

Pte. Stanley Crook, of the 1st Devons, son of Mr. James Crook, a member of the Dawlish Town Band, was in the memorable fighting on the French frontier last week. In a letter to his grand-father, Mr. W. Crook, he gives the information that he was wounded, but lightly passes over his hurts (doesn't even say what they are) and seems chiefly anxious to get back to the fore-front again.

In the course of his letter he writes:

“Just a few lines to let you know that I am wounded and on my way to a place for treatment, where I don't know. My wound is not serious now, it's going on fine. The sooner it's well the better, as I want to get back to the front again.

I can tell you we had a warm time in the firing line. The bullets and shells were flying past us like the wind. It's a wonder any of us poor devils are alive. The Germans came out to attack us in great masses. The fighting lasted about 40 minutes and it was a terrible affair, as fast as we shot them down others came up and took their places. Very few of our fellows killed as far as I know, but a large number were wounded. D company suffered most and our Officer told us there were only about 10 uninjured out of the whole company.

The Germans even robbed our wounded of their khaki and wore it themselves, thinking we might not recognise them in it. A German Officer pinched some of my clothes and I had to go 100 miles before I had another rig out. What you have read in the papers this week about the fighting is quite true. I can't remember much of it as all we thought about was getting hold of the Germans. All our boys fought like Britons and people at home ought to know what they went through for their country's sake. My rifle and bayonet are hungry waiting for a little more Work. Roll on, so that I can go back to the front again.”

**You are invited to take a reproduction of John's Gospel
which was given to every service person during the First World War.**

Light refreshments will be available after the service.

COMMEMORATING THE DEATH OF CLARENCE CROOK



2nd Battalion, Devonshire Regiment

who was killed in action on

17th MARCH 1915



**Dawlish World War One Project 1914-1918 / 2014-2018
Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Dawlish Town Council**



Welcome to this Act of Commemoration.

Dawlish Town Council and Churches Together in Dawlish and District are commemorating the death in the service of the nation of every Dawlish person who was killed as a result of enemy action during the First World War.

Today we remember the death of Clarence Crook who died in action towards the end of the Battle of Neuve Chapelle on 17th March 1915.

After the First World War, it was decided that a single town War Memorial would be erected close to the parish church, and no church would have its own War Memorial. In keeping with this decision, these Acts of Commemoration take place in the town centre churches without regard to the denomination of the person they commemorate and they are led by the minister or pastor of the host church. The same Order of Service is used at each service.

There will be opportunity to talk to the leader of the service afterwards when light refreshments will be served.

Please join in the words which are in heavy type

Churches Together in Dawlish & District
28 High Street, Dawlish, EX7 9HP

CLARENCE CROOK

Clarence Crook's father was James Crook who was born in Cockermouth in 1874, but became a bricklayer in Dawlish where he married Alma. Clarence was second son of six children. Alma died in 1908, and James remarried Louisa and they had three more children.

After leaving school Clarence got a job as a Telegraph Messenger in the Post Office. He joined the 2nd Battalion, Devonshire Regiment early in the war and went to the French front in November 2014.

The circumstances of Paul's death

Pte H Langdon, also Clarence's Company said in a letter to James Crook, "His death was instantaneous. I feel his death very much as he was very great chum of mine. I saw that he buried alright and saved his belongings." Later the C.O. of the Company wrote to his brother Stanley who was also in the trenches, "He was killed in the trenches by a bullet which came from no one can tell where, and died almost at once. You who have no doubt done many months in the trenches will understand better than those at how would. Your brother was a good steady soldier and his loss is greatly felt by myself and the whole company."

The day before his death, Clarence wrote home

"We have had a big battle and given the Germans what they want. Have had a very tough time of it. Should not like to through very much of that, but it's got to be done. Roll on the time for coming home again."

The Devonshire Regiment History records

The regiment had reason to feel proud of its share in Neuve Chapelle. It had done all that had been asked for it. It had been mainly instrumental in capturing the brigade's objective. It had given proof that the long winter in waterlogged trenches had not sapped its initiative or dulled its fighting-spirit. The reputation of the regiment was high. As a fresh draft marched to the front and the local people heard they were Devonshire's, they dived into any shops which were handy and pressed cigarettes, tobacco, chocolate and other presents on the men.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
for thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory
for ever and ever.
AMEN.**

The Blessing

God grant to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the Church, the Queen,
the Commonwealth and all the world
peace and concord:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.

Amen.

Introduction

We have gathered today as part of our commemoration of those Dawlish people who were caught up in the courageous but tragic events of the First World War.

We remember those who were killed in action,

those who were maimed and those whose minds were disfigured by conflict.

the bereaved and the lost and those who lived in darkness,

the families which were shattered,

and all who held in silence the unspeakable memories of warfare.

In particular today on the 100th anniversary of his death we remember Clarence Crook who died in the service of his country.

Prayer

**Almighty God, the Lord of all,
today we pause to remember with gratitude
the life and death of Clarence Crook
knowing that he was, is and always will be
known and loved by you.**

**We thank you for his willingness to fight for our country
even if necessary to the point of death.**

**And today we remember his family and friends
who grieved at his death**

and whose lives were never the same.

Amen.

We hear about the life and death of Clarence Crook

Reading Romans 8:31-39

What, then, shall we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

please stand

A prayer of Commemoration

We remember before God Clarence Crook

Lord, have mercy

Today we commit Clarence Crook to the love of God

We give thanks for his life, and grieve at his death

May he rest in peace

and rise in glory.

He shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;

age shall not weary him, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

we will remember him.

We will remember him.

A candle may be lit or a bouquet may be placed before the pieta.

A time of silence

We remain standing

The Commitment to all those who died in the service of the nation.

Lord God, Father of all,

in thankfulness for Clarence Crook

and in his memory

we pledge ourselves

to bring comfort to the sad, the lonely and the distressed;

to bring relief to all who are in need

and to serve you and to work for peace.

Keep us ever mindful of the struggles

and achievements of former generations

and so make us grateful

now and in the days to come. Amen

O Lord, our maker and our strength,

from whose love in Christ we can never be parted

either by death or life:

Look in mercy on those for whom we pray this day,

and grant us your protection and peace,

that we may be saved in body and soul,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

As we ask for deliverance from the forces of destruction

and for peace in our time and in our lives

we pray together: