by the shelling Napier described. Lovat was wounded in the stomach while Kindersley sustained heavy wounds to his legs including a broken right femur and pelvis. Kindersley's wounds were severe enough to prevent his return to action for the rest of the war. He eventually recovered well but limped for the rest of this life. ⁴²

Hugh Kindersley was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1941 and Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1945.³

⁴¹ https://wikivisually.com/wiki/Hugh_Kindersley,_2nd_Baron_Kindersley

⁴² Ever Glorious: The Front Line Letters of the Crookenden Brothers, 1936 -46

LIONEL NASSAU KINDERSLEY

Lieutenant
15th The King's Hussars
Killed in Action 25th November 1917

Lionel Kindersley was born on 6th August 1897 in Kensington, London. He was the eldest son of Robert and Gladys Kindersley. Robert was a businessman, stock-broker, merchant banker and public servant who organised the National Savings Movement. Robert was Director of the Bank of England from 1914 to 1946 and was knighted in 1917.⁴³



In 1905 Robert bought Langley House in Abbots Langley which is situated across the road from the library and is now the Breakspear Hospital. This large house was built in the 1770's by Sir John Cope Freeman for his retirement. Sir John later became County Sheriff of Hertfordshire and had previously been owner of a large slave plantation in Jamaica. In 1759 he had the road through the village diverted around a pond which stood in a field to the front of the house. This kept the road away from the house but created a sharp bend in the road at the top end of the High Street. The Kindersley family lived at Langley house until 1923.

On 12 August 1909 Hugh is recorded as being No 5 in the Owl Patrol, which was then the 3rd patrol of the Abbots Langley Scout Group. He was 12 years old. It was as a direct result of a letter from Lionel (known as Beau in the Scouts) and his brother Hugh, that the famous bugle was bought for the Group and the Kindersley boys contributed 9d each. He is still recorded as No. 7 in the log book on 31st October 1909.

Lionel followed his father to Eton College at the age of 13 and joined up early in 1915 at the age of 18. He attended Officers' Training College. On leaving the College he joined the 15th Hussars as a Second Lieutenant and moved to France on 31st January 1916. He served with the 15th Hussars through the campaigns of 1916 and 1917 on the Somme and at Flers-Courcelette, and in the Battle of Cambrai where he was "Killed in Action" at Bourslon Wood on 25th November 1917, at the age of 20, by which point he had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant.

His death was recorded in the January 1918 edition of the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine which you can read on a separate sheet.

There is also a stained glass window in the north wall of the chancel in St Lawrence's church in his memory, which you can also see on a separate sheet.

⁴³ Wikipedia.org

Lionel Kindersley is commemorated on the Cambrai Memorial, Louveral, France, on the Abbots Langley War Memorial, and on a stained glass window at St Lawrence Church, Abbots Langley.⁴⁴

St Lawrence's Church, Abbots Langley (on the north wall of the Sanctuary, behind the pulpit) in memory of Lionel Kindersley. From the church magazine of December 1918:

“Before the celebrations on All Saints' Day there was dedicated a beautiful window in the Chancel of the Church, between the Organ Chamber and the Nave, erected by Sir Robert and Lady Kindersley to the memory of their eldest son. It bears the inscription: AMDG and in loving memory of Lionel Nassau Kindersley, of Langley House, Lieut 15th Hussars, who died fighting for his country at Bourlon Wood, France, on November 25th 1917, aged 20 years.

It bears in its left hand light the figure of S Louis of France, while underneath is depicted his deathbed. The right hand shows the figure of S Oswald, the great Christian warrior and King of Northumbria, and the picture beneath the figure shows him setting up the Cross as his standard before the Battle of Heavenfield AD633 or 634.

Reproduced from 'Outlook' the Abbots Langley and Bedmond Parish Magazine November 2017 issue

⁴⁴ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project



**ABBOTS
LANGLEY
ROLL OF
HONOUR**



We will be tolling the 'Big Bell' at St Lawrence at 12 noon on the date of the death of this soldier as we will for all the fallen of the Great War.

The information in italics below is taken from the Church magazine of January 1918.

25th November 1917
Lieut Lionel Nassau Molesworth
Kindersley

15th (The King's) Hussars
We offer out sincerest sympathy and that of the whole parish to Sir Robert and Lady Kindersley on the loss of their eldest son. They have done so much to interest themselves in and to make common cause with the people of Abbots Langley, and they may feel assured that their grief and sorrow is shared by all. Lionel Nassau Molesworth ('Bo' as he was familiarly known) Kindersley was killed in action on November 25th at Bourlon Wood, where he was most gallantly covering the retreat of his company. His CO writes of him: 'He went up with a dismounted company formed from the Regiment, to support the Infantry in Bourlon Wood, where there had been terrific fighting. Almost immediately he went forward with his squadron to reinforce on the front line on the nights of the 23rd and 24th. He was in action all through the 24th and the following night, displaying conspicuous gallantry and doing splendid work commanding bits of Infantry and his own men in the confusion. They beat off several counter-attacks, and he was in at least two of our counter-attacks and advances to restore the line. On the morning of the 25th he had orders to withdraw on arrival of fresh troops. He came back, and all might have been well (and he would likely have had distinction for his fine work), but was sent forward

again until the relief was complete. He had only been back a few minutes when another German counter-attack was launched, and he was shot dead through the temple whilst encouraging his men. So passes a very gallant officer, whom we shall all miss much - he is a great loss to us.'

Lieut Kindersley was of a most loving and amiable character, and yet with it all was absolutely fearless. He was a skilful athlete, and many of our boys here will remember many cricket matches played and his prowess with the bat and his keen enthusiasm. Whilst at Eton he won both the junior and senior hurdles and the Public Schools' Hurdles Championship. He received his commission in the Hussars in May 1915, and was only 20 years old at the time of his death. RIP.

