



Lest We Forget

The Quest For The Missing Brother

By Felicity Beresford 91Y

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A detailed embroidery of a red poppy flower. The flower has four large, rounded petals in a vibrant red color. In the center is a dark, circular center. A green stem extends from the bottom of the flower, and a green leaf is visible at the top left. The entire design is set against a plain white background.

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Christopher John

He was born at Vine Cottage, Upper Green, Inkpen, Newbury on the 15th June 1900. In his early years Christopher went to the local Inkpen school near

'Muddy Bottom' who had a headmaster called Mr Pearce. Early mornings and when he returned from school he would help out his mother and father on their farm. He was one of fifteen brothers and sisters which out of them there are now only two living, my Grandad and my Great Auntie Katie. On the Painting's farm all the children, shared out the farm work between them but as they grew older some of the children went into 'service'.

His sister Beattie became a cook and during the First World War worked in a ammunitions factory where she lost the top half of one of her fingers. His third eldest brother William was a reserved occupation.

The fifth eldest brother, Norman was well known in Inkpen for looking after Combe Gibbet, as it could be seen from the farm. Combe Gibbet was supposedly last used in 1676 for the hanging of George Broomham and Dorothy Newman. Norman inherited the family farm. He was in the Berkshire Royal Horse Artillery in the Battle of Loos and was returned to England having been gassed. He brought back from the war some live bullets and shells that he had set in cement by his pond as shown below. Later on had a son who is still living and is named after Christopher and known by everyone as 'Young Christopher'. Young Christopher is now in his eighties.



Vine Cottage where Christopher was born



The actual birth dates of all the children including my Grandad are a bit suspect as they had factory certificates that were issued by their employer in this case my Great Grandad and were only registered as and when someone was passing by on their way to Newbury Market.





Methodist Chapel

The family was well known at the Methodist Chapel, Post Office Road and they formed part of the local Wesleyan section. They usually went to church by horse and trap or by walking as there was no public transport in the village.



My Grandad had to get up in the morning and before he walked the five mile trek to school through 'Muddy Bottom' he had to milk the cows and churn the butter and ice cream using an old fashioned hand churn. Each of the children had a vegetable plot and grew all there own vegetables and had lots of huge pigs. The family owned a horse

called Topper shown below with my great Grandad next to him and my Great Auntie Katie on him.

Once a week on a Thursday they used to go and sell some of their produce or their cows at Newbury Cattle market. The family owned several Jack Russell dogs which they used to take when out rabbit hunting or 'ratting'. They gathered wild mushrooms from the fields. They caught moles in mole traps and stretched the moleskin out to dry, these were then sold to passing tinkers probably to be then made into hats or gloves.



Christopher John would have probably gone to the one and only shop in the area to get groceries such as tea, sugar, salt, treacle, pepper, bread - things that could not be grown on the land. My Grandad remembers going there to buy bread as his mother did not bake. Food was mainly cooked in a big pot which had vegetables and meat added to it. My Grandad remembers rabbits hung outside ready to be skinned. When a pig was killed big hunches of bacon were cut off and hung up in the kitchen ready to have slices cut off to fry. It was run by a gentleman by the name of John Ward a nephew of the previous owner Mr Killick who had hung himself over the bread oven. No one knows why.

Short History of The Royal Berkshire Regiment. (Princess Charlotte of Wales)

The regiment was first began in 1744 as Trelawny's Regiment (49th Foot in 1748) and in 1755 as the 2nd Battalion of the 19th Foot (66th Foot in 1758). The regiment was formed on 1st July 1881 from the 49th Princess Charlotte of Wales and the 66th Berkshire Regiment.



Royal Berkshire
Regimental Cap Badge

After they fought in the battle of Tofrek in the Sudan the regiment became Royal. Their badge had a dragon above a scroll saying 'Royal Berkshire'. This was continued to be used until the regiment merged with the Wiltshire Regiment, Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment, in 9th June 1959. It has served in many wars of which some are as follows, the War of American Independence, French Revolutionary Wars, Peninsular War, Crimean as well as the two World Wars. The regiment has won many battle honours and six of its members have won the Victoria Cross.

