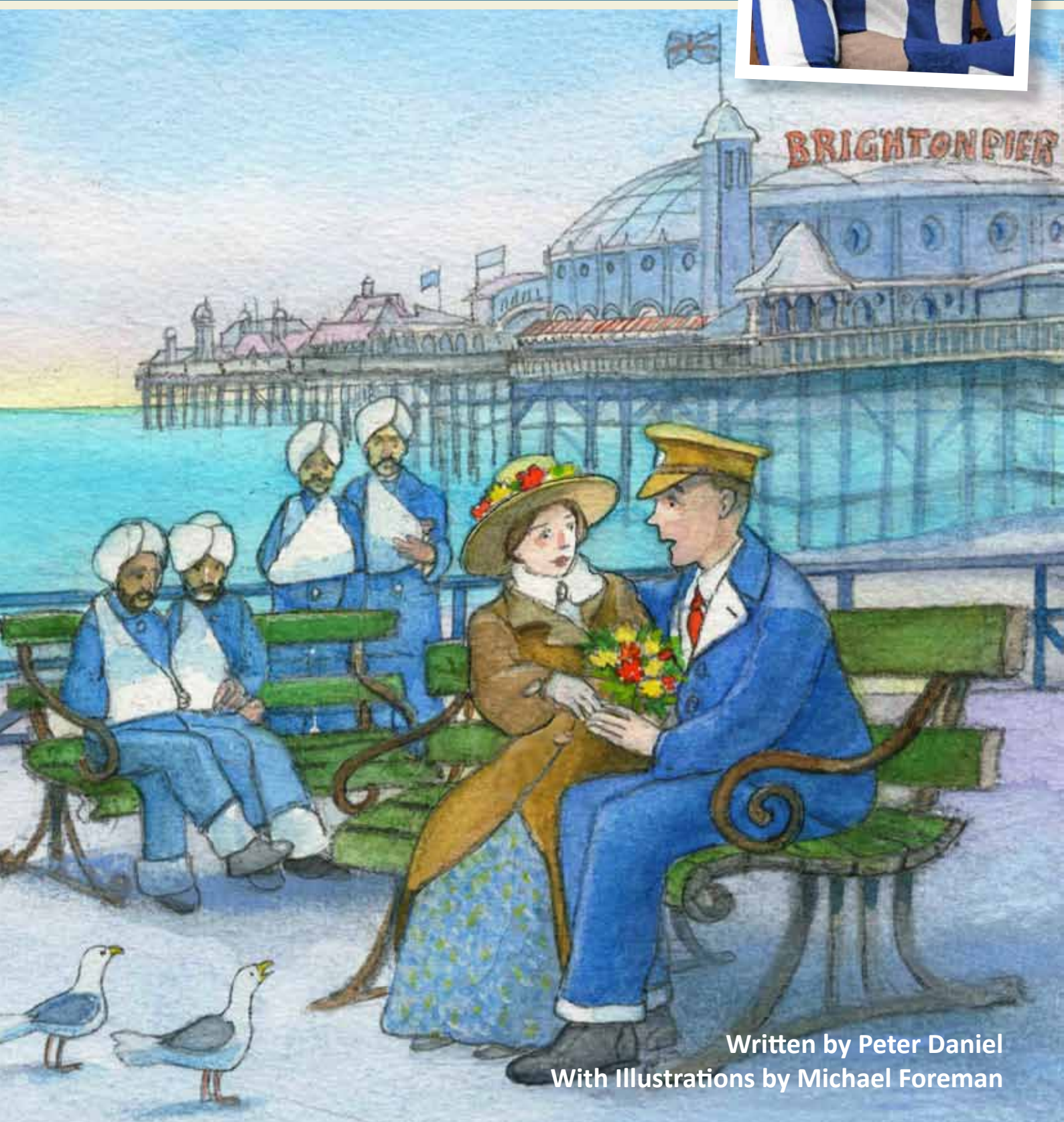


# Pom Pom Plays the Game

*The story of Pom Pom Whiting*



Written by Peter Daniel  
With Illustrations by Michael Foreman

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# Introduction

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In 2014 Westminster City Archives were awarded £92,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to mark the centenary of World War 1.

The focal point of the project is a school's initiative based around Michael Foreman's fictional story 'War Game' telling the tragic story of a young football team that goes to war, experiences the Christmas Truce but are tragically killed together in battle. Throughout 2014 and 2015 we have been working with volunteers and students developing this resource that will be used in schools to help children understand the real life horrors of war and the impact on real peoples lives.

The project and resource has focussed on the story of London-born Robert 'Pom Pom' Whiting (1884-1917), father of three, pre-war goalkeeping star and 17th Middlesex (Football Battalion) Regiment soldier. His extraordinary personal history combines sporting prowess, patriotism, reckless desertion, and then redemption by brave military service and tragic loss in battle

On 17th November 2014, The City of Westminster Archives, brought together ten schools from Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham and Kensington and Chelsea to the Abbey Community Centre in Westminster to participate in a musical commemoration of the lives of a group of local men who were lost in the 1914-18 War. Pom Pom was one of those stories commemorated.

*Peter Daniel, Westminster City Archives April 2015*


## Acknowledgements

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Westminster City Archives would like to thank the numerous individuals and organisations who contributed to the 'Playing the Game' project and helped make this resource possible. We would especially like to thank the many students and volunteers for their research and to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their grant.

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Illustrations	Michael Foreman ( <i>Pages: Frontcover, 7, 18, 40, 44, 53, 58, 60, 65</i> ) Jonathan Boast ( <i>page 85</i> )
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Contributors	Julia Haydoch, Peter Burgess
Researchers	Lara Schenke, Kathryn Spicer, Karen Ploch
Editor	Peter Daniel





In everlasting memory of my dear  
daddy, Private R. Whiting, 17th Middlesex,  
killed in action April 28th, 1917.—From his  
little son Joey, whom he never saw.

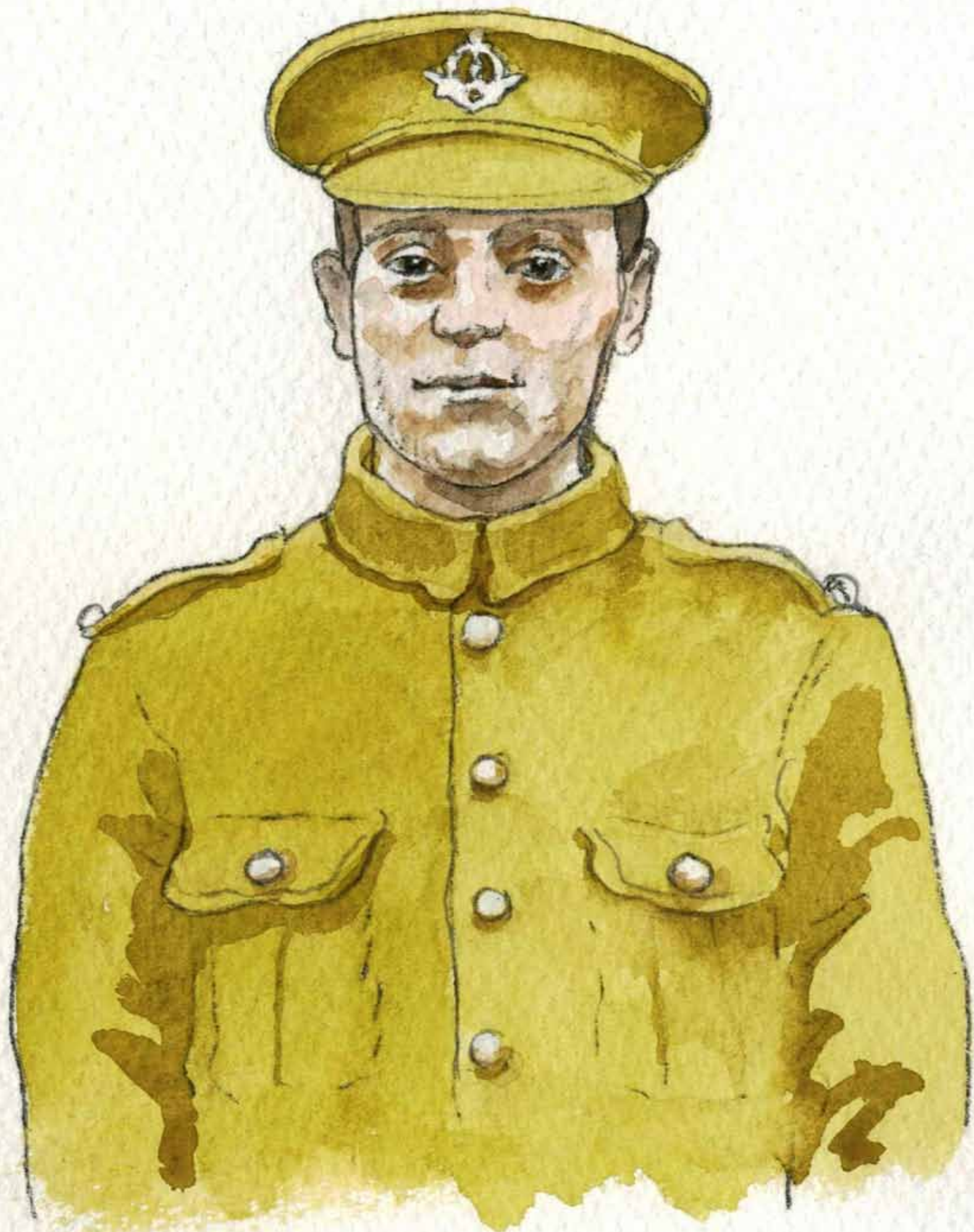
Kent and Sussex Courier 16th February 1923

When the Hove War Memorial was  
unveiled on 27th February 1921 a simple  
bunch of carnations was left on it with the  
words, "To the Dad I never knew."

**Was this little Joe Whiting?**

# Pom Pom Plays the Game





Pom Pom Whiting

Michael Foreman

# Waiting for Zero

It's 3 a.m. I can't sleep. I've got a bad feeling about this one, reckon my number might just be up this time. In an hour and half, the time it takes to play a match, I might be brown bread\* because when that whistle blows we won't be playing under F.A. rules and though some of us might win a medal the only trophy we'll collect is a pile of bricks they once called Oppy Village. If I try to close my eyes to shut out the fear it just makes it worse, as all I see are ghosts -people and places that have brought me to this muddy hole in France. They flash past in a whirl, the story of my life. (\*brown bread=dead)



'Oppy Wood' 1917 John Nash - IWM DSC2374



Scaling ladders in front line trenches on the day prior to the opening of the Arras offensive, 9th April 1917.  
IWM Q 6229

Oppy was a village close to Vimy in northern France. Fortified by the Germans, it was not captured until September 1918. John Nash's painting shows the brutal landscape where Pom Pom met his death. No Man's Land is devastated by shell holes which have been turned into lakes, shelters dug deep in the ground, and trenches with cemented floors and arches reinforced by sheet metal, a cold place dead to the world. Imagine Pom Pom as the figure with his head to the ground waiting for zero hour.

# A Cockney Born and Bred

Now if I'm going to tell my story I suppose I should start from where it all began. I came into this world on the 6th January, 1883. You probably know me now as 'Pom Pom' or Bob Whiting, but that's not my real name. Chelsea and Brighton fans could have been cheering Bobby Greenhalf because that's the name you'll find on my birth certificate. Don't ask me why - it's a long story and I'd get in a right two and eight\* explaining it to you - and here's another thing ... I'm a Cockney born and bred so rhyming slang is second nature to me. (\* two and eight = state)

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		WEST HAM								
1883 BIRTH in the Sub-district of West Ham		in the County of Essex								
Column:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
276	6th Jan 1883 1 Church Street Plaistow U.S.D.	Robert	Boy	Robert Greenhough	Margaret Greenhough formerly Gorman	Boiler-maker	The mark of Margaret Greenhough mother 1 Church Street Plaistow	Twenty third February 1883	R M Marsh Registrar	

Source 1. Birth Certificate 1883

176	6th January 1883 1 Church Street Plaistow U S D	Robert	Boy	Robert Greenhough	Margaret Greenhough formerly Gorman	Boiler-maker	X The mark of Margaret Greenhough mother 1 Church Street Plaistow	Twenty third February 1883	R M Marsh Registrar
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Robert 'Pom Pom' Whiting was born on 6th January, 1883 under the name of 'Robert Greenhough', he was brought up in Canning Town. His parents were Robert Greenhalf (born 1852, Whitechapel, London) and Margaret Gorman (born 1857, Southwark, Surrey). Pom Pom's father had been brought up by his stepfather Robert Whiting, he was so fond of him that he changed the family name to Whiting.



In the centre of the photograph (left) are Pom Pom's Grandma Whiting (ex Greenhough and step Grandad (Bob Whiting), left is his sister Nel (Helen) and right is his dad Robert. It was taken about 1910 outside their house at Rayleigh, Essex. Bob Whiting had been an excellent step father to Pom Pom's dad and they all loved him.

Whiting Family Collection Peter Burgess



"Canning Town is the child of the Victoria Docks ... poorer labourers live there, because they cannot afford to go farther, and there become debased."

Charles Dickens Household Words Issue 390 1857



Mum had been a match girl before I came along and so Dad always joked she'd "struck it lucky" when she met him! She'd never admit it to him but I know she was grateful to leave Bryant and May's factory in Bow to bring a family up with him in Canning Town. "Nothing's more important than family" she used to say. I would have done anything for my old mum. Wanted to make her proud of me. Sadly she died young so never saw me make it as a footballer. Not that football glory would have impressed her. Family was the thing for her and as her eldest child she made sure I never forgot that.

### The Bryant and May Match Factory Bow

At the Bryant and May factory in Bow, where 'Pom Pom' Whiting's mother Maggie had worked before he was born, the workers were largely young women like her who worked 14 hour days for less than five shillings (25p) a week (see picture below).

Conditions were harsh. For example, turning up late for work meant a fine of a half day's pay. On top of all this, the work itself was unusually hazardous.

The phosphorous used to make the matches caused yellowing of the skin and hairloss. Worse still was phossy jaw, a form of bone cancer.



Source 2. Match Girls



Socialist campaigner Annie Beasant's (above) revelations about the awful conditions for girls at Bryant & May caused a public outcry. The firm tried to stop the girls talking to her by making them sign a gagging order. Those who refused were sacked but the 1,400 girls at the factory went on strike to support them. After three weeks of action, Bryant and May caved in. They agreed to re-employ the sacked organiser and end the fines system. The girl's victory was a major step forward for trades unionism and also for women as a political force.

# Survival of the Fittest

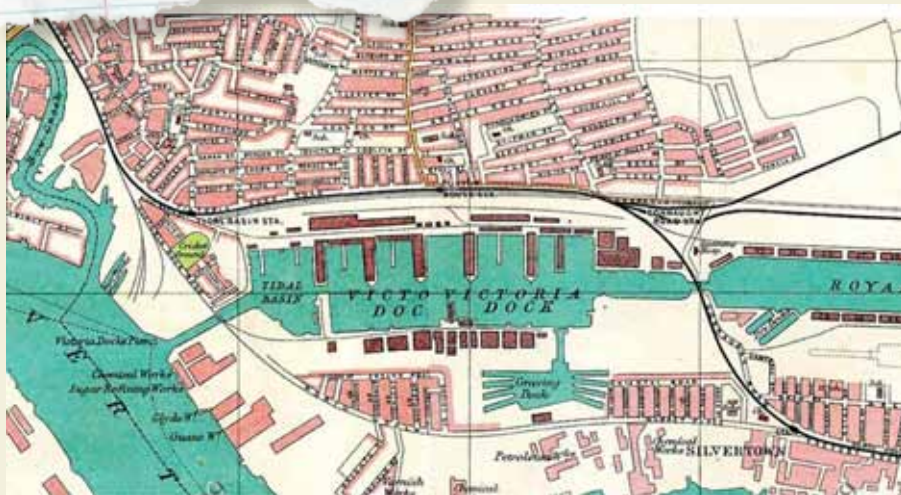
Growing up I lived for kick-about in the street with my mates, but with so many mouths to feed in our family the pressure was on me, as the eldest, to help out by earning a few bob.\* As soon as I left school, aged 14, I went to look for work. Each morning I'd join the crowds pouring through the gates of the Victoria Docks to fight for casual work at what was known as the 'call on.' Once inside we'd rush towards particular spots and wait 'on the stones' for the 'calling foremen' to appear. You had to scramble over those beside you to catch his eye and if you were lucky he'd call out your name and give you a days work unloading cargo ships. If you could survive that then no bully on the football field was ever going to scare you! It was the survival of the fittest and I was a survivor.

\*(bob= a shilling or 5p)



Dockers waiting on the stones for a days work.

## Source 3. Docklands Map

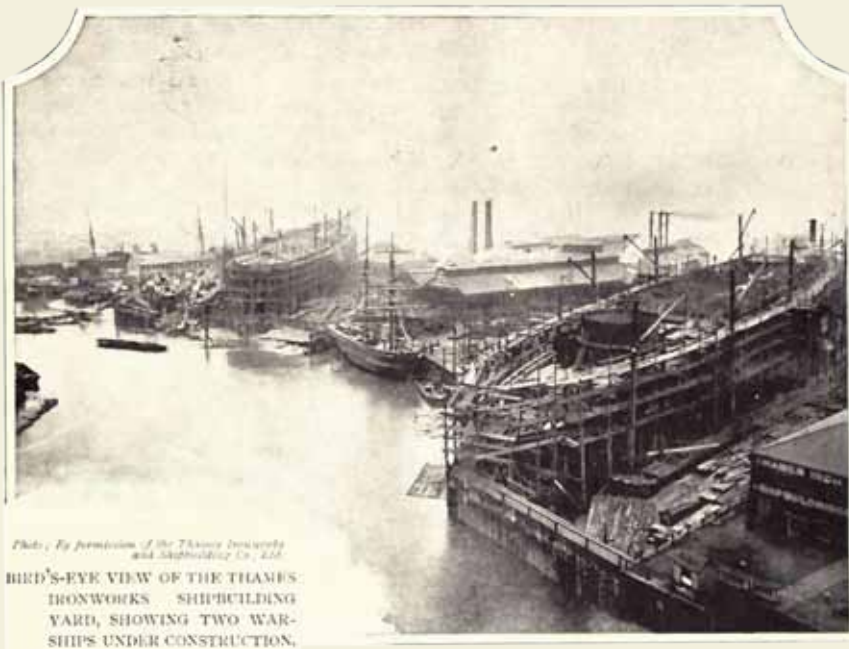


The Victoria Docks dominated Canning Town and provided casual labour for the poor who lived in the awful slums bordering the dock gates.

*“You can imagine for a moment from 1,500 to 2,000 men crowded together; the front men forced up against the chain: the back men are climbing over the heads of those in front, and the contractor behind the chain is picking out the men, generally his own favourites.*

*I myself have had eight or ten men upon my shoulders and my head, and I have been hurt several times in a struggle for employment like that.” “Unless a man is very strong,” says another witness, “there is a great possibility of his clothes being torn off his back.”*

The Times 1889



Pom Pom's father Robert (Greenhalf) Whiting, pictured right in 1936 aged 85, worked at Thames Iron Works (pictured above) which was close to their home in Canning Town.

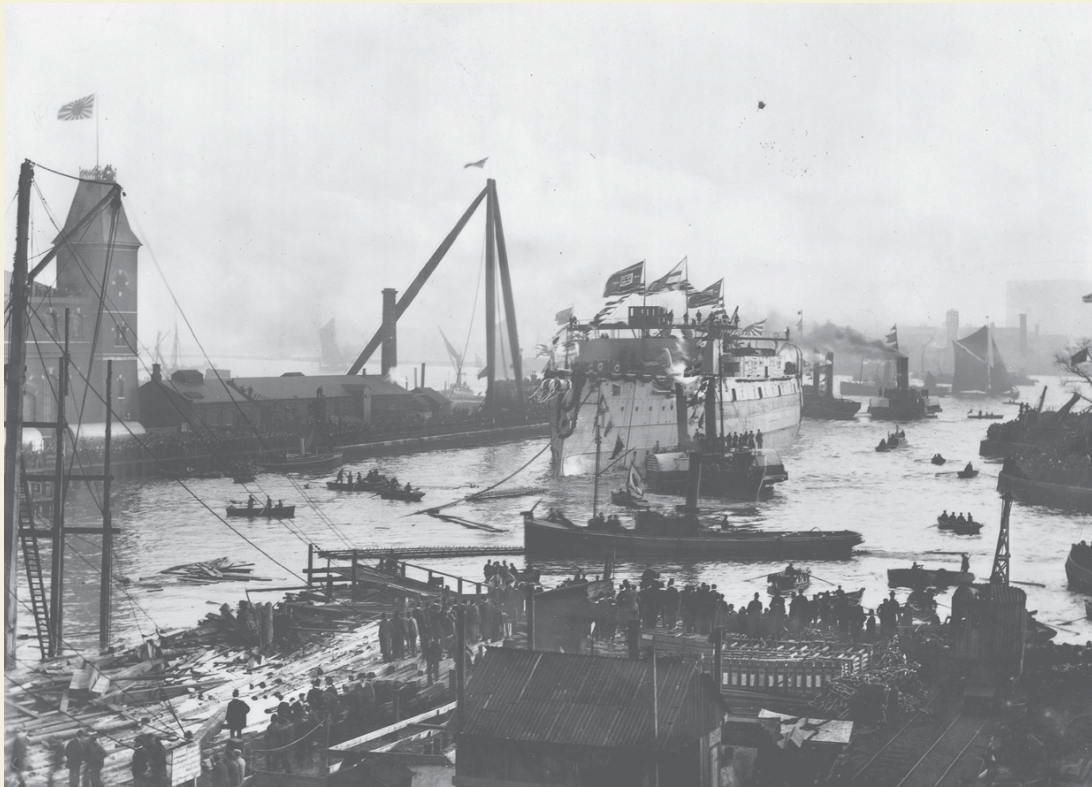
Picture Peter Burgess Whiting Family Collection

Source 4. 1891 Census Canning Town

Administrative County of		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the						Page 76	
Civil Parish	Municipal Borough	Municipal Ward	Urban Sanitary District	Town or Village or Hamlet	Rural Sanitary District	Parliamentary Borough or Division	Ecological Parish or District		
West Ham	West Ham	Plaistow	West Ham	West Ham	West Ham	South West Ham	St Gabriel		
492	9	1	24	Robert Whiting	Head	Mar	36	Boiler maker	City Road Middx
				Margaret	Wife	"	36		Peckham Surrey
				Robert	Son	"	8	Scholar	Barking Road Essex
				Edward	"	"	6	"	Barking Road Essex
				Ellen	"	"	5	"	Bow Road Essex
				Martha	"	"	3	"	Barking Road Essex
				Polly	"	"	1	"	Beaconsfield Road Essex
				Frederick	"	"	3 months	"	Beaconsfield Road Essex

First Name	Surname	Relation to Head	Age	Occupation	Place of Birth
Robert	Whiting	Head	36	Boiler maker	City Road Middx
Margaret	Whiting	Wife	36		Peckham Surrey
Robert	Whiting	Son	8	Scholar	Barking Road Essex
Edward	Whiting	Son	6	Scholar	Barking Road Essex
Ellen	Whiting	Dau	5	Scholar	Bow Road Essex
Martha	Whiting	Dau	3		Barking Road Essex
Polly	Whiting	Dau	1		Beaconsfield Road Essex
Frederick	Whiting	Son	3 months		Beaconsfield Road Essex

The Dockers Union tried to help us by organising strikes to improve the terrible conditions we worked under in the dock, but I knew from day one that I had to try and find a way out. “Gawd ‘elps ‘em that ‘elps ‘emsleves” Dad used to say and he pulled in a few favours to get me a job at the Thames Iron Works where he worked as a boiler maker. Instead of unloading ships, I was now helping to make ‘em. Looking back I suppose I should thank that German Kaiser Bill too. As long as he was about, Dad said, the Royal Navy would keep us in overtime making sure they stayed one step and several dreadnoughts\* ahead of the Germans. *\*(dreadnought = battleship)*



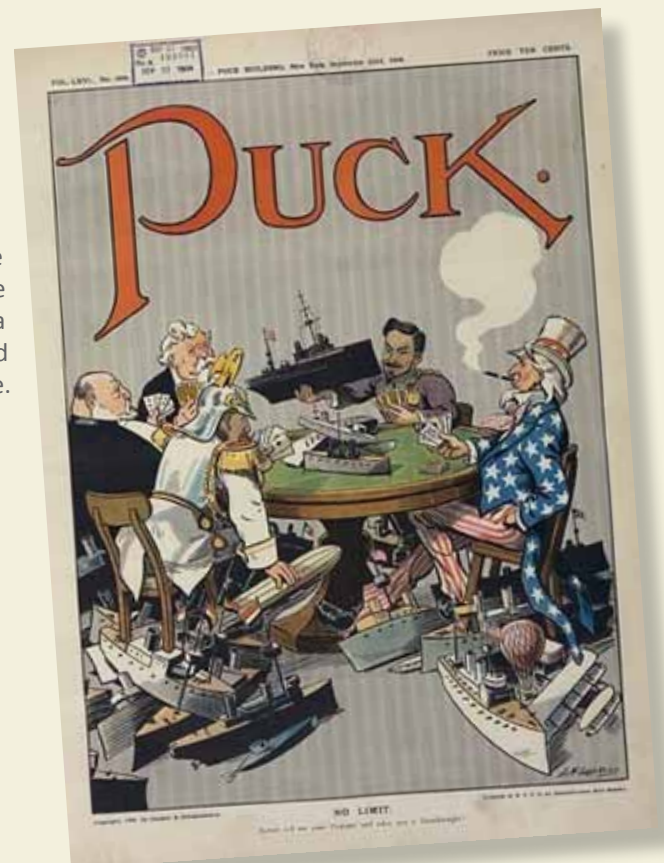
The Japanese warship 'Shikishima' is launched at the Thames Iron works, 1898.

The naval race between Germany and Great Britain between 1906 and 1914 created huge friction between both nations and it is seen as one of the causes of World War One. In 1906, Britain launched the first dreadnought - a ship that meant all others were redundant before its awesome fire power.

*RMG C6851*



This 1909 cartoon in Puck shows US, Germany, Britain, France and Japan were engaged in a naval armed race.



Kaiser Bill – Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany - was Queen Victoria's grandson and was envious of his cousin King George V's navy.

*W.K. Haselden Daily Mirror, 25.9.14*

# The Irons

Soon after I began my apprenticeship at Thames Iron Works, word got around that I was a useful goalkeeper and I was asked to go for a trial at the Memorial Ground, where our newly re-named work's team, West Ham United, played. I'd queued up to see the governor of the Iron Works, Mr Arnold Hills, open the ground to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Now sadly the old Queen had passed away, but as our new king, Edward VII, took to the throne, in 1902, I took my first step towards becoming a professional footballer with the team we still called 'The Irons.'



Source 5. Pom Pom's First Club

West Ham United was founded as the Thames Ironworks team in 1895. They have two nicknames: 'The Irons' and 'The Hammers' and these both relate to the club's origin as an Ironworks team. The club was renamed West Ham United in 1900.



The club was founded by the owner of Thames Iron Works Arnold Hills (left) as an amateur club for the workforce. He severed his ties with them when they decided to turn professional.

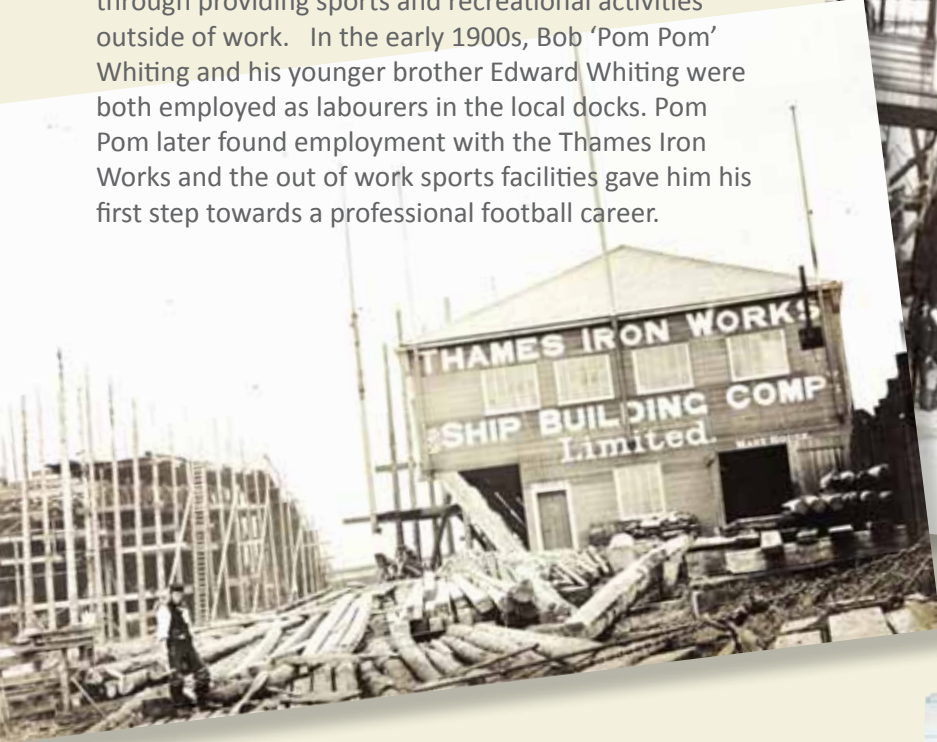
Illustration of Pom Pom Whiting  
Michael Foreman



An early match at Thames Iron Works memorial Ground in Canning Town

A little under six foot tall and weighing around 12 stone, Bob Whiting was naturally suited to the role of goalkeeper. Although he showed promise as a goalkeeper, Bob Whiting only made the Reserve Team of West Ham United. After a couple of years in the Reserves of West Ham United he decided to move and in 1904 he decided to move on to South West Ham F.C.

Dockers in the Victoria Docks (pictured below right) had no job security under the casual system that existed there. Thames Iron Works offered job security and a caring employer in John Hills, who wanted to create loyalty in his workforce by looking after them through providing sports and recreational activities outside of work. In the early 1900s, Bob 'Pom Pom' Whiting and his younger brother Edward Whiting were both employed as labourers in the local docks. Pom Pom later found employment with the Thames Iron Works and the out of work sports facilities gave him his first step towards a professional football career.