There is a window in St Lawrence (on the north wall of the Sanctuary, behind the pulpit - see photo on page 2) **in memory of Lionel Kindersley**, so from the church magazine of December 1918:

Before the celebrations on All Saints' Day there was dedicated a beautiful window in the Chancel of the Church, between the Organ Chamber and the Nave, erected by Sir Robert and Lady Kindersley to the memory of their eldest son. It bears the inscription:

*AMDG and in loving memory of
Lionel Nassau Kindersley, of
Langley House, Lieut 15th
Hussars, who died fighting for his
country at Bourlon Wood, France,
on November 25th 1917, aged 20
years.*

The window is an extremely artistic one, and is the work of Messrs Powell, of Whitefriars, to whom we owe so many windows in the Church. It bears in its left hand light the figure of S Louis of France, while underneath is depicted his deathbed. The right hand shows the figure of S Oswald, the great Christian warrior and King of Northumbria, and the picture beneath the figure shows him setting up the Cross as his standard before the Battle of Heavenfield (Editor's note: AD 633 or 634).

Reproduced from 'Outlook' the Abbots Langley and Bedmond Parish Magazine November 2017 issue

PERCY FREDERICK GEORGE MITCHELL

Born 1896 -Brighton, Sussex.

4th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment; 3rd Battalion 1st Army Cyclist Corps – Private - Regimental Number – 381.

Survived the Great War

Percy was born in 1896 at Brighton. In the 1901 Census he is living in Kettering with his mother Eliza, father Edgar James and a younger sister and brother. In 1911 the family had moved to the High Street, Abbots Langley, where Edgar continued to work as a Blacksmith and Wheelwright. By this time Percy had two brother and two sisters, Frederick, Eve, Edgar and Lily May. In 1911 Percy worked as a Blacksmith's Apprentice. In 1912 and 1914 his father Edgar James Mitchell is listed in Kellys Directory for Hertfordshire under Smiths, Blacksmiths and Farriers.

Percy would have joined the scouts when he was 13 years old.

He is first recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in September 1914, serving with the Bedfordshire Regiment. In the December 1914 Parish Magazine he is recorded serving with the 4th Bedfordshire's but by January 1915 had transferred to the 1st Army Cyclist Corps.⁴⁵

His Medal Roll Index card shows that he first served in France from the 23 June 1915.

In September 1916 Percy is shown in the Roll of Individuals Entitled to the Silver War Badge as enlisting on 10th August 1914, just a couple of weeks after war was declared. This record also shows that he was discharged on 9th August 1916, recording the cause of discharge as "Sickness Para 392 XVI KR". This would indicate that he was unfit for active service. The Silver War Badge was issued to those unfit for war service this showed that the soldier had been honourably discharged.

On 23rd October 1915 the Hertfordshire Advertiser reported "*Cyclist Mitchell of 1st Army Cycling Corps, 3rd Battalion, is in a General Hospital in France. His leg is broken*". On 6th November 1915 the Hertfordshire Advertiser recorded that "*Private Percy Mitchell, in hospital in England, has received severe shrapnel wounds, which necessitated removing one of his legs*". The injury was recorded in the November 1915 edition of the Parish Magazine. Later in the month, on 27th November 1915, the Hertfordshire Advertiser noted that "*Percy Mitchell is now in Norwich Hospital, and being the youngest inmate of the hospital is known as 'the Baby'*". On 15th April 1916, the Hertfordshire Advertiser erroneously reported that "*Edgar Mitchell was recovering from the amputation of his right leg*". The Advertiser recorded on 10th June 1916 that "*Private Percy Mitchell has returned home, having lost a leg, and has been welcomed by his many associations*". Percy was discharged disabled, and this was recorded in the January 1917 edition of the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine.¹

Percy survived the Great War War as did his brother Frederick, and his father Edgar. In addition to the Silver War Badge he received the British War Medal, Victory Medal and the 14/15 Star.

⁴⁵ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

LEONARD WILFRED MUNT

Born 6th December 1895 – Abbots Langley. Baptised 5th April 1896 – Abbots Langley
**1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment; Royal Flying Corps & Royal Air Force – Private; Air
Mechanic (3rd Class) - Regimental Number – 406469**

Survived the Great War

Leonard Munt was born in Abbots Langley, in the 1901 Census he is living in Breakespeare Road. His father William is employed as a Carter on a Farm and is aged 53 years. His mother is called Annie and he has sisters Caroline, Elizabeth and Ellen and a younger brother Arthur.

In 1911 the family are still living at 59 Breakspeare Road and William is working as a farm labourer. He has another brother Sidney. His sisters Ellen and Elizabeth are working as Domestic servants and Leonard is employed as a House Boy.

Leonard would have been 14 years old when he joined Abbots Langley Scouts.

Leonard was first recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in November 1914 serving with the Hertfordshire Territorial's. His first Muster, (service), date is recorded as 3 October 1914. He transferred to the 1st Battalion of the Hertfordshire regiment at some point, and in May 1917 the Parish Magazine recorded that Leonard had been wounded. He remained with the Hertfordshire's until late 1917 or early 1918 at which point he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) just before the creation of the Royal Air Force (RAF) in April 1918. The final Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in December 1918 records Leonard serving with the RAF. He was recorded in the Absent Voter Records for Autumn 1918 and Spring 1919 serving as an Air Mechanic (3rd Class), and his address was given as 59 Breakspeare Road, Abbots Langley.⁴⁶

His brother Arthur Jonathon Munt is recorded in The National Roll of the Great War 1914-1915. He was a gunner in the Royal Field Artillery. It states "Volunteering in 1915, he was drafted to Mesopotamia in the same year. He saw much service in this theatre of war and was engaged in heavy fighting in the attempts to relieve Kut. On the cessation of hostilities he returned to England and was demobilised in April 1919, and holds the General Service and Victory Medals.

Leonard survived the Great War returning to live in Abbots Langley.

⁴⁶ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

HAROLD ROBERT OVERY

Born 16 May 1895 to 1974

23/11/1914 Surrey Yeomanry

12/10/1916 12th Bat East Surrey Regiment. Pte. Reg No. 25458 Badge No. 123907

Harold was one of seven children born to Robert and Mary Overy and his brother William Arthur was born in 1897. In 1891 the family lived in Abbots Langley and his father Robert was employed as a School-Master at the Asylum. Harold was born at Old Windsor in 1895, and later baptised in Leavesden on 20th October 1895. In the 1901 Census the family lived in Abbots Road, Abbots Langley, and Robert worked as a Rate and Tax Collector.⁴⁷ Harold helped his father in his work which was why we have a record of events now.



