

No 22 December 2016

1. Mitrailleur (Machine Gunner) Norbert Selhorst Belgian Army. Norbert had served in the Belgian Army since the bombardment of Liege. He was visiting his wife who was sharing Hill Head Cottage (the lower of the two cottages of the same name?) with Mme Vermaelen. This was not to the liking of the Bradwell Belgian Relief Committee because in their minutes the arrangement was questioned and the reason appears to have been financial. Mme Selhorst had already moved from her lodging in Moorbrook on Moorbrook Lane. The owner of the property, Mr Harries, had written to the Relief Committee to inform them that the lady was no longer his responsibility (with what sounds like a sigh of relief). Later in the war Mme Selhorst was lodged with Mrs Nancy Bradwell on Church Street. Mme Selhorst appears to have been an ongoing thorn in the side of the Committee because later their minutes show questions being asked as to who ordered an ambulance to bring the lady back to Bradwell from hospital in Sheffield (it appears that she had been in a road accident in the city) before the bill for the vehicle could be paid. Sadly later minutes make only an indirect reference to the affair when it was minuted that Mr Craig, the Committee Treasurer, was asked to seek a reduction of the ambulance fee 'in the circumstances'. So perhaps it was Mr Craig who ordered the ambulance but there is no evidence whether a reduced or full bill (or indeed no bill at all!) was paid.
2. 45995 Air Mechanic 2 (Fitter) Levi Peck Royal Flying Corps. In 1911 14 year old Dewsbury born Levi was living with his father George and mother Mary Ann on Batham's Farm. Levi was given as working as a farmer's son.
3. 45115 Lance Corporal Stanley Benson 7th Field Ambulance Royal Army Medical Corps. In 1911 21 year-old Stanley was living with his parents Michael and Amelia and his brothers Alfred and Harold in Urmston, Lancashire. Stanley was working as a banker's clerk in Urmston. In May 1917 Stanley Benson was wounded and taken to the 19th Casualty Clearing Station in France where he died. He is commemorated in the Duisans Military Cemetery in France. Stanley's visit to Bradwell was to visit his aunt Mrs Benson who lived on the Hills.
4. Mitrailleur (Machine Gunner) Auguste van Achteen, Belgian Army. Although a visit by Auguste to Bradwell is noted in a newspaper cutting in 1917 it is not know who his wife was or where she was living.