

# **CHARLES EDWARD ROYDEN**

**(1881-1918)**

**Bombardier C E Royden 80135,  
D Battery, 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade, Royal Field Artillery**



**Researched and written by**

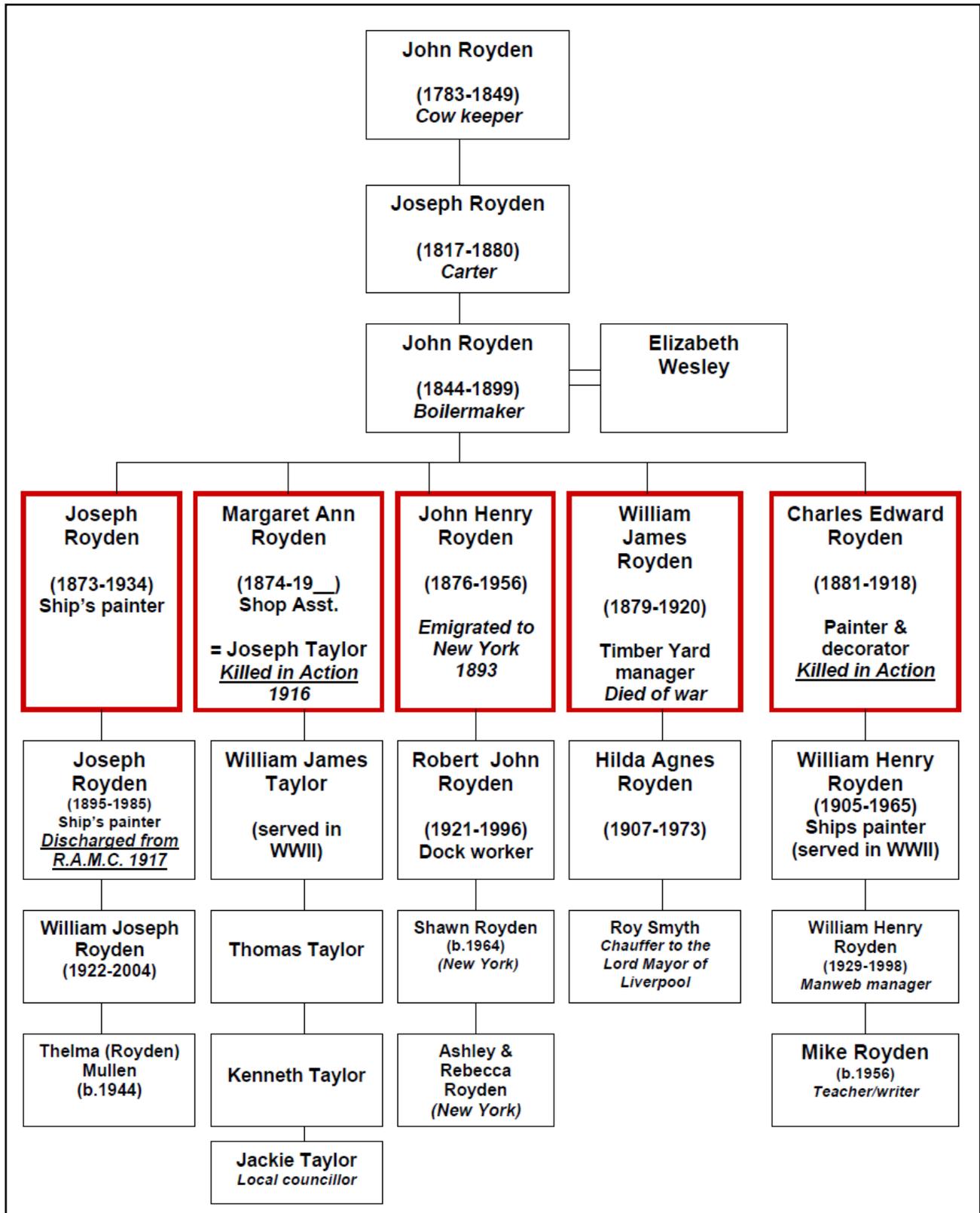
**Mike Royden**



*Rest my dear husband, but oh how I'll miss you.  
Loving you dearly your memory I'll keep;  
Never while life lasts shall I forget you,  
Sacred is the spot where you lie asleep.*

**Emma Royden (March 1918)**

## The Family of John Royden in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Liverpool



## The Family of John Royden in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Liverpool

John Royden (Charles Royden's father) was born in 1844 in Toxteth in the heart of Liverpool's South Dockland. His father, Joseph Royden, was a carter serving Liverpool docks. His grandfather, also called John, had brought the family to Liverpool from West Kirby, where the Royden's were well established as farmers. John (1783-1849) grew up in West Kirby parish, at a time that the port of Liverpool was expanding and offering increasing opportunities to those hoping for a secure future. Shortly after his marriage and sometime between 1808 and 1811, he moved to Liverpool, to Harrington Street, an area of dense court housing close to the south docks.

John Royden (1844-1899) married Elizabeth Wesley in 1872. She was the daughter of John and Elizabeth Wesley of Leeds Street, near the terminus wharves of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, just to the north of where the Pier Head now lies. Her father was a local tailor. John Royden was a boiler maker who could read and write, but Elizabeth could only mark her name with a cross, as she did on their marriage certificate. This was very common - the Education Act had only just been placed on the statute book and it is unlikely she had had a formal education.

Within a short time the couple were struggling to make ends meet in the court housing of Upper Mann Street. The south docks area was a warren of back to back courts, with poor conditions and little sanitation and this was a tough life bring up a large family.



*Left: Upper Mann Street*

On the night of the 1881 census, the enumerator recorded five children – four sons and a daughter. Also in the house that night was Elizabeth, John Royden's older sister, a forty year old unmarried charwoman. She may have lived there or in a house nearby and stopped overnight to help with the birth of Charles who had been born earlier that day. There must have been a

great deal of fuss and excitement going on when the recorder had knocked on the door.

In the 1890's, the family began to break up. They were now living in 394a Mill Street, the main thoroughfare passing through the area on the route towards Liverpool town centre. This was an improvement, although slight, on their previous accommodation. At least they were away from the court housing.

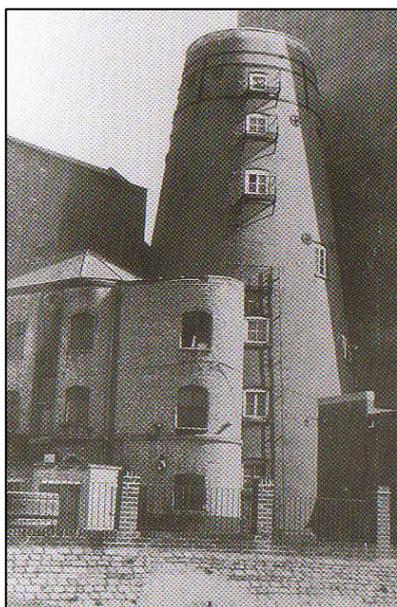
Joseph, the eldest, was the first to leave. Employed as a decorator, he married Elizabeth Albiston in 1891. Elizabeth (18), and her younger sister Ruth, were actually living in the Royden household in 1891. Their father, John Albiston, was recorded as 'away at sea' and in the absence of their mother, the Royden's were looking after them. Joseph and Elizabeth moved a few doors down to 408a Mill Street.

Margaret was next to leave. She was working as a shop assistant and married Joseph Taylor in 1894. They moved to one of the new terrace houses in nearby Denton Street, just off Mill street. By the 1911 Census, they were back in a house next door to where Margaret had lived with her parents – 396a Mill Street. They had eight children, although 3 died in infancy.

John Henry Royden was working as a shop boy in 1891. Two years later at the age of only 17 he boarded a ship to America, this was a one way ticket as John made New York his home. His descendants live there to this day.

William became a timber clerk in the offices of a local timber yard and moved into nearby Grove Cottage.

But times had already become increasingly hard into the late 1890's when their father, John Royden, was admitted to Toxteth Workhouse Infirmary – this was the NHS of its day, there was no alternative for those who could not pay for hospital care. John died in 1899 aged 55 and was buried in the adjoining Smithdown Road Cemetery in an unmarked grave. In the 1901 census, his sister Ann is also recorded in the Workhouse Infirmary. A former charwoman, she was by then an infirm pauper, and unlikely to have seen the family home again. Elizabeth, John's widow, was living at 36 Denton Street according to the 1901 census and only her youngest child Charles was still at home. But by 1903 he too had left and Elizabeth was alone.



*Left:* The Mill Street mill in 1950. *Above:* the view across Grafton Street in 1905 – see bottom left section of following map

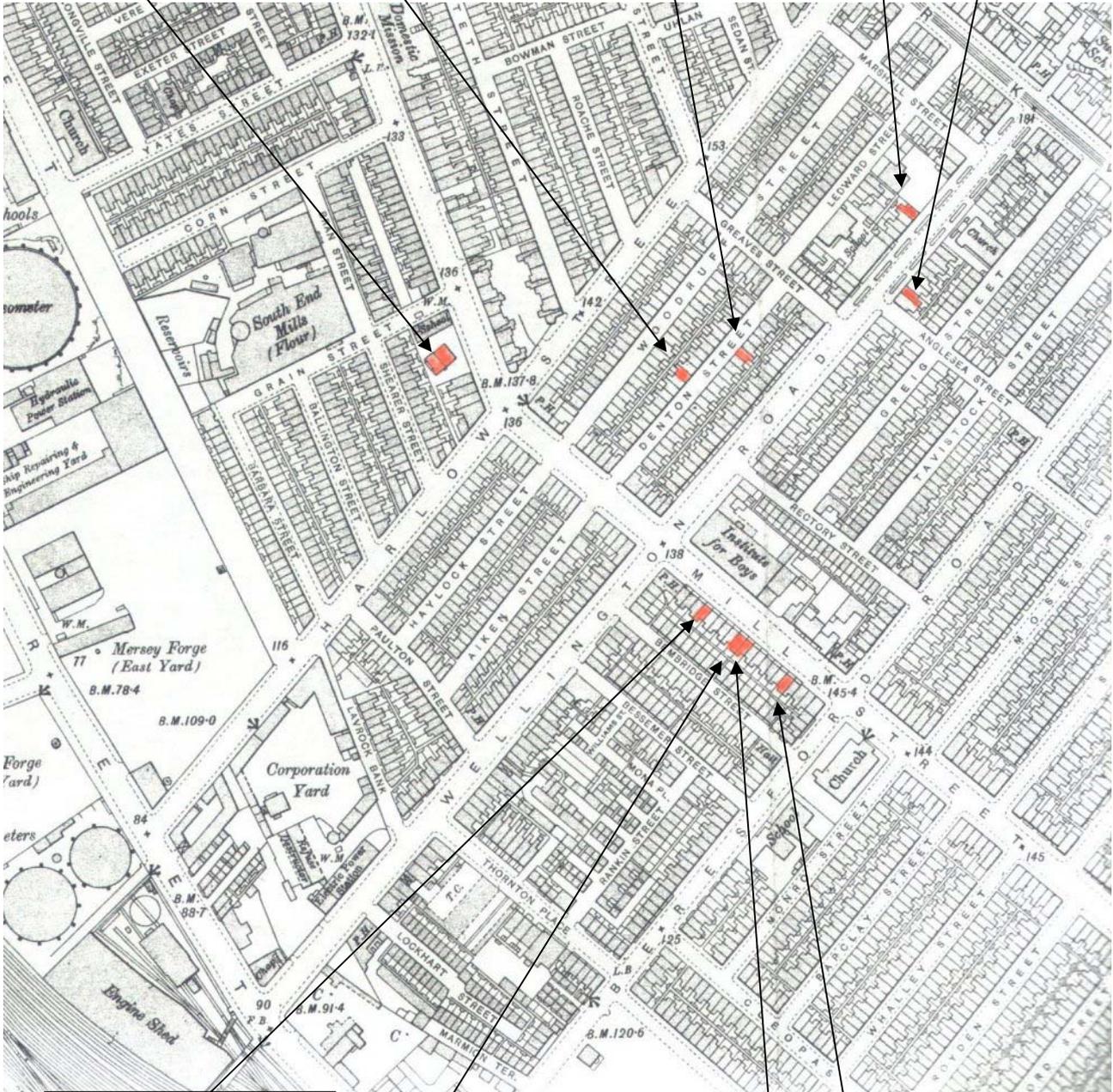
**Some of the Royden homes in the Dingle, Liverpool, occupied by the children and families of John and Elizabeth Royden.**

**William Royden  
Grove Cottage  
(1901)**

**Margaret  
(Royden) Taylor  
21 Denton St  
(1901)**

**Elizabeth Royden  
36 Denton St (1901)**

**Charles Royden  
Wellington Road  
161 160**



**Joseph Royden jnr  
384a Mill Street**

**Joseph Royden Snr  
408a Mill Street 1901**

**John and Elizabeth Royden (1844-1899)  
family moved from Upper Mann Street (1881) to  
live here at 394a Mill Street (1891)**

**Margaret (Royden) Taylor  
396a Mill Street (1911)**

*Map shows Toxteth Park, near Herculaneum shore in 1906  
Royden Street can be seen at the bottom right*

