

Disaster at Aubers Ridge - the story of one of the fallen, Private Harold Frank Linfield of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment



by Malcolm Linfield

Harold Frank Linfield was born in Worthing on 27 July 1893, fourth son of Arthur and Edith Linfield. Arthur was one of the pioneer growers of fruit under glass, having started his business in Worthing in the 1880s. Married in 1883, Arthur and Edith (née Young) had seven children, five of whom joined up during the First World War. As committed Wesleyan Methodists, the Linfields raised their children in a strong Christian tradition within a loving and supportive family.

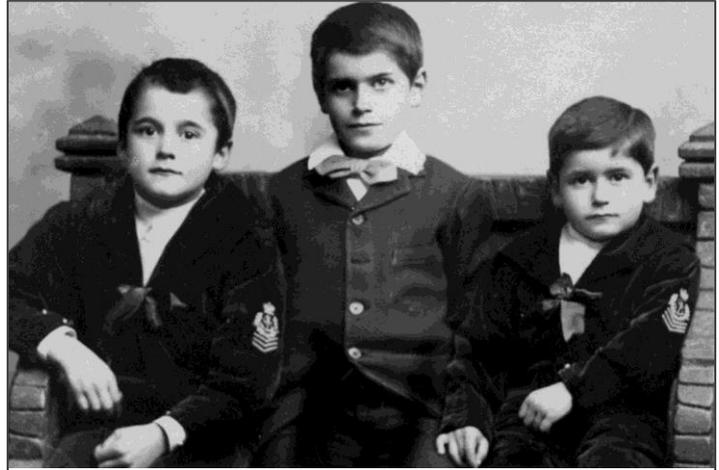


Fig. 1 Harold, far right, with two of his older brothers, Bill (left) and Gordon (centre), photographed in about 1900. (Family collection)

Among the family papers, there is a brief, but touching, glimpse of Harold as a child:ⁱ

'My father told me appealing stories of him as a boy. He'd been crazy about animals, and kept bantams, which he fussed over and talked to by the hour. He was shy; he'd bitten his nails even worse than I did...

My grandmother ... frequently spoke of him. He had been small, dark, and musical; he could play anything by ear. He'd had one of the first phonographs, and driven them all mad playing 'Alexander's Ragtime Band' on it. Once, she gave me an odd little black instrument, shaped like a potato with holes in it. "It's an ocarina," she told me, "a kind of Greek flute... he could coax almost any tune out of it"... "He was such a dear boy," she told me. "People just couldn't help liking him..."



Fig. 2 Left to right: Harold, Wilfred and Bill - about 1907. (Family collection)

Harold joined the family firm as a young man and is recorded as a fruit grower in the 1911 census, living with his parents and siblings at 'The 'Laurels' in Chesswood Roadⁱⁱ. With the idea of creating new opportunities for his younger sons, Arthur Linfield bought a farm at Thakeham in 1913. But his good intentions were thwarted by the worsening political crisis on the continent, culminating in the declaration of war against Germany on 4 August 1914. Encouraged by the newspapers and cinemas, and a wave of patriotic fervour, young men flocked to their local recruiting office, anxious to play their part before it was all over.

Worthing was no exception: when the call of duty came, Harold and his younger brother Wilfred volunteered together on 4 September 1914, when they joined the 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment as privates. Interestingly enough, they had consecutive service numbers: Wilfred was G/1294 and Harold G/1295. They were also quite young: Harold was 21 and Wilfred only 17. They were sent to Dover for training, and a faded sepia postcard, sent by Harold to his mother, shows them marching through Lydd. There is a poignancy in the image - lines of marching boys grinning at the camera - most of whom saw the war as a bit of an adventure which would be over within months. Few of them had any idea of the horrors awaiting them across the Channel.