The 4th Battalion was raised in 1859 as the 1st-12th Berkshire Reserve Volunteer Corps, other corps were added and in 1872 thirteen corps were consolidated to form the 1st Berkshires RVC. This became a Volunteer Battalion of the Regiment in 1881 when it was formed. Then in 1882 redesignated as the 1st Volunteer Battalion and in 1908 they were reorganised as the 4th Battalion. In 1915 the Battalion was renumbered 1/4th.



To the Royal Berkshires

They wear the halo of warfare's glory,
Erect of figure, and proud of face.
The Berkshires! Heroes of Reading's story,
The noble type of a noble race,
A glint of steel in the golden morning,
The Royal Berkshires, the street adorning -
The rank and file in their khaki pass.

The senses thrill with a keen emotion,
A sigh - a catch in the passing breath;
Must men like these, for a life's devotion,
Too often pay with a hero's death ?
How many have known the days of slaughter,
The endless counting of comrades slain ?
When red blood poured o'er the field like water,
When brave bones bleached on a foreign plain ?

In the foremost rank of the seething battle,
'Mid brave men dying, old comrades dead;
'Mid the cannon's crash, and the bayonets' rattle,
The Royal Berkshires have fought and bled.
While women weep for the men who perish -
For battle's pain, and its awful loss -
In Berkshire now, there are those who cherish
As legacy - The Victoria Cross.

Thistle Anderson. Reading, June 28 1917

The Great War had Started

Not far from the main gates of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) situated outside Mons in Belgium, a stone monument commemorates the date of the 22nd August 1914 when at 7am a squadron from the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards fired the opening British shots of World War 1.

There was a a lot of support for the war, the Foreign Office of the British declaration of hostilities announced that people had cheered and there had been a rush to the recruiting offices. There is a famous poster showing Lord Kitchener, who was the Secretary of State for War, pointing his finger and the caption underneath read 'Your King and Country Need You.' Men from all classes responded to this and in one week alone during September 1914 about 175,000 volunteered. The original height limit for enlisting was 5ft 8" in mid 1915 it went down to 5ft 5" in October and then to 5ft 3" in November.



At the end of the month 750,000 men had enlisted and in all two and a half million men, the actual number being 2,504,183 had volunteered before March 1916. None of them knew what they let themselves in for as there was lots of censorship. It was in that month the military service became compulsory for single men between the ages of 18 and 41 was introduced into Britain due to the French having severe losses on the Western Front and wanting Britain to take over. By the end one in three adult males had undergone military service and over three million had enlisted voluntarily. One million or more were to be found on the Western Front.



An Enlistment Poster

Most of these soldiers made up 78 infantry divisions ready for active service, by the summer of 1916, 58 of these divisions were in France after a short training period.

For many of them the Western Front was an unbelievable nightmare with trenches were often flooded and the men were knee deep in mud. The whole balance in warfare had changed from the attacker having the advantage to the defender having it with the introduction of the machine gun, the magazine fed rifle, artillery guns using action recoil and barbed wire.

Some of Christopher John's older brothers had joined the army. He may have wanted to help protect his country theoretically he could not as he was only sixteen but it did not stop him. My Grandad seems to remember that there was a lot of pressure put on the young men to join up by other local people in their area perhaps Christopher felt that

and altered his birthday for that reason. Christopher joined the army some time after July 1915 when the enlistment records ceased probably November/December 1915. He was in the 1st/4th Battalion of the Berkshire Regiment. It is not known at this point where or when Christopher was transferred into the 5th Battalion, it could have been soon after he joined up at Brock Barracks, Reading or perhaps after basic training or when he was out in France.



A description in one book about the Somme tells how an officer ordered his men to take off the identification from their dead comrades who were then buried in a big shell hole. There was no time to think about how the relatives might feel it was simply done so as the officer might know how many men were killed so he could replace them. Perhaps there was no other way of getting over the problem of so many dead men.

My Grandad remembers the puttees his brothers wore. These were thick bands of material tied round the bottom of the trouser legs to stop the rats running up your legs. This is the uniform that he probably wore.