On 15th June 1909 a group of boys, namely B.E. Hill, R. Welland and H.R. Overy, met in Abbots Langley and formed a Patrol of boy scouts under the leadership of the 1st Scout Leader, Mr H C Bonaker, assisted by C. Whittaker and F. Bennett and by Mr Overy of High Street, Abbots Langley. Mr Overy was the village recorder and lived where the Doctor's surgery is now situated and became the leader of the Home Guard in Abbots Langley during the Second World War. They formed the Owl Patrol which was the 3rd patrol at that time so the probable strength of the Troop was 24 Scouts. As a result of a letter from the two Kindersley boys, a bugle costing 4/- was to be obtained by the patrol. The boys paid in their contributions and a bugle was brought from Mr Green on 19th June. *You can see an account of this on a*

separate sheet. Voting took place for the bugler, and Harold Overy was elected. He held this position until 18th December, when he sent in his resignation in favour of Ralph Welland.⁴⁸

At the time of the 1911 Census the Overy's lived at Linden Villas, Abbots Road, and Harold worked as a Stock Broker's Clerk. In 1912 his father Robert was Clerk to the Parish Council and Registrar of Births, and the village recorder and they lived where the Doctor's surgery is now located.

⁴⁷ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

⁴⁸ H R Overy's Notebook

When war broke out Harold attested to the Surrey Yeomanry at Clapham on 23rd November 1914, and undertook a Medical, where it was declared that he was of "Good Physical Development". Harold is recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour for the first time in December 1914, serving with the Surrey Yeomanry. He joined up with the Surrey Yeomanry on 21st July 1915 and was sent to France on 23rd September 1915. On 12th October 1916 he was posted to the 12th Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment.



On 10th April 1917 Harold received multiple wounds, and was sent back to England on 19th April. The Parish Magazine recorded that it was reported that Harold Overy had been wounded in its May 1917 edition. He was admitted to the Military Hospital at Endell Street in London and on 26th July 1917 was discharged to Abbots Langley as being "No longer physically fit for War Service". The Parish Magazine recorded that Harold had been Discharged Disabled in August 1917.

On 31st August 1917 Harold received a War Badge and Certificate. The badge was worn on the right breast or on the right lapel of a jacket and signified that a man had been discharged disabled. Harold Overy survived the War. We have it on record that in July 1963 "Mr H R Overy presented the Rover Crew with the gift of books, maps and his set of pre-1914 Patrol Leaders Badges."⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Woodsmoke issue of July 1963

WILFRED ARTHUR OVERY

Private

13th Battalion London Regiment (Kensington's) #490583

Survived

Wilfred Overy was born in 1897 at Abbots Langley. He was one of seven children (two sons and five children) born to Robert and Mary Overy. In 1891 the family lived at Abbots Langley and Robert was employed as a School-Master at the Asylum. In the 1901 Census the family was registered living in Abbots Road, Abbots Langley, and Robert worked as a Rate and Tax Collector. By the time of the 1911 Census the Overy family lived at Linden Villas, Abbots Road. In the 1912 Kelly's Directory Robert was listed as Clerk to the Parish Council and the Registrar of Births.

William joined the Scout Group on 15th June 1909 with his brother Harold and was recorded as being the No. 3 at that time. He was one of the boys who contributed money towards the bugle, as well as for his uniform and 2d for a copy of Scouting for Boys, and his brother later lent him 6d for some equipment. It was noted that he had attended all meetings⁵⁰

Wilfred attested on 7th September 1914 to the 13th Battalion of the London Regiment – the Kensington's, he was employed as an Insurance Clerk by George H Fryer & Co. The Kensington's had mobilised to Abbots Langley when war was declared on 4th August 1914. He was recorded for the first time in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in October 1914, serving with the 13th London's (Kensington's). On 10th February 1915 he was sent to France and embarked at Southampton.

On 12th March 1915 Wilfred was wounded during the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, and spent from 14th March to 2nd April at the 5th General Hospital at Rouen suffering from a slight gunshot wound. The Abbots Langley Parish Magazine reported him wounded and missing in the April 1915 edition. However Wilfred survived and he returned to the Kensington's and fought at the Battle of Aubers Ridge on 9th May 1915 where the Kensington's were cut to ribbons. The battalion lost 13 officers and 453 men (70%) of its strength in the attack, and the Kensington Regimental Association's records note that Wilfred Overy was taken prisoner during the action.

Wilfred was officially recorded as Missing on 11th May, and as a Prisoner of War on 1st June 1915. In June 1915 the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine reported "*No news has been heard of Wilfred Overy, of the 13th (Kensington) Regt, since the engagement at Aubers on May 16th*", and in August 1915 the Magazine reported "*No news has been received of Wilfred Overy, a prisoner of war in Germany*".

A year later on 12th August 1916 the Parish Magazine recorded "*A remarkable publication is produced by the British Prisoners of War at Munster, in Germany, called 'The Rennbahn Church Times, a record of camp spiritual work'. A copy of the first printed series is before us. The number contains an excellent article by an Abbots Langley man, our friend Wilfred Overy, on 'The only Englishman who ever became Pope'. It is nice to hear of him again in this way, and it is strange to see his name and that of the Parish in print in a War Prisoners'*

⁵⁰ H R Overy's Notebook

newspaper. By God's good grace, may they soon be set free." The article was also published in the Hertfordshire Advertiser on 12th August 1916.

Wilfred was repatriated on 1st December 1918, and attached to the 13th London Regimental Depot. On 7th February 1919 he was attached to the 119th Company RDC at Feltham and discharged and demobilised on 25th April 1919. He was discharged awaiting a hernia operation at St Bartholomew's Hospital. He had been injured during his time as a prisoner lifting heavy coke at the coal pits. He had received treatment from a German Doctor but had been supplied with an unsuitable truss. A Medical Board, held at Watford on 2nd July 1919 noted that Wilfred be considered 20% disabled, and presumably eligible for a War Pension. Wilfred Overy survived the War as did his brother Harold.⁵¹

⁵¹ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

LEWIS STANLEY QUARMAN

Born 12th November 1896 – Abbots Langley. Baptised 20th January 1897 – Abbots Langley
**1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment; – Private; 3165 – 1/5 Battalion Nottinghamshire and
Derbyshire Regiment - Regimental Number – 235481**

Survived the Great War

Lewis Quarman was one of a very large family living in Garden Road. The records indicated that he was one of 11 children, with his father stating on the 1911 Census that he had 11 children born alive and 10 still living. In 1911 he was living at 5 Garden Road with his father William and mother Louisa.