Fig. 3 Harold marches through Lydd with the 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment on the way to Dover. The postmark is dated 4 November 1914. He is near the rear of the photograph, with his kit bag hanging down from his right shoulder. (Family collection)

On completion of their training, Harold and Wilfred were sent to France, where they arrived on 4 January 1915.ⁱⁱⁱ The 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment was part of the 1st Division, 2 Brigade and in January 1915 they were manning a portion of the line near the village of Givenchy in Northern France. Towards the end of January, the Battalion was manning a redoubt amongst some brick stacks near the main Bethune-La Bassée highroad. Using ladders against these brick stacks, the Germans attempted to storm the redoubt but were effectively repulsed before they could do any harm. 'D' company, to which Harold belonged, and a detachment of the 1st Northampton Regiment, were in the thick of the fighting and their gallantry was recognised in a Special Order by the Brigadier-General. Over 200 Germans were killed, earning the battalion its unofficial title of 'The Iron Regiment'.

February was a fairly quiet month, and much time was spent in cleaning up the trenches, which were continually flooding, and company training, which included parades, drill, physical training, bomb throwing, shooting practice, and bathing. Living conditions were harsh – the mud, the intense cold at night, the boredom from prolonged periods of inactivity and the constant fear of attack – all took their toll. Men often stood for hours on end in waterlogged trenches and many succumbed to a horrible and

painful infection that caused the feet to swell and turn green. The winter of 1914/15 was particularly wet on the Western Front, and over 20,000 men in the British Army were treated for the condition, known as 'trench foot'. Within a month of arrival, Harold's brother was infected and his condition was serious enough that on 7 February 1915^{iv} he was sent back to England. The soldiers really looked forward to their baths; it made them feel human again. All their clothes were washed and ironed, providing a temporary reprieve from the ghastly infestations of lice. Barbers were also in attendance.



Fig. 4 Harold and his platoon during their training in the Dover area. The postcard is dated 12 November 1914. Harold is standing at the back, to the left of the drainpipe. (Family collection)

Wilfred's affliction, though very painful, may well have saved his life. Harold had an awful time, and in the letters he wrote home he said he was thankful that his brother was no longer there.^v Once he had recovered, Wilfred was sent for a month's training at Keeble College, Oxford where he took his commission. As a Second-Lieutenant in the 9th Battalion East Kent Regiment, Wilfred returned to the Front in May.

By March, the Germans were moving troops across to fight the Russians on the opposite side of Europe. Much time was spent on company training and bombing practice. During the Battle of Neuve Chapelle (10-13 March 1915) - where the British failed to exploit a gap they created in the German line - the 2nd battalion was not immediately engaged, although close up in reserve. However, in May they were called upon to play a leading role in an attack on Aubers Ridge, a barely discernible feature in the landscape, but which gave the Germans a significant observation advantage across the British front.

On 6 May, the Battalion were instructed to march to Les Façons, and on 7 May they received orders for an assault on the German lines opposite Richebourg L'Avoué, facing Aubers Ridge. From Les Façons, they marched

to Richebourg during the evening of 8 May, and on arrival took over the breastworks from the Black Watch. During the night, the ditches in 'No Man's Land' and those between the front and support trenches were bridged in preparation for the attack the following morning. Encouraged by the partial success of Neuve Chapelle, and eager to show the French that the British could provide effective support, General Haig, Commander of the 1st Army, decided to launch a pincer attack against the German line to the north and south of Neuve Chapelle. The 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment was in the first wave of troops to leave the trenches in the southern attack at Richebourg L'Avoué. The day started with a welcome issue of tea and rum at 3.30am, but what happened next is best described in the words of some of the men who were there. Two of the best accounts appear in letters written soon after the battle by soldiers in Harold's battalion. Private George Short, who embarked for France on the same day as Harold and Wilfred, wrote the following to his mother in Southwick:^{vi}

"On Sunday morning at 4.30 our first gun spoke, and fired a few 'coal-boxes' till 5.00, and then all the guns started. The earth seemed to shake and tremble, shells flew over our heads and you couldn't hear what the next man said to you if you tried. It was like a continual roll of thunder. We all thought there could not be one possible man left alive in front of us. Smoke and dust and all manner of things were flying about over the German lines. Then, after half an hour of this, we had the order to charge. We all streamed out over our parapets and lined out beautifully. We advanced till we got just over a hundred yards away from the Germans, and then their machine guns started on us. They absolutely mowed us chaps down, and we flopped down and remained as still as mice. We daren't even lift a finger. . .

