

Richard Joshua Giggs Askew



Nº4116 & Nº552864

Nº2 Field Company  
Royal Engineers

Richard Joshua Giriggs Askew was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 1888 in Clowne, Derbyshire to Richard and Mary Askew (his mother's maiden name Griggs) He was baptised on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 1888. His father was a Labourer. He was their 7<sup>th</sup> of 8 children.

April 16 <sup>th</sup>	Richard Griggs	Richard & Mary	Askew	Clowne	Labourer	C. L. Higgs	Pector
No. 336.							

In 1891 Richard was aged 4, one of 4 children in the family home on Main Road Laughton near Doncaster. His father was working as a Brick Layer.

Administrative County of <u>Yorkshire</u>		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the										Page 6			
Civil Parish of <u>Laughton</u>		Municipal Borough of <u>Laughton</u>		Municipal Ward of <u>Rotherham</u>		Urban Sanitary District of <u>Laughton</u>		Town or Village or Hamlet of <u>Rotherham</u>		Parliamentary Borough or Division of <u>Doncaster</u>		Ecclesiastical Parish or District of <u>All Saints</u>			
Coln	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES	Number of rooms in the house	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON- DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employer	Employed	WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Lame (4) Lunatic (5) Pauper (6) Soldier (7) Sailor (8) Merchant (9) Farmer (10) Tradesman (11) Professional (12) Clerical (13) Domestic (14) Unemployed (15) Other			
40	Main Rd.	1	3	Richard Askew	Head	M	47	Bricklayer		X	Laughton, Pauper				
				Mary	Wife	M	43				York, Pauper				
				Rachel	Daughter		17				Laughton, Pauper				
				George	Son		17				Laughton, Pauper				
				Richard	Son		17				Laughton, Pauper				
				George	Son		17				Laughton, Pauper				

Parents Richard & Mary



By 1901 Richard was aged 14 and was living away from the rest of the family, living and working as a Servant/Cowman on a farm in Hooton Pagnell. One of his brothers (George) is living in the Workhouse Union Work house as a Pauper, his parents living with another relative.

Administrative County of <u>Yorkshire</u>		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the										Page 6			
Civil Parish of <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>		Municipal Borough of <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>		Municipal Ward of <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>		Urban Sanitary District of <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>		Town or Village or Hamlet of <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>		Parliamentary Borough or Division of <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>		Ecclesiastical Parish or District of <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>			
Coln	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES	Number of rooms in the house	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON- DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employer	Employed	WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Lame (4) Lunatic (5) Pauper (6) Soldier (7) Sailor (8) Merchant (9) Farmer (10) Tradesman (11) Professional (12) Clerical (13) Domestic (14) Unemployed (15) Other			
32	Hooton Pagnell	1	3	Richard Askew	Head	M	14	Servant			Laughton, Pauper				
				George Hudson	Head	M	53	Farmer			Laughton, Pauper				
				Ann	Wife	M	47				Laughton, Pauper				
				William	Son	S	17				Laughton, Pauper				
				William Robson	Son	S	23	Blacksmith			Laughton, Pauper				
				Betty Johnson	Son	S	15	General Domestic			Laughton, Pauper				
				Arthur Sturges	Son	S	29	Farmer			Laughton, Pauper				
				Richard Askew	Son	S	14	Cowman on farm			Laughton, Pauper				

In 1902 Richard lost his father, passing away in the Workhouse Union Workhouse where he must have joined his brother George at some point.

In 1911 Richard aged 24 is living as a boarder in Hooton Pagnell and working as a 'Wood Sawyer / Joiner'

1	Thomas Rodwell	Head	48	-	Married	-	-	-	Gardener (Domestic)	Gardener (Domestic)	Yorks Sutton	
2	Lilian Rodwell	Wife	43	-	Married	23	2	2			Yorks Doncaster	20
3	Raymond Rodwell	Son	8	-	-	-	-	-			Yorks Hooton Pagnell	
4	Mildred Rodwell	Daughter	7	-	-	-	-	-			Yorks Hooton Pagnell	
5	Richard Askeew	Boarder	24	-	Single				Wood Sawyer	Joiner	Yorks Hooton Pagnell	20

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)

1. I hereby certify that the above is a correct and true statement of the persons and their relationships in the household as at the date of the enumeration.

2. I have visited the premises and verified the names and relationships of the persons in the household as at the date of the enumeration.

