FORGET ME NOT

Christopher Shelton
Karen Jarvis's Great Uncle
Joe, Max, Jasmin & Annie Jarvis's Great, Great Uncle

Christopher Shelton was born in Burton Joyce, Nottinghamshire on the 13th July 1896. The family moved to Hoby in 1914 and he found a job as a Railway porter in Syston and later at East Langton.

On the 8th November 1915, or possibly 8th December his service record states both dates, he signed up at Leicester (10th Battalion) under the Derby scheme. Under the terms of this scheme, men would only be called up when necessary and they could go back to their usual occupations in the meantime and make arrangements. They were also promised a degree of choice into which regiment they were sent and at some point, Christopher asked for a Navy transfer, eventually ending up in the Royal Naval Division. The RND, although fighting in the trenches alongside the army, continued Naval traditions and therefore instead of a private, Christopher was an able seaman. He signed his enrolment documents into the Navy at Blandford on 17th April 1917, giving his home address as: The Cottage, Hoby.

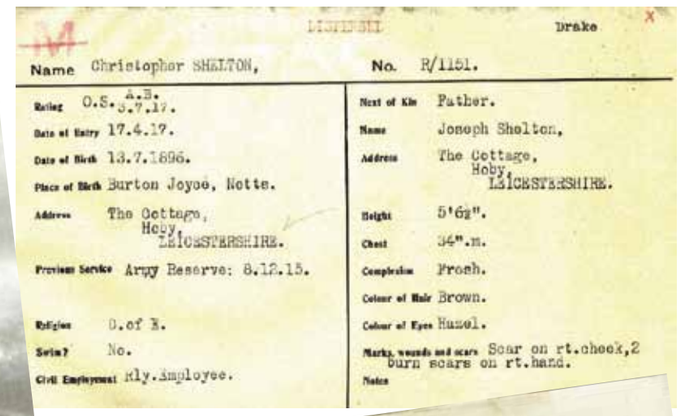
I do wonder if Christopher enlisted as a result of the recruitment fair that came through Hoby in early December 1915, it seems possible. Interestingly his Navy forms are signed by H.B Pollock, who was very high ranking in the RND. Usually these form-filling tasks would have done by a much lower ranking official and I did wonder if this might be connected to Admiral Beatty helping out local men.

Christopher arrived in France on the 5th July 1917 and the next day joined the base depot in Calais. After a period of training he joined his battalion at the front line on the 28th August 1917 along with 121 other reinforcements. At that time the battalion were holding the line in rotation in the Gavrelle-Oppy sector, north-east of Arras.

In August 1918, on the outskirts of Achiet-le Grand, he suffered a "mild" gun shot wound to his neck and was hospitalised in France. After the armistice Christopher remained in France until February 1919 and was demobilised at Barrowby Camp, Grantham. Christopher returned to Hoby and married Irene Boulter, a Hoby girl, in 1922. They had two daughters and later lived at Great Glen. Christopher Shelton died in 1967.

There were several families called Shelton living in Hoby during the First World War but my Sheltons were not related to any of them.

During the First World War my grandad's sister, Annie, worked at Brooksby Hall when it was a convalescent hospital for wounded sailors run by Mrs Beatty. Annie met her future husband Charles Rusk there. He was recovering from an injury he had received in the Battle of Jutland.



Name Christopher SHELTON, No. R/1151.
Rating O.S. A.B. Drake
Date of Entry 17.4.17. 3.7.17.
Date of Birth 13.7.1896.
Place of Birth Burton Joyce, Notts.
Address The Cottage, Hoby, LEICESTERSHIRE.
Previous Service Army Reserve: 8.12.15.
Religion C. of E.
Swim? No.
Civil Employment Rly. Employee.
Next of Kin Father.
Name Joseph Shelton,
Address The Cottage, Hoby, LEICESTERSHIRE.
Height 5'6½".
Chest 34".n.
Complexion Frosh.
Colour of Hair Brown.
Colour of Eyes Hazel.
Marks, wounds and scars Scar on rt.cheek, 2 burn scars on rt.hand.
Notes

19.4.17. RO/108.("A" Hon.Bn.) Joined Battalion 17.4.17.
4.7.17. Drafted to Drake Battalion R.N.D. from 2nd Reserve Battn. B'ford.
4. 7.17. D.O/185.(2nd Res.Battn)Rated A.B. 3.7.17. (2241.)
10.8.17. BEF.D.O.56. Joined XIII Corps Draft Training Depot, 29.7.17.
7.9.17. BEF.D.O.67. Joined Drake Battn.from XIII Corps D.T.D. 28.8.17.
26.10.17.BEF.D.M.80. To Field Amb. 15.10.17. Synovitis rt.knee.
23.11.17.BEF.D.O.88. Rejoined Battn.from Field Amb. 10.11.17.
2.9.18. RA/2611.Adm. 9th GH.Rouen 23.8.18. GSW Neck mild. NOK inf. RND List No: 1274.
2.9.18. Drake 73. Wounded, 21.8.18. GSW.neck.
7.9.18.A/1674"Wounded" 21.8.18.
26.9.18.RA/29247. Adm 2 Con.Dep.Rouen 19.9.18.GSW.Neck.
8.10.18. LA/29767. Adm.11 Con.Dep.Puchy 30.9.18.
7.10.18. Drake 69. From Hosp.to L.Base Depot, 3.10.18. W.
15.10.18.HA/30010.Dis to Base Dep.Calais Class "A" ex 11 Con.Dep.2.10.18.
30.10.18.Drake 99. Rejoined.10.10.18.
6.11.18. Drake 101.Leave to U.K.via Boulogne,22.10.18.-5.11.18.with R.A.
21.2.19. A.F.X. 22 Dude to L.R.D.
14.2.19. Drake 13. Embarked for U.K.at Mieppe, 8.2.19.for demobilisation.
11.2.19. A.F.X. 11 recd.demobilised 11.2.19. Harrowby Camp,Grantham.
15.3.19. W.O.Cert: to A.G.9b.
2.9.19. Recd. AF/103. 5.7.17. embkd.Folkestone Disembkd.Boulogne 6.7.17. Jnd.Base Depot.Calais.
2.9 . 19. AF/103 Filed.
3 · 12 · 14. Ug. Est. List 21. p. 36.