Well we laid there for a little while, and then we started to make a hole to dig ourselves in. Our entrenching tool was our real pal. We remained there all day, with shells and bullets flying over us. Our company, which went out with 260 men or more and 5 officers, had as many as 200 casualties. . .

You should have seen our poor chaps try to crawl back. I started to at about 5.30, and it was one of the most risky things I've ever attempted. When we got in I and another chap went back to find the regiment, or what was left of it, and we found it behind the firing line. . ."

George was killed in action on 25 September 1915. Another eye witness was Private Coldwell of 'C' company, 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment, writing to his aunt in Brighton:^{vii}

'About 4am our artillery bombarded the enemy's trenches for a long time to destroy the barbed wire etc. Then 'C' company was ordered to advance. We reached their barbed wire but no further. The wire entanglements were not destroyed, and as our fellows tried to get through they were shot down like sheep, shells dropping around us like peas . . . I only had time to make a small hole, just large enough to put in my head (which I did) when the Germans opened rifle fire and machine guns on all lying about,

dead or alive. I lay in the open exposed to the guns all the morning, and never got hit once . . . it makes me quite faint to think of it, seeing bodies flying through the air, without limbs, and expecting to be blown to pieces any minute. I did not dare to move to get a drink of water out of my water bottle. When it had become quite dark I started to crawl back to our trench . . .’

Lt. Col, F.G. Langham, commanding the 5th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment, was another important witness of the terrible events that day.^{viii} Their job was ‘to ‘mop up’ the trenches after the assaulting line had taken them’, and to support the 2nd Battalion and the Northants. His account reveals the hopeless and horrifying situation as the men climbed over the parapet. Suddenly,

‘the most murderous rifle machine gun and shrapnel fire opened, and no one could get on or get back. People say the fire at Mons and Ypres was nothing to it. No end of brave things were done, and our men were splendid, but helpless. They simply had to wait to be killed. After some considerable time, we got orders to retire, but this was easier said than done. Some men were 300 yards out from our parapet, many dead, and some even on fire; and in two cases, men of ours who were burning alive, committed suicide, one by blowing out his own brains, and another cut his own Jugular vein with the point of his bayonet. Every now and again you would see the men roll over on the ground. Then men began to crawl in, most of them wounded’.

Langham observes that the ‘only thing to be thankful for is that they did not use their chlorine gas, but the wind was the wrong way’.

There were two decisive factors which led to the slaughter at Aubers Ridge. Firstly, there was a serious shortage of munitions. Sir John French, Commander in Chief of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), had been pleading with Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, for months to increase supplies, since it severely limited his ability to fight for any length of time. The initial bombardment of the enemy trenches had been absurdly short, and had dismally failed to make any gaps through the barbed wire defences. Those men who were able to get over the parapets and actually make it through to the German lines, found it virtually impossible to go any further and hundreds of them were pinned down in no-man's land, unable to advance or retreat.

Then there were the German machine guns, which were utterly lethal. Protected within large V-shaped wooden boxes, with the point of the V at the outer side of the breastwork, they were set up every 20 yards, and had steel rail loopholes near ground level which enabled the machine guns to sweep the front with a grazing effect. They could not be seen because they had been positioned in strongly protected emplacements at ground level. After witnessing what appeared as a severe bombardment of the German line, the heavy fire from the German rifles and machine guns came as a complete surprise and was totally unexpected. Within half-an-hour the advance had halted, and they found themselves in a very

dangerous position, with the Germans continually spraying the ground with machine gun fire.

However, it was Haig's order for a second bombardment at 6.15am that proved equally devastating for those unfortunate soldiers trapped in the mud. Not only were many of the British guns obsolete and therefore limited in their capabilities, but many fuses, especially on the 15 inch howitzers, failed to function. Many shells fell short because the bores of the guns were too worn and were undoubtedly the cause of many deaths of our own soldiers.

The few attackers who managed to reach the relative shelter of the enemy breastworks looked on with horror as their wounded comrades were blown to bits, not only by shells falling short, but as a result of a deliberate attempt to cut gaps through the German wire. For the next 40 minutes, shrapnel was sprayed onto the wire rather than the breastwork. After Neuve Chapelle, the Germans strengthened their defences considerably and used thicker wire to make formidable and impenetrable barriers. The lack of intelligence about this and the protected machine gun emplacements was unforgivable in the circumstances.