3. After visiting the premises and verifying the names and relationships of the persons in the household as at the date of the enumeration, I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be necessary, and have corrected such as appeared to be incorrect.

Date of Enumeration: 1911

3 2 5

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation or in charge of the dwelling)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (Kitchens, Bathrooms, or Apartments). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count sanitary, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom, and workroom, office, shop.

Three

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: Lilian Rodwell

Postal Address: Hooton Pagnell

On the 16<sup>th</sup> February 1914 Richard married Eva Campey. He was working as a Joiner at this point.

1614. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Hooton Pagnell in the County of York.

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
163	February 16 <sup>th</sup>	Richard Askeew	27	Bachelor	Joiner	Hooton Pagnell	Richard Askeew deceased	Brick Layer
		Eva Campey	21	Spinster		Hooton Pagnell	Thomas Campey deceased	Dairy Keeper

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church of England by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Richard Askeew and Eva Campey, in the Presence of us, Ernest Birkinshaw and Batha Marshall, Vicar.

When war was declared on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914 Richard was 27 and married for 6 months. Like many including his brother George he would be called to serve

Brother George enlisted in early September 1914 but only served 25 days due to an old ankle injury, being medically discharged. There is no record of him in service again.

No service records survive for Richard but documents show he joined the Royal Engineers (T = Territorial), not surprising being a Joiner, and had the initial service number 4116. (later 552864)

552864	SPR.	ASKEW, Richard.	R.E. (T).	
			4116.	
			Royal Engineers.	

On the 27<sup>th</sup> November 1914 Richard and Eva had a daughter, Lucy Askeew.

Nº4114 Fredrick Griffith enlisted on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 1916 and joined the SMRE (South Midland Royal Engineers) 2/3 Field Company. It is almost certain that Richard followed the same time line and posting.

Enlisted ...	on 29 <sup>th</sup> day of May 1916
Joined on Enlistment ...	Corps. S.M.R.E. 2/3 <sup>rd</sup> Field Co. Regtl. No. 4114

The South Midland Royal Engineers were divided in to the 2/1 and 2/2 Service Companies and the 2/3 (training) Company which remained in the UK and trained recruits before posting to service companies.

2/3 SMRE became 482<sup>nd</sup> (South Midland) Reserve Field Company RE at some point.

No. 4114	Name Griffiths J.C.	Sqn., Batty., or Company	Corps. S.M.R.E.	Date of enlistment	29.5.16	G.C. Badges
FOR C.O. 482 <sup>nd</sup> (SOUTH MIDLAND) RESERVE						
FIELD COMPANY R.E.						



On the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1916 Richard and Eva had a 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter Lily Askew, the baptism records noting Richard a Soldier.

First name(s)	Lily	Mother's first name(s)	Eva
Last name	Askew	Residence	Hooton Pagnell
Birth year	-	County	Yorkshire (West Riding)
Baptism year	1916	Country	England
Baptism date	16 Jul 1916	Record set	Yorkshire Baptisms
Baptism place	Hooton Pagnell	Category	Birth, Marriage, Death & Parish Records
Denomination	Anglican	Subcategory	Parish Baptisms
Father's first name(s)	Richard Joshua Griggs	Collections from	England, Great Britain
Father's occupation	Soldier		

With no service record it is difficult to chart Richards war service, with no 1915 Star awarded it is certain he went to France after 1<sup>st</sup> January 1916 but exactly when is not known. Nor is it possible to trace his postings once in France.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1917 the men of the territorial forces were allocated new service numbers. Richard was allocated 552864

552864	SPR.	ASKEW, Richard.	R.E. (T).	4116.		
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Numbers 552001 to 554000 were allotted to the London Field Companies Royal Engineers.

No552859 (Richard 552864) was posted to 1/4 London Field Company on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 1916 from the London Division Engineers.

Surname <u>Brock</u>		Christian Name <u>Larry</u>	
Joined on Enlistment ...	1 <sup>st</sup> LONDON DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS.	3374	
Transferred to ...	2 <sup>nd</sup> " " "	4070	552859
cc. 1/4 Lan Flia Co		Joined 1/4 Lan Flia Coy from Base	on service 17.8.16

No552853 Holmes was in the 3/4 London Field Company in November 1916 and later 1/4 London Field Company.

counterfoil to me:—552853			
No. <u>4070</u>	Rank <u>Spr</u>	Name <u>Holmes J W</u>	
Unit <u>3/4 London Field Co</u>	<u>R.E.</u>	<u>1-11-16</u>	
<u>526 Sapper Holmes, J.W. ex. 1/4th London Field Co. R.E.</u>			

It is possible that Richard at some point was also in 3/4 or 1/4 London Field Company RE

No552120 Henry William Jeater served in the Royal Engineers 518th Field Company, 1/4<sup>th</sup> London Field company became 518th Field Company Royal Engineers

1/4 <sup>th</sup> Ld Co Appointed (Upd) Lance Corporal 10.11.15	
47 <sup>th</sup> Division	
518 Coy RE	
1/4 <sup>th</sup> London Field Coy RE.	

