

WALTER JOHN WILKINS TURNER

Royal Field Artillery

Have you ever watched Star Trek? Captain Kirk has beamed down to the planet surface. Mr Spock has assumed temporary command and his ensign reports no detectable life forms whilst scanning the surface. "I suggest" says Spock "that you scan each section of the surface to determine where the captain cannot be, and thereby determine where he must be".

If you have ever researched soldiers of the First World War it has a passing resemblance to the search for Captain Kirk. If you were kind enough to buy a copy of *For the Duration: Elsenham in Conflict* and even more kind by reading it, you will know that Walter Turner was the only First World War soldier who escaped full identification by the editors prior to publication in August 2014. The editors have now put that right, and Walter can be remembered as he should be, in the knowledge of how and where he fell, along with the other 24 who died. This is the story of how he was found, and ultimately how he died.

So why is Walter so difficult to identify? Well the answer is Adolf Hitler. When men went to join up at the recruiting office they completed a form, an attestation form, to swear allegiance to the Crown. That system was in place long before and during the Great War for both volunteers and conscripts. Each mans progress through his military career was charted and a record placed with his personal folder which contained, for

example, his medical examination and subsequent medical history, posting records, embarkation details, service history and various letters. It also, importantly, confirmed his number and unit, and almost without fail details of family and next of kin. It is a vital and rich source of information for the researcher. After the Great War, the millions of records were later pruned and eventually warehoused in London. Enter Adolf, or more accurately the Luftwaffe. During the Blitz the warehouse was set on fire and 60% of the records burned. Of the remaining 40% many were lost in part, scorched or water damaged.

It will not have escaped you: Walter's record was one of those lost in the bombing. Well that's not a problem is it? The Commonwealth War Graves Commission ("CWGC") has a record of all the men killed, so they can tell us about Walter. True to a certain extent. The CWGC records were made up from many sources but the record is only as good as the information supplied. Have you ever noticed that on many memorials to the Great War dead there is surname and a first name only? When standing before the recruiting officer the men often gave the first name by which they were known. It could have been any of their first names if they had more than one, and of course, many did. In addition their full name was often not recorded by the recruiting officer. It means that the name recorded on the attestation form and ultimately at the CWGC is not necessarily quite the same version as given to the soldier by his parents. In one example that the editors came across, one Albert Dewsbury when standing in front of the recruiting officer gave his first name as Bert. He was dutifully recorded as B Dewsbury. Unhelpful when trying to find his records 100 years later!

So if Walter gave his name as John Turner when he joined up, searching the CWGC database for Walter Turner is not going to find him. All that is known from the outset is that somebody called Walter Turner died in 1917. That is what the plaque in St Mary's Church Elsenham confirms. It is a remarkable record (as stated in the book) because it gives a year of death



Walter with wife Gertrude and son Reginald.

for each man. It has been proved accurate in all other cases even though it was erected as late as 1937. So let us at least start there and conclude that Walter died in 1917. All other years of death, at least for now, can be excluded. The search for Walter is on.

Confirmation is now needed of the man's correct name and evidence that he is the correct Walter associated in some way with Elsenham. The next step is to look at the Census records. There is no point repeating what is already printed in For the Duration: suffice to say Walter John W. Turner (as he was then known to the editors) was connected locally with his family to Elsenham.

At least there is a name and year of birth (1886); and therefore approximate age at death, within a year. Back to the CWGC. He is there somewhere! When men died, the family had to complete a statutory declaration which assisted in the presentation of medals. This recorded all the details needed by researchers: mother, father, siblings, wife and address. This information was recorded at the CWGC with his record of death. Unfortunately not everybody did it: and after the CWGC record had been completed where did all the bits of paper go? – Well of course, with the man's file in a warehouse! It will again not have escaped you that this information is missing for our Walter.

What all this adds up to is that whilst the CWGC has diligently recorded all the Turners who were killed in 1917 in the Great War with their service numbers and units, without connecting one of those Turners to Walter John W. Turner of Elsenham we cannot identify which casualty he is: and therefore cannot say anything about how he fell. The link really is the service record but of course it is missing. Add to this, that the CWGC record sometimes has the family information and sometimes doesn't, sometimes has an age and sometimes doesn't, sometimes has an incorrect name, and sometimes just has an initial for a casualty with the surname. It all starts to look problematic: too problematic for resolution prior to the publication of the book.

So thus far, not only was Walter's record lost in the Blitz but also there is nothing at the CWGC to connect our Walter to the correct Walter on the CWGC database. Enter Spock.

There are various search parameters that can be used on the CWGC database. If you use:

Surname: Turner
Forename: Walter
Date of Death (starting): 1/12/16
Date of Death (ending): 1/2/18

There are 113 records which match the search criteria. Well it's as good a place to start as any! The record as revealed includes many men with a different second name: Walter Joseph, Walter Oliver etc. They are off the list. There are for some reason a number of Williams listed, and some men with initials only; W.E, W.S, W.C etc. They are off the list. The first cull leaves 19 possibles, as the others cannot be Walter John or W.J.

The next cull takes out those whose ages are recorded, and are no where near. The final cull employs the use of other databases: Soldiers Died in the Great War and the Canadian National Archive. Two possibles served with the Canadians but they were both shown to be William. Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914-1919 was published in 1921 by H.M. Stationery Office which in essence was a detailed list of all officer and other rank casualties in the Great War. The entries provided such information as place of enlistment, residence, decorations, type of casualty, date and place of death and theatre of war. It often gives slightly different information to the CWGC but by using this as a cross reference the final cull takes the possibles down to 3. All of the others simply cannot be him. From the CWGC database these are:

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Regiment / Service	Memorial / Grave
Turner Walter	Private	105410	9/10/17	-	Machine gun Corps (infantry)	Tyne Cot
Turner Walter John	Rifleman	303027	2/12/17	31	London Regiment (London Rifle Brigade)	Cambrai
Turner W.J.	Gunner	179514	31/7/17	-	Royal Field Artillery	New Irish Farm Cemetery

If our start point is anything like correct he has to be one of these three records. The machine gunner is first. The MGC did not exist until October 1915 and was disbanded as a cost saving measure in 1922. Records have been largely destroyed and the only information available for Walter is at the CWGC and in Soldiers Died. When the MGC was formed men were taken from existing units, given another number, trained then posted. 105410 Turner of the MGC was formerly 12703 Turner of a reserve cavalry unit: the Northumberland Yeomanry. It doesn't sound like our Walter, however he enlisted in Marylebone which is a good distance from Northumberland! He cannot immediately be discounted yet, however his birth place is recorded as Chantilly France. W.J. W's birth was registered in Bishop's Stortford in June 1886. 105410 Turner is off the list.

Next Rifleman 303027 Walter John Turner. Rifleman is the equivalent of a private. Here there is memorial information at the CWGC

"Age 31. Son of John and Sarah Ann Turner of "Highgate" Edith Road Ramsgate; husband of Jessie Ann Turner of 104 Mandeville Road Enfield Wash, Middlesex"

This is possible. Our Walter would have been 31 at death (birth date sometime in second quarter of 1886). Our Walter's father is John but his mother Mary Ann: a simple mistake with "Sarah's" name? Always possible. The address is more remote but not impossible. Many people moved considerable distances in the war. The wife's name is a problem: our Walter married Gertrude Alice Lawson on 1st August 1914. Well, of course, by the time Walter died, just over 3 years later Gertrude might have died and he could have remarried. Weddings happen quickly in time of war. A good theory, but Gertrude Alice Turner died on 7th January 1973 and her death certificate declares her to be the widow of Walter John Wilkins Turner. Her address at death was Thornwood, Epping. 303027 Walter John Turner is off the list.

Using Spock's logic it can only be gunner 179514 Turner of the Royal Field Artillery. If it is, positive evidence is really needed to link him to our Walter, as opposed to the negative evidence in Spock's conclusion. It might be good enough for Jim Kirk, but not for our Walter!