When the roll call for the 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex was taken in the evening at Les Choquaux, it revealed two officers killed, nine wounded and three missing; in the ranks, 101 were dead,

118 'missing' and 329 wounded.^{ix} Harold was among the missing, but he must have been killed early in the battle. As a soldier in 'D' company, he was among the first to climb over the parapet, and since his body was eventually recovered, he must have been hit fairly close to his front line. Heavy machine gun fire cut many of them down even on their own ladders and parapet steps, but men continued to press forward as ordered. There was total chaos as the German snipers deliberately picked off the officers, leaving few men to lead. Panic and confusion led many to dart back towards the cover of their own parapet, where they were met by new waves of troops trying to climb out. Very soon the trenches were clogged with dead and wounded. The simultaneous attack by the British to the north was equally disastrous for exactly the same reasons.

Major General Haking, Commanding Officer of the 1st Division, reported the failure of the offensive at 7.20am. General Haig, hearing of French successes at Vimy, ordered a renewed bombardment at 3.20pm, but it would ultimately prove a disaster, just like the earlier attacks. Final casualty figures were 458 officers and 11,161 men, the vast majority



Fig. 5 A touching portrait of Private Harold Linfield, 1914. (Family collection)

within yards of their own front line trench;^x among these, the 1st Division sustained 3,968 casualties, of whom 160 were officers.^{xi} The tragedy of Aubers Ridge is that it achieved *absolutely nothing* - not an inch of ground was won, no tactical advantages were gained; not surprisingly, the true story was hidden from the British public since very little about the battle reached the papers. The loss of so many men with nothing to show for it was hardly likely to impress anyone or boost their confidence in the direction of the war. One notable exception was the 'Sussex Daily News', which reported on the 'very heavy losses' on 18 May 1915.

On 2 June 1915, the 'Worthing Gazette' reported that Harold 'was in the thick of the fighting for the possession of Hill 60 a few weeks ago, but nothing has been heard of him since'. This man-made feature, a few miles to the south east of *Ypres*, was formed in the 1860s from the spoil taken from a new railway cutting and was of immense strategic value as an observation point. Since the outbreak of war, there had been a number of skirmishes and it changed hands on several occasions. But in the official diary of the 2nd Battalion, there is no mention of any fighting at Hill 60, so the newspaper claim has to be flawed. Such a mistake is understandable when one considers the lack of information getting back from the Front.

On 14 July 1915, the 'Worthing Gazette' announced:
'Harold F. Linfield (son of Mr and Mrs A.G. Linfield of the Laurels, Chesswood-road) was officially reported as wounded and missing last week. As a fact, it is now two months since any definite news was received concerning him, and although there is, of course, just a possibility that he may have been taken prisoner, the uncertainty as to his fate is naturally a source of much anxiety to his parents and his many friends'.

After such a long wait for news, his devastated parents finally heard from the War Office on 15 September 1915 that Harold had been killed on 9 May at Richebourg L'Avoué. Harold's father immediately telephoned the Worthing Gazette to inform them of the sad news.^{xii} On 20 October 1915, the family held a memorial service for Harold at the Wesleyan Church in Steyne Gardens, where he was described as 'a simple, modest, home-loving Christian lad' who 'had no love of fighting, but went out from a deep sense of duty'.^{xiii}

When Owen Buckmaster found himself in the same front trench in August 1915, he felt a deep empathy for the men who had been so cruelly mown down just a few months earlier:^{xiv}