In 1911 his father William was an Army Pensioner and an Asylum Pensioner and is aged 66. It appears that his mother Louisa was born in India and is a British subject. His parents have been married for 39 years, and Lewis was the youngest child at this stage as there are only 3 children living at home, his older sister Mary, (Mercy), who worked as a nurse and brother John who was a postman. Lewis is listed as working in a paper mill. In the 1901 Census he is living in Adrian Road with sisters Mabel; 23, Mildred; 21, Mercy; 11, and brothers Charles; 14 and John; 12. Lewis's eldest siblings were born in India as it appears that his father served in the British Army in India.

Lewis would have been 13 years old when he joined Abbots Langley Scouts. When Lewis is volunteered for the Great War in 1914 he would have been 18 years old. His records indicate that he originally served with the Hertfordshire Regiment but then transferred to the Nott's and Derby's, (Sherwood Foresters) Regiment.

He is listed in the National Roll of the Great War as a Private in the 1st Hertfordshire Regiment it states *"he volunteered in September 1914 and in the following year proceeded overseas. Whilst on the Western Front he took part in heavy fighting at Ypres, Hill 60, Festubert, Cambrai and the German Offensive and subsequent allied advance into Germany and suffered from shell shock. He was demobilised in March 1919 and holds the 1914-15 star and the General Service and Victory Medals"*

It appears from the UK Silver War Badge Records that he received the silver war badge and certificate. This was issued by the army when a service man is discharged and no longer fit for active service. This record shows him as serving from 15th September 1914 to 18th August 1919. Lewis survived the Great War returning to live in Abbots Langley, however on the same page on the Roll of Honour are his brothers Charles and John who were both killed in the Great War, Charles in operations in Kut and John in action at Longueval in France.

CHARLES THOMAS RIDGEWAY

Born 30th December 1894 – Abbots Langley.

Baptised 7th April 1895 – Abbots Langley

1st 2nd 4th & 5th Battalions Bedfordshire Regiment; Corporal

– Regimental Number – 14274

3rd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment - 2nd Lieutenant

Survived the Great War

Charles was born in December 1894 in Abbots Langley and in 1911 was living at 27 Breakspeare Road; he was one of 9 children. His father Charles was a bricklayer and his mother was called Sarah. In 1911 aged 16 he is working as a domestic gardener and his 2 sisters living at home Alice and Maude are working as Certified Mental Nurses, most probably at Leavesden Asylum.

In the 1901 Census he is listed as Thomas, probably to avoid confusion with his father Charles and is living with brothers George; 20, Harry; 15, and sisters Laura; 12, Maude; 10 Jessie; 8 and Aggie; 4. **Charles would have been would have been one of the older scouts when he joined Abbots Langley Scouts at around 15 years old.**

Charles enlisted into the Bedfordshire Regiment at around the age of 20. The Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour first recorded Charles (junior) in November 1914, serving with the 4th Bedfordshire's. His Medal Roll Index Card noted that he went to France on 27th April 1915 and was probably serving with the 2nd Bedfordshire's at the time. The 4th Bedfordshire's did not leave for France until 1916, and the Parish Magazine recorded that Charles was serving with the 2nd Bedfordshire's in its June 1915 edition. By December 1915 the Parish Magazine reported that Charles had transferred to the 5th Bedfordshire's, and a month later in January 1916 he was recorded serving with the 1st Bedfordshire's. In January 1916 the 1st Bedfordshire's were in trenches on the Somme. The Langleybury Parish Magazine recorded that Charles was serving with the 1st Bedford's in June 1916. He was again listed in the Langleybury Parish Magazine in February 1917.⁵²

On the Roll of Individuals entitled to receive the Victory Medal and or the British War Medal, Charles is listed by the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment as being entitled to receive these medals, however it also indicates that he had received these from the Worcestershire's. It also records that Charles was commissioned into the Worcestershire Regiment on 27th August 1917.

Charles survived the War and was married on 7th November 1918 just before the end of the Great War.

⁵² Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

PERCY CHARLES ROBINS

Born 3rd April 1897– Abbots Langley. Baptised 6th June 1897– Abbots Langley
**Hertfordshire Territorials; 1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment; 4th Reserve Battalion; -
Private - 443rd Agricultural Labour Company Labour Corps – Regimental Number - 457905**
Survived the Great War

Percy was born in Abbots Langley in 1897. In 1901 he was living in Garden Road aged 4. Percy's father is working as a Stockman on a farm. He was one of 7 children.

On the 1911 Census the family are still at the same address. Percy is working as an errand boy and his father is working as a Stockman at Cecil Lodge. Also living in Garden Road is fellow scout Lewis Quarman and Charles Ridgeway at number 2 Garden Road,

Percy Robins would have been 12 when he joined Abbots Langley Scouts.

The Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour was first records him in October 1914, serving with the Hertfordshire Territorials.

The National Roll of the Great War recorded that he had volunteered in September 1914, and was engaged on various duties with his battalion until drafted overseas in 1917. At some point he had transferred to the 1st Battalion of the Hertfordshire's, and the National Roll continued to note that he saw much service on the Western Front and took part in heavy fighting in the Battle of Arras in April 1917. Although not recorded as wounded in the Parish Records the Robin's family records noted that he had received a chest wound and was invalided out of the Army. Percy was withdrawn from the Front Line and moved to the Reserves and eventually to the Labour Corps.⁵³

Percy survived the War and is recorded as holding the General Service and Victory Medals.

⁵³ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

FREDERICK HERBERT SCOTT

Born 1895 – Kings Langley. Baptised 13th November 1895– Kings Langley
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment; - Private –
Regimental Number – 16960
Survived the Great War

Frederick was born in 1895 in Kings Langley. In 1901 he was living in Breakspeare Road, his father working as a Carter on the road and his mother as a Laundress. On the 1911 Census the family are living at 48 Breakspeare Road and his father, also Frederick is working as a Carman, Coal Merchant. Frederick Herbert is a Telegraph Messenger, Government.