## Census Records of John Royden (1844-1899)

Page 2]		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the											
Parish (or Township) of <i>St. Thomas</i>		City or Municipal Borough of <i>Liverpool</i>		Municipal Ward of <i>South Subt.</i>		Parliamentary Borough of <i>Liverpool</i>		Town of <i>Liverpool</i>		Hamlet or Tything, &c., of <i>Hayden</i>		Ecclesiastical District of <i>St. Thomas, The Bishop</i>	
No. of Sub-lease	Road, Street, &c., and No. or Name of House	HOUSES Inhabited (U.S. of Ireland)	Name and Surname of each Person	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born		Whether Blind, or Deaf and-Dumb?		
						Males	Females						
5	5 Amersth	1	Samuel Hill	Head	Mar	42		Shipwright	Douglas	Ireland			
			Agnes do	wife	Mar	39		Shipwright's wife	Stretton	do			
			William do	Son	Mar	18		Shipwright	Liverpool	Lancashire			
			Elizabeth do	Daughter	Mar	12		Widow	do	do			
			John do	Son	Mar	2		do	do	do			
6	1	1	Peter Smith	Head	Mar	53		Seaman	do	Scotland			
			Anna do	wife	Mar	52		Seaman's wife	do	do			
9	1	1	Joseph Royden	Head	Mar	40		DOCK Labourer	Liverpool	Lancashire			
			Anna do	wife	Mar	39		do	do	do			
			Agnes do	Daughter	Mar	19		do	do	do			
			John do	Son	Mar	17		do	do	do			
			Catherine do	Daughter	Mar	15		do	do	do			
7	1	1	William Whitbread	Head	Mar	71		House Joiner	do	do			
			William do	Son	Mar	52		Foys Labourer	do	do			
			John do	Son	Mar	25		Ship Carpenter	do	do			
15	1	1	Samuel Thomas	Head	Mar	70		Dock Labourer	St. Giles	Gloucester			
			Sarah do	wife	Mar	21		do	do	do			
11	9	1	Ralph Lakeman	Head	Mar	60		Provision Dealer	St. Giles	Cornwall			
			Ann do	wife	Mar	40		do	do	Ireland			
			Catherine do	Daughter	Mar	16		Scholar	Liverpool	Lancashire			
			Harriet do	Daughter	Mar	14		do	do	do			
			Elizabeth do	Daughter	Mar	5		do	do	do			
6	Total of Houses...	30	Total of Males and Females...		12	12							

**Census of 1861 showing the family of Joseph Royden (1817-1880), including his son John (1844-1899)**

Household and No. or NAME of HOUSE	habitable (U.S. of Ireland)	Person	Head of Family	Marriage	Male		Female	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born
					Males	Females			
210 14/7/11	1	Sarah Ann Lane	Head	Mar	20		26	General Laborer	Lancashire
		Robert do	Son	Mar	23		23	Widow	do
		Elizabeth do	Daughter	Mar	19		19	General Domestic Servant	do
		James do	Son	Mar	21		21	do	do
		John Royden	Son	Mar	27		27	Dock Labourer	do
211 11 do do	1	Elizabeth do	wife	Mar			32		do
		Joseph do	Son	Mar	7		7	Labourer	do
		Margaret do	Daughter	Mar			6	do	do
		John do	Son	Mar			5	do	do
		William do	Son	Mar			2	do	do
		Charles do	Son	Mar			1	do	do
		Elizabeth do	Sister	Mar			40	Chambermaid	do
212 12 do do	1	William Stanfield	Head	Mar	38		38	General Laborer	Lancashire
		Mary do	wife	Mar			34	do	do
			William do	Son	Mar	14		Labourer	Lancashire

**Census of 1881 showing the family of John Royden (1844-1899)**

Household and No. or NAME of HOUSE	habitable (U.S. of Ireland)	Person	Head of Family	Marriage	Male		Female	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born
					Males	Females			
50 394 <sup>a</sup> Mill St.	1	John Royden	Head	Mar	42		42	Dock Labourer	Liverpool Lancashire
		Elizabeth do	wife	Mar	37		37		do do
		Margaret do	Daughter	Mar	17		17	Decorator	do do
		John do	Son	Mar	15		15	Shop assistant	do do
		William do	Son	Mar	12		12	Post Office Boy	do do
			Charles do	Son	Mar	10		Scholar	do do

**Census of 1891 showing the family of John Royden (1844-1899) showing the family now living in 394a Mill Street**

254	36	dw	1		<del>Muscarella, Susanna</del> <i>Middle</i>	55	V	"			Company - receipt	
255					<del>Miriam Rachel de</del> <i>Wife of</i>	19	V	<i>Sefton General</i>	<i>Widow</i>		<i>Charter of Sefton Hospital</i>	
257	36	dw			<del>Elizabeth Royden</del> <i>Widow</i>	48	V				<i>Sefton Hospital</i>	
					<del>Charles</del> <i>son</i>	20	V	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Widow</i>		<i>Sefton Hospital</i>	
258	36	dw	1		<del>Robert Worrell</del> <i>Head of</i>	29	V	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Employer</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>Sefton Hospital</i>	
					<del>Edward de</del> <i>Wife of</i>	51	V					
					<del>Edward de</del> <i>Wife of</i>	40	V					
248	36	dw	X		<del>Michael Gurnshaw</del> <i>Widow</i>	59	V	<i>Widow</i>				

**Census of 1901 showing John Royden's widow Elizabeth, also nearby in Denton Street at number 36, with son Charles still at home.**



**Toxteth Workhouse**

**(Coincidentally the birthplace of the author, although by then it was the NHS run Sefton General Hospital).**

Evans Thos.rigger "Grove Cottage"  
 342a Williams Edward grocer & prov. dlr  
 342b Lacy J. & L. Ltd. bakers  
 344 British Workman Public House Co.  
 Limited  
**344a Mason William G. Iron-**  
**monger and Post-office**  
*Harlow st*  
 346 Pendleton William W. victualler  
 348 Forsyth Archie tobacconist  
 350 Higgin Daniel butcher  
 352 & 354 Dalglish R. P. Ltd. pawnbrokers  
*Haylock st*  
 356 Pressdee James grocer & prov. dlr  
 358 Young Brothers fishmongers  
 362 Robertson F. George chandler  
 364 Poynton Brothers bakers  
*Aiken st*  
 366a Waterworth Brothers greengrocers  
 368 Huddleston Henry Wilson fishmonger  
 374 Jones Thomas grocer  
*Wellington road*  
 376 Jillings Thomas Charles  
 "Wellington Vaults"  
 378 Ryan Charles hairdresser  
 380 Lloyd Charles C. striker  
 382 Greason Mrs. Sarah A.  
 384 Dunn Alfred Thomas labourer  
 386 Liptrot Charles fruit porter  
 388 Antrobus Henry Thomas mariner  
 390 Ashcroft John labourer  
 400 Fogg Alfred labourer  
 402 Frost George scaler  
 404 Robinson Thomas carter  
 406 Jones George blacksmith  
 408 Flynn Michael dock labourer  
 410 Andrews Alfred dock labourer  
 380a Pearce Mrs. Emily  
 382a Jackson Thomas Richard carter  
 384a Roydon Joseph painter  
 386a O'Neill Thomas blacksmith  
 388a Hancox Henry carter  
 390a Owen James carter  
 392a Wood Morgan Chas. dock labourer  
 394a Dutton Thomas labourer  
 396a Taylor Joseph painter  
 398a O'Neill Mrs. Sarah Amelia  
 400a Street Stanley dock labourer

*Left: Gore's Street Directory 1911 –  
 extract for Mill Street - shows the  
 family still living very close together;*

*Thomas Evans', William Royden's  
 father-in-law, is registered at the top in  
 Grove Cottage, where William was also  
 now residing.*

*Older brother Joseph Royden is at  
 no.384a, while brother-in-law Joe  
 Taylor, married to Margaret Royden, is  
 at no.396a.*

*Younger brother Charles Royden was  
 at 161 Wellington Road, off Mill Street.*



**Upper Mann Street**

**Grove Cottage**

**St John the Baptist School**

On 19<sup>th</sup> April 1903 Charles Royden married Emma Hughes at St. Matthews Church in nearby Hill Street. Emma was the daughter of Griffith Hughes, a sail maker, and Emma Knox, who was descended from a line of stonemasons, both born in Liverpool. Emma Hughes was six months younger than Charles, born in the family home in nearby Palmerston Street, on 24 September 1881.



A year after the young couple married, Charles junior was born in 1904, followed by William in 1905 (*author's grandfather*). They went on to have four daughters, Alice Emma, Agnes, Nelly, and Hilda. By now the family were living at 161 Wellington Road, a street of newly laid out terraces immediately off Mill Street and the next street to Denton Street. All the family lived within just a few yards of each other. Charles was now a painter and paper hanger, a trade that stayed with various members of the family down successive generations to the present day.

In the first decade of the 19th century when the first Royden family came to Liverpool from their farmland in Caldy and West Kirby, most of their descendants stayed in the same area of the south docks for a century. In fact, that link has continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with some of Joseph's family still residing in the Mill Street area. Even the 19<sup>th</sup> century shipyard owned by Thomas Royden and Sons was also situated nearby in this dockland area and that branch of the family continued to have townhouses there even while they enjoyed the fruits

of their labours in their mansions at Frankby and Hillbark, back at the original family home in the north east corner of the Wirral. Royden Street, situated near the end of Mill Road in the photograph below, was named after Sir Thomas Bland Royden, Lord Mayor of Liverpool in 1878-9 and MP for West Toxteth, owner of the shipyard and cousin of the Toxteth Roydens.



***Beresford Road / Mill Street (2010)***



***Wellington Road and former school (right). Site of No.160 is where the houses face the school (left), while No.161 was on the site of the school***

## The Children of Charles Royden and Emma Hughes



**Charles Royden (born 1904)**



**William Henry Royden (born 1905)**



**Nelly Royden (born 1912)**



**Agnes Royden (born 1910)**



**Alice Emma (born 1907)**



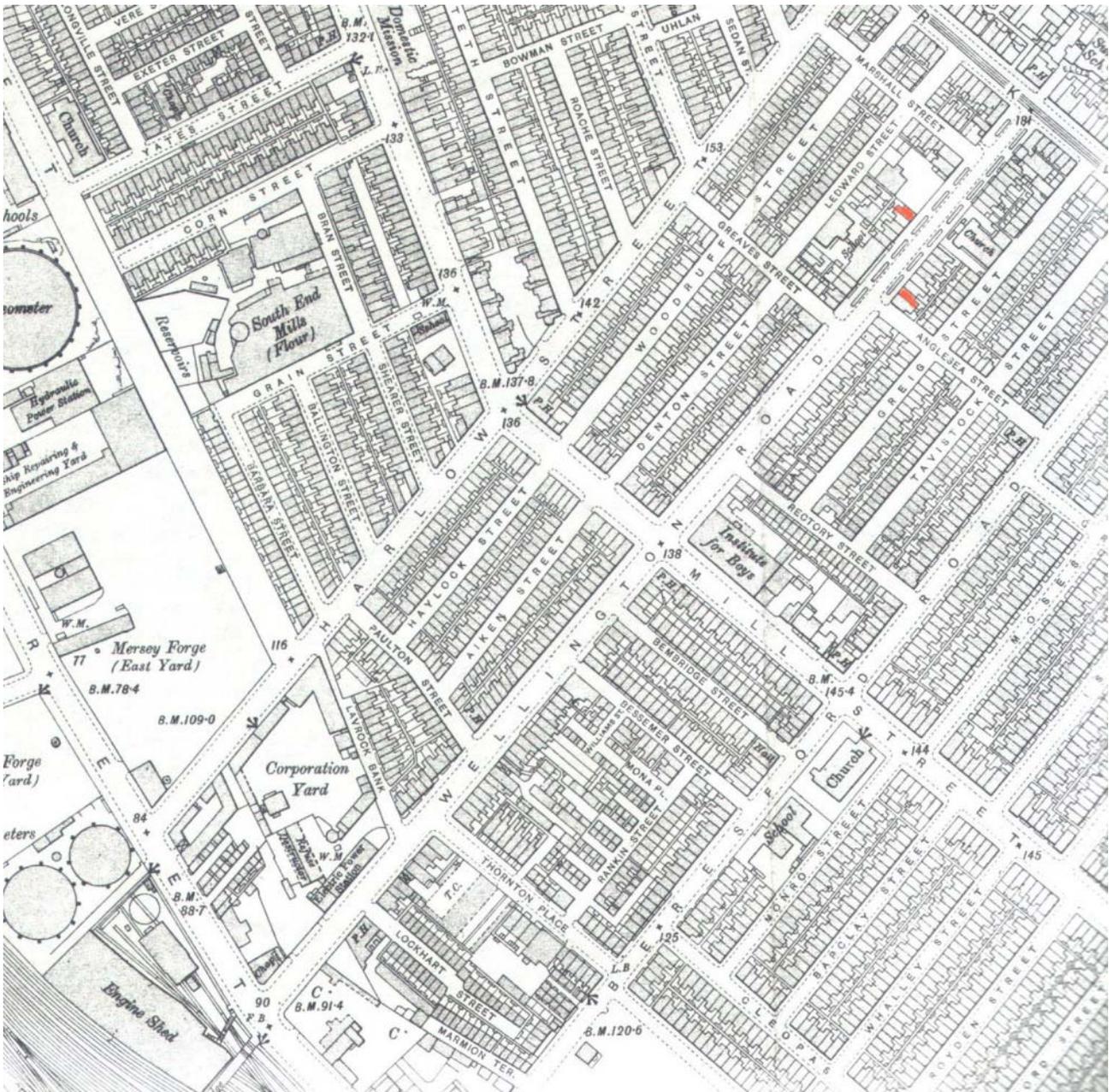
**Hilda (born 1914)**



**Emma, Nelly, Agnes**



**My father William Henry Royden (junior) in the yard at 160 Wellington Road with his grandmother Emma (Hughes) Royden (right)**