'Just over the parapet were the bodies of many of the 2nd Battalion of the Sussex Regiment, killed in the attack on the Aubers Ridge on the 9th May, 1915. There they lay, facing the enemy, mummified, packs squared, bayonets fixed as if on parade, shot down and wiped out before they had barely been able to get throughout our own wire; their lives squandered by the folly and incompetence of the staff. Anyone with any common-sense could have seen that no man could have done what they were asked to do. In front of the trenches the terrain was flat, without one particle of cover. In the spring only the blades of young corn would have been growing on it. To reach the German lines the men would have had to cross several hundred yards of this ground in the face of withering fire

from machine guns concealed in deep emplacements, and skilfully sited so as to support each other and rake every yard of ground with fire. The few field guns and other artillery which we then had would have been as effective in silencing the Germans as a packet of fireworks. Had any men reached the enemy trenches they would have found these protected in depth, with triple rows of barbed wire far stouter than any we used; its long savage spikes placed close together. Behind this front lay the German second and third lines, no less strongly-protected than the first, and then about a mile away, again across flat level ground, rose the gentle slopes of their final objective, the Aubers Ridge, behind which the Germans had hidden their field artillery'.

The awful reality is that several thousand corpses remained where they had fallen, left to slowly decompose in the mud. At least Harold has a grave with a headstone in the Military Cemetery at Rue-Pettillon, Fleurbaix – most of the soldiers killed on 9 May have no known grave and are recorded on the endless stone panels of the cemetery at Le Touret.

It is extremely difficult to find *any* sort of justification for what happened at Aubers Ridge. A charitable view might reflect on the relative inexperience of the British Army at this early stage of the War, since they were still on a steep learning curve. In fact, they were not ready for this type of warfare. Sir John French and General Haig were well aware of British weaknesses and must have known that a British disaster at Aubers Ridge was more than a distinct possibility. Although the British had managed to break through the German line at Neuve Chapelle, the appalling lack of armaments only allowed for a 40 minute bombardment, whereas the French bombardment at Vimy Ridge to the south lasted a full 4 days. Not surprisingly, the wire entanglements in front of the German trenches remained uncut.

Of course, the British commanders were under a lot of pressure to achieve some sort of victory. With only seven divisions to the French one hundred, there was an urgent need to prove they could effectively support their allies, mainly by providing a diversion to the main action at Vimy Ridge. In so many ways there were political priorities which transcended the military justification for the attack. The poor British 'Tommy' was just a pawn, knowingly sacrificed in their thousands on that fateful day in a futile attempt to save the face of the British Expeditionary Force. What a sham and disgrace that it should ever have happened. French's intense frustration with Kitchener for ignoring his pleas for more munitions led him to complain directly to the press; the ensuing political row led to the collapse of the Government and the creation of a Ministry of Munitions under Lloyd George. The fiasco at Aubers Ridge was a decisive factor in French's decision to expose Kitchener's intransigence.

Apart from the photographs, I am very fortunate to have Harold's memorial plaque and scroll, long treasured, as well as his war medals, recently acquired from a collector who had the generosity of spirit to return them to his family. More poignantly, I have a small framed portrait of Harold containing a pressed flower; it says on the back: 'Wallflower – picked by dear Harold in the trenches in the early Spring of 1915'.