Christopher's Uniform - Infantry Soldier Somme 1916

Mark I steel helmet, known as 'Brodie' after its inventor, manufactured from November 1915. By July 1916 a million had been delivered. The design gave protection from air-burst shrapnel and shell fragments. Made of 'Hadfield's manganese steel with a weight of 2lb 2ozs (0.978 kg). With a unit battle insignia painted on it. Blue hearts, the distinguishing mark of the Berkshires was sewn on to the back of the steel helmet cover.

M1902 service dress tunic in khaki serge. They had a turned down collar fixed by one or two hooks and eyes. Four front pockets with straight buttoned flaps, pleated chest pockets. Reinforced against the weight and chafing of equipment with rectangular cloth patches. It had two short rear vents.

M1908 cotton webbing equipment enabled the soldier to carry all of his field necessities, it could be taken off in one piece and included a haversack with a tin triangle fix to it to show it was a Berkshire Battalion and containing a mess tin, personal effects, eating utensils, shaving kit, cardigan waistcoat, pair of socks, soft cap, a groundsheet and two days' rations of corned beef and biscuits plus matches, pipe and tobacco. Under the haversack was the bayonet scabbard with the entrenching tool helve strapped attached to it by straps. On the soldiers right hip would be the



entrenching tool head beneath a two pints capacity water bottle made of enamelled steel and covered with khaki cloth. Extra ammunition bandolier which was a simple cotton container with five pockets holding two five round clips.

General service shovel, picks, shovels, large wire cutters, empty sandbags and even coils of barbed wire might be given to the soldier to carry at anytime.

M1902 service dress trousers in khaki serge were straight cut and had two side pockets. Worn with braces and had twelve buttons arranged around the waist.

SMILE rifle No 1 Mark III, Hobnailed Ammunition Boots and M1902 Khaki cloth puttees secured by tapes.

Wire cutters for attachment to rifle. No 1 Mark II. They worked by pushing the rifle forward against a strand of wire caught between the cutter jaws.

A Brief Account of the Battle of the Somme

The first man to die on the Somme was Private E. Whitlock of the 1/4th Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry. He was from Banbury in Oxfordshire and was killed by a shell two days after his unit had taken over the French trenches known as the 'old front line'. His battalion was part of the British Third Army. On the 30th July the first officer to die was Captain A.G. Rollaston of the 1/7th Worcesters. Up until the end of 1915 the British lost 48 men a day, this was more than the French at that time. In March, 1916 the Third Army ceased to be responsible for the Somme sector and it was at this time that the newly formed Fourth Army took over. Now a major Allied offensive was planned and the four divisions which had first taken over from the French the year before were joined by another eight to increase it to sixteen and three reserve cavalry and three infantry divisions of General Gough were held in the rear in anticipation of a breakthrough in the lines. With the French there were half a million men waiting for the attack on the Germans. This was supposed to be the 'Big Push' that was to end the war.

At 7.00am on the 1st July 1916 the Battle of the Somme commenced for the British it would suffer the worst casualties in the history of the British Army. This was because they needed good weather for a massive attack. Before the start of the battle a non-stop barrage of artillery fire in all a total of 1,500,000 shells from 1537 guns were fired at the enemy lines for seven days. Unfortunately for the British, the Germans had built a network of underground tunnels and shelters so deep that no bomb could touch them. General Rawlinson and his officers drew up a plan putting the British in No Man's Land in front of the machine-gun teams of the Germans that were supposed to have been wiped out but had not been cleared by the previous weeks bombardment. Behind this the troops moved into position. At 7.30am the British attacked advancing with fixed bayonets, looking just like they



were on parade back home in England only to be torn to pieces by the German guns.

'There was a devil of a lot of shelling before the attack. Then we went over the top, made slits through the wire, fixed bayonets and off we went.' (Mr William Huggins, Sergeant.)

'It was a disaster.' (Mr Wright.)

