

No 13 March 2016

1. The enlistment of 20 year old 203491 Private (later Lance Corporal and then acting Sergeant) Cheetham William Fletcher 3rd, 4th and then 1/5th Battalion Notts & Derby Regiment (Sherwood Foresters) on 7th September 1914 is described in 'Cheet's' own words in the book A Bradwell Man produced by his grandsons Barry and Bill Fletcher. He left behind him his parents John and Annie and he later wrote 'My parents didn't know anything about my going, I just vanished'. He finally saw active service on 24th March 1915 and was in action at the Battle of Hohenzollern Redoubt (part of the Battle of Loos) later that year. In his army record it is stated that he suffered gunshot wounds in the back and shoulder on 22nd December (Cheet in his diary says it happened on the Christmas Eve). He was back in England recuperating a month later and had recovered sufficiently to visit Bradwell in March. On the 13th June we read that he, a bachelor of Hill Head, married Grace Pember Bough spinster also of Hill Head. Cheet's occupation was given as joiner and wheelwright. Cheet left the army on 8th February 1919 when his address was given as Brier Cottage. Cheet was serving in the Home Guard in October 1943 when he 'went to sleep and didn't wake up'.
2. 10057 Lance Corporal (later Sergeant) Anselm George Hallam 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment. In 1911 Anselm was living with his parents Stephen and Mary Anne probably in Smalldale which was the family's home in 1901. Anselm was a cotton doubler in 1911, his first army posting coming in September 1914. In January 1915 he wrote a surprisingly detailed description of the action he had seen near the French village of Radinghem south of Armentières. Unlike his elder brother Thomas Edwin Hallam George came safely through the war and died in Leeds in 1963 aged 70.
3. 14562 Private (later Sergeant) John Howe 10th Battalion Notts & Derby (Sherwood Foresters) Regiment. John Howe was born in Edale in 1892 but was living in Smalldale in 1901 with his father Walter, a railway ganger, and mother Martha Elizabeth. By 1911 John was working as a railway labourer and still living at home with his younger twin brothers Oswald Ashton and Harry. Throughout March 1916 the 10th was in action near Armentières and in the month the Battalion lost 18 men killed, 81 were wounded and 3 were listed as missing with heaviest of the casualties coming towards the end of the month.