In the 113 names turned up in the initial CWGC search only 3 men are listed with 3 forenames. Whilst the records are questionable if they are anything like correct it represents 1.13%. It illustrates a simple point: in the record keeping the use of 3 forenames is relatively rare. The majority seemingly only had two.

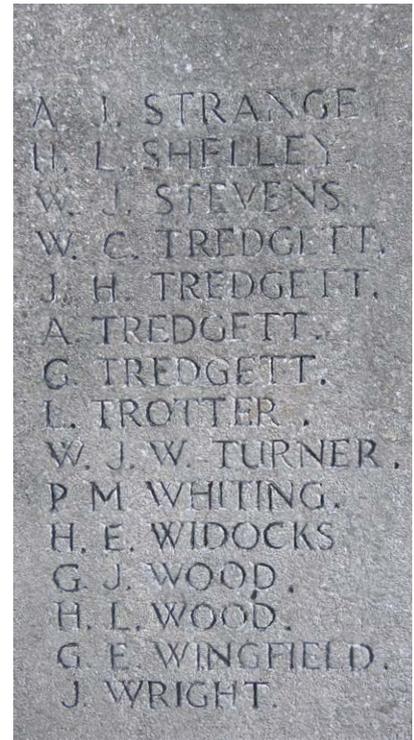
The CWGC information refers to him only as WJ Turner. Soldiers Died confirms his name as Walter John Turner. His residence and place of enlistment are recorded as Epping: that is not too far away; and wait a minute, Gertrude who had kept faith with Walter's name for 55 years after his death lived in Thornwood Epping when she died. Quite a coincidence. The evidence was now beginning to mount and then, by accident, the fat lady sang loud and clear. The Epping War Memorial has a website cared for by John Duffell of the local British Legion. It records, in effect, a summary of the information at the CWGC and in Soldiers Died. He was approached and confirmed there was no more local information available. He had drawn a complete blank and had found nothing in the local press of the time, the West Essex Gazette, such as an obituary. John submitted information to the Hell Fire Corner website recording a great deal of information about the Epping War Memorial. He included a photograph of the Roll of Honour and as soon as the author looked at it, quite by accident, that did it.

THE ROLL OF HONOUR.		
C. L. Awbrey, M.C.	W. Gosling	W. S. Newman
V. E. Adams	L. A. Green	F. H. Oakley
Geo. Austin	H. T. Green	E. J. Patten
Herbert Allen	S. P. Gardener	W. J. Pert
F. W. Binder	H. Golliford	L. J. Pomphrett
Jack Barnes	P. J. Goddey	W. Porter
H. W. Barker	S. E. Harris	S. H. Pretlove
G. Crabb	A. C. Hall	H. C. Plumb
W. R. Crabb	C. Holland	C. P. Plumb
E. Cracknell	E. F. Holland	D. C. Poulton
G. W. R. Church	G. E. Hancock	A. C. Poulton
Walter Chater	D. F. Hasler	A. M. Rees
Frank Cox	A. S. Hammond	W. Rogers
P. J. Chew	H. H. Hills	E. J. Rowland
J. T. Coote	A. J. Howe	C. Simmons
J. A. Clark	A. Hummerston	E. M. Saunders
E. Cryer	H. L. Hummerston	W. J. Strange
H. J. Day	H. G. Jenkins	A. J. Strange
Harry Day	G. H. Jervis	H. L. Shelley
J. N. Davis	A. Juniper	W. J. Stevens
E. Davis	E. Juniper	W. C. Tredgett
G. Doe	Guy Kinnell	J. H. Tredgett
W. Elliott	P. S. Kinnell	A. Tredgett
W. H. Fenner	A. J. Kent	G. Tredgett
R. Fenner	A. F. Ladbam	L. Trotter
H. Fleming	G. W. W. Latter	W. J. W. Turner
B. Fish	E. Law	P. M. Whiting
E. Fowler	H. Lewsey	H. E. Widoeks
J. J. Frost	E. A. Love	G. J. Wood
A. C. Frost	A. J. Love	H. L. Wood
J. Gould	H. Mead	G. E. Wingfield
A. E. Gould	H. M. Miller	J. Wright

Roll of honour as published locally.



Epping war memorial.



Close-up showing Walter's name.



Roll of Honour, St. John's Church.

The only Turner on it is named as W.J.W. Turner. That information is not recorded in John's website. The editors prior to publication looked at that website, but just didn't go quite far enough. The Roll of Honour and subsequently the memorial followed a public appeal for information and names about those who should be included. It used information gathered locally. The inescapable conclusion is that the person or persons who supplied the information locally obviously knew the third name. It was not in official records. Putting together the exclusionary and inclusionary evidence gunner 179514 Walter John Turner on the Epping War Memorial was very likely to be Walter John Wilkins Turner on the Elsenham War Memorial.

The author visited Epping. The roll of honour now in St. John's Church and the memorial itself both record Walter with his full initials.

The evidence thus far would probably have been enough to convince most researchers, however the editors decided to look slightly further.

Walter and Gertrude had a son, Reginald born on 17th November 1914 at Stansted. The editors confess a small error. For the Duration suggests Reginald married Ivy Carter in December 1940.

Reginald was married in 1940, but to Rhoda Russell, on 24th March in a ceremony solemnised at the Methodist Church in Epping. On nothing more than a hunch, a search of the births, marriages and deaths register revealed Reginald's death. His death was registered in June 2003 and as happens on so many death certificates it was registered by Reginald's son, Peter John Russell Turner. Of course, a death certificate has the address of the informant. In this case Black Notley Braintree.

Could it really be that after looking for so long, Walter's grandson was 20 minutes away down the A120? No phone number, so nothing for it but to climb into the car. Saturday morning 21st November 2015 saw the first frost of the winter; a cold clear blue sunny day – what a day to end the search. A knock on a door in Black Notley....utter deflation. Peter left there 10 years earlier for somewhere in Suffolk but the lady of the house Claire Osborne thought she had details somewhere and promised a phone call. The call in fact came later that day. Peter was last known in Long Melford near Sudbury. The internet is sometimes a very powerful place. Contact with the local British Legion with whom Peter is associated resulted in a phone number and a nervous phone call on the evening of Thursday 26th November 2015.

And that, as they say, was that. A long conversation later, about Gertrude, Peter's great grandfather Wilkins Turner, his own father's wartime service and his grandfather's medals still in his possession and the search to identify Walter Turner was truly over. There is now no doubt at all. Walter John Wilkins Turner born 4th April 1886 at Pledgdon Green Henham is gunner 179514 Walter John Turner Royal Field Artillery who died on 31st July 1917. His medals in his grandson's possession record the number 179514. There could be no better confirmation.

So at long last having identified Walter the editors set about telling his story in greater detail. Peter's father, Reginald, wrote an account of his own life. The editors can do no better than reproduce an extract from that account. The writing is atmospheric and will be of particular interest to the people of Elsenham.

"A start must be made somewhere or with someone, so let it be grandfather, John Turner, a large kindly man with a Santa Claus beard and to me I suppose the perfect image of a grandfather. Born in the small village of Broxted near Thaxted on the northern border of Essex in the year 1844 one of a large family he received no education and was never able to read or write. He married Mary Wilkins, the daughter of a game keeper from Stansted way, and settled in Elsenham. They had one son and four daughters. Rose, the eldest spent most of her life in domestic service except during the Great War 1914-1918, she worked for the Great Eastern Railway at Cambridge Station. Never married until late in her life, looking after her parents in their latter years, enjoying only a brief spell of happiness. Rose and her husband settled down in a small cottage at Henham, but within a very short time her husband died. One of the sad stories of life.

My grandparents lived in a small wooden bungalow in their old age, still in Elsenham, and backing onto the railway line. During my visits I spent countless hours at the bottom of the garden watching the passing trains.

At the top of the road, I remember there was a well, topped by a large ornate copper dome shaped roof. Drinking water had always been a problem in that area so Walter Gilbey, the local squire, had had the well sunk and the building above it erected.

The grand folk were staunch in their religious beliefs and regularly attended a small Quaker meeting home in Elsenham.