'The noise of the battle became indescribable. The shouting of orders and the shrill British cheers as they charged forward could be heard above the violent and intense fusillade of machine guns and rifles and the bursting bombs, and above the deep thunderings of the artillery and the shell explosions. With all this were mingled the moans and groans of the wounded, the cries for help, and the last scream of death' (A German officer)



**Infantry
Soldiers
crossing
into No
Man's
Land.**

At the end of the day there were 57,470 British casualties of which 19,240 had been killed. More than 300 battalions had suffered 500 casualties each. There were fifteen British soldiers killed and thirty men wounded for each minute over a period of twenty-four hours. Little had been achieved a few small groups had managed to get as far as Serre and Beaumont Hamel only to be cut off or forced back. In the south Mametz and Montauban were taken and some of the 36th (Ulster) Division were holding position on the Thiepval-Pozières ridge.

In the next big push of the Somme at Trones Wood, Rawlinson's Fourth Army attacked at night and saw the use of the creeping barrage fired to inch forward in front of the infantry. The Somme was meant to be a quick offensive but it became a grinding slog into which divisions went for a few days at a time to return wornout,

totally exhausted and with memories of mud that could drown a man in minutes like quicksand.

Battle of Flers-Courlette was to build further gains of ground that the Allies had won over the months of July and August but they were not successful as the Germans were too strong.

The battle continued until mid-November when the oncoming winter and the worsening mud conditions made fighting impossible. The typical British soldier learnt how to cope with conditions that were far from what he had experienced back home in 'Blighty'. He hoped that if he was unfortunate to be hit and injured it would not be a too severe wound just enough to get him home. In the trenches there was a spirit of brotherhood that helped them cope with appalling conditions beside which there was nothing they could do about the situation just what they were ordered.

By the end of the Somme the British had advanced five miles and had suffered 419,654 casualties, the French 200,000 and the Germans 600,000 the exact figure will never be known. The highest percentage of casualties were not from rifle or machine-gun fire but from artillery.

Every family, trade, occupation, profession and community had been represented in the ranks of Kitchener's Army before the Battle of the Somme by thousands of innocent enthusiasts. By the end of the war most families in Britain had suffered bereavement or associated with one. Only a few young men that returned were not be affected throughout his life by his experience of the War and would have different point of view because of the terrible ordeal.

Two accounts of the 1st/4th Battalion Royal Berkshires

After the artillery bombardment that had started on the 25th June, the 1st/4th was centred around Mailly-Maillet. On 1st July 1916 which was the first day of the Somme his battalion was in reserve in the area around Mailly-Maillet. The next day they were told to prepare to attack over unknown territory, their target being the northern side of Thiepval beyond Ancre Brooke. They moved up during the night to Mesnil a mile behind the lines and encountered tear gas but there were no casualties recorded from this.



Just as they were going into the trenches the attack was cancelled and they returned to Mailly-Maillet. It was assumed that Christopher John was a casualty from artillery fire and his body was not recovered. The battalion's movement was in the dark so his absence might not have been noticed. Unfortunately the Commonwealth War Graves Commission had made a mistake in the casualty details as we found out from the Newbury District Museum that he was actually in the fifth battalion and unless there was a misprint Christopher signed up as Panting instead of Painting.

This account was supplied by The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment Museum.

On the 2nd July they were ordered to the north side of Thiepval beyond Ancre Brook but there was extremely thick smoke and dust everywhere and it was decided to wait until nightfall. When under cover of darkness the soldiers marched to Mesnil during the march a gas in the air caused their eyes to water badly. The company commanders went first to the trenches to assess what was happening. Lieutenant Hughes was told that the attack had been cancelled just as 'A' company was moving into the trenches. So the battalion went back to Mailly-Maillet for the night. This was when Christopher John from our first research was supposed to have been lost. The battalion returned to Couin and did not return to the trenches until the 8th July. The above was based on an account written by Captain Cruttwell of the 1/4th Royal Berkshire Regiment.



5th Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment - 3rd July 1916

The 5th Battalion was marching from Franvillers to Henecourt Wood whilst the battle was continuing on their right and to the rear. Each soldier was given some extra bandoliers of bullets and two bombs each and two hundred entrenching tools were passed around. At this point in time the battalion was part of the 12th Division. The battalion was moved into the front-line trenches facing Ovillers la Boisselle, their orders were to take the village the next day with the 7th Suffolks. The battalion was split into four groups 'B' and 'C' companies in the front trench and 'A' and 'D' in support. Lieutenant-Colonel Willan was in command. 'B' supported by 'A' were on the right hand side and 'C' supported by 'D' took the left. Their first objective was to attack in waves the Germans' support trench at the western end of the village. Each wave consisted of two platoons. The first two waves were to go through the support trench, the third was to stop at Shrapnel Trench and the fourth at the enemies front line. There was to be a defensive flank to be formed on the right as the advance progressed.

