



Dawlish Town Council

Churches Together in  
Dawlish and District



## COMMEMORATION OF EIGHT DAWLISH SERVICE MEN WHO WERE KILLED ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE BATTLE OF LOOS



**8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Devonshire Regiment**

**25<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 1915**

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



**Dawlish First World War Project**

## 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 eight Dawlish men, all serving with the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment, were killed in action in the Battle of Loos. This was the largest number of Dawlish casualties on one day in the whole of that war.

Today we commemorate the deaths of these eight men and give thanks for their courage and bravery in a fearsome battle which they fought for their country to provide a better life for those they left behind.

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

The Act of Commemoration begins with the laying of a wreath of the Dawlish War Memorial by the local branch of the Royal British Legion.

**Light refreshments will be available in the church after the Commemoration.**

**You are also warmly invited to a light buffet afterwards in the Royal British Legion in Park Street.**

## A SERVICEMAN'S PRAYER

This prayer was written by a soldier in the trenches during the First World War. You might like to reflect on it after the Act of Commemoration.

Almighty and everlasting God,  
by whose grace thy servants are enabled to fight the good fight of faith  
and ever prove victorious:  
We humbly beseech thee so to inspire us,  
that we may yield our hearts to thine obedience  
and, exercise our wills on thy behalf.

Help us to think wisely,  
to speak rightly,  
to resolve bravely,  
to act kindly  
and to live purely.

Bless us in body and in soul,  
and make us a blessing to our comrades.  
Whether, at home or abroad,  
may we ever seek the extension of thy Kingdom.

Let the assurance of thy presence save us from sinning;  
support us in life, and comfort us in death.

**Amen.**

**The Dawlish World War 1 project has been made possible by funding from the Lottery's Awards for All and Dawlish Town Council.**

Our website, [DawlishWorldWard1.org.uk](http://DawlishWorldWard1.org.uk) will be live shortly. It will contain all the Orders of Service, and considerable detail about each combatant who did not return.

## WILLIAM HENRY STEVENS

*Born Dawlish 1890 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 25.*  
William Stevens was the fourth child of Henry Stevens and Sarah Jane. He was born in Manhead, but the family moved to Dawlish in 1896.

He married Elizabeth Aggett in autumn in 1908. She came from Drewsteignton. They live in Old Town Street and Elizabeth's younger brother seems to have lodged with them.

William was a carter and Elizabeth worked in a laundry. Elizabeth died earlier in 1915, before William was killed.

## THE ALLIED GENERALS IN THE BATTLE OF LOOS



Field Marshal John Denton Pinkstone French was Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force for the first year and a half of WW1



Marshal Joseph Jacques Césaire Joffre, was the Commander-in-Chief of French forces on the Western Front from the start of World War I until the end of 1916.



Field Marshal Douglas Haig, was a senior officer during WW1. He commanded the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) from 1915 to the end of the war.

## THE INTRODUCTION

### Welcome and introduction to the Service

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 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their deaths, we remember John Gwyne Kerle Anning, Frank Charles Cotton, Sidney Cornelius, Ernest John Crideford, William John Dew, Albert Joh Hooper, Ernest George Martin, and William Henry Stevens who died in the service of their country.

### HYMN

1

Our God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast,  
and our eternal home.

2

Under the shadow of thy throne  
thy saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is thine arm alone,  
and our defence is sure.

3

Before the hills in order stood  
or earth received her frame,  
from everlasting thou art God  
to endless years the same.

4

A thousand ages in Thy sight  
are like an evening gone;  
short as the watch that ends the night  
before the rising sun.

5

Time, like an ever rolling stream,  
bears all its sons away;  
they fly, forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the opening day.

6

Our God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
be thou our God while life shall last,  
and our eternal home.

*Please be seated*

### Prayer

*Leader* Almighty God, the Lord of all,  
we pause to remember with gratitude  
the eight Dawlish men who killed in action  
one hundred years ago;  
and we remember the others  
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 that day.

### THE COMMEMORATIONS

*Leader* We now remember each soldier who was killed this day 100 years ago.