The other daughters Winnie, Bess and Lily, married in early life. Winnie settled in Quendon and had two sons and two daughters. Bess just a few doors away from Winnie one son and one daughter being widowed rather early in life. Aunt Lily married an Edward Thake of Thornwood, and settled nearby in Woodside, she had one son.

Walter, my father, and the only son worked for a few years in some greenhouses in Elsenham after leaving school. Then for health reasons he was advised by his doctor to find a job working more in the open. With no work then available locally he had to go further afield to Gloucestershire, where he obtained a job as gardener on a big estate. Here he met my mother, Gertrude Lawson, in service at the house on the estate, a girl from that district, Lower Slaughter, and a courtship started. During 1911 my father returned to Elsenham. Work had started there on building a new railway line from Elsenham to Thaxted, and he had managed to get work on this project. Mother followed and herself found local employment in domestic service. They married in 1914, living for a time with my grandparents. I was born in their house. In the following two years from the first home of their own at Stansted they moved to Loughton, and it was here father had to register for the armed forces. Living in a house that went with his work meant they had to get out, they found a flat at Bell Common, Epping.

Father received his "calling up papers" and was drafted into the Royal Field Artillery as a gunner. After a short training period he was sent to France and was killed on 31st July 1917 in the first day of the battle of Ypres. He is now buried in a military cemetery in Belgium".

The reference to the call up papers by Reginald would seem to suggest that Walter was not a volunteer. On balance that is probably correct. Walter's personal record is missing, but the records of some of the men with whom he undoubtedly trained have survived. Please refer to document 1 which is an analysis of the surviving records for numbers 179499 to 179529. Of these 30 numbers, 14 records survived. It is possible to draw some general conclusions.

Extracted from each record is the attestation date, medical examination date (if available), enlistment date and date of posting to France (or other) which is generally the date of leaving England. The record is a testament to the calling up referred to by Reginald under the Military Services Act which came into force in Spring 1916. Before that the Derby Scheme was the last vestige of the volunteer army. It allowed men to volunteer for the part of the service that they wished to join but then to remain at home until called upon. When conscription was introduced men were sent where necessary and, in reality, many of the Derby scheme volunteers did not join the units of their choice. The analysis shows that some attestations were taken before the act came into force. It is not possible to entirely rule out Walter as a volunteer, but it seems unlikely. It seems clear that some of the medical examinations were done before attestation, and some after (which is entirely logical) but perhaps importantly the vast majority of the enlistment took place in the first few days of November 1916. It is therefore very likely that having undertaken his medical examination earlier in the year Walter received his "calling up papers" and went in early November to Kingston on Thames following which he underwent a period of training in the Royal Field Artillery.

The majority of postings (none of which were to Walter's eventual unit) came in the period Spring/early Summer 1917 and therefore it is logical to assume that Walter was posted in the same period. When training was complete returns were made to the army who then posted as necessary. It was estimated that in the Royal Field Artillery losses would amount to 3% per month which required a monthly training rate of 530 soldiers as replacements. After training was complete 10 days embarkation leave was granted before the soldier was required to report to his point of embarkation. It is very likely that Walter was granted the same embarkation leave before his posting and therefore that the picture we have of Walter in uniform with his family was taken in that same period in 1917.

And so to France. Walter wrote home on occasion (his letters are few and undated). All the letters were headed from B Battery 71st Brigade Royal Field Artillery. There is no evidence that in his time after initial posting he served with any other unit. Depending on his arrival date Walter may have seen his first action at Arras in April 1917 but thereafter 71st Brigade as part of 15th (Scottish) Division was earmarked for the forthcoming assault that was officially the third battle of Ypres – better known as Passchendaele: a battle that in its first day would not only claim the life of Walter but also another son of Elsenham John Lankester serving with 44th Division at Pilckem. When the whistle signalled the advance they probably didn't know it, but they were no more than a few miles apart.

71st Brigade was formed as part of the raising of the second new (Kitchener) army or K2. It moved to France with 15th (Scottish) Division in July 1915 long before Walter joined its ranks. The brigade remained with 15th Scottish throughout the war. Its composition went through several transformations however by December 1916 the 71st consisted of four 6 gun batteries designated A, B, C and D. Whilst by no means hard and fast, D battery was a Howitzer battery. The others were 18 pounder field guns, the staple diet of the artillery throughout the war, and similar to those field guns that you see fired on ceremonial occasions in Hyde Park.

When Walter joined B Battery it is beyond doubt that this was a field gun battery. The divisional history in fact confirms that as of December 1916 A, B and C were field gun batteries and D a Howitzer battery. Each gun was supported by a total crew of 10 however in action the gun was operated by 6 often commanded by an NCO. It is well demonstrated in this posed picture.



Operating field gun. The limber in the background was often sited close to the gun to provide additional cover from small arms fire. The limber was drawn by 6 horses, with a driver on one side of each pair.

The photograph below was taken at Pilckem on 2nd August 1917 in the first phase of Passchendaele after the weather turned. Weather that produced not just mud. The landscape oozed with the putrefaction of unburied flesh and bubbled with the release of poisoned gas from the incessant gas shells fired by both sides. The slime itself often became the enemy: men begging to be shot as they failed to escape its clutches are not myths, nor is the “disappearance” of soldiers from the column as they struggled, weighed by equipment, into the front line through a pitch black night time relief over miles of duck boards wide enough only for one man at a time to pick his way into the filth of a ragged line of water logged craters that the map described as the front line. For those who read this, and perhaps felt that curious sense of deep loss and continuing grief when witnessing the centenary remembrance of the Somme, know that these words cannot describe the utter desolation that was Passchendaele: a battle far worse and almost unimaginable after the losses and lessons of 1916. Kiggell, Haig’s chief of staff, on later seeing that endless desolation is reported to have cried and said “good God, did we really send men to fight in that?”



The grim reality of field gunnery at Passchendaele soon became apparent with the well documented change in the weather which forever associates the battle with the pervasive presence of mud.



Horses drawing guns with drivers on the way to the front.

Note the proliferation of trees which suggests the photograph is taken well behind the lines.

Such was Passchendaele after Walter's death but not before. Third Ypres was preceded by the battle of Messines, which is to the south of the town. The line from North of Ypres represented something of a reversed S shape running round Ypres and then south. Messines was designed to straighten it out and is perhaps best remembered today by the mighty mine explosions which signalled the start of the battle on 7th June. It was, relatively speaking, a success and set the scene for what was to commence on 31st July. The focus of third Ypres to the North East, was set to push the enemy from those infamous ridges which surrounded the town: on top of the ridge the small village of Passchendaele would eventually name the battle.

Strains of the Somme echoed not in a week long preliminary bombardment but one of 10 days involving 3,000 guns. The object to gain the Geluvelde – Passchendaele Plateau was a step towards breaking out to the North Sea beyond. The main role fell to General Gough's 5th army, part of which, 15th (Scottish) Division contained Walter, his mates in the gun crew, a young lieutenant called Osmer Stewart and an 18 pounder field gun in B Battery.

The main fighting unit of the army was the division. It consisted then of 3 brigades; each brigade had 4 battalions. Each of them had approximately 800 fighting men sub-divided into companies, platoons and sections. Please now refer to document 2. This map taken from the divisional history shows the disposition of the division on 31st July. It does not reveal the positioning of the artillery nor has it been possible to find much that accurately assists, which is not to say it doesn't exist somewhere!

The motto of the artillery "Ubique", means "everywhere". The artillery would have been positioned (generally) behind and in support of the infantry. Different batteries were assigned different tasks which could and would vary with the ebb and flow of battle. The artillery really were everywhere. The jigsaw of available records in fact creates more questions than answers but in essence Walter's story is bound up in 4 questions: Where did he start? What did he do? Where did he meet his death? And how did that happen?

The editors regret that in order to try to understand what happened it is necessary to firmly don an anorak and have an understanding of First World War map references. Please try to bear with it; it is also important in understanding where Walter was (or possibly was not!) originally buried and where he is (or possibly is not!) now buried. It is ultimately a fascinating story in itself.