Frederick would have been 14 when he joined Abbots Langley Scouts.

Frederick's Army pension records as enlisting on 31st August 1914 at Watford. He declares himself as 18 years and 6 months old and is working as a Postman. He is 5 feet 6 and a half inches tall and weighs 120 pounds. His records show that he was stationed in the UK from the 31st August 1914 to the 10th August 1915 then serving in France until August 1918 and then serving at home until the 9th February 1919 when he was discharged his address is given as 101 Breakspeare Road. During the war he had been promoted from Private to Lance Corporal.

His casualty record shows that he sustained several injuries during his service including injuries to his ankle and shoulder. In 1918 he spent 32 days in hospital at the Queen Mary's Military Hospital in Whalley, Lancashire due to a gunshot wound in his left forearm. A medical report prior to discharge states that he received a gunshot wound to the left shoulder and chest on 10th April 1917 in France and listing this and also the wound to his forearm as a disability.

His Pension Record noted that he attended a Medical Board at Watford on 9th October 1919, and was deemed to be 20% disabled, and on 27th March 1920 received a Final Gratuity of £52-10 shillings.⁵⁴

It appears that his father Frederick also served in the Great War as UK Royal Air Force Airmans records list a Frederick Scott born in Kings Langley in 1874 as serving. He was aged 44 years.

Frederick survived the War and is recorded as holding the General Service and Victory Medals. In 1922 he is recorded as marrying in Northleach in Gloucestershire at this time he is working as a Post Office Assistant.

⁵⁴ Information from Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

THOMAS ALFRED SHEPHERD

Born 10th March 1897 – Watford.

Royal Navy and the Royal Naval Air Service - Service Number – F17870:217870

Survived the Great War

Thomas Shepherd was born in Watford in 1897. The 1911 Census records him as 14 years old and working as a Student for Railway Clerk. The family are living at 80 Marlin Square. His mother Mary Jane Shepherd is a widow and is living with her daughter also Mary Shepherd and Thomas. Also at the home his grandmother who is visiting and Jessie Mayston; 6 and Irene Harding; 4, who are boarding. His father had died in 1911.

In the 1901 Census the family are living in Watford and it appears that his father also Thomas is working as a Railway Guard. Thomas Alfred does not appear on this census and was probably staying with relatives. It appears that this was his father's second marriage and he had 5 half siblings.

Thomas would have been 12 when he joined Abbots Langley Scouts.

Like fellow scout Richard Coombes he served in the Royal Navy. He enlisted when he was 19; the record of his Royal Naval Service lists him as enlisting on 5th July 1916. It details him as 5 feet 10 inches tall and having brown hair and blue eyes. It gives his occupation as Railway Clerk.

He initially served on President II which was a training base this is also shown as his last ship. He transferred to the Royal Air Force on 31st March 1918 when it was formed.

Thomas Shepherd survived the war.

RALPH JOHN HIBBERT WELLAND

Born 1895 Kilburn – Survived the war

Lieutenant

13th (County of London) Battalion (Kensington); 3rd, 7th & 8th Battalions Seaforth Highlanders; 4th Reserve Veterinary Hospital, Army Veterinary Corps; Royal Garrison Artillery

Ralph was born in the Autumn of 1895 in Kilburn to Robert and Louise, and in the 1901 Census the family had moved to 76 Marlin Square, Abbots Langley. Robert was employed as a Chartered Engineer and Louise worked as an Elementary School Mistress.

Ralph joined the Abbots Langley Scout Group when it formed on 15th June 1909 and is one of the founder members of the Group, along with Harold Overy and Bertram Hill. As a result of a letter from the two Kindersley boys, a bugle costing 4/- was going to be obtained by the patrol. The boys paid in their contributions and a bugle was brought from Mr Green on 19th June. *You can see an account of this on a separate sheet.* Voting took place for the bugler, and Harold Overy was elected. He held this position until 18th December, when he sent in his resignation in favour of Ralph.⁵⁵



On 22nd July Overy noted - *R Welland Scout No. 6. Got belt and has paid in 10d has attended all meeting so far. Paid 2d for Scouting for Boys.* It was later noted that "*R. Welland had also paid 10d for a hatchet*". On 6th November as part of his 1st class test he walked xx miles with Frank Coleman (unfortunately this text is illegible in the notebook). In the Owl Patrol of August 4th Ralph is noted as the leader, and on 31st October 1909, Ralph is No. 6 Bugler, 2nd Class, and by 15th June 1910 he is the Bugler, Shoulder Cord. It is also noted that *if Bugler Welland hasn't learn to swim and cannot swim the required length, he will forfeit his badge.*

In the 1911 Census the family were living at London Villa, Abbots Road, which was next door to Harold Overy. It is presumed that Robert had died by this time as Louise is noted as the Head of the Household.

At the outbreak of War Ralph joined up with the Hertfordshire Yeomanry, but on 21st August 1914 he was discharged as being no longer fit for War Service. He was diagnosed with Valvular Disease of the Aortic Valve and also had a long-standing history of rheumatism throughout infancy. However ten days later he re-enlisted with the 13th Battalion of the London Regiment – the Kensingtons, who were mobilised in Abbots Langley in August 1914. Ralph was recorded for the first time in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in October 1914, serving with the 13th London's. He was sent to France, but was invalided home with a recurrence of heart disease, and was discharged again on 10th December 1915. The Parish Magazine noted that Ralph had been invalided home in February 1916.

⁵⁵ H R Overy's notebook

On 8th March 1916 Ralph attested to the Seaforth Highlanders, and re-enlisted with the rank of Lance Corporal. His previous medical issues and discharges were noted when he attested and the Officer Commanding the 3rd Battalion of the Highlanders noted that “he is able to carry out all his duties in every way satisfactorily, and that his name should be removed from The Pension List”. On 10th June 1916 the Hertfordshire Advertiser reported that “Ralph Welland, who was on the discharged list, has now joined the Seaforth Highlanders”.