Before the attack an intense bombardment was supposed to drive the enemy into his dugouts. At 3.03 am the first wave started to crawl forward, the German front line was reached with just a few casualties. The attack was supposed to begin ten minutes before the soldiers after which at zero, it was to be directed in a line through Ovillers Church. Then at zero plus 30 minutes the barrage was to stop whilst the supporting companies attacked the second-line trenches. This did not happen the artillery arrangements were changed at the last moment. The bombardment happened an hour before it should have, the Germans retaliated and many British soldiers were hit as they passed No-Man's Land.

The four Berkshire companies unobserved by the enemy crawled through gaps in the wire and almost reached the German Front trenches but they were hampered by large shell-holes. All four companies were proceeding in the right direction except 'B' company was off too far to the right. After passing this first trench they came under severe fire and machine-gun fire. The following wave followed past the support trench and on to Shrapnel Trench where hand to hand combat started. It was very dark and it was difficult to make out who was on your side. Shouted orders were not being heard above all the noise. The Germans in their dugouts seemed to come out of nowhere. Then the bombs ran short and somehow the Germans had got between the first and second trenches and there were more advancing from the left.

There was confusion the 5th Battalion, the Suffolk and the Essex became mixed up and the greater part of the men fell back to the German front line. Captain Wace tried to encourage the men forward again when the C.O decided to withdraw and dig in on the Albert-Ovillers sunken road. All the time No-Man's Land was being swept by deadly cross fire. There they stayed trying to dig themselves in, during the rest of the day until dusk unable to be reinforced because of the heavy fire of the Germans. They had to remain there until under the cover of darkness they could withdraw. Out of the battalion there was only seventy men left and Colonel Willan but later they were united with another seventy men and two Second-Lieutenants, Breach and May who had dug in in No-Man's Land. This was the day Christopher John was lost and listed with the rest of the casualties as follows :

Officers

Killed: 2

Died of Wounds: 2

Wounded: 3

Missing: 7

Other Ranks

Killed: 2

Wounded: 212

Missing: 104

Total: 14 Officers and 318 Other Ranks.



Christopher John death is recorded in a book titled 'Soldiers died in the Great War, The Princess Charlotte of Wales' (Royal Berkshire Regiment) under the listing for the 5th Battalion that Christopher enlisted in Newbury, Hungerford, Berks. His name on that list is spelt without the first 'i' thereby making his surname 'Panting' and not Painting but his service number is the same. One theory behind this is that Christopher by his birth date was only sixteen and on his records he is listed as being eighteen years old when he died. My Grandad also remembers his mother receiving the

