

Reporting Potts
Comrades in
1915



YDGA

Potts' Comrades Section A-D

AEDY - H K [2048]

AINGER - T C [2/Lt]

Captain Wroughton is squire of Woolley Park, Wantage, Lieutenant H P Crossland and Second Lieutenant W H Crossland reside at Faringdon and Second Lieutenant T C Ainger is connected with the signallers.

On Wednesday Second Lieut T E Ainger who was first reported wounded was also reported missing. We regret to state that nothing has been heard of him.[BC 1/10/15 p7]

ALDER A - [1882]

ALLEN - J [1830]

ANDREW - C G P [1796]

Mr and Mrs G W Andrews of 70 Albert Street Slough would be grateful for any news of their son, Lance Corporal G P Andrews (1976) of the A Squadron Berks Yeomanry, reported missing in Gallipoli on August 21st. {BC 5/11/18915 p4]

photo - Mr and Mrs G W Andrews of 70 Albert Street Slough are most anxious for news of their son Lance Corporal Cecil G P Andrews 1976 of the A Squadron, Berks Yeomanry who was reported missing after the famous charge at Gallipoli on 21st August [BC 12/11/1915 p 5]

ANDREWS - Arthur W [1785] - See page YCD

ASHMAN - H [1993]

AYRES - Robert John [2281]

No news has been received of Trooper Robert John Ayres of 79 London Street, Reading whose father is official sick visitor of the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society. He is officially reported as missing but his chums have written home to say that he was killed. Trooper Ayres was formerly a clerk in the employ of Mr J St Laurence Stallwood and subsequently was associated with Rawle Johnston and Co. Bedford Row, London. He enlisted last September and is 23 years of age. Ayres was one of the best swimmers produced by the Reading Elementary Schools and for three years in succession (1904-7) he won the Albert Palmer Challenge Cup. His contests with Jack Bright will still be remembered for he twice beat Bright in the final. The contest was renewed in the Thames off the Promenade and Ayres won the marble clock by again defeating his old rival. It is a curious coincidence that Bright is also missing after action in the Dardanelles. He was formerly in St Giles Choir.

No news has been received respecting Trooper R J Ayres of London Street Reading who, as stated in our last issue, is missing [BC 24/9/15]

[see Dunn]

BABBISTER - W J [1636]

BALDWIN - W E [1519]

BARFORD - H H [1996]

BARRATT - L [2259]

BENNETT - Fred J [2157]

Trooper Fred Bennett, son of Mr J Bennett, The Homestead, Wargrave and associated with the Accounts Department at Messrs Huntley and Palmers has been wounded, degree not stated. Trooper Bennett who is 20 was educated at the Collegiate School and Henley Grammar School and had just started in the offices of Messrs Huntley and Palmers when the war broke out.

Trooper Fred Bennett, son of Mr J Bennett of the accountants department, Messrs Huntley and Palmers was shot in the knee. The bullet has been extracted and Trooper Bennett is going on satisfactorily.

photo - Trooper Fred Bennett The Homestead, Wargrave - wounded

[accompanied Potts at the investiture see BC 17/12/1915]

BERRY J E [1794]

BIDDIS H B [1688]

BIGGS - Frank Hurley

The following is an extract from a letter received by Mrs Biggs of Droxford, Basingstoke Road, Reading on September 11th from her son Trooper Frank Hurley Biggs of the Royal Berks Yeomanry in the Dardanelles.

"Am glad to say I am all right; did not get a scratch on our charge sorry to say the Berks Yeomanry got rather badly cut up: cannot seem to find any of my pals. We were cut up into little parties ... when we finished up the charge, three of us got cut off and we had to lay under cover all day and crawl back at night under all kinds of fire. I was the only one to reach the base alive, but they have been staggering in in ones and twos since. Poor Reg West was hit very early - hope not badly. It is quite impossible to describe what it was like. As soon as we took the Turkish trenches the shells were bursting right inside the trenches and it was impossible to hold them. All our officers were killed or wounded so we had to get on ourselves as well as we could. I have got two days rest at the base now - have got a rotten cold. To see our fellows lying around wounded and groaning for help and not be able to do anything for them is terrible. The conditions out here make the fighting as bad as it can be. Even here at the base we are under shell fire. Some of the troops that came out here from France say it was a picnic there compared with this."