Source 6. 1901 CENSUS Canning Town

Administrative County		West Ham		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the boundaries of the										Page 21	
Civil Parish		Ecclesiastical Parish		County Borough, Municipal Borough, or Urban District		Ward of Municipal Borough or of Urban District		Road-District		Parliamentary Borough or Division		Town or Village or Hamlet			
of West Ham		of St. Gabriel		of West Ham		of Canning Town		of		of South West Ham		of			
No. of HOUSES	ROAD, STREET, No. and No. or NAME of HOUSE	Uninhabited	Inhabited	Name and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	Sex	Age last Birthday of	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employer, Worker, or Own account	If Working at Home	WHERE BORN	(1) Dead and Death	(2) Blind	(3) Lunatic	(4) Infirm, Feeble-minded
118	50		1	Robert Whiting	Head	Male	49	Boiler Maker (Ironworks)			London, Essex				
				Edward	Son	Male	17	Labourer			Canning Town				
				Ellen	Dau	Female	15				Canning Town				
				Martha	Dau	Female	14				Canning Town				
				Mary Ann	Dau	Female	12	Scholar			Canning Town				
				Frederick	Son	Male	10	Scholar			Canning Town				
				James	Son	Male	7	Scholar			Canning Town				
				Joseph	Son	Male	4				Canning Town				
4	Total of Houses and of Tenements with less than Five Rooms	3	3	Total of Males and of Females...		16	12								

First Name	Surname	Relation to Head	Age	Occupation	Place of Birth
Robert	Whiting	Head	49	Boilermaker (Ironworks)	London
<b>Robert</b>	<b>Whiting</b>	<b>Son</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>Labourer</b>	<b>Canning Town Essex</b>
Edward	Whiting	Son	17	Labourer	Canning Town Essex
Ellen	Whiting	Dau	15		Canning Town Essex
Martha	Whiting	Dau	14		Canning Town Essex
Mary Ann	Whiting	Dau	12	Scholar	Canning Town Essex
Frederick	Whiting	Son	10	Scholar	Canning Town Essex
James	Whiting	Son	7	Scholar	Canning Town Essex
Joseph	Whiting	Son	4		Canning Town Essex

# Pom Pom of the Rangers

After a couple of years in the Irons' reserves I decided that if I wanted to be a professional I needed first team football. After a brief spell at South West Ham F.C. I moved to Tunbridge Wells Rangers. I even had a nickname now 'Pom Pom' because my powerful goal kicks reminded the fans of the Vickers gun they had used in the Boer War. Everyone did their best to make me feel at home, but Tunbridge Wells was as different to Canning Town as chalk is to cheese. It wasn't until I took lodgings in the town and met my Nellie that I stopped missing London. She lived with her dad Bill, a builder, and earned her living taking in washing.



Source 7. 'Pom Pom' nickname

Hiram Maxim originally designed the Pom Pom in the late 1880s as an enlarged version of the Maxim machine gun. The gun became famous during The Boer War in South Africa between 1900 and 1902. The gun's distinctive 'Pom Pom' sound soon became famous across Britain just as a young goalkeeper Bob Whiting was taking his first steps into professional football. It was the range and power of Robert Whiting's kicking as a goalkeeper that drew comparisons to the gun and earned him his 'Pom Pom' nickname.

R. Whiting, South West Ham's goalie has earned the sobriquet of 'Pom Pom' by reason of his tremendous kicking and punching.

Essex County Chronicle.  
Feb 24th 1905

Vickers QF 1Pounder  
'Pom Pom' gun



A postcard from  
Tunbridge Wells from the early 1900s

Sarah Quinnell (b 1883) was 22 when she met Pom Pom. She was the daughter of William Quinnell, a brick maker's labourer who lived in St John's Road, Tunbridge Wells. It appears that Sarah (known as 'Nellie' to her family and friends) was the youngest of nine children.

Nellie and I were soon courting and the happiness she brought me spread to my performances for Rangers. After spending a very happy Christmas with Nell I started the New Year of 1906 looking forward to my first appearance in the F.A. Cup. We had been drawn away to Norwich City and the press had already written us off after a heavy defeat on New Year's Day. However, I knew there would be Football League scouts at the game, so I was determined that I would do all I could to prove our critics wrong. As it happened, I had the game of my life and was cheered off the pitch by my teammates at the end of the game. We had defied our critics and grabbed a 1-1 draw to take the tie back to Tunbridge Wells, but better still somebody tipped me off that I had impressed Chelsea's scout so much they wanted to sign me.

The New Year opened with an unexpected reverse at Sittingbourne in the return with New Brompton Amateurs and how the Rangers came to lose 4-1 beats me to this day. After the game I pointed out to 'Pom Pom' that the outlook against the Canaries wasn't very bright, and although I refrain from giving his reply, the confidence he expressed as to what would happen when they met the Southern Leaguers was fully borne out by the result.

### THE VISIT TO NORWICH

was a very enjoyable one, and going down from Liverpool Street with Mr Millward and Mr Carr, their reminiscences of many first class contests at which they had assisted were very entertaining. It is needless for me to write the story of the match ever again, but I shall never forget the splendid effort Whiting made and the manner in which he was supported by his backs and halves. He had an ovation when the teams went off, and after that movement on the Rangers right resulted in Wilcox being beaten by Parkes, one actually dared to hope for the visitors success as time crept on. Some of the Rangers' executive looked the other way whenever the Canaries got near 'Pom', who was unluckily beaten by a drive from Bushell which Livesey might have booted away. The end came with honours even, and a merry party sat down to dinner at the Great Eastern Hotel.

### Source 8. F.A. Cup Hero



Norwich City 1905-1906. P Daniel

On 13th January 1906, Bob Whiting played in goal for Tunbridge Wells Rangers in a F. A. Cup tie against Norwich City. Scouts for Chelsea Football Club were present at the game and Pom Pom's incredible performance was soon winning admirers. The manner he kept the Norwich forwards at bay impressed the scout from Chelsea F.C. who was looking for a replacement for their goalkeeper, Billy 'Fatty' Foulke. Chelsea Manager Bill Lewis was soon in touch and Pom Pom found himself heading back to London to sign for the Football League's newest team.



Tunbridge Wells Rangers photographed with the Kent Cup in 1907-the first season after Pom Pom had left the club. Pom Pom's short stay at the club coincided with the club playing in the Southern League in season 1906-07 which at that time was considered the equal of the Football League.



# My Big Break at the Bridge

Shortly after the Norwich game Mr Langdon, the Chairman of Rangers, called me into his office and told me that he had accepted an offer from Chelsea and that I had to travel up to London to agree terms with their Chairman Gus Mears and Manager Bill Lewis. I took the train from Tunbridge Wells to Victoria and then the short journey on the underground to Walham Green.\* Stamford Bridge was home to the Football League's newest club and as I walked towards the club's offices behind the main stand I caught a fleeting glimpse of the pitch. I paused for a second to imagine what it would be like to run out there as Chelsea's keeper. This was my dream, now I had to make it happen. \*(Walham Green is now Fulham Broadway)



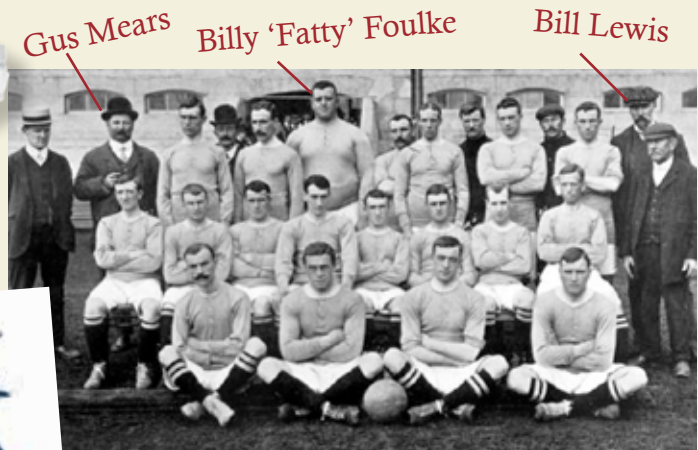
Opened in 1877, Stamford Bridge was used by the London Athletic Club until 1905, when new owner Gus Mears founded Chelsea Football Club to occupy the ground; Chelsea have played their home games there ever since. It has undergone numerous major changes over the years, most recently in the 1990s when it became an all-seater stadium.

**RANGERS LOSE THEIR GOAL-KEEPER. WRITING GOES TO CHELSEA.**

On Tuesday afternoon, Mr J. Langdon, the Chairman of the Rangers' executive, received a telegram from Mr W. Lewis, manager of the Chelsea team, asking if the Rangers would transfer Whiting, and offering to play a match on Monday if arrangements could be made. Mr Langdon hurried round, and in the course of an hour or so matters were fixed up on the telephone, the transfer being notified to the S.E.L. Secretary, and the Rangers' coffers have benefited by the transaction, the sum mentioned running into three figures. Whiting received his papers on Wednesday morning, and a parting injunction to him to make the best terms he could for himself was carried out. It was too late to do anything in the way of a match this season, but the Rangers will receive a visit from the English League (who have made such a bold bid for promotion in their first season), early next year. Whiting was fixed up for the Rangers last summer by Mr Langdon, and has proved a very capable goalie, coming into prominence for his successful keeping in the English Cup-ties, culminating in a magnificent display against Norwich City on their own ground, the Southern Leaguers being somewhat lucky in saving the game. Whiting may succeed Foulke at Stamford Bridge, and he has put on a couple of stone since he took up his residence in the Wells. He left the town yesterday to play his first match for his new club, and told the writer he hoped to be taking part in local League cricket during the summer

Source 9. Rangers Lose Their Goal-Keeper

Source 9. Chairman and manager



Chelsea F.C. 1905-06

In 1896, Gus and Joe Mears purchased the Stamford Bridge Athletics Ground with the intention of turning it into the country's finest football ground. When he failed to persuade Fulham FC chairman Henry Norris to re-locate his club to the ground, he considered selling the land to the Great Western Railway Company. However when on the verge of abandoning his football dream his Scotch Terrier bit his colleague Fred Parker, who still supported the idea. So impressed was Mears with his friend's reaction, he decided to take his advice and found Chelsea F.C. in 1905. Mears died in 1912, and his grave is in the nearby Brompton Cemetery, London.



Black and white and blue all over. Chelsea's Stamford Bridge stadium with only one stand as it looked on November 7, 1909 (top picture). Stamford Bridge has undergone numerous major changes from the time Pom Pom played there, most recently in the 1990s when it became an all-seater stadium (above). *Chelsea F.C.*

Mr Lewis told me that the team would soon be losing their legendary keeper, 'Fatty Foulke,' who was leaving the club before the end of the season to sign for Bradford City. He told me that I was being signed for Chelsea's reserves as he had promised Micky Byrne, the current reserve keeper, that he would have first shot at claiming Fatty's first team place. I was more than happy to agree to this and to sign my contract. I won't tell you how much they gave me but it was nowhere near the maximum wage that Fatty had been on which was £4 a week. In any case if the song they sang about him was right, and it was true that he really did eat all the pies, then he must have needed the extra cash!



Chelsea F.C.

### William 'Fatty' Foulke

William Foulke was Chelsea's first ever goalkeeper and captain and remains one of their most famous players despite playing only one season at the club. He was signed for £50 from Sheffield United where he had won two FA Cup winners medals and won one England cap but the Chelsea directors had as much an eye on his box office appeal as they had on his goalkeeping ability.

One of the many stories about him concerned an early away trip to Burton. At the team's hotel, Fatty decided to go down for dinner early. His song is the infamous, "Who ate all the pies?" and that is literally what the goalkeeper did. When the rest of the team came down they found that all eleven plates had been cleared!

In his one season at the club Foulke played 35 games, conceding just 28 goals. In the six games he missed that year, 17 goals were let in. He moved back north after one season to join Bradford City and he died of cirrhosis in May 1916 aged just 42.

### Source 11. Hull Daily Mail 22nd November 1905

A good deal of controversy seems to exist respecting the weight of Chelsea's leviathan goalkeeper and captain, William Foulke. In the third part of "The Book of Football" appears a most interesting article on the new Chelsea club, by Mr J. T. Robertson, the club's manager, in which it is stated officially, one might really say, that Foulke's weight is 22st 3lb, which is only 1lb less than the joint weight of the club's two backs, MacKie and McEwan.—"Football Chat."

James Ridley



Chelsea decided to accentuate Fatty Foulke's bulky presence by placing two small boys behind his goal who would also retrieve the ball when it went out of play and it is believed that these were the first ever ball-boys. One of them, James Ridley can be seen behind the goal in the picture above. He later joined the Football Battalion and fought alongside Pom Pom.

Fatty Foulke left Chelsea F.C. for Bradford City a fortnight before the end of the season and as the opportunity of promotion to Division One had gone it was decided that Mickey Byrne and I would alternate in goal for the final two matches of the season. I made my Football League debut in the final match of Chelsea's first ever season against the Division 2 Champions, Bristol City. Although I put in a solid performance we were unlucky to suffer a narrow 2-1 defeat. Nevertheless, now I had tasted first team football I was determined to stake my claim to be Chelsea's keeper for the following season.



Bristol City's Ashton Gate Ground in 1907

Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Bristol City	38	30	6	2	83	28	2.9 64	66
2	Manchester United	38	28	6	4	90	28	3.2 14	62
3	Chelsea	38	22	9	7	90	37	2.4 32	53



Pom Pom's debut came in the last match of Chelsea's first ever season in the Football League 1905-06 against 2nd Division Champions Bristol City. Billy 'Fatty' Foulke had played his last game for Chelsea in their home match against Glossop a fortnight before. With no chance of promotion Pom Pom was given his chance to impress, (Bristol City 1 - Chelsea 0).



Bristol City's Gilligan (left) scored the first goal that Pom Pom would concede in the Football League. Despite ending on the losing side Pom Pom's first performance impressed the watching Chelsea directors and was reported in Tunbridge Wells. Two weeks later Pom Pom went on Chelsea's close season tour of Europe.

on several occasions. Whiting has accomplished wonders beneath the bar, and I hear that his display against Bristol City on Saturday was very pleasing to the Chelsea directors, "Pom." being invited to participate in their Continental tour, which starts next Thursday.

Kent & Sussex Courier. Friday 4th May, 1906

Competition:	Football League Division 2 Position 3
Venue: date	Ashton Gate: Saturday 28th April 1906
Attendance:	14,000
Bristol City	Clay, Annan, Cottle, Spear, Wedlock, Hanlin, Bennett, Maxwell, Gilligan, Burton, Hilton.
Scorers	Gilligan 1st, Burton 2nd
Manager	Harry Thickett
Chelsea	1 Bob Whiting, 2 Robert Mackie, 3 James Fletcher, 4 Peter Proudfoot, 5 Bob McRoberts, 6 George Henderson, 7 Martin Moran, 8 Thomas Miller, 9 Frank Pearson, 10 Thomas McDermott, 11 Jack Kirwan
Scorer	Pearson 88
Debuts	Bob Whiting, James Fletcher
Manager	John Tait Robertson

Source 12. Chelsea Debut

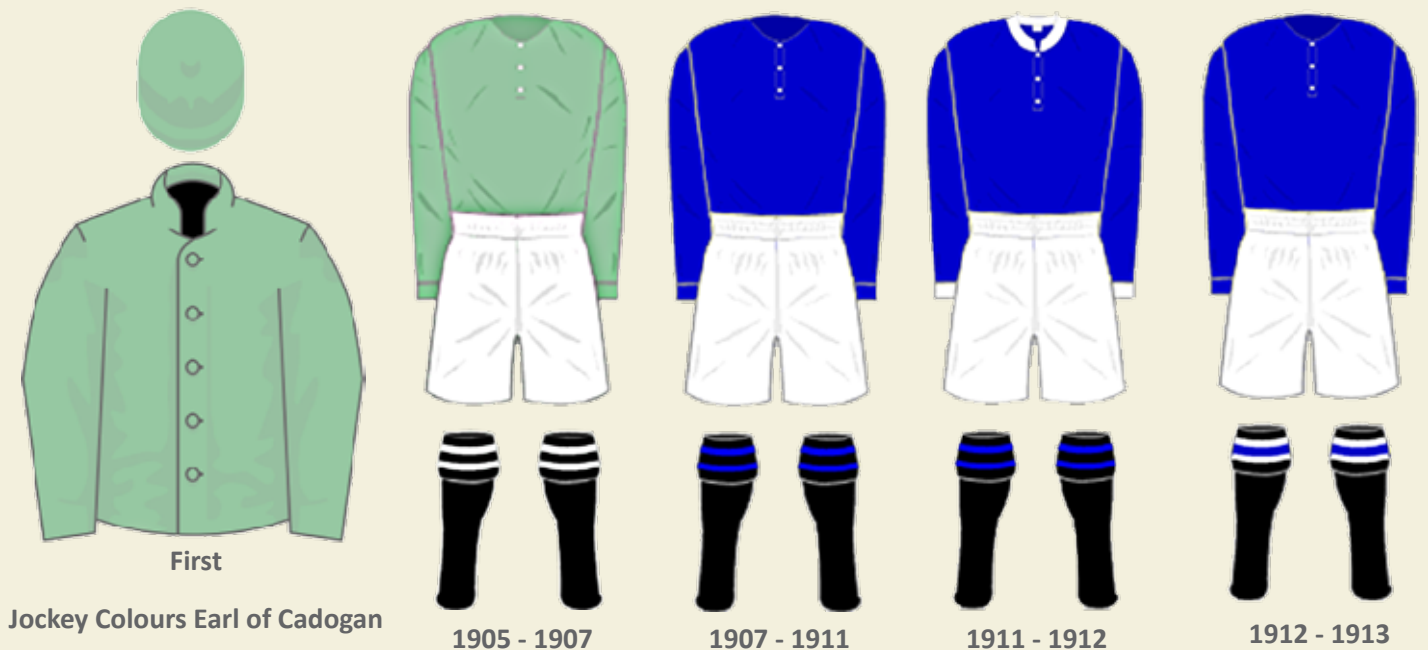
That summer of 1906 seems like a dream to me now I spend my days in a godforsaken muddy trench in France. If I close my eyes I can still see Mr Lewis's beaming smile as he told me to get measured up for a new whistle\* as I was going on the club's European tour. I'd never been abroad before and here I was getting suited and booted for Chelsea's first ever trip overseas. I got to visit Denmark, Bohemia, Austria and Hungary and got paid for the privilege! Life can't get better than that. Irishman Micky Byrne and I shared the keeper duties on tour and I continued the great start I'd had to my Chelsea career. We played ten games and won the lot!

*\* (Whistle and flute = suit)*

**Source 13. Chelsea Team Group and Kits**



Chelsea F.C. 1907-1908. Pom Pom is standing in the centre of the middle row marked with a red star. *Chelsea F.C.*



Initially, Chelsea played in the racing colours associated with the Earl of Cadogan, who was the club's president and also held the title Viscount Chelsea. Weatherby's Ltd, who maintain historical records of racing silks, have confirmed that these colours were Eton blue and white. Rick Glanvill, the club's historian has discovered that a more conventional royal blue was adopted probably at the start of the 1907-08 season.

Chelsea toured Denmark, Bohemia, Austria and Hungary just one year after formation, winning every match.

Date	Month	Opposition	Result	Score	Venue
13	May	Boldklubben 1893	Won	6-2	Copenhagen, Denmark
14	May	Southampton	Won	2-1	Copenhagen, Denmark
16	May	Deutscher FC	Won	4-0	Prague, Bohemia
17	May	Deutscher FC	Won	6-1	Prague, Bohemia
	May	Budapesti Torna Club	Won	4-0	Budapest, Hungary
	May	Magyar Athletikai Club	Won	6-0	Budapest, Hungary
22	May	Ferencvaros Terna Club	Won	3-1	Budapest, Hungary
	May	Vienna Cricket FC	Won	3-1	Vienna, Austria
	May	First Vienna FC	Won	3-0	Vienna, Austria
	May	Wiener Ramblers	Won	6-0	Vienna, Austria

**"Pom-pom," looking all the better for his Continental trip with the Chelsea F.C., returned to the Wells on Tuesday. The tour was a successful and enjoyable one, and with the exception of a heavy hail storm at Vienna the weather conditions were delightful.**

Kent & Sussex Courier. Friday 1st June, 1906

Source 14: Chelsea European Tour 1906



# Chelsea Debut

I began the 1906-07 season as Chelsea's reserve keeper behind first choice Mickey Byrne and we both knew we had the biggest of all 'Daisies'\* to fill ... Fatty's! Mickey was picked for the first game against Glossop which the boys won 9-2! Now after a win like that you don't normally make any changes. However poor old Mickey dislocated his shoulder trying to save a shot and that meant I was in for the next match away at Blackpool. I did well keeping a clean sheet in a goal-less draw and that got me mentally ready for my first appearance the following week at Stamford Bridge. As fate would have it this was to be against Bradford City, which meant I'd be up against Fatty himself. He'd been very popular with our fans so I knew I had to do well. \*(Daisy Roots'=boots)

Chronicles of the Chelsea Football Club.

## CHELSEA v. BRADFORD CITY,

ENGLISH LEAGUE MATCH.—Division II.  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1906. Kick-off, 3.30 p.m.

**CHELSEA (Light Blue).**

1 WHITING, Goal.				
2 WALTON Right Back.		3 MILLER Left Back.		
4 HENDERSON Right Half.		5 McROBERTS Centre Half.	6 BURNIE Left Half.	
7 MOHAN Outside Right.	8 McHERMOTT Inside Right.	9 HILDON Centre.	10 COOPERLAND Inside Left.	11 KIRWAN Outside Left.
O				
12 GARTON Outside Left.	13 HIGGINSON Inside Left.	14 NEWTON Centre.	15 BARTLETT Inside Right.	16 CLARKE Outside Right.
17 MILLAR Left Half.		18 KIRK Centre Half.	19 ROBINSON Right Half.	
20 FARRER Left Back.		21 CAMPBELL Right Back.		
22 FOULKE Goal.				



In April 1906 Pom Pom was signed up as a reserve goalkeeper for Chelsea F. C. However when Chelsea's regular goalkeeper Michael 'Micky' Byrne (pictured above between Chelsea founders Gus Mears and Fred Parker) was injured in the opening match of the 1906-1907 season, Bob Whiting was given the opportunity to establish himself as the club's first choice goalie. Between 1906 and 1908, Bob Whiting made 54 appearances in goal for Chelsea Football Club.

"Keuwyn," Babington-road,  
Streatham, S. W., 17-9-06.

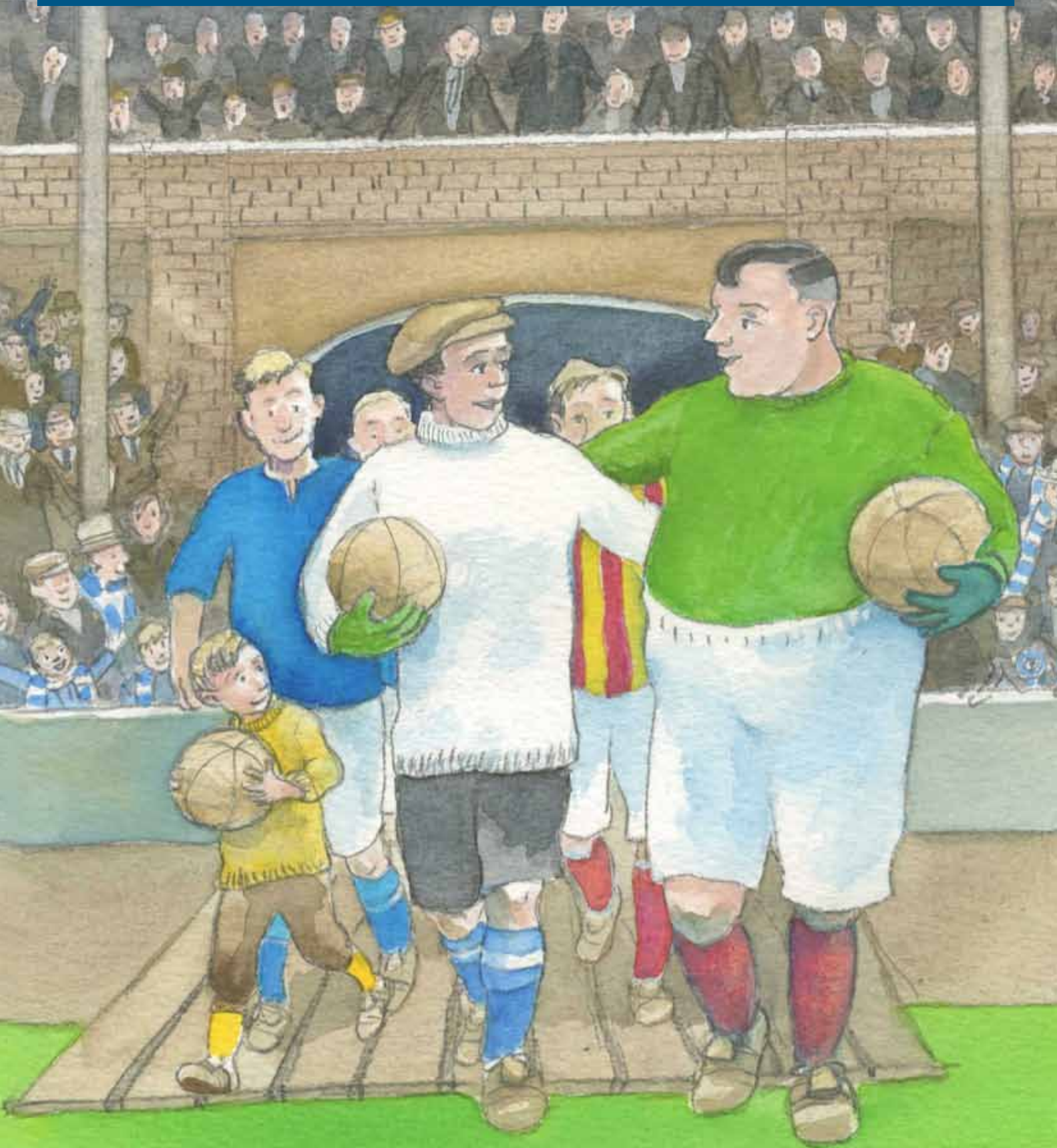
Dear Sir,—Being a native of Tunbridge Wells and a regular reader of the "Courier," I should like to add my testimony to the grand play of Whiting last Saturday for Chelsea against Bradford. Some of his saves were simply miraculous, while his kicking was clean and powerful, the ball seldom failing to drop beyond the half-way line. He had a very rousing reception, and, from remarks that I heard, he is a good catch. His play quite eclipsed that of Foulke, who, though good at times, was never really safe. In my opinion Whiting has a great future before him, and I quite think we shall see him gain very high honours in years to come.

Yours faithfully,  
JAMES G. ROGERS  
(An Admirer of Chelsea).



Fatty Foulke  
Bradford City

I can tell you I had butterflies as I ran out of the tunnel with Fatty, but things couldn't have gone any better. We beat Bradford City 5-1 and even Jimmy Ridley, our ball boy, who was very fond of Fatty thought I'd played well in comparison to Chelsea's former goalkeeping 'Colossus.'



Chelsea defeated Foulke's Bradford City side 5-1 the first time they met with Whiting in goal. Fatty weighed 24 stone and got lots of stick from the crowd. He didn't care though, apparently he once said, "I don't care what they call me as long as they don't call me late for lunch!"



Mickey's unfortunate injury was the lucky break I needed and I seized my chance to play the rest of the season as Chelsea's first choice keeper. We finished runners up to Forest by just three points but I didn't mind as we still got promotion. As the closest side to London's West End we were the celebrity club and I don't think I ever stopped signing autographs. My only regret was that mum wasn't there to see me, although I made sure I didn't forget to include the rest of the family in my success.

**Source 15. Chelsea Triumph**

Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Goal Avg	Points
1	Nottingham Forest	38	28	4	6	74	36	2.05 56	60
2	Chelsea	38	26	5	7	80	34	2.35 29	57
3	Leicester City	38	20	8	10	62	39	1.58 97	48

By their splendid 4-0 victory over the Wolves on Saturday, Chelsea won their way to the First Division of the English League. In two seasons the Pensioners have accomplished what some clubs have striven for for nearly a score of years, and have not realised their ambition. Many more, in addition to the writer, are extending hearty congratulations to Richard Whiting, more familiarly known as "Pom-Pom," on being one of the men to help the Pensioners into the highest class football. The Rangers' late goalie has again fixed up with Chelsea, and there are some who think that "Bob" will one day gain the highest honours the game offers. So may it be, and ere many more weeks are over, I shall hope to see him "holding 'em" at the other game on Rusthall Common, as he and Wally Oable did last season.

Kent & Sussex Courier. Friday 19th April, 1907



As a member of London's newest club Pom Pom was constantly in demand for autographs. He appeared on cigarette cards and posed for cabinet cards at the Gambler and Reeks studios in the Fulham Road and he would give them to his sister Mary-Ann (above).

*Pictures Peter Burgess*

CHELSEA F.C. PROFILES. No. 17.

ROBERT WHITING is an unmistakeable Londoner. He was born at West Ham, where now a days all youngsters learn to kick a football as soon as they can toddle. As the result of the Norwich City v. Tunbridge Wells cup-tie he suddenly became famous. Everybody was talking of the way in which the comparatively unknown goalkeeper kept the whole of the Southern League Team at bay for ninety minutes, defying all attempts to beat him. He was captured by Chelsea for reserve goalkeeper, and the unfortunate accident to Micky Byrne in the first match of this season gave Whiting a place in the League team which he has kept ever since. He has about the strongest



kick of any goalkeeper now playing, and with very little assistance from the wind can land the ball from a goal-kick pretty well in the penalty line at the opposite end. Hence his nickname of "Pom Pom." If he does not possess intuitive anticipation in a very marked degree, he is quite at home with "rasping" shots, and would probably stop anything short of a cannon-ball. The harder they come the better he likes it. We do not think he has ever been charged into the net. Many opponents have tried to do so—once—but few, if any, have made a second attempt. Pom Pom has just turned 23, he stands 5 ft. 10½ ins. and weighs 13 st. 6 lbs.

**"Pom Pom."**

Robert 'Pom Pom' Whiting's profile published in the Chelsea v Burton United programme, Football League Division 2, Saturday 23rd February 1907. *Chelsea F.C.*

## Chronicles of the Chelsea Football Club.

### CHELSEA COMPETITIONS.

#### No. 2.—“ Pom-Pom ” Whiting.

This proved a very popular competition and the number of post cards received would have papered a small room. The task of selecting the winning card proved a particularly long and arduous one. The final selection, a very difficult one to make, resulted in the Prize being awarded to:—

R. A. ELLIS,  
119, Page Street,  
Westminster,

for the following :

“ We've got a good goalie in Whiting,  
In kicking the ball and in smiting ;  
When Chelsea got nine  
It was sweeter than wine,  
They'll be smart who get nine against  
Whiting.”

