

# FORGET ME NOT

## FREDERICK CHARLES PAUL 1888 -1982 ENID BOESSER'S GRANDFATHER



My maternal grandfather Frederick Charles Paul was born in 1888, in Blandford Forum, Dorset, the third son of Henry and Mary Paul.

His father was a whitesmith, coachsmith, journeyman. He had three brothers, and a sister who died at birth. Disaster struck the family in 1895, when both of his parents contracted the flu and died within a month of each other, aged 39 and 36. As a consequence, Frederick (known as Charlie) aged 7yrs. was separated from his siblings. He had a nomadic childhood being passed from one relative to another, having to work to 'earn his keep' usually on their farms or at the age of 11 in his uncle's flour mill. In his twenties a constant in his life was his Uncle Charles with whom he was living at the time of his enlistment. Charlie enlisted into the 4th Battalion, Dorset Regiment on 29 September 1914, just 8 weeks after Britain declared war on Germany.

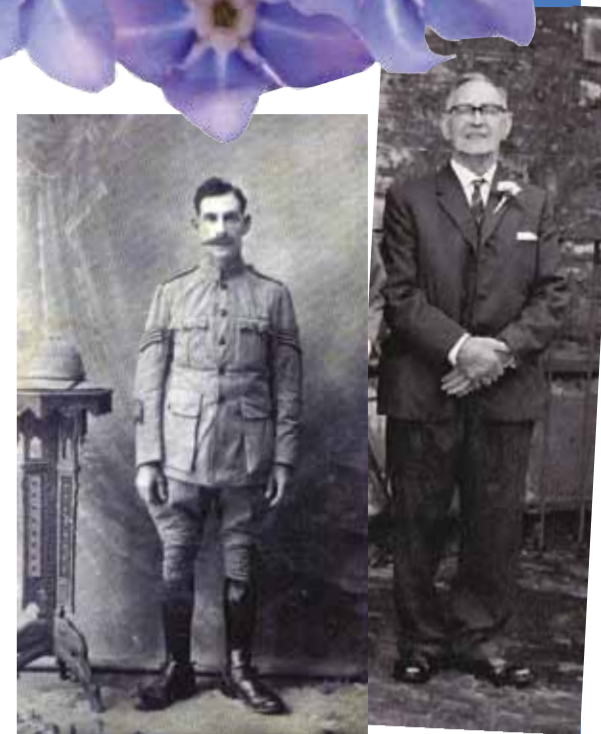
The Battalion was soon divided into two, Charlie being in the 1/4th Battalion, which consisted of men who had volunteered to serve overseas. They sailed in October 1914 for India, where they relieved a Regular Army battalion to go on to fight in Mesopotamia. After service and rigorous training in India, the 1/4th, as part of the Indian Expeditionary Force D, transported, in late February 1916, from Karachi to Basra on HMT Elephanta. A strenuous twelve day desert march took them to Nasiriyeh, which became their base. Here Charlie who had been promoted to Corporal and now Sergeant was appointed to the Military Foot Police and then to the Military Mounted Police. In late September 1917 the battalion played a decisive part in the battle of Ramadi on the Euphrates. The 1/14th's part in this was mentioned in the official despatch. Six months later, on 23rd March 1918, the Dorsets played a leading part in capturing Khan Baghdad. They remained in Mesopotamia for the rest of the war and Charlie returned to England in October 1919 for demobilisation.

Conditions in Mesopotamia, like Gallipoli, defy description. Extremes of temperature (49°C was common); arid desert and regular flooding; flies; mosquitoes and other vermin; all led to appalling levels of sickness and death through disease. Under these incredible conditions, units fell short of officers and men, and all too often the reinforcements were half-trained and ill-equipped. Medical arrangements were shocking with wounded men spending up to two weeks on boats before reaching any kind of hospital. These factors, and the determined Turkish resistance, contributed to high casualty rates.

Despite the horrendous events in Mesopotamia my Grandfather survived and returned to England. Like many others he never talked about the dreadful experiences of war, he just recounted how he had met the most amazing people both in the 'military family' and the native populations of the countries in which he served.

On his demobilisation to England, Charlie initially stayed again with his Uncle Charles in Southampton, before moving back to Blandford Forum. He was a chorister at Blandford Forum church. He met my Grandmother when the choir was invited to attend a local dance that was being held for girls who were still in service after the war. My Grandmother Mary Morley was working as a cook at 'The Big House' in nearby Tarrant Kingston.

Mary had to move back to her home in Barton-on-Humber in Lincolnshire to live with her elderly father and step-mother. Charlie moved to Barton-on-Humber for work and to be close to Mary, he lodged at the family home. On the death of Mary's father he had to move out of the house as it wasn't the 'done thing' for an unmarried couple to live alone. A special licence was applied for and they married in 1920.



As a wedding gift my Grandmother had a very special greenhouse built for my Grandfather. He was a very keen gardener and this was his relaxation, and where he found peace for the rest of his life.

They went on to have three children, Charlie having to work in Yorkshire on the north bank of the River Humber as a blacksmith at G & T Earle's Cement Works. My mother tells the story of how, as a young child she would sit in her bedroom and gaze longingly out of the window at the lights on the north shore, because she missed her Father so much. He took the ferry to Hull early on a Monday morning and lodged during the week in a village called Hestle. He would not return home until late on Friday evening or sometimes Saturday lunch time if there was plenty of work. When the Eastwoods Cement Works opened in South Ferriby on the south bank of the Humber, Charlie got a job there, where he worked until his retirement. He was a bit of a legend at work because, although he was a slight man, in his job he wielded a 26lb hammer one handed, when he retired it was thrown into one of the nearby ponds as no one else had the strength to use it!

Frederick Charles Paul never forgot those who didn't return, he came home from the Great War having served the country he loved, he didn't dwell on the past but lived for the future. He overcame many tragedies to live a simple but fulfilling life, he was the wisest, unassuming, gentle man I have known. He could still communicate in Arabic until he died at the age of 92.

'In the battle zone, where frequently they had to do duty in exposed positions under heavy fire and suffered severe casualties, the military police solved an important part of the problem of traffic control. In back areas their vigilance and zeal have largely contributed to the good relations maintained between our troops and the civilian population.

"Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the BEF

## HENRY HARDWICK JONES ALI MORGAN'S GREAT UNCLE

Henry was born on June 23rd 1891, the eldest son to Walter and Elizabeth Jones who lived at 22 Willow Street Leicester. In the 1911 census Henry was a house painter.

He enlisted with the army in 1914 aged 23 and was attached to the 7th Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers as a Private, service number 16201. Henry landed in France at Boulogne on July 9th 1915 but was killed less than 3 months later on September 26th. Henry fell in the area between the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the first Army, east and west of Grenay. Henry was awarded the British War Medal and the Star 1914/15.

Like 20,000 other officers and men with no known grave they are commemorated on the Loos Memorial. The fallen include Fergus Bowes-Lyon, the Queen Mother's brother and John Kipling, the son of Rudyard Kipling.

Henry left two younger brothers, Ernest and Albert Jones. Ernest later married Evelyn in 1936 and they raised their sons Derry and Barry in Netherhall, Leicester. Barry married Barbara in 1963 and they moved to Syston and raised daughters Samantha and Alison Jones. 100 years after Henry joined the Army, Alison (Ali) and husband Scott Morgan moved into Hoby.