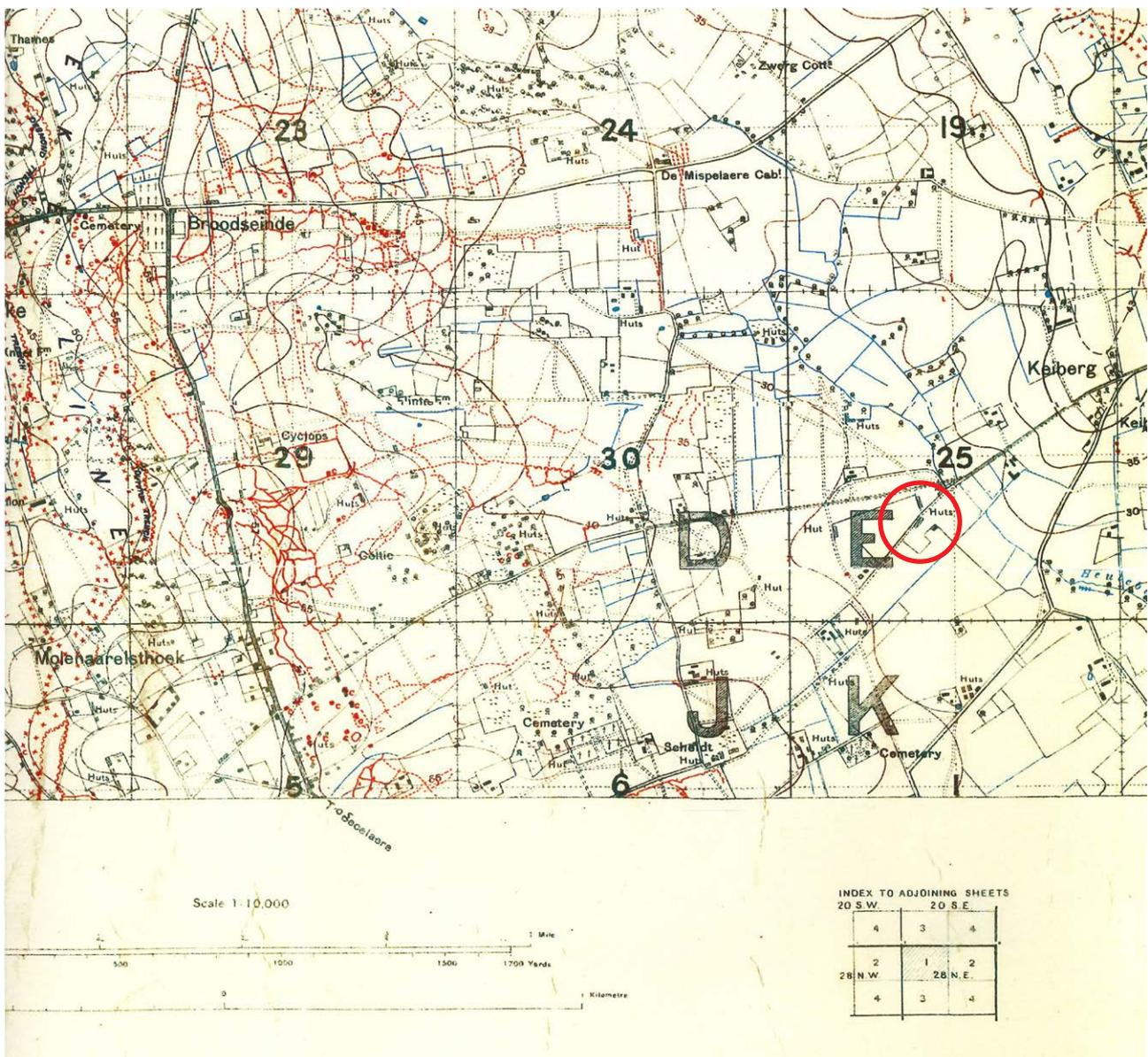
In relation to the Belgian fighting front, use was made of Belgian produced maps rescued from Antwerp before it fell in October 1914. Trench map sheet numbers and references are based on the Belgian 1:40,000 sheet lines numbered from 1 to 72. The area around Ypres is sheet 28.

Each of the 1:40,000 sheets was divided into rectangles lettered A to X. Each rectangle was then sub-divided into squares some numbered 1 to 30 and some 1 to 36.

The grid reference used on the 1:40,000 series was retained on the 1:20,000 series and the 1:10,000 series so a single map reference was valid for all of them. The latter two scale maps showed greater detail: the 1:20,000 series were favoured by the artillery and the 1:10,000 by the infantry. Each 1:40,000 sheet was divided into four 1:20,000 sheets with NW, NE, SW and SE suffixes to the main sheet number e.g. 28 NW. Each 1:20,000 sheet was divided into four 1:10,000 sheets with the numbers 1 to 4 as suffixes to the 1:20,000 sheet number e.g. 28 NW 1.

The area covered on a 1:10,000 map is divided into 1,000 yard and 500 yard squares. These squares correspond at the 1,000 yard level with the numbered squares referred to in the 1:40,000 series. Each 1,000 yard square is sub-divided into four 500 yard squares designated a, b, c or d. To define a point within a 500 yard square it is divided into tenths along the West – East axis and similarly on the South – North axis, so map references (as they do today) require an easting and a northing. This will therefore put a location within a 50 yard square which is generally accurate enough but this can be further divided into tenths to put a reference within a 5 yard square.

Confused? Probably best to look at an example.



Here is a map extract from the 1:10,000 series. The small diagram in the margin shows (in the shaded area) that it is Sheet 28 NE 1

To pin point a location it is not really necessary to use the suffixes at all since as is noted above a single map reference is valid for the whole map series. The suffixes therefore help to the extent that they may refer to the scale of the map being considered.

You can clearly see, in the example above, the designation of the letters to identify the rectangle, the numbers to show the sub-divided squares, the dotted lines to quarter the squares (a, b, c, d reading top left to bottom right) and the tenth markings on the edges of the squares. If now there is a need to pinpoint some huts marked on the map the map reference is

S28 (NE 1) E.25. c. 8.6 (Circled in red).

It is far more common to see this written S28 E.25.c.8.6.

The point is, that if you use this map reference on the 1:40,000, 1:20,000 or 1:10,000 series it takes you to exactly the same place. Got it? Well now you have it you possess the ability to compare certain map references and relate that to the ground, and of course ultimately to present day positions.

Why is this important? Answer: Ubique. If you now go back to the 15th Division operations map and rotate it so that the faint squares run North South you will immediately notice the numbers 3, 4, 5 etc running through the battlefield area. This is in fact S28 I.3; S28 I.4; S28 I.5 etc.

Walter's story on the 31st is exceptionally difficult to piece together. There is no map, plan or set of orders yet found that gives the position of B Battery on the morning of the 31st. The map of operations gives a location for headquarters of the two leading brigades, the 46th and the 44th. In the 46th HQ war diary there is a warning order dated 10/7/17 which is one of the few references yet found. It is worth setting it out in full:

11. ARTILLERY

(i) Field Artilleries supporting the attack of the Division will consist of :--

(a) Right Sub-Group (H.Q. I.7.c.9.0.)
70th Bde R.F.A.
71st Bde R.F.A.
The right Sub-Group will cover the front of the 44th Inf.Bde.

(b) Left Sub-Group (H.Q. I.8.d.1.9.)
177th Bde R.F.A.
180th Bde R.F.A.
The Left Sub-Group will cover the front of the 46th Inf.Bde.

(c) Reserve Sub-Group.
One Army Bde. R.F.A. (H.Q. I.9.c.4.8.)
The Reserve Sub-group will assist in the barrages .

(d) Special Sub-Group.
150th Army Bde R.F.A. (H.Q. I.9.a.0.7.)
The Special Sub-Group will be used for smoke barrages, etc.

After the capture of the Black Line, 5 Brigades R.F.A. will move forward to the line CAMBRIDGE Road to cover the advance on the Green Line.

(ii) Heavy Artillery will support the Division under Corps orders.