Sergeant H Biggs, Berks Yeomanry of Maidenhead writing home says:-

"Suppose you have seen in the papers about the VC being awarded to one of our fellows. He was a very quiet fellow and the last one would think to exhibit such courage and devotion. We had a general parade when the news was read out and we have him three rousing cheers. What makes it all the better is the fact that he was recommended by a major and sergeant of the Inniskillings who witnessed the deed, so no one can say that there was any favouritism as they might do if he had been recommended by anyone connected with the Yeomanry.

Hope Reg Kington will get the DCM. He is extremely modest about the part he took in it but the others speak very highly of his conduct.

It makes us all feel very proud to belong to such a regiment after what they have done and I don't think there is any doubt that if our Brigade had been supported that hill they rushed would have been held and who knows but it might have had a decisive veering on the situation. [bc 29/10/1915 p12]

BISHOP A C [2/Lt]

BISHOP - P [1649]

BLANE A [1647]

BLYDE Hubert Cave [2/Lt]

Second Lieut H C Blyde is the eldest son of Mr A W Blyde, HM Treasury Examiner of Accounts for Sussex and Hampshire who resides at 8 College Road Reading. He formerly resided in Hertfordshire but has been living in Reading several years. Second-Lieut H C Blyde is an old Kendrick and aged 27. He had been in the Berks Yeomanry for seven or eight years and before the outbreak of war held an appointment in the central offices of the Reading Gas Company. He was a smart NCO and, some short time after the outbreak of war received his commission, the appointment being dated January 15th. He has worthily upheld the prestige of his regiment. Two brothers who were educated at Reading School are also with the forces. [BC 24/9/15]

photo - Second Lieutenant H C Blyde, Berks Yeomanry of Reading who behaved so gallantly in defending Major Gooch from the Turks [BC 24/9/15 p 4]

BOURKE - T J [2278]

Trooper T J Bourke who is one of the officers of Customs and Excise in Reading, received a bullet through the instep on the evening of August 21st after the Yeomanry had taken Hill 70 with the bayonet. He is now in Beaufort War Hospital, Fishponds, Bristol.

BOWYER - P [1743]

BRIGHT - Jack

[see Ayres]

BRILL - H V [1790]

BROWN - C C [1861]

BUDD - J [1712]

BUTLER - Charles [1606]

News has been received that Corporal Charles Butler has been killed. Intimation was first received that he was wounded but afterwards the news came through that the worst had happened. Corporal Butler, whose home was at Oxford, had for some years been employed at the Reading Post Office. He had been associated with the Yeomanry for some time and made a host of friends with whom he was very popular. He was shortly to have been married.

photo - Corporal Charles Butler employed at Reading GPO - killed

[see Seward]

BUTLER-HENDERSON - E B [Capt]

Captain Butler-Henderson was shot twice but happily not severely. [BC1/10/15]

CALDER - A [2110]

CARTER - T G [1723]

CARTLAND - K J G [2001]

CAUGHT - R [2002]

CHAMBERLAIN - Thomas Henry [2136]

Trooper Harry Chamberlain of 103 Norfolk Road Reading, who was wounded in the ankle and is now at Beaufort Hospital, Bristol, has a thrilling story to tell. Writing to his parents he says:-

"I got off with a bruised ankle through shrapnel hitting it. I had a most marvellous escape. It tore my boot and sock open and then only bruised and shook my ankle up. The force knocked me over with four of my comrades and then I managed to crawl under a bush. It was terrible.