It is impossible to print even a small proportion of the many other excellent efforts sent in, and the following must suffice.—

“ Opportunity's come to R. Whiting,  
Whilst poor Micky's shoulder is righting.  
He has proved, in his role, he  
Is quite a ' class goalie,'  
And his ' saves ' have been really exciting.”

W. LAMBERT,  
Wandsworth Bridge Road, S.W.

“ The man that can punch out and boot,  
Is Whiting the Chelsea recruit,  
Though smaller in bulk  
Than the evergreen Foulke,  
He's a good'un, we think he will suit.”

E. A. EARTLY, Knightsbridge.

“ For a ' plaice ' in the ' First ' so inviting,  
With heart and ' sole ' Chelsea are fighting ;  
Only third could they get,  
With a ' whale ' in the net,  
So we wish them good luck with their  
' Whiting.' ”

F. A. MANNING,  
Earlsfield.

“ This clever ex-Tunbridge Wells Ranger,  
To Goal-keeping tricks is no stranger,  
Resourceful and quick,  
As ' slim ' as ' Old Nick,'  
He's as safe as a bank when there's danger.”

F. E. CLARKE,  
Walham Grove.

“ A great catch has been landed in Whiting,  
Who was much angled for ('twas exciting),  
He accepted the bait  
Thrown out by John Tait,  
In his ' element ' now he is fighting.”

W. LAMBERT,  
Wandsworth Bridge Road, S.W.

“ Whiting, successor to Foulke,  
Is a capable man, and no joke,  
Although not so stout,  
He can hop round about,  
And the man that can beat him's the bloke.”

S. COULDREY,  
Marlboro' Road, Chelsea.

“ A great capture indeed is young Pom-Pom ;  
The county of hops he has come from.  
He foils all attacks,  
In resource nothing lacks.  
We're proud of our goalkeeper Pom-Pom.”

CYRIL COLE,  
Barkston Gardens,  
South Kensington, S.W.

Pom Pom limerick competition published in the Chelsea v Leicester Fosse programme, Football League. Division 2, Saturday 29th September 1906. *Chelsea F.C.*

# Challenges at Home and on the Pitch

At the end of the season I made the biggest and best decision of my life when Nellie and I got married near our home in Tunbridge Wells. Football had been my life up to now, but soon I would have a family of my own. I'm glad of that. Sometimes losing a match or having a bad game can seem like the end of the world when of course it isn't. I love football but I knew I loved my dear old trouble and strife\* a darn sight more.

\* (trouble and strife = wife)

1907. Marriage solemnized at *St. John's Church* in the *Town* of *Tunbridge Wells* in the County of *Kent*.

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
4.99	August 12 <sup>th</sup> 1907.	Robert Whiting	23	Batchelor	Professional Footballer	89 St John's Road	Robert Whiting	Boiler maker
		Nellie Quinell	24	Spinster	—	89 St John's Road	William Quinell	Labourer

Married in the *St. John's Church* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Prot. Ep. Church* by *—* or after *summo* by me, *—*

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *Robert Whiting* in the Presence of us, *Mary Ann Quinell* *John Quinell* *St. Dunstons Sandleys*

## Source 17. Marriage Certificate

4.99	August 12th, 1907	Robert Whiting	23	Batchelor	Professional footballer	89 St John's Road	Robert Whiting	Boiler maker
	St John's Church Tunbridge Wells	Nellie Quinell	24	Spinster	—	89 St John's Road	William Quinell	Labourer

On 12th August, 1907, Robert Whiting married twenty-four year old Sarah Nellie Quinell at St John's Church in Tunbridge, Kent. On the marriage certificate, Bob Whiting's bride, Sarah Quinell, gives her first name as "Nellie".



Nellie and Pom Pom married at St John's Church Tunbridge Wells.

Peter Daniel

Kent and Sussex Courier  
Friday 16 August 1907

**A FOOTBALLER'S WEDDING.** — Considerable interest was taken in a wedding solemnised at St. John's Church on Monday afternoon, the contracting parties being Mr R. Whiting, Chelsea's capable goalkeeper, and Miss Nellie Quinell, of St. John's-road, Tunbridge Wells. "Bob" Whiting is well known locally as being the Rangers' goalie in the season that they ran into the competition proper of the English Cup, and he burst into fame by a magnificent display against Norwich City. That it was not meteoric was plainly evidenced last season, when he helped to lift Chelsea into the highest class of football, and he had the proud distinction of having less goals scored against him than any other custodian in the English or Southern Leagues. Small wonder, then, that a deal of interest was manifested in Monday's happy event, and the Vicar of St. John's, the Rev. H. E. Eardley, officiated, and delivered a brief homily to the newly-wedded couple at the close of the service. Amongst a numerous congregation were some Directors and the Hon. Secretary of the Rangers, and the happy pair came in for a very hearty reception as they emerged from the church, having to run the gauntlet of their many friends armed with rice and confetti. "Pom-Pom" and his bride received many hearty congratulations and presents, amongst them being one from the Directors of his old club.

We all had high hopes for the new season but it started disastrously. We lost our first four matches and found ourselves bottom of Division One. I had a poor game against Forest when I let in six so by the time Arsenal came to the Bridge for London's first ever top flight derby the pressure was really on. There was a lot of local pride at stake and I'm pleased to say the Gunners came off second best!



London Transport Museum

Source 18. London Derby



Arsenal programme, 1907 Chelsea F.C.

Nov 9, 1907 Chelsea 2 Arsenal 1.

Attendance: 65,000

When Chelsea met Arsenal in 1907 it was the first London derby ever played in the top flight. Arsenal Football Club was founded in 1886 as a munition workers' team from Woolwich, then in Kent, now southeast London. They turned professional in 1891 and joined The Football League two years later. They were promoted to the First Division in 1904 but financial problems meant they were close to bankruptcy by 1910. They were bought out by Sir Henry Norris that year and to improve the club's financial standing, he moved the team to Arsenal Stadium, Highbury, north London in 1913. After the First World War he arranged for the club's promotion back to the First Division, in controversial circumstances.

Playing with me against the Gunners was my old china\* George Hilsdon from West Ham. The fans nicknamed him 'Gatling Gun' because of the power of his shooting and he scored twice in our 2-1 win. Now you remember I was named after a gun too, so you can imagine the fun the papers had with that as Chelsea's cockney keeper and centre forward outgunned the 'Gunners' from Woolwich!

\*china plate = mate/friend



**The Curse of the Weather Vane**

George 'Gatling Gun' Hilsdon (left) – whose five goals on his debut in 1906-07 remains a league record, scored 98 goals in 150 league games for Chelsea. As the club's first England international he was immortalised on a weather vane on the club's old East stand. It came to be considered as a lucky charm and so when the vane was removed for redevelopment of the East stand in 1973, Chelsea were relegated and almost lost their ground. Former chairman Ken Bates had a replica made for the East stand to reverse the club's fortunes. In 2013 the original weather vane was rediscovered in a shed in a metal foundry in Surrey.



**George 'Gatling Gun' Hilsdon**  
10 August 1885 – 10 September 1941

George was a footballer who began his career at West Ham United, making his debut in the 1903/04 season. Pom Pom was playing for West Ham at this time and Hilsdon transferred to Chelsea in the same year, 1906. He was the first player to score 100 goals for the West London club, reaching a then-record 108 goals from 134 games by the time of his return to West Ham in 1912. His career was ended by the First World War, to which he was conscripted in 1914 and crucially injured by a gas attack.

Hilsdon was nicknamed 'Gatling Gun' because his shots "were simply unstoppable and which travel like shots from a gun."



**Source 19. Pom Pom's 'Old China'**

Hilsdon's profile published in the Chelsea v Barnsley programme (right), Football League Division 2, Saturday 24th November, 1906. *Chelsea F.C.*

**Source 20. Pom Pom's Chelsea Career  
Match by Match 1906**



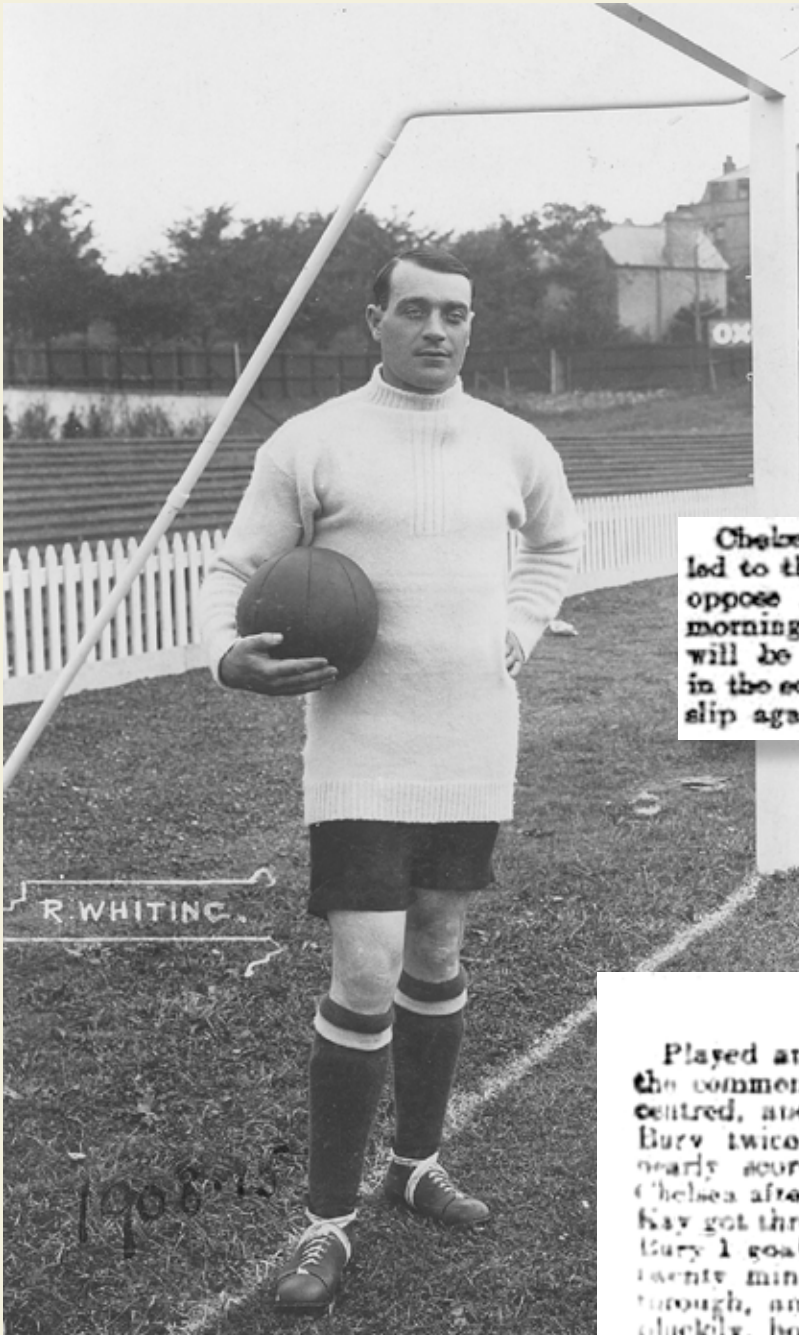
Comp	Date	Home			Away	Att	
League	26 April 1906	Bristol City	2	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	14,000	L
League	8 Sept 1906	Blackpool	0	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	6,000	D
League	15 Sept 1906	<b>Chelsea</b>	5	1	Bradford City	10,000	W
League	22 Sept 1906	West Bromwich Albion	1	2	<b>Chelsea</b>	25,562	W
League	29 Sept 1906	<b>Chelsea</b>	1	0	Leicester Fosse	20,000	W
League	6 Oct 1906	Nottingham Forest	3	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	24,000	L
League	13 Oct 1906	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	0	Lincoln City	10,000	W
League	20 Oct 1906	Burton United	2	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	4,000	L
League	3 Nov 1906	Burslem Port Valley	2	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	5,000	L
League	10 Nov 1906	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	0	Burnley	10,000	W
League	17 Nov 1906	Leeds City	0	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	8,000	W
League	24 Nov 1906	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	1	Barnsley	14,000	W
League	1 Dec 1906	Chesterfield Town	0	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	6,000	D
League	8 Dec 1906	Wolverhampton Wanderers	1	2	<b>Chelsea</b>	8,000	W
League	15 Dec 1906	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	1	Clapton Orient	15,000	W
League	22 Dec 1906	Gansborough Trinity	1	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	3,000	D
League	25 Dec 1906	Hill City	0	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	16,000	W
League	19 Dec 1906	Glossop North End	0	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	4,000	W

Source 21. Pom Pom's Chelsea Career Match by Match 1907

Comp	Date	Home			Away	Att	
League	1 Jan 1907	Stockport County	1	2	<b>Chelsea</b>	7,000	W
League	5 Jan 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	3	0	Blackpool	15,000	W
FA Cup	12 Jan 1907	Lincoln City	2	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	5,000	D
FA Cup	16 Jan 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	0	1	Lincoln City	11,883	L
League	26 Jan 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	0	West Brom	41,168	W
League	2 Feb 1907	Leicester Fosse	1	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	17,000	D
League	9 Feb 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	0	2	Nottingham Forest	15,000	L
League	16 Feb 1907	Lincoln City	0	5	<b>Chelsea</b>	3,000	W
League	23 Feb 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	1	0	Burton United	11,000	W
League	2 March 1907	Grimsby Town	2	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	6,000	L
League	4 March 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	0	Stockport County	8,000	W
League	9 March 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	1	Burslem Portvale	8,000	W
League	16 March 1907	Burnley	1	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	7,000	D
League	19 March 1907	Bradford City	6	3	<b>Chelsea</b>	6,000	L
League	23 March 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	0	Leeds City	25,000	W
League	29 March 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	3	0	Hull City	48,000	W
League	30 March 1907	Barnsley	3	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	5,000	L
League	6 April 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	7	1	Chesterfield Town	12,000	W
League	13 April 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	4	0	Wolves	30,000	W
League	20 April 1907	Clapton Orient	0	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	18,000	W
League	27 April 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	4	1	Gainsborough Trinity	15,000	W
League	7 Sept 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	4	Sheffield United	25,000	L
League	14 Sept 1907	Newcastle United	1	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	35,000	L
League	21 Sept 1907	Nottingham Forest	6	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	20,000	L
League	12 Oct 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	1	3	Bolton Wanderers	35,000	L
League	19 Oct 1907	Birmingham City	1	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	20,000	D
League	26 Oct 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	1	Everton	50,000	W
League	2 Nov 1907	Sunderland	3	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	13,000	L
League	9 Nov 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	1	Arsenal	55,000	W
League	16 Nov 1907	Sheffield Wednesday	3	1	<b>Chelsea</b>	22,000	L
League	23 Nov 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	4	1	Bristol City	20,000	W
League	30 Nov 1907	Notts County	2	0	<b>Chelsea</b>	12,000	L
League	2 Dec 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	1	0	Blackburn Rovers	18,000	W
League	7 Dec 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	2	2	Manchester City	50,000	D
League	14 Dec 1907	Preston North End	2	4	<b>Chelsea</b>	8,000	W
League	21 Dec 1907	<b>Chelsea</b>	3	4	Bury	35,000	L



Playing in the First Division meant playing under the spotlight. I had been dropped earlier in the season, but had won my place back, before it all went horribly wrong against Bury just before Christmas 1907. We were 3-1 up when I misjudged a cross that gifted them a goal and inspired them to come back to win 4-3. I got quite a bit of stick from the crowd, but that's nothing to what our manager Mr Calderhead said. In between swear words, I discovered I was dropped and came home feeling very sorry for myself, until seeing my pregnant wife Nell reminded me there was more to life than football.



Pom Pom after his move to Brighton in 1908.  
BHA Collectors' and Historians' Society

Chelsea Manager David Calderhead dropped Pom Pom at Christmas 1907. Calderhead took over from Bill Lewis in July 1907 and then spent almost 26 years at the club, making him the club's longest-serving manager.



Chelsea's sensational home defeat by Bury has led to the exclusion of Whiting from the team to oppose Liverpool at Anfield Road to-morrow morning, and Whitley will keep goal. Whitley, it will be remembered, superseded Whiting earlier in the season, but was dropped in consequence of a slip against Manchester United.

Nottingham Evening Post - Tues 24 Dec 1907

Source 22. Dropped by Chelsea

#### CHELSEA v. BURY.

Played at Stamford. Chelsea attacked strongly at the commencement, and after fifteen minutes Hilsdon centred, and Lindsay headed through his own goal. Bury twice broke away dangerously, and Hibbert nearly scored. Hilsdon put on a second goal for Chelsea after a brilliant run three-quarters of the field. Kay got through for Bury. Interval:—Chelsea 2 goals, Bury 1 goal. After attacking almost continuously for twenty minutes in the second half Hilsdon broke through, and scored another fine goal. Bury played pluckily, however, and Booth lifting the ball into the home goal mouth Whiting misjudged, and Currie scored. Then in quick succession Gildea and Miller scored for Bury, who snatched an unexpected victory. Result:—Bury 4 goals, Chelsea 3 goals.

Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer - Mon 23 Dec 1907

# Pom Pom of the Albion

After that disastrous Christmas, Jack Whitley took my place in goal. I did what I could in training and in games to win back the faith of our manager, Mr Calderhead, but sadly I would never play for Chelsea's first team again. After my last reserve match at Stamford Bridge against Norwich on April 30th 1908, he called me into his office. My Chelsea career had began after that cup tie against Norwich two years before. Now I was told it had ended against the very same team. Nell and I were about to become parents so this was the last thing I wanted to hear, so you can imagine how relieved I was when Mr Calderhead then told me that Brighton and Hove Albion had been in touch and wanted me to join them.

Source 23. Transfer to the Seaside



**The CHELSEA F.C. Chronicle**  
 OFFICIAL PROGRAMME of the Chelsea Football & Athletic Company, Limited.  
(Incorporated in England) MEMBERS OF  
**The Football League (Division 1), South Eastern League (Division 1).**  
 Vol. III, No. 38. Thursday, April 30th, 1908. [ONE PENNY.]

**CHELSEA v. NORWICH CITY.**  
 SOUTH EASTERN LEAGUE. Kick-off 5.30 p.m.

CHELSEA (Blue).				
	1	WHITING	Goal	
	2	LYON	Right Back	3
				HARDING
				Left Back
4	5	HENDERSON	Right Half	CUMMINGS
				Centre Half
7	8	DOLBY	Outside Right	MCKENZIE
				Inside Right
	9			BRIDGEMAN
				Centre
	10			FREEMAN
				Inside Left
	11			KIRWAN
				Outside Left
		Referee—	Mr. H. THOMPSON	
12	13	PEGG	Outside Left	14
				RANDALL
				Centre
	15			TAYLOR
				Inside Right
	16			DIVINE
				Outside Right
17	18	HUTCHISON	Left Half	WAGSTAFFE
				Centre Half
	19			ELLIS
				Right Half
	20			GUNTON
				Left Back
	21			RAYNES
				Right Back
	22	FRY	Goal	
NORWICH CITY.				

Printed and Published for the Proprietors (The Chelsea Football and Athletic Co., Ltd.), by Jno. Thomson & Son, Ltd., London.



After Pom Pom lost his place in the Chelsea goal following his disastrous performance against Bury he never played for the 1st team again. His last appearance at Stamford Bridge in Chelsea colours came in the reserves match v Norwich on the 30th April 1908. *Chelsea F.C.*

For a working class Londoner like Pom Pom Whiting the delights of being beside the seaside at Brighton would have been irresistible.

After my transfer to Brighton Nell gave birth to a healthy son we named Robert, after yours truly, and the new family Whiting moved down to Hove that summer close season of 1908. I'd always loved days out by the seaside, so to actually live by the sea was living the dream for me. It certainly took away the feeling of disappointment I'd felt at leaving Chelsea. Nell, baby Bob and I had plenty of time to enjoy our new home that summer with long walks along the esplanade and on the beach together.



*Peter Daniel*

Brighton and Hove Albion F.C. were founded in 1901 and until they were elected to the Football League's new Third Division in 1920 they were members of the Southern League. The Southern League was very strong with teams such as West Ham United, Fulham and Spurs playing in it. Brighton had previously been Old Brightonians, representing the area in the FA Cup in the 19th Century.



*BHA Collectors and Historical Society*

Pom Pom (starred) playing for Brighton and Hove Albion FC cricket match against supporters 1912.



*BHA Collectors and Historical Society*

# Champions of all England

A year after moving to Hove to play for Brighton Nellie gave birth to our second son William James. My little Jim (we ended up calling him by his middle name) was born in the golden autumn of 1909, when my happy home life was reflected in glory on the pitch. Brighton's Goldstone Ground was close to where I lived in Hove and I soon built up a good rapport with the fans. By the end of the 1909-10 season I had helped Albion become Southern League champions. I treasure that medal to this day and it means far more to me than any medal I could ever win in this war. Our triumph also meant that I would have the chance to play against the Football League champions in the F.A. Charity Shield match, which would be the curtain raiser for the new season.



The Goldstone Royal Brighton Pavilion and Museums

The Goldstone Ground or The Goldstone (below) was the home ground of Brighton & Hove Albion F.C. between 1902 and 1997. The ground was close to where Pom Pom lived in Westbourne Street so he could walk to the ground. Brighton now play at American Express Community Stadium, in Falmer, on the outskirts of the city, following the move from their temporary stadium at Withdean. After the sale of the Goldstone to private developers, the area was changed to a row of warehouse style retail shops, along with a "drive-through" Burger King outlet.

Source 24: Brighton 1910 Championship



Fans at a 1910 match v Exeter at the Goldstone  
Peter Daniel



In the successful 1909-1910 football season, Bob Whiting conceded just 28 goals in 42 matches. He was considered a vital member of the Brighton & Hove Albion first team, wearing the goalkeeper's jersey in every game of the 1909-1910 season which culminated in the Albion winning the Southern League Championship title.

Brighton and Hove Albion Collectors' and Historians' Society

# The CHELSEA F.C. Chronicle

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME of

The Chelsea Football & Athletic Company, Limited.  
(Edited by "McW." of "The Wisdom Shop.")

MEMBERS OF  
The Football League (Division 2). South Eastern League (Division 1).  
London League (Premier Division).

Vol. VI. No. 1. Saturday, September 3rd, and Monday, September 5th, 1910.

[ONE PENNY.  
POST FREE 1/6.]



"Want to take the famous Midland Champion on, do you?  
Very well, sir, step inside!"

## CHARITY SHIELD.

### ASTON VILLA BEATEN BY BRIGHTON AND HOVE ALBION.

As champions of the League and the Southern League these teams met at Chelsea yesterday in the Football Association charity match. Fine football weather prevailed, and 10,000 people were present. The Villa played Gerrish at centre for Hampton, Walters being at inside right. The game opened at a fine pace, with Brighton showing prominently, but the Villa defence was sound. Later, the Villa attacked, only to be in turn repulsed. The opening exchanges had given promise of a really good game, but after the first fifteen minutes the play became rather scrambling, and very little combined work was done. Hall and Bache on the Villa left wing occasionally got away, but though Booth, the opposing half-back, was weak, Blackman defended well. Hall put through direct from a corner-kick, but the point was, of course, disallowed. At half-time the score-sheet was blank.

For twenty minutes after the resumption play was very scrambling, the kicking being poor and the ball often going out of play. Of the two teams, however, Brighton were the better, and following a corner by Longstaffe, Webb scored for them after twenty-five minutes. Brighton and Hove more than held their own to the end, and gained a thoroughly well-deserved victory in a disappointing game.—Result:—

Brighton and Hove Albion	1
Aston Villa	0

Sussex Agricultural Express. Fri 21 Oct 1910

\* \* \*

Of course we must give "Pom-Pom" Whiting a rare reception. He is one of Chelsea's old boys and his performances for Brighton have earned him vast renown.

McW.

## ASTON VILLA v. BRIGHTON AND HOVE A.

FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION CHARITY SHIELD MATCH.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1910.

Kick-off 5.0 p.m.

### ASTON VILLA (Claret and Light Blue).

	1			
	CARTLIDGE			
	Goal			
	2	3		
	LYONS	MILES		
	Right Back	Left Back		
4	5	6		
TRANTER	BUCKLEY	HUNTER		
Right Half	Centre Half	Left Half		
7	8	9	10	11
WALLACE	GERRISH	HAMPTON	BACHE	HALL
Outside Right	Inside Right	Centre	Inside Left	Outside Left
Referee—LIEUT. W. C. CLOVER.				
Linesmen—Messrs. GILLETT and SCHUMACHER.				
12	13	14	15	16
HASTINGS	WEBB	JONES	COLEMAN	LONGSTAFF
Outside Left	Inside Left	Centre	Inside Right	Outside Right
17	18	19		
HAWORTH	McCHIE	BOOTH		
Left Half	Centre Half	Right Half		
20	21			
LEEMING	BLACKMAN			
Left Back	Right Back			
	22			
	WHITING			
	Goal			

### BRIGHTON AND HOVE ALBION (Blue and White Stripes).

**ANY ALTERATIONS WILL BE NOTIFIED ON THE BOARD.**

Printed and Published for the Proprietors (The Chelsea Football and Athletic Co., Ltd.), by JAS. TRUSCOTT & SON, LTD., London.

Pom Pom was in goal when Brighton beat Aston Villa 1-0 to lift the Charity Shield on Monday 5th September, 1910 at Stamford Bridge. Charlie Webb scored Brighton's goal.

Chelsea FC

The Charity Shield game between Aston Villa and ourselves, both champions of our town leagues, was seen as a decider as to who could call themselves 'Champions of All England.' To make the game that bit more special to me it was going to be played at Chelsea's Stamford Bridge ground. I knew Mr Calderhead would be there watching the game alongside many of my old team mates, so I was determined to keep a clean sheet and show them what they were missing! In the end that's exactly how it turned out. I kept the Villa forwards at bay whilst my team mate Charlie Webb scored the only goal of the match. Nevertheless it was a bitter sweet League moment for me as we held the Charity Shield aloft in front of the man who had ended my Stamford Bridge career.



Brighton & Hove Albion Champions of All England team  
 BHA Collectors' & Historians' Society



Bob 'Pom Pom' Whiting  
 BHA Collectors' & Historians' Society



238 Dyke Road, Brighton showing replica of the F.A. Charity Shield in the gable. This shows how proud people in Brighton were of their team.



*The Encyclopaedia of Brighton* by Tim Carder, 1990

Pom Pom's wife and children are not listed as living with him in his flat in Westbourne Street, Hove (below). They lived in Tunbridge Wells, where Nellie's family lived.



Source 26. 1911 Census Hove

**CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.**

*Prepared and printed by the Registrar-General of Births, Marriages, and Deaths, at the General Register Office, London. The returns are not to be used for proof of age in its connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose.*

*Copy on this Schedule please read the Explanatory and the Instructional notes on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.*

Number of household  
 To be filled up by the Enumerator  
 and retained

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35		36				
																																		REGISTRATION DISTRICT		PROFESSION or OCCUPATION		SITTING ROOM		NATIONALITY
Name		Age	Sex	Marital	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION					SITTING ROOM		NATIONALITY		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION		RELIGION						
1	Robert Halsey		29		Married	3	2	2			Professional Footballer		Chirk		Methodist		Wilt Wren Gardens		1911																					

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)

(To be filled up by or on behalf of the Head of Family or other person in charge, on the evening of your visit.)

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: *Robert Halsey* Postal Address: *138 Watkinson St. Hove*

Name of Enumerator: *Mrs. D. D. D.* District: *Brighton*

Source 27. 1911 Census Tunbridge Wells

### CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink. The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Special care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as an inscription with Civil Age Entries, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND RESIDENCE	SEX (M or F)	AGE (in years)	PARTICULARS AS TO MARRIAGE		PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Person and sex and service.	INDUSTRY or OCCUPATION with which connected.	MARRIAGE Status	BIRTHPLACE of every person.	NATIONALITY of every person.	BIRTHDATE
			Married	Single						
1. Walter H. Quinell 2. Elizabeth H. Quinell 3. Alice 4. Frank 5. William 6. Agnes 7. Charles 8. James 9. James 10. James 11. James 12. James 13. James 14. James 15. James 16. James	M F F M M M M M M M M M M M M M	50 23 17 17 86 28 3 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Married	Single	Head of Family Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk	Head of Family Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk	Married	England	England	1861 1888 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894 1894

William Quinell	Father	86	Widower	Brickmaker
Sarah (Nellie) Whiting	Wife	28	Married	
Robert Whiting	Son	3		
James Whiting	Son	1		

Write below the number of persons in this dwelling (House, Tenement, or Apartment), under the column, and the names of all persons in the household, under the column, and the names of all persons in the household, under the column.

I declare that the Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: *Walter H. Quinell*  
Printed Address: *89 St James Road*



A footballer's life, like a soldier's, doesn't always fit well with being a family man as you are always away from home. Nell's father Bill was unwell and so we both agreed that she should move back to Tunbridge Wells to help her sister Liz look after him. I found it hard to be away from Nell and the boys but knew it was for the best. By the 1913-14 season I'd been Brighton's first choice keeper for five years. I was never lonely as I had some really close friends amongst my team mates. We stuck together on and off the pitch, but none of us knew then that soon we would be swapping blue and white stripes for khaki and that comradeship would be needed onto the battlefield.



Jasper Matthews Batey (1891-1916) was nicknamed 'Ginger' Batey, after Batey's Ginger Beer, a popular drink. Batey enlisted originally in the 17th Service Battalion (Footballers' Battalion) of the Middlesex Regiment. Private Jasper Batey later joined the Army Cyclist Corps and was killed in action on 23rd October, 1916 at the age of 25. Private J. M. Batey is buried in the Cambrin Military Cemetery in Northern France.

*BHA Collectors' and Historians' Society*

'Pom Pom' Whiting, pictured with Brighton's left-half Jasper 'Ginger' Batey. Both players would perish in the First World War.

The players of Brighton & Hove Albion Football Team for the 1913-1914 Football Season portrayed with their two trainers in a souvenir card produced by Ebenezer Pannell, the team's official photographer. Bob Whiting, the Albion's goalkeeper is pictured in the middle of the top row. This was the final peace time season before war broke out.

*BHA Collectors' and Historians' Society*



# War is Declared

I didn't take much notice of the headlines when Archduke Franz Ferdinand was shot in Sarajevo on June 28th 1914. I was too busy planning my benefit match which Brighton had awarded me for six years loyal service. Also like most football fans, I was always more interested in reading sporting headlines than grim news from places I'd never heard of. When Britain declared war on August 4th it was a different matter. All the Brighton lads were at the Goldstone for pre-season training but all we could talk about was the crisis in Europe. War fever had certainly gripped the nation. My sister Mary Ann wrote and told me that people were smashing up the German shops in London's East End and I even heard that one of my old Chelsea team mates Max Seeburg had been interned as an 'enemy alien'.