**161 Wellington Road (highlighted above) /  
160 Wellington Road (highlighted below)**



**Alma, Nelly (Fletcher) Royden's daughter,  
Outside no.160 Wellington Road with the  
school in the background in the 1960s.**

WELLINGTON ROAD, PARK ROAD—8

Grafton st  
 Seaman's Friend Society Chapel  
 Lavrock bank  
 21 Webster Edward labourer  
 23 Broomfield Arthur boat owner  
 25 Burns Robert engineer  
 27 Roberts John warehouseman  
 29 Bradley Peter ship's steward  
 31 Harold Neild  
 33 Vaughan Morris  
 35 Jenkins James William  
 37 Vicars Joseph plaster  
 39 Humo Mrs. Ellen grocer  
 Pavilion st

41 to 45 Manifold Chas. Geo. victualler  
 47 Kirk Andrew barman  
 49 Teese Alfred Ernest  
 51 Nord Albert fireman  
 53 Hughes Hugh mariner  
 55 Bache Alfred  
 57 Steens George joiner  
 59 Dutton Mrs. Mary  
 Gospel Hall  
 63 Greenwood David newsagent  
 65 Worsley Mr., Susana shopkeeper  
 67 Woodward Joseph labourer  
 69 Pattinson John hairdresser  
 71 Walsh John James foreman  
 73 Green Henry shopkeeper  
 75 Jones John boiler maker  
 77 Harkins Henry seaman  
 79 Emmett John, Sen. shipwright  
 83 Kay Thomas B. confectioner  
 85 Kaye Mrs. Mary Anne chandler  
 87 Williams Mrs. Jane  
 89 Jones Albert Edward shipwright  
 91 Geddes Andrew W. shipwright  
 93 Jones Thomas oaker  
 95 Pinches Edward boatswain  
 Mill st

95 Freeman James painter  
 97 Ryan Denis  
 99 King Lawrence licensed broker  
 99 Jones Miss Mary marine store dealer  
 101 Broomfield Joseph boat owner  
 103 Pears John James boat owner  
 105 Hughes John Harold  
 107 Jones John Maurice labourer  
 109 Hudson Edwin  
 111 Barlow Mrs. Mary  
 113 Billows Thomas cutter  
 115 Pike James carter  
 117 Corless Mrs. Margaret  
 119 Sundberg Otto mariner  
 121 King Robert  
 123 Hopley Jonathan miller  
 125 Dean George  
 127 Roberts David sailmaker  
 129 Mavers Robert George engine driver  
 131 Spittleshouse Edward warehouseman  
 133 Senior Mrs. Sarah  
 135 Davies John  
 137 Lee James mariner  
 139 Roach James coal heaver  
 141 Higgins Robert hydraulician  
 143 Clee William victualler  
 Greaves st

145 Vickers Mrs. Ellen chip potato dealer  
 147 Barnes Mrs. Rose shopkeeper  
 149 Bell Clayton labourer  
 151 Cowley John shipsmith  
 St. John the Baptist's Schools  
 153 Holford Mrs. Sarah Ann  
 155 Glynn Michael  
 157 Poole Joseph mariner  
 159 Reilston James mariner  
 161 Beyden Charles painter  
 177 Lea John William clerk  
 179 Cumpstey Bryan shipwright  
 Marshall st

181 & 183 Lewis William Henry coal dir  
 185 Mellor John W. pawnbroker  
 28 & 30 Baxter Geo. W. "Herculeum  
 Bridge Hotel"  
 Lockhart st

32 Stewart Mrs. Edith provision dealer  
 34 Tennant Thomas boiler maker  
 36 Quinn Francis labourer  
 38 Thornton Wm. & Sons builders  
 42 Riley Edward labourer  
 44 Jackson Alphonso  
 46 St. Cleopas' Mission House

Thornton place  
 48 Schofield Thomas  
 50 Boyd Henry mariner  
 52 Poffard Mrs. Maria  
 54 Crowley Joseph electrician  
 56 Jacobson Albert storekeeper  
 58 Thompson Samuel foreman  
 58A Jones Matthew Henry carter  
 58B Clare James cowkeeper  
 58C Phillips E. J. builder  
 58D Piggott Mrs. Ann Lile pickle manfr  
 Wellington gardens  
 69 King Alfred brass finisher  
 63 McLoughlin Edward  
 64 Carter George labourer  
 66 Newman Joseph Edward signalman  
 68 Hume Mrs. Ellen  
 70 Wilkinson John coal merchant  
 72 Massey Mrs. Martha  
 74 Povey William carter  
 76 McLoughlin Jasper fireman  
 78 White George Abel  
 80 Carr David "Princes of Wales Hotel"  
 Beasmer st

82 Watson Robert bread & flour dealer  
 84 Critchley Harold shopkeeper  
 86 Jones William Henry miller  
 88 Turton Benjamin cardriver  
 90 Davison James fisherman  
 92 Smith William shopkeeper  
 94 Lewis William Henry coal dealer

Bembridge st  
 94 Bailey William Robert victualler  
 100 Herold William pork butcher  
 Mill st  
 104, 106 & 108 King Lawrence licensed brkr  
 110 Nangle William general dealer  
 112 Thompson Stephen broker  
 Rectory st

116 Berry Thomas  
 118 Linster James  
 120 Cormack William  
 122 Collins Robert George painter  
 124 Black William  
 128 Fleming William block maker  
 128 Phillips Thomas H. book keeper  
 130 Brown Thomas railway porter  
 132 Benn Mrs. Fannie  
 134 Jamieson George James seaman  
 136 Smith John Matthew labourer  
 138 Daniel Jas. S. Custom House officer  
 140 Beasmer Frank  
 142 Platell William cook  
 146 Leatham Richard painter  
 148 Clarke John shipwright  
 150 Perry Charles engine driver  
 152 Harrison Robert labourer  
 156 Mudie Edgar L. bootmaker  
 Anglesa st

158 Ablett Thomas confectioner  
 160 Scott William laundryman  
 162 Laycock Mrs. Charlotte  
 164 Griffiths Ernest joiner  
 166 Bradley Charles joiner  
 168 Robinson Levi cranedriver  
 170 Johnson Mrs. Ann  
 172 Davies John book keeper  
 United Methodist Church  
 182 Pennington Harry labourer  
 183 Hackett Andrew labourer  
 185 Wagstaff William carter  
 199A Probert John confectioner  
 190 Carruthers Mrs. Eliza  
 192 Boswell James labourer  
 194 Langherne Thomas newsagent  
 198 & 200 Cooper Frederick victualler  
 Park road

Street Directory for  
 Wellington Road 1911,  
 showing Charles living in  
 No. 161.

The family moved across the  
 road to No. 160 on 15 April  
 1912

Charles and his family underwent an enforced house move when they were informed that the school next door was to be enlarged and their house at No.161 was to be demolished to make way for it. So tied were they to the area that they simply moved across the road to No.160 when a tenancy was vacated. The house move took place on 15 April 1912 – a date fixed in the minds of Charles' children many years later as it was the day the Titanic went down. The tragedy was profoundly felt in the community - although the vessel left the country from Southampton, Liverpool was the home of the Titanic and many of her crew and engineers came from the city. It must have been a day of mixed emotions – the excited business of the house move, combined with the rumour and confusion as the awful details of the sinking slowly came through.

By the time war broke out in 1914, Charles was in his thirties and supporting a large family. In the early months of the war there was more encouragement for younger, unmarried men to enlist, but once the war was clearly not going to be over by Christmas, men in their thirties, including married men with dependants, began to feel it was their duty to sign up too. Charles now felt it was his turn to volunteer. When he signed on at Seaforth (north Liverpool), on 20th January 1915, at the age of 33 years 9 months, he stated that he had already served in the West Lancashire R.F.A. The West Lancashire Division was a formation of the Territorial Force. It was formed as a result of the reforms of the army carried out in 1908 under the Secretary of State for War, Richard Burdon Haldane, and was one of 14 Divisions of the peacetime TF. In August 1909, the West Lancashire became the first TF Division to take the field when it assembled for annual camp at Caerwys in North Wales. However, when he actually served with them is unknown. It is likely that this was in peacetime. Many men were keen to volunteer for the Territorials as it was chance for the working man to meet up socially with other like minded individuals, to face a fresh challenge away from their working environment and the claustrophobic atmosphere of their home life, with the promise also of annual camps, often in the Welsh countryside. For a self employed painter, there would be slim opportunity to take a holiday with his wife and children.

Charles was also given a notice before he signed on appealing for men like him to enlist. On his Attestation he signed on for '*Short Service – for the duration of the war*' like the rest of the recruits. He enlisted in the Royal Regiment of Artillery RFA. The notice was given to him by '*Sgt. Royden of the Kings Liverpool*'. However, which of his relatives this was it has not yet been possible to determine. By 1915, eldest brother Joseph was now 42 and although was now at the age limit where he would no longer be called upon, he may have served in the Territorials. His son Joseph did serve in the RAMC, but his rank was Private. John Henry was in New York. William, two years older than Charles, was in the 10th Liverpool Scottish, part of the King's Liverpool, but his rank was also Private (pictured). So, '*Sgt Royden*' remains to be discovered.



A description of Charles can be gleaned from his medical examination on enlistment. It stated he was 5'7 ¼" high, weight 123lbs, chest expanded 34 2/3 inches, (range of expansion 2 ½ "), with three vaccination marks from infancy, plus perfect

vision. He was passed fit for the Army based on this examination and his own declaration that he did not suffer from anything that would be an impediment to him.

If Charles did go along to the recruiting office at Seaforth with one of his brothers, the scenario on his return home that day to break the news to his wife would have made interesting viewing. A mixture of pride at him signing on, but also acute apprehension at the thought of what the future may hold both for Charles and their large family. There is also the possibility that the motivation may have been one of basic economics. As a painter and decorator, his income may well have taken a down-turn once the effects of the war had begun to bite on the local community. Smartening up the house was sure to have dropped on people's list of priorities. It would not take much to make Charles' financial situation more precarious. He had a wife and six children in small terraced house in the dockside area of Liverpool. Life was not easy at the best of times. He would also be surrounded by families who had already seen their men-folk sign up fairly quickly. The King's Liverpool Regiment, for example, recruited so many volunteers that four regiments of Old Pals were formed before the end of 1914. Poster campaigns could be seen everywhere, and recruitment meetings were held regularly in the communities and workplaces. Volunteers continued to stream forward, so much so, that it would be another year before conscription would be necessary, in January 1916. The stigma of anyone being passed a white feather in such a tight knit community would have been unbearable.

Within days, Charles had left Liverpool for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he was headed for the R.F.A. training camp. It maybe that as Charles appears to have had some previous experience and training in the R.F.A. he was posted to the No.1 Battery, 1A Reserve Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. This was a home-based unit which had three roles;

1. As depot or training units;
2. For providing mobile artillery forces for use in the event of enemy attack (or, as proved to be the case in Ireland in 1916, for use against insurrection);
3. For providing static artillery forces to defend key ports and coastal installations.



*Exact location unknown, but most likely to be the Newcastle R.F.A. training camp – Charles is somewhere on this photograph.*

After three months of uneventful training in Newcastle, Charles was put on a charge on 14 April 1915. His offence was 'Absent from 9am, 13 April until 6am, 14 Apr 1915'. In other words, arriving back to camp a day late. His punishment was to 'forfeit 4 days pay as a field punishment'. But where had he been? The chances of him being out on the town and getting back in the early hours are unlikely – especially as the charge sheet shows the punishment was reduced to two days pay by a superior officer. That would not have happened if he was enjoying himself in Newcastle. Most likely he had been home to visit his wife and six children and may have missed his train or been delayed getting back on time to camp – maybe the officer had some sympathy for him and reduced the punishment. Especially as he was being hit in the pocket with such a large family.



**A typical gun team on a 4.5 howitzer**

*"The war of 1914-18 was an artillery war: artillery was the battle-winner, artillery was what caused the greatest loss of life, the most dreadful wounds, and the deepest fear".*

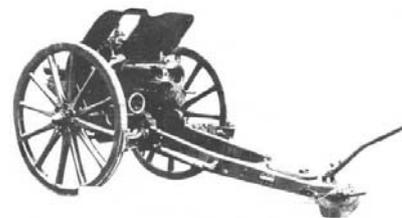
John Terraine *White Heat - the new warfare 1914-18*

**Charles' brigade was posted to the north of Arras in 1917**



## Postings according to Charles Royden's War Papers

20 January 1915	Enlisted
20 January 1915	No.1 Depot
8 June 1915	1 Battery 1A Reserve Brigade
16 June 1915	Issued with basic kit and posted
19 June 1915	20 <sup>th</sup> Division Artillery
24 August 1915	6 <sup>th</sup> Battery Reserve Brigade
1 October 1915	Appointed Acting Bombardier
29 January 1916	36 <sup>th</sup> Reserve Battery request Charles' documents
6 March 1916	Inoculation T.A.B. (Tetanus? And...?)
29 Sept 1916	Entered Edinburgh Hospital - Influenza
7 October 1916	Discharged from Edinburgh (10 days in hospital)
7 October 1916	Hospital – (illegible) – (short rest?)
10 April 1917	36 <sup>th</sup> Reserve Battery – France
5 May 1917	18 <sup>th</sup> Brigade RFA. (18th Brigade was transferred to the 4th Canadian Division from 13 July 1916 to July 1917).
21 July 1917	(illegible)
25 August 1917	(illegible)
7 Sept 1917	Rejoined A.C. 18 <sup>th</sup> Brigade
9 Sept 1917	(illegible)
21 Sept 1917	Rejoined A.C. 18 <sup>th</sup> Brigade
4 October 1917	Confirmed Bombardier (?)
31 October 1917	D/18 posted
20 (Nov/Dec?) 1917	Granted Class II P.Pay at 3d
3 January 1918	(illegible)
22 March 1918	Killed in action



There is an entry into Charles service record that he was posted to the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment during this period – possibly June 1915, but the dates are not clear and this may have been rescinded as he was still at Newcastle in the No.1 Battery (20<sup>th</sup> Division Artillery) on the day of his posting. On 19 June 1915 he was issued with his full kit but again it is not clear where he went to next, but he had been posted on 24 August 1915 to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battery Reserve Brigade, and may have still been in the UK, continuing to serve in a supporting reserve roll. By October Charles had been promoted – to Acting Bombardier. He was probably posted again, on 29 January 1916, as the 36<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battery were recorded as requesting his documents.