### JOHN GWYNE ANNING

We hear about the circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God John Gwyne Anning

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit John Gwyne Anning to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit*

### ERNEST GEORGE MARTIN

*Born Dawlish 1897 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 18.*

Ernest was the youngest Dawlishian to die in the battle. He was only 18. He was the oldest of three siblings and worked as a paper boy and was employed by Mrs Townley Parker of Bridge House.

He was killed in the initial charge on the German trenches. His platoon commander write to his mother, "Dear Mrs Martin,—I am extremely sorry to have to tell you that your son was killed in action on Sept. 25th, whilst taking part in a successful but unfortunately expensive attack. He was one of the best boys in the platoon, and I can sympathise with you in the loss of such a good son. His body was buried on the battlefield and his grave marked with a cross. Hoping that the fact that he died for his country will comfort you, I remain, Yours Sincerely, H. D. Drew, No. 3 Platoon Commander, 8th Devons."



After the charge

**ALBERT HOOPER ('Bert')**

*Born Dawlish 1878 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 37*

Albert's grandparents lived in Park Hill (later Strand Hill) and his parents in High Street.

Albert was four when his father died leaving him and his two siblings to be brought up by his mother Mary. At one time they had a lodger George Olive a blacksmith, lodging with them.

Unlike his siblings, Albert remained living at home, initially working as a shoemaker/bootmaker and then as a postman. He had an interest in the military because he joined the Territorial Force (later the Territorial Army) soon after it was formed in 1908 combining the Volunteer Army and the Yeomanry. It was envisaged as a home defence force for service during wartime; units were liable to serve anywhere within the United Kingdom when, but could not be compelled to serve outside the country. Albert's experience of and loyalty to the TF led to his early enlistment in the Devonshire Regiment.



**Preparing to go over the top**

**FRANK CHARLES COTTON**

We hear about the circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God Frank Charles Cotton

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit Frank Charles Cotton to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit*

**SIDNEY CORNELIUS**

We hear about the circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God Sidney Cornelius

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit John Sidney Cornelius to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit*

**ERNEST JOHN CRIDEFORD**

We hear about the circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God Ernest John Crideford

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit Ernest John Crideford to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit*

**WILLIAM JOHN DEW**

We hear about the circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God William John Dew

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit William John Dew to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit*

**ALBERT JOHN HOOPER**

We hear about circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God Albert John Hooper

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit Albert John Hooper to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit*

**ERNEST GEORGE MARTIN**

We hear about the circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God Ernest George Martin

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit Ernest Joh Martin to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit*

**WILLIAM JOHN DEW**

*Born Dawlish 1885 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 30.*

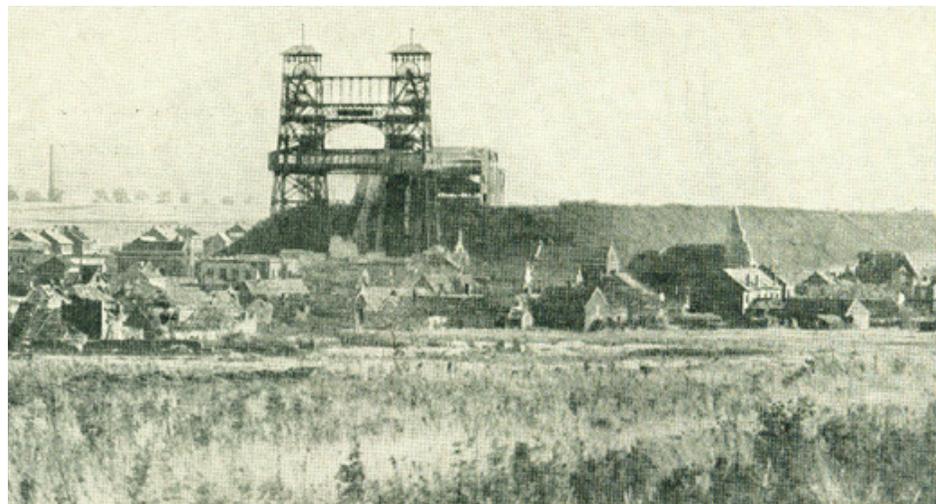
William Dew was one of five children of John and Louise Hodge. His father died when he was 5 and he was brought up by his widowed mother who worked as a charwoman. They lived in Exeter for a time.