After the Archduke Franz Ferdinand (right) was assassinated in Sarajevo on 28th June, 1914 Europe soon found itself plunged into a world war. Anti-German riots occurred intermittently in British towns and cities during the First World War. The picture shown right here describes damage caused to German bakers' shops in the East London district of Poplar shortly after the outbreak of war. Peter Daniel



Rioting against Germans, London, 1914

Source 28. War is Declared

Chronicles of the Chelsea Football Club.

## CHELSEA v. TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

SOUTH EASTERN LEAGUE MATCH.  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 19th, 1907. Kick-off, 2.45 p.m.

CHELSEA (Blue).				
1 CAMPBELL, Goal.				
2 POTTER Right Back.	3 TRUEMAN Left Back.		4 HARRIS Left Half.	
4 PROUDFOOT Right Half.	5 McCARTNEY Centre Half.	10 LAW Inside Left.		
7 MORAN Outside Right.	8 MANSELL Inside Right.	9 SEEBURG Centre.	11 DONAGHY Outside Left.	
				
12 DOW Outside Left.	13 LEACH Inside Left.	14 EAMES Centre.	15 WALKER Inside Right.	16 STANSFIELD Outside Right.
17 BIRD Left Half.	18 McNAUGHT Centre Half.	19 STEEL Right Half.		
20 BURTON Left Back.	21 HOLMES Right Back.			
22 WHITHOURNE Goal.				
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (Red).				

Referee - Mr. G. A. V. V. E. L.

Printed and Published by the Proprietors, The Chelsea Football Club (Limited), by J. W. Turner & Co., Ltd., London.



Max Seeburg (1884-1972)

### THE SPY PERIL.

#### ALIENS ARRESTED IN READING.

On Wednesday, by a special order from the Home Office, drastic measures were taken throughout the whole country with regard to all enemy aliens from 17 to 65 years of age. With the object of sending all between the ages of 17 and 45—the ages of military service—all Germans and Austrians residing in the country were rounded up at the police stations, and in Reading the order was carried out with promptitude and dispatch. On Wednesday afternoon the whole of the Germans and Austrians in the town between the ages mentioned were arrested, and as can be imagined, this caused no little commotion and excitement. Aided by the registrations recently made, the police were able to make a systematic arrest of all such persons, who were taken to the police station pending further instructions. Included in the list were many professional men and well-known tradesmen. Max Seeburg, the well-known late Reading Football Club player, and more recently licensee of the "Marquis of Lorne" public-house in Friar-street, was amongst those arrested. Some of the aliens were arrested whilst at work, and as was natural, their employers were surprised to find that they had been employing aliens—this being the first intimation of the fact.

Max Seeburg was a German footballer who played for - Chelsea, Tottenham Hotspur, Burnley, Grimsby Town and Reading - between 1907 and 1914. Seeburg became the first European-born foreigner to play in England. He was interned in 1914.

In those first mad weeks of August thousands flocked to join up. None of the boys from Brighton could as we were all under contract to play that coming season and none of us could break our agreements without permission from the club. This was the situation with all professional footballers, but that didn't spare us from being accused of cowardice. One poster pointed out that 90% of rugby players had joined up, but didn't say they were all free to do so as amateurs. A lot of it was to do with snobbery as most footballers were working class lads. Nevertheless the criticism still hurt and so we were pleased when our captain at Brighton, Archie Needham, decided to do something about it by representing us at a meeting the F.A. had called at Fulham Town Hall to discuss the crisis.



Captain Archie Needham.  
BHA Collectors' & Historians Society

### FOOTBALLERS' BATTALION.

#### Authority Given for its Formation.

Authority has now been given for the formation of a battalion of athletes and footballers to be called the 17th Football Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment. The committee responsible for raising the battalion is under the presidency of Mr. Joynson Hicks, M.P., and includes amongst its members Lord Kinnaird and Mr. F. J. Wall, Secretary of the Football Association.

A meeting will be held at Fulham Town Hall to-morrow for the purpose of arranging certain matters connected with the raising of the battalion. The meeting will be attended by the members committee and directors and managers of the London clubs as well as by professional football players.

The chief recruiting officer of London will also attend, and it is hoped that many professional footballers will set an example to football lovers by enlisting in the battalion.

After completion the battalion will be trained in the vicinity of London.



Recruits in London's Whitehall.  
Imperial War Museum

"This is not the time to play Gar..."

**RUGBY UNION FOOTBALLERS**  
are  
**DOING THEIR DUTY**  
over 90% have enlisted



"Every player who represented England in Rugby international matches last year has joined the colours."—Extract from *The Times*, November 30, 1914.

**BRITISH ATHLETES!**  
Will you follow this  
**GLORIOUS EXAMPLE?**

Above: Sheffield Evening Telegraph Saturday 12 Dec 1914

*Will they never come?*



Both posters courtesy of Library of Congress

At the start of WWI in 1914 rugby and cricket matches stopped almost immediately. Football continued with the 1914-1915 season and many citizens were outraged. Stamford Bridge is shown on the poster (right).

REPRINTED FROM  
**"THE WEEKLY DISPATCH"**

# The CHELSEA F.C. Chronicle

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME of

The Chelsea Football & Athletic Company, Limited

MEMBERS OF

The Football League (Division 1) South Eastern League

Vol. X. No. 19

Saturday, December 5th, 1914

ONE PENNY  
POST FREE 11D.

## THE MUD SLINGERS



The Leader: "Come on, boys, keep it up, some of it's bound to stick."

[The Times declare that Professional Footballers are shirking their National Duties and that League Matches are a scandal and prevent Recruiting.]

Chelsea Programme. 12th December, 1914. Chelsea FC

## THE KHAKI CROWD—CHELSEA, DECEMBER 5th, 1914.



Puzzle: Find the "thousands of 'shirkers' at professional football matches."

## ANOTHER CHEERY SCRAP OF PAPER FROM THE TRENCHES.

YET another very welcome and greatly appreciated letter has reached us from the firing line. Not only does it give us an insight into the undaunted spirit in which our heroic soldiers are meeting unprecedented suffering and facing scenes of carnage with that indomitable optimism which makes them invincible, but it is one more rebuke to those who would have us believe that our heroes in the trenches look with reproach, if not disgust, upon the professional footballers who still carry on. The letter—which is written in pencil, partly on a half sheet of note paper and partly on an envelope—is from Rfn. W. Richards, 2nd Batta. Rifle Bgde., —th Division of the British Expeditionary Force, and it runs as follows:

Sunday, Dec. 20th, 1914.

DEAR SIR,—Just a few lines to let you know the boys want you to know how we get the football results in the trenches. We get an issue of newspapers every now and again, and they are passed down, one man to another, till everybody knows how their teams are getting on.

But I can tell you YOU DON'T KNOW HOW FOOTBALL GIVES ENCOURAGEMENT TO OUR TROOPS IN THE TRENCHES. It cheers every man who takes interest in football, and I can tell you, Sir, that I feel downhearted if I don't hear how my team, Chelsea, are getting on. But I am so sorry to hear that our team, Chelsea, are doing badly lately, but I do hope they will soon get over it, and keep up in the First Division. And, Sir, my opinion of stopping football is "all Tommy Rot," because if they were to stop football they would make the troops in the trenches downhearted; so I do hope it won't be stopped, just for our sakes that are at the front.

From an old Supporter,

Rfn. W. RICHARDS, &c.

Play up the Boys in Blue. Good old Chelsea!

Chelsea F.C. response to criticism of players and fans, December 5th 1914. Chelsea FC

On the 21st November match between Chelsea and Notts County Colonel Charles Burn failed to enlist a single Chelsea player or fan. Chelsea responded to the criticism they received in the match programme (above and left).

# The Formation of the Football Battalion

Archie took with him my fellow team mates, Ralph Routledge, Frank Spencer and John Woodhouse for the meeting just before Christmas 1914. When we saw them at training the next day they told us that they had enlisted with the 17th Middlesex (1st Football) Battalion. This would be one of Lord Kitchener's 'Pals battalions' where groups of friends were encouraged to join up and fight together. Apparently, the Football Association was keen on forming a battalion of soldiers made up from players and fans and were working with Brentford M.P. William Joynson-Hicks to make it a reality. Our lads were persuaded to join up at the meeting and Archie felt the rest of us should follow their example.

PLAYER'S CIGARETTES.



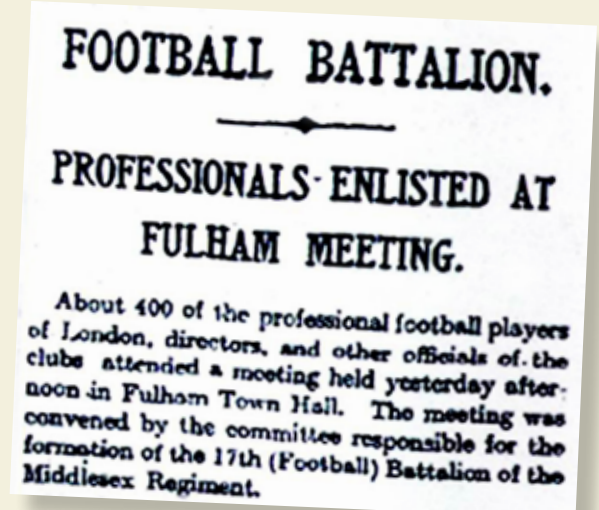
RT. HON. SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS, BART.

On Dec 14, 1914, William Joynson-Hicks, a Conservative MP and future Home Secretary, founded the 17th Middlesex Regiment at a meeting at Fulham Town Hall, which would later be known as 'the Footballers' Battalion. It was meant as an attempt to attract the athletes, in hopes that the legions of fans would follow their example. Whiting enlisted in the 17th on New Years Eve 1914.

Source 29. Recruiting for the Football Battalion



Fulham Town Hall



Sheffield Evening Telegraph Saturday 12th Dec, 1914

Before we could join up, Brighton were playing at West Ham on Boxing Day, 1914. I'll never forget it as 'Gatling Gun', who was now back at the Irons, kept me busy in our 2-1 defeat. He wasn't the only old face I caught up with, as the trip back home to the East End meant I could meet up with the Whiting clan for Christmas. That Christmas also saw the famous Truce in the trenches. "Simply Wonderful" one paper called it as Tommy and Fritz laid down their guns, threw down their jackets, and played football instead.

Football at the Truce 'War Game'

Michael Foreman



**"SIMPLY WONDERFUL,"**

**Football Between the British and German Trenches.**

From Rifleman William Eve, of the 1st Battalion Queen's Westminsters.

I have never, and am not likely again to witness such scenes as took place last night and this morning.

The order was sent down from our captain that during Christmas we were not to do any sniping unless we were sniped at. So last night we were talking to the Germans in their trenches, and standing up on the parapet with lighted matches.

**Never to be Forgotten.**

It was a beautiful moonlight night, and the ground was white with frost. It was a spectacle never to be forgotten. We were like a lot of ants on an anthill, and all right up to now. Our fellows and the Germans have been walking about, meeting halfway. Our chaps took out cake and chocolate.

It is simply wonderful that here, in the midst of war, this glorious day should have such a hold as to make peace between us for a day; to-morrow we shall be going for each other again. Our chaps actually have been playing football in front, and the officers were allowed to go and converse, providing they were dressed as privates.

**"God Surely Reigns."**

Try and picture it to yourself; there is not a gun to be heard, and everyone strolling about as though there was no thought of war. God surely reigns on high.

Of course, we were prepared for a surprise, and the frost was so severe last night that we had to work the bolts of our rifles every quarter of an hour to keep them free.

And this morning the German soldiers were calling out "Happy Christmas," and various other things they know. It is wicked that we should be here shooting each other when they don't want to fight any more than we do.

Some of our chaps have just come in they have been exchanging cigarettes. This is a ragtime war.



Princess Mary Gift tin. Peter Daniel

Soldiers on both sides were happy to call an unofficial truce at Christmas 1914. Many German soldiers had lived in London before the war and as they spoke English struck up conversations in 'no man's land'. One German soldier even enquired about how Fulham had got on in the F.A. Cup! The soldiers of both sides swapped presents. British and Empire troops were given a brass tin sent by Princess Mary, George V's daughter. Over 426,000 of these tins were distributed to those serving on Christmas Day 1914. The tins were filled with various items including tobacco, confectionary, spices, pencils, a Christmas card and a picture of the princess.

Simply Wonderful newspaper article  
National Army Museum

Archie had told us that we would be allowed to continue to play for Brighton whilst we were training and that our seven shillings\* a week soldier's pay would be paid on top of our football wages. Nobody wanted to let him down so thirteen of us took the King's shilling\*\* and enlisted at Hove on New Year's Eve 1914, before going up to Kingsway in London at the end of January 1915 to be officially sworn in as soldiers of the Football Battalion. \* (7 shillings is 35p) \*\* (Soldiers were paid a shilling a day)

Source 30. Pom Pom's Attestation

W 8021-1282 250m 11/14 Lt. 27 Gen. No. 2125 Army Form B. 2505.

*I want to allot my pay to my wife daily for Football Battalion*

**SHORT SERVICE.** (For the Duration of the War.)

**ATTESTATION OF** *17th (Service) Bn.*

No. *715* Name *Robert Whiting* Corps *Middlesex Regiment*

Questions to be put to the Recruit before enlistment.

1. What is your Name? ... 1. *Robert Whiting*
2. What is your full Address? ... 2. *9 Coleridge Street, Hove Sussex*
3. Are you a British Subject? ... 3. *Yes*
4. What is your Age? ... 4. *30 Years 11 Months*
5. What is your Trade or Calling? ... 5. *Football Professional*
6. Are you Married? ... 6. *No*
7. Have you ever served in any branch of His Majesty's Forces, naval or military, if so, which? ... 7. *No*
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated? ... 8. *Yes*
9. Are you willing to be enlisted for General Service? ... 9. *Yes*
10. Did you receive a Notice, and do you understand its meaning, and who gave it to you? ... 10. *No* Name: ... Corps: ...
11. Are you willing to serve upon the following conditions provided His Majesty should so long require your services? ... 11. *Yes*

For the duration of the War, at the end of which you will be discharged with all convenient speed. If employed with Hospitals, depots of Mounted Units, and as Clerks, etc., you may be retained after the termination of hostilities until your services can be spared, but such retention shall in no case exceed six months.

I, *Robert Whiting*, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made.

*Robert Whiting* SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.  
*[Signature]* Signature of Witness.

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.

I, *Robert Whiting*, swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown, and dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.

The Recruit above named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me at ...

on this *17th* day of *Jan* 191*5* at *Hove Sussex*

*G. Farguharson* Signature of the Justice

† Certificate of Approving Officer.

I certify that this Attestation of the above-named Recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required terms appear to have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the *17th (Service) Bn.*

If enlisted by special authority, Army Form B. 203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original attestation.

191*5*

*[Signature]* Approving Officer.

KINGSWAY F.O.

† The signature of the Approving Officer is to be affixed in the presence of the Recruit.  
‡ Here insert the "Corps" for which the Recruit has been enlisted.

§ The particulars of his former service, and to produce, if possible, his Certificate of Discharge and Certified to him conspicuously endorsed in red ink, as follows, viz.—(Name) ... on the (Date) ...

*I agree to allot my pay to my wife, Robert Whiting.*

1	Robert Whiting
2	9 Coleridge Street, Hove Sussex
3	Yes
4	30 years 11 months
5	Football Professional
6	Yes
7	No
8	Yes
9	Yes
10	Yes
11	Yes



'Pom Pom' Whiting featured on a post card that reads: "Pom Pom, Brighton's Goalie, who amused the crowds with his long kicks." Dated 28th February 1914 at the club's Goldstone Ground. BHA Collectors' & Historians' Soc

Pom Pom's attestation. When somebody signed or enlisted in the army they promised to serve their King and country. This document was kept as proof of that promise. National Archives

Source 31. Medical History



Men having their army medical.

To be used for recruits enlisting direct into the Regular Army only. Army Form B. 178. Not to be used for Special Reserve recruits and Special Reserve enlisting into the Regular Army.

**MEDICAL HISTORY of**

Surname: Whiting Christian Name: Robert

TABLE I.—GENERAL TABLE.

Birthplace: West Ham Parish: West Ham County: Essex

Examined: on 1<sup>st</sup> day of Jan 1915  
at Hove

Declared Age: 30 years 11 37 days

Trade or Occupation: Football Professional

Height: 5 feet, 9 1/2 inches

Weight: 201 lbs.

Chest Measurement: 46 inches (Girth when fully Expanded)  
4 inches (Range of Expansion)

Physical Development: V. Good

Vaccination Marks: (Arm) Right: - Left: 3  
Number

When Vaccinated: Infant

Vision: R.E.—V=5  
L.E.—V=5

(a) Marks indicating congenital peculiarities or previous disease: None

(b) Slight defects but not sufficient to cause rejection: None

Approved by: (Signature) G. Parker Esq. R.A.M.S. BC. Cantles  
(Rank) Private Medical Officer

Enlisted: at Hove  
on 31<sup>st</sup> day of Dec 1914

Joined on Enlistment: Corps: 17 Middlesex Regtl. No.:

Transferred to:

Became non-effective by:

Surname:	Whiting
Christian name:	Robert
Birthplace:	West Ham, Essex
Examined:	1st Jan 1915
At:	Hove
Declared age:	30 years 334 days
Trade:	Football Professional
Height:	5 foot 9 1/2 inches
Weight:	201 lbs
Chest:	46 inches
Expansion:	4 inches
Physical Development:	V (very) Good
Enlisted at Hove 31st December 1914	
Joined on enlistment 17th Middlesex	

Pom Pom's medical was undertaken at Hove in Sussex on 31st December 1914. National Archives



We were the lads that had been crowned 'Champions of All England.' We'd shared a lot already as team mates on the pitch and now we braced ourselves as a new challenge awaited us. How many of us who'd lined up for our team photograph when we'd reported back for preseason training in July would come through it unscathed? Who could guess, but as my old dad used to say- 'You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs,' and wars aren't fought without a drop of blood being spilt.

**THE FOOTBALLERS' BATTALION.**

Large crowds gathered in Kingsway yesterday to witness the first parade of the new "Footballers' Battalion," officially known as the 17th Battalion Middlesex Regiment (the "Die-hards").

The men, under Colonel Grantham, mustered about 250 strong, and after receiving their pay to date marched off with swinging stride to their temporary quarters at the White City, Shepherd's Bush.

Many of them had journeyed considerable distances. M'Cormick had just arrived from Plymouth, Tull from Northampton, and Goodwin from Exeter.

Amongst the recruits were representatives of most of the notable teams south of the Trent, the spectators spending the time whilst the men were forming up, in identifying them.

One prominent goalkeeper was easily recognised by the fact that he wore a shield over an eye which had suffered in a Cup-tie match on Saturday.

Captain Wells Hopland (chairman of Clapton Orient) was present, together with other officers of the battalion.

Shortly before the contingent marched off Mr. Joynson-Hicks, M.P., arrived.

The men received a cheer from the spectators as they left the recruiting depot.

To-day a further 200 men raised by Captain Pretzman Newman, M.P., in the Tottenham and Enfield district, will march to the White City by way of Oxford-street.

Willie Watt, the Dulston golfer, has enlisted in the Black Watch. Watt is one of the best of the young school of professional golfers.



Footballers at Kingsway following their enlistment. Peter Daniel



Footballers marching to White City in January 1915. Peter Daniel

**Source 32. The Brighton Team of 1914-1915**



Five players marked by a red star were killed in WW1. They were Charlie Matthews (inset, left), Bob Whiting (centre back row), Jasper 'Ginger' Batey (middle of the third row next to Mr J. Robson in collar & tie), Ernie Townsend (last player in the third row, next to trainer, M. F. Coles) and Charlie Dexter (the player seated second left in the 2nd row.)  
BHA Collectors' and Historians' Society

Unlike many of the new Kitchener battalions we didn't have long to wait for our uniforms. These were issued to us at our temporary H.Q at White City, where the Olympic games had been held in 1908. We spent the first few days of our lives as soldiers practicing drill and going on long route marches. These were often from White City to the West End where we would rest at the Marble Arch end of Hyde Park before marching back again. The facilities there were quite basic and I had trouble sleeping on the straw mattresses that were put out for us on the freezing cold concrete floors we slept on.

**Source 33. Training to be Soldiers**



New recruits being fitted for uniforms. Imperial War Museum



Private Pom Pom  
Michael Foreman



**THE FOOTBALLERS' BATTALION AND THE CHURCH - THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM CONDUCTING A SERVICE AT THE WHITE CITY.**  
 It is interesting to notice the change which has come about, since the outbreak of war, with regard to the attitude of sports-lovers in general and footballers in particular. Incidentally, it is an instance of how easy it is to be wiser in judging at conclusions. No sports-lovers were more held up to something like contempt than those who continued to attend football matches, instead of enlisting. And now we have a Footballers' Battalion, smart, well-set-up and patriotically keen on their duty. The Battalion is one of the most useful of the branches of the new Army, and the Footballers are proving themselves particularly alert in shelling for their work. Our photograph shows the Battalion at a Church service conducted by the Bishop of Birmingham, Dr. Minnall Wakefield. (P. 45, and 61)

Football Battalion church service White City 1915. Peter Daniel

One of the lads who joined a week before me was my old ball boy at Stamford Bridge, Jimmy Ridley. It was a few years since I had seen him, but it was good to see a familiar face and chat about old times. It really helped us all settle into army life having so many of us already knowing each other.

Source 34. James Ridley



Ball Boy James Ridley

To emphasise the the size of Fatty Foulke, Chelsea hired local boys to fetch the ball when it was hit into the space behind the goals created by Stamford Bridge's oval athletics track. One of the lucky youngsters can be seen on the right of the main photo between Martin Moran and Jack Kirwan. He is James Ridley, who was aged 13 and living at 7 Stamford Road (now Holmead Road), a few doors down from The Rising Sun pub, directly opposite the new stadium.

As you can see, Foulke's shorts are almost as long as little Ridley's body. We don't know what money the youngster received, but there are stories that Foulke would some-times playfully carry the ball boys off the field under his arms. The photo was presented to Ridley as a memento.

The closeness to his heroes had an enduring effect on the young lad. Ridley didn't make it as a professional footballer. However, when World War I broke out he joined up and joined the 17th Middlesex – the so-called 'Footballers' Battalion'. He was captured at Cambrai in 1917 and was a prisoner of war until peace returned. In later life, he recalled how, even in the darkness of war, it was an honour to serve alongside the battallion's Chelsea F.C. stars.

Army Form B. 2505

**SHORT SERVICE.**  
(For the Duration of the War).

**ATTESTATION OF** *Footballers Batt*

No. *412* Name *James Ridley* Corps *Middlesex*

Questions to be put to the Recruit before enlistment.

1. What is your name?.....	1. <i>James Ridley</i>
2. What is your full Address?.....	2. <i>7 Stamford Road, Fulham</i>
3. Are you a British Subject?.....	3. <i>Yes</i>
4. What is your Age?.....	4. <i>13</i> Years..... Months.
5. What is your Trade or Calling?.....	5. <i>Labourer</i>
6. Are you Married?.....	6. <i>No</i>
7. Have you ever served in any branch of His Majesty's Forces, naval or military, if so, which?.....	7. <i>No</i>
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated?.....	8. <i>Yes</i>
9. Are you willing to be enlisted for General Service?.....	9. <i>Yes</i>
10. Did you receive a Notice, and do you understand its meaning, and who gave it to you?.....	10. <i>Yes</i> (Name <i>Ed. J. ...</i> Corps <i>...</i> )
11. Are you willing to serve upon the following conditions provided His Majesty should no longer require your services?.....	11. <i>Yes</i>

For the duration of the War, at the end of which you will be discharged with all convenient speed. If employed with Hospitals, depots of Mounted Units, and as Clerks, etc., you may be retained after the termination of hostilities until your services can be spared, but such retention shall in no case exceed six months.

I, *James Ridley*, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made.

*James Ridley* SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.  
*Richard ...* Signature of Witness.

**OATH TO BE TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.**

I, *James Ridley*, swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown, and dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

**CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER:**

The Recruit above named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act. The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence. I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me at **KINGSWAY R.O. LONDON**, on this *25* day of *January* 191*5*.

*R.B. ...* Signature of the Justice.

I certify that this Attestation of the above-named Recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required forms appear to have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the *Middlesex*.  
If called by special authority, Army Form B. 203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original attestation.

Date *25 Jan 1915* *R.B. ...* Approving Officer  
Place **KINGSWAY R.O. LONDON.**

The signature of the Approving Officer is to be affixed in the presence of the Recruit.  
Here insert the "Coep" for which the Recruit has been enlisted.

In addition to the players there were lots of fans of clubs like Chelsea, Millwall and Spurs who had answered the poster campaign to join up. Most of the posters I saw made out that the war would be like a football match with the winners coming away with the glory and a nice medal to match!

**DO YOU WANT TO BE  
A CHELSEA DIE-HARD?**  
IF SO  
**JOIN THE 17<sup>th</sup> BATT.  
MIDDLESEX REGT.**  
"THE OLD DIE-HARDS"  
And follow the lead  
given by your Favourite  
**Football Players**

**OFFICES:**  
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, 42, RUSSELL SQUARE, W.C.  
**WEST AFRICA HOUSE**  
TOWN HALL, CHELSEA

Kensington & Chelsea  
Local Studies

**"PLAY THE GAME"**  
**SHARPEN UP 'SPURS  
COME FORWARD NOW  
TO HELP TO REACH THE  
GOAL OF VICTORY  
SHOOT! SHOOT!! SHOOT!!!  
AND STOP THIS  
"FOUL PLAY"**  
Join the **Football Battalion  
OF THE DIE-HARDS**  
(17th Middlesex)

Imperial War Museum

**MEN OF MILLWALL**  
Hundreds of Football enthusiasts  
are joining the Army daily.  
Don't be left behind.  
Let the Enemy hear the "LION'S  
ROAR."  
Join and be in at  
**THE FINAL**  
and give them a  
**KICK OFF  
THE EARTH**

Apply:  
West Africa House, opposite National Theatre,  
Kingsway.

Library of Congress

**AN APPEAL TO  
GOOD SPORTSMEN**

THE need for more RECRUITS for  
our Army is VERY URGENT—appeals  
should not be necessary. Every man  
must know his duty to himself and to  
his country. There are approximately  
three millions of men with no family  
responsibilities, I ask these to show  
that they are GOOD SPORTSMEN and  
to ENLIST NOW and help the other  
GOOD SPORTSMEN who are so bravely  
Fighting Britain's Battle against the  
world's enemy.

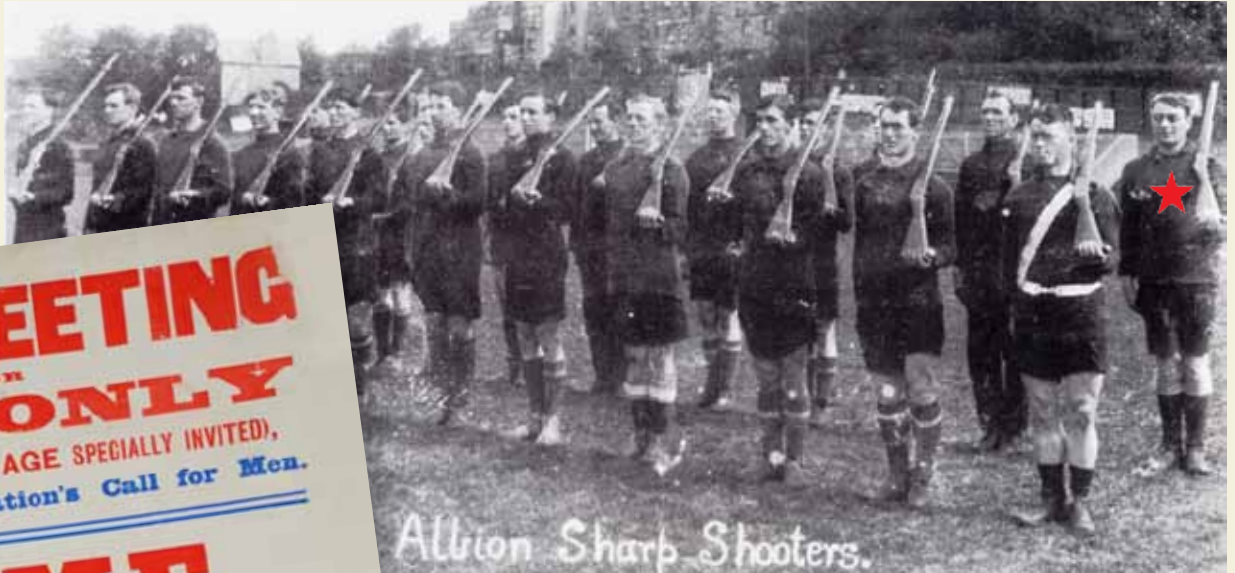
**F. J. WALL**  
Secretary,  
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

42, Russell Square  
18th November, 1914

46 Imperial War Museum

# Footballer Soldier

Despite our military training we were still allowed to turn out for Brighton in the Southern League at weekends. All of us were fit lads but the military training was tough and took it out of us both mentally and physically. Nonetheless it was great to get back to a bit of normality even if it only lasted 90 minutes.



Albion Sharp Shooters with Pom Pom starred in red.  
BHA Collectors and Historians' Society

**WAR MEETING**  
FOR  
**MEN ONLY**  
(THOSE OF MILITARY AGE SPECIALLY INVITED),  
To Support the Nation's Call for Men.

**DOME,**  
**MONDAY NEXT (SEPT. 7), at 8 P.M.**

**SPEAKERS:**  
**THE RT. HON. HERBERT SAMUEL, M.P.**  
PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,  
**THE BOROUGH MEMBERS**  
AND OTHERS.

**THE MAYOR OF BRIGHTON (Ald. J. L. Otter, J.P.)**  
IN THE CHAIR.

**GRAND ORGAN. PATRIOTIC SONGS.**  
**DOORS OPEN AT 7. NO TICKETS.**

Royal Brighton  
Pavillion and Museum



Peter Daniel



Albion Sharp  
Shooters with Pom  
Pom starred in red.

BHA Collectors and  
Historians' Society

# Footballers and Recruiting.

## A SCATHING INDICTMENT.

As briefly reported in last night's "Mail," yesterday's meeting of the Football League considered at some length the attitude of players towards recruiting. A scathing letter was received from Colonel C. F. Grantham, the commanding officer of the Football Battalion, as follows:—

Gentlemen,—As the Officer Commanding the Football Battalion, it is my duty to bring the following facts to your notice.

