

SOLDIERS NAMES ADDED TO DORCHESTER WAR MEMORIAL AFTER 92 YEARS AT CEREMONY IN DORCHESTER

By Brian Bates

On 16th July, at noon, a group of about 30 people assembled around Dorchester's main war memorial, at the junction of South Street and South Walks to commemorate two soldiers of the Great War, whose names had just been added to the town's Great War Roll of Honour. There followed a ceremony, attended by The Mayor of Dorchester, representatives of the British Legion, the Royal Naval Association and the Dorsets Veterans' Association. We were also fortunate enough to have Major Matt McDonald, of the Canadian army, who was representing the people of Canada. Our esteemed secretary, Judy, and member Robert represented the Dorset & South Wiltshire Branch WFA. We also had three serving members of 4 Rifles present, one of whom was a relative of one of the soldiers being remembered. Other relatives and members of the public also attended. The two men being remembered that day fought and died with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), hence the presence of the Canadian officer.

The ceremony commenced with a short introduction by me explaining how Canada came into the war and a summary of the major operations her troops were involved in. I also quoted something said by a French Canadian on our declaration of war on Germany:

"It is our duty to let Great Britain know and to let the friends and foes of Great Britain know that there is in Canada but one mind and one heart and that all Canadians are behind the Mother Country."

Next, relatives of the fallen gave biographies of each man, followed by a prayer. Then came the exhortation, followed by 'last post' and 'reveille,' played by a trumpeter from the Light Cavalry Band, Bovington Camp. We were treated to an excellent rendition of the Royal Armoured Corps version, which I had not heard before. Finally, there was the laying of the wreaths, before we made a hasty retreat out of the blazing sunshine, for refreshments in the United Church.

This event all began some six months ago, when a lady from Sherborne phoned me to say that she had read my book, 'Dorchester Remembers the Great war,' and wondered why her relative, George Quinton, was not shown on any of our town's memorials. I suggested that she get in touch with the Town Council to see if they

would be prepared to add him to the list. In response to a request from the town clerk, I researched George's eligibility and found that he had as much right to be on there as any other person, and more right than some.

I happened to mention what I was doing to a relative of two other soldiers who appear in my book and he immediately chirped up with, 'well, in that case, I think Charlie Cutt should be on there, too.' So, we went through the same procedures and finally ended up with a new plaque, containing the two names and the ceremony. Details of Charlie and George are as follows:

Pte GEORGE QUINTON - 491179

George was born in Devizes on 11 November, 1896, the son of Mr H and Mrs E Quinton. In 1914 he was visiting his brother James, in Ontario Canada when, instead of returning to the UK he decided to join the Canadian forces. He enlisted in London, Ontario, on 25 May, 1915, giving his occupation as farmer. He embarked for England on 17 March, 1916 and arrived on the 23rd. He joined the 1st Btn CEF in France on 23 July, 1916, a month after gaining his good conduct stripe. George remained with the 1st Btn until he joined the ranks of the 3rd Canadian Tunnelling Coy, on 27 January, 1917, which was operating near the river Lys at the time.

On 17 September, 1917 the Tunnellers were building dugouts at Mount Sorrell, on the Ypres-Menin Rd, when an enemy shell landed, killing George. He was buried by the roadside at Clapham Junction but has no known grave. Presumably it was either destroyed or just not found. His name appears on the Menin Gate memorial. Although George never appeared on any Dorchester war memorials his death was recorded in All Saints Church newsletter. At the time of his death his parents were living at 42 Tilley's Buildings, Dorchester.

Cpl CHARLES CUTT - 180027

Charles Cutt was born at Upwey, near Weymouth, on 30 October, 1896. He was related to the Parsons family, the well known purveyors of tea, coffee and groceries, in Dorchester. The shop remained in the town for over one hundred years and many a Durnovarian has been delighted by the wonderful aroma of roasting coffee that emanated from the open door of their shop in High East Street. It is now a Turkish take-away.

Charles, or Charlie as he was more commonly called emigrated to Canada with his parents. The family lived in Victoria, British Columbia and he worked as a baker. On 15 December, 1915 Charlie was enlisted into the 88th Btn (Victoria Fusiliers). After initial training he arrived in England on 8 June, 1916, where he was transferred to the 30th Reserve Btn for the rest of his training. On completion

Charlie made the journey across the Channel and joined the 47th Btn in the field, on 20 August.

On 13 April, 1917, the battalion commander wrote the following in the war diary, whilst in trenches at Vimy Ridge:

'Splendid day, snow nearly all gone - state of ground on ridge very bad - Several enemy observation balloons up - our aeroplanes very active - intermittent shelling of ridge by enemy's heavies.'

He then went on to list the service numbers of 21 men including Charlie who had been Killed in Action that day. Charlie was buried in Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension. Lievin is a small town 3.5 kilometres west of Lens. The cemetery is on the south west side of the town on the road to Givenchy-en-Gohelle

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