



When we look at WWI we only ever hear about the battles, the dates, the weapons. But what about the men that died in those battles from those weapons? They often get forgotten and over time just become a number, one of the millions of deaths that were the consequence of this war. All these everyday men are the interesting ones, and this book is about one of them; and his name was Ernest William Blunden.

NAME: ERNEST WILLIAM BLUNDEN
BIRTH PLACE: SOMPTING, SUSSEX
DEATH DATE: 18 JUNE 1916
ENLISTMENT LOCATION: WORTHING
RANK: PRIVATE
REGIMENT: ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT
BATTALION: 9th BATTALION
NUMBER: G/7021
TYPE OF CASUALTY: GAS WOUNDS

FAMILY

ERNEST'S YOUNGER BROTHER HENRY WAS IN THE QUEEN'S OWN CAMERON HIGHLANDERS REGIMENT, AND WAS A CORPORAL. HE WAS KILLED IN ACTION ON THE 31st JULY 1917 AGED 26.

DESPITE IT HAVING NOTHING TO DO WITH THE WAR, RESEARCHING ERNEST'S FAMILY WAS ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING TOPICS; ESPECIALLY THE MYSTERY CHILD. IN THE 1911 CENSUS, MRS BLUNDEN WROTE THAT SHE HAD 3 LIVING CHILDREN; HOWEVER THERE IS NO TRACE OF THIS THIRD CHILD; NO BIRTH OR DEATH CERTIFICATES. I GUESSED IT WAS A GIRL BECAUSE THERE WAS NO MILITARY RECORDS FOR ANYONE ELSE... PERHAPS MRS BLUNDEN HAD AN AFFAIR AND THIS CHILD IS THE RESULT? MORE REALISTICALLY, THE DOCUMENTS WERE PROBABLY LOST.

how interesting!

Ernest William Blunden, Royal Sussex Regt. 1914-1918

Alfred C. Blunden, 1872-1918

Ernest J. Blunden, 1874-1918

1911 CENCUS

ALTHOUGH I COULD FIND NO DEATH RECORDS FOR HIM, ERNEST'S FATHER MUST HAVE DIED BETWEEN 1891 AND 1901, BECAUSE BY THEN MRS BLUNDEN HAD BEGUN TO WRITE THAT SHE WAS A WIDOW.