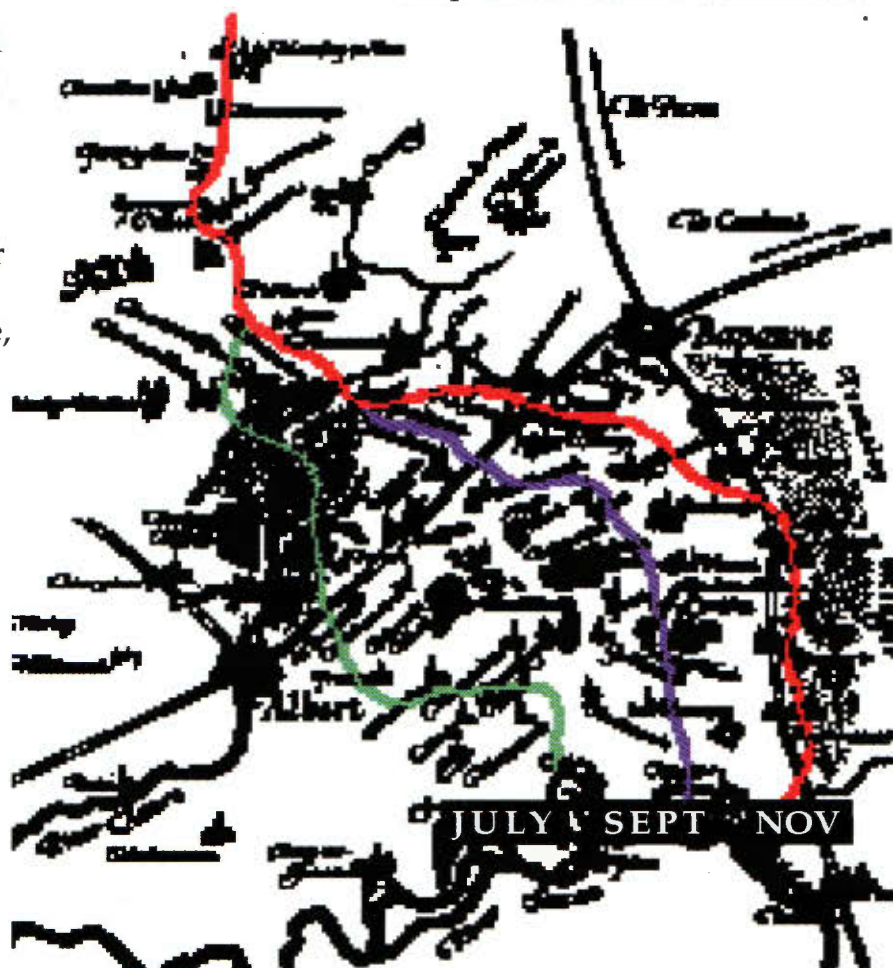
telegram that told her Christopher had been killed in action and that it arrived at their home in a red envelope.

Battles of the Somme

- ✓ Battle for Albert, 1st July 1916 included the capture of Montauban, Mametz, Fricourt, Contalmaison and La Boisselle.
- ✓ Battle of Bazentin Ridge 14th-17th July included Trones Wood, Longueval and Ovilliers.
- ✓ Battle of Delville Wood 15th July to 3rd Sept.
- ✓ Battle of Pozieres Ridge 15th July to 3rd Sept included fighting for Mouquet Farm.
- ✓ Battle of Guillemont 3rd to 6th Sept.
- ✓ Battle of Ginchy 9th Sept.
- ✓ Battle of Flers-Courcelette 15th Sept. capture of Martinpuich.
- ✓ Battle of Morval 25th to 28th Sept. capture of Combles, Lesboeufs, Gueudecourt.

Map of the Somme Battlefields

- ✓ Battle of Thiepval Ridge 26th to 28th Sept.
- ✓ Battle of the Transloy Ridges 1st to 18th October capture of Eaucourt, l'Abbaye, le Sars.
- ✓ Battle of Ancre Heights 1st Oct to 11th Nov. capture of Schwaben and Stuff Redoubts and Regina Trench.
- ✓ Battle of the Ancre 1916 13th to 18th Nov. capture of Beaumont Hamel.



Casualty Records

Rank: Private
Surname: Painting
Unit Text: Fourth/Fifth Bn
Secondary Regiment: Unknown
Age: 18
Grave Reference: Unknown
Cemetery: Thiepval Memorial, France

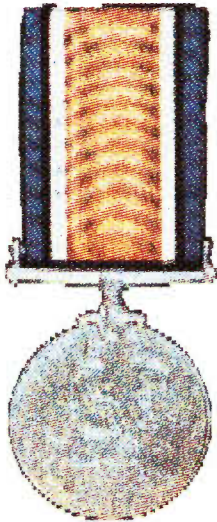
Initials: C.J
Forenames: Christopher John
Secondary Unit Text: -
Service Number: 19257
Date of Death: 3rd July 1916
Marker Type: Pier II Face D

Additional Information: Son of Mr & Mrs A Painting of Vine Cottage, Inkpen, Berks.

Original Registered text: Painting, Pte. Christopher John, 19257. Fourth Bn. Royal Berkshire Regiment. 3rd July 1916. Age 18.

Medals: British War and Allied Victory Medals.

Medals.