You are aware that some little time ago there was much controversy in the papers with regard to the manner in which the professional footballer had failed in his duty by not coming forward to serve his country in its time of stress. The laxity of the football professionals and their following amounted to almost a public scandal. Mr. Joynton-Hicks, M.P., therefore raised the Football Battalion, and public opinion died down under the belief that most, if not all, of the available professionals had joined the battalion.

This is not the case, as only 122 professionals have joined.

I understand that there are 40 League clubs, and 20 in the Southern League, with an average of some 30 players fit to join the colours—namely, 1,800. These figures speak for themselves.

I am also aware, and have proof that in many cases directors and managers of clubs have not only given no assistance in getting these men to join, but have done their best, by their actions, to prevent it.

I am taking the opportunity of your meeting to ask you, gentlemen, if you and your clubs have done everything in your power to point out to the men what their duty is? "Your King and Country call upon every man who is capable of bearing arms to come forward; and upon those who are unable to use their best endeavours to see that those that can do so."

It is no use mincing words. If men who are fit and capable of doing so will not join, they, and also those who try by their words and actions to prevent them, will have to face the opinion of their fellow-men publicly.

I will no longer be a party to shielding the want of patriotism of these men by allowing the public to think they have joined the Football Battalion.—Yours, etc.,

(Signed) C. F. GRANTHAM,  
Commanding 17th Service Battalion, Middlesex Regiment.

The League delegates strongly resented the letter. It was stated that the suggestion there were 1,800 professional players who were held by the League clubs and prevented from joining the forces was grossly untrue; and the suggestion that club directors or managers prevented their players from joining the colours was a libel which they all strongly resented.

Captain Wells Holland, of the Clapton Orient Club, said the letter of Colonel Grantham was entirely justified. There were certain clubs who had done splendidly, but there were others who had made it plain to their professionals that if they joined the battalion their connection with the clubs would cease (cries of "Name!"). He was not justified in giving names, but he did know that players had had assistance refused in the matter of travelling expenses, and had even the amounts received as battalion pay deducted from their club wages (renewed cries of "Name!").

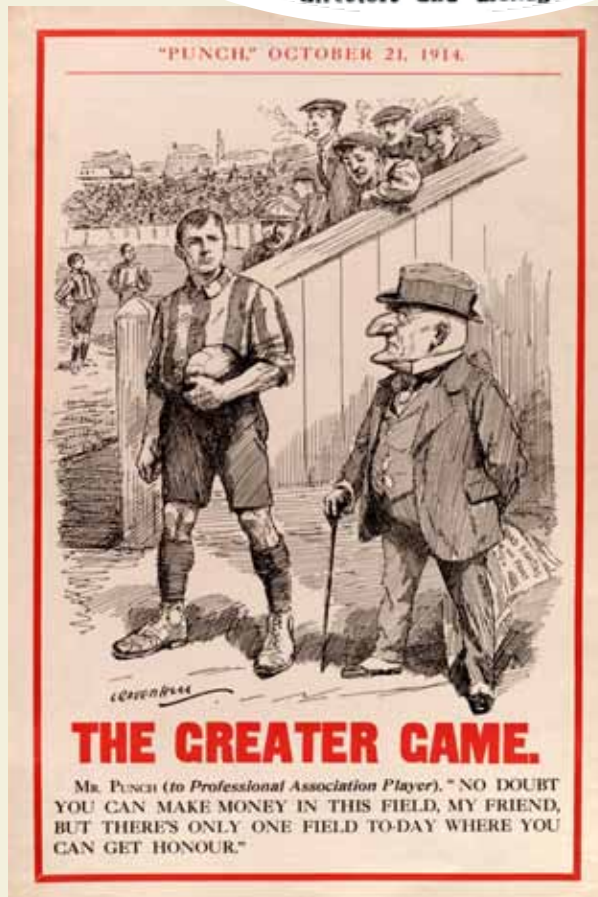
The following resolution, proposed by Mr Sutcliffe, and seconded by Mr T. E. Maley, of the Bradford Club, was carried:—

"This special general meeting of the clubs of the Football League heartily approves the declaration of the Management Committee with reference to the importance of all professional football players who can do so joining the colours. They fully recognise the serious call of national and patriotic duty, and pledge themselves to continue to do everything in their power to support the Management Committee and other football authorities in encouraging recruiting in all phases of national service."



The War Illustrated 18th February 1915. Peter Daniel

...all, of the available professionals.  
...ined the battalion.  
This is not the case, as only 122 professionals have joined.  
I understand that there are 40 League clubs, and 20 in the Southern League, with an average of some 30 players fit to join the colours—namely, 1,800. These figures speak for themselves.  
I am also aware, and have proof that  
...directors and managers



'The Greater Game.' Punch cartoon 1914 Mr Punch (to Professional Association player). "No doubt you can make money in this field, my friend, but there's only one field to-day where you can get honour."

The Football Battalion played friendly matches as a way of attracting new recruits, but not many of the Brighton lads got selected, as there were so many professionals to choose from. More often than not they went for the players that would draw the crowds like Vivian Woodward, the Chelsea captain and England centre forward. He was an Olympic gold medal winning celebrity who was wealthy enough to play for fun in the First Division of the Football League. Yours truly couldn't compete with that!



Captain Vivian Woodward (highlighted) of the 17th Middlesex (1st Football) Btn.  
National Army Museum



#### COUNTRY TRAINING FOR FOOTBALLERS' BATTALION.

The Footballers' Battalion (17th Middlesex Regiment) has left the White City, which has been its headquarters since the corps was raised, to take up training in camp. Until it receives the call for active service, it will remain at Holmbury Park, Dorking, the country residence of Mr Joynson Hicks, M.P., who founded the battalion.

Including many prominent professional footballers in its ranks, and officered by famous players and football officials, including Lieutenant Vivian Woodward, the Footballers' Battalion now numbers 1400, and has recently received War Office sanction to raise its strength to 1600.

The departure of the corps was witnessed by a large number of people, and the march of the fine, athletic-looking men through the London streets to Waterloo occasioned much enthusiasm.

Evening Telegraph. Monday 13th March 1916

Vivian Woodward was an amateur player so was never paid more than expenses. Originally a Spurs player, he joined Chelsea in 1909. He was England's record goal scorer with 29 goals in 23 games and had won two gold medals at the London (1908) and Helsinki Olympics (1912) representing Great Britain at football. He was transferred to the Football Battalion and would often visit Stamford Bridge where he would march around the pitch with a drummer urging fans to enlist.

Having said that, I did get to play in one Football Battalion match, but this was to be against them and not for them. On the 10th March, 1915 a team was sent down to Brighton to play us in a fund raising match to buy instruments for our regimental band. Seven hundred soldiers from the battalion led us into the Goldstone accompanied by a military band playing the Football Battalion's very own march entitled, 'Play for Goal.' Having not managed to make the Battalion team I got a great deal of satisfaction from showing them what they were missing by keeping a clean sheet in our 2-0 win.



William Joynson Hicks (starred in red) with Football Battalion players, 1915. *National Army Museum*

The band fund is not yet sufficient to provide the necessary instruments, and subscriptions will be welcome. To-day a match will be played on the Brighton and Hove Albion ground between the local Southern League team and the team of the battalion, which will include Lieutenants V. J. Woodward, Frank Buckley, and Bell. In the Brighton team there will be at least eight members of the battalion, with Lance-corporal Whiting in goal. Another Brighton player, Sergeant Wilcocks, may be the custodian for the battalion. The battalion is now over 1,000 strong, and recruits are coming forward steadily.

It has been stated that the battalion will shortly be moved from the White City to Warwick, and the presence of the soldier-footballers in the Midlands should have the effect of inducing players from the Midlands to join in. However, nothing definite has yet been arranged, the question to be decided being the possibility of the Warwick Barracks not being large enough.

## "PLAY FOR GOAL"

### FOOTBALLERS' BATTALION'S NEW MARCH.

Much effort is being expended in making the Footballers' Battalion attractive to the footballer, and now the soldier footballers belonging to the 17th (Football) Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment have had a march dedicated to them, and as soon as a band has been formed in the battalion the march will be recognised as the official tune for the battalion.

It has been written by Mr. Richard Levett, and is called "Play for Goal." The music has a good swing, and is likely to become popular.

Birmingham Gazette. Wednesday 10th March 1915

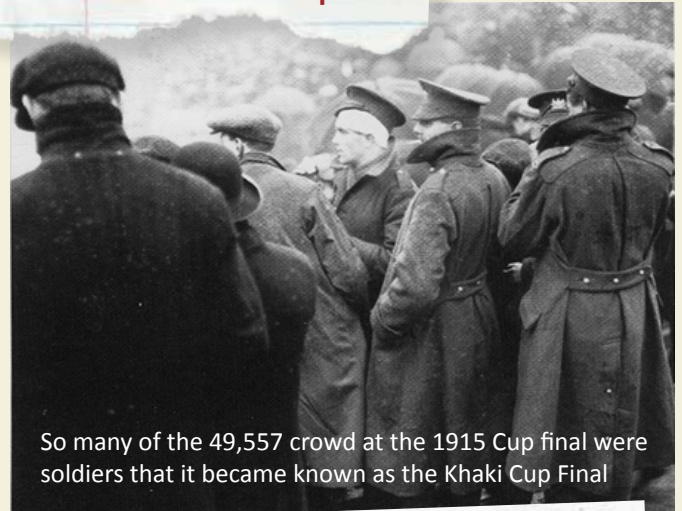


Such a song and dance had been made about the way football had continued in spite of the war that it came as a relief when the 1914-15 season came to a close. The game that traditionally brought the curtain down was the F.A. Cup final and for the first time in their history Chelsea had made the final. I was rooting for my old team, but sadly they went down 3-0 to Sheffield United. At the end of the game the cup was presented by the Earl of Derby, a great organiser of recruitment campaigns, who urged supporters to join the war effort and told the two teams: *“You have played with one another and against one another for the Cup; play with one another for England now.”*



Chelsea captain Jack Harrow shakes hands with Blades' captain George Utley before the F.A. Cup final at Old Trafford on the 24th April 1915

**Source 36. The 1915 Cup Final**



So many of the 49,557 crowd at the 1915 Cup final were soldiers that it became known as the Khaki Cup Final

The MANCHESTER HIPPODROME (OXFORD STREET) Twice Nightly, at 8-40 & 9-50  
MATINEES—Ten, and Thers., 2-4.

8 MANCHESTER UNITED PROGRAMME

**CHELSEA**  
Royal Blue Shirts and White Knickers

1 <b>MOLYNEUX</b> Goal				
2 <b>BETRIDGE</b> Right Back		3 <b>HARROW</b> Left Back		
4 <b>TAYLOR</b> Right Half		5 <b>LOGAN</b> Centre Half	6 <b>WALKER</b> Left Half	
7 <b>FORD</b> Outside Right	8 <b>HALSE</b> Inside Right	9 <b>THOMSON</b> Centre	10 <b>CROAL</b> Inside Left	11 <b>M'NIEL</b> Outside Left
Referee: Mr. H. H. TAYLOR <b>KICK-OFF, 3-30.</b>				
12 <b>EVANS</b> Outside Left	13 <b>MASTERMAN</b> Inside Left	14 <b>KITCHEN</b> Centre	15 <b>FAZACKERLEY</b> Inside Right	16 <b>SIMMONS</b> Outside Right
17 <b>UTLEY</b> Left Half		18 <b>BRELSFORD</b> Centre Half	19 <b>STURGESS</b> Right Half	
20 <b>ENGLISH</b> Left Back			21 <b>COOK</b> Right Back	
22 <b>GOUGH</b> Goal				

Red and White Shirts and Black Knickers

**SHEFFIELD UNITED**

Any change in the Teams will be notified by number on the board which will be sent round the enclosure.

**6-40 ARDWICK EMPIRE (TWICE NIGHTLY) 9-0**

1915 F.A. Cup Final programme. Football Association

**CHELSEA AND THE CUP.**

**Soldier at the Front Writes of Their "Awful Fluke."**

From a Private in the Queen's Westminsters.

Whatever is the matter with Chelsea? It must have been an awful fluke for them to get so far in the Cup. Of course, they won't win it!

National Army Museum



Chelsea were struggling to get their key men fit for the 1915 F.A. Cup final, notably one eyed centre forward Bob Thomson, who had scored five goals on the road to the final. There were rumours that Vivian Woodward, the club's England centre forward, would return from service to play a part, but Woodward, ever the gentlemen, said he would only be included if Thomson was unfit. Thomson, who had dislocated an elbow, was passed fit at the eleventh hour and so Woodward sat in the stand to watch the Blues 3-0 defeat.

Strangely enough a few days after Chelsea's Cup final defeat I had the chance to play one more time at the Bridge. It was in a South East Counties match for Brighton reserves but I volunteered to play as I knew it could be my last chance to play on my old stamping ground.



The main gates of Stamford Bridge c 1913-14

With the end of the Football League at the end of the 1914-15 season Chelsea's chairman William Claude Kirby helped to establish a replacement in the form of a London Combination tournament of 12 teams (including Croydon Common) that Chelsea would win by 7 points in early 1916.

A second, short competition taking in Luton and Reading was also scooped by the Pensioners. These informal championships lasted until the resumption of the League proper in 1919, with attendances ranging from 2-20,000.

Danish giant Nils Middelboe (below) was a star of these games.

**Source 37. Final Game at the Bridge**

4 Chronicles of the Chelsea Football Club.

**CHELSEA V BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION**

SOUTH EASTERN LEAGUE MATCH

Wednesday, April 28th, 1915 Kick-off 3.30 p.m.

---

**CHELSEA (Blue)**

1 <b>HAMPTON</b> Goal	2 <b>CIRDWOOD</b> Right Back	3 <b>BROWN</b> Left Back
4 <b>LAKE</b> Right Half	5 <b>N. MIDDELBOE</b> Centre Half	6 <b>MACFARLANE</b> Left Half
7 <b>ALLOTT</b> Outside Right	8 <b>WILSON</b> Inside Right	9 <b>STEER</b> Centre
10 <b>BRADY</b> Inside Left	11 <b>BRIDCEMAN</b> Outside Left	
12 <b>Pte. TYLER</b> Outside Left	13 <b>WEBB</b> Inside Left	14 <b>Pte. REED</b> Centre
15 <b>Pte. WOODHOUSE</b> Left Half	16 <b>COOMBER</b> Centre Half	17 <b>Pte. BEECH</b> Right Half
18 <b>PARLEY</b> Left Back	19 <b>Pte. DEXTER</b> Right Back	20 <b>Cpl. WHITING</b> Goal

**BRIGHTON AND HOVE ALBION (Blue and White)**

---

Referee - . . . Mr. F. W. BARTON (London).  
Linesmen - . . . Messrs. F. W. DAY and A. COBBARD.



Pom Pom's final match at Stamford Bridge was played exactly two years before he was killed in WW1 on 28th April 1917. Playing against him was Danish international Nils Middelboe, who joined Chelsea from Newcastle United as an amateur on the advice of Vivian Woodward, who told him he would be able to pursue his career in banking in London. He was made club captain on his arrival at Stamford Bridge and was Chelsea's first overseas signing to play first team football. He played 46 first team games between 1913-22. (not including wartime matches) scoring 1 goal.

# The Football Battalion Goes to War

With the season over soldiering became our sole focus. After finishing our basic training at White City, we had a brief spell at Cranleigh in Surrey before we were transported to Clipstone, a massive army camp near Mansfield, Nottinghamshire. I enjoyed it there, perhaps because we had celebrity status with the locals. Finally after another month we travelled south to Perham Down in Wiltshire, which was on the edge of Salisbury Plain. Here we undertook our final training for armed combat before we left for France, landing at Boulogne on 18th November 1915.

## FOOTBALLERS' BATTALION

Arrive at Mansfield for Training.

Sheffield Evening Telegraph. Tuesday 6th July 1915



Source 38. Training for the Front

Clipstone Camp was a massive army camp of wooden huts which was built at Clipstone near Mansfield in WW1. While this camp was just one of those built to train the men of Kitchener's New Army, it is believed to be the largest.

*Peter Daniel*

## THE FOOTBALLERS' BATTALION.

After military training extending over nearly twelve months, the 1st Footballers' Battalion (17th Middlesex Regiment) has left England for one of the theatres of war, and the good wishes of the sporting community go with them. Colonel F. W. Grantham, who has been in command since the formation, left the battalion quite recently, the War Office having appointed Colonel H. T. Fenwick, who was second in command, and very popular with all ranks.

Nottingham Evening Post. Monday 15th November 1915

Our first billets in France were at a little village called Le Ciseaux, and from there we moved to a factory town called Isbergues. We could hear the guns there and were all a little nervous so we were quite relieved to play a bit of football. Every regiment in France had heard we had arrived and wanted to play us, but none of them, understandably, could compete with a team of professionals. There was always quite a bit of banter after the games. On one occasion we met a group of Scots returning from the front line at Bethune and when we asked them how things were they told us we were 1-0 down to the Germans at half time but they were sure the Football Battalion could grab an equaliser!



Source 39. Pom Pom's Letter to Albert Underwood. 7th December 1915



Letter extract 7th December, 1915 from Pom Pom to Albert Underwood, Secretary of Brighton and Hove Albion F.C.

Our first taste of the trenches was near the French town of Loos, the location of a battle just a month before we had arrived that had claimed 50,000 British casualties. The closer you got to the front the more you realised that war wasn't a game. Some of the stories I'd heard recently were scarcely believable. The Christmas Truce seemed incredible enough, but what was said to have happened at Loos back in September seemed even more unbelievable. We had a few lads from the King's Road who knew some of the men that had been there back then. Apparently one of the London Irish lads, a Chelsea boy named Frank Edwards, had actually 'gone over the top' to attack the German trenches kicking a football and screaming, "On the ball London Irish." A case of real life being stranger than fiction.



The Rifleman pub sign Twickenham



Footballer of Loos painting. Ed Harris

On 25th September, 1915, the men of the London Irish Rifles hatched a plan to dribble six footballs toward the German frontline. On the eve of the Battle of Loos their commander rumbled their plan and using his gun shot out five of the balls – but one remained hidden. This belonged to the battalion's football team captain, Rifleman Frank

Edwards. He had grown up close to Stamford Bridge and had joined the London Irish at the Duke of York's barracks in Sloane Square, on 2nd August 1914. Edwards had deflated his ball and concealed it under his tunic. Shortly before Zero hour, he re-inflated it and defying orders kicked off the 'Big Push' by punting the football into no man's land. Together with his comrades he dribbled the ball towards the German lines shouting, "On the ball, London Irish." Edwards who suffered a gunshot wound to his thigh, survived the charge, but suffered the effects of the gas that had blown in the faces of the footballers for the rest of his life.



Kensington and Chelsea Local Studies



Frank Edward's story was completely forgotten until Ed Harris, husband of Edward's granddaughter, Susan (above) found the original ball which had been retrieved from the battlefield at the London Irish barracks in Camberwell. It was in poor condition but has since been restored to remind us of the amazing courage of the London Irish. Ed Harris

The attack at Loos had been the first time the British army had used poison gas. They released chlorine gas on the German lines, but the wind blew it back in the faces of our own boys who suffered more casualties than the Germans. I experienced my first gas attack in April 1916, but by then we had been issued with PH helmets. These were cloth gas masks that made us look ridiculous. However that was better than covering your mouth with a urine soaked hankie which was what the poor boys had to do before the first masks were handed out!



British soldiers line up ready for a game wearing PH helmets. *Bibliothèque de France EL-13 (5310)*



ONE OF THE HIDEOUS EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THE GERMAN POISON-GAS ATTACKS.

A close view of a British "trench helmet." Provided with respirators and protection for the eyes, these hideous but beneficent anti-gas masks recall old-world pictures of the Vahngiericht and the weird garb of the Ku-Klux-Klan which figured so prominently in the Southern States at the close of the American Civil War.

### The PH Helmet

The PH helmet was an early type of gas mask issued by the British Army in the First World War, to protect troops against chlorine, phosgene and tear gases. Rather than having a separate filter for removing the toxic chemicals, they consisted of a gas-permeable hood worn over the head which was treated with chemicals.

The PH Helmet (Phenate Hexamine) was introduced in October 1915. Around 14 million were made and it remained in service until the end of the war by which time it was relegated to second line use.

The PH Helmet was worn over the head and inside the tunic, the collar was then closed about the lower section of the hood for protection. The PH helmet is constructed of a double layer of light blue-grey flannel, with two glass eye pieces set in metal rims. The 'snout' of the helmet has a metal tube, leading from a rubber mouth piece that is held in the mouth, to the outside of the helmet, where a rubber valve would be usually found.

### Why did soldiers use urine soaked hankies?

Soldiers exposed to gas were told to urinate on a cloth and cover their mouths and noses with it! The ammonia in the urine would neutralize the chlorine gases commonly used in battle during WWI.

Life in the front line trenches was always tense, but one of the hardest things to cope with was the monotony of it. Sometimes we would be entertained by what was happening over our heads as our airman fought with the Germans. At first we looked on these dogfights as if they were some great big football match in the sky, but it soon dawned on me that the losers in this 'big match' paid with their lives. Whilst the aerial conflict above the trenches never worried me, the news that the Germans were using their Zeppelin airships to bomb where my family still lived in the East End really got to me.



Lt Reginald Warneford destroying airship LZ377 Ralph Gillies Cole Fleet.  
Fleet Air Arm Museum

When Lt Reginald Warneford shot down a German air ship in June 1915 he became a national hero and was awarded a Victoria Cross. Warneford died tragically shortly after being awarded his medal but his story and image as a 'sportsman' was used in the recruitment campaign. Warneford is buried besides Stamford Bridge in Brompton Cemetery.

**SPORTSMAN BATTALION'S RECRUIT**  
**WHO WRECKED THE ZEPPELIN**  
**and won the V.C.**

**FOLLOW HIS LEAD**  
**AND JOIN THE**  
**SPORTSMAN'S BATTALION**

Apply E. CUNLIFFE-OWEN, Hotel Cecil, Strand, London.

Source 40. The Big Match

For God, For King & For Country.

**Y.M.C.A.**

**H.M. FORGES ON ACTIVE SERVICE**

PATRON  
 MILITARY CAMP DEPT  
 HR.H. DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

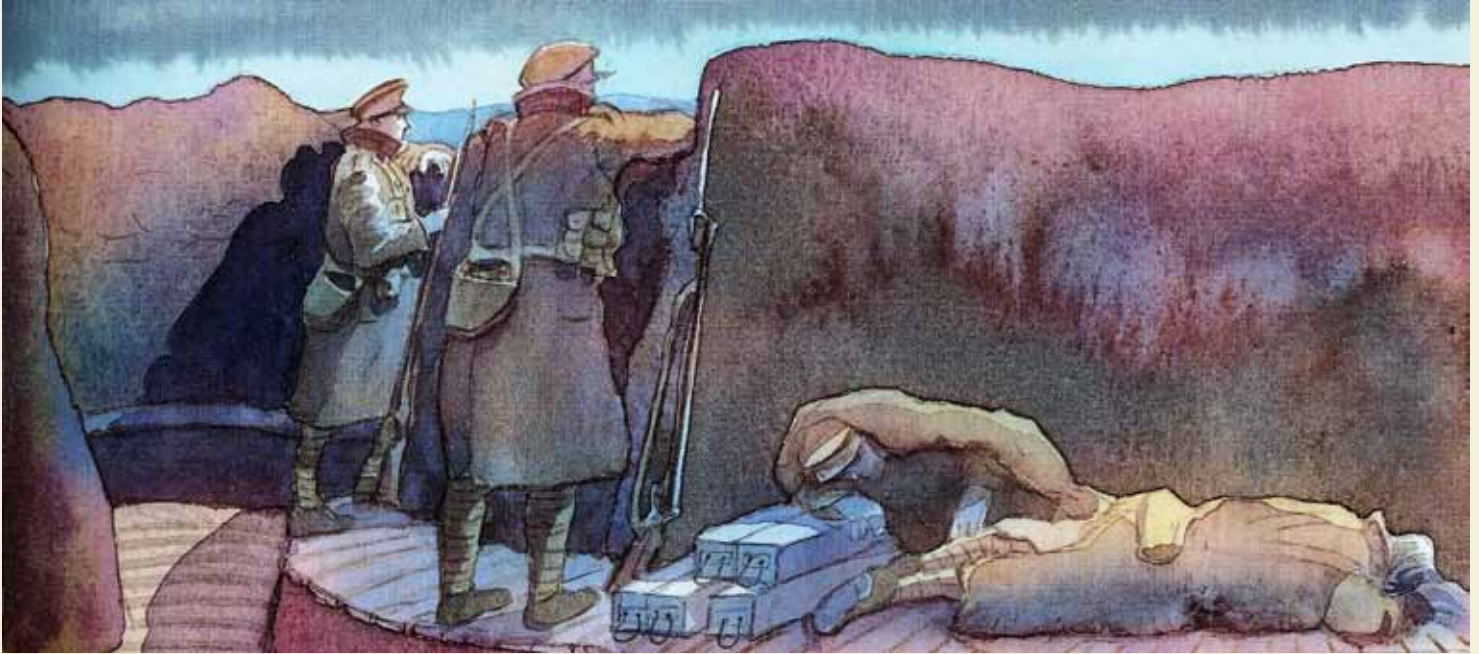
Reply to \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_ Bat \_\_\_\_\_ Regt \_\_\_\_\_ 1915

Stationed at \_\_\_\_\_

Letter extract dated 7th December 1915 from Pom Pom to Albert Underwood, the Secretary of Brighton and Hove Albion

*Well we are having some exciting times in the "big match" out here. It is great sport to see our airmen scoring against the "Allemandes" (German troops) - hoping you will excuse the bit of French. Going great guns in the French language out here, quite a genius at it. I hope this will find you and all old friends at Brighton in the best of health as it leaves me at present. Am looking forward to be playing next season with the old club."*

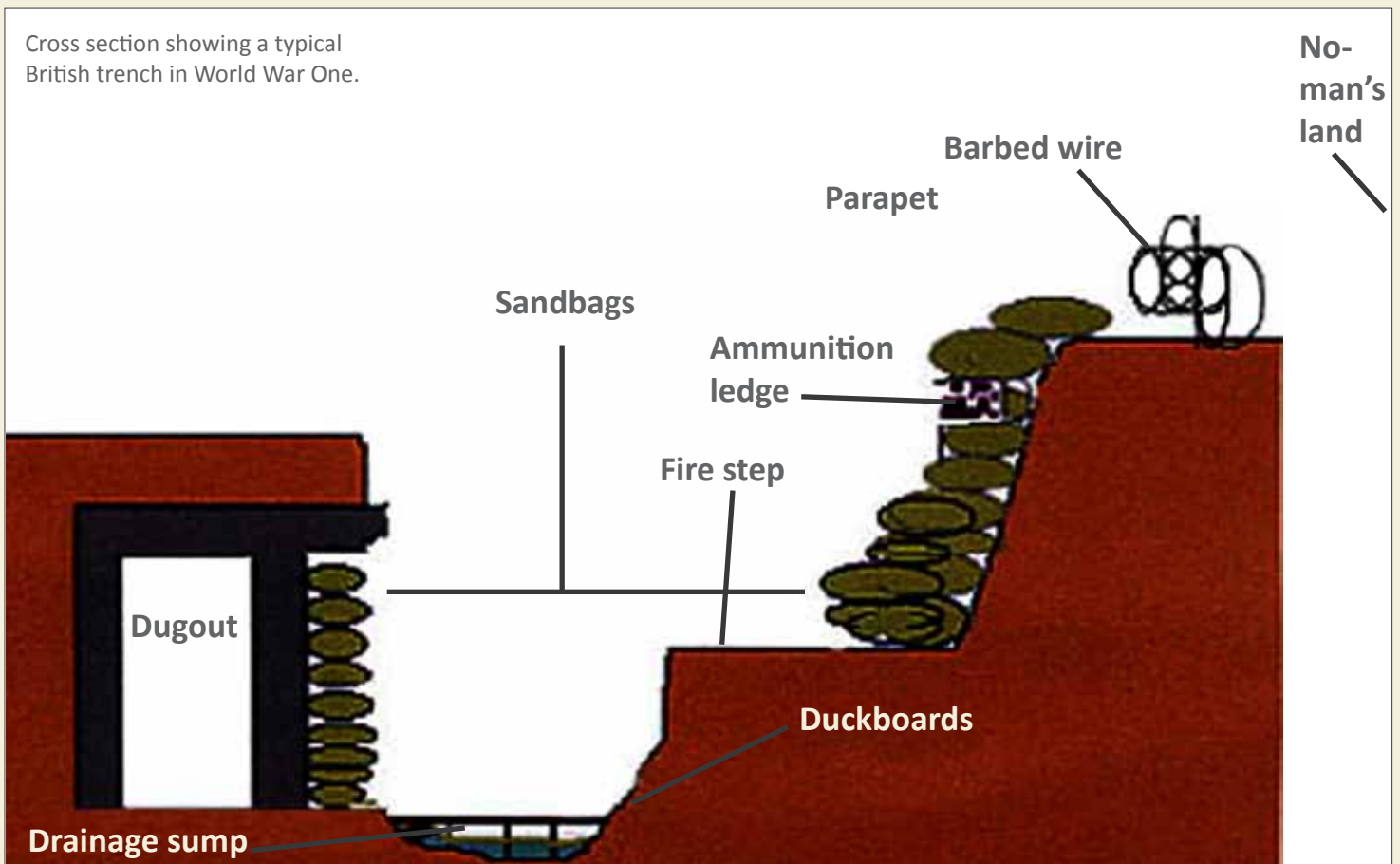
Trench life was hard work too. We were constantly trying to repair the muddy trenches that we found ourselves in. Sometimes it was very frustrating as we could spend all day improving the parapets and then the Germans could destroy everything we had done with one well placed shell. The constant tension in the front line never left you. However quiet or mundane it became as we waited, the peace could be shattered at any moment by a German 'whizz bang'\* that would bring death without warning.



British trench. *War Game Michael Foreman*

\*The term 'whizz bang' described the noise made by shells from the German 77mm field guns. The shells they fired travelled faster than the speed of sound so a soldier heard the "whizz" noise of a shell before the "bang" issued by the gun itself. Hence they had virtually no warning of incoming shells.

Cross section showing a typical British trench in World War One.