Good deduction on + research

THE BLUNDEN FAMILY TREE


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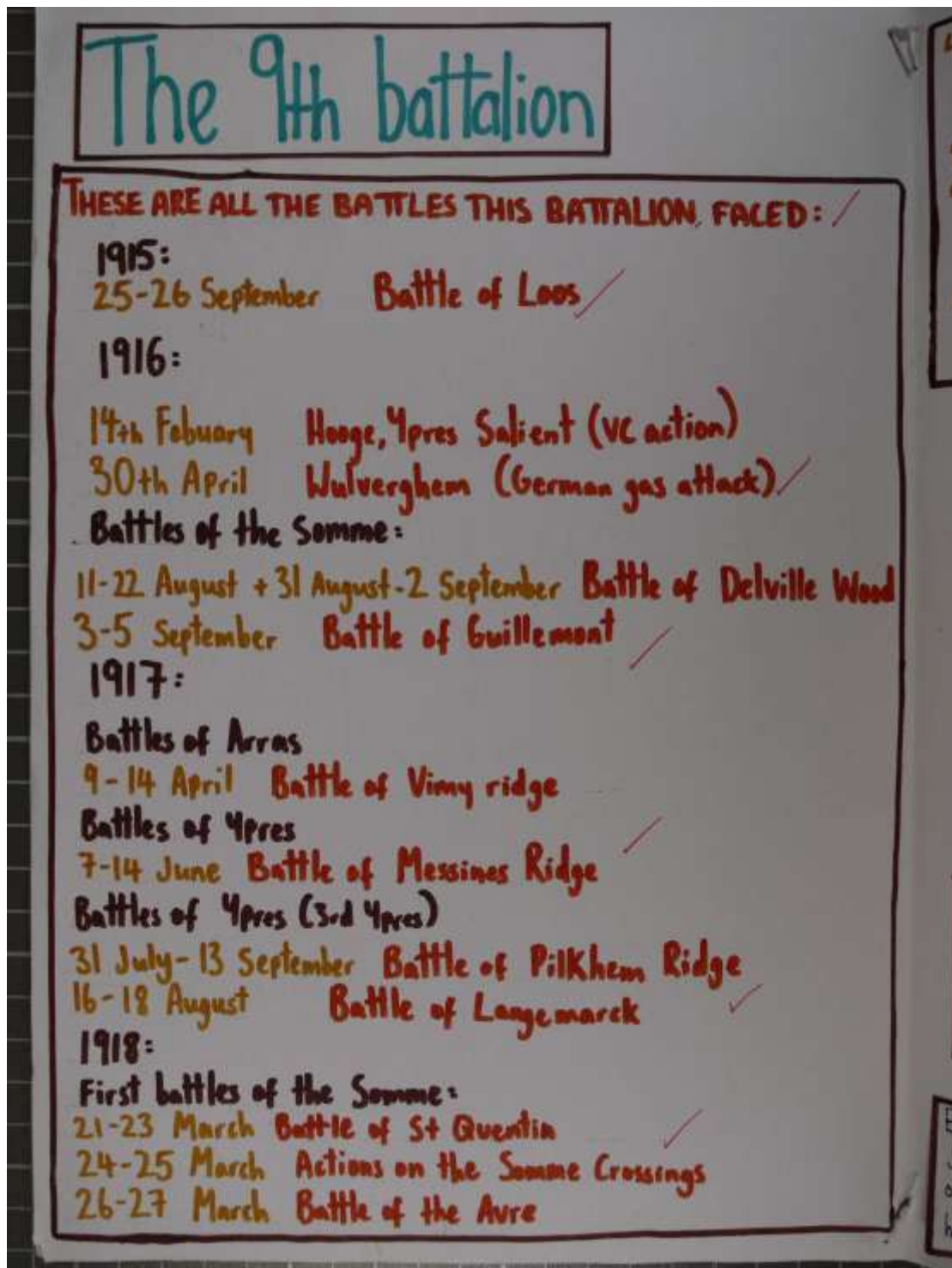
    EDWIN ----- MARY JANE
      |
      +-----+
      |       |
    ADA VIRGOE ERNEST WILLIAM HENRY EDWARD ?
      |
      +-----+
      |       |
    ALICE CM  ERNEST J
    
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? = MYSTERY CHILD. Mrs Blunden states she has 3 children in 1911, but there is no trace of this child anywhere.


HE LIVED AT 92 STATION ROAD.

All this information is very usefull because it is just plain facts that tell me almost everything i need to know about Ernest, it's also very reliable as it comes from the website ancestry which collects official documents and is sourced by experts. However the "3rd child" did throw me off a bit.





4th April Battle of the Avre
 Battles of the Hindenburg line
 8-9 October Battle of the Cambrai
 9-12 October Battle of the Sene
 the final advance in Picardy
 4 November Battle of the Sambre ✓
 5-7 November Passage of the grand Honnelle