William was a General Labourer (railway company).

William married Sarah Monk in Newton Abbot, and they came to live in Chapel Street, Dawlish where they had three children. After William's death Sarah married Charles Jarvis in Newton Abbot.

One of his brothers, Alfred Thomas Dew, was killed in the Battle of Jutland on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1916.

The 8th Battalion was asked to take 'Tower Bridge' and the neighbouring village. They did this successfully, but then had to withdraw because the reserve support was not near enough the scene of battle to support them.



### ERNEST JOHN CRIDEFORD

*Born Dawlish 1893 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 22.*

Ernest Crideford was one of a family of nine children, working as a gardener for Mrs Wilford of Oak Cottage. He probably enlisted at the same time as his brother on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2014, responding to news of German atrocities and Allied difficulties.

We know very little of the nature of his death apart from a letter from a friend who was a non-combatant of the Regiment, a friend of Ernest's, who wrote to his parents that he was killed in the charge, and he sent some of the photographs and other things found in Ernest's pockets to his parents.

In the *Dawlish Gazette* of 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014 which wrote, "The 8th, Devons (Buller's Own\*), which includes a number of Dawlishians, was in the forefront of the recent fighting in Flanders and contributed honourably to the great victory secured. The casualties however were heavy. Of the Dawlish men, besides the three announced as wounded in last week's issue, who are all in England in hospital and we understand doing well, we regret to state that news has been received of the death of Pt Ernest Crideford, of Queen Lane. The deceased was 22½ years of age, and before joining up was in the employ of Mrs Wilford, of Oak Cottage. The sincere sympathies of the community will be extended to the parents in their loss."

On the 30<sup>th</sup>, *The Gazette* reported, "Fears for the untimely fate of other local men of the 8th Devons who took part in the fighting of Sept. 25th have been only too sadly confirmed this week. At the same time one Dawlish family has had the great joy of having a relative officially notified as wounded whom they mourned as dead. This was in the case of Pte Ernest Cridleford [sic], whose parents received a letter from a Non-com. of the Regiment, a friend of their boy, early in October, stating that he was killed in the charge. At the same time some photographs and other things found in the lad's pocket were forwarded to them. The almost unbelievable news contained in the official notification, which simply stated that he was wounded, came to hand on Wednesday."

\* Buller's Own was the nickname of the Devonshire Regiment, derived from General Buller's role in the Boer War.

### WILLIAM HENRY STEVENS

We hear about the circumstances of his life and death

*Leader* We remember before God William Henry Stevens

*Response* **Lord, have mercy**

*Leader* Today we commit William Henry Stevens to the love of God

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

*Leader* May he rest in peace

*Response* **and rise in glory.**

*There is silence as a candle is lit.*

#### 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

#### A general reflection

*Please stand*

**Hymn** He who would valiant be,  
let him come hither;  
one here will constant be,  
come wind, come weather;  
there's no discouragement  
shall make him once relent  
his first avowed intent  
to be a pilgrim.

Who so beset him round  
with dismal stories,  
do but themselves confound;  
his strength the more is.  
No lion can him fright,  
he'll with a giant fight,  
but he will have a right  
to be a pilgrim.

Hobgoblin nor foul fiend  
can daunt his spirit;  
he knows he at the end  
shall life inherit.  
Then fancies fly away,  
he'll fear not what men say,  
he'll labour night and day  
to be a pilgrim.  
He who would valiant be,

*Please remain standing*

### **For the Fallen**

*All*            **They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;  
age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
we will remember them.  
We will remember them.**

### **The Last Post is sounded**

#### **A time of silence**

#### **The Kohima**

*Leader*        When you go home, tell them of us and say  
for your tomorrow, we gave our today.

*All:*            **We will not break faith with you.**

### **SIDNEY CORNELIUS**

*Born Dawlish 1886 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 29.*

Sidney Cornelius was the first child of Samuel Alfred Cornelius, who was a cabinet maker, and Harriet who lived in what is now Strand Hill. By the time of the outbreak of war, Sidney, who was unmarried, was living in Truro as a Fruiterer's manager. He returned to Exeter to enlist.