1. Trenches generally formed a zigzag pattern to help protect the trench against enemy attack.
2. Fire steps and scaling ladders enabled troops to go 'over the top', i.e. to go out into no-man's-land (the area between the opposing armies) to attack enemy trenches.
3. Machine guns, one of the most deadly weapons, could fire 600 bullets/minute.
4. Trench toilets, called latrines, were usually pits 1.5 metres deep, dug at the end of a short gangway. Each company had two sanitary personnel who had to keep the latrines in good condition.
5. Earth-filled sandbags helped to shore up the edges of the trenches and absorb bullets and shell fragments.
6. Duckboards were wooden planks placed across the bottom of trenches and other muddy ground. They helped protect men from trench foot and from sinking deep into the mud. Trench foot resulted from days standing in water logged trenches; gangrene could set in and result in the amputation of a man's foot.
7. Owing to the use of mustard gas and other chemical weapons, all soldiers needed gas masks. Mustard gas was almost odourless and took 12 hours to take effect.
8. Each soldier had a kit containing nearly 30 kilograms of equipment. This included a rifle, two grenades, ammunition, a steel helmet, wire cutters, a field dressing, a spade, a heavy coat, two sandbags, a ground sheet, a water bottle, a haversack, a mess tin, a towel, a shaving kit, socks and rations of preserved food.
9. Barbed wire helped protect the trenches and also made it very difficult to attack the opposing trench. Before an attack, soldiers went out at night to cut sections of wire to make it easier for the soldiers in morning raids. Minor cuts and grazes caused by the barbed wire often became infected in the unsanitary conditions of the trenches.
10. The British army employed 300 000 field workers to cook and supply the food for troops. However, there was often not enough food to cook. The main diet in the trenches was bully beef (canned corned beef), bread and biscuits.
11. Snow, rain and freezing temperatures drastically slowed combat during the winter months. In hot, dry summers, lack of fresh water, scorching sun, and the stench of dead bodies and rubbish made trench life equally difficult.



British guns in action. War Game Michael Foreman

Source 42. All Work and Very Little Play

For God. For King & For Country.



Reply to ..... Company ..... Bat ..... Regt ..... 1915  
 Stationed at .....

Dear Bert

We are having a rest after our first dose of the trenches, and I can tell you we have well earned it...I can honestly say it is all work and very little play. You feel a bit fatigued in the trenches after you have been there for 24 hours building up parapets, which the fellows across the way mow down with their *whizzbangs*. What delightful toys they are to be sure. But for everyone they send our fellows the good old R.F.A. (Royal Field Artillery), give them back about twenty, so I suppose they are busy making their rabbit holes look a bit shipshape afterwards and by goodness they must be busy sometimes, as our artillery does give them a doing every now and then.

Yours  
 Pom Pom

Extract from a letter from 'Pom Pom' Whiting to Albert Underwood, the Secretary of Brighton & Hove Albion F.C.

In January 1916 we lost Captain Woodward when he was wounded by a grenade. That man seemed to live a charmed life and it was typical of him that he should get a 'Blighty'\* wound to take him back home. You can probably guess from my tone that the novelty of life out here had well and truly worn off for me. The hardest thing to take was the constant tension of waiting on the unknown. It tested your sanity to think of the dreadful things that might happen to you over which you had no control. Quite a few men went down with shell shock. It struck down my fellow Lance Sergeant, Walter Tull, in May 1916 and if it could happen to Walter, who was a brave soldier, it could happen to anyone.

\* (Blighty was old Indian army slang for home/Britain. A wound that took you home was known as a 'Blighty'.)

**Source 43. Shell Shock**



Walter Tull. *Finlayson Family/Phil Vasili*

**Walter Daniel John Tull (28 April 1888 – 25 March 1918)**

Walter Tull played for Spurs (1909-11) and Northampton Town (1911-14). He was the second Black player in the top division of the Football League, and the first Black infantry officer in the British Army. Tull was brought up in a National Children's Home orphanage in Bethnal Green, London, along with his brother, following the death of their parents.

Tull served in the Footballers' Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant on 30th May, 1917 despite Military Law specifically excluding 'Non-Europeans' from exercising command as officers. Tull fought in Italy in 1917-18, and was Mentioned in Despatches for 'gallantry and coolness' while leading his company of 26 men on a raiding party into enemy territory. He returned to France in 1918, and was killed in action on 25th March, 1918 during the Spring Offensive; his body was never recovered.

Campaigners have called for a statue to be erected in his honour, and former Northampton South MP Brian Binley has campaigned for Tull to be posthumously awarded the Military Cross, which he was nominated for his bravery in Italy, but never received.



Walter Tull Spurs, 1911. *Finlayson Family/Phil Vasili*



Captain Vivian Woodward was Chelsea's captain too. *Peter Daniel*

**Captain V. J. Woodward, the famous footballer, is again in the doctor's hands. Having recovered from the grenade wound he received in the trenches, he joined the 3rd Battalion of the Footballers. Unfortunately he was seized with illness that necessitated prompt medical attention. He is now at his home in London.**

Evening Despatch - Thursday 25th May, 1916

One of the footballers out in France with me was Liverpool's Jackie Sheldon. He was really down when I met him because he had got himself involved in the infamous Good Friday match rigging scandal. Jackie had moved to Liverpool from Manchester United and had been accused of accepting bribes to throw the match and allow United to claim the points to save them from relegation. He had received a lifetime ban from the F.A. so was worried what he would do once the war was over. To be honest I always thought that was the last of his problems when every day out here might be his last!



Jackie Sheldon, Liverpool

#### The 1915 Betting Scandal that nearly relegated Chelsea

Coming to the end of the 1914-15 season there were six teams within two points of each other at the bottom of the table. Chelsea were on 22, Spurs on 23 and Manchester United with three other clubs on 24. On Good Friday, 2nd April

1915 Liverpool visited Old Trafford and lost 2-0. The game was a strange one as Liverpool barely seemed interested and managed to miss a penalty. After the game, the FA investigated and found that there had been an arrangement to fix the result between some of the players of both teams.

The war was a key factor in the fix as at that time it was almost certain that because of it the league would end after the 1914-15 season ending the footballing careers of everyone then playing. Also, the players perhaps thought the diversion of the conflict would lessen the attention that would normally be paid to a dubious match result.

Jack Sheldon, (pictured above) a Liverpool player, who had formerly played for United, was alleged to have been the ringleader and he, together with three other Liverpool players, were banned for life. Three United players also suffered the same fate. Sheldon protested his innocence (see the article on the right) but confessed to having arranged the whole thing a couple of years later. All four Liverpool players went to fight in the trenches and were apparently given a pardon after the war. Of the four only Sheldon played for Liverpool again.

At the end of that season, United escaped relegation by one point, finishing with 29 points, one ahead of Chelsea (but with an inferior goal average) who were in turn one point ahead of Spurs.

This led to another controversial incident when the league resumed in 1919. The pre-war First Division had comprised 20 teams and this was increased to 22 afterwards. The assumption had been that the two top teams in the Second Division would be promoted and the two teams who should

## SCANDAL ECHO.

### LIVERPOOL FOOTBALLER'S DENIAL.

Private J. Sheldon, of the Footballer's Battalion, has written the following letter from France in regard to the "scandal match" between Liverpool and Manchester United.

Would you kindly grant me space in your valuable paper to explain my position re suspension? Perhaps it is unfair for me to ask this favour after my case has been dealt with so long ago by the F.A. But you will understand how difficult it is for me to explain while doing my bit "Somewhere in France."

I am now taking the first opportunity I have had, and wish to let the numerous followers of football know how I stand. I emphatically state to you, as our best and fairest critic, that I am absolutely blameless in this scandal, and am still open, as I have always been, to give to any Red Cross Fund or any other charitable institution the sum of £20 if the F.A., or anyone else, can bring forward any bookmaker or any other person with whom I have had a bet. Assuming I return safely from this country, I intend taking action against my suspension, and in the meantime you would do me a great favour if you would kindly insert this letter in your issue—Begging to remain, yours faithfully, PTE. J. SHELDON, 17th Middlesex.

E. J. West, it is common knowledge, has taken up a similar attitude, and he has been in communication with the Football Association.

Evening Despatch - Thursday 25 May 1916

have been relegated would be reprieved. This was true for Chelsea but not for Spurs. Arsenal had finished fifth in the Second Division but chairman Henry Norris somehow persuaded the league to promote his team at the expense of a reprieve for Spurs. Hence why Spurs historically hate Arsenal.

# Return to Blighty

From the moment I arrived in the trenches I was running alive with lice, it was something you couldn't avoid. We tried to get rid of the 'chats'\* as we called them by running a candle along the seams of our uniform where the little pests would lay their eggs. You could hear the eggs go pop as you did this, but as soon as you put your uniform back on you were running alive with them again. As if that wasn't bad enough there was the Scabies mite. These little devils burrowed into your skin and laid their eggs. I went down with them in a bad way at the end of May 1916. For the first time since we had come out I had been granted leave to go back home and see Nell and the boys. As soon as she saw the state I was in she packed me off to see the doctor and I ended up being admitted to the 2nd General Hospital in Dyke Road, Brighton.

\*(this was known as chatting –the word has passed into modern English as a word for talking as chatting was always carried out whilst talking with friends)



Kings ward, 2nd Eastern General Hospital. Dyke Road, Brighton

## Source 44. Army Hospital Admission Form

Name of Hospital	Admitted to Hospital			Discharged from Hospital			Disease	Number of days in Hospital
	Day	Month	Year	Day	Month	Year		
<i>E. Gen Hospital Brighton</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Scabies</i>	<i>7</i>
Eastern General Hospital, Brighton	23	5	10	29	5	16	scabies	7

**Scabies** is a contagious skin infection caused by a parasitic mite, and was common in the trenches during the First World War because medics were unfamiliar with its early signs and many soldiers reported sick after it was too painful to endure, by which time their mates would be infected too.



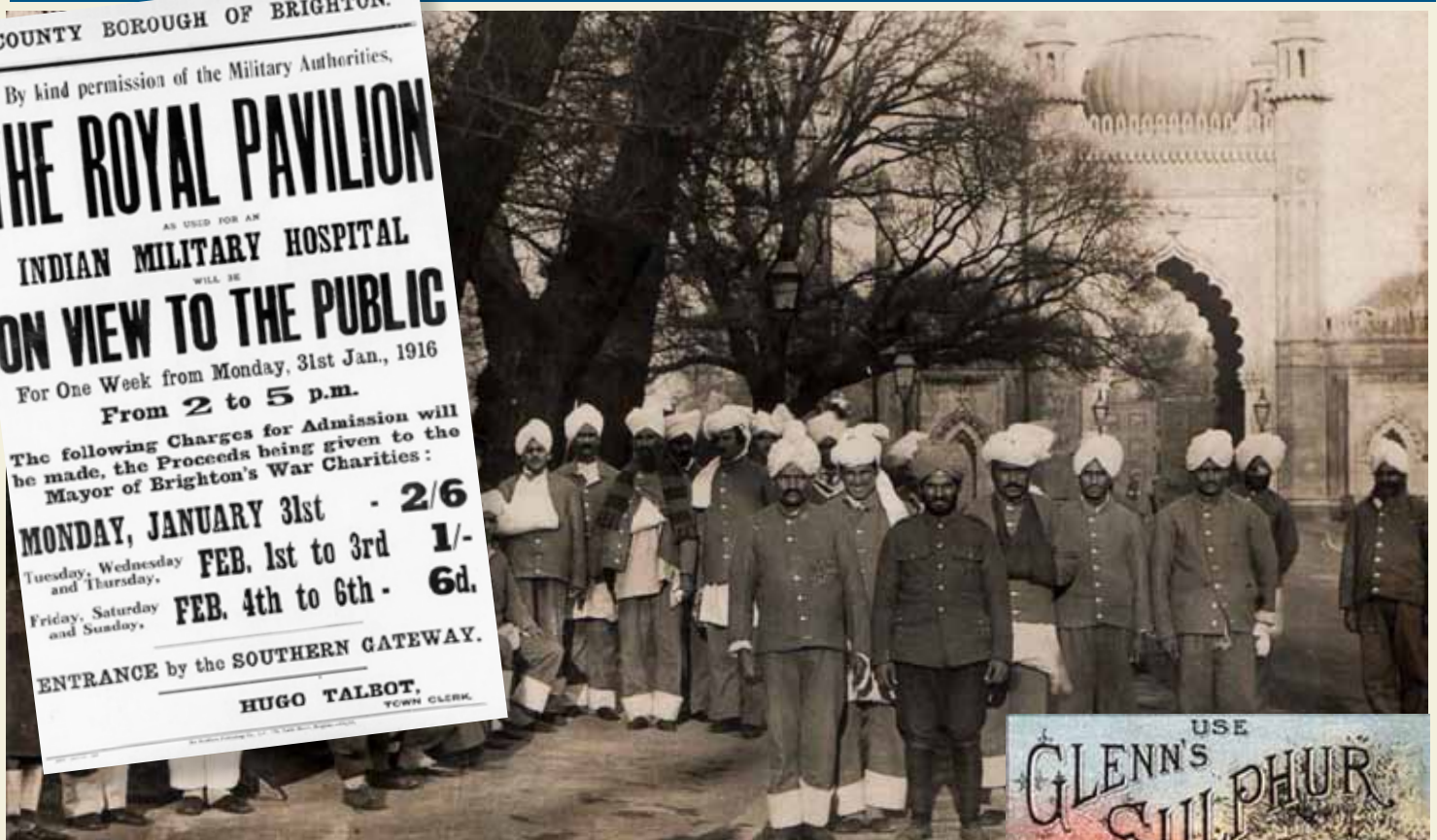
*Adm. 2 Eastern Gen. Hospital Brighton 23.5.16*  
*on leave from France returned*  
*off strength of Battalion accordingly*

Admitted to 2 Eastern General Hospital whilst on leave from France and struck off strength of Battalion accordingly Brighton. 23rd May 1916

After seven days in the hospital taking sulphur baths to kill the mites that had infected me I was desperate to get out and enjoy being back in Brighton with Nell and the boys again. I was issued with my hospital blues\* whilst I recovered and I can't put into words how it felt to hold my little' uns by the hand and stroll along by the sea again. I tried to push the thought of leaving them again to the back of my mind, as it broke my heart to think I might not live to see them grow up. At least I'd been given this chance to see them again unlike those poor Indian lads we saw, who were so far away from everyone they loved.

\* a blue uniform for wounded soldiers

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BRIGHTON.  
By kind permission of the Military Authorities,  
**THE ROYAL PAVILION**  
AS USED FOR AN  
**INDIAN MILITARY HOSPITAL**  
WILL BE  
**ON VIEW TO THE PUBLIC**  
For One Week from Monday, 31st Jan., 1916  
From 2 to 5 p.m.  
The following Charges for Admission will be made, the Proceeds being given to the Mayor of Brighton's War Charities:  
MONDAY, JANUARY 31st - 2/6  
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, FEB. 1st to 3rd 1/-  
Friday, Saturday and Sunday, FEB. 4th to 6th - 6d.  
ENTRANCE by the SOUTHERN GATEWAY.  
HUGO TALBOT, TOWN CLERK.

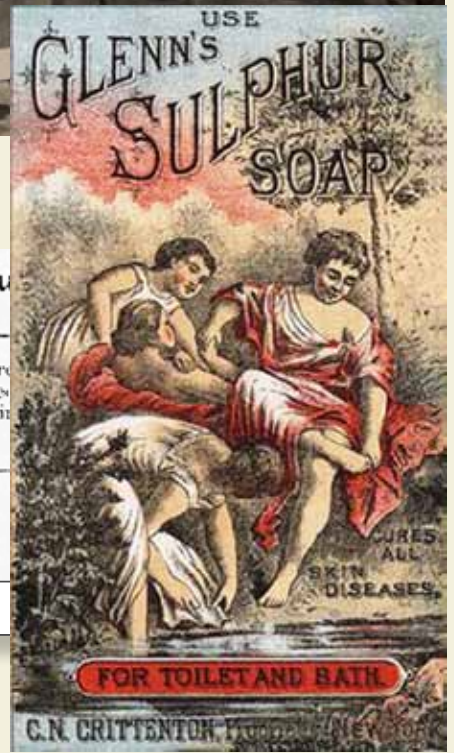


Wounded Indian troops were nursed at Brighton's Royal Pavillion.  
Royal Brighton Pavillion and Museums

Source 45. Pom Pom's Hospital Treatment

to the Sick List in the case of Warrant Officers treated in qu

Number of days in Hospital	Remarks bearing on the cause, nature, or treatment of the case, likely to be of interest or of future progress, including particulars of treatment out of hospital, transfers, &c., will be given in special syphilis case sheet.
7	Treatment: Sulphur Baths + Sulphur Ointment



Scabies is a centuries-old ailment and throughout history, as far back as the Roman Empire, sulphur has been the cure of choice.

Scabies has a lot of nicknames including - human itch mite, crabs, skin lice, or just plain old mange. It looks like a rash, and the actual cause is nearly impossible to see with the naked eye. Scabies is a mite that burrows deep under the skin in tunnels where it lays eggs. As horrible as it sounds, scabies is relatively easy to treat with a simple sulphur solution. Pom Pom would have recovered quite quickly after taking his sulphur baths at the hospital.

On my last day before reporting back for duty, I wanted to be alone with Nell. As we strolled along the sea front she didn't have to tell me how she was feeling as I could see the look of fear in her eyes. We sat on a bench by the pier and I gazed out to the horizon. Across the sea the mother of all battles was brewing. How could I leave her to return to that? How could I wave her and my boys goodbye knowing I might never see them again? 'Family!' that one simple word kept spinning around in my head. I thought of my old mum and in that moment my mind was made up. I needed more time with them so I decided to go A.W.O.L. (absent without leave). I'd have some explaining to do, but I'd tell them I was too ill to report back and it would be worth taking the punishment to spend a few extra days at home.



# Absent Without Leave

When I decided to go A.W.O.L. in June 1916 I thought it would be just for a few days, but those days turned into weeks and the longer it went on the harder it became to turn myself in. The Battle of the Somme or the 'Big Push' as the papers called it came on the 1st July 1916. I have to admit I felt bad when I read about the first casualties arriving back in Brighton. As more and more wounded returned rumours started spreading about the terrible slaughter that had occurred. This news only magnified my guilt. Should I stay on the run or hand myself in? It was a question I couldn't decide until Nell told me something that turned my world upside down. She was pregnant!



Soldiers wounded on the Somme aboard a hospital train

## HEROES OF THE BIG PUSH.

Late last night about 200 wounded soldiers arrived at Brighton from the scene of the great battle in France. More than half were stretcher cases, but the men were quickly transferred to the hospitals. Despite the lateness of the hour the wounded men had a splendid reception from a large crowd. The disabled warriors were very optimistic and had not the slightest doubt that the great advance meant the beginning of great things for the Allies.

Hull Daily Mail - Wednesday 5 July 1916 (above) and Mon 3rd July 1916 (right)

## FACTS ABOUT THE GREAT OFFENSIVE.

This is not the big push itself, but the first push of the big push. It is not an attempt to break through, but the beginning of a steady, unrelenting pressure by which it is hoped eventually to crumple up the German resistance.

The offensive now in progress is roughly on a scale about three times the magnitude of the battle of Loos, the previous greatest British effort.

Our first task is not to win territory, but to make the enemy incapable of holding it. The people at home must accustom themselves steadily to contemplate the painful fact that an offensive must involve heavy losses to the Allies.

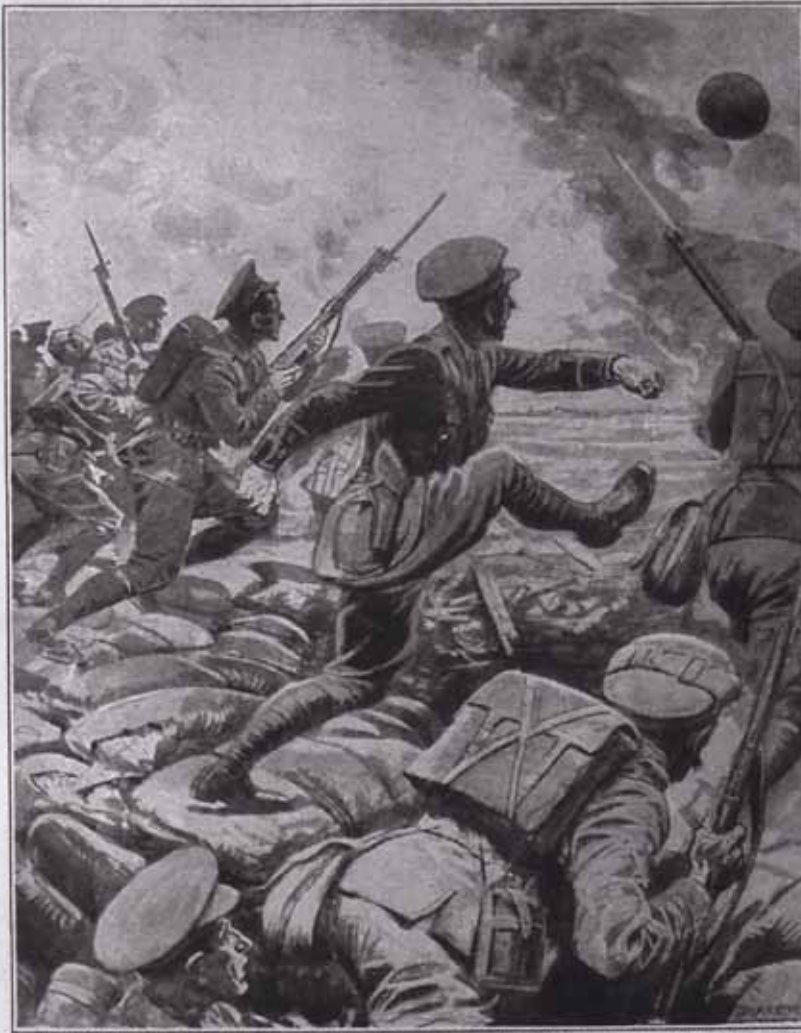
In the present war the beginning of the end will come when one side or the other evinces a definite superiority, in the exercise of which the other side loses so heavily that its front can no longer be held unbroken and that its remaining resources become inadequate. It cannot be said at present that the Allies can claim anything so decisive.



How could I go back now that Nell was carrying my baby? I knew what lay in store for me if I did. There might still be a few individuals, who'd read about what Captain Billy Nevill did on the first day of the Somme and thought life in the trenches was like Saturday afternoon at the Goldstone,\* but I knew better. I knew that if I went back it was quite likely I'd never see the face of my unborn child. I know it was wrong, but what would you have done if you were in my shoes?

\*The Goldstone = Brighton's ground

### Gallant Officer Scores a Goal on the Field of War



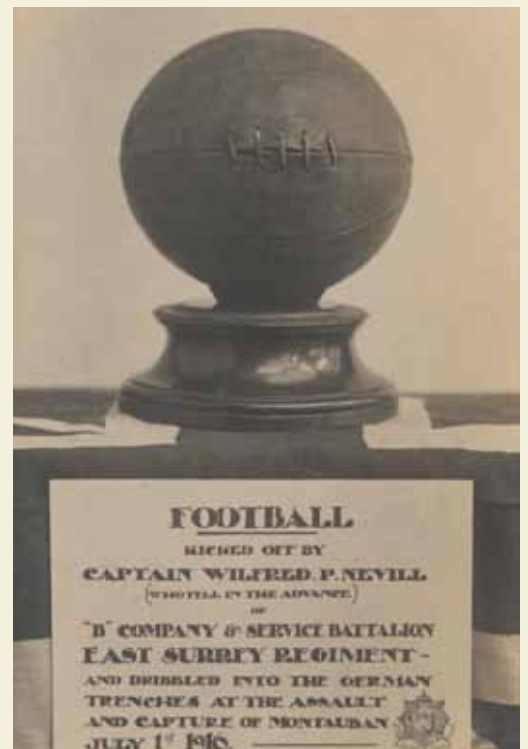
An episode which strikingly illustrates the proverbial sporting spirit of Britons on the battlefield took place in an assault on the German trenches. The whiplashed order to charge went down the line with lightning rapidity, and every man advanced over the parapet. At this critical moment an officer kicked a football, with the names of the members of his platoon etched on it, towards the German lines. Shouting "Follow up, lads!" he led the way, but was struck down before he had proceeded a few paces.

The War Illustrated October 1915

In October 1915, The War Illustrated featured the story of the Footballer of Loos (see page 55) with a subtle twist - their illustration placed an officer in Frank Edward's role! One man undoubtedly influenced by this version of the story was Captain Billy Nevill of the East Surrey Regiment, who would repeat Edward's daring deed on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 1st July 1916. Nevill purchased four balls, one for each of his platoons, and offered a prize for whoever could advance furthest into German lines. Nevill painted onto one: "The Great European Cup. The Final. East Surrey's v Bavarians. Kick off at Zero" and on another "No Referee." Nevill was to die in the attack on what would become one of the most infamous days in the history of the British army. Perhaps because of this, in later years, Captain Nevill and the East Surrey's story stole much of Frank Edwards and the London Irish Regiment's thunder.



Captain Billy Nevill



Peter Daniel

My head was already all over the place when I heard in August 1916 that my younger brother Joe had been killed on the Somme. He was only nineteen. He had his whole life ahead of him but it had been snuffed out like a candle. There's no glory in dying so young. The ones who think there is, are the armchair heroes. The same brave types who've been fainting in the aisles watching the Battle of the Somme film at the flicks.\*

\*flicks = cinema



Kent & Sussex Courier Fri 20th October 1916

"The Battle of the Somme" was the world's first war documentary. It shocked audiences who had no idea of the horrors of WW1.

Pom Pom's brother Joe was killed in the fierce fighting at the aptly named Delville Wood above. Imperial War Museum

Source 46. Pom Pom's brother Joe

Campaign:—		1914-15.		(A) Where decoration was earned.
				(B) Present situation.
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Honours which included (if any)
(A) GREENHALF	5 <sup>th</sup> Bde Dof Cornwall	Lt	5644	MEDAL ROLL PA C/1/101 B5 389
(B) Joseph	---	---	---	16 STAR C/1/51014
Regiment: 6th Btn Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry				Dead
Regimental Number: 3/5647				
THEATRE OF WAR. (1) France		Death Date: 16 August 1916		
QUALIFYING DATE 21.5.15.				
(6 24 16) W234—HP5590 500,000 4/19 HWV(P240) K008				[Over]

Private Joseph Greenhalf's medal card. National Archives



Pom Pom's brother Private Joseph Greenhalf. Peter Burgess

# Court Martialled

I knew the Redcaps\* would get me eventually and they did. On the 13th October 1916 after 133 days on the run I was arrested and taken to Hove Magistrates Court. I was collected from the court by a military escort and then held in a military prison to await a return to France for my court martial. I left Folkestone on the 18th November, 1916 as a prisoner so there was no romantic farewell for me. Nell was now five months pregnant so it broke my heart to think what I was leaving behind me in Blighty.

\*Redcap= Military Police

## Source 47. Arrested



As a prisoner awaiting trial Pom Pom would not have been allowed to spend time with Nell before he returned to France so there would be no romantic farewell for him. *Peter Daniel*

## HOVE MAGISTRATES' COURT ALBION FOOTBALLER AS ABSENTEE

On Saturday Robert Whiting, a private in the Footballers' Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, was remanded to await an escort. He was charged with being an absentee since June last, but pleaded not guilty on the ground that he had been suffering from a complaint for which he entered hospital in May. Defendant told Detective-Sergeant Adlam that he had been treated in hospital, and that he was not in a fit condition to travel.

Whiting was before the war the goalkeeper of the Brighton and Hove Football Club, and a very well-known figure in the football world.

The Brighton Herald, 21st October, 1916



I didn't know it at that time but Nell gave birth to our son Joe on the day of my court martial in Albert, 26th February 1917. I will never forget hearing the news. I had just been found guilty and sentenced to nine months hard labour, when Nell's letter arrived with the news. I remember looking at the famous statue of the Virgin and her baby that clung precariously above the ruined town and thinking we had something in common. If she could hang on to that child and see out this war then maybe I could do the same thing too.



The statue of the 'Golden Virgin' - on top of the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Brebières, Albert (pictured left) was hit by a shell in 1915, and slumped to a near-horizontal position, where however it remained until further shelling in 1918 destroyed it. A superstition grew that whoever made the statue fall would lose the war, and so Royal Engineers wired supports to keep it and British morale up. *Peter Daniel*



Hard labour consisted of sewing mail bags, oakum picking, (tearing up old ropes) and stone breaking. The jobs were meant to be boring and had to be carried out in silence. A military prison was set up near Dyce in north Scotland for deserters where they worked in a granite quarry.

**F.G.C.M. (Field General Court Martial)**

**Charge:** When on active service absenting himself whilst on leave 3/6/16 to 13/10/16 (133 days)  
**Finding:** Guilty  
**Sentence:** Hard Labour for 9 months  
**Awaiting:** Trial from 12/12/16  
**5.3.17 5th Army** Sentence suspended

**Source 48. Casualty Form Active Service**

Date	From whom received	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 30, or other official documents
		Embarked ...	18/11/16	
		Disembarked...	22.11.16	
22/1/16	4122 Depot	Staples.	26.11.16	
24/2/17		Albert.	26.2.17	902 62238
				018191017
01/3/17	4122 Depot		01/3/17	CM/2319

*Handwritten notes in the table:*  
 Charge: when on active service absenting himself whilst on leave. 3/6/16 to 13/10/16 (133 days)  
 Finding: Guilty  
 Sentence: H.L. for 9 months  
 Awaiting: Trial from 12/12/16  
 Sentence Suspended

Pom Pom's trial began on the 26.2.17

**Source 49. Birth of Joe Whiting**

After 133 days of absence from Army --Pom Pom Whiting was caught and sentenced to 9 months hard labour in a Military Prison. If he had deserted whist in France he may have faced death by firing squad for such an offence.

**DESCRIPTIVE REPORT-ON ENLISTMENT.**

(To correspond with Entries of the Medical History Sheet.)  
Applicable to all ranks.