It is possible Richard joined 1/4 (518) Field Company in France at some point as part of a reinforcing draft. If this was the case at some point he transferred to 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company RE. there is no mention in either of the units war diaries of the nature and time of reinforcing drafts arriving or of transfers between them so it is almost impossible to track Richards war in France through 1916 or 1917 with any certainty.

The only records available show that by May 1918 Richard was serving with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company RE, part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Division.

Name <u>Askew Richard</u>	Regimental No. <u>4116 552864</u>
Regiment <u>R.E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Coy</u>	Rank <u>Sgt</u>

(No552875 Heppell was with 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company RE in August 1917)

<u>R.E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Coy. 552875 for Heppell.</u>	<u>a</u>
2nd Field Coy., R.E.	
552875 Sgt Heppell, A. To England ex 20 Gen. Hos. 8-8-17.	

Richards name (Pte R Askew) was inscribed on a cross erected on the village green in Hooton Pagnell dedicated to the serving men of Hooton Pagnell. Penistone, Stocksbridge and Hoyland Express 16 June 1917

<h2>VILLAGE WAR SHRINE.</h2> <h3>Hooton Pagnell and Frickley Men.</h3> <p>A war shrine has been erected on the village green at Hooton Pagnell, opposite to the Market Cross. It takes the form of an oak crucifix, surmounted by a canopy. On either side of the Sacred Figure are panels. On the left-hand side appears the Pauline text: "Be just and fear not"; and immediately below that a Shakespearian quotation:—"Let all the aims thou aimest at be thy country's, thy God's, and Truth." On the right-hand side is inscribed an appropriate prayer for the</p>	<p>men who "through perils of war are serving this nation," and immediately below the crucifix appear the names of the following men who have fallen:—Pte. E. Wilde, Able-Seaman H. L. Waters, Cpl. H. Mottram. The remainder of the panels are occupied with the names of the following men of Frickley and Hooton Pagnell who are serving:—Lieut. Col. St. Andrew Warde-Aldam, D.S.O., Major E. Bernard Wilson, Lieut. J. R. P. Warde-Aldam, Sergt. R. Williamson, Sergt. C. Parkin Coates, D.C.M., Lee-Cpl. F. Gray, Lee-Cpl. J. A. Gould, Pte. R. Askew, Pte. P. Adams, Pte. H. Allatt, Pte. W. H. North, Pte. W. Adams, Pte. C. Wood, Pte. F. O. Bland, Pte. R. Brass, Pte. W. Horne, and Pte. F. H. Myers.</p>
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The assumption is that Richard was with 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company RE by early May 1918. The Company were at Dravegny on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 1918.

LOCATION REPORT.		5th. May, 1918.
2nd. Field Coy. R.E.	DRAVEGNY.	4.H.69.79.