Ralph embarked at Folkestone and disembarked at Boulogne on 10th August 1916. He was posted to the 7th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders on 11th August 1916, and then to the 8th Battalion on 24th August. On 11th September he was admitted to No 2 Casualty Clearing Station, and moved to No 5 General Hospital at Rouen two days later, and was despatched to England on a Hospital Ship on 20th September. On 16th October he was discharged for a third no longer fit for Military Service. The report of the Medical Board of 2nd October noted that his heart problems had returned, but were not a result of, but had been aggravated by active service. On 24th November 1916 Ralph re-enlisted, this time with the Army Veterinary Corps (AVC) and served with the 4th Reserve Veterinary Hospital. His name was once again removed from the Pension List. Throughout 1917 the Parish Roll of Honour listed Ralph serving with the AVC, however by January 1918 and through to the end of the War it was noted that he served with the rank of Lieutenant with the Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA). Ralph is listed in the Absent Voter Records for Autumn 1918, Spring 1919, and Autumn 1919 serving with the RGA. He gave his address as Abbots Road, Abbots Langley.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

Letter to Parish Magazine describing 1914 Christmas Truce

"February 1915 Parish Magazine - invalided home from the Kensingtons. Letter from the Front regarding the Christmas Truce - We received the following most interesting letter from Private Ralph Welland of the Kensington Regiment, who since writing, has been invalided home:-

"I think that the account of our Christmas Day in the trenches might interest you and – if there is room in the Parish Magazine – the Abbots Langley parishioners. We went into the trenches on the 23rd inst., and came out on the 26th; we do three days in and three days out.

We manned the trenches about 6 o'clock on Wednesday evening and had a fairly quiet night and following day, except for one or two German sniper, who are quite hot. On Christmas Eve, 4.30, I was detailed off for rations, that is, to go back to our transport and draw rations for the following day and the following day's breakfast. There was a lovely moon and it was beginning to freeze, but there was not enough frost then to save us from getting knee-deep in mud and water as we went out through the communication trench (connecting our trench to the village behind). About 8 o'clock, when we were returning, we could see the German trenches all lighted up by about twelve groups of lights, which proved to be Christmas trees with Germans walking around. Naturally, instead of using the trench in returning, we walked along the top, which was frozen hard by this time. Before the Christmas trees were lighted up it appears that a German soldier hailed us – "English soldiers, the German soldiers wish the English soldiers a happy Christmas" and then "You no shoot me if I come half way" (the trenches were about 150 or 200 yards apart), whereat two of our boys went out and met him and then returned with a bottle of homemade wine and a box of cigars. That set the ball rolling, and all night greetings were being exchanged; of course there was plenty of carol singing. When Christmas Day broke the Germans came out of their trenches and we met them half-way between the barbed wire entanglements, exchanged greetings and shook hands. Souvenirs were being exchanged all day, and I myself had several German cigarettes, and a very good cigar, of which they seemed to have plenty. At dinner time we gave them some Christmas pudding and bully beef, for which they seemed extremely grateful, but in return they could only give us some of their black bread, which we thought afterwards would make admirable cases for shells. As we were out on the top of the trenches we took the opportunity to repair them in front. This unofficial truce was to last until 12 o'clock, but the Germans much wanted it to last longer, as they said "You no shoot, we no shoot" and up to the present the fighting hasn't regained the former pitch. By the way, there was heavy firing on either flank whilst we had our holiday.

As we make a good deal of tea and Bovril in the trenches, we are always having water fatigues, but on Christmas Day I took a jar and found a bike (lady's, minus tyres etc) and cycled in daylight along a road a quarter of a mile from the enemy's trenches – a novel experience, I think.

Our menu on Christmas Day was :- Breakfast: Fried bacon, tea, fried bread with jam on top ("dough- nuts"). Dinner: Stew made from tinned stew (very good indeed), Christmas pudding and tea. Tea: Toast and jam, tea. There were about six of us "mucking in" together, so one was appointed cook, and as we were lucky enough to find a pail in which to cook our grub and make tea, you see we had a real Christmas spread, although we would have liked to have been home for Christmas. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves."

CHARLES WHITTAKER

Born 30th April 1892 in Abbots Langley – and survived the war
Acting Corporal
Fitter / Motor Transport Army Service Corps / #M2/022008

Charles is recorded in the 1901 and 1911 census at Yew Tree Cottage, Abbots Road. He was 8 in 1901 and lived with his parents Nathaniel and Elizabeth and his sisters May aged 8 (presumably a twin), and Marian aged 12.

Charles joined the Scout Group on 15th June 1909 at the age of 17 and is recorded as **being the Assistant Scout Master and Examiner for 'cooking' for the 1st Class Tests** of the Abbots Langley Scout Group. The following record is also noted –

Saturday 19th December - No 1,2,3 & 6 marched to Hunton Bridge. C Whitaker in command. Did a small bit of MORSE. Attempted to make a raft. Squad drill. Arrived home 5.20 in time for 5.00 Service.⁵⁷

On 12th December 1914, aged 22, Charles attested to the Army Service Corps (ASC) and was attached to No 6 Motor Ambulance Convoy. He gave the name George Charles Whittaker, his occupation as Motor Driver, and noted that he had served for two years in with the **1st Battalion of the Hertfordshire Territorials**. He joined up with the ASC at their depot at Grove Park on 13th December and embarked at Avonmouth on the SS Twickenham on 5th February 1915, arriving at Rouen in France on 10th February. He was recorded in the Abbots Langley Parish Magazine Roll of Honour in January 1915 serving with the Army Service Corps (ASC). On 18th April he was transferred to No 4 Motor Ambulance Convoy, and returned to No 6 on 10th May 1915.

Charles was admitted to 21 Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) on 27th October 1915 suffering from Tonsillitis. He was discharged on 2nd November 1915. On 28th February 1916 he was posted to 2nd ASC Repair Shops, and on 11th March was posted to the 16th Auxillary Bus Company at GHQ.

He was granted leave between 29th April and 4th May 1916, and married Florence Lacey at Stratford on Avon on 2nd May. Between 1916 - 1917 he continued to serve with the 16th Auxillary Bus Company. In January 1917 the Abbots Langley Parish Roll of Honour noted that he had transferred to the Motor Transport Section of the Army Service Corps (MTASC). Charles was granted leave between 1st to 13th September 1917 and he received a third period of leave from 6th to 20th October 1918. When he returned from leave he was appointed Acting Corporal on 26th October 1918 and subsequently appointed Lance Corporal on 26th December 1918.