Name Robert Whiting  
 Apparent age 30 years 11 months Height 5 feet 9 1/2 inches  
 Chest measurement { Girth when fully expanded 46 inches.  
 Range of expansion 4 inches.  
 Distinctive marks Scar on both knees & bridge of nose

Name: Robert Whiting  
 Age: 30 years 11 months  
 Height: 5 feet and 9 1/2 inches  
 Expansion: 4 inches  
 Distinctive marks: Scar on both knees  
 Next of kin: Robert Whiting (father)  
 West Ham crossed out and replaced by Sarah Whiting wife

**INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY RECRUIT.**

Name and Address of next of kin Robert Whiting 9 Coleridge St Hove Sussex  
 Relationship Father

**Particulars as to Marriage.**

(a) Christian and Surname of Woman to whom married, and whether spinster or widow.	(b) Place and date of marriage.
<u>Nellie Whiting (Spinster)</u>	<u>St John's Church Tunbridge Wells 12 Aug 1907</u>
(c) Present address.	(d) Initials of Officer verifying entry.
<u>9 Coleridge St Hove Sussex</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>

Marriage to Nellie Whiting (spinster) St John's Church Tunbridge Wells. 12 August 1907. 9 Corbridge Street, Hove Sussex

**Particulars as to Children.**

Christian Names	Date and Place of Birth
<u>Robert Leonard</u>	<u>2. March 1908 Tunbridge Wells</u>
<u>William James</u>	<u>5. Sept. 1908 Hove Sussex</u>

Robert Leonard 2 March 1908 Tunbridge Wells  
 William James 5 Sept 1908 Hove Sussex  
 Joseph Fredrick 26 Feb 1917 Tunbridge Wells

**STATEMENT OF THE SERVICES.**

Corps in which served	Regt. or Depot	Promotions, Reductions, Casualties, &c.	Army Rank	Dates	Service not allowed to reckon for fixing the rate of Pension		Service in Reserve not allowed to reckon towards G. C. Pay		Verifying correctness of entries.
					years	days	years	days	
				Service towards limited engagement reckons from <u>31/12/14</u>					
				Joined at <u>London</u> on <u>31/12/14</u>					
		<u>Attested &amp; att'd</u>	<u>Private</u>	<u>31/12/14</u>					
		<u>appointed unpt</u>	<u>LCpl</u>	<u>11.2.15</u>					
		<u>appointed paid</u>	<u>LCpl</u>	<u>11.2.15</u>					
		<u>Promoted</u>	<u>Cpl</u>	<u>24.5.15</u>					
		<u>appointed unpt</u>	<u>LCpl</u>	<u>17.6.15</u>					
		<u>appointed unpt</u>	<u>LCpl</u>	<u>9.8.15</u>					
		<u>appointed unpt</u>	<u>LCpl</u>	<u>28.5.16</u>					
		<u>appointed unpt</u>	<u>LCpl</u>	<u>18.11.16</u>					
		<u>In arrest awaiting trial</u>		<u>12.12.16</u>					
		<u>sentenced by FGCM</u>		<u>26.2.17</u>					
		<u>9 months I.H.L. for absence on active service</u>							
		<u>Total Service forfeited as above</u>							

Joined up Hove 31 Dec 1914  
 Attested 31 Dec 1914  
 Appointed L Cpl 11 Feb 1915  
 Promoted L Sge 17 June 1915  
 Reveted to Private 2 Aug 1915  
 Posted Private 23 May 1916  
 Posted Private 18 Nov 1916  
 In arrest awaiting trial 12 Dec 1916

26.2.17 Sentenced by FGCM (Field General Court Martial) to 9 months hard labour for absence on active service from 3.6.16 to 13.10.16 (133 days)

Descriptive report on Enlistment for Pte Robert Whiting.  
National Archives

About a week after Joe was born I was offered the chance to redeem myself. A new offensive was being planned and after the slaughter that had occurred at the Somme in 1916, the army was desperately short of men. I was offered the chance to accept a suspended sentence if I would agree to go back to re-join the Football Battallion for the planned attack. I knew I now had a black mark against my name, and I couldn't bear to think my boys might one day be ashamed of me, so I agreed to go back.



Charge	Maximum Penalty
Misbehaving in front of the enemy in such a manner as to show cowardice	Death
Causing mutiny in the forces, or endeavoring to persuade persons in HM forces to join in a mutiny	Death
Striking his superior officer	Death
Deserting HM service, or attempting to desert	Death
Offering violence or using threatening language to his superior officer	Penal Servitude

A soldier receives his sentence at court martial

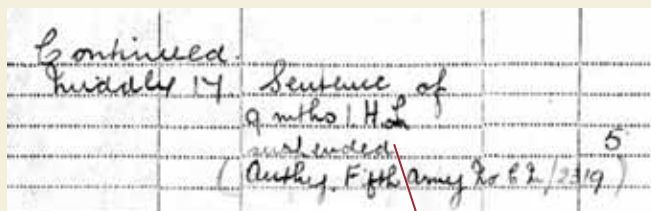
Pom Pom did not go absent without leave in France and Flanders if he had he would have been executed. During the Great War the British Army wanted to set examples to the troops. "Do not walk away from our war - we shoot you if you do." On the battlefield men could be shot for desertion, cowardice (even if it was caused by shell shock or other mental affections), and other breaches of discipline.

British court martials condemned 306 soldiers to be shot at dawn. Among them were 25 Canadians, 22 Irishmen and 5 New-Zealanders. Australia was the only country that did not want its soldiers (all volunteers) to be executed.

### Source 50. The General



General Hubert Gough. Imperial War Museum



17th Middlesex Regiment  
Sentence of 9 months IHL (Hard Labour) Suspended  
(authority Fifty Army Commander in Chief)

### Why was Pom Pom's sentence suspended?

Pom Pom's sentence of 9 months of hard labour after deserting for 133 days was suspended because Commanding Officer Hubert Gough needed troops for his new offensive at Arras. Gough himself gave approval for the suspension.

Pom Pom had missed one of the largest battles in the First World War, the Battle of the Somme. Over 420,000 soldiers lost their lives here leaving the army desperately short of men for what would later be known as the Battle of Arras.

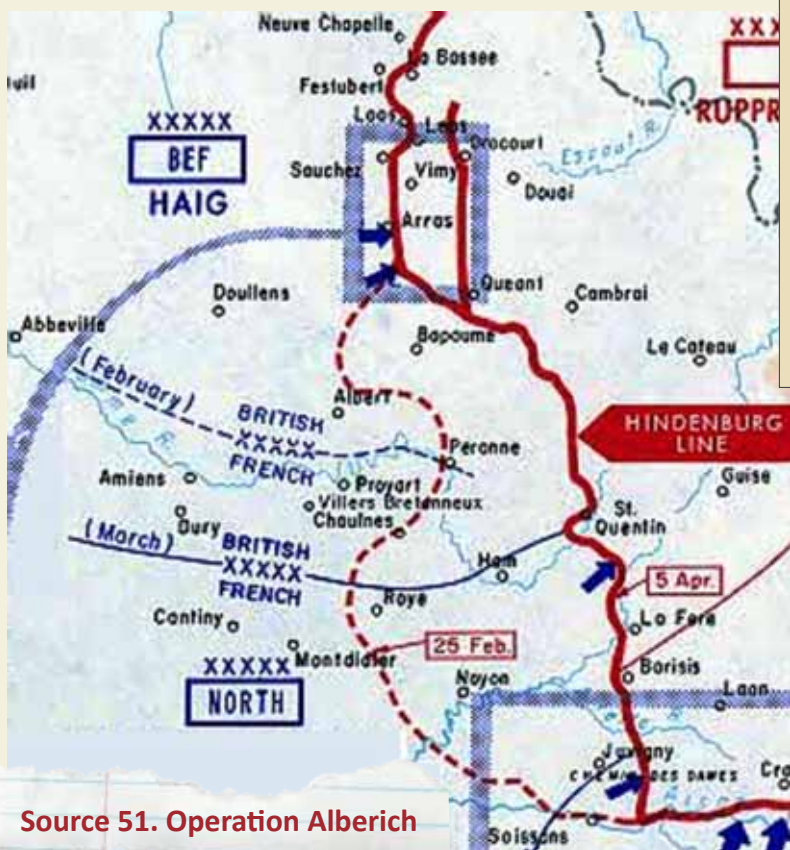
I haven't had time to dwell on the birth of my Joe as the last few weeks since his birth have been filled with preparations for the big offensive. The Germans have retreated back behind their Hindenberg Line, a formidable line of defence named after one of their generals. As we've moved through the towns they have vacated we've discovered they've destroyed everything. Villages have been flattened, wells poisoned, trees cut down to useless stumps and roads destroyed. They've also left us a few presents in the form of booby-traps that have put us on constant guard. On the 9th April, 1917 the Battle of Arras began and we're now waiting our turn to be flung against their new front line.



Troops resting at Vraignes following the German retreat to the Hindenberg Line 20th March 1917. IWM Q1904

**BIG BRITISH ATTACK  
FROM ARRAS TO LENS.**  
—  
**ENEMY LINES PENETRATED  
ON WIDE FRONT.**  
—  
**PROGRESS TOWARDS CAMBRAI  
AND ST. QUENTIN.**  
—  
**VILLAGES CAPTURED.**

Derby Daily Telegraph. Monday 9 April 1917



Source 51. Operation Alberich

Alberich was the code name for the German withdrawal to new positions on the shorter, more easily defended Hindenburg Line which took place between 9 February and 15 March 1917. The British referred to it as the 'German Retreat to the Hindenburg Line' but the operation was a strategic withdrawal rather than a retreat.

The General

"Good-morning; good-morning!" the General said  
When we met him last week on our way to the line.  
Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of 'em dead,  
And we're cursing his staff for incompetent swine.  
"He's a cheery old card," grunted Harry to Jack  
As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.  
But he did for them both by his plan of attack.

Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967)  
*Counter Attack and Other poems 1918*



General Hubert Gough, 1917. MOD

On 26th April we began final preparations for our attack on the Hindenberg Line. The day was spent preparing our kit and equipment before moving up to our assault positions in front of Oppy Wood. We sat and shared what food we had and sang the old songs perhaps for the last time. We are good friends, true friends, because the trials of trench life have made us know one another, because we have held money, food, shelter and clothing in common and shared all that we have had. We hope to meet again in a day or two, but it is quite certain that in the mean time, some of us will have "gone west."\* We all know we will not take Oppy Wood without losing lives. Who will go? Who can say? However all of us have written our wills and drafted what may be our last letters home.

\*Gone west = to be killed

Source 52. 'Dress and Equipment' from the Middlesex Regiment War Diary, April 1917

## APPENDIX

### DRESS and EQUIPMENT

1. OFFICERS will be dressed + equipped exactly the same as the men. All Officers will carry compasses.
2. OTHER RANKS clothing, arms, + equipment as issued except that the pack will not be carried. Haversack will be carried on the back in place of the pack.  
CARDIGAN will be worn. ground sheet or cape macintosh. will be carried rolled + fastened to the back of the waist-belt.  
BOX RESPIRATORS, in GAS ALERT position + like helmet will be worn.  
CARRIED IN THE HAVERSACK - Spare oil tin, Holdall, Iron Rations MESS TIN + COVER will be carried along outside the Haversack, the unconsumed portion of current day's rations will be carried in the mess tin.  
WATER BOTTLES to be filled.  
SAA 120 rounds per man.  
SIGNALLERS, RUNNERS, LEWIS GUNNERS, + CARRYING PARTIES will only carry 50 rounds.  
MILLS GRENADES N° 5 - Two carried one in each top pocket of jacket.  
FLARES AEROPLANE as issued.  
SANDBAGS - Two are fastened to each knee in front of shoulder.  
\* AB 64 + Identify DISCS carried in top left pocket of jacket + round the neck respectively.  
FIELD DRESSING in pocket provided for that purpose.  
RIFLE GRENADES each Grenadier carrying a munition will in addition to his Haversack carrying his rations etc! will carry his entire haversack to contain 5 Rifle Grenades complete. Grenadiers will not carry the entrenching implement.

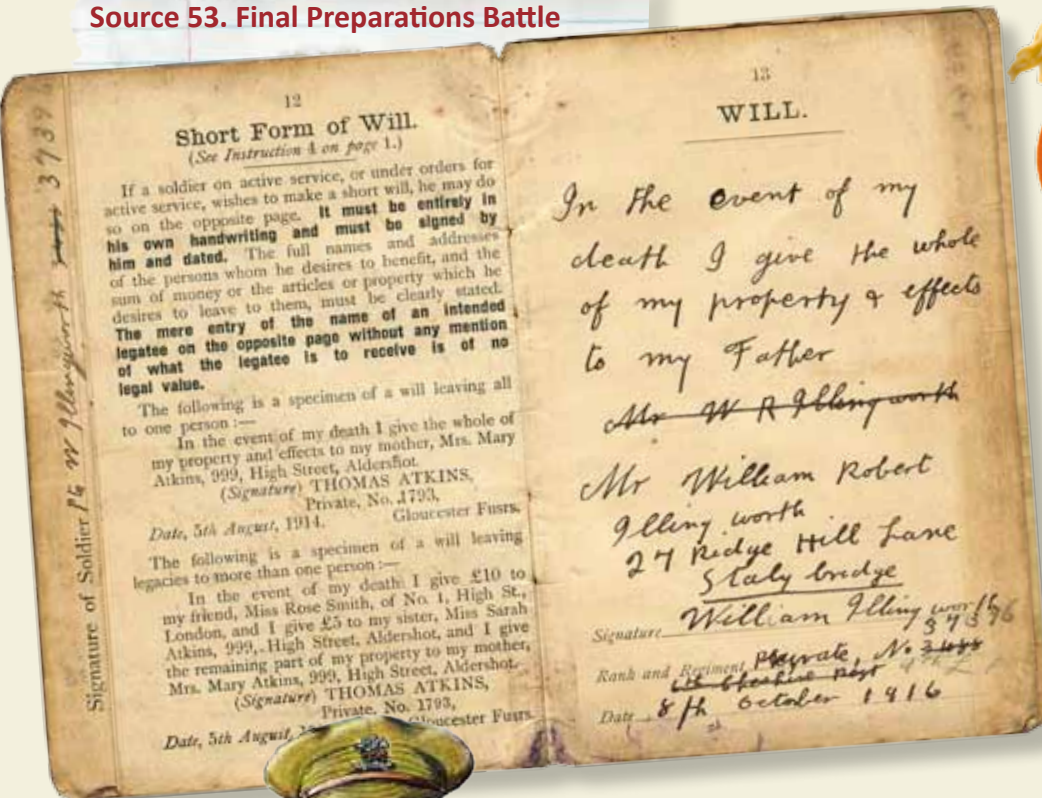
\* AB64 + identify discs in top left pocket of jacket and round the neck respectively. Field Dressing in pocket provides for that purpose.



Source 53. Final Preparations Battle

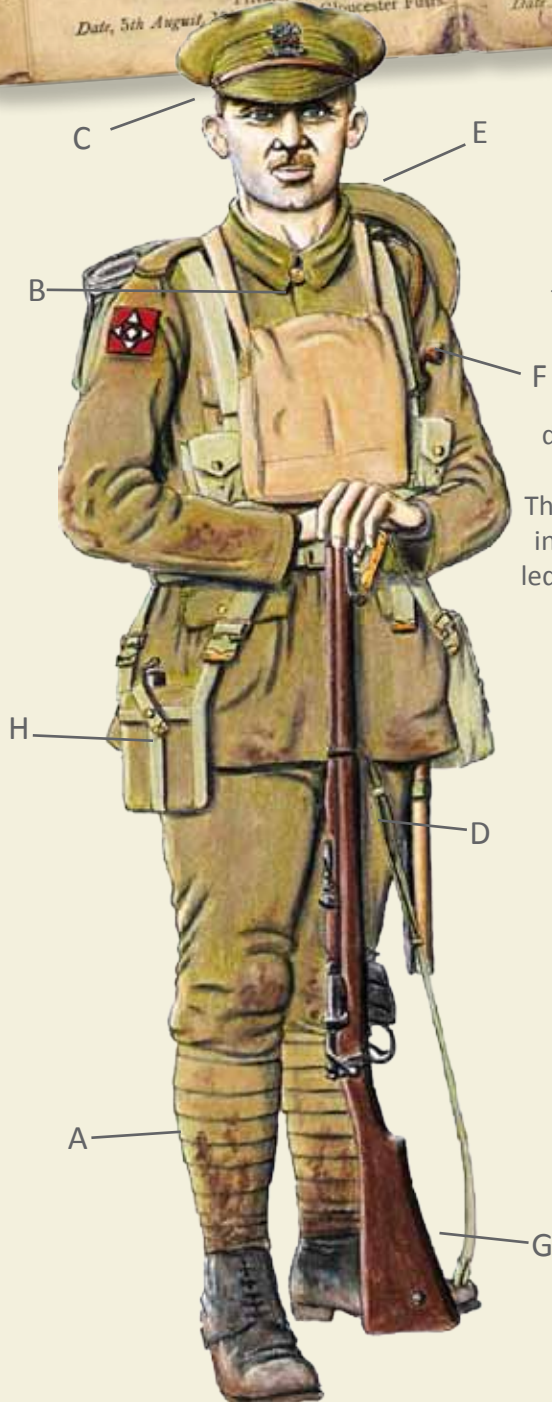


The British Army and their Imperial forces issued identification discs from the beginning of the First World War. The discs were made of fibre, one in red and one in green, and suspended around the neck. The red tag was to be removed from a soldier's body when he was killed whilst the green one was left to allow the body to be identified for burial. Sadly the disc perished in the soil and many became unknown soldiers.



Army Pay Book AB64

The AB64 acted as a soldier's ID and recorded their pay. The final page, was headed Last Will and Testament, and had to be retrieved from a soldier killed in action. For new recruits, demonstration copies were used in the name of Thomas Atkins. This nickname for British soldiers, in use since the Napoleonic wars, led to British soldiers being known as Tommy.



Equipment item	Letter
Puttees	A
Gas mask	B
Trench cap	C
Entrenching tool	D
Steel helmet	E
Ammunition pouches	F
Rifle	G
Water bottle	H

In 1902 khaki was adopted by the British Army who were more sensible than the French, who wore blue coats and red trousers. The soldier was issued with the 1908 Pattern Webbing for carrying personal equipment and he was armed with the Short Magazine Lee Enfield rifle. Gas masks became necessary after the first use of gas in 1915.

We moved up to the front line in complete silence. Words are not needed to describe the tense nervous strain of the long wait we have had this past night standing in the narrow crowded trenches, whilst all hell broke loose over the German lines. I'm sitting here with my mates from 'B' Company waiting for Zero hour. We will be in the first wave and must capture our first objective, Oppy Wood. It's 4.20am now. Just five minutes before the whistle blows. I'm closing my eyes trying to focus on the faces of everyone I have ever loved but my baby boy Joe, despite every effort of my imagination, remains faceless. Dear Joe, don't forget your daddy Pom Pom ....

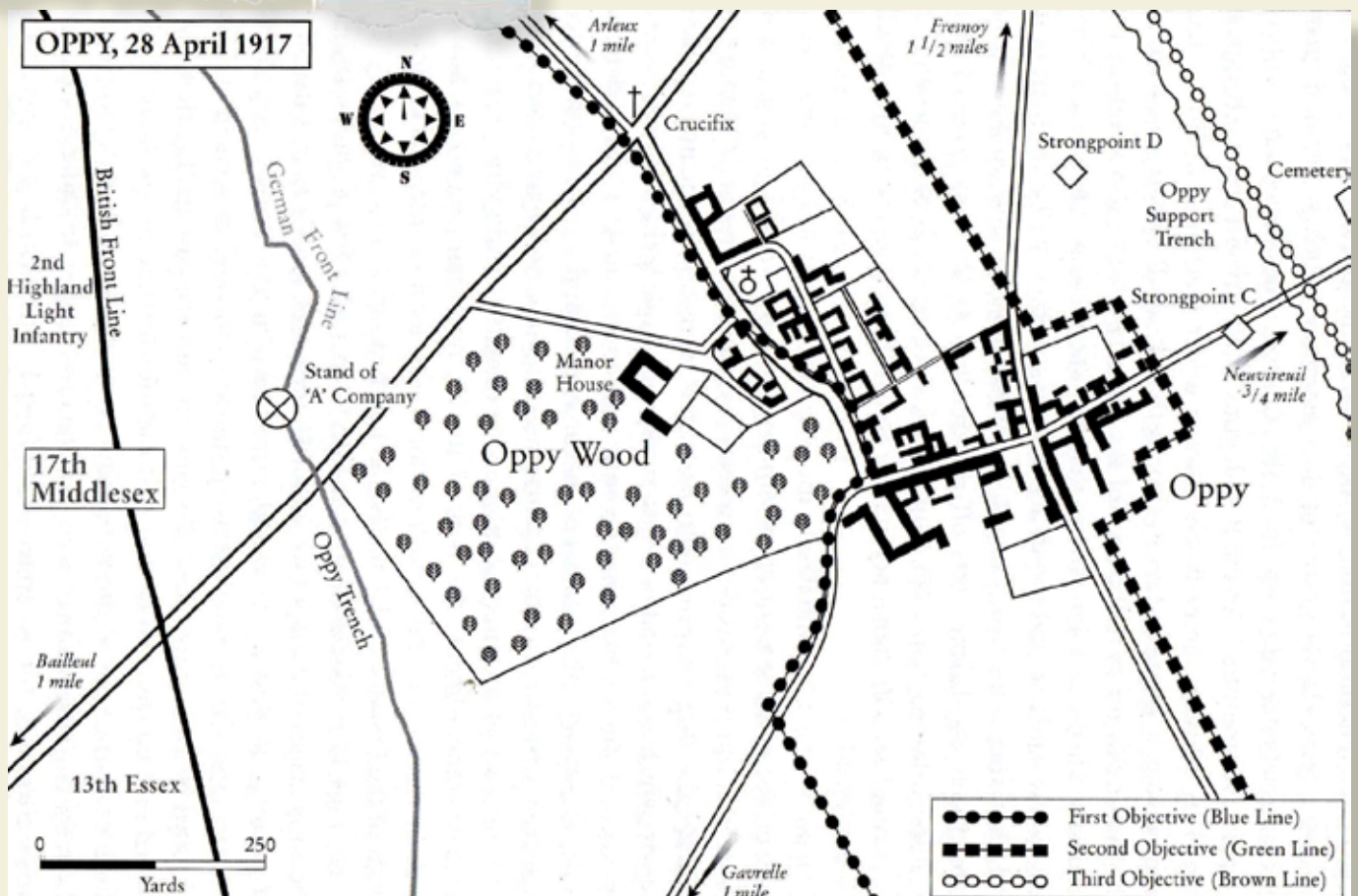
.... the whistle blows.

### The Whistle Blows



Source 54. First Objective (Blue Line)

Advancing over 'No man's land' under heavy fire, Arras, April 1917.  
Library and Archives Canada/PA - 001020



Map of Oppy Wood showing British and German Positions from Andrew Riddoch's *When the Whistle Blows*

# Nellie's Grief



I'd been up all night with baby Joe when the knock on the door woke me from a fitful sleep. I hadn't slept well since my Bob, that's Pom Pom to you, returned to France, so was tired and confused when I took the letter from the postwoman. I couldn't read it in front of my little boys, Bob and Jim, so I told them to go outside to play. Just two days ago I'd received a field postcard telling me that he was alright. I can tell you I shook as I opened that letter. I read the opening words and no more... "I very much regret..."

Source 55.  
A Dastardly Rumour,  
Sussex Daily News



By 1916 many postmen had been replaced by women so the men could go and join the war.

### HOW WHITING FELL. DASTARDLY RUMOUR REFUTED.

For some time past a dastardly rumour has been in circulation in Brighton to the effect that Whiting, who greatly distinguished himself as a goalkeeper in the service of Brighton and Hove Albion, and previously with Chelsea, was shot as a deserter in France, the real fact being that he fell gallantly in action. Unhappily the rumour has now reached the ears of his widow, and has come as a great shock to her. Fortunately Mrs. Whiting, who is now living with her fatherless little ones at 3, Albion-square, St. John's-road, Tunbridge Wells, had in her possession official documents and letters which disprove a foul calumny on the heroic dead. These she has forwarded to Mr. Albert Underwood, Secretary of the Albion, with the request that they should be given all possible publicity. They have been shown to a Representative of the *Sussex Daily News*, which gladly opens its columns for the purpose. The following is a copy of a letter dated 15th May, 1917, which Mrs. Whiting received from Second-Lieut. J. G. Howard, acting adjutant 17th Middlesex Regiment:

"I very much regret to have to inform you that your husband, No. F74, Private R. Whiting, of this Battalion, was killed in action on the 28th of last month. He was killed instantaneously by shell-fire in the recent offensive operations. Will you please accept my sincere sympathy in your loss."

The official notification from the Record Office, which Mrs. Whiting has attached to this letter is also dated 15th May, 1917. It acquaints her that her husband was "killed in action" on 28th April, 1917, encloses her the King and Queen's gracious message of sympathy, and also expresses the regret of the Army Council "at the soldier's death in his country's service."

The officer commanding "B" Company, 17th Middlesex Regiment, wrote Mrs. Whiting:—"Your husband lost his life while attending to the wounded under fire, and died while doing his duty both well and nobly. He is buried very near the scene of the action near Vimy Ridge." Mrs. Whiting also received a letter of sympathy and condolence from the Rev. Donald Murray, O.F. In this he said: "Your husband was killed at the post of duty during an attack on the 28th instantaneously by shell fire. It is sad for those left behind, but you must remember there is a world to come."

NOTHING is to be written on this side except the date and signature of the sender. Sentences not required may be erased. If anything else is added the post card will be destroyed.

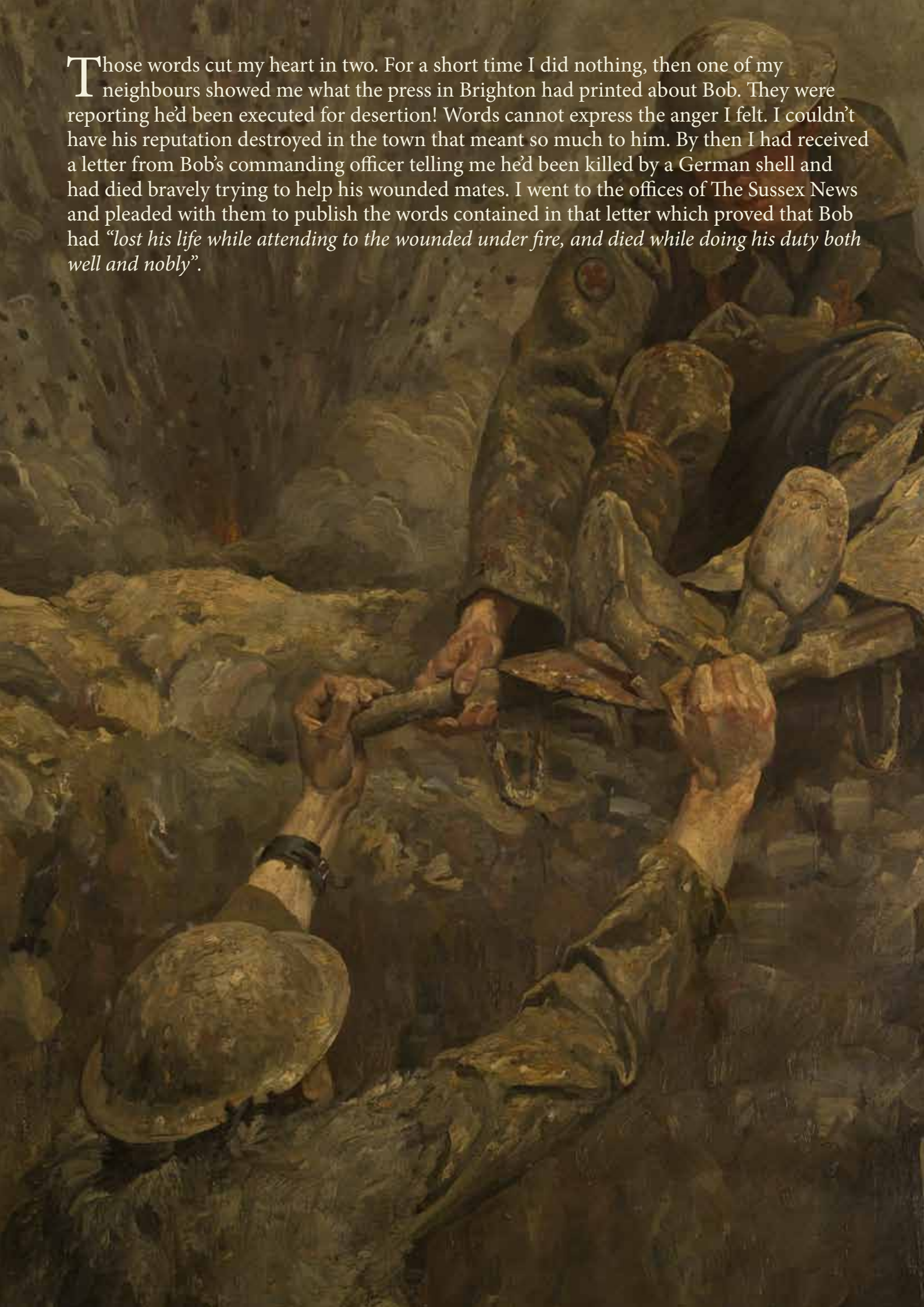
I am quite well.  
~~I have been admitted into hospital~~  
 { sick } and am going on well.  
 { wounded } and hope to be discharged soon.  
 I am being sent down to the base.  
 I have received your { letter dated \_\_\_\_\_  
 telegram " \_\_\_\_\_  
 parcel " \_\_\_\_\_  
 Letter follows at first opportunity.  
 I have received no letter from you  
 { lately  
 for a long time.  
 Signature } *H. W. Francis*  
 only  
 Date *June 6/17.*

[Postage must be prepaid on any letter or post card addressed to the sender of this card.]

W.L.W. 1035, 1036, 1037, 1038, C. & Co., Great Britain, N.W.

A soldier going into action was allowed to send a field postcard. The soldier crossed out a selection of brief messages. No written messages were allowed.

Those words cut my heart in two. For a short time I did nothing, then one of my neighbours showed me what the press in Brighton had printed about Bob. They were reporting he'd been executed for desertion! Words cannot express the anger I felt. I couldn't have his reputation destroyed in the town that meant so much to him. By then I had received a letter from Bob's commanding officer telling me he'd been killed by a German shell and had died bravely trying to help his wounded mates. I went to the offices of The Sussex News and pleaded with them to publish the words contained in that letter which proved that Bob had *"lost his life while attending to the wounded under fire, and died while doing his duty both well and nobly"*.



**The Football Battalion Decimated at Oppy**

On 28th April, 1917, 544 men and 20 officers from the Football Battalion took part in the attack on Oppy Wood. The Battalion War Diary recorded how few of these men were able to come through the battle unwounded.

*Of the troops who went over the top in the morning 1 Officer + 41 unwounded men eventually found their way back while 3 wounded Officers + 106 wounded O.R. were able to get back in the early stages of the fight.*

17th Middlesex Regiment War Diary 28th April 1917. National Archives

*Of the troops that went over the top that morning 1 officer + 41 unwounded men eventually found their way back while 3 wounded officers + 106 wounded O.R. (Other Ranks-ordinary soldiers not officers) were able to get back in the early stages of the fight.*

**Source 56.  
Casualty Form - Active Service**

Army Form B. 103. **Casualty Form - Active Service.** Regimental Number F. 74.

Regiment or Corps 17th Middlesex Regt.

Rank Plt Surname Whiting Christian Name R.

Religion \_\_\_\_\_ Age on Enlistment \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months.