(iii) (a) The opening bombardment will last seven days.

(b) The creeping barrage will start on the enemy's front line and will lift off the enemy's front line at zero plus 8 minutes and will move forward at the rate of 100 yards in 4 minutes . A map showing initial position of Barrage has already been issued to units. It will remain stationary 300 yards beyond the Blue and Black Lines until the hours fixed for the advance from that line, therefore the leading waves of attacking Battalions must time their advance from the Blue Line so as to be within 100 yards of the barrage when it moves on.

(c) There will be a protective barrage for 1 hour in front of the Green Line.

Warning order

On the basis that headquarters might just be somewhere close to the gun and using the operations map and new found knowledge of map references Walter's brigade may have been positioned in the area of the road about half way between Potizje and the Menin Gate and between the 6th Cameron Highlanders and the 13th Royal Scots of 45 Brigade. It seems slightly odd that they are designated the right sub-group to cover the frontage of 44th Brigade, when they seem to be on the left behind 46th Brigade. No doubt it makes perfect sense to an artilleryman!

The coloured lines referred to – blue, black and green – are intended to be lines reached by the infantry at various phases of the advance. What is clear in this order is the requirement to advance to Cambridge Road which on the operations map is the road running roughly North South behind Cambridge Trench. 46th Brigade headquarters was at the Northern end of Cambridge Road at a site known as Mill Cottages – a former windmill. The artillery therefore must have started to the west of Cambridge Road. Whether that warning order was revised prior to the 31st we do not know – orders were constantly changed, but the 71sts war diary gives a good clue.

To give you an idea of the scale of the research problem, this warning order was found in the 46th Brigade war diary. That diary is in two parts. The order was in a part that consists of 165 pages of largely closely typed script. There is no index and the various documents are not in date order (or any other order for that matter). The diary is available on line from the National Archive but has to be purchased before you can spend many happy hours going through it in the hope of finding something. There is no search engine that can pick out certain words and take you to the correct location in the document. There is nothing in the catalogue at the National Archive to tell you what is in the diary at all. This research is educated guess work – foot slogging seems an appropriate phrase!

The 71st Brigade war diary for July, August and September is missing from the copy at the National Archive. Fortunately, there was more than one copy (now there's army thinking for you!) and an original has been obtained from Firepower the Royal Artillery Museum in London. It does not record Walter's arrival. The July entries give approximate locations on a daily basis. What comes from the diary is a sense of preparation whilst at the same time continuing to defend Ypres and fire when necessary on the enemy at various locations. Interestingly, the diary in early July records enemy fire on Hussar Farm, Dragoon Farm, White Chateau and L'Ecole (school) – all locations to the East of Ypres within the 15th Division battle area. On the 13th the diary records:

War diary:

"One section each A/71 + B/71 + C/71 + D/71 moved to battle positions E of Ypres. Another section of A/71 and D/71 moved up into battle positions".

By 21st July

"Remaining sections of B/71 and C/71 come up to battle position".

And on the 22nd

"B/71 + C/71 commenced to register.....".

Registration was, of course, finding targets and making sure the gun would hit them. On 24th July the 12th Highland Light Infantry carried out a trench raid to test enemy strength and gain information of what and who may be in the way of the assaulting troops. The raid was particularly successful and reported thus in the 71st war diary.

War diary:

"Our artillery cooperated with the rest of the group in support of a most successful raid..... we also carried out bombardments according to programme. Practice barrage at 5 pm. Hostile artillery rather below normal. Savile Road and the area E of it containing A/71 B/71 and C/71 rather severely shelled during the raid and afterwards from the N....".

Savile Road is marked on the operations map. On 26th July the war diary reported

"...EA (enemy aircraft) active about 9 pm flying low over our lines and 18 PDR positions in I 3. One dropped white and green lights over a battery in I 2 d and shortly afterwards this battery was shelled with HE (high explosive) air bursts. No action taken by our AA (anti-aircraft).

The days of preliminary bombardment and enemy bombardment continued unabated. X day the 29th, Y day the 30th and then to Z day the 31st. Here then is the full diary entry for that day

"Z day. The attack commenced at 3.50 am. Our barrage was excellent and at first all went very well and the first objective (the blue line) a line running just (unclear) of Wildes Wood & Bill Cottage was taken at +46 minutes. The next (black) line also was taken in scheduled time +1-55 minutes. This was just East of Frazenberg. After some hours rest – a protective barrage. The 45th IB continued the attack – the 44th and 46th who had commenced it, coming back with support lines. At first all went well and our infantry passed the Hane-beek valley not far from the third (green) objective. Owing however to lack of support by the 8th division on the right they were compelled to fall back somewhat to a line running from D 19 central Borry Farm to D 25 d 80 15. This line they held all night. A company of Gordons spent the night in the green line some 500 yards further E but returned in the morning. During the morning of Z day B/71 moved according to timetable to a position near Bavaria House in the old German lines. This however was found untenable consequently the battery returned shortly Lieutenant O.N. Stewart was killed whilst in charge of a lone gun which moved forward independently very early. This battery suffered about 30 casualties".

It would seem from an analysis of the 46th headquarters war diary and the 71st war diary that the warning order was probably never changed. The artillery were beginning to get into battle positions by the 13th. There are regular reports thereafter placing the artillery generally in the area I.3.c (close to headquarters) and I.2.d either side of Savile Road. They are not far from the road which runs from the Menin Gate, through Potizje, past Mill Cottages, Bavaria House and eventually to Frazenberg.

And what of Walter? Note the reference to Lieutenant O.N. Stewart and his lone gun. On 19th August 1917 2nd Lieutenant Douglas Archer wrote a letter to Gertrude Turner from his home in Edinburgh. What follows is the full text. He was obviously convalescing at the time.

"Dear Mrs Turner

The strenuous fighting after the 31st July and the fact that I had to go into hospital shortly afterwards has somewhat delayed the writing of this letter, and even now I am writing in bed but cannot delay any longer in sending you these few lines of sympathy in the dreadful loss you have sustained in the death of your husband.

I was not his section officer but I had learned to respect your husband for his many good qualities, and, being married myself I have always felt a strong bond of sympathy with the men of the battery who have a wife at home.

Your husband was one of the gunners who went forward early on the morning of 31st July with second Lieutenant Stewart with a single gun. This gun went forward about 10 minutes past 5 in the morning, or one hour and 20 minutes after our infantry had gone over the top.

Unfortunately it never reached our own front line. What actually happened I have never been able to fathom, but I presume that Mr Stewart must have found difficulty in negotiating the ground in front of him and left the road either to avoid the heavy shelling or in order to find a better way to push his gun forward.

In any case the gun got into a shell hole and the men were endeavouring to get it out when a shell must have burst in their midst. The entire detachment were either killed or wounded. We lost Mr Stewart, one of the most gallant officers I have had the pleasure of meeting, and your husband also paid the full penalty.

It was quite apparent that all died instantaneously and I superintended the burying of the men and saw that your husband was properly buried. I also put up a rough cross bearing the names of men who lie there.

They are gunner Morton, driver Webb (both of B battery), gunner Kelly of the 51st Battery Australian Artillery and your husband. Herewith I give you the map spotting of the grave.

Belgium

Sheet 28 NW

I 5 a 15-70

Please accept these few lines of sympathy and I trust that the knowledge that your husband died for a great cause may somewhat allay the bitterness of your loss.

Believe me.

Yours sincerely

Douglas Archer

Second Lieutenant from 55 Falcon Road Edinburgh".

Walter's immediate commanding officer Major Atkin also wrote to Gertrude on 11th August. Here again is the full text.

"Dear Mrs Turner

It is with my deepest regret that I have to inform you of the death of your husband gunner W. Turner of the battery under my command.

He was doing a most gallant and daring piece of work when he met his death. His gun was supporting the attacking infantry when they came under heavy shell fire and he with all his gun detachment including his officer were killed or wounded.

He was a good gallant and brave soldier and during his service in this battery he did his duty well and nobly. Officers, NCOs and men mourn his loss also myself for he was greatly respected by all.

