

## 12th West Yorks.

On November 28<sup>th</sup> 1914 100 men from the 12<sup>th</sup> West Yorks. Regiment arrived. The regiment was only two months old, having been formed on the 16<sup>th</sup> September. They were made up with men from Leeds, York, Hull and surrounding areas. However, as the Vicar was to tell them in December, they were the original 14<sup>th</sup> Buckinghamshire Regiment of Foot who made quite a name for themselves during the Napoleonic Wars 100 years previously. The head of that Regiment was Ralph Verney, and the colours from the battles can be still seen at Claydon House.

By December 1914 Captain Daniells was in command of 130 men at Wing, and even his sister joined him for Christmas. The Village Hall, Recreation Ground, Parish Room and the Wesleyan Schoolroom were all placed at the disposal of the 12<sup>th</sup> and used extensively during their stay. The Vicar, Revd. Henry Tatham, became their Hon. Chaplain and special services were held in the Church for them, as well as in the Hall. Revd. Tatham wrote 'what "a boon and a blessing to our men" our Hall is in war and peace' as they used it for drilling when the Recreation Ground was unsuitable due to the weather, as well as for recreational purposes. On Boxing Day 1914 the Badminton Club hosted a tea at the Hall for the men. A concert was held afterwards with the Vicar's daughter, Miss Helen Tatham, showing her Morris Dancers, Mrs. Gates' sang and even the men joined in with Capt. Daniells and his sister and several of the soldiers performing.

They departed at some point during January 1915 but returned on February 15<sup>th</sup>, with two companies numbering 500 in total. Before they left for a final time in March a special parade was held in the grounds of Mentmore Park, on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Including the 500 billeted at Wing there were 5,000 men from a variety of regiments billeted in Leighton, Linslade and surrounding villages and they paraded in front of Lord Kitchener.

The Vicar kept the village up to date with the 12<sup>th</sup> throughout the war. Sadly, in August 1916, two of their deaths were recorded. Captain Cyril Oliver and Lieut. Chas Wooler. The Vicar described them as 'well-known and popular officers when the Battalion was billeted in Wing'. Both were mortally wounded in the first days of the Battle of the Somme. Captain Oliver was wounded on the first day of the Battle of Bazentin Ridge, at Bazentin-le-Grand on 14 July 1916. Lieut. Wooler died at the Battle of Fricourt, again on the first day of that battle. He was 21 years of age and his brother had been killed at St. Eloi in March of that year as well.

Though there were happier times though with the 12<sup>th</sup>. On November 30<sup>th</sup> 1917 John Briscoe, of the 12<sup>th</sup>, married local girl Louisa Yates. Captain Daniells also returned to the village after the war and project managed the building of the War Memorial.