Between 14th April and 3rd May 1919 he was transferred to serve with the Motor Transport Company 2nd Echelon and on 7th May 1919 he was transferred to the UK for release. He arrived on 8th May and was demobilised from Woolwich Dockyard on 6th June 1919. He was assessed as Medical Category "A", and when demobilised was described as sober, reliable and intelligent and his Service Record noted that whilst serving he had gained a Specialist

⁵⁷ H Overy's notebook of 1909

Military Qualification as a Mechanic. Arthur's Medal Roll indicated that he had gained the rank of Acting Corporal before demobilisation.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Roger Yapp, Back to the Front Project

BRAMWELL HENRY WITHERS

Born 10 April 1888, New South Wales, Australia – Survived the War
2nd Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment
(5020 W Lancs Comm in 1943)

Bramwell was born in Australia and the family moved back to England when Bramwell was still young. In the 1901 census, he is aged 12 and living with his family in Killises Avenue, Streatham.

From the London Gazette of 2nd April 1909, page 2592: it states that Bramwell H. Withers was to be promoted from 2nd Lieutenant to Lieutenant from 5th March 1909 within the Special Reserve, 3rd Battalion, The Hampshire Regiment.



Lieutenant B. Withers was a founding member of the Scout movement and started **The 1st Kings Langley (October 20 1909)** and the **Langleybury Troop**, but it seems that he left the running of those to the relevant Scout Masters.

He was the First Class examinations for Abbots Langley Scout Group where he marked map reading, signalling and rescue work.⁵⁹

He was also involved with the Winchester Scouts and later started a Sudanese Troop and represented them at the 1st World Jamboree from 30 July 1920 at Olympia, London.⁶⁰ Contingents came from 34 nations, and were later inspected by the King and Queen, Princess Mary and the Duke of York at Buckingham Palace on August 10th.

Their Majesties were received with a Royal salute and a Scout bugle call. The lads from overseas were 'arranged in column formation facing the King's door. The Chief Scout was present, together with a number of the principal Scout officers from various colonies and foreign countries.

In the summary census of 1911 Bramwell aged 23 is living at Mill House, Hunton Bridge, around the corner to **Charles Bonaker, the Abbots Langley Scout Master**. Bramwell was living with his sisters which he used as a base whilst in the area and his sister Grace Mary died in 1911, so he may well have come home to be with her.

In the Kings birthday honours list of 1928 Captain Bramwell Henry Withers, of The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire), attached Sudan Defence Force, is made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

⁵⁹ H R Overy's notebook

⁶⁰ <http://www.oocities.org/keeto111/withers/bram.txt>

He was initiated into the United Grand Lodge of England Freemason on 21st August 1913. His profession was Lieutenant and the Lodge was Orion in the West, Poona Bombay, Lodge Number 415.

Bramwell first saw active service during World War One when entering East Africa in November 1914 with the 2nd Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment.

- August 1914: in Bangalore, India.
- Moved to Tanga, German East Africa, landing 3rd November 1914 with the 27th Indian Brigade.

Promoted from Second Lieutenant to Lieutenant on 9th November 1914⁶¹

- Moved to Mombasa on 7th November and commenced operations in East Africa.

He gained the rank of Captain on 19th November, 1915⁶².

- Moved in May 1916 to South Africa, to allow for recovery from mass ill-health.
- Moved to Egypt, landing at Suez on 18th January 1917.
- 14th April 1917: attached to 232nd Brigade, 75th Division. The Battalion was moved in rapid succession to the 233rd and 234th Brigades of the same Division, and detached as a result of a medical board on 9 August 1917.
- Proceeded to Sidi Bashr and then placed onto Lines of Communication at Gaza.
- Moved to France, landing at Marseilles 27th May 1918.
- 4th June 1918: attached to 94th Brigade, 31st Division.
- 28th June 1918: transferred to 101st Brigade, 34th Division.

He was then promoted to Temp Major in September 1918 and Assistant Commandant Prisoner of War Camp.

He was seconded for service with the Egyptian Army from 4th November 1918 till 16th January 1925 when he transferred to the newly formed Sudan Defence Force (17th January 1925).

He was in Darfur, being one of the officers who joined GRIGG's patrol (#99) sent out in January 1922 to arrest the dozen surviving leaders of the Fiki Abdullahi Suheina uprising. The patrol was sent out at the end of January, just after the closure of the award period for the Nyala clasp (The Darfur 1921 clasp had expired on 22nd November 1921) and Bramwell is not on the roll for either clasp.

Officer Commanding the 11th Sudanese Battalion at the time of it's Mutiny at Khartoum in 1924.

Discontent among Egyptian Officers which infected a minority of the Sudanese soldiers flared into outright mutiny in 1900. WINGATE, who had recently succeeded KITCHENER as Sirdar and Governor-General of the Sudan, was able to suppress this outbreak without bloodshed, but 24 years later his successor, El Ferik, Sir. Lee STACK Pasha was assassinated by Egyptian Terrorists in Cairo in November 1924. This outrage led to a number of demands and penalties upon the Egyptian Government by the British High Commissioner, ALLENBY.

⁶¹ London Gazette of 26th November 1914, page 9972

⁶² London Gazette of 3rd February 1916, page 1345

This included the withdrawal of all Egyptian Troops from the Sudan and sparked a series of disturbances within the Egyptian Army, the most serious of which was at Khartoum.

["Pasha" is an honorific or honorary title for officers in the rank of commander in chief, Lieutenant General and Major General, also the honorary title of "Bey" was given to officers of the ranks of Brigadier, Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel.]

The Egyptian Troops themselves presented little problem, but on the 27th November 1924 a small number of Sudanese Officers and men of the 11th Sudanese Battalion seized the Military Hospital compound and having killed a British Doctor and an N.C.O. barricaded themselves in the Officers Mess. Here they held out for many hours against elements of two British Battalions and a Field-Gun, inflicting a number of casualties on the British. Eventually, however, their stronghold was reduced to rubble and most of the mutineers were killed or wounded. Four of the ringleaders were court-martialled and executed.