Please accept my deepest sympathy in your sad bereavement. We all feel his loss so much.

Please accept my condolence and deepest sympathy.

I remain yours sincerely

CP Atkins Major RFA

OC B/71 RFA

Lieutenant Stewart took forward a lone gun but the reason for it is far from clear. It seems very unlikely to have been needed to support the infantry, otherwise they would all have been going forward. The only other reference the author has been able to find to the gun movement is in the 15th Divisional Artillery War Diary which contains a report on the action. Here is the full extract.

MOVEMENT OF OUR GUNS.

At 8.30 am. three Artillery Brigades moved one battery each forward to previously prepared positions along CAMBRIDGE ROAD. These were followed by the remaining batteries in each Brigade at half-hour intervals.

11.0 am. Three 18-pdrs. batteries moved forward to positions just South of BAVARIA HOUSE; these batteries were blocked on POTIJZE Road and did not get into action until 4.0 pm. One of these batteries was brought back to original battle position during the night of 31st July/1st August.

Two single guns were sent forward but could not get across NO MAN'S LAND or German front system until 1.30 pm. One of these guns was knocked out. The other moved forward and took up a position at I.6.c.2.9.

1.

It is a tantalising report from which one may well conclude that one of these single guns may be Walters. It is certainly possible and would tend to support later information about the location of Walter's initial burial. It is difficult to imagine however that there was much if anything of the Frazenberg Road left for Lt. Stewart to leave as described by Archer. Lieutenant Stewart was previously awarded the Military Cross. His citation appeared in the London (17th July 1917) and Edinburgh (20th July) Gazettes just before he was killed. It reads

"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When acting as F.O.O. he went forward under heavy shell fire and sent back valuable information throughout the day. His maintenance of communications enabled the artillery to inflict considerable damage on enemy position".

This perhaps partly explains the reason for the single gun to move forward. F.O.O. means Forward Observation Officer. It is however unlikely that if observation was the plan he would have needed a field gun and a crew to go with him. Perhaps he went forward not only to observe but also to find a suitable position for the others to follow. What started as the vanguard turned sadly to a forlorn hope. Getting that gun forward must have been highly conspicuous to the enemy, an incredibly brave act to which, in itself, you who read are giving due recognition.

Walter's story is not quite over. There is reference to a road in Archer's letter. It seems likely that the road in question is that previously described from the Menin Gate to Frazenberg.



Road at St. Jean: north of Walter's position: 31/7/17

This photograph was taken on 31st July 1917 at St. Jean just to the North of Walter's position. This gun limber belonged to 36th division (it is definitely not Walter's). It shows however the road conditions in the area at the time which must have been similar to the conditions on Walter's road. By 2nd August it had been raining hard. This photograph was taken in the area on the 2nd.



Conditions by 2/8/17

Archer goes on to describe Walter's burial with other men from the battery and gives a map reference.

Belgium Sheet 28 NW I.5. a. 1.5 – 7.0

Clearly a reference to the gunners 1:20,000 series. According to the CWGC Walter is buried at New Irish Farm Cemetery which is like so many a concentration burial site. There were so many small burial sites that not all could be properly maintained so bodies were exhumed and reinterred. We know from Archer's letter that he superintended the burial of Walter together with Morton, Webb and Kelly.

Attached to Walter's burial record at the CWGC is a burial return dated 7/6/1920 in which Walter is listed. There is also a map reference for where the body was found.

S28 I.4.a. Central

The word "central" is a lazy way of identifying the exact spot. It simply means somewhere in the middle of 4a, but that is not

I.5.a. 1.5 – 7.0 – Archer's specification

In fact those locations are 600 yards or more apart. Alarm bells are now faintly sounding. Please see document 3 which is the burial return.

In the same burial return underneath Walter's name there appears an unknown Australian and what is there listed as 56133 Private Morton RE. If the CWGC records are again considered for Kelly and Morton it reveals the same burial return. Morton is actually 156133 Moreton and of course Kelly is an Australian –he can only be the unknown Australian in the burial return. What of Webb? He is said to be buried at Birr Cross Roads Cemetery – quite some distance from New Irish Farm. All four were possibly members of B Battery 71st Brigade on 31st July. Alarm bells now clanging. You may care to

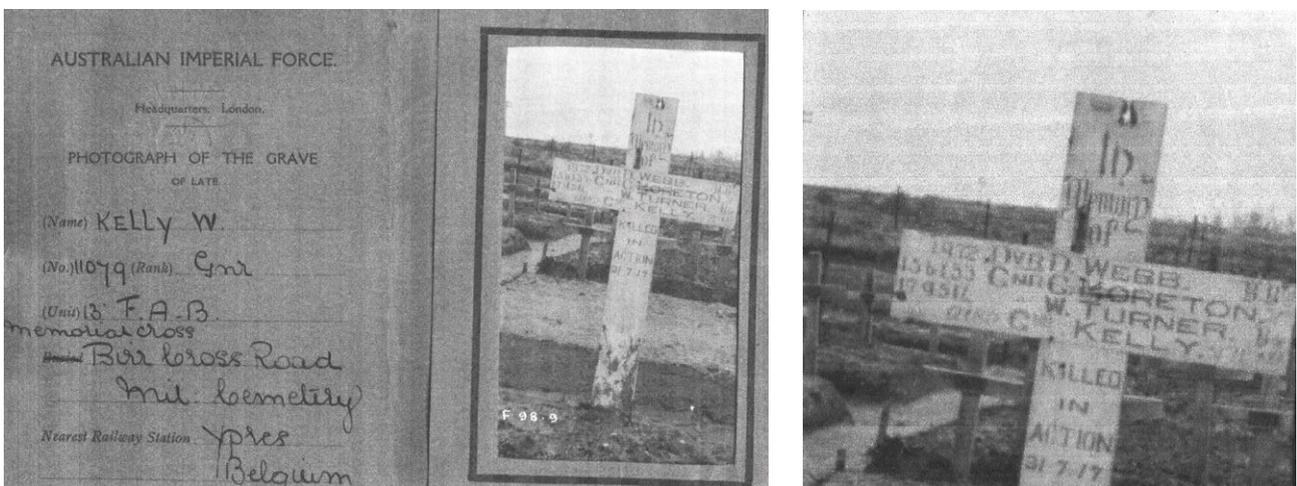
consider documents 4, 5 and 6 attached. The comprehensive report from Birr Cross Roads records all four burials and the burial return lists three of them showing “one cross four bodies” originally located at

I.5. b. 2.4

So we now have three potential initial burial sites and two final resting places with the bodies according to Archer buried together but now finally resting apart. Finally the graves registration report form for Birr Cross Roads dated 17/11/22 shows the names of Moreton, Turner and Kelly crossed through and the letters “UBS” substituted. This means unknown British soldier but for some reason Webb is still there.