It was usual that the reserve brigades were used for training and also as a headquarters unit for the handling of men invalided from overseas. It is not entirely clear from Charles' papers if and when the 36<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battery moved to France. There is quite a gap between his promotion to Acting Bombardier in October 1915 and his hospital visit to Edinburgh almost a year later on 29 September 1916, where he was treated for Influenza. He may have still been in Newcastle when he became ill, given the easy access to Edinburgh to a hospital specially requisitioned for the treatment of ill and wounded WW1 soldiers. This was the 2nd Scottish General Hospital, the former Craigleith Poorhouse, previously known as St. Cuthberts Poorhouse, opened in 1873. (In 1914 the poorhouse had been taken over by the Territorial Forces, with 1032 beds. After WW1 the 2nd Scottish became Craigleith Hospital, and in 1930 became the Western General Hospital).

When he was discharged from Edinburgh the doctor wrote on Charles' record,



*'This was an ordinary (?) case of influenza - is very anaemic - sent to \_\_\_ lery(?) [illegible] for short stay'.*

So Charles was then sent for a short convalescence to an unknown hospital from 7 October 1916 until 28 October. Movements then become

unclear again until Spring 1917. By then it is likely that Charles was in France with the 36<sup>th</sup> Reserve Brigade RFA - at least by 10 April 1917, and certainly by 5 May 1917 when he was posted to the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade RFA.

### **18<sup>th</sup> Brigade RFA**

When Charles joined the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade, they were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel C. Sykes, a veteran of the Mesopotamia campaign. There were four batteries – the 59<sup>th</sup>, 94<sup>th</sup>, A/18, and D/18, to which Charles was posted. D/18 was commanded by Captain H. Eden M.C.

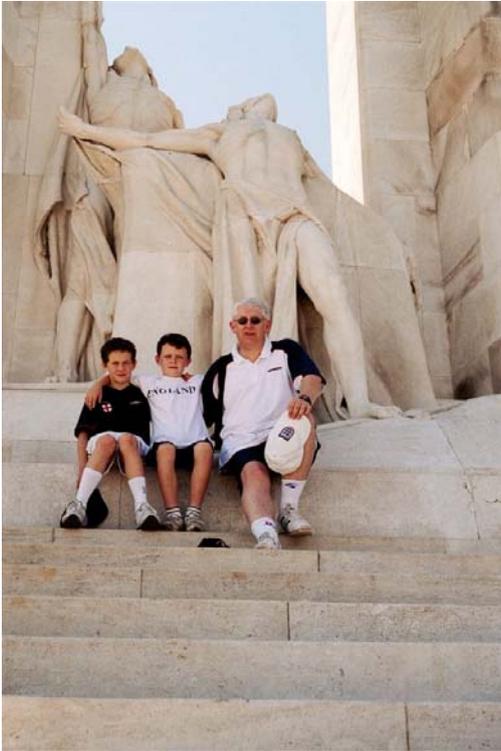
On 24 June 1915 the British Government had enquired whether Canada could supply any more formed bodies of troops. It was decided that there were enough reserve and surplus troops already overseas and the Canadian 3<sup>rd</sup> Division began to form in France in December 1915. A shortage of artillery led to the guns of the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Lahore) Division of the Indian Corps being attached. The 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade RFA were part of this Division and supported the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division from 20 March 1916 until 13 July 1916. They saw action firstly in Belgium at Battle of Mount Sorrel (2-13 June 1916), followed by a move south to the Somme; where there were further engagements at the Battle of Albert (1-13 July 1916), including the capture of Montauban, Mametz, Fricourt, Contalmaison and La Boisselle, then the Battle of Pozieres (23 July 1916), including the fighting for Mouquet Farm.

Following the Battle of the Somme, artillery was re-organised due to operational difficulties. Frequent moves of infantry divisions sometimes meant that their artillery stayed in place to fight with replacement divisions rather than their own. Also, there was a need to create a reserve artillery force to provide reinforcement for either attack or defence. This led to the creation of Army Field Artillery Brigades which could be used to support any action across the particular Army's section of front above the resources available at Divisional level.

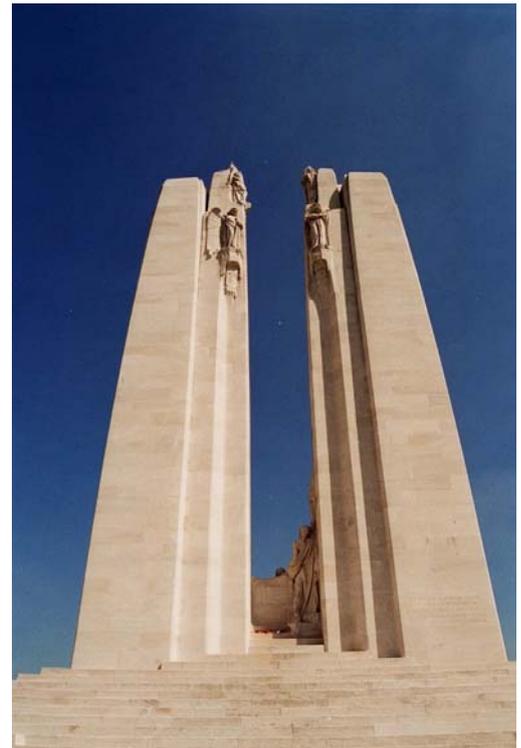
Following the early engagement in the Battle of the Somme, it was also necessary to reorganise the Canadian Corps, and the 18th Brigade was transferred to the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Division from 13 July 1916 to July 1917. According to Charles' war record, he was posted to the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade on 5 May 1917. The Brigade had already fought with the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Division at the Battle of Le Transloy (1-18 October 1916), the Battle of Ancre Heights (21 October - 11 November 1916) and the Battle of Ancre (13-18 November 1916).

Shortly before Charles joined them they had seen notable action in support of the Arras battles of 9 April 1917 attack on Vimy Ridge. The Official History (1917 Vol 1) notes the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade was attached to the Canadians in the fight for "The Pimple" Hill 145. Vimy Ridge was a vital part of the German defence system and its taking by the Allies in 1917 was a major turning point in the war. Attempts to take it over

the previous three years had failed, but in April 1917 the Canadian Army supported by other allied forces (including the Royal Field Artillery and Charles' Brigade) took the hill and held the advantage. Over 66,000 Canadians alone were killed and are commemorated at the Vimy Ridge Memorial Park with its stunning marble memorial. On this land of 100 hectares given to the Canadians by the French Government there is a small information centre, preserved trenches and tunnels.



*Mike Royden with sons Lewis & Liam at the Vimy Ridge Memorial and preserved trenches*



**Affairs South of the Souchez River (3-25 Jun 1917) and the Capture of Avion (26-29 Jun 1917).**

On the day that Charles joined the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade he must have thought he had arrived in hell. There was a vicious engagement going on around the Souchez River which included air attacks (*'a hostile red machine flying low over the batteries'*) D Battery (Charles' unit) fired 386 rounds that afternoon on enemy wire and trench positions. Later that night two Canadian battalions mounted a successful attack on a block of trenches taking 50 prisoners. However, this stirred the enemy into retaliation and

three such attacks were mounted in the night, and each time were driven off, but at cost of 18 allies killed and 130 wounded. During this night time battle over 7,000 rounds were fired by the artillery. Shelling continued by both side for the next few days (and nights). A German attack was repelled on the evening of 7<sup>th</sup> after considerable heavy fire on the open fields of the Souchez River valley, although late in the evening a gunner in Charles battery was wounded.

Following the action at Vimy, the 18<sup>th</sup> were involved in the Battle of the South of the Souchez River (3-25 June 1917) and the Capture of Avion (26-29 June 1917). The 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade was allocated to the First Army, although this did not occur until August 1917. Charles was assigned to the newly formed D Battery which was identified as being equipped with 4.5" Howitzers.

Artillery was positioned in the area Carency - Ablain St Nazaire - Bois de Bouvigny, an exposed position in which it was subject to severe shelling. This excerpt from the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade R.F.A. war diary gives a flavour of what Charles was experiencing first hand;

### 11th May 1917

Night firing. 300 rounds by A/18. During night 10/11<sup>th</sup> enemy counter attacked at 8.25pm and 3.30am. The first attack was repulsed after 3 hours of severe fighting in spite of reinforcements being brought up from two battalions in addition to 34<sup>th</sup> RFR [Royal Fusiliers?] and flammenwerfer [flame throwers] being used. The second attack forced the 44<sup>th</sup> Battalion back from the trenches gained the previous evening east of the triangle in M.36D. Enemy suffered severe casualties - 200 Germans were seen lying out at day break opposite this battle front. 18 pounders fired 6363 rounds and 4.5 howitzers 684 rounds in defence of infantry. 1 gunner of 59<sup>th</sup> battery wounded.

Quiet during day. At 5pm Batteries 'stood to' to assist infantry with protective barrage when required. 44<sup>th</sup> Battalion led by Major Belcher bombed down German trench and regained all ground withdrawn from that morning. Hardly any of the enemy withstood the attack. Those in the trench were killed and those ran towards La Collotte suffered heavily from our shrapnel fire. After the attack was over and all captured ground consolidated, Major Belcher was killed by a reversed bullet from a sniper. Our casualties were otherwise slight.

### *This the Commonwealth War Graves Record of Major Belcher*

Name:	BELCHER
Initials:	C S
Nationality:	Canadian
Rank:	Major
Regiment/Service:	Canadian Infantry (New Brunswick Regiment)
Unit Text:	44th Bn.
Age:	26
Date of Death:	11/05/1917
Awards:	M C
Additional information:	Son of H. M. and Jessie S. Belcher, of 60, Douglas Lodge, Vancouver, British Columbia.
Casualty Type:	Commonwealth War Dead
Grave/Memorial Reference:	VIII. B. 21.
Cemetery:	VILLERS STATION CEMETERY, VILLERS-AU-BOIS

Other days were a mixture of answering S.O.S. calls to the front line infantries (to provide shelling to support their urgent requirements), repairing and maintaining battery positions, and firing on the occasional German balloon or hostile aircraft. In

the midst of all this on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1917 there was the Brigade Sports Day in preparation for the 1<sup>st</sup> Army Show. Two day later the war diary entry read;

*Divisional Artillery Sports. Brigade won most of the competitions. Daily harassing fire carried out.*

Such a brief comment, but conjures up the bizarre image of the Brigade competing on field and track behind the lines before getting back on the guns later that day to shell the enemy.



*The Souchez river valley today. D Battery would have been positioned in this vicinity, attacking towards the Givenchy-Vimy Ridge in the distance*

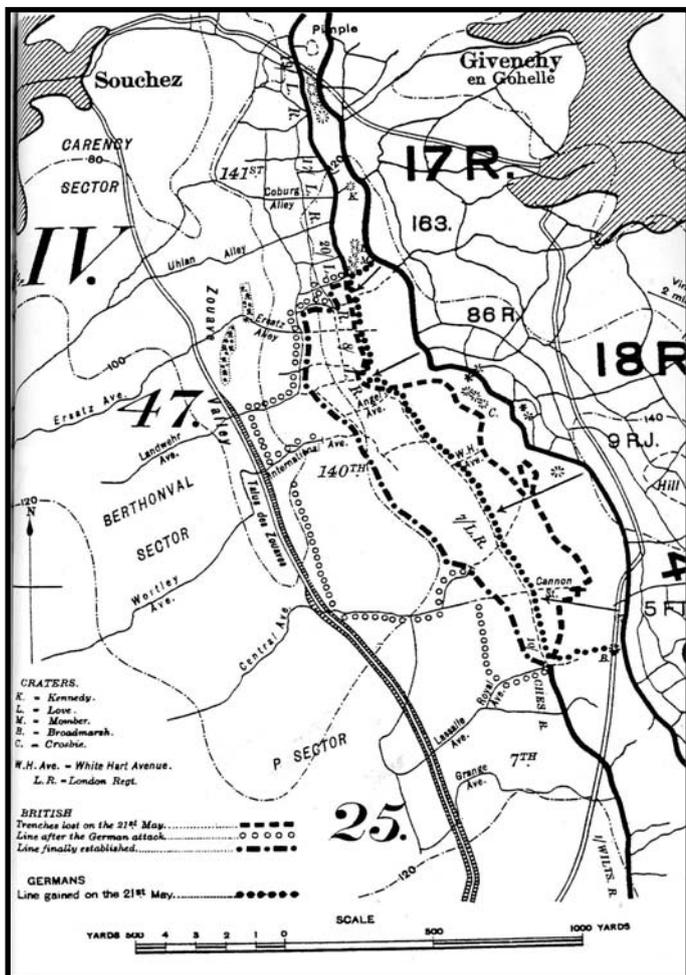
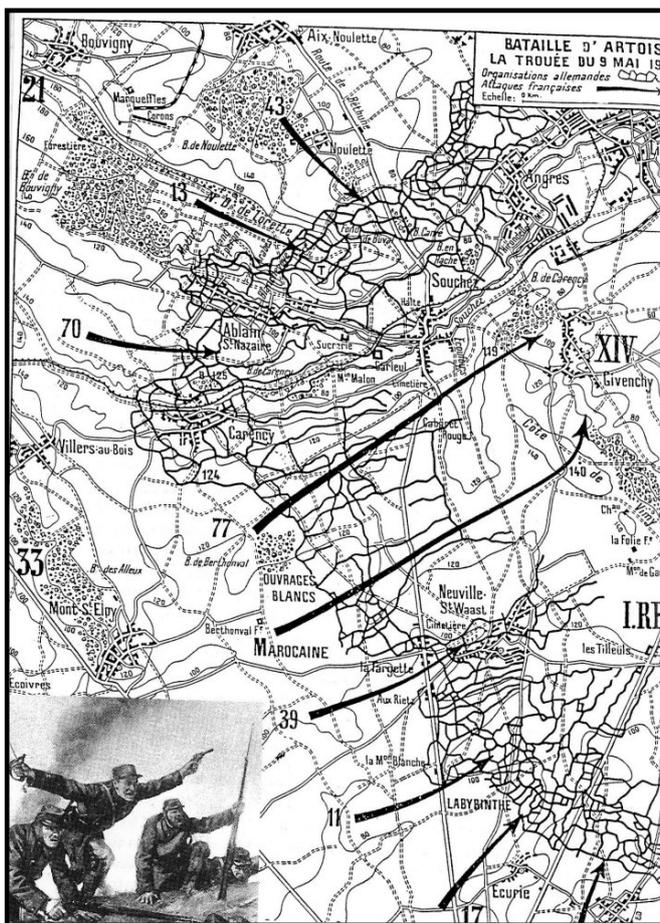


GETTING A FIELD GUN INTO POSITION. [Official photograph.]



