

# FORGET ME NOT

## JOSEPH KIRBY MOWFORTH MARY DUNFORD'S GRANDFATHER

Joseph was born on 12th May, 1882 at Elloughton in the East Riding of Yorkshire, one of four children.

At the time of his birth his father's occupation was listed as 'Labourer' but by the time of his marriage in 1908 his father was listed as a 'Farmer'.

The family were brought up as Primitive Methodists – the moral code remaining with Joseph throughout his life. As an octogenarian he might, very occasionally, partake of a small glass of sherry. Nothing more.

On leaving school at the age of fourteen he found work gardening. As there were many large houses requiring help in the garden, he would have received training from the Head Gardener of wherever he was fortunate enough to be employed.

A Reference of February 1906 from Oswald Sanderson of Hessle Mount, Hessle near Hull, recommends him to The Earl of Feversham at Duncombe Park, Helmsley, North Yorkshire.

In February 1908 a Reference from the Earl's Head Gardener recommends Joseph to Edwin Fenton of The Lawn, Sutton on Hull. He worked here until September 1912 when he went to Sharow Hall near Ripon, as Mr. Fenton retired to Bridlington and did not have need of a gardener at his smaller property.

Joseph remained at Sharow Hall until long past retirement and died in June 1973 aged 92 years.

Records of his wartime service are sketchy. His Demobilization Certificate of 1919 tells us that he had been based at Catterick Camp, North Yorkshire, where he enlisted as a member of The Royal Flying Corps in August 1916 and consequently served in The Royal Air Force as an 'aircraft hand'. Family stories tell not so much of his 'daring do' but of him actually continuing with his gardening – growing vegetables and caring for the poultry in order to feed the troops.



## FRANK ALVEY MIKE CROFT'S GRANDFATHER

My Grandfather Frank volunteered for the army in August 1914, in London, whilst working as a teacher, and on 15 September joined the Royal Fusiliers, also known as the City of London Regiment, which raised 47 battalions for service, and fought in France, Flanders, Gallipoli and Egypt. His army service is as follows:

15 September 1914 to 22 December 1914, 'Home'; 23 December 1914 to 26 August 1915, Expeditionary Force (Malta); 27 August 1915 to 11 June 1916, Expeditionary Force Mediterranean (Gallipoli and Egypt); 12 June 1916 (married 10 days later) to 15 May 1917 'Home'; Reserve 14 May 1917 to 23 July 1917. He was a Private from 15 September 1914; Lance Corporal from 19 September 1914; Corporal from 9 October 1915; Sergeant from 27 February 1916. He received the following medals: the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.



Frank was discharged as physically unfit on 23 July 1917 after a total of 2 years and 312 days, the medical report stating: "Accident occurred March 1915, Malta. Out for a walk at night (not on duty) he fell over a cliff, dropped 20 feet, broke both ankles. Had influenza at Gallipoli which caused deterioration in the acuteness of the vision ... Is unable to walk more than 2 miles and unable to march at all, on account of accident to ankles."

The following article was written by my grandfather and published in the Derbyshire Times, date unknown.

### A Raw Recruit's Experience

On reading the copy of the Derbyshire Times which my people sent to me last week, it occurred to me that some of your readers might like to hear what a real raw recruit's experiences have been like during the last seven weeks.

When war broke out I was one of the poor unfortunates who were fetched back to school midway through the summer holidays in order to keep the London kiddies off the streets. You can quite imagine what London was like in that fortnight of the War, and when the great wave of patriotism which burst over the Metropolis flooded the schoolrooms, I felt that the four walls of a school couldn't keep me in, and I decided I must enlist.

Just at this time I received a note from my 'Alma Mater' asking me to attend a meeting at the College (Westminster) in order to consider what ex-Westminsterians could do in order to serve their country. As a result of this meeting, fifty of us joined the 2nd City of London Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, and although we have had to rough it a great deal, and accustom ourselves to a mode of life absolutely different from anything we have ever experienced, yet I don't think one of us has regretted the step he has taken.

The second day we joined we were rigged out in our uniform, and then our military routine began. Our headquarters in town was the Horticultural Hall, and after parading there at 7a.m. each morning, we marched to Battersea Park to go through the mysteries of 'squad drill' etc. Here it was that I first got on the 'promotion list' for upon the Adjutant discovering I could give instruction in 'Swedish Drill' I was made Lance-Corporal, and very proud I felt of my stripe. This routine continued for about a fortnight, when at a minute's notice, we were served out with a military 'kit bag' and some 'kit' and packed off to our present camp.

We landed at our destination about 8p.m. and after being served out with two blankets we were put into boxes which had been vacated by race horses, twelve men in each box, and told to 'make ourselves comfortable'. Never shall I forget that first night – in the first place the cold was intense, and seeing that I had slept in a luxurious bedroom the preceding night, and now had to spread a blanket on the bare chalk floor, you will not be surprised when I tell you that sleep never came my way. Then again the box next to mine contained a number of old hands and the language – well, our box was very cold but I should say theirs was very, very hot – very!

However by the time we turned in on the following night sleeping accommodation had somewhat improved, for we had been rigged up with a kind of bunk, which was very much appreciated by all. These bunks are in the form of hammocks, or rather strips of canvas slung by ropes from posts. These are quite comfortable, but there is always the danger of the fellow above coming down on the chap beneath, as happened in my case, when at 3a.m. one morning a 12 stone fellow dropped from above and nearly finished me off.

Reveille goes at 5.45a.m. and then there is a scramble for water, for it's a case of the 'early bird' etc. in regard to washing, for water is somewhat scarce, and at first it was a common thing to do go dirty until dinner-time. But now I can scramble with the best of them. At 7.45 we begin the day's work by a march of four or five miles, and then at 8a.m. the bugle sounds the ever welcome sound of 'cookhouse'. There are many bugle calls in camp which a recruit fails to recognize, but I find that everyone knows this call immediately the first note is sounded. Funny, isn't it?

After breakfast our work consists of four hours drill and then after 'cookhouse' we go for a route march of from 10 to 12 miles. We have tea about 5p.m. and then (providing one is fortunate enough not to be a non-commissioned officer) one is free for the night. If one happens to be a NCO there are numerous mysterious duties to perform, and for a fortnight now I have been busy almost every minute of each day. 'Lights out' is sounded at 10.15p.m. and thus the day comes to an end.

I'm afraid I've rambled too much already, but there's one thing about my new life I like very much and that is the discipline. In the Army a man is told once and he has to obey, and the value of that fact to some men is more than they realize. Also I have learned that contrary to the usual run of things, 9 o'clock in the army means 8.50 and not 9.30. We have a whole crowd of mascots – chiefly animals that have strayed over the downs – and the men make a great fuss of them.

I have had two experiences which I shall never forget. Shortly after I had gained my second stripe I had to attend a Court Martial to give evidence against a deserter, and I was much more uncomfortable than he was. The other experience was a military funeral for yesterday (Sunday) I attended (as one of the Corporals in charge) the funeral of a Belgian and a Highland soldier who died of wounds. It was a very impressive and solemn affair.