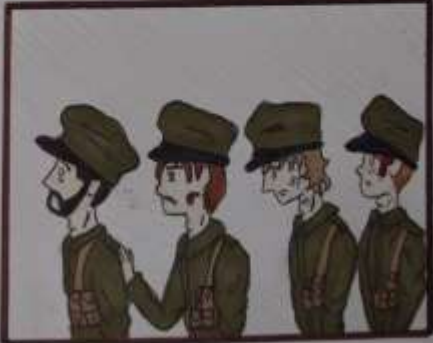


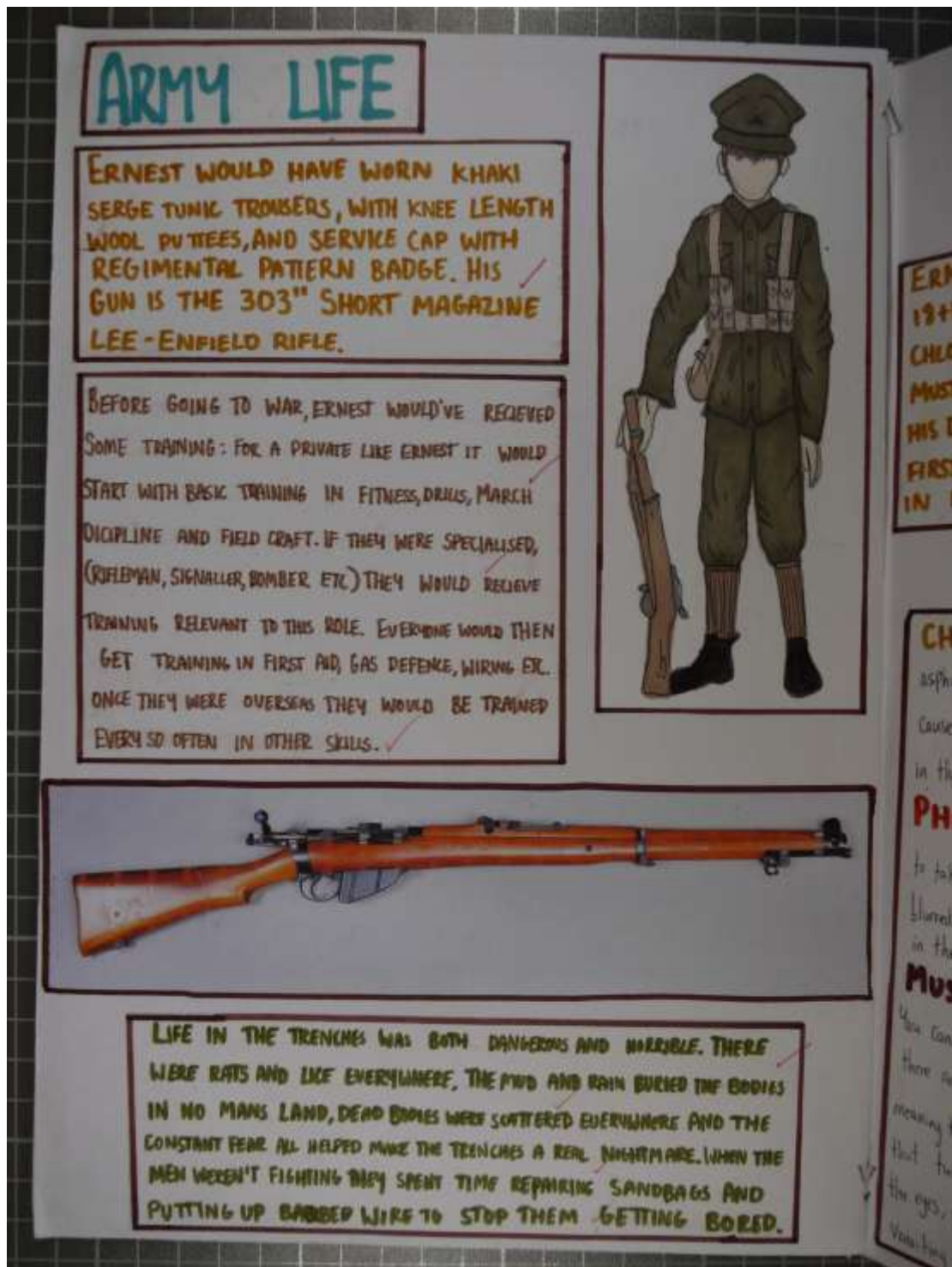
Wood

CASUALTIES			
BATTLE	OFFICERS	OTHER	TOTAL
LOOS	19	362	381
HOOGE	5	134	139
GUILLEMONT	7	179	186
Delville Wood	3	115	118
Bois-en-Hache	9	107	116
Aweringt	2	91	136
Wargnies-le Grand	1	135	136
total:	46	1123	1169

THE 9TH BATTALION WAS FORMED IN CHICHESTER IN 1914, IT WAS UNDER COMMAND OF 73RD BRIGADE IN 24TH DIVISION, THEY LANDED IN BOULOGNE ON 1st SEPTEMBER 1915 ✓

Ernest died from gas wounds on 18th June 1916, and because of the gas attack on 30th April 1916 that seems to be when he was taken ill. ✓





GAS

AT THE START OF THE WAR SOLDIERS WERE GIVEN CLOTHS DIPPED IN URINE OR BICARBONATE SODA TO STOP GAS INFECTING THEM. GAS MASKS WEREN'T USED UNTIL 1916 AND WERE CHANGED MANY TIMES DURING THE WAR.