"Now I will tell you how I got it. The night before we walked six miles to near Achi Baba and rested there till 2.30 pm Saturday and by that time our whole Division moved off and advanced on the Turks. We got within 800 yards of them and then down came the shrapnel and shells. Oh! it was cruel, but we still advanced with fellows falling down all around us. After this a shell burst right among eight of us and I felt something hit my foot and over I went with four more. I crawled to a bush two yards away and dug my head in and directly after another shell came two yards from me and burst. I thought this was my end, but no, I was only hit with lumps of earth and the time fuse or cap of the shell fell at my feet. Worse was to come. Bullets rained all ways. One fell within two inches of my head. I lay in this position from 3.45 pm to nearly 12 o'clock and did not dare move my head up as the snipers were everywhere. About 11 o'clock the guns' rattle and bombardment by our ships stopped and only rifle fire and machine guns were at it. I crawled out a bit and could see nobody anywhere. I was just wondering what to do when along came a Dorset man with his arm bleeding furiously. We then decided to try and find the Red Cross hospital but along came two first aid men and they dressed our wounds. The sights we saw that moonlight night are, on this paper, best left out but I will try and tell you if ever we meet again. From the hospital I went on a trawler to the hospital ship and from there to this ship. They called the scene the second Valley of Death, and a good name too. I must not say how many of our fellows are left but just cast an eye on the casualty list and you will see how we have suffered, I think I am one of the luckiest chaps alive as regards wounds and escapes of my life. I have got the top of that shell which I hope to keep. We are having splendid food and rest which is one of the best tonics The dirty dogs of Turks reverse their bullets so that it makes a spreading wound where they hit."

It is satisfactory to know that Mr and Mrs Chamberlain have heard good news from their son. The ankle is however worse than at first anticipated and is very painful. Chamberlain also has had a slight wound in the left leg. He says that they had a splendid reception at Bristol. Chamberlain who is 19, and was formerly employed as a clerk at the Reading Gas Works, enlisted 12 months ago and made rapid progress in efficiency.

photo - Trooper Chamberlain 103 Norfolk Road, Reading wounded

Trooper Thomas Henry Chamberlain of 103 Norfolk Road Reading and of the Berkshire Yeomanry, who was wounded during the gallant attack by the Yeomanry and others in Gallipoli, returned home on Friday for ten days convalescence. He was wounded in both legs but he is now making very satisfactory progress. Trooper Chamberlain was accorded a very hearty welcome on his return and was presented by the neighbours with a shaving kit which bore the following words "A token of love and respect for the duty to your King and country, wishing you the best of luck for the future - from Mrs Knight, Mrs Collier, Mrs Taylor" Mrs Collier's little boy played at the door on the violin "Home Sweet Home". The house was also decorated with a horseshoe, festoons, flags etc and there were letters "Welcome Home". Needless to say Trooper Chamberlain highly appreciated the welcome which was given him. He speaks highly of Major Gooch who as already reported has died of wounds received whilst leading the Berks Yeomanry in the gallant charge. Trooper Chamberlain enlisted in the Yeomanry in September last year, prior to which he was engaged as a clerk at the Reading Gas Company's offices. [BC 1/10/15 p9]

CHAMPION - H D [1569]

CHARLISH - E A

Corporal E A Charlish of the Windsor (A) Squadron of the Royal Berks Yeomanry send a letter to his parents at Windsor in which he states:-

One thing Ashmead-Bartlett did not mention, and that was who stormed Hill 70. No doubt all the Yeomanry come under the same heading but in reality it was our Brigade which led the charge and were just on top of the hill. The other regiments were far away from Hill 70, but came up later after the thing was over. I expect you have heard of one of our Berks Yeomanry fellows, named Potts, who has won the VC for gallantry on August 21st. It appears that he rescued a wounded comrade under fire, being wounded himself. There were heaps of men worthy of the VC, but were unfortunate in not being seen. In my opinion all the stretcher bearers were worthy of recommendation for they worked day and night unceasingly. We are still in the reserve trenches. In France, where men are sent back they generally go to some village,