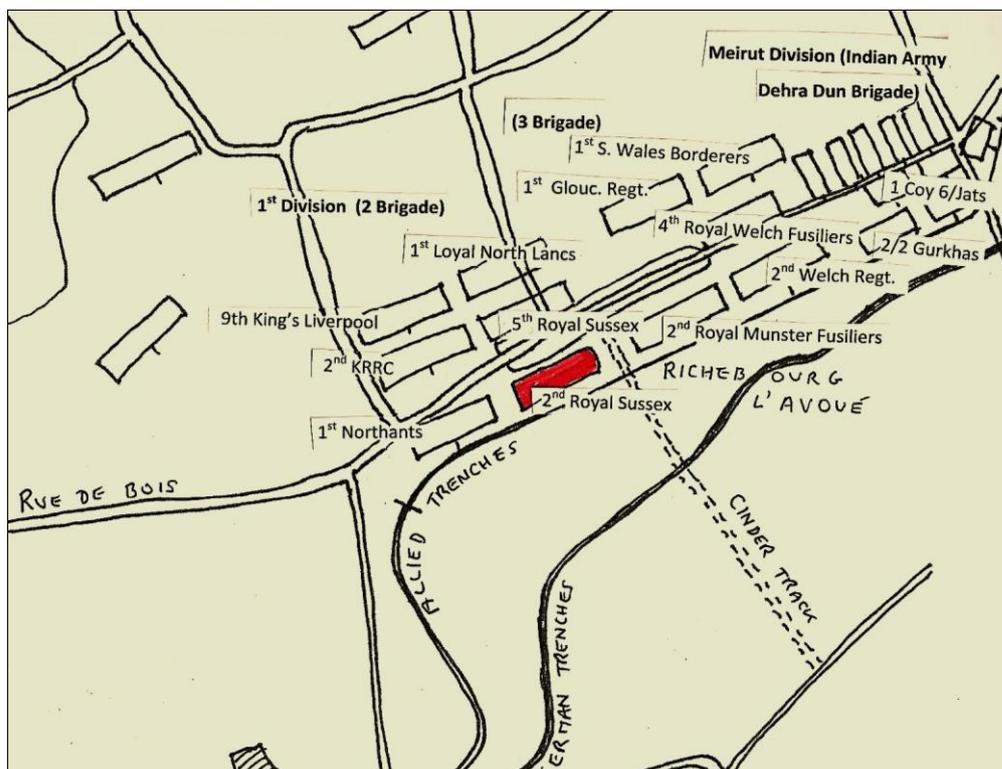
References

- ⁱ 'A Time for Loving', short story by Kathleen Peggy Champ (née Linfield), 1975
- ⁱⁱ Ancestry website, England 1911 Census
- ⁱⁱⁱ RSR 2/65 1914-19. Lists of non-commissioned officers and men of the Royal Sussex Regiment ('mostly, if not all, 2nd Battalion') killed, wounded or declared missing during the First World War, at the West Sussex Record Office (WSRO). Includes dates of embarkation and repatriation to England
- ^{iv} op cit RSR 2/65
- ^v Worthing Mercury, 23 October 1915 p. 6 col. 2
- ^{vi} Sussex News, 20 May 1915 – from RSR 2/63 Cuttings Book 17 October 1914 – 4 December 1915. A collection of cuttings from national and local newspapers relating to the proceedings of the 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment in France, at the WSRO
- ^{vii} Sussex News, 25 May 1915 – WSRO 2/63 Cuttings Book
- ^{viii} RSR 5/79 Extract from letter dated 14 May 1915 from Lt Col F.G. Langham at WSRO
- ^{ix} RSR MS 2/57 Royal Sussex Regiment 2nd Battalion War Diary (typescript copy) at WSRO
- ^x Hancock, Edward *The Battle of Aubers Ridge* (Leo Cooper, 1995), p. 141
- ^{xi} The Long, Long Trail website: <http://www.1914-1918.net/bat11.htm>
- ^{xii} Worthing Gazette, 15 September 1915 p. 5 col. 2
- ^{xiii} Worthing Gazette, 20 October 1915 p. 6 col. 6
- ^{xiv} RSR 2/162 1969. Roundabout. Extract from Viscount Buckmaster's book, expressing his views on the attack on Aubers Ridge by the 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment (WSRO)

Bibliography

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Winter, Denis | <i>Death's Men: Soldiers of the Great War</i> (Penguin Books, 1979) |
| Macdonald, Lyn | <i>1915: The Death of Innocence</i> (Penguin Books, 1997) |
| Bristow, Adrian | <i>A Serious Disappointment: The Battle of Aubers Ridge 1915 and the Munitions Scandal</i> (Leo Cooper, 1995) |
| Clark, Alan | <i>The Donkeys</i> (Hutchinson, 1961) |
| RSR/Library/2/6 | <i>The Roussillon Gazette (1915-16)</i> |
| Miller, Hugo | <i>We Won't be Druv</i> (Reveille Press, 2012) |

Appendices: (1) First Army Order of Battle, Aubers Ridge 1915: Southern attack – immediate front and reserve trenches. Map drawn by author, based on the official map of the War Office Historical Branch (see <http://www.wadhursthistorysociety.org>)



(2) Letter from Harold Linfield to his sister-in-law Lena, 17 February 1915

Pte. Linfield H. No 1295
'D' Company
2nd Batt. Roy. Sussex
British Exp. Force
17/2/15.