Egyptian nationalist influence upon the Sudanese troops had long been a cause for concern to the British Authorities and plans for the separation of the Sudanese element of the Egyptian Army and the formation of an all Sudanese Force under British Officers had been under consideration for some time. These plans were now brought forward and the Sudan Defence Force under El Lewa HUDDLESTON Pasha as its first Qaid el Am (G.O.C.) was formed on 17th January 1925.

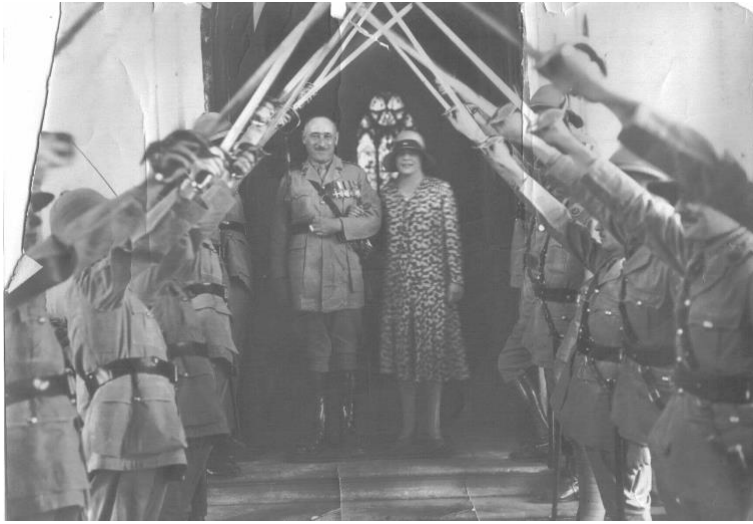
Sudan Defence Force

In January 1925, the Sudan Defence Force (also known as the SDF) was formed and about one hundred and forty British officers were transferred to it from the Egyptian Army under the first Kaid (GOC), Lewa HUDDLESTON Pasha, who had been Acting Sirdar of the Egyptian Army following the assassination of STACK (see above). A small number of British officers under an Inspector-General, Lewa SPINKS Pasha, remained with the Egyptian Army in a largely supervisory role until 1936.

The old numbered Sudanese battalions were phased out, the last, the 9th, being disbanded in 1930 when its Colours and other regalia were handed over for safe-keeping to the Cameron Highlanders, the two regiments having enjoyed a close and friendly association since the 1880s. To-day they can be seen beautifully displayed in the museum at Fort George near Inverness.

The new Sudan Defence Force of approximately six thousand officers and men was made up of four principal corps, the Camel Corps, Eastern Arab Corps, Western Arab Corps and Equatorial Corps, all, with the exception of the Camel Corps, being recruited locally as their prefixes suggest. These were supported by artillery, engineer, armoured car and machine-gun units, medical, signals and transport services.

Captain WITHERS reverted back from secondment to his old Regiment the Loyal North Lancashire's in 1928 who were at that time stationed at Secunderabad in India.



He was stationed at Fort William, Calcutta, November 1929 to October 1930.

Whilst he was there he married Lillian Julia Bibby on the 11th March 1930.

Loyal North Lancashire Regiment -

the 42nd

Commanding Officer: Lt Colonel BELL. Adjutant: Captain KINGSBERRY
Company Commander: Major Bramwell WITHERS.

Stationed during 1931 in Waziristan.

Stationed during 1932 at Cawnpore.

To Palestine with the Regiment in 1936.

The Loyal Regiment in Palestine 1936.

In the rewards for operations in Palestine a distinguished place is taken by the 1st Battalion The Loyal Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel, J.G. HALSTED, MC, who became temporary Colonel and A.Q.M.G. with Major's B.H. WITHERS, O.B.E. and N. COLLINS as the next senior officers. The Battalion which received 16 awards, was engaged in the only action fought by the new Emergency Force, and assisted in beating off a raid at Mount Carmel.

The Battalion was in the last year of its tour abroad and was due at Tidworth on March 24th 1937. Since 1920 it had been in Malta, Tientsin and Peking, Secunderabad, Calcutta, Waziristan and Cawnpore. The Battalion left Bombay on February 12th and took up Palestine duty on February 22nd for one year's normal garrison work, but was on active service continuously all the year. At Tidworth the Battalion was to take over barracks in the 7th Infantry Brigade vacated by the 2nd Battalion on October 1st on transfer to Shanghai.

From the London Gazette of 11th October 1917, page 10477:

N. Lancashire R. - Capt. B. H. WITHERS to be Adjt., vice Capt. (actg. Maj'.)

D.P.J. COLLAS. 28th June 1917.

London Gazette of 24th January 1919, page 1196: Capt. B.H. WITHERS, N. Lancashire R., from Adjt., to be temp. Maj'. whilst employed. as an Asst. Commandant. P. of W. Camp. 23rd Sept. 1918.

From the London Gazette of 3rd July 1923, page 4613: Whitehall, July 2, 1923.

The KING has been pleased, by Warrants under His Majesty's Royal Sign Manual, to grant unto the under-mentioned Officers permission to wear the Insignia of the Fourth Class of the Order of the Nile which Decoration has been conferred upon them by His Majesty the King of Egypt in recognition of good services rendered during the recent operations in Southern and Western Darfur: - Captain Bramwell Henry WITHERS, The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire), Commanding 11th Sudanese, Egyptian Army.

London Gazette of 4th June 1928, page 3852: CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD. St. James's Palace, S.W. 1, 4th June, 1928.

The KING has been graciously pleased on the occasion of His Majesty's Birthday,

to give orders for the following promotions in, and appointments to, the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire: - To be Officers of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order: - Captain Bramwell Henry WITHERS, The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire), attached Sudan Defence Force.

London Gazette of 13th November 1928, page 7389: Loyal Regt. - Capt. B.H. WITHERS, O.B.E., is reinstated to the establishment. 14th Nov. 1928.

London Gazette of 9th December 1930, page 7890: Capt. B.H. WITHERS, O.B.E., to be Maj. 7th Dec 1930.

London Gazette of 15th January 1937, page 340: Loyal Regt B.H. WITHERS, O.B.E., retires on retired pay 6th Jan 1937.

London Gazette of 12th April 1938, page 2455: Loyal R - Maj. B.H. WITHERS, O.B.E., having attained the age limit of liability to recall, eases to belong to the Res. of Off. 10th April 1938.