Of his death the Officer Commanding D Company wrote, "May I express my deepest sympathy with you and your family in the anxiety you have felt and must feel for the safety of your son Sidney, of this company, who has been returned as 'missing' since Sept. 25th. I am afraid I feel the worst. It is a terrible blow to you I feel sure, although of course you are a perfect stranger to me. You may—and I hope it is true—have some information about your son, but to us here he is put down amongst the missing. I think some of the latter probably have been taken prisoners, and perhaps your son was wounded and captured. I really can't find out. All I can tell you is that he was with the scouts, who I regret to say lost severely, very few escaping unwounded. Your son was in my old platoon, No. 15, and was of the ones I valued most, most obliging, willing, keen and conscientious in his work as a soldier, and a perfect gentleman. I sympathise with you and yours deeply. Please write and let me know if I can do anything for you. Any information that may come in from other regiments I will at once let you know."



- ▲ An early gas mask
- ◀ An advance through a gas cloud

## FRANK CHARLES COTTON

*Born Dawlish 1893 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 26.*

Frank Cotton was the second youngest of eleven children of Arthur Cotton and Susan (nee Wollacott). Arthur was one of the most notable fishermen in Dawlish, and also served as Town Crier; Susan was a Sick Nurse. Five of the children were in military service in July 1915.



The *Dawlish Gazette* reported on 30th October 1915: "Considerable anxiety is felt in the case of Sergt F C Cotton, who remains unaccounted for. He is posted as "missing," and official notification of this has been received from the War Office. Of fine physique, hard as nails, and full of fun and life, Frank was a great favourite in Dawlish, and his many friends can only hope and trust that at the worst he is a prisoner. He is married and is the sixth son of Mr A C Cotton, billposter, etc. "

Frank's wife has received the following letter, dated Oct 20th, from Second-Lieutenant C Pepys, of the 8th Devons:—

"I am sorry indeed to say that I can get no further information regarding your husband, Sergt Cotton, than that he is missing. He went into action on the morning of Sept 25th in charge of No. 6 platoon, B Company, and since then I can find out nothing about him. None of No. 6 platoon have returned. They are all either killed, or wounded, or missing. I am sorry indeed that I can give you no news. I am still trying to find out things of the men who are missing and hope to do so, and I especially want to find out about your husband, as he was my platoon sergeant and one of my favourite and trusted men. I dare not give you much hope as so many were beyond recognition after the shell fire, but there is a slight chance. I cannot say how sorry I am for you and how much I sympathise with you in your trouble and I do hope he may be alright."

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

*All*      **Lord God, Father of all,  
in thankfulness for the life of these Dawlish men  
and in their 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**

*Leader*    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:

## The Lord's Prayer

*All*      **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**

*Leader* 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.

**An account of the Battle of Loos is available on request after the Service.**

**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.**

**Your are also invited for a light buffet lunch in the Royal British  
 Legion in Park Street, Dawlish**

## **THE STORY OF THE DEATH OF EIGHT DAWLISH MEN ON ONE DAY**

### **JOHN GWYNE KERLE ANNING**

*Born Dawlish 1893 Private in the 8th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment. Age 22.*

John Anning joined the Devonshires by chance. He was an only son of Dawlish residents who left home at the sage of 20 to go to live in the north of England where he was apprenticed to a brass-worker. He returned home for a summer holiday in August 1914, and as soon as war broke out he enlisted.

C D Roberts, the Captain of the company, wrote to his father "With reference to your inquiry for Pte. John Anning, No. '10762,' A Company, 8th Devons Regiment. I very much regret that he was killed in the recent heavy fighting on Sept. 25th. He was reported by one of his comrades to have died advancing on the enemy's trenches. Please accept and convey my greatest sympathy to all relatives and friends. It is some consolation for you to know that he died an Englishman's death."

On 29<sup>th</sup> October, the *Exeter & Plymouth Gazette* carried the news, "News has been received that Private J. Anning has been killed in action. He was the only son of Mr J. Kerswell Anning, and nephew of Miss F. Anning (Starcross), and grandson of the late Captain J. Anning, master mariner and ship owner. The family for centuries have been tenant yeomen of the Earls of Devon. Private Anning came home from Manchester for his holiday in August, 1914, and was among the first to enlist in his county regiment, joining Buller's Own."



A recruiting office