A CORNER OF THE BATTLEFIELD NEAR ARRAS. [Official photograph.]

**Souchez river valley area 1915**



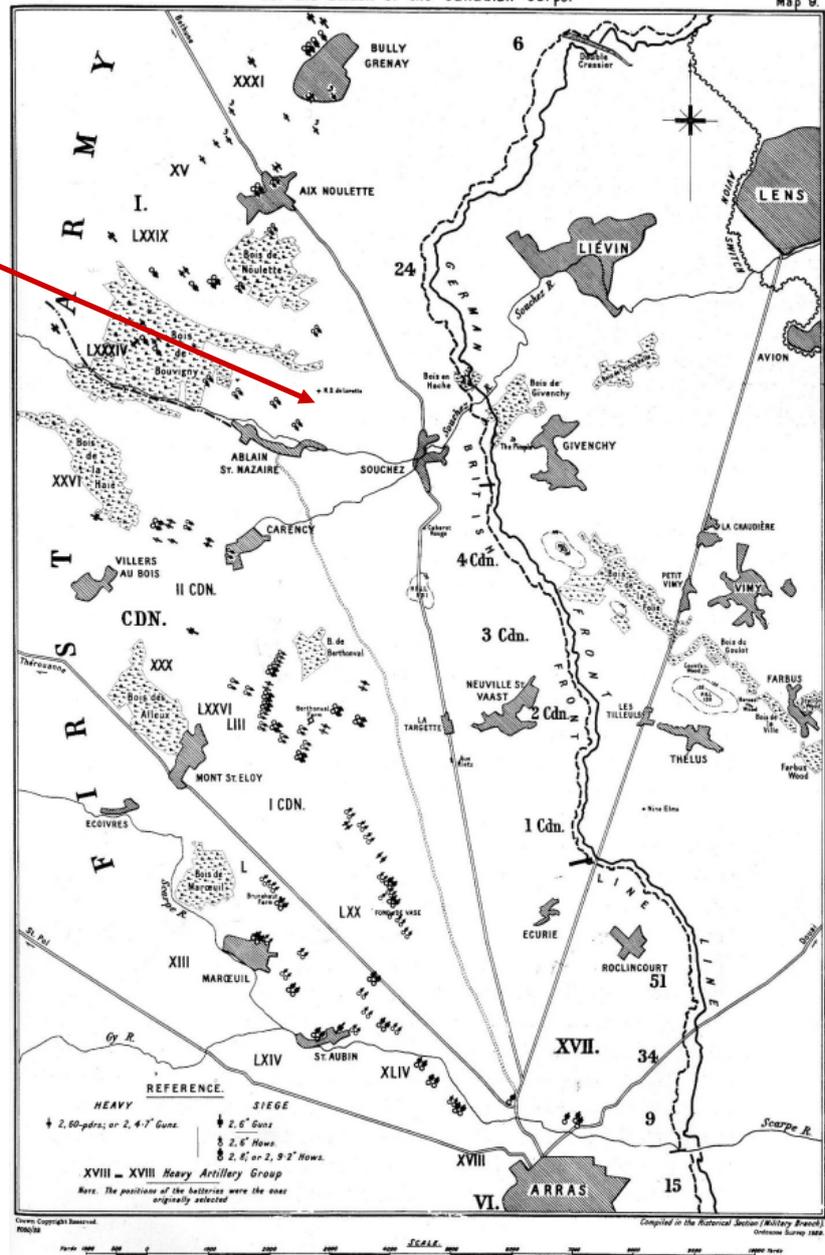
Above: The map show the warren of German trenches before being over run and pushed back to the ridge positions immediately to the west of Givenchy

Below: The same area in May 1917 when Charles joined 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade RFA

## VIMY, 1917.

The Concentration of the Heavy and Siege Artillery  
for the attack of the Canadian Corps.

Map 9



The photograph of the Souchez river valley was taken from here and was most likely the position of Charles' battery during May-July 1917

The fighting continued to be heavy into early July, when the brigade received orders to withdraw to the wagon lines at Ablain St. Nazaire, the village HQ to the rear of the front line gun emplacements. However, the news was not good for D Battery who had to remain in action with their howitzers now attached to the 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Field Artillery Brigade. For the main brigade it was the commencement of the handing over of guns to the 5<sup>th</sup> Army control, which were left in wagon lines at Ablain, while the men marched back to billets in Haillicourt near Bruay. Over the next few days the guns were dismantled and also sent to Bruay where they were overhauled and the men went on parades each day.

On 11<sup>th</sup> July, it had become apparent why they were moved to the Bruay billets and drilled on parade. Later that day they were ordered to form up and line the main street. A short while later King George V rode past visiting the troops along the Rue Nationale. This was not an isolated visit, the King made dozens of such tours and inspections in the battlefields during the war. The previous year while visiting behind the lines he took a fall from his horse which landed on top of him fracturing his pelvis. At the time of this July 1917 visit anti-German feeling towards the Royal family's ancestral roots led him to adopt the family name of Windsor. This proclamation was issued in the same week that he visited Bruay.



*Looking down on Ablain St Nazaire from Notre Dame de Lorette*



*King George V inspecting senior Canadian officers near Vimy 1917. Pictured left is the Rue Nationale, Bruay, today where the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade RFA lined the street for the visit of the King on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1917.*

Where Charles went to next is still the subject of further research. It is thought that the Brigade was involved in the nearby Battle of Hill 70, Lens (15-25 Aug 1917), before being moved north to the Ypres Salient in Belgium, where they were in action in the Second Battle of Passchendaele (26 Oct-10 Nov 1917).

This was followed by a returned to France where they were supporting the tank attack near Cambrai 20-21 Nov 1917 and the Capture of Bourlon Wood 23-28 Nov 1917. There was then four days of action repulsing the German counter attacks (30 Nov-3 Dec 1917). It would seem that the Brigade was then pulled out behind the lines as they do not appear to be involved in further major actions until the defence of the Ludendorff Offensive near Arras.

*[This further ongoing research will include further consultation of the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade RFA war diaries to confirm movements and will no doubt require a detailed section inserting here]*

### **Killed in Action**

However Charles would not live to see this. On 21<sup>st</sup> March 1918, the Germans began their Spring Offensive - the 'Kaiserschlacht' (*Kaiser's Battle*), also known as the Ludendorff Offensive, which was a series of German attacks along the Western Front, and would be the deepest advances by either side since 1914. This would be the only remaining chance the Germans would have to press home victory before the deployment of the mustering forces of the USA. *Operation Michael*, the German offensive which was centered on the Somme, was launched by the German artillery raining down shells on the British and Allied positions, purposely targeting the British artillery and rear lines of troops, ready for what they hoped would be a lighting attack to split the British and French Lines, with the overall intention of pushing the British forces back to the Channel. Casualties on both sides were horrendous. On the first day alone, the Royal Field Artillery had fatalities totalling 113 from the rank and file and 9 officers. (During the whole of the German spring offensive (21st March - 5th April 1918), the Royal Field Artillery had fatal casualties on the Western Front of 1,471 from the rank and file and 152 officers. During the Great War 1914-1919 overall, the Royal Field Artillery had fatal casualties in all theatres of 30,446 men from the rank and file and 2,513 officers).

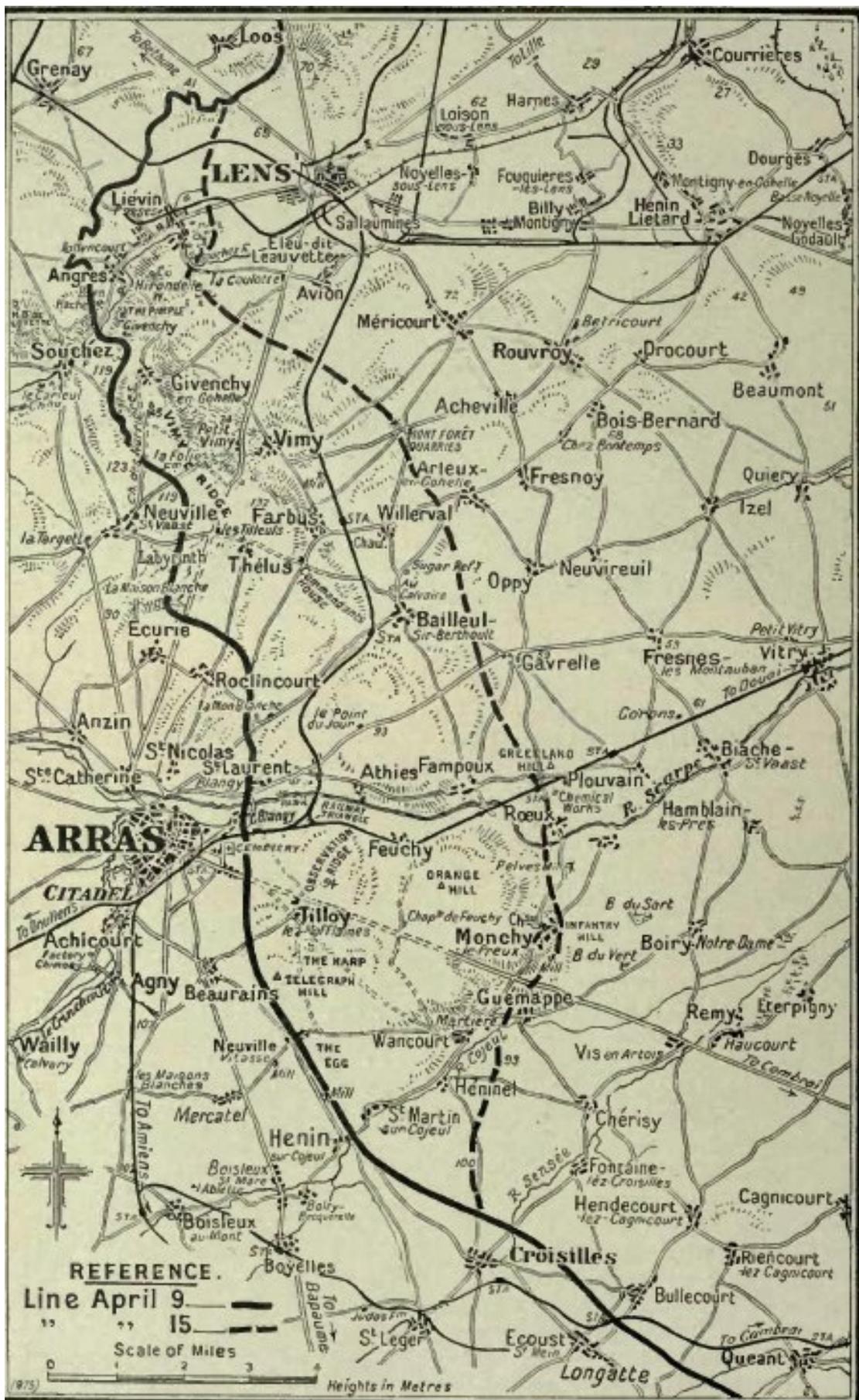
On the 5 March 1918, the War Diary of the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade records them being moved from Ficheux to Agny, south of Arras – the Brigade were returning to the front line after a short break behind the lines. By 13<sup>th</sup> March they were back in action firing on German trenches situated between Vis-en-Artois and Triangle Wood. However, much more serious action was on its way – and the British would be on the receiving end.