ERNEST DIED OF GAS POISONING ON 13th JUNE 1916, PROBABLY FROM CHLORINE OR PHOSGENE GAS BECAUSE MUSTARD GAS WASN'T USED UNTIL AFTER HIS DEATH. THE GERMANS WEREN'T THE FIRST TO USE GAS, BUT THEY USED IT IN 1915 IN BATTLE OF YPRES.


CHLORINE GAS: Chlorine gas burns the throat of its victim, making them die of asphyxiation. (not getting enough oxygen) It mixes with the moisture in its victims eyes and lungs, and causes yellow mucus to come pouring out of your nose and mouth, eventually the build up of mucus in the lungs causes them to swell.

PHOSGENE GAS: Phosgene gas was sometimes combined with chlorine gas. It can take up to 48hrs to take effect on its victim, but when it does they cough a lot, have burning eyes and lungs, watery eyes, blurred vision, difficulty breathing, nausea and vomiting. It can cause sores similar to frostbite or burns, fluid in the lungs, coughing up white or pink liquid or low blood pressure.

MUSTARD GAS: Wasn't used until 1917, and by the end of the war had injured 1 million soldiers. You cannot see mustard gas but it does have an odd smell. If the ground is cold enough it can settle there and stay for up to a few weeks. When it was first used it could get through their gas masks, meaning they had to improvise them, once it's inside you you can't get it out. Can cause: skin sores, red spots, feet turn to blisters, swelling in your nose and throat as your lining is blasted, irritation, burning or blistering of the eyes, runny or bloody noses, sneezing, hoarse throat, shortness of breath, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, fever, nausea, vomiting and loss of voice.

WHEN RESEARCHING, I MOSTLY USED THE INTERNET AND TEXTBOOKS. WITH TEXTBOOKS THEY ARE OFTEN VERY USEFUL FOR GENERAL INFORMATION, I COULD LEARN A LOT ABOUT TRENCH LIFE FROM THEM BECAUSE THEY ARE USED IN SCHOOLS SO THEY HAVE TO BE USEFUL. THEY ARE OFTEN FAIRLY RELIABLE BECAUSE THEY ARE USED IN TEACHING, THEY ARE USUALLY WRITTEN BY EXPERTS WHO KNOW ABOUT THE SUBJECT. THE INTERNET HOWEVER DOES HAVE SOME WEBSITES THAT ARE QUITE UNTRUSTWORTHY AND COULD BE WRITTEN BY ANYBODY, SO THE INFORMATION COULD BE FALSE. FOR THIS PROJECT I MOSTLY USED WEBSITES I KNEW AND COULD TRUST.

I FOUND THIS PICTURE (SEE BELOW) ON THE HOWSTUFFWORKS WEBSITE, WHICH TOLD ME A LOT ABOUT GAS. I THINK IT IS QUITE USEFUL, BECAUSE IT SHOWS ME: WHAT UNIFORM SOLDIERS WORE, WHAT GAS MASKS WERE USED, WEAPONS AND A LITTLE IDEA OF THE CONDITIONS. IT IS RELIABLE BECAUSE IT WAS A PICTURE TAKEN AT THE TIME AND IT'S MEANT TO INFORM PEOPLE OF THE CONDITIONS IN WWI.



RESEARCH:

THE ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENT:

This website was usefull because it told me about the uniform and background of the 9th battallion. It was very reliable because it was set up to keep the memory of this regiment alive and to inform us about them, some of the writers even had ancestors that fought for them.

HOW STUFF WORKS:

Howstuffworks gave me all the information about gas and it's effects. It was very usefull and I had to edit out some information because there was so much. It was reliable because the whole website is about explaining science like this.

ANCESTRY:

This gave me lots of background information about Ernest. It was useful because it was just what I was looking for, but not as reliable because there were lots of Ernest Blunden's so I had to do a lot of working things out, but it is meant to inform.

SUSSEX ROLL OF HONOUR:

This is where I found out who Ernest was, it gave me brief information.

THE LONG, LONG TRAIL:

The long long trail gave me information about life in the trenches and the training involved. It was usefull because there was plenty of information, and reliable because the website is all about researching soldiers, and it is very factual.

BATTLEFIELDS:

This website told me about the battles and casualties of the 9th battallion, it was useful as the information told me a lot, but may not be as reliable as the other sites because it wasn't made by experts who study the time period properly.