

Remembrance Sunday

The Centenary of Armistice Day ~ The Great War 1918~2018

They Loved and Were Loved

By Elizabeth McDonald with Shirley Bunny

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It is said that there isn't any family which hasn't lost at least one of their men in either, or both, of the two world wars...

My great-grandmother, Mabel (Ada) Robinson, née Ashby, was one of so many, many women who lost their menfolk in battle. Her husband and both of her two brothers died in the Great War of 1914~1918.

My great-grandfather, Lance Sergeant Alfred E. Robinson of the 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders had served in India followed by two years in Egypt, and was posted to France and thence to Belgium at the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914. But he saw very little of it; just a few short weeks later, sometime between the seven days of 22nd-28th October 1914 he was killed at the 1st Battle of Ypres by a German sniper as he carried a wounded comrade across no man's land to safety. According to the War Diary of the Gordon Highlanders, before he died, he "*was much disappointed that he had not been able to kill his 40 Germans before 1st Jan, as all ranks had been asked by the Commanding Officer to do this.*" Great-Granddad was buried where he fell as were so many other soldiers, the loss made even harder for my great-grandmother to bear by the subsequent German mining of that area.

One of Great-Grandma's brothers, Henry H. Ashby, was a rifleman in the London Rifle Brigade. He received his commission in August 1915 as second lieutenant in the 3rd Middlesex Regiment, but, as was listed in the January 1916 issue of the Church of England's quarterly magazine *Men's Society*, in the roll of honour for its members killed in war, he too was killed in action in France in September 1915.

Great-Grandma's second brother, Sergeant Sidney Ashby, was a gunner in the Royal Flying Corps. In 1916, he received The Military Medal For Bravery In The Field for shooting down a German Zeppelin, but he wanted to be a pilot and tragically was subsequently killed in a training accident in 1917.

Great-Grandma lived into her nineties, but she never stopped grieving for her husband and her two brothers who went away to war and never came home...

May we never break faith with our forefathers who fought and died in the unimaginable horrors of the two world wars that we might live in peace and freedom today.

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Please note that this is a document in progress; I'm still researching the precise details of the war deaths of my Great-Grandfather and Great-Great Uncles, and will amend this document as I gather more information...