

December 1914

THE WAR.- Still are we in the stress of the most widespread and desolating war that the world has ever seen. Every day with its tales of destruction and its lengthening lists of casualties brings home to every one of us its terrible reality, and as yet “the restoration of a rightful and abiding peace,” which we pray for in our daily intercessions, seems further off than ever. On November 14th passed to his rest that noblest of Englishmen and ideal hero, Lord Roberts. As a gallant soldier and victorious leader he has stood above all others of our age. But he has been to all of us much more than that – a great Christian patriot, and one, who, so far from courting popularity, told his countrymen many a home truth, though we paid little heed to him and are now bitterly repenting our folly, and yet he has so endeared himself to us all that his name (particularly his nickname) became “familiar in our mouths as household word,” and his departure is felt to be a personal as well as a national loss. Death came to him as he would have wished it to come, in the execution of his duty and within sound of the guns.

LETTER FROM THE FRONT.- The following extract from a letter dated November 5th, 107th Battery, R.F.A., 3rd Division, British Expeditionary Force, and addressed to Mrs. James by Sergt. Chas. Richards (son of Mr. William Richards, of Marsworth, formerly of Burcott), will, though relating to the earliest period of the war, be of interest to many:-“We have had very exciting times since we arrived in sunny France. Soon as we landed we were rushed up to Belgium, having our baptism of fire at Mons. It all came so sudden. We were in action and blazing away at the Germans before we realized we were at war. It was hot work, our division taking the brunt of it. We had some splendid targets, the Germans rolling up in thousands, and less than a mile away. Our guns played havoc with them. The more we knocked down the more came on-there were really too many of them. It was simply raining lead. We kept blazing away until the infantry had withdrawn. Then we had to withdraw our guns and the sport commenced. The teams coming up for the guns made a good target for the Germans, but they can’t shoot straight. All the same horses were going down everywhere. I lost my section officer and my bombardier, and a few horses. We saved all the guns. Soon as we limbered up we had a race for cover and another position. We withdrew still further, and took up position near Cambrai where we had a big battle. Again they were too strong for us, thousands of them and scores of guns. We withdrew again towards night and commenced the great retirement. I shall never forget that, it was worse than fighting. Day and night, day after day we kept on, dog tired, dirty and hungry, no time to wash or shave, men falling asleep on their horses and vehicles. We were within 20 miles of Paris when we had the order to take the offensive. That simply worked wonders. Men bucked up, and no longer felt tired, only eager to get at the Germans again. We found them on the Marne and gave them a thrashing, our battery putting a German battery out of action allowing the Lincolns to go and capture them; the guns now on view in London. It was a great fight, and they beat a hasty retreat to the Aisne, where again we had a very long battle. At the Marne we were introduced to the “Jack Johnsons” or “mechanical engineers” as we call the German big shells. They make a large hole where they burst and most awful noise, and their fragments fly hundreds of yards. They are very fond of shooting at Churches and destroying towns and villages – some haven’t a house standing. The most painful sight of all is the poor people tramping along the roads, their homes and belongings destroyed by the Germans.I am not allowed to state where I am, but the fight goes on everywhere day and night. At night it is like a firework display with flashes from the guns and the bursting shells, and generally several fires round us. I hope you will excuse the scrawl. I am writing this during a lull in the firing sitting round my gun. It is indeed good news to hear

my mother and father are well. I thank you very much for your kind wishes, and remain, yours truly,
C. E. Richards, Sergt."

We do not publish a list of the Wing men in the Forces this month, but we rejoice that several have joined lately and we have good hope that the War Office circular issued to every householder will produce favourable results. The sight of able bodied Englishmen playing in or watching football matches at so critical a time remind one of "Nero fiddling while Rome was burning," and is little short of a scandal and disgrace.

REV. G. V. KENDRICK.- I have to announce the approaching departure of my colleague, the Rev. G. V. Kendrick. He came to Wing in June, 1912, in the place of Rev. J. H. Cuthbertson, and we shall all miss his ministrations in and out of Church, his parochial visits, his teaching in the Sunday and Day Schools, and his interest in the Church choir and the Choral Society. He is about to be married, and has been appointed by the Bishop of Calcutta to the Chaplaincy of the Tea Planters of Assam, with which some Mission work is combined. He hopes to leave England on January 3rd, and will carry with him our hearty good wishes and our prayers for his welfare and success.

C.E.M.S. – The monthly meeting was held in the Parish Room on November 9th. Mr. Kendrick introduced a discussion on some points in the Bishop of Oxford's Visitation Charge recently delivered at Aylesbury – particularly that part of it which dealt with the prophetic or teaching office of the sacred ministry. An interesting conversation on preaching and sermons followed.

BILLETS.- We have been often warned to expect some troops in Wing, but on Friday, 28th, part of a newly formed battalion – the 12th West Yorks- actually arrived. They numbered about 100, and are under the command of Lieut. Daniells. Many of them are quite young, and they come principally from York, Leeds and Hull, and other Yorkshire towns. The Vicar opened the Parish Room for their use, and on Sunday they attended morning service at the Church. Monday, the 30th, was a hopelessly wet day, and they were glad to drill in the Hall. In the evening Mr. Long delivered in the Parish Room a lecture, founded principally on an admirable little work recently published: "First lessons in war," by Prof. Spenser Wilkinson. Almost all the men were present and listened to the lecture with great interest, and (we hope) profit. We expect another draft of 100 men very shortly.

We record with much sorrow the death, after a very short illness, of Miss Thomas, housekeeper to Lady Edith Cotes. Though she has not lived in Wing very long she had endeared herself by her kindness to her neighbours at Burcott, and was a regular communicant at the Church and a Sunday School teacher.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES.- The services on Christmas Day will be, as aforetime viz:- 7 and 8 a.m.- Holy Communion,

10.30 a.m.- Matins, Sermon and Holy Communion.

5 p.m.- Evensong and Carols.

The Intercession services for this month are, in addition to daily Matins and Evensong-12.5 noon (and on Thursdays 3.30).

SPECIAL DAY OF INTERCESSION ON BEHALF OF THE WAR.-The first Sunday of the year (Jan. 3rd) is appointed Special Intercession throughout the country. Our Bishop says in his message to the Diocese: "I trust the day will be observed fervently in every parish." He suggests and authorises the observance of Saturday, January 2nd, as a special day of fasting in preparation for the day of Intercession.

EXTRACT FROM PARISH REGISTERS.

HOLY BAPTISM.

Nov. 1st.- Phyllis Annie, daughter of Wm. Henry and Annie Cornelius Eldridge, of Ascott, huntsman.

MARRIAGES.

Nov. 4th.- Lewis Lovell, of Linslade, to Margaret Amy, daughter of Wm. Page, of Burcott, Wing.

“ 25th.- Ernest Frederick Prentice, of Wing, to Mabel Rose Janes, of Cheddington.

BURIAL.

Nov. 16th.- Martha Hammerton, widow, of Wing, aged 73.

OFFERTORY RECIEPTS.

	£	s.	d.	
Nov. 1. All Saints' Day	1	13	3	Sick & Needy
	0	4	6	U.M.C.A. (Chl.)
8. 22 nd S. aft. Trin.	1	17	6	Ch. Expenses.
15. 23 rd “	1	1	10	
22. 24 th	1	9	8	
29. Advent Sunday	4	10	5	S.P.G.