



Account of Purley on Thames

Chronicles 1910-1919

1910 10 Edw VII/1 Geo V

The south Berks Hunt set up its kennels at Belleisle Farm (ref 21)

1911 1/2 Geo V

1912 2/3 Geo V

1913 3/4 Geo V

The Thames Conservancy obtained a public landing site at Mapledurham.

Mr C West was appointed Assistant Overseer on March 20th at a salary of 5 Guineas (ref 25)

1914 4/5 Geo V

The First World War broke out

Cecil Aldin became Master of the South Berks Hunt and moved into Belleisle Farm soon afterwards. He was appointed a 'remount officer' by the War Office and was charged with finding sufficient horses to keep his regiment on the move. He turned the farm into a remount depot and had responsibility for several other depots. At one time he had over 500 horses in his charge (ref 40-33)

The Reverend John Dudley-Matthews was drowned in December while crossing the Thames above the weir at Mapledurham Lock. He was returning home after preaching in Mapledurham Church. A plaque was erected later to his memory on the south wall of the chancel. He had been Rector since 1902 and Chairman of the Parish Meeting since 1903 (ref 10-1)

1915 5/6 Geo V

Richard H Pring was inducted Rector on 4th April (ref 22)

On April 17th 40 children from the school were taken to see soldiers build pontoons on the river (ref 184-15)

British Automobile Traction Company were established in July and on Saturday 31st July began operating a bus service between Streatley and the Bear Hotel in Reading. The service was operated by a fleet of five 30HP Leyland S type single deckers registered HE 8 to HE 12. They had 27 seats and were licensed to carry 32 persons. They carried the logo 'BRITISH' on the side.

On 29th August Trooper Harry Jarman of the Berkshire Yeomanry died of his wounds aged 20. He had lived at a cottage in the grounds of Westfield where his father was coachman to Lady Sykes (ref 1-3/75; 12, 59-ii-280)

On December 17th an aeroplane landed in Purley (ref 184-15)

1916 6/7 Geo V

The war had resulted in an acute shortage of labour and on Feb 17th one child was kept away from school to work. (ref 184-15)

On March 28th Mr H W Tidbury of Horseshoe, Pangbourne was appointed Assistant Overseer in place of Mr C West who had resigned on account of the war. (ref 25)

On 15th May Dudley Cecil Aldin was killed during night operations on Vimy ridge. He was aged 19 and was a second Lieutenant in the 105th Field Company of the Royal Engineers. His father Cecil Aldin later erected a brass memorial tablet in the church. At the time the 105th were engaged in tunnelling operations between bomb craters in order to get closer to the German lines during the battle of the Somme. (refs 12, 59-2-408)

On 31st May First Class Stoker Harry Kirk died when his ship HMS Black Prince, blew up at the Battle of Jutland (refs 12, 59-4-819)

On June 10th Alan D Powley was killed in action leading his men in a charge in German East Africa. He was a second Lieutenant in the King's African Rifles and the youngest son of the late rector Matthew Powley. He was buried in Iringa Cemetery and a memorial tablet was erected to his memory in the church (refs 12, 59-3-623)

Private William H Nash of Lower Farm, Purley was killed on 1st July. He was engaged in the Battle of the Somme serving in the Royal Berks Regiment (second Battalion) He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France. (refs 12, 59-3-623)

On September 25th Private Robert James Nash of Lower Farm died in captivity in Turkish hands. He had been part of the 43rd Regiment which had surrendered at Kut on April 29th. He had been taken into captivity and treated brutally (refs 12, 197, 59-3-623)

Private Frederick Charles Mott of Purley was killed on 28th October aged 23. He served in E company, 2nd Battalion, Royal Berks Regiment and was buried at Bancourt British Cemetery. (ref 12)

1917 7/8 Geo V

A tenth century sword was found while the Oxford Road was being widened near Tilehurst Station. It is now in Reading museum.

J R Wright resigned as organist at the church, a post he had held since 1887.

Charles E Sheppard of Purley was killed on 7th October aged 35. He was a Private in the 9th Battalion Devonshire Regiment and is commemorated on the Tyne Cott memorial in Belgium (ref 12)

Edgar G Sheppard of Purley was killed on 5th November. He was a rifleman in the 2nd/11th Battalion, London Regiment and is commemorated on the Tyne Cott Memorial in Belgium (ref 12)

1918 8/9 Geo V

On 9th August Leila Minna Downing Fullerton of Purley Park died, She was the only daughter of the late Major Storer and had married George Fullerton in 1889. She was 55 and left £300 to the churchwardens to be invested for the upkeep of the church (ref 10-7)

A new paten was presented to the church my Mrs Myra Downing Fullerton on 11th November (ref 10-3)

1919 9/10 Geo V

The clock in the tower of the church was installed to the memory of G F Downing Fullerton and his wife Leila, by their four children. The mechanism was manufactured by Gillett and Johnson Ltd of Croydon, Surrey

On the 4th December Miss N Collins of Purley was elected a member of the Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers. Cyril W C Jenkyns was the Master.

The salary of the Assistant Overseer (Mr Tidbury) was raised to £10 pa.

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