According to the War Diary of the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade, on the night of 21<sup>st</sup> March 1918, the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade were defending Monchy le Preux, a small village on an elevated position just to the east of the town of Arras. There were numerous strongholds surrounding the town as it was imperative that Arras should not fall. The German bombardment and ground attack continued throughout the night and following day, which became so heavy and losses so great that the order was given to pull out and fall back towards the town;

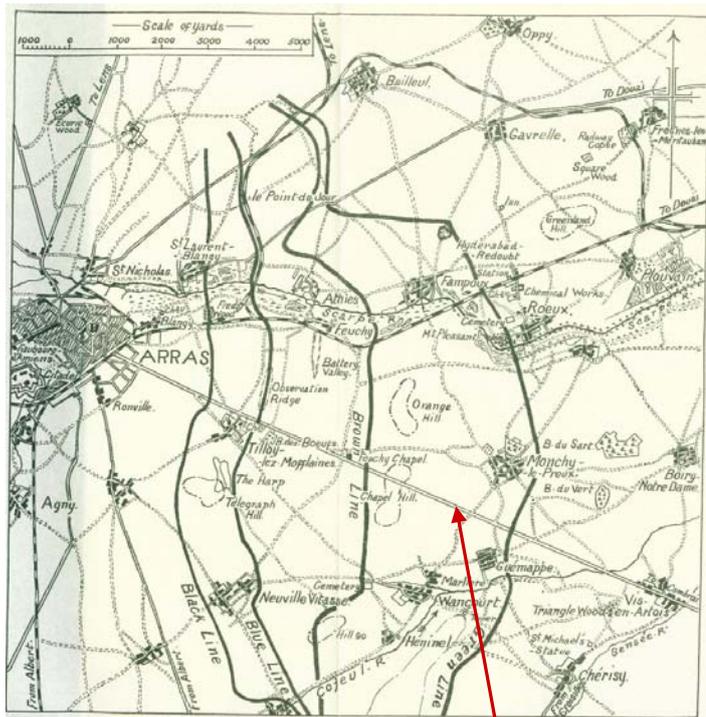
March 22     *Attack continues – more severe to the north and south of us*

March 23     *Bombardment still in progress*

*Infantry withdraw west of Wancourt to a line west of Monchy-le-Preux  
Batteries withdrawn to Nievelle Vitasse*



THE AREA OF THE BRITISH OFFENSIVE OF APRIL, 1917.



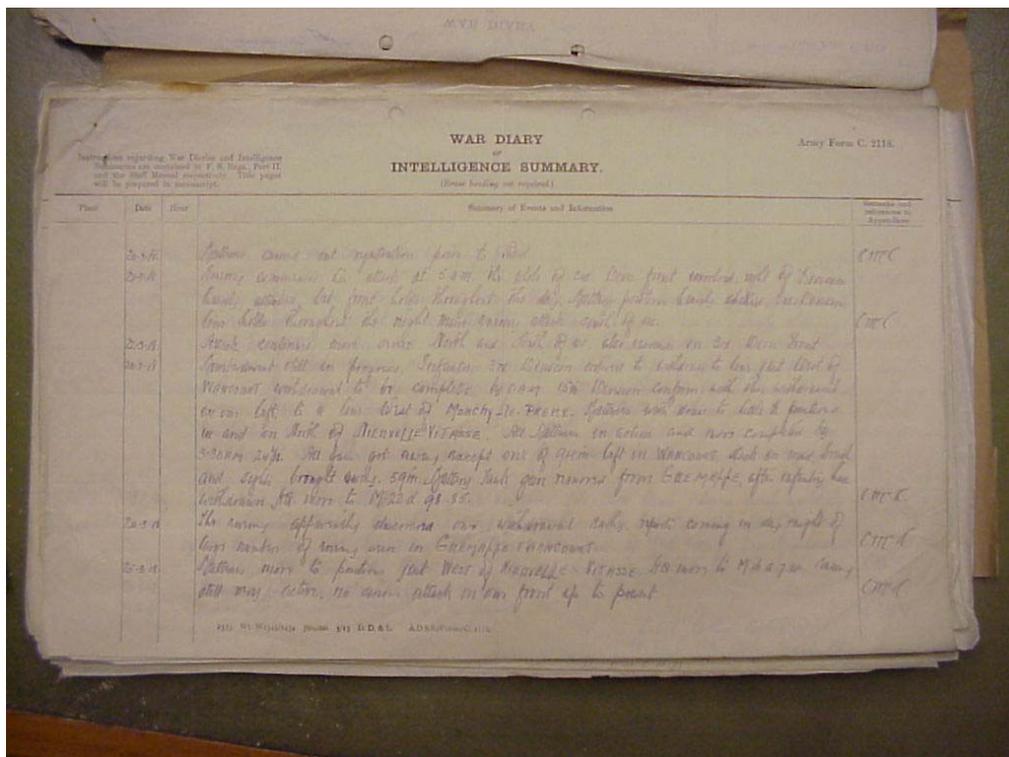
**Above: The Canadian Caribou memorial in Monchy-le-Preux**

**Top left: the map shows the position of Monchy-le-Preux in relation to Arras**

**Left: Monchy-le-Preux today from the Arras-Cambrai road**

**Below: The view today from Monchy-le-Preux looking down towards Boiry Notre Dame and Vis-en-Artois, from where the Operation Michael attacks came on 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> March 1918**





*The War Diary of 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade covering the action of 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> March*

There were several fatalities in D Battery, and Charles Royden was among them. How he was killed is unknown, but it is likely he died as the result of the shelling while the artillery and troops were withdrawing. Charles was then taken behind the lines, probably to the advanced dressing station in Boisieux-au-Mont, about 6 miles south of Arras. Once his death was confirmed he was then buried in the Bucquoy Road Cemetery near Ficheux.

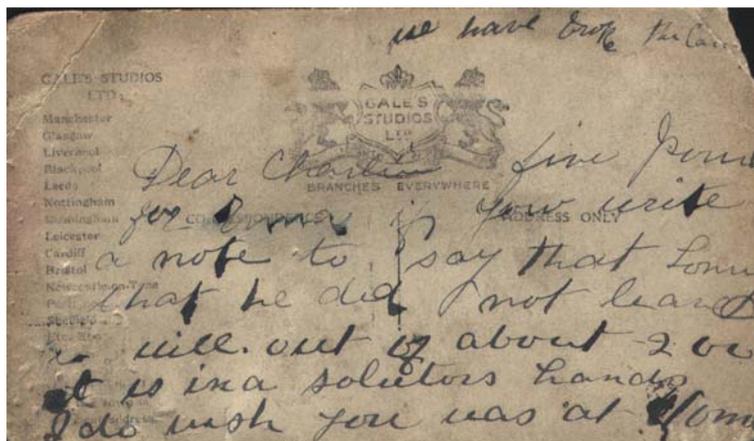
[In November 1916, the village of Ficheux was behind the German front line, but by April 1917, the German withdrawal had taken the line considerably east of the village. In April and May, the VII Corps Main Dressing Station was posted nearby for the Battles of Arras. It was followed by the addition of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> Casualty Clearing Stations, which remained at Boisieux-au-Mont until March 1918. The stations continued to use the Bucquoy Road Cemetery begun by the field ambulances. After the war, the cemetery was enlarged and relaid to a new design by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Within days, Charles' wife Emma received the official notification she had always dreaded. Charles' commanding officer also wrote to her saying he and Charles' battalion comrades deeply regretted his death. Such words no doubt written by most officers charged with the unenviable task of writing home to bereaved relatives, but still of some comfort and pride to Emma.

Emma was now a widow at 36, with six children to bring up. The eldest, Charles jnr, was still only fourteen years old. He would soon be expected to bring in a wage. At least there was Charles' war widows pension, amounting to 43s 4d per week (£2.17p), although this wasn't granted until September 1918. How Emma fed herself and six children in the meantime is unknown, but in later years she had a reputation as a strong, determined and forceful women - no doubt she was already shaped by the hardship of the war years – she was well prepared for life without her husband.

She wasn't alone in her grief of course, which is clearly revealed by the obituary notices placed in local paper a couple of weeks later. Close family lived in adjoining streets - Charles' sister Margaret had lost her husband, killed in action two years previously, and Charles' mother Elizabeth (d.1930) would also be able to help out if Emma had to go out to work.

A few weeks later Charles' possessions were returned to her - a wallet, locket, gold ring with a stone (probably his wedding ring), photographs and a purse containing two coins. Her husband went off to fight for king and country, and this sad, pathetic bundle was all that came back.



*We have broke the cart (?)*

*Dear Charlie five pounds  
for Emma if you write  
a note to say that Tommy (?)  
that he did not leave  
a will out of about 200  
it is in a solicitors hands  
I do wish you was at home*

This may have been one of the photographs found in Charles possession out in France and returned to Emma. It is likely to be his mother Elizabeth who also wrote the cryptic message on the reverse (shown above). It seems that some mishap had damaged the cart – probably Charles' hand cart, common on the streets at that time, used by Charles to carry his ladders and paint tins. The name of the person who has not left a will is unclear and no immediate relatives seem to fit the bill. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are money troubles at home and Charles is sorely missed.

An old battered crucifix has also been passed down to me with the legend that it was in Charles' hands as he was read the last rites. However, after obtaining his war papers, which listed the possessions returned to Emma, there was no mention. It may have been returned by a comrade, or, of course, it just may be a story told to his infant children and passed down to me.

## Charles Royden's Service Medals



Once the war was over the government began to issue service medals. The usual trio of awards, the 1914 Star (or the 1914-15 Star if appropriate), together with the British War Medal and the Victory Medal, became popularly known as 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred' after characters in a Daily Mail cartoon of the period. The dates of Charles' war record abroad gave him the medal entitlement of the British War Medal and the Victory Medal for his services in the Great War. This was confirmed by his medal index card held in The National Archives.



However, what happened to them is a mystery. They would have been awarded to Emma, his wife, but their whereabouts today are unknown. It seems strange that the memorial plaque (below), which was received, was passed down to me with the photographs and his battered crucifix, but no mention of the medals. Of course, they could have been passed down through other grand children, nephews or nieces over the last century, but after visiting Charles' children, all of whom are now passed away, no mention has ever been made.

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
ROYDEN Charles	RFA.	Bomber.	80135
Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	RFA/215 <sup>B</sup>	22973	Dead 22.3.18
BRITISH	- - -	-	
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry thereon			

*Charles' medal index card held in The National Archives*

## Memorial Plaque

In 1916 a Government Committee was set up by Secretary of State for War, David Lloyd George, to consider what form of memorial should be made available to the next of kin of those who died 'on active service'. On 7 November 1916, *The Times* informed its readers that the cost of the memorial was to be borne by the State and that the precise form it was to take was a matter for much longer consideration, though he initially accepted idea was that it should be '*...a small metal plate recording the man's name and services.*' It was not until August 1917, in the midst of the Third Battle of Ypres, that the memorial 'plate' project resurfaced. The General Committee decided that the commemoration should now take the form of a bronze plaque. The announcement was reported in *The Times* for Monday 13 August 1917, and the public competition for appropriate designs was described in extravagant detail. The first prize of £250, for two model designs, was awarded to 'Pyramus' - Edward Carter Preston, of the Sandon Studios Society, Liverpool. Production of the plaques began in December 1918 and around 1,150,000 were made. The plaques commemorated those men and women who died between 4 August 1914 and 10 January 1920 who had been killed on active service.

Memorial Scrolls were also sent to the next of kin, and were sent out in seven and a quarter inch long cardboard tubes. The plaques themselves were dispatched under separate cover in stiff card wrapping enclosed within white envelopes bearing the Royal Arms. Both memorials were accompanied by a letter from King George V which bore his facsimile signature and read as follows:

*I join with my grateful people in sending you this memorial of a brave life given  
for others in the Great War.  
George R.I.*

Emma received the memorial penny for Charles, which was passed on to myself after the death of my grandfather.





**H**E whom this scroll commemorates was numbered among those who, at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom.

Let those who come after see to it that his name be not forgotten.

**Bdr Charles Royden  
Royal Field Artillery**



BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

I join with my grateful people in sending you this memorial of a brave life given for others in the Great War.

*George R. I.*



## Other Memorials

Charles Royden is recorded on several memorials including:

### The Commonwealth War Graves Database

Casualty Details	
Name:	ROYDEN
Initials:	C
Nationality:	United Kingdom
Rank:	Bombardier
Regiment/Service:	Royal Field Artillery
Unit Text:	"D" Bty. 18th Bde.
Age:	36
Date of Death:	22/03/1918
Service No:	80135
Additional information:	Son of John and Elizabeth Royden; husband of Emma Royden, of 160, Wellington Rd., Dingle, Liverpool. Native of Liverpool.
Casualty Type:	Commonwealth War Dead
Grave/Memorial Reference:	II. D. 22.
Cemetery:	BUCQUOY ROAD CEMETERY, FICHEUX

### The War Memorial Book, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral



This book is mounted within a large case on a raised plinth. A page is turned each day. There were three small volumes on show for the public to access. Charles Royden was recorded here too, although they are no longer *in situ* and may be kept in storage.



## Liverpool Town Hall - Hall of Remembrance

The Hall of Remembrance was opened by the Duke of Windsor, then Prince of Wales, in 1921, and contains the City's Roll of Honour. The Roll of Honour carries the names of over 13,000 military men from Liverpool who died during the First World War. This list of war dead began to be compiled during the war when names of the fallen were posted in a window overlooking Exchange Flags and relatives queued to add names. Because of this, the list is far from complete, but a number of names have been added since 1921 on additional panels.



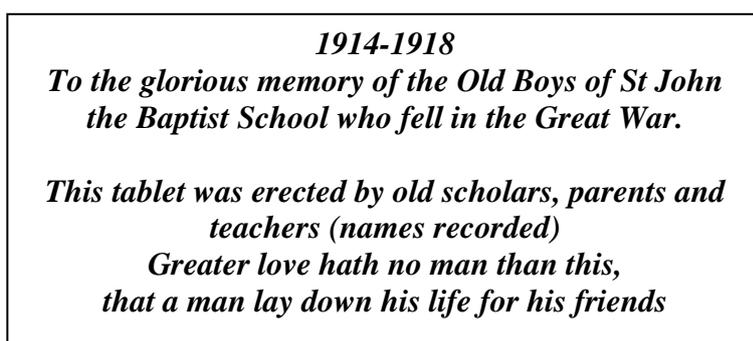
Charles Royden is recorded on the Roll of Honour.

