

PRIVATE CHARLES R W BRADBURY

Service Number: 11967

Born April 1889 Shepshed

Killed in action Tuesday 21st December 1915, Aged 27.

Enlisted Hinckley 24th August 1914 Special reserve

Whitehouse Cemetery, St. Jean-les-Ypres Belgium.

St Catherine's Church Memorial

St Catherine's personal stone tablet, North Aisle.

Ancient Order of Foresters Memorial

Cast name marker from Rose Garden



Charles was the son of James and Emily Bradbury, 19 Hawthorne Cottages, Britannia Road, Burbage and fiancé of Gertrude Ghent. Brother of Mary Beasley, Sarah Campton, Mary Ann Payne, James Bradbury, Evelyn Bradbury.



Figure 65 Hawthorne Cottages

Charles had previous military service in the Territorials with the 1st Volunteer Battalion Leicestershire Regiment. After recruits training he was posted to 3rd Reserve Battalion Leicester Regiment on 3rd September 1914. By the 11th December he had embarked to France. On the 27th January 1915, he received an abrasion to finger caused by gunshot wound and was evacuated to Dieppe. By the 15th May Charles was posted back to 3rd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment. On 31st August he sailed again from Southampton to France, reaching 1st Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment on 5th September. Sadly, Charles was killed in action 21st December.

The Hinckley Times carried the following report:

Quite a gloom was cast over Burbage when the news became known that Private CRW Bradbury of the 1st Leicester Regiment was killed in action on 21st December.

The deceased who was 27 years of age was highly respected and well known throughout the village. For some years, he had been employed at Messer's Moore, Eady, Murcott & Goode, Burbage, but prior to enlisting he was engaged at Messer's Johnson and Barnes at Kibworth. He enlisted three weeks after war broke out and went to France in December 1914 to reinforce the 2nd Leicester's. He was wounded at La Basse and was invalided home in March 1915, with rheumatism. He returned to France at the end of August to reinforce 1st Leicester's. The deceased was a member of the Burbage Constitutional Club and the Cricket Club. Writing to his parents at 19 Balls Lane, Quartermaster Sergeant Cummings of 'C' Company Leicester's says, "I am awfully sorry to have to write to inform you that Private Bradbury was killed on 21st December. He was killed instantaneously by a shell in his trench and did not suffer in the least. He is buried at St. Jean near the ruined Church and where we are putting a cross as soon as we can get one made. We all offer our sympathy in your loss and your loss must be tempered by the knowledge that he was a very good and cheerful soldier and could always be turned to do his duty in the trenches".

Writing to the deceased fiancée, Miss Ghent of Three Pots Road, Burbage, Captain CW Furbision says,

"It is with deepest regret that I write to tell you of the death of Private Bradbury of my Company. He was killed by a shell on the morning of the 21st and his death was instantaneous. We buried him at night and erected a cross over his grave. The number and position of the grave will be forwarded later to his parents. Bradbury was always a good fellow and I was very sorry he was killed. Will you please give my sympathies to his father and mother, whose address I have lost. I am returning the things that were in his pocket and a button which I cut off his coat for you".



Figure 66 Ghent's Cottage, Coventry Road



Figure 69 Nellie Ghent & her mother

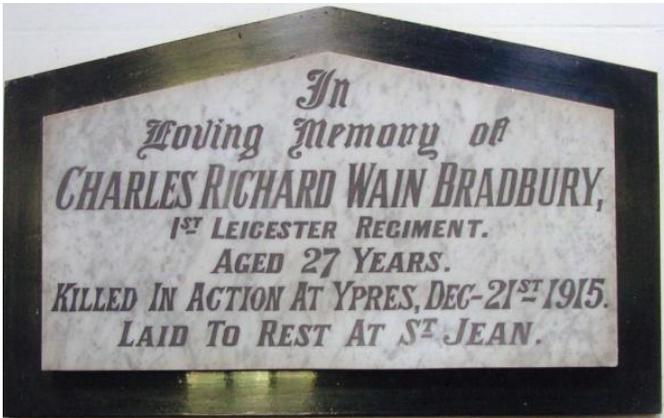


Figure 67 Pte Bradbury - St Catherines Tablet

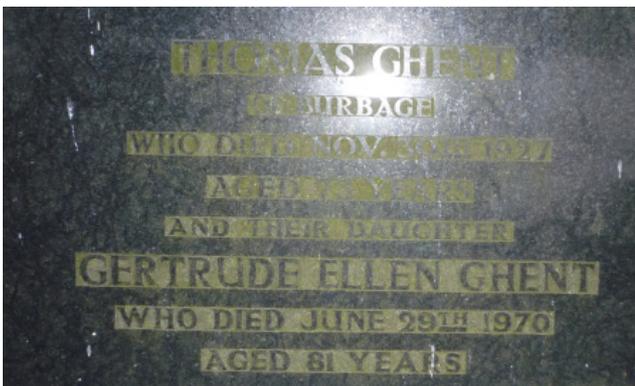


Figure 68 Headstone - Gertrude Ghent

A LOVE STORY

Charles was engaged to Gertrude Ghent, known to her family as Nellie, who lived at the Old Framework Knitter Cottages on Three Pots Road, now Coventry Road. Charles worked previously as a clerk at the factory at the end of Balls Lane now Britannia Road, living at 19 Hawthorne Cottages.

Neighbour Bernard Rowe, 21 Hawthorne Cottages was killed in 1918. Charles was born in Shepshed, it is believed his father had remarried and moved to the area where Charles found employment, before moving to work in Kibworth where he worked as a clerk at the cashmere hosiery manufacturers of Johnson and Barnes. He may have lodged in the village although at one time busloads of workers were shipped in everyday from the local villages. At the outbreak of war, many of the workers enlisted together in the Leicester's and the Sherwood Foresters.

Gertrude was the first person to receive news of his death as the Army had lost the address of his family. They had discovered her details from the things in his pocket. She never married and wore his ring all her life. His photograph was in a small silver frame next to her bed.

A marble plaque to his memory was placed on the wall of north aisle near where she sat at Church services.

Gertrude died in 1970 and was buried in St Catherine's Churchyard.