Enlisted (a) \_\_\_\_\_ Terms of Service (a) D. 5 year Service reckons from (a) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of promotion to present rank \_\_\_\_\_ Date of appointment to lance rank \_\_\_\_\_

Extended { \_\_\_\_\_ } Re-engaged { \_\_\_\_\_ } Qualification (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
or Corps Trade and Rate \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Officer. \_\_\_\_\_

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, &c., dating active service, as reported on Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 26, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B, 213, Army Form A, 26, or other official documents
Date	From whom received				
		Embarked ... <u>Becheville</u>		<u>18/11/16</u>	
		Disembarked... <u>Amoye</u>		<u>1/12/16</u>	
<u>22/1/16</u>	<u>H. 200 Depot.</u>	<u>Grind from Belgium</u>	<u>Staples.</u>	<u>22.1.16</u>	
		<u>James Bath</u>	-	<u>26.1.16</u>	
<u>24/2/17</u>		<u>2/10</u>	<u>Albert.</u>	<u>26.2.17</u>	<u>Box 6320.</u>
		<u>Charge: when in active service about</u>			
		<u>Indep: 1/11/16</u>			<u>0.8.1917</u>
		<u>Sent: 18.1.17 for 9 months</u>			
		<u>Quar: 1/11/16</u>			
<u>21/1/17</u>	<u>Y. 100</u>	<u>Sentence Suspended</u>	-	<u>5/3/17</u>	<u>CA/2319</u>
<u>2 MAY 1917</u>	<u>O. C. B.</u>	<b>KILLED IN ACTION</b>	<u>In the field</u>	<u>28 APR 1917</u>	<u>2/21</u>
					<u>2/LT For Captain.</u>
					<u>1/6 Regular Inf. Sec. 0.5</u>

(a) In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or enlisted into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of such re-engagement or enlistment will be entered.  
(b) Signaller, Shooting-Smith, &c.

[M1101] W4120/M748 1000m 2/76 433 G & S Form B.103/4. E. 054. (P.T.O.)

Casualty form from Pom Pom's military record. National Archives

The weeks after I heard the news are just a blur now. I knew I would have to be strong for the boys, but I knew how tough life would be from now on. I was now a single parent and would have to try and bring the boys up on a weekly pension of just 26 shillings and 3d (£1.31) and whatever I could make from taking in washing.

**PTE. R. WHITING**

We last week published a photo of Pte. R. Whiting, of whom a Chaplain had written to his wife, Mrs. Whiting, 10, Albion-square, St. John's, Tunbridge Wells, to the effect that he had been killed by shell-fire on the 28th April, although official news had not been received last week-end from the War Office. The Chaplain's intimation that the popular footballer had met his death while in action, has now been officially verified, and his widow desires to return thanks for numerous expressions of sympathy in her bereavement. Mrs. Whiting is left with three children, the youngest being three months, and born while its father was at the Front. In addition to the usual document from Headquarters, Mrs. Whiting has received the appended letter from the Adjutant to the Middlesex Regiment:—"I very much regret to have to inform you that your husband, No. F.74 Pte. R. Whiting, of this Battalion, was killed in action on the 28th of last month. He was killed instantaneously by shell-fire in the recent offensive operations. Will you please accept my sincere sympathy in your loss,

Kent and Sussex Courier Friday 25th May 1917



Opening of Tunbridge Wells War Memorial 1923. Peter Daniel

Source 57. Widows Pension

Widows—Form 3.

(15625) Wt. 35422/060. 50,000. 10/17. R. & L., Ltd.

Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to:—  
The Secretary,  
Ministry of Pensions  
(Widows and Dependants Branch),  
45, Grosvenor Road,  
London, S.W. 1,  
and the following number quoted.

**REGISTRY**  
**MINISTRY OF PENSIONS**  
**INFANTRY RECORD OFFICE**  
(Widows and Dependants Branch),  
21, ROYAL ST.,  
No. 45, GROSVENOR ROAD,  
**HOUNSLOW.**

LONDON, S.W. 1,  
*20th November 1917*

No. *2140 Middlesex (Rev.) II*

SIR,

I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you that the widow of No. *F/74. Pte. R. Whiting*  
*17th Middlesex Regt.*

has been awarded a Pension of *26/3* a week, for herself and *three* children, with effect from the *19-11-17*.

The Officer issuing Separation Allowance has been informed of the award.

The Pension will be paid from the Pension Issue Office.

The certificates received in support of the application have been returned to the widow.

I am, Sir,

I had to try and focus on the boys, but there was always something that would take me back instantly to the dark place I'd been when I first heard my Bob had been killed. There was his medals, 'Pip Squeak and Wilfred' they called them, then his 'Dead Man's Penny'. Then one day I lost my purse in which I kept his broken wedding ring and last letter home. However the most emotional day of all was when they unveiled the memorial which included Bob's name, in Tunbridge Wells.



Opening of Tunbridge Wells Memorial 1923.  
Images Peter Daniel



Every family that had lost someone in the war received a memorial plaque and message of condolence from King George V. The plaques soon gained the nick name, 'Dead Man's penny.'

**Source 58. Pom Pom's Medals**

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the  
"1914-15 Star"  
granted in respect of the service of No. 174.  
Private WHITING, R., Middlesex Regiment. 348.  
Date June 9<sup>th</sup> 1919  
Signature Mrs R. Whiting



**The 1914-15 Star**

Also known as '*Pip*'. This bronze medal similar to the 1914 Star was awarded to all who served in any theatre of war against Germany between 5th August 1914 and 31st December 1915, except those eligible for the 1914 Star.

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the  
British War Medal  
granted in respect of the service of No. F/74  
Private WHITING, R., Middlesex Regiment.  
Date November 5<sup>th</sup> 1920  
Signature Mrs R. Whiting



**The British War Medal 1914-18**

Also known as '*Squeak*'. The silver or bronze medal was awarded to those who served between 5th August 1914 and 11th November 1918.

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the  
granted in respect of the service of No. F/74  
Pte. WHITING, R., Middlesex Regiment  
Date 31 JAN 1921  
Signature Mrs R. Whiting



**The Allied Victory Medal**

Also known as '*Wilfred*'. It was decided that each of the allies should each issue their own bronze victory medal with a similar design, similar equivalent wording and identical ribbon. Approximately 5.7 million victory medals were issued.



THE ROLL OF HONOUR.



Sergt. F. Gilliam, Crowborough, Killed. Pte. Whiting, Tunbridge Wells, Died of wounds. Corpl. Clifton, Tunbridge Wells, Died of wounds. Pts. W. Richardson, Goudhurst, Military Medal. Pte. A. Bailey, Southborough, In Hospital. Pte. T. Richardson, Southborough, Wounded. Pte. G. Towner, Five Oak Green, Killed. Pte. V. Yenner, Ticehurst, Killed.



Pom Pom appears on the Roll of Honour in the Kent & Sussex Courier.. 18th May, 1917



Above Pom Pom's name on the Tunbridge Wells War memorial. It is also on the Hove Library roll of honour shown below.



The Hove War Memorial was unveiled on 27th February, 1921 a simple bunch of carnations was left on it with the words, "To the dad I never knew."



A new memorial to the players and supporters of Brighton and Hove Albion who lost their lives during the two World Wars. Bob Whiting, Charles Dexter and Jasper Batey were early recruits in the Footballers' Battalion.

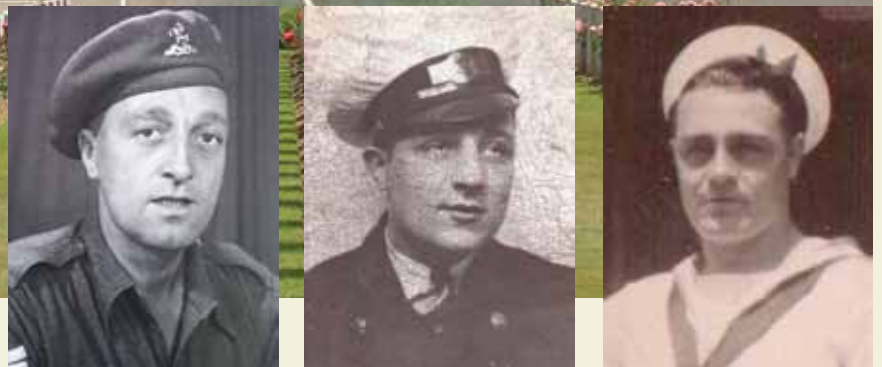
He has a memorial now out in France, but I can't bring myself to go. The boys will never forget him and not because he was a footballer or a soldier, but because he was their dad who put his family first before anything.

**Source 60. No Known Grave in France**



The Arras Memorial

Pom Pom is remembered on Bay 7 of the Arras War Memorial in France (right). The Arras War Memorial contains the names of 34,793 identified casualties who died in the fighting around Arras.



Pom Pom's three sons, Robert, Jim and Joe. *The Whiting Family*

**PTE. R. WHITING.**  
 Additional information respecting the death of Private Robert Whiting, of the Footballers' Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, have been received by his widow in response to enquiries forwarded to the Western Front. We have previously reproduced a photo of the deceased soldier, who was reported to have been blown to pieces by a shell, which was somewhat verified by an official document from the War Office which stated "Cemetery where buried unknown." The officer commanding "B" Company —th Middlesex Regiment, has written Mrs. Whiting as follows:—"I daresay you know your husband lost his life while attending to the wounded under fire, and died while doing his duty both well and nobly. He is buried near the scene of the action, near the Vimy Ridge. Assuring you of my deep sympathy in your great loss."

Kent & Sussex Courier. Friday 25th May, 1917



In May 1917, Nellie (Sarah) Whiting was informed that her Pom Pom had been killed on active duty in France and been "buried very near the scene of the action near Vimy Ridge". Sadly his grave was later destroyed in the fierce fighting that took place in the area and so Pom Pom has no known grave. His name is inscribed on a panel on the *Arras War Memorial in France*, one of nearly 35,000 men who have no resting place.

# Education Activities



# A Letter to Nellie

## Activity

Use Pom Pom's description of life in the trenches (pages 54-60) to write a letter home to his wife Nellie.

For God, For King & For Country.



PATRON  
Y.M.C.A. NATIONAL COUNCIL  
H.M. THE KING



Y·M·C·A  
H.M. FORCES ON ACTIVE SERVICE



PATRON  
MILITARY CAMP DEPT  
H.R.H. DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

Reply to ..... Company ..... Bar ..... Regt ..... 1915

Stationed at .....

*Dear Nell,*

Describe what Colours you would see?

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What evidence of the war can you see around you?

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What can you hear?

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What can you smell?

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What emotions do you feel?

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*With all my love, Pom Pom*

# Not Forgotten: Pom Pom Whiting

## Activity

Visit your local war memorial and write down five names from those listed on the panels. Research these individuals using the Commonwealth War Graves website ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)) using the instructions below.

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Nationality	Regiment	Additional Information
Robert Whiting	Private	F74	28.4.1917	34	British	17th Battalion Middlesex Regiment	Husband of Mrs. N. Whiting of 3 Albion Square, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

## Instructions

1. Visit [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org).
2. click on the '*search our records*' option on the menu.
3. Fill in the names of the 5 soldiers you have found on your local memorial on the '*Debt of Honour Register*'.
4. Click 'submit' - You should see more information appear about each soldier.
5. Use this information to complete the information section on the table above.
6. Choose one of your soldiers in the table and click '*print a certificate*' for them.
7. Log onto The War Graves Photographic Project <http://twgpp.org/search.php>. You can order a photograph of the grave or memorial of the soldier you are researching on this site. It also sometimes lists information not shown on the CWGC site.



1

2

3

In Memory of  
Private ROBERT WHITING  
F74, 17th BN., Middlesex Regiment  
who died on 28th April 1917 Age 34  
Husband of Mrs.N.Whiting, of 3 Albion Square,  
Tunbridge Wells, Kent  
Remembered with honour  
ARRAS MEMORIAL

4

5

6



### Interpreting CWGC Information:

1. Robert 'Pom Pom' Whiting was a Private-the lowest rank in the army. He had been demoted from Lance Sergeant.
2. Pom Pom belonged to the Middlesex Regiment ("The Football Battalion"), and was in the 17th Battalion. A battalion is about 800 men.
3. Pom Pom's army number was F74. He would have known this by heart and worn it around his neck on his dog tags used to identify casualties.
4. Date of Pom Pom's death. He died on the 28th April 1917 aged 34 at the Battle of Arras.
5. This section shows Pom Poms next of kin, his wife Nellie. The address was used by the army to issue memorial death plaques.
6. Location of grave. Pom Pom has no known grave so his name is listed on a memorial. 526,816 British soldiers who were killed in WW1 have no known grave but are remembered on memorials abroad and often in their home towns.

# Pom Pom in the Headlines

## Activity

Read through Pom Pom's story and select an incident from his life to create a newspaper story.

### Headline

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### Introduction *(who, what, where and why)*

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### Further Detail *(expand on one or two aspects of the story to provide more information)*

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### Eyewitness account *(look at the previous page, include this in the newspaper article)*

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### Conclusion *(give a brief summary of the whole report)*

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# In Memoriam: Pom Pom Whiting



An epitaph is a short inscription on a gravestone in memory of the person buried there.

Rudyard Kipling was a famous author and poet especially famous for writing 'The Jungle Book' based on his experiences of growing up in India. He drafted the epitaph seen on the graves of unknown soldiers:



Rudyard Kipling

'A Soldier of the Great War Known Only Unto God.' He also selected the words used on many memorials for those with no known grave: 'Their name liveth for evermore.'

Read the first verse of Rudyard Kipling's poem 'My Son Jack'

## My Son Jack

*'Have you news of my boy Jack?  
Not this tide.  
When d'you think that he'll come back?  
Not with this wind blowing,  
and this tide'*

Now read 'A Son' by Kipling. How do you think he felt knowing that he'd persuaded his son to join the army?

## A Son

*My son was killed while laughing at some jest. I would I knew  
I knew  
What it was, and it might serve me in a time when jests are few.*

## Activity

Imagine you are Nellie Whiting and you want to write a fitting epitaph for your husband.

- Use the six images that appeared on this advert for the Widow's fund
- Use the images to help you think of how Nellie felt about Pom Pom's life and death as a soldier in the Football Battalion.
- Use the template overleaf to write your first draft of his epitaph.
- When you are happy with what you have written design a stained glass window memorial to bring alive your words.



**THE REASON FOR THE FUND:  
A Memory and an Appeal!**



BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION  
CHAMPIONS OF ALL ENGLAND



Bob 'Pom Pom' Whiting

## In Memoriam: Pom Pom Whiting

### Activity

- Read through Pom Pom's story
- Write your own epitaph for Pom Pom. Remember that epitaphs are usually quite short, four lines are usually enough.
- When you have written your epitaph, create a stained glass window that illustrates your epitaph using the template on page 94.

### My list of words and phrases

*(write a list of words or phrases for your epitaph)*

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### Sort out my list of words and phrases

*(Now look at your words and phrases. Can you put them into an order that creates a mood and tone of what you are trying to say?)*

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### The final draft of my poem

*(Ask a partner to read through what you have written. What works well? What isn't clear and needs improving? When you have done this give your epitaph a title and write your final draft in this box)*

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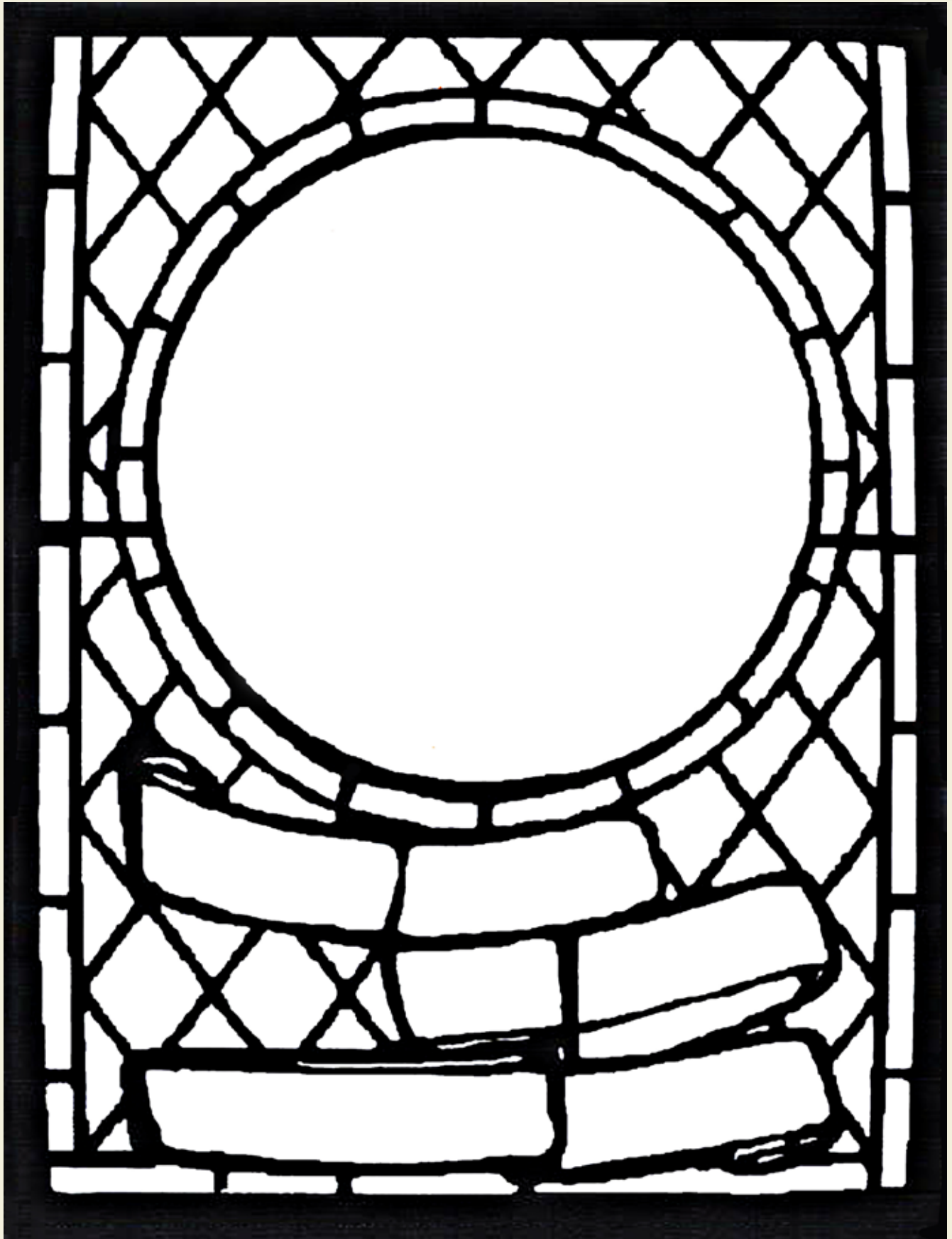
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## In Memoriam: Pom Pom Whiting

### Activity

- Use the storybook to develop a football themed design for your stained glass window.
- Include your epitaph for Pom Pom below your design.



# Investigation: Robert 'Pom Pom' Whiting



## Activity

- Use the sources provided for you to fill in Pom Pom's biographical details in the table below.

<b>Source 1</b> Birth Certificate 1883	When was he born?	What name was he born with?	What was his father's profession?
<b>Source 2</b> Match Girls Photograph	Pom Pom's mother Margaret worked in the same factory as the girls in this picture. What was it called?		
<b>Source 3</b> Docklands Map	Where did Pom Pom first find work when he left school?		
<b>Source 4</b> 1891 Census Canning Town	What were Pom Pom's brothers and sisters called?		
<b>Source 5</b> Pom Pom's First Club	What was the first team that Pom Pom played for called?		
<b>Source 6</b> 1901 Census Canning Town	Who were the two new additions to the Whiting family since 1891?		
<b>Source 7</b> Pom Pom's Nickname	What was a Pom Pom and why was Bob Whiting compared to it?		
<b>Source 8</b> F.A.Cup Hero	Who did Pom Pom star against in the F.A. Cup?		
<b>Source 9</b> Chelsea Chairman and Manager	Who were the Chairman and Manager of Chelsea when Pom Pom signed for the club?		
<b>Source 10</b> Stamford Bridge Then and Now	What can you see on both pictures that has not changed since the first picture was taken in 1909?		
<b>Source 11</b> Hull Daily 22.11.1905	How much did Billy 'Fatty' Foulke weigh?		

## Investigation: Robert 'Pom Pom' Whiting

<b>Source 12</b> Chelsea Debut	Who did Pom Pom play against on his Chelsea debut?
<b>Source 13</b> Chelsea team Group and Kits	What was the colour of the Chelsea shirt that Pom Pom wore when he played for Chelsea?
<b>Source 14</b> Chelsea European Tour 1906	Chelsea twice won 6-0 during their European tour. Who were they playing in these games?
<b>Source 15</b> Chelsea Triumph	Where did Chelsea finish in Division 2 after this first full season with the club?
<b>Source 16</b> Pom Pom Profile	What did the Chelsea programme claim that Pom Pom could do with his goal kicks?
<b>Source 17</b> Marriage Certificate	When and where did Pom Pom get married?
<b>Source 18</b> London Derby	Pom Pom played in the first ever top league London derby. Who was it against and what was the score?
<b>Source 19</b> Pom Pom's Old China	Who was Pom Pom's old China?
<b>Source 20</b> Pom Pom's Chelsea Career Match by Match 1906	What was the score when Pom Pom kept goal against Fatty Foulke's Bradford City?
<b>Source 21</b> Pom Pom's Chelsea Career Match by Match 1906 Stamford Bridge Then and Now	Pom Pom first lost his place in the Chelsea goal after the match against Forest on 21st September. Why?
<b>Source 22</b> Dropped by Chelsea	Why did Pom Pom finally lose his Chelsea place after the match against Bury?
<b>Source 23</b> Transfer to the Seaside	Which club did Pom Pom join on leaving Chelsea?
<b>Source 24</b> Brighton 1910 Championship	In what year did Pom Pom win the Southern League with Brighton and how many goals did he concede?

<p><b>Source 25</b> Charity Shield 1910</p>	<p>Who did Brighton beat to win the Charity Shield in 1910 and what was the score?</p>
<p><b>Source 26</b> 1911 Census Hove</p>	<p>What is Pom Pom's occupation on the 1911 census?</p>
<p><b>Source 27</b> 1911 Census Tunbridge Wells</p>	<p>Who is Nellie and the Whiting children living with in 1911?</p>
<p><b>Source 28</b> War is Declared</p>	<p>What is the name of the former Chelsea player arrested as an 'alien' in 1914?</p>
<p><b>Source 29</b> Recruiting the Football Battalion</p>	<p>What did the poster claim the Germans believed Britons would rather do than fight?</p>
<p><b>Source 30</b> Pom Pom's Attestation</p>	<p>How old was Pom Pom when he joined the army?</p>
<p><b>Source 31</b> Medical History</p>	<p>How tall was Pom Pom and how much did he weigh?</p>
<p><b>Source 32</b> Brighton Team of 1914-1915</p>	<p>How many footballers in this picture were to die in the war?</p>
<p><b>Source 33</b> Training to be Soldiers</p>	<p>Where was the Football Battalion's London training base?</p>
<p><b>Source 34</b> James Ridley</p>	<p>How did Pom Pom know James Ridley?</p>
<p><b>Source 35</b> A scathing Indictment</p>	<p>How many professional players had joined the Football Battalion by March 1915?</p>
<p><b>Source 36</b> The 1915 F.A. Cup Final</p>	<p>What was the name that this F.A. Cup Final came to be known as?</p>
<p><b>Source 37</b> Final Game at the Bridge</p>	<p>When did Pom Pom play his final match at Stamford Bridge?</p>

## Investigation: Robert 'Pom Pom' Whiting

<b>Source 38</b> Training for the Front	Where was the Football Battalion's Nottinghamshire training base?
<b>Source 39</b> Pom Pom's Letter to Albert Underwood 7.12.15	What were the names of the Brighton players with Pom Pom in the trenches?
<b>Source 40</b> The Big Match	Where was the 'Big Match' played that Pom Pom talks about in his letter?
<b>Source 41</b> Trench Warfare	How many bullets per minute did a machine gun fire?
<b>Source 42</b> All Work and Very Little Play	What was the German weapon that annoyed Pom Pom most in the trenches?
<b>Source 43</b> Shell Shock	Who was Pom Pom's fellow Lance Sergeant who was sent home with shell shock?
<b>Source 44</b> Army Hospital Admission Form	What was the disease that led to Pom Pom being taken to hospital?
<b>Source 45</b> Pom Pom's Hospital Treatment	How did the hospital in Brighton treat Pom Pom's disease?
<b>Source 46</b> Pom Pom's Brother Joe	When was Pom Pom's brother Joe killed?
<b>Source 47</b> Arrested	What reason did Pom Pom give the court at Hove as to why he had not returned back for duty?
<b>Source 48</b> Casualty Form Active Service	What was the date of Pom Pom's Court Martial and where was it held?
<b>Source 49</b> Birth of Joe Whiting	When was Joe Whiting born? What was the strange coincidence about that date?

<p><b>Source 50</b> The General</p>	<p>What was the name of the General who suspended Pom Pom's sentence?</p>
<p><b>Source 51</b> Operation Albeich</p>	<p>What was the name of the German defensive line that they retreated behind?</p>
<p><b>Source 52</b> Middlesex Regiment War Diary April 1917: Dress and Equipment</p>	<p>What did each soldier have to carry to identify themselves in case they were killed in battle?</p>
<p><b>Source 53</b> Final Preparations for Battle</p>	<p>What did each soldier have to write in the back of their pay book?</p>
<p><b>Source 54</b> First Objective (Blue Line)</p>	<p>What was the name of the wood that Pom Pom's B Company had to capture?</p>
<p><b>Source 55</b> A Dastardly Rumour in the Sussex Daily News</p>	<p>What was the dastardly rumour that Nellie had to deal with?</p>
<p><b>Source 56</b> Casualty form Active Service</p>	<p>What date was Pom Pom killed in action?</p>
<p><b>Source 57</b> Widow's Pension</p>	<p>How much money did Pom Pom's wife receive for her Widow's pension?</p>
<p><b>Source 58</b> Pom Pom's Medals</p>	<p>What were the nicknames of the three medals awarded to Pom Pom?</p>
<p><b>Source 59</b> Remembering Pom Pom</p>	<p>Where is Pom Pom remembered in Britain?</p>
<p><b>Source 60</b> No Known Grave in France</p>	<p>What was the name of the memorial in France which includes Pom Pom's name on it?</p>

TUNBRIDGE WELLS  
PTE. R. Whiting

We last week published a photo of Pte R. Whiting, of whom a Chaplain has written to his wife, Mrs. Whiting, 10, Alboin-square, St. John's, Tunbridge Wells, to the effect that he had been killed by shell-fire on the 28th of April, although official news had not been received last weekend by the War Office. The Chaplain's intimation that the popular footballer had met his death while in action has now been officially verified, and his widow desires to return thanks for numerous expressions of sympathy in her bereavement. Mrs. Whiting is left with three children, the youngest being three months, and born while its father was at the Front. In addition to the usual document from Headquarters, Mrs. Whiting has received the appended letter from the Adjutant to the Middlesex Regiment- "I very much regret to have to inform you that your husband, No. F74 Pte. R Whiting, of this Battalion, was killed in action on the 28th of last month. He was killed instantaneously by shell fire in the most recent offensive operations. Will you please accept my sincere sympathy in your loss."

Mr. Whiting senior in his recent bereavement in the loss of his daughter. Robert Whiting or "Pom-pom." as he was known among the sporting fraternity, rendered yeoman service to Tunbridge Wells Rangers as a goalkeeper. He was eventually transferred to Chelsea, and it is no exaggeration to say his brilliant "keeping" gained the Pensioners a place in Division 1 of the League. Subsequently he joined Brighton and Hove Albion and proved a valuable asset to that club who held his signature when he joined the Colours. His kick-off from goal was remarkable and the delight of the "gods;" in fact on more than one occasion he drove the ball from one goal area to the opposite square- a matter of a hundred yards. Sport has lost a brilliant and popular defender.

Kent and Sussex Courier



Pom Pom after his move to Brighton in 1908.  
*BHA Collectors' and Historians' Society*



Each year on the anniversary of Pom Pom's death, 28th April 1917, Nellie paid for a tribute to be published in the local newspaper.

*'Pom Whiting, has I am afraid "gone west." He went down for the stretcher-bearers and while leading them up a shell came over and dropped amongst them. Poor old Pom- he was one of the best. We were cracking a few jokes together two days previously.'* Tim Coleman quoted in Liverpool Echo 8th May 1917

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of a good husband and father, Pte Robert Whiting, killed in action in France on April 28th 1917. "Gone but not forgotten."  
Wife and Children

When the Hove War Memorial was unveiled on 27 February 1921 a simple bunch of carnations was left on it with the words, *"To the Dad I never knew."*

1 May 1925

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of my dear husband, Robert Whiting killed in action in France April 18th 1917-  
From his Widow and Children

*"He is not lost, but only gone a little while before, He waits to welcome those he loved on that bright heavenly shore."*

Kent and Sussex Courier

30 April 1926

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of my dear husband, Robert Whiting, killed in France April 28th 1917. "Gone but not forgotten." - From his Widow and Children

*"Duty called and he was there, To do his bit and take his share, His heart was good his spirit brave. He's resting in a hero's grave."*

Kent and Sussex Courier

26 April 1929

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of my dear husband Pte Robert Whiting, killed in France April 28th 1917

*"As we loved him, so we miss him, In our memory he is dear; Loved, remembered, longed for always, Bringing many a silent tear." - From his Widow and three sons*

Kent and Sussex Courier

3 May 1918

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of a good husband and father, Pte Robert Whiting, killed in action in France on April 28th, 1917. "Gone but not forgotten." - Wife and Children

28 April 1922

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of my dear husband, Robert Whiting, killed in action in France, April 28th 1917. To-day recalls sad memories of our loved one gone to rest. Those who think of him to-day Are those who loved him best. - Widow and Children

29 April 1921

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of my dear husband, Robert Whiting, killed in action in France April 28th 1917- From his Widow and Children

*"Gone but not forgotten."*

Kent and Sussex Courier

In everlasting memory of my dear daddy, Private R, Whiting 17th Middlesex, killed in action April 28th 1917- From his little son Joey whom he never saw.

Kent and Sussex Courier, 16 February 1923

22 April 1927

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of my dear husband, Robert Whiting killed in action in France April 28th 1917- From his Widow and three sons.

*"Gone but not forgotten, Today recalls sad memories of our loved one, gone to rest; And those who think of him today Are those who loved him best."*

Kent and Sussex Courier

2 May 1930

Whiting- In ever-loving memory of my dear husband Robert Whiting killed in action April 28th 1917 "Gone but not forgotten." - From his Widow and Children

Kent and Sussex Courier



Yours Truly  
R. Whiting