The Lord Mayor's Office has transcribed the list of names and a database has been created which can be used to search for names on this - the First World War Memorial Roll of Honour of Liverpool's Military War Dead. This is now held on the web site for the Town Hall and the entry for Charles is shown here;

Panel	Rank	Initials	Surname	Award	Regiment
Panel 45	BOMB.	C.	ROYDEN		R.F.A. (18TH BRIGADE.)

## St John the Baptist School Memorial Plaque

Charles was an old boy of St Johns (Wellington Road) and his name appears on the school war memorial.



The school has long since been demolished and the plaque is now kept in the nearby St Cleopas Church on the corner of Mill Street and Beresford Road.

## Newspaper obituaries

**ROYDEN**—In loving memory of my dear husband, Bombardier, Charles Royden, R.F.A., who was killed in action March 22, 1918, aged 36 years. (Never forgotten by his sorrowing wife and six children, 160, Wellington-road; also his mother, brother Will, and brother-in-law Alan (somewhere in France); and deeply mourned by all his sisters and brother-in-law. Respected by all who knew him.)  
Rest, my dear husband, but oh, how I'll miss you.  
Loving you dearly your memory I'll keep;  
Never while life lasts, shall I forget you,  
Sacred's the spot where you lie asleep.  
**ROYDEN**—March 22, killed in action, aged 36 years. Bombardier Charles Royden (our Charlie), R.F.A., dearly loved youngest brother of Margaret Taylor and brother-in-law of late Corpl. Joe Taylor, 396, Mill-street. (Dearly loved and sadly missed by his only sister, Maggie, and family.)  
Proudly he did his duty,  
Nobly he fought and fell;  
Our only grief we could not be there  
To bid him a last farewell.  
Rest peaceful, dear brother, in a hero's grave.  
Your life for your country you nobly gave.  
Not farewell, dear brother, only good-night.

*Obituaries placed by the family in the local Liverpool Newspapers, March 1918.*

The obituary above is particularly moving, containing the bereavement poetry and touching personal comments. Margaret refers to him as 'Our Charlie' and his brother as 'Will'. (My father was always 'Billy' as a child and 'Bill' as an adult).

It confirms that his mother was still alive and that Emma had a brother Alan, also fighting out in France. This is most likely who my father's brother, Alan, was named after.

It also confirmed the address of his sister Margaret and that her husband had already been killed in the war.

## LIVERPOOL'S FALLEN HEROES.



Official news has just been received by Mrs. Royden, of 160, Wellington-road, Dingle, of the death of her husband, Bomb. Chas. Royden, killed in France on March 22nd. His major and comrades deeply regret his death. He was an old scholar of St. John the Baptist School, and joined the forces at the outbreak of the war.

## **Return to the Battlefields**

In 1966, Charles' daughter Agnes received a reply to her letter to the Imperial War Graves Commission (now known as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission). It detailed the location of her father's grave and she was able to visit the cemetery later that year. On a visit to Agnes' home during the late 1970s she gave me the letter. It was a long wait, but eventually I was able to visit the area myself with my two sons, Lewis and Liam, en route to a family holiday.

After an overnight stay in St. Omer we headed south towards Arras. The weather was glorious and soon we could see glimpses of the breathtaking Vimy Ridge memorial from the motorway. We doubled back and passed a grim looking German cemetery as we headed towards Vimy. The road wound through fenced off woodlands where the remains of trenches and craters could be clearly seen. The road climbed and opened out on the top of the ridge where the 250' memorial rose before us.

On leaving Vimy we headed off to Arras and with the aid of a special edition Michelin map sent to us by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (marked with cemeteries under its care), we soon found the Bucquoy Road. Approximately 5km south of Arras we arrived at cemetery No.100, near the village of Ficheux. The rural location was peaceful and completely surrounded on all sides by golden cornfields. The cemetery was immaculate and looked like it had been laid out only days previously, instead of over 80 years earlier. The original letter to Agnes gave the plot number as Plot II, Row D number 22. It was an emotional moment, having waited 25 years to make the trip. It was special too, to have Lewis (10) and Liam (7) there to see where their Great-Great Grandfather had come to rest.

The cemetery was beautifully maintained and the visit also made very clear the comprehensive care carried out by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, from the excellent web site, videos, teaching packs, and the provision of maps, to the primary role of the maintenance of so many cemeteries from so many different theatres of war. Nevertheless, the weather over time had made Charles' name rather faint on the headstone, but a dash of water soon brought out the detail for a photograph. In the low entrance wall a small brass door was set which provided a pleasant surprise in the form of a visitor's book and register. We signed in our own entries after finding Charles' details in the register. Even the pen was still in the register file. It all added to a most pleasurable experience despite the circumstances, to finally visit the site and to discover that in such a beautiful foreign place it will be forever England.

Over the years I have made numerous return journeys also made several trips on my own, so I could spend unrestricted time researching and walking the battlefields. One trip began in The National Archives in Kew, London, where I discovered Charles War Records (the 'burnt records' – only a fifth of these records survive – they were moved during the Second World War to a supposed safe underground storage, but took a direct hit during the Blitz and 80% of them were destroyed. Those that survived suffered scorching and water damage, (hence the name 'burnt records'). I felt quite ecstatic to find Charles' records had survived. I also obtained his medal card, pension record and copied numerous extracts from the 18th Brigade War Diary. Sitting outside in the car park after the Record Office had closed and poring over the sheets of photocopied records, it was clear that so many more avenues of investigation had been opened up. I had to go to Belgium and

**France to follow them up. As luck would have it I had my passport on me and time on my hands in the school holidays. I started the engine. By 8.30pm I was in Belgium.**

**What followed was a fascinating week following the movements Charles had taken using the war diary and his army documents, which cumulated in discovering the site of his likely death and a final visit to his grave.**

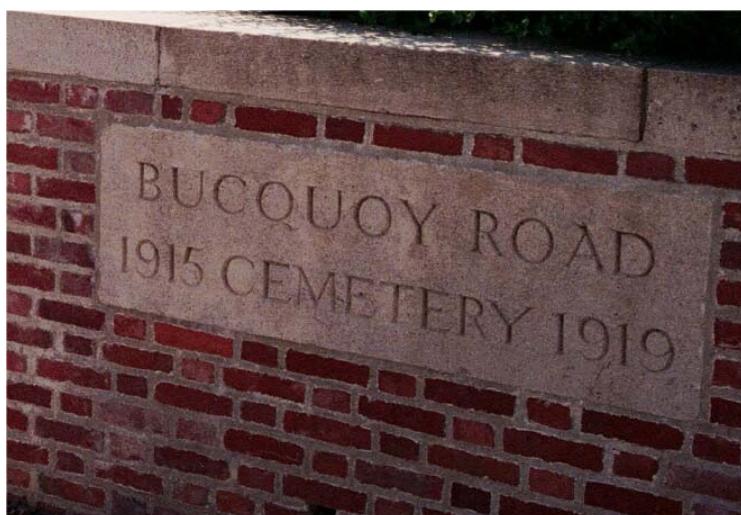
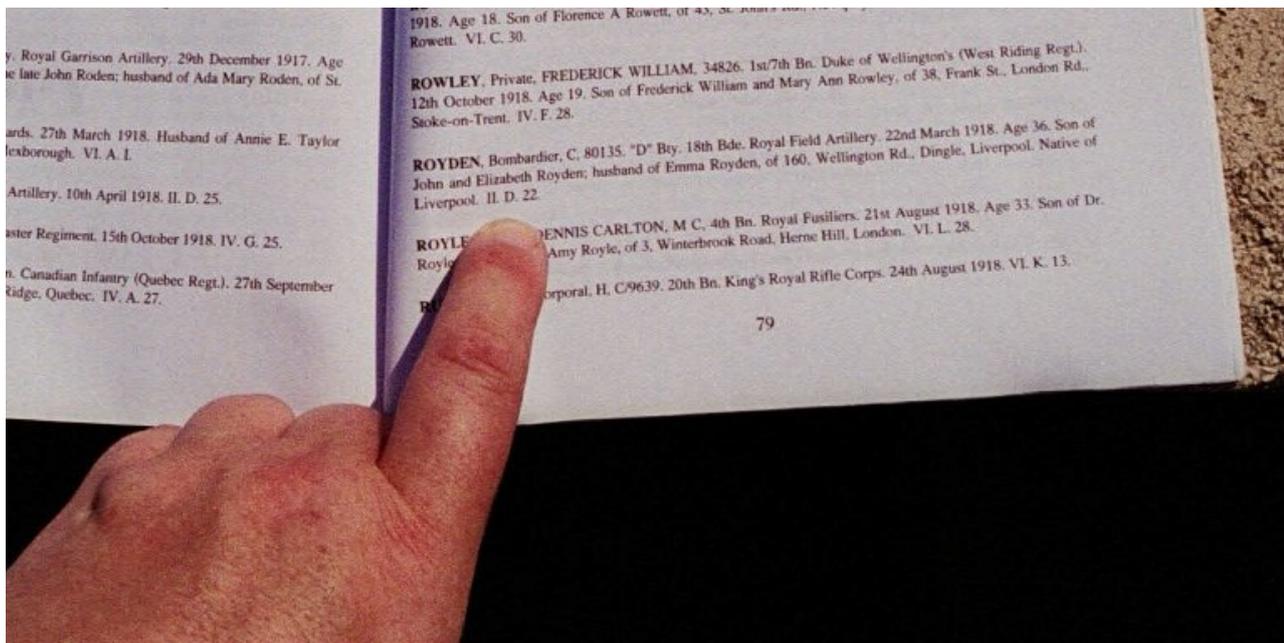
**One uncanny experience was meeting Paul Reed, the noted Battlefields expert, author and consultant to many a TV programme. I had used two of his guide books all week and he was actually in the very last site I had visited at Delville Wood on the Somme. It was early evening, there was no one else around as the visitor centre was about to close and it seemed that here I was after using his advice throughout my journey, and here he was to see how I had got on at the end. In fact, he did take great interest in what I was doing before signing my books.**

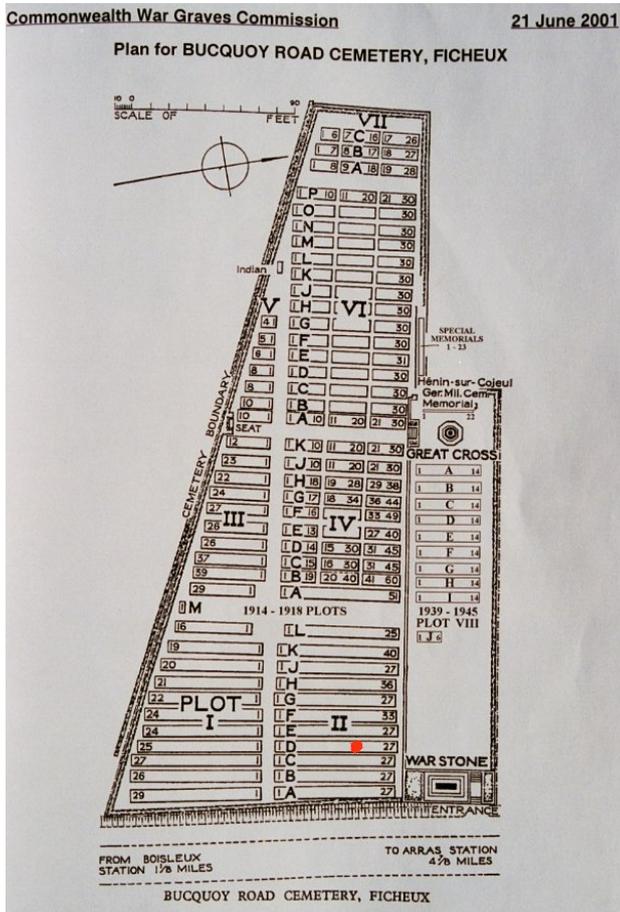
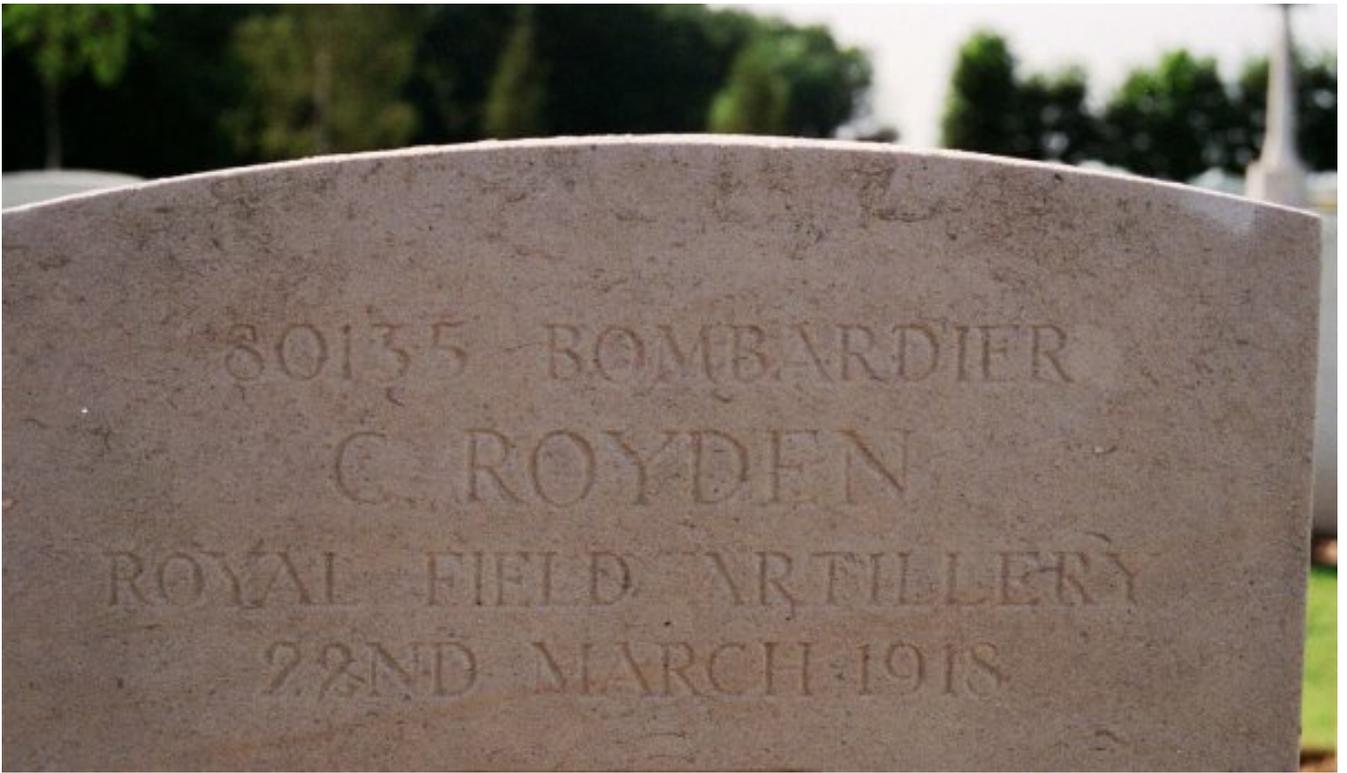