Christopher Shelton

Harry Bennett
June Allsop's Father, Vic Allsop's Grandfather

My father Harry Bennett was born in the little village of North Wheatley, near Retford, Nottinghamshire in 1893. Before the war he worked with horses on a farm.

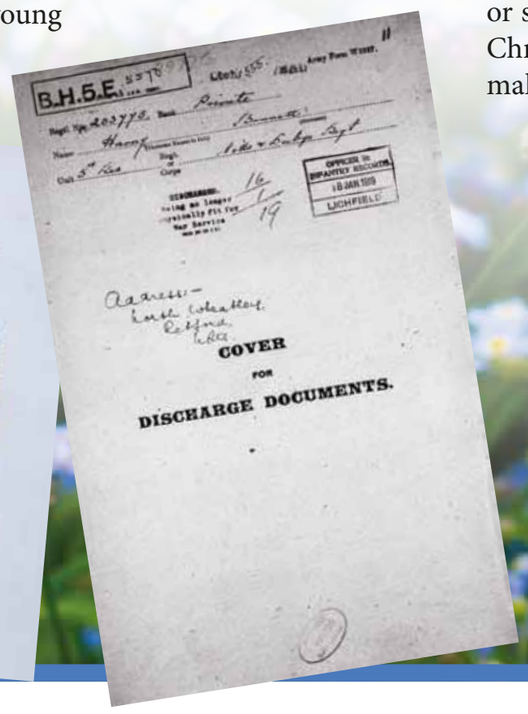
He was recruited into the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment, originally the Sherwood Foresters, on 10th December 1915 and was posted to France on 11th April 1917; he was a trench runner at the Battle of the Somme. In November 1917 he noticed he had sustained a hernia, which he put down to the rough conditions in the trench. He was put onto light duties but on 21st March 1918 he was wounded in action when a shell fragment entered his left upper arm. Father was shipped back to England to Rock Ferry Military Hospital for treatment but when he recovered from this injury he had to return to hospital shortly afterwards to have his hernia repaired.

He served with honour but a combination of the hernia and the shrapnel wound left him unfit for further service and he was honourably discharged from the army, having been declared medically unfit, on 16th January 1919.

He was one of three who returned home from his regiment. As with most soldiers he never talked about the war. I suppose as an athletic young man he was very rarely out of the line of direct fire.

After the war father settled down in the village he had been born in, buying a lovely Victorian house called "The Laurels". After he married my mother he bought some agricultural land away from the house on Wood Lane, and started growing corn and potatoes, ploughing with the two horses he had also bought, Bonny and Violet, which makes me think that was a great love in his life. Later he specialised in growing strawberries, and was the first to do so, now the village is renowned for strawberry growing. I can remember him hoeing potatoes by hand, walking up and down the rows all day long; this would have been in the mid 40's, probably about 1948. Eventually he progressed to a Fordson tractor but he never liked mechanisation, and I know driving a car was not his favourite thing. He much preferred his bicycle; he biked the one and a half miles to the fields every day.

He could stack sheaves of corn on a corn stack with precision, and woe betide a workman if he did it wrong, then the thrashing machine would come and thrash the corn. He could carry an 18 stone bag of corn on his back up the Granary steps, how times have changed, Health and Safety would go into melt down today! He smoked like a trooper, hardly ever had one out of his mouth, he was teetotal, and loved plain food, roast beef, apple pie, and bread and jam, or should I say jam and bread. We always killed a pig at Christmas, and his two sisters came to help my mother make pork pies and sausages.



B.H.5.E.
Regt. No. 203778. Rank Private
Name Harry Bennett
Unit 5th Res. Regt. Corps Line of Comm. Sgt.
Discharged in pursuance of K.R. Pen. Reg. Para. 392 (iii) 16 Jan 19
OFFICER IN INFANTRY RECORDS 18 JAN 1919 LICHFIELD
Address — Little Coleaton, Retford, Notts
COVER FOR DISCHARGE DOCUMENTS.

Award Sheet.—First Award.
H
Name BENNETT.
Regt. No. 203778.
Date of Discharge 16th Jan. 1919.
Reason Physically unfit.
SERVICE
FOREIGN SERVICE
AWARD.
20.1.20