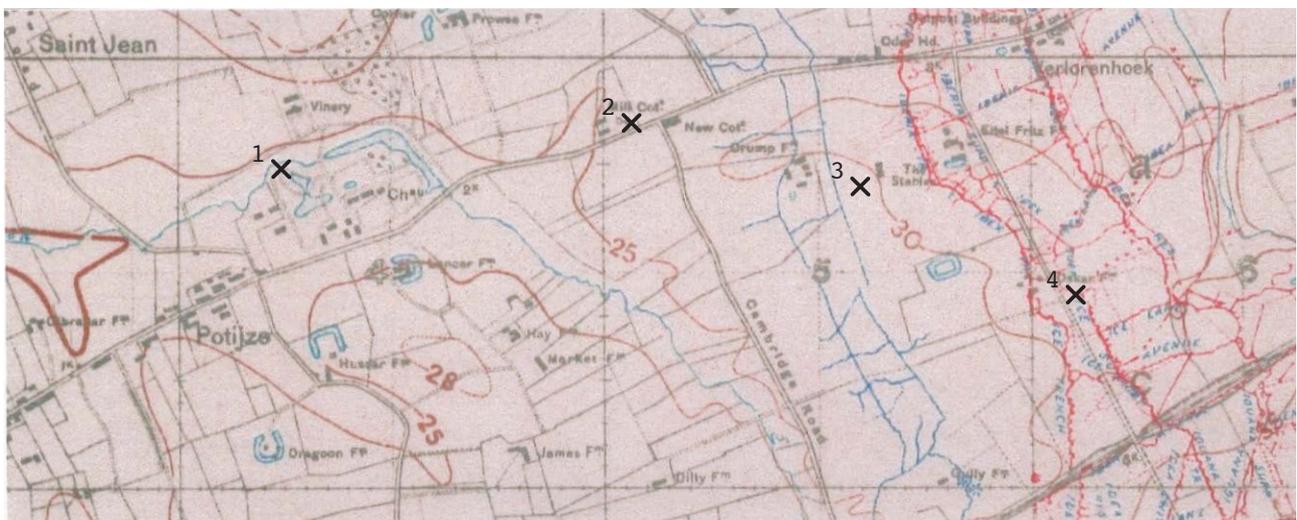
The explanation of this muddle is neither simple nor entirely satisfactory. The British records are incomplete but the Australian National Archive wasn’t bombed in WW2. The photograph below is from Gunner Kelly’s record. It is undated and said to be taken at Birr Cross Road Cemetery.

It is (in the author’s humble opinion) without doubt the “rough cross bearing the names of men who lie there” referred to in Douglas Archer’s letter and is probably taken at Birr Cross Roads.



Grave photograph from Australian records.

Now consider this map extract showing I.4 and I.5 from S28 NW 1:20,000 series.



- Key:
- 1. S28.I.4.a. central: see Document 3.
 - 2. S28.I.5.a. 1.5 - 7.0: the Archer position
 - 3. S28.I.5.b. 2.4: see Document 5
 - 4. S28.I.6.c. 2.9: Second single gun position: 15th Divisional Artillery Report

It shows the front lines, British in blue, German in red. Archer's letter says the gun did not make it to our own front line. His burial position puts it very close to Mill Cottages. The Birr Cross Roads report puts it in what was Nomansland close to the area noted as "the stables". After day one of the assault the British front line was already beyond the blue line. It is tempting to think that Archer's site is preferable to the later identification; he was an artillery man after all. At the time Archer wrote he had however been ill and he was quoting the map reference from his bed. Maybe he didn't get it quite right. Whichever site is preferred it seems that Archer buried four bodies whom he firmly believed were Turner, Moreton, Kelly and Webb. The CWGC have confirmed that the Birr Cross Roads Concentration Report is dated January 1919. The four bodies must have been exhumed and together with the cross re-established at Birr Cross Roads where the cross was later photographed. In June 1920 the bodies were discovered at 28. I. 4. a central, identified by disc in the case of Turner and Moreton which eventually led to the reclassification at Birr Cross Roads.

This must mean that, although the evidence in Archer's letter is compelling, it is wrong. He certainly buried 4 people, but their identification is far from clear. There are nagging unresolved questions. How was Webb identified as still being at Birr Cross Roads if Turner, Moreton and Kelly were never there? The CWGC conclude that he appears to have been identified solely on the information given on Archer's cross. Kelly's date of death has been changed to 1/8/17. How was that arrived at, and how was an unknown Australian found in 1920 identified as Kelly? The CWGC somewhat glibly responded that this was the responsibility of the Australian service authorities. It ignores the fact that they based much of their information on papers supplied by the (then) Imperial War Graves Commission. There are two UBS' listed at New Irish Farm beside Moreton: who you may wonder are they? 100 years on these questions will never fully be resolved without a more forensic examination and that is likely to be cost prohibitive.

One of the final questions is the scale of the loss at Walter's Gun. It is unclear from Archer's and Atkins letters as to whether all died. If the search parameters are limited to "B Battery 71st Brigade on 31/7/17" at the CWGC, the result shows the death of one officer and ten men. Whether they were all at Walter's Gun and why Kelly was tagging along are questions probably unanswerable. All of the personal records are missing for those troops apart from Stewart's officer's record, and this is inconclusive. There are other available statistics. 15th Divisional history records that between 29/7/17 and 4/8/17 71st Brigade lost one officer and 9 other ranks killed, 26 wounded and 2 missing. The same search parameters at the CWGC give one officer and thirteen other ranks killed. If the "missing" two were killed the figures are not too far out. The war diary of 71st Brigade for the whole of July shows officers killed 2, and 6 wounded. Other ranks killed 14, wounded 52 and gassed 75. The statistics are not terribly easy to interpret however for what it is worth it seems Walter's Gun probably bore the brunt of the casualties on the 31st.

The years which followed Walter's death were not easy for Gertrude or Reginald. Here is a further short extract from Reginald's ramblings.

"Mother stayed at the flat for another couple of years. Aunt Lily not then married and working at the armaments factory at Waltham Abbey was living with her. Aunt Lily married and found a small cottage at Woodside, near Epping, one in a row of four. After a short time another of the cottages became empty and mum was lucky enough to get it. We moved about 1920. The cottage was very small, one main room downstairs with just another smaller room at the back, two bedrooms upstairs. All cooking was done on a range in the main room, lighting was by paraffin lamps or candles. Water had to be brought in a bucket from a tap some distance away. The toilet was down the garden, a wood seat over a pale, which had to be emptied periodically. Still the rent was only 4 shillings and 2 pence a week, which suited mother's financial position very well. Her widow's pension for herself and me was only 30 shillings. For all that I firmly believe my childhood was far happier and more contented than the children of today enjoy. Toys were very few, but to compensate that, just across the road from our cottage was the forest, a natural playground where we could play without the slightest fear".

On 31st July 2017 the author with Peter, his children and grandchildren intend to visit Ieper (as it is now named) and doubtless New Irish Farm Cemetery will be on the itinerary. Of course Birr Cross Roads will be visited as well, and two wreaths, not one, will be laid that day. It will serve well to remind us that the reason for our visit is not to applaud brave victory or gloat over an enemy defeated but to clasp hands tightly together in friendship and to remember. If in that remembrance we include not one but several.....well isn't that after all why we are there? To remember them all, the khaki and the field grey.

Walter John Wilkins Turner (and others)
 Died 31st July 1917
 Remembered with Honour

Alan Taylor on behalf of the editors
 For the Duration: Elsenham in Conflict

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. Analysis of surviving records
2. Operations 31.7.17 to 4.8.17
3. Burial Return: New Irish Farm 7-6-1920
4. Comprehensive Report: Birr Cross Road
5. Burial Return: Birr Cross Roads: January 1919
6. Graves Registration Report form: Birr Cross Roads 17.11.22

ALL MEN CERTIFIED APPROVED 8/11/1916 BY
 R.M.LAIRD AT WOOLWICH NO.4 DEPOT R.F.A.

NUMBER	NAME	ATTESTN.	MEDICAL EXAM.	MOBILISATION/ ENLISTMENT	TO FRANCE (or other)	FROM FRANCE (or other)	RECORD
179499	ELLIS C.T.	10/12/1915	6/11/1916	6/11/1916	14/3/1917	7/2/1919	Service
		Uxbridge	Hounslow Bks				
179502	WELLS R.	30/8/1916		3/11/1916	21/3/1917	24/10/1917	"
		Kingston					
179503	STARTUP A.N.	23/11/1915	25/8/1916	3/11/1916	15/2/1917	14/11/1917	"
		Putney	Chelsea	Kingston on Ths.			
179509	MUNDAY F.H.	10/5/1916	7/9/1916	3/11/1916	9/6/1917	1/5/1918	"
		Croyden	Kingston Med Bd	Kingston on Ths.			
179510	SMITH H.G.W.	30/8/1916		3/11/1916	21/3/1917	21/1/1918	"
		Richmond					
179515	FLOYD T.H.	3/11/1916	25/8/1916	3/11/1916	10/2/1917	11/2/1918	"
		Croyden	Battersea Med Bd	Kingston on Ths.			
179517	GOULD S.N.	28/10/1916	28/10/1916	6/11/1916	7/10/1917	11/5/1919	"
		Hounslow Bks	Hounslow Bks				
179519	STONE C.S.	3/11/1916		3/11/1916	19/6/1917	24/2/1918	"
		Wandsworth					
179520	COLLIER F.	1/11/1916	8/11/1916	31/10/1916	1/3/1917	21/10/1919	Pension
		Richmond	Woolwich	Woolwich(?)			
179521	BOWDEN T.	2/11/1916	3/7/1916	2/11/1916	20/5/1918	21/12/1918	Service
		Richmond	Kingston on Ths	Kingston on Ths			
179522	OWEN W.F.	Undated		2/11/1916	15/5/1917	24/4/1918	"
179523	SMALL G.H.	Nov-16	24/6/1916	2/11/1916	1/3/1917	25/7/1918	"
		Wandsworth Tn. Hall.	Battersea Med. Bd	Kingston on Ths			
179527	ROSENBERG H.*	6/11/1916		6/11/1916	Deserted	17/4/1917 to	Pension
		Whitehall		Woolwich		20/30/1918	
179529	DENNING J.	16/5/1916	3/11/1916	3/11/1916	21/3/1917	unclear	Service
		Bristol	Bristol				