**The original Bucquoy Road cemetery before being laid out by  
the Imperial War Graves Commission.  
Row D – where Charles is buried - is in the foreground**









# **PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE**

**WORLD WAR ONE SOLDIERS'  
DOCUMENTS  
WO 363**

## **NEW SOLDIER'S RECORD**

Filmed by Microformat Systems b.v.  
at the  
Public Record Office.  
The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund  
and the  
Public Record Office



Duplicate

156

# SHORT SERVICE.

(For the Duration of the War.)

## ATTESTATION OF

No. 80135 Name Charles Royden Royal Regiment of Artillery (L.I. & Co.)  
Corps

### Questions to be put to the Recruit before enlistment.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. What is your Name? ...   | 1. <u>Charles Royden</u>                              |
| 2. What is your full Address? ...   | 2. <u>160 Wellington Rd</u><br><u>Wingfield, York</u> |
| 3. Are you a British Subject? ...   | 3. <u>Yes</u>   |
| 4. What is your Age? ...  | 4. <u>23</u> Years <u>9</u> Months                    |
| 5. What is your Trade or Calling? ...   | 5. <u>Painter</u>                                     |
| 6. Are you Married? ...   | 6. <u>Yes</u>   |
| 7. Have you ever served in any branch of His Majesty's Forces, naval or military, if so,* which?                      | 7. <u>Yes West Lancs P. F. A.</u>                     |
| 8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated ...  | 8. <u>Yes</u>   |
| 9. Are you willing to be enlisted for General Service? ...  | 9. <u>Yes</u>   |
| 10. Did you receive a Notice, and do you understand its meaning, and who gave it to you?                              | 10. { Name <u>Yes</u><br>Corps <u>Rgt Royden</u>      |
| 11. Are you willing to serve upon the following conditions provided His Majesty should so long require your services? | 11. <u>Yes</u>  |
- For the duration of the War, at the end of which you will be discharged with all convenient speed. If employed with Hospitals, depots of Mounted Units, and as Clerks, etc., you may be retained after the termination of hostilities until your services can be spared, but such retention shall in no case exceed six months.

I, Charles Royden do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made.

Charles Royden SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.

J. H. Overlandy Signature of Witness.

### OATH TO BE TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.

I, Charles Royden swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown, and dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

### CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.

The Recruit above named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to.

The said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me at SEAFORTH on this 20 day of 191 M.A.

Signature of the Justice B O S Regt-Dist

### † Certificate of Approving Officer.

I certify that this Attestation of the above-named Recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required forms have been compiled with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the 7

If enlisted by special authority, Army Form B. 203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original at the 7

Date 191  
SEAFORTH

B O S Regt-Dist

† The signature of the Approving Officer is to be affixed in the presence of the Recruit.  
‡ Here insert the "Corps" for which the Recruit has been enlisted.

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R A A 5

80135

To be used for recruits enlisting direct into the Regular Army  
Form B. 178\* to be used for Special Reservists  
and Special Reservists enlisting into the Regular Army.

MEDICAL HISTORY of

Surname *Bojden*

Christian Name *Charles*

TABLE I.—GENERAL TABLE.

Birthplace ... Parish *Dingle Pool* County *Lancs*

Examined ... on *20<sup>th</sup>* day of *Jan* 191*5*  
at *Seaforth*

Declared Age ... *33* years *270* days.

Trade or Occupation ... *Painter*

Height ... *5* feet, *7* $\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Weight ... *123* lbs.

Chest Measurement { Girth when fully Expanded *34* $\frac{1}{2}$  inches.  
Range of Expansion *2* $\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Physical Development ...

Vaccination Marks { Arm ... Right Left  
Number *3*

When Vaccinated ... *Infancy*

Vision ... { R.E.—V= *6/6*  
L.E.—V= *6/6*

(a) Marks indicating congenital peculiarities or previous disease....

(b) Slight defects but not sufficient to cause rejection

Approved by ... (Signature) *[Signature]*  
(Rank) *Lieut R A M O*  
Medical Officer.

Enlisted ... at *Seaforth*  
on ... day of ... 191*5*

Joined on Enlistment ...	Corps	Regtl. No.
Transferred to ...		

Became non-effective by ...  
(Signature) on ... day of ... 19*15*

### Transfer Clothing and Necessaries Statement.

MEMORANDUM showing the articles of Clothing in possession of a Man proceeding from the No. 1 Battery R.A. to the 20<sup>th</sup> Div<sup>n</sup> Artillery

Date of Transfer 19. 6. 1915

Regimental No., Rank and Name 80135 Sgt Royden E.C.

(Date of enlistment) or recommencement of Service \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Articles not in possession to be struck out of the list, and any articles not included should be inserted	No.	Articles not in possession to be struck out of the list, and any articles not included should be inserted
2	Boots, Ankle, or Shoes, Highland, pairs	1	Cloak or Great Coat
1	Cap	1	Spurs, Jack, pairs
2	Drawers (insert kind) pairs		
	Frock (insert kind)		
	Canvas		
	Gaiters, Highland, pairs, drab		Kit of Necessaries, complete
1	Gloves, pairs		
2	Jacket, Service Dress, or blue Kilt		With the exception of
1	Pantaloons, Cord, pairs	1	Brass brush
1	Puttees, pairs	1	Button Brass
1	Shoes, Canvas, pairs	1	Cloth Brush
1	Trousers, Service Dress, or blue, pairs	1	Polishing
	Canvas	1	Blacking
1	Waistcoat, Cardigan		

Signature of the Soldier Charles Royden

Certified that this statement is correct in every particular.

Date 18. 6. 15 Alarvy - Gadd. 35-40 Captain, P.F.A.  
Commanding No. 1 Battery 1<sup>st</sup> Res. Bde. I.A.C.  
Commanding Squadron, Battery or Company.

Station Worcester \_\_\_\_\_ Name of unit man is leaving

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Commanding Squadron, Battery or Company.

Station \_\_\_\_\_ Name of unit man is joining

Instructions.—This transfer clothing and necessaries statement will be made out by the soldier, and submitted to the Commanding Officer of the unit from which the transfer will be made.

Squadron, Troop, Battery and Company Conduct Sheet

Regiment of R.H.A. 1914

Regimental Number & Name: 135 Charles Royden

Age on 23 years 9 months Painter

Place and Station of Enlistment: Woolwich Regt

Date of Enlistment: 20/1/15

Period of Enlistment: 20/1/15 to 20/1/16

Place	Date of Offence	Rank	OFFENCE	Names of Witnesses	Punishment awarded	By whom awarded	REMARKS
<u>Woolwich Regt</u>	<u>15/4/15</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	<u>Absent from g. on. until 6 a.m. 14/5</u>	<u>Documentary</u>	<u>Forfeits 14 days pay &amp; 1/4 to 20 as a Field Punishment</u>	<u>Major A. Fitzpatrick R.H.A.</u>	<u>Forfeits 2 days pay by 1/16</u>

To be filled over

Casualty Form - Active Service

Regiment or Corps R.H.A. 1914

Regimental No. 80135 Rank Capt Name Royden

Enlisted (a) 20/1/15 Terms of Service (a) W.O. Service re-opens from (a) 20/1/15

Date of promotion to present rank \_\_\_\_\_ Date of appointment to lance rank \_\_\_\_\_ Numerical position on roll of N.C.O.s \_\_\_\_\_

Extended \_\_\_\_\_ Re-engaged \_\_\_\_\_ Qualification (b) Capt

Date	From whom received	Report	Place	Date	Authority
		No. 1. Hospital Posted	Gnr.		
		13th. 14. Res. Bde. Posted	"	8/8/15	
		20. Div. at Ly. Posted	"	19/6/15	
		6. 15. Res. Bde. Posted	"	26/8/15	
		Appointed A.P.S.		1/10/15	
		36th. Res. Bde.	Coventry	1/11/15	
3.12.17	C. O. 1st Lt.	1st Lt. 1st Lt.	1st Lt.	3.12.17	
2.7.17	C. O.	2nd Lt.	2nd Lt.	2.7.17	
19.11.17	ad. 1st Lt.	1st Lt.	1st Lt.	25.8.17	1st Lt.
7.12.17	ad. 1st Lt.	1st Lt.	1st Lt.	7.12.17	1st Lt.
2.1.18	ad. 1st Lt.	1st Lt.	1st Lt.	2.1.18	1st Lt.

CAPT. R.F.A.  
COMMANDING 36th RESERVE BATTERY R.F.A.

(a) In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or enlisted into, Squadron D, Army Reserve, particulars of such re-engagement or enlistment will be entered in the column for re-engagement or enlistment.

(b) e.g. Signaller, Shoeburyness, etc., also special qualifications in technical Corps duties.

Form B. 111, Army Form A. 56, or other official documents.

Place: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

*Wife*

*Emma Royden*  
*160 Wellington Road*  
*Wingfield Liverpool*

No.	Description	Quantity	Value	Remarks
1	...	...	...	...
2	...	...	...	...
3	...	...	...	...
4	...	...	...	...
5	...	...	...	...

*W. H. ...*

*W. H. ...*

953-H3574 250,000 4/17 HWA(P-1619/3) Army Form B. 104-136

Any further letter on this subject should be addressed to: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Officer i/c \_\_\_\_\_  
 Records, \_\_\_\_\_

and the following No. quoted. \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Place: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Station: *Woolwich* Date: *7/14* Sm.

SIR OR MADAM,

I am directed to forward the undermentioned articles of private property of the late No. *80135* Rank *Private*  
 Name *Royden* Regt. *R.P.A.*

I have to acknowledge receipt of the articles as stated opposite.

and would ask that you will kindly acknowledge receipt of the same on the form opposite:— *W.C.C.*  
*three gold rings with stones*  
*two gold coins, watch, photos*

Yours faithfully,

(Sign here) *Emma Royden*

The Officer i/c Records, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Station: \_\_\_\_\_

These are the only articles at present for coming, should any further articles be received at any time they will be duly recorded.

Yours faithfully,

Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to:—

The Secretary  
Ministry of Pensions  
(Widows and Dependants Branch)  
45, Grosvenor Road,  
London, S.W. 1.

MINISTRY OF PENSIONS

Widows & Dependants Branch

45, GROSVENOR ROAD,  
LONDON, S.W. 1.

and the following number quoted

RECEIVED  
25 SEP 1918  
RECORDS

24. 9. 1918

No. 6880 P 2 10 4 (Rev.)

M.H. & R.F.A. RECORDS  
28 SEP 1918

SIR,

I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you that the widow of No. 80135

Capt. Charles Payne  
R.A.F.

has been awarded a Pension of 48/4 a week, for herself and Six children, with effect from the 1st July 1918

The Officer issuing Separation Allowance has been informed of the award.

The Pension will be paid from the Pension Issue Office.

The certificates received in support of the application have been returned to the widow.

I am, SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

*Matthew Nathan*

The Officer in charge of Records,

Secretary.

## Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In Memory of  
Bombardier C ROYDEN

80135, "D" Bty. 18th Bde., Royal Field Artillery  
who died age 36  
on 22 March 1918

Son of John and Elizabeth Royden; husband of Emma Royden, of 160, Wellington Rd., Dingle, Liverpool.  
Native of Liverpool.

Remembered with honour  
BUCQUOY ROAD CEMETERY, FICHEUX



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

### Memorial Certificate

*Proudly he did his duty  
Nobly he fought and fell:  
Our only grief we could not be there  
To bid him a last farewell  
Rest peaceful, dear brother, in a hero's grave  
Your life for your country you nobly gave  
Not farewell dear brother, only goodnight.*

**Margaret (Royden) Taylor (March 1918)**  
The sister of Charles Royden

