

## ELSENHAM WW1 ROLL of HONOUR

### SOME SURVIVORS' STORIES

During our research for "Elsenham in Conflict" a few other pieces of information came to light on other men listed on the Roll of Honour in the church who survived the war.

Among all the many **Sandfords** there are two others **William** and **Charles** whose parents were William and Emma Sandford, who in 1911 lived in Bambers Green. Unfortunately no records for these men have been found, but attestation records have been found for their brother **Albert James Sandford!**

This is quite an interesting little story. Albert originally joined the Army Service (Special Reservists) for 6 Year's Service on 10 September 1914 but was discharged on 11 February 1915 for "having made a mis-statement as to his age on enlistment", not an uncommon occurrence in the early days of the war! As has already been mentioned in our book, several Elsenham men enlisted on and around the same date, although he is the only one we know of who has enlisted in this fashion and not the more usual Short Service.

His age is shown on his attestation as 16 altered to 17 years and 227 days. There is also a note stating his brother Charles is in "Lord Kitchener's army" as the first recruits were known, but no mention of his brother William.

A further Attestation for Short Service for Albert has also survived showing he enlisted on 29 May 1916 at the legal age of 18. He was placed in the Army Reserve before being posted in October 1916 to the RGA. He then seems to have served without incident until demob in September 1919.

It seems quite ironic that all this information about Albert has survived and nothing regarding his brothers, apart from the note about Charles. It is also a little curious that his name is not included on the Roll of Honour.

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Short Service Attestation papers for **John Childs** have survived.

As stated in the book, we were unable to find any connection between the families of Harold Childs and John. Neither was any direct connection found to link the families of John and Albert Childs, despite both families living at Loppingdales Farm according to the 1911 Census, most likely their fathers Jim and George were cousins.

John enlisted in February 1917, just short of his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Bedfords and served on the home front till November that year before going to France. He was only there for a short time without serving on the front line before he was transferred back home in January 1918. He was posted to various bases before being demobbed in October 1919.

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On Saturday 28 July 1917, the following report appeared in the "Herts & Essex Observer":

*Prisoner of War*

*Mrs E Hutley, of Tye Green, Elsenham, has had a letter from her husband, Pte Ernest Hutley, Essex Regiment, who was reported missing in April, stating that he is a prisoner of war in Germany. Pte Hutley's parents live in Grove Hill, Stansted and prior to the War, he looked after the fire engine for Stansted Parish Council and was for 14 years in the employ of Mr A Ratcliff, plumber and house decorator, of Cambridge Road.*

Our Roll of Honour has no mention of Ernest Hutley but the name **Albert Hutley** is recorded. On checking census records, it was found that they are brothers, the sons of Henry and Alice Hutley of Grove Hill, Stansted. There are also three other brothers, Herbert, William and Reginald and two sisters, Kate and Gertrude.

Now another curiosity. No attestation records were found for Ernest, the best is a medal card for an E. Hutley, No. 40072 of the Essex Regiment but no further details to connect it to him. However, records survive for his brothers Albert, Herbert and William, although nothing for Reginald. The only other record found for Ernest is his death in October 1960.

Albert, the one listed on our Roll of Honour, was posted to the Army Reserve on 26 February 1916 and was mobilised at the age of 38 on 7 February 1917 as a sapper in 5<sup>th</sup> Reserve Bn, Royal Engineers. He is unmarried, as his mother Alice is his next of kin, living at Tye Green (presumably the family must have moved sometime after 1914, see William's story). He was discharged as "no longer physically fit for service", on 29 March 1918, although no further details are given, the only other record found is of his death at Skegness at the age of 74 in 1952.

**Herbert Hutley** has a curious military career. He attested on 8 December 1915, was mobilised as a driver in the REME on 18 August 1916, discharged the next day, then "recalled to the colours" on 13 June 1917! He was posted presumably to France in March 1918, although this is a little unclear, then finally discharged on 28 April 1919. He was married to Rose Rebecca Thompson and had a son, Jack William, their address being Lower Street, Stansted.

**William Hutley** enlisted very early on in London at the Admiralty Recruiting Dept on 1 September 1914 and was "considered fit for service in the Royal Fusiliers" and given the number 1247. His father is shown as next of kin, still at Grove Hill. He served in France at various times in 1915, 1916 and 1917. He suffered severe gun shot wounds in the thigh and shoulder in 1917 and was permanently discharged as "no longer physically fit for service" on 16 October 1917.