British War Medal 1914-1920

This medal was awarded for services in the Great War. Later, it was also extended to include operations in Russia during 1919-1920 and post-war mine clearing. It was to commemorate the most terrible battles that Britain has fought in like the Somme, Ypres and the Naval Battle of Jutland.

**Allied Victory Medal
1914-1920**

The above medal was awarded to all personnel who took part in the Great War on land and at sea. The original medals were made of a dull bronze and later on they were gilded. It has a rainbow multi-coloured ribbon attached. The medal also could have a bronze oak leaf is worn on this ribbon.



First World War Cemeteries and Memorials

There are one hundred and sixty five cemeteries and seventy four memorials on and in the rear of the battlefields. Most of them are British, out of them only ten French and German. They are surrounded by farmland which makes them very quiet and pleasant. The Thiepval Memorial is dedicated to the Missing and engraved on it is Christopher's name. It shows that 72,085 soldiers were unable to be identified and died in the Somme up until 20th March 1918. It stands on a ridge overlooking the battlefield and was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and is for South African soldiers as well. It has sixteen piers with the names of the dead written on them Christopher John being on Pier 11 Face D. It was built between 1928 and 1932.



It could be that Christopher is actually buried in the Ovillers Military Cemetery where there are 2477 unidentified soldiers buried there rather than at Thiepval. There were 106,973 men who died and their whereabouts like Christopher is still unknown to their families. 53,409 are buried in 'unknown soldier' graves and 53,564 bodies are lost and not recovered. In 1982 the remains of forty-nine British soldiers and two German soldiers who fought on the Somme were discovered. They are now buried together in the Terlincthun British Cemetery as some of them were from the Royal Berkshires' perhaps Christopher was one. Back in Inkpen Christopher and twenty four other men that fought in the First World War are remembered on a plaque in St Michael's Church.

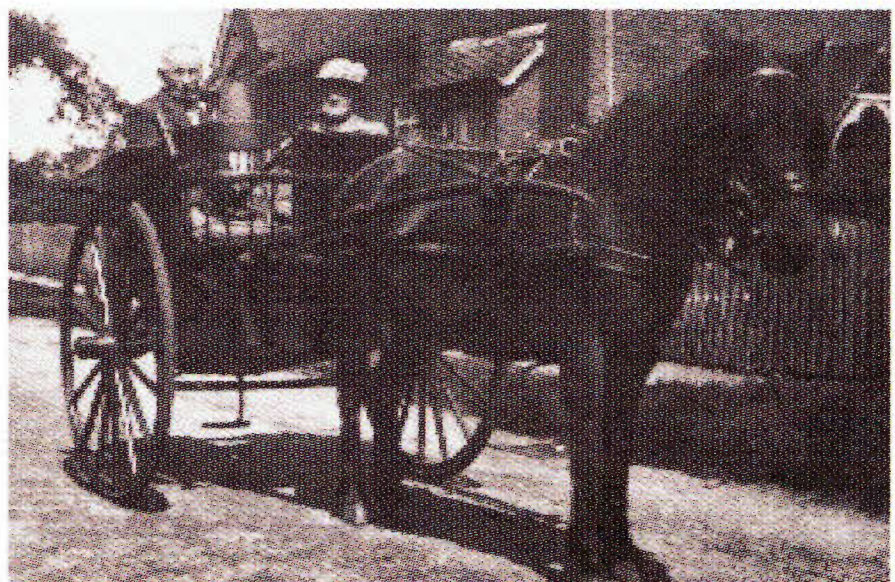


Almost directly opposite SHAPE where the war started there is a bronze plaque on a wall of the Hotel Medicis records 'The outpost of 116th Canadian Infantry Battalion stopped at this very point upon the cease-fire on November 11th 1918.' Three miles away from there on the land originally given to the Germans to bury their own and British casualties in 1914 reputedly the first British soldier and officer to be killed, first man to be awarded the Victoria Cross and the last British Soldier to die before cease-fire are buried in the St.Symphorien Cemetery.

Family Tree

From the below family tree you can see that the Painting family has lived in the Inkpen area for nearly two hundred years and probably a lot longer. Norman's son who is still living and is named after Christopher John and known by everyone as 'Young Christopher', remembers that his Grandmother never truly believed he had died and that he would one day return home.