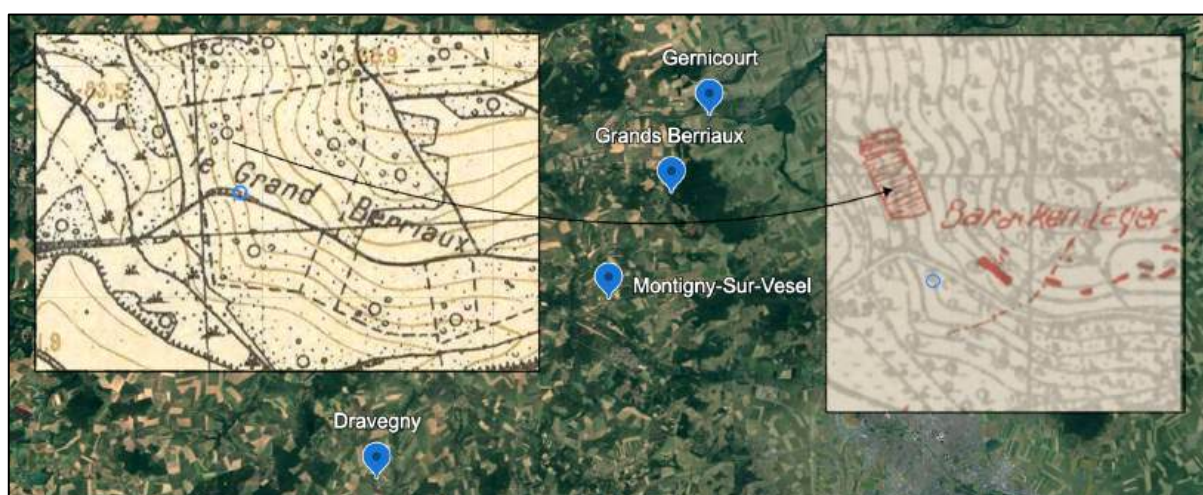
DRAVEGNY	3 pm	Standing orders read & sections by section officers
5 <sup>th</sup> /18		Cleaning, inspecting, and checking coy vehicles and equipment
6 <sup>th</sup> /18		Section drill, progress & guards. Inspection by C.R.E. 3 p.m. & train in afternoon.
7 <sup>th</sup> /18		Cleaning & polishing vehicles & harness.
8 <sup>th</sup> /18		Baths: repair & cleaning of equipment.
9 <sup>th</sup> /18	8.30 am	Bayonet fighting 2 p.m. coy drill.
10 <sup>th</sup> /18		Musketry target practice & coy drill
11 <sup>th</sup> /18	6.30 am	Company move to CAMP de L'ORME, MONTIGNY-SUR-VESE

On the 11<sup>th</sup> May 1918 they moved to Camp de L'Orme at Montigny-sur-Vesle, 13<sup>th</sup> to Le Cholera where they undertook some demolition work. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> the officers and some NCOs headed to view the defences at Gernicourt that the company would occupy in case of attack. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> the company moved to billets in Grands Berriaux

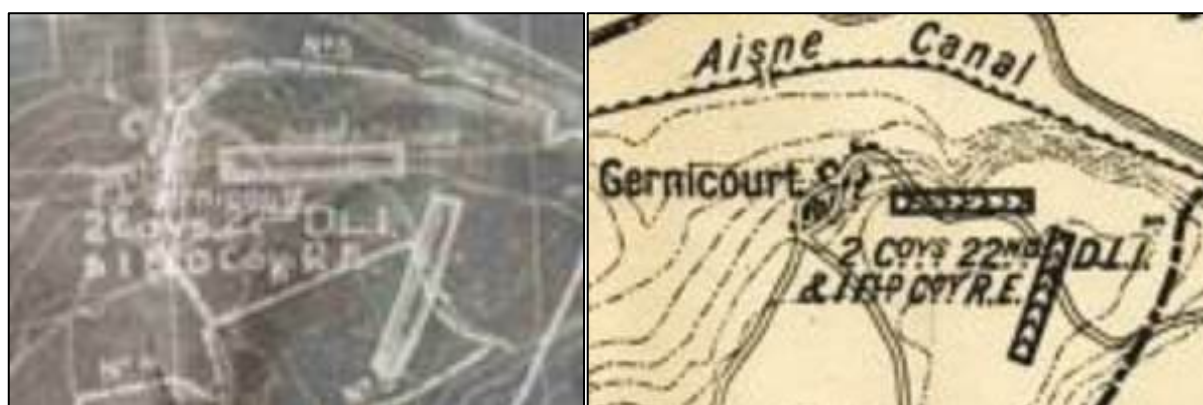
(4) The section 2nd Field Co. R.E. working on O.P. 11. Hill 180, will continue to work on it, but will live with H.Q. of 2nd Field Co. R.E. in GRANDS BERRIAUX.

OP (observation Post) 11 and Hill 180 were just behind Gernicourt wood to the south east of the village.

A Barrack (Baraken) noted on the German map of Grands Berriaux



Gernicourt, battle positions of the 22<sup>nd</sup> (Pioneer) Battalion Durham Light Infantry and 1 Company Royal Engineers, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company.





On the 26<sup>th</sup> May 1918 at 3:45pm a warning was received from a German prisoner that an attack was imminent.