but we here are are only a mile from the front line. In fact we get as many shells and bullets as if we were in the front line. and as for the rest, well, I will just give you an account of what we do. Of course you understand we cannot move out of the trenches in safety so we are home like rabbits etc. We generally get up about five in the morning and each man cooks his own meals in a fashion. There are generally a few Stand to Arms during the day and then the proper rest comes at night; we work in shifts up to five am. Each party does four hours hard work every night without stopping so after the grilling we have had previously you can imagine that we are more or less feeling pretty worn out by the time our shift finishes. I always go out in charge of a party while the sergeant has a smoke and my job is sort of walking foreman. We had a rather big Turkish attack this morning on the whole line, but I believe we easily repulsed them and captured two trenches. We have just heard th news that Major Gooch has died of wounds in England. I was just about four yards off him when he was shot through the head in the charge. All the reiment regrets this loss and has sent a letter of condolence to Mrs Gooch, every member signing it. we are still having good grub here and had an issue of flour so I made my section some pancakes. They looked all right but they felt a bit heavy after eating. I am keeping all right out here.

Corpl Charlish adds " I have not tasted any beer for two months. Quite a record. And then he says "What O! - a pint of Burges"

Corpl Charlish has since written another letter containing the intelligence that he is now in hospital at Malta suffering from dysentery. {BC 5th Nov 1915 p 14}

CHINA - W [2003]

CHASNEY - Horace [1416]

photo - Corporal Horace Chasney, son of Mrs Chasney of The Plough Inn, East Hendred, near Steventon. He is with the Berks Yeomanry and officially reported as wounded

CHISMAN H [2005]

CLARE W T [1413]

CLAYDON - A T [1732]

Trooper A T Claydon who is wounded was in the ledger office of Messrs Sutton and Sons. He came from Englefield and was a good vocalist.

CLAYDON - G H [1733]

CLIFFORD - Owen [1727]

[see Nicholls]

COE - N W [2067]

COLEBROOK - G W [1959]

No news has been received of Trooper G W Colebrook, son of Mr W M Colebrook and of the Berks Yeomanry who has been missing since the engagement in Gallipoli [BC 24/9/15]

COLLINS - W C [1083]

CONSTABLE - E A [2071]

CROSBIE - Donald Fraser

Mr Donald Fraser Crosbie, son of Mr and Mrs W Crosbie of Glenkers, Erleigh Road has written a number of interesting letters to his parents. Mr Crosbie is a dispatch rider with the headquarters staff and was attached to the Berks Yeomanry.

Writing on September 1st Mr Crosbie said. "We are still lying in our dug-outs on the side of the hill. We live like rabbits and one's ears, nose, eyes etc are continually filled with earth. Needless to say one crouches as near the earth as possible when the Jack Johnsons are flying about. We do our turn in the trenches but there is no danger. I think it is safer there than in the dug-outs". On September 3rd he said "We have been shelled today so had to be like rabbits, close to the earth."

In a letter dated September 8th Mr Crosbie said "On Saturday last we left our dugouts on the hill and proceeded over into trenches for about five miles. Luckily we had brought provisions as the occupants of our new home did not move out until very late and we could not get rations for the next day." [BC 24/9/15 p 7]

[see also West]

CROSSLAND - H P [[Lt]

Captain Wroughton is squire of Woolley Park, Wantage, Lieutenant H P Crossland and Second Lieutenant W H Crossland reside at Faringdon and Second Lieutenant T C Ainger is connected with the signallers.

CROSSLAND - W H [2/Lt]

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DANDRIDGE R [2009]

DAVENPORT R L [1739]

DODD - H [2042]

Another local member of the Berkshire Yeomanry has been reported wounded. His name is Trooper H Dodd whose home is at Cookham Rise. He has been wounded in the hip by shrapnel. [BC 24/9/15 p 7]

DUNN - C [2359]

Trooper C Dunn, Berkshire Yeomanry, son of Mr and Mrs H Dunn of 27 Queens Road, Reading, writing home says: "Don't worry about my being wounded. I have a fairly big wound in the left hip but I am going on all right. But the Brigade to which we are attached had terrible luck and poor Bob Ayres was killed."

DURRANT - V [1980]

YDGA 9/12/2011