Document 1: Analysis of surviving records

S. JEAN 02/261

CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES (Exhumation and Reburials).

BURIAL RETURN.

B2590/33

Name of Cemetery of Reburial NEW IRISH FARM 7.6.20
28. C. 2. c. 2. 2.

Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was cross on grave?	Regimental particulars	Means of Identification	Were any effects forwarded to Base?
D	9	S28I4 A CENTRAL	YES	8/295 BOMBR. FOWLER B	DISC. CROSS	
	10	Do	No	179514 PTE TURNER	DISC	
	11	Do	No	U. AUSTRALIAN S	CAP. BADGE	
	12	Do	No	56133 PTE MORTON R E	DISC	
	13	Do	No	U. B. S.	CLOTHING	
	14	Do	No	U. B. S.	CLOTHING	
	15	Do	No	U. B. S. 75-KINGS OWN	NUMERAL	12 JUN 1920
	16	Do	No	U. B. S.	CANCELLED BY CERTIFIED REPORT	POSITIVE 17 JUN 1920
	17	Do	No	U. B. S. KINGS LIVERPOOL	NUMERAL	INITIALED 18 JUN 1920

is form to be made out in triplicate, two copies being handed to the D. A. D. (C. of G.) and the other retained by the Burial Office.

Document 3:
New Irish Farm
burial return.

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.

D. A. D. G. R. & E. Central Sub-District.
No. 5. District.

118. 26/C.

BIRR CROSS ROADS BRITISH CEMETERY.

COMMUNE: ZILLEBEKE.

Sh. 28. I. 17. a. 8. 8.

PLOT 3. ROW "B" (continued)

A. Bty. 280/City of London. R. F. A.	925265	De LOM.	Gnr. P.	29-8-17	✓	
-do- -do-	925312	HANCHETT.	Gnr. T. A.	-do-	✓	E. 16.
-do- -do-	925554	ROYER.	Gnr. H. V.	-do-	✓	
-do- -do-	970851	BENNETT.	Gnr. E. G.	-do-	✓	
B. Bty. 71/Bde. A. F. A. 1972	WEBB.	Dvr. D.		31-7-17	✓	
-do- -do-	156133	MORETON.	Gnr. G.	-do-	✓	E. 17.
-do- -do-	179514	TURNER.	Gnr. W.	-do-	✓	
51/Bty. A. F. A.	KELLY.	Gnr.		-do-	✓	
5/North'd Fus.	BAINBRIDGE.	Lt. T. L.		26-4-15	✓	E. 18.
15/Bn. D. L. I. att'd 126/Fl'd Co. R. E.	368831	LUMLEY.	Pte. W. B.	2-10-17	✓	E. 19.
5/North'd Fus.	NASH.	Capt. P. O. C.		26-4-15	✓	E. 20.
G. W. R.	1958	Mc. GILLIVRAY. Rfn. F.		4-6-15	✓	E. 21.
6/D. L. I.	1816	WILMOT.	Bndn. A. E.	19-5-15	✓	G. R. U. 22.
	45536	AMOS.	Pte. G. H.	17-10-16	✓	E. 23.

Document 4: Comprehensive Report:
Birr Cross Road

29/16

**CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES.
(EXHUMATION AND RE-BURIALS).**

BURIAL RETURN.

OF CEMETERY OF RE-BURIAL. **BIRR CROSS ROADS CEMETERY**

Zillebeke 118/16 E

W	Grave	Approximate map reference where body found	War cross found on grave	Particulars of cross found on grave	Means of Identification	Were any effect forwarded to B
	4	I.10.0.0.9.5. ✓	Yes	Unknown British Soldier 6/D.L.I. Killed 17/5/15		No
	5	I.10.0.0.9.5. ✓	Yes	Unknown British Soldier		No
	6	I.10.0.0.9.5. ✓	Yes	Sgt Hunter T. 681 6/D.L.I. Killed 22/5/15		No
	7	I.10.0.0.9.5. ✓	Yes	Pte Perry H. 656 6/D.L.I. 22/5/15		No
	8	I.17.0.0.0.0. ✓	Yes	Pte Scragg A.C. 502 C Coy. 50/A.I.F. Killed 28/9/17		No
	21	I.5.b.2.4. ✓	Yes	Dvr Webb D. 1972 B Bty 71/ Bde. Killed 31/7/17		No
	22	I.5.b.2.4. ✓	Yes	U.S. Gnr. [unclear] 170153 B Bty VI Bde. Killed 31/7/17		No
	23	I.5.b.2.4. ✓ SEE OVER.	Yes	U.S. Gnr. [unclear] 170153 B Bty VI Bde. Killed 31/7/17		No

Document 5:
Burial Return:
Birr Cross Roads:
January 1919

be rendered in duplicate, one copy being handed to the Registration Officer and the other retained by the Burial Officer.

F.A.P. & S.S.

Press 6-1464-77-119-5000.

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT Army Form W3372.

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

SECTION **No.1.Area I.W.G.C.** REPORT No. **118** SCHEDULE No. **39/C**
17.11.22

PLACE OF BURIAL **BIRR CROSS ROADS CEMETERY. ZILLEBEKE**
COMMUNE : **ZILLEBEKE**

Land belongs to **28.I.17.a.80.85.**

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or Despatched	Map Reference
Plot. 3. Row 'B' Cont ALL CROSSES ERECTED						
53rd Bn. A.I.F.	3018	MEYERS	Pte. A. E.	24.9.17	E	15
A/Bty 280/Cty. of London R.F.A.	925265	DE LOM	Gnr. P.	29.8.17	E	15
- do -	925312	HANCHETT	Gnr. T.A.	-do-	E	15
- do -	925554	ROYER	Gnr. H.V.	-do-	E	16
- do -	970851	BENNETT	Gnr. E.G.	-do-	E	16
B/Bty 71/Bde (A.F.A.)	1972	WEBB	Dvr. D.	31.7.17	E	15
do	154123	MORRISON	Gnr. G.	-do-	E	15
do	179514	MURPHY	Gnr. W.	-do-	E	17
51/Bty A.F.A.	11077	KELLY	Gnr. W.	1-8-17	E	17
98/ North'd Fus		BAINBRIDGE	Lt. T.L.	28.4.15	E	18
15/ Bn. D.L.I. Attd 126/ Fld Co. R.E.	368361	LUMLEY	Pte. W.W.	2-10-17	E	18
5/ North'd Fus		NASH	Capt. R.O.C.	26.4.15	E	20
Q.W.R.	1958	MCGILLIVRAY	Rfn. F.	4.6.15	E	21
6/ D.L.I.	1816	WILMOT	Bds. A.E.	19-5-15	E	22
MGC	45538	AMOS	Pte. C.H.	12-10-16	E	23

* See Section 62-244

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12594-311303 50,000 1/17

Document 6: Graves Registration
Report form: Birr Cross Roads 17.11.22