26<sup>th</sup> 3.45  
7.30  
Warning received from 8<sup>th</sup> Div. that prisoners had stated that an attack by  
~~it~~ was contemplated by the enemy against the CHEMIN DES DAMES almost  
immediately. *mm*

SECRET & URGENT

OC 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Co RE  
OC 15<sup>th</sup> Field Co RE  
OC 490<sup>th</sup> Field Co RE

8<sup>th</sup> DIV. ENGINEERS  
NO. S 2170  
Date 26.5.18

Prisoners taken on our left state  
that an attack is contemplated almost  
immediately against the CHEMIN DES  
DAMES

Please take every precaution  
(short of "standing to") to ensure that  
the company under your command  
is ready for action or movement  
at short notice if required

(sd) J.F.S. Ross  
Capt RE  
Adj-RE 8<sup>th</sup> Division

At 7:30pm orders were received to take battle positions as soon as possible.

7.30  
Orders received from 8<sup>th</sup> Div. for Field Co. at GRANDS BERRIAUX (2<sup>nd</sup> Field Co) to  
take up battle positions as soon as possible. *mm*

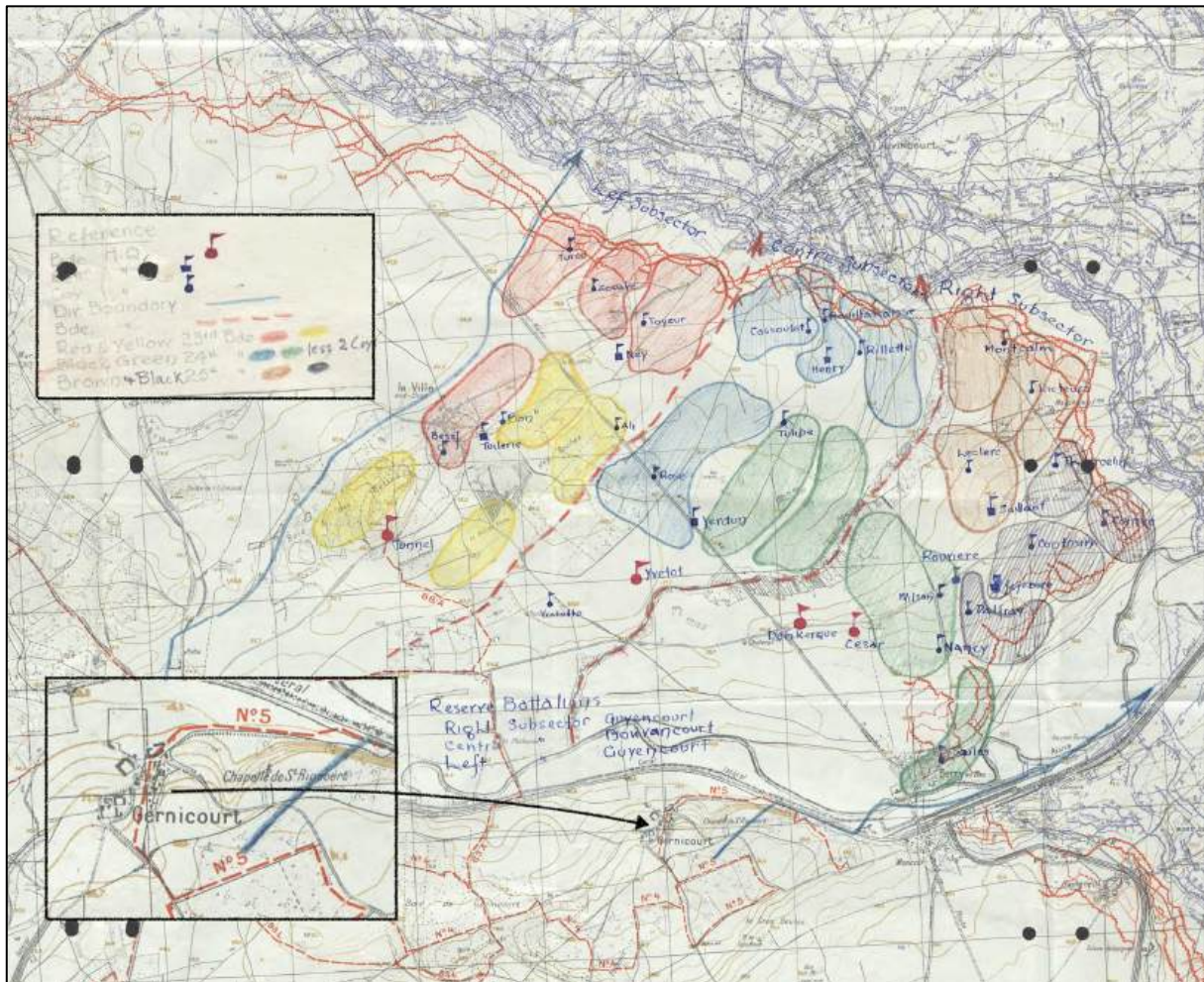
At 10:40 pm the Officer Commanding 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company received orders to man emergency trenches.