Dear Lena

I was ever so pleased to receive your letter & to get all the news, its nice to know how every one is getting on. I am glad to hear that you are keeping well, & I hope baby is getting on alright, so you have had him christened. I think the name is very nice, especially Peter. Please give my love to Carol, Jim & Joan. I guess the officers & soldiers are very interested in Carol for she is such a little dear & has such nice ways but she is certainly starting early.

I am ever so pleased to hear that Dutch is home. I do hope he will not come out here again. I would like to be home with him, still I must trust to one, that I shall get back again safely one day. I feel sure I shall. We are having a good bit of wet weather here, so you can guess I am thankful we are still resting, although it is in a draughty barn. If you care to send anything, I could do with anything to eat, & should rather like a mouth-organ. I hope you do not mind me saying. Have not seen any zeppelins, but plenty of airo-planes (German's).

Gladys wrote & told me the engagement was off between her & Arthur. I can guess who was to blame.

There are a lot of Worthing fellows out here, there is Captain Fuller, Scott, Lee, Peerless, Hills & ever so many more. I often get a fellow come up to me & say what! you out here, & I don't know who they are until they say. I was with Brown & Stead before they died.

I am glad the children like the Gramophone. I guess Joan is getting quite big now. I am glad to hear the 'Rooms are doing well.

Must close now, heaps of love to all,

Ever your affectionate brother

Harold.

Note: Lena was Harold's sister-in-law, being married to his eldest brother Arthur. Peter, the new baby he refers to, was the father of the author. 'Dutch' was the family's name for Wilfred Albert Linfield, sent back to England on 7 February with 'trench foot'.

According to the 2nd Battalion War Diary, they were billeted at Allouagne from 4 February, and at the time he wrote this letter, between 16-20 February, they were involved in platoon and company training. This included firing on the range, machine gun training and signalling instructions. They spent the whole of February in training, finally returning to the front in early March.

Arthur didn't join up, but worked with his father to keep the family business going, so there would still be jobs for everyone when they returned from the war. Of the five boys and two girls in the family, four of the boys and one of the girls eventually joined the armed forces – all were to return, except poor Harold. Arthur became a Special Constable.

Harold's comment that he is 'glad to hear the 'Rooms are doing well' probably requires an explanation – he is presumably referring to the mushrooms being grown at Town House Farm in Thakeham. This farm was purchased by the firm in 1913, where several mushroom sheds were erected in 1913/14.

Letter to Mr Arthur Linfield 9 September 1915No. 2 Field Ambulance
1st Division
British Expeditionary Force
Sept. 9th 1915

Dear Mr. Linfield

I have today made further inquiries among the officers & men of the Battalion and am afraid that I can give very little hope as far as your brother is concerned. The men who knew him say he fell wounded in the charge, that is as far as I can get. He was certainly not brought in wounded at night, nor has his body been recovered. There are two possible explanations – That the body was taken and buried by the Germans, or that at night he mistook the German trenches for his own and crawled in. This latter is not so unlikely as it sounds for many of the wounded men who were brought in at night told me that they were so confused that they did not know the enemy trenches from our own. I am afraid though that there is very little hope, for if he had been taken a prisoner even if wounded we would have managed to get word through by this time. I am sorry to quench even the smallest spark of hope, but they told me at the orderly room today that all who were reported “wounded and missing” are now reported “killed in action”.

I very much wish it were possible for me to give you more hopeful news, but I do not think I ought to encourage you to believe that you are likely to receive better news.

I hope you will not think this letter is at all unsympathetic. I am sure you would rather know the truth, no matter how painful than be buoyed up by false hopes.

Give my kindest regards to all your family. If I get any further news I’ll write at once and if I can do anything at all for you please write, I shall be only too glad.

With kind regards.

Sincerely Yours

John D. Coutts

Note: Harold’s body was recovered soon after this letter was written, and the family were informed by the War Office on 15 September. It has been estimated that over 93% of the 2nd Battalion RSR who were killed at Aubers Ridge on 9 May 1915 have no known grave (Hugo Miller, *We Won’t be Druv* (Reveille Press, 2012), p. 21).

With special thanks to my cousin Maggie Maclay, who recently discovered these letters among the papers of her late mother, Mollie Cormick, youngest child of Arthur and Lena Linfield and a great enthusiast for the history of her family.