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The "Observer" for Saturday 18 November 1915 under the heading "War Casualties" included the following report:

*Wounded, shell-shock*

***DIXON 15673 G (Elsenham) Essex Regiment***

According to the Elsenham School Roll, George Dixon was born on 8 May 1892 and attended the school from 1897 until he left aged 14 in 1906.

The only record found is his medal card which shows he arrived in France on 30 August 1915 and was discharged on 9 March 1918. He also qualified for the 1915 Star but not 1914-15 Star.

According to the 1911 Census, George's family lived in Robin Hood Road, and George, 19, is listed as "Cowman on Farm". His father was Alfred Dixon and his mother's name is Annie. There are three brothers listed, James, 21, a Farm Labourer, Edward, 15, a "Houseboy" and Charles, 9, still at school. The 1901 Census listed a sister, Bessie, who also went to Elsenham

School. In 1911 she is employed as General Domestic Servant by Annie Lewington, 8 All Saints Terrace, Newmarket.

George's brothers **James** and **Edward** also served but no records have been found other than our Roll of Honour.

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The name Dixon is almost as prolific as the Sandfords are in our history and it seems likely that most of them are related, judging by how many of them lived in Robin Hood Road! The other **George Dixon** on our Roll looks likely to be the son of yet another George who is shown on the 1911 census as a "Carpenter on estate" aged 46 and living at Fullers End. His wife Ellen is 45 and the children are Jessie, 18, George, 10, Cecil, 6, Elsie, 2, and a grandson Bernard aged 1. So far no records that can be proved to be of young George's service have been found, although the school records record his date of birth as 24 September 1900.

**Lawrence Dixon, Sen**, seems most likely to be the Lawrence Dixon listed in the 1911 Census as aged 28 and living with his wife Annie and 6 year old son Albert in Wells Cottages, Robin Hood Road. A Medal Card exists for a Lawrence Dixon in the Essex Regiment who landed in France on 2 September 1915 but no other records have been found. He died in 1958 and is buried in the High Street Cemetery.

The other **Lawrence Dixon** according to the school records was born on 25 October 1896 and would only have been 17 on the outbreak of the war. His parents were William, a gardener and Emily Dixon. His brother **Clifford** who was a year older, also served but no records have been found for either of them. Lawrence died in 1951 and is buried in the High Street Cemetery.

**Harry Dixon** would seem likely to be Henry Dixon aged 30 in the 1911 Census, shown as living in Robin Hood Road with his wife Mabel and son Henry. Yet again no military records have been found.

Of the remaining Dixons on the Roll no clear records could be found for either of the two **Fredericks** listed or for **Arthur**. There are two Arthurs in the 1911 Census, Arthur aged 38 of Park Road and Arthur aged 33 of New Road.

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**George Keeble** served in the Merchant Navy and according to his Medal Card was born in Reigate, Surrey in 1890. This is confirmed by the 1901 Census which shows him living with his family in Reigate aged 11. He and his wife Anne, (nee Pigerham), who were married in 1910, were foster parents to Charles Jackson, one of our World War II casualties (see story page 204 in "For the Duration").

He was presumably serving before 1914 as he does not appear in the 1911 Census. Anne and her baby daughter Gwendoline are shown as living at Loppingdales Farm with her parents John and Hannah Pigerham.

Anne died aged 70 in 1955 and George in 1965 aged 83, he is listed as a Retired Railway Plate Layer. They are both buried in the High Street Cemetery.

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**Arthur, George and Walter Morton** would appear to be brothers who all enlisted but unfortunately no military records have been found so far.

They are the sons of John (a Farm Labourer) and Martha Morton of Tye Green and are listed on the 1911 Census, together with a younger brother Percy aged 9 and a sister Rose aged 7.

**Walter**, 19, was the eldest and was a "Horsekeeper on Farm". He is on the Elsenham School Roll which shows his date of birth as 19 April 1891, his admission date as 20 April 1896 and a leaving date of 13 May 1904. **George**, 14, ("Labourer on Farm" was born on 10 February 1897, admission date 18 September 1900 and leaving date of 23 March 1910. **Arthur**, the youngest at 11 years old, was born on 4 April 1899, admission date 30 June 1902 and leaving date 4 April 1912.

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