Christian Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
John	5-11-1827	Farmbord
Francis	13-8- ?	West Woodhay
Ann	5-6-1851	-
Edith	18-12-1853	East Woody
Alice	30-3-1855	Inkpen
John	14-4-1837	West Woody
George	7-8-1857	Kintbury
Ephriam	10-11-1861	Inkpen
ALBERT	6-4-1864	Inkpen d18-8-1945
Calib	18-4-1866	-
William	19-7-1869	-
Mark	25-5-1873	-



His mother and father in a cart pulled by Topper



**Christopher John's
eldest brother, Ernest**



**Christopher John's second
eldest brother, Bob**



**Christopher John's fourth
eldest brother, Sidney in
his uniform**



**Christopher John's fifth
eldest brother, Norman**

Christian Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Agnes (Stacey)	21-8-1867	d31-1-1945
ALBERT	6-4-1864	d18-8-1945
Children		
Ernest	5-11-1885	
Bob	5-11-1886	
William George	21-4-1888	
Sidney	8-6-1890	
Agnes Ellen	22-4-1892	
NORMAN	5-2-1894	
Beatrice	12-10-1895	d 24-6-1992
CHRISTOPHER JOHN	15-6-1900	d 3-7-1916
Ivan	24-6-1900	
Oliver	23-8-1901	
Harold	22-12-1903	
Annie Katie	5-8-1905	Still living
Lily Alice	26-3-1907	
Mark	31-3-1909	
THOMAS H.	25-6-1912	Still living
NORMAN Painting		
Henrietta		d 1981
Children		
Reginald		
Denny		
Danny		
Christopher		Still living in Inkpen
THOMAS		
Doris Jean Kirby	25-6-1912	
Children	20-9-1914	d 4-3-1996
Peter	17-1-1940	
Sheila	18-12-1943	
Sue	3-5-1947	
DIANA	10-5-1953	Petersham, Surrey



Christian Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Stephen Beresford	23-4-1952	Tidworth, Wilshire
DIANA Painting	10-5-1953	
Children		
FELICITY	5-10-1982	Paddington, London

Conclusion

The main problem in finding out more about Christopher lies in the fact that all of his brothers have passed away apart from my Grandad and his only living sister my Great Auntie Beattie would not be able to help as she has Alzheimer's disease. There are other Paintings still living in or near Inkpen, children of my uncles and their children who might be able to assist later on when I visit Inkpen again. Another reason why the research is difficult is because lots of local records were destroyed by bombs during the Second World War as well as many army records when during the blitz of 1940, the Army Records Centre, Arnside Street, Southwark, London was bombed and three quarters of its records were destroyed. A lot of identification of the soldiers on the battlefield was missing or taken from them for counting up the numbers of deaths. The fact was that there was no time for single burials as they were under fire or they were buried at nighttime. They may have been buried too deep and when they were dug up to be put in single graves by the Imperial War Graves Commission the soldiers were not found. It is also difficult to trace the army records without a service number.

The following story shows how badly the birth certificates in our family were muddled up. My Grandad when he reached retirement age and applied for his pension was told that no one of the name of Thomas Painting existed. He had to have different brothers and sisters go in front of a Justice of Peace and say that he was their brother. In the end he was given a pension under the name of someone who was registered a year later and was called Thomas Wallace Panting.



Why the Hell worry ?

When you are a soldier you are one of two things. Either you are at the front or behind the lines. If you are behind the lines you have nothing to worry about.

If you are at the front you are one of two things. You are either in the danger zone or you are not. If you are not you have nothing to worry about.

If you are in the danger zone you are one of two things. You are either wounded or you are not. If you are not you have no need to worry.

If you are wounded you are one of two things. Either you are seriously wounded or you are slightly wounded.

If you are slightly wounded there is no need to worry. If you are seriously wounded one of two things is certain. Either you get well or you die.

If you get well you need not worry. If you die you cannot worry anyway.

So what the hell are you worried about ?

Written By Anon. Found in an anniversary newspaper 'Berkshire at War 1914-1918.



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