10.40  
p.m.  
O.C. receives orders to man emergency trench. Whole Coy  
dismounted, under O.C. - less HQ, wagon men, 50% senior  
NCO's and Lt Miller - with over days ration march  
off 11.45 p.m. Pontoon & fuel wagons sent off to put up  
positions in front of MONTIGNY.



South of the River AISNE there was an important tactical feature about GERNICOURT, forming part of the Battle Zone and covering the Right flank of the Division. The GERNICOURT DEFENCES, together with the BOIS POUPEUX DEFENCES, were held by permanent garrisons.

Battle Zone positions of the 8<sup>th</sup> Division, Gernicourt way back from the front lines.



The battle positions of 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company RE were allotted to them by the 22<sup>nd</sup> (Pioneer) Battalion Durham Light Infantry (DLI) who were in charge of the Gernicourt defences.

8th Division, R.E. Order No. 75. 26th May 1918.

- (1). 2nd Field Coy, R.E. will occupy Battle position as allotted by 22nd D.L.I. as soon as possible. They will move forward in fighting order less greatcoats. Not more than 3 Subaltern Officers and 50 R.E.G.'s will go up. valuable specials should also be left behind. The 2nd in Command is not to go up without orders from C.O.R.E.

- (5). All Units will keep in close touch as follows:-  
2nd Field Coy. with 22nd D.L.I.



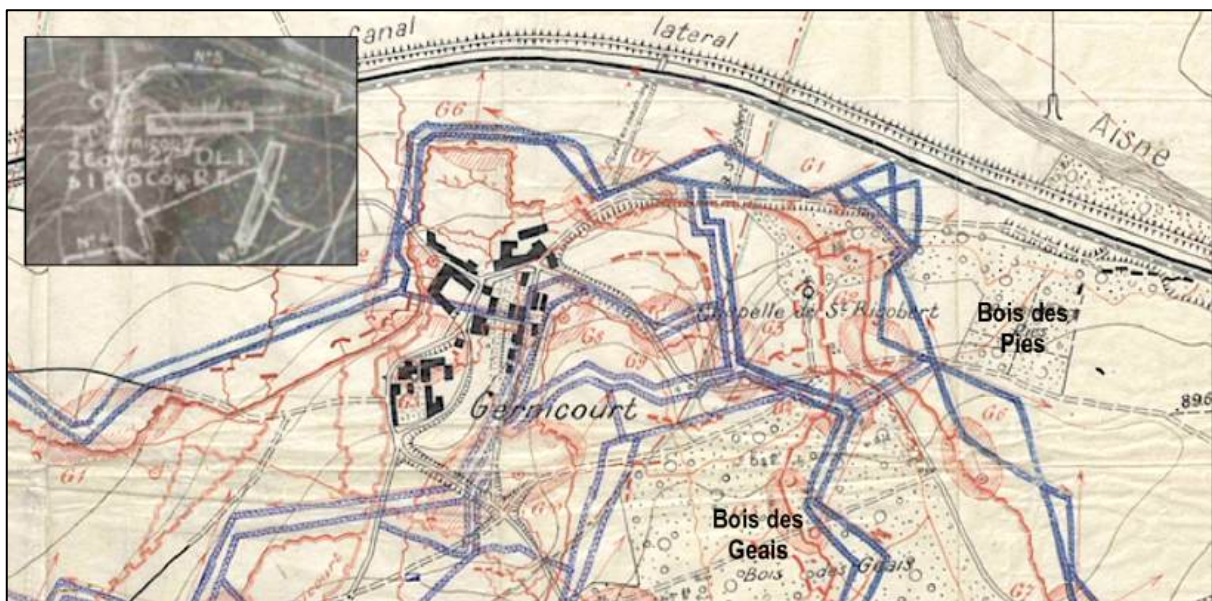
The O.C. 22nd D.L.I. has been made responsible for the defences of GERNICOURT, to include a line approximately from 2209, 2961 to 2202, 2951. (BOIS de PIES and BOIS de GEAIS, both inclusive).

The following troops are placed at disposal of O.C., 22nd D.L.I. for this purpose in addition to 22nd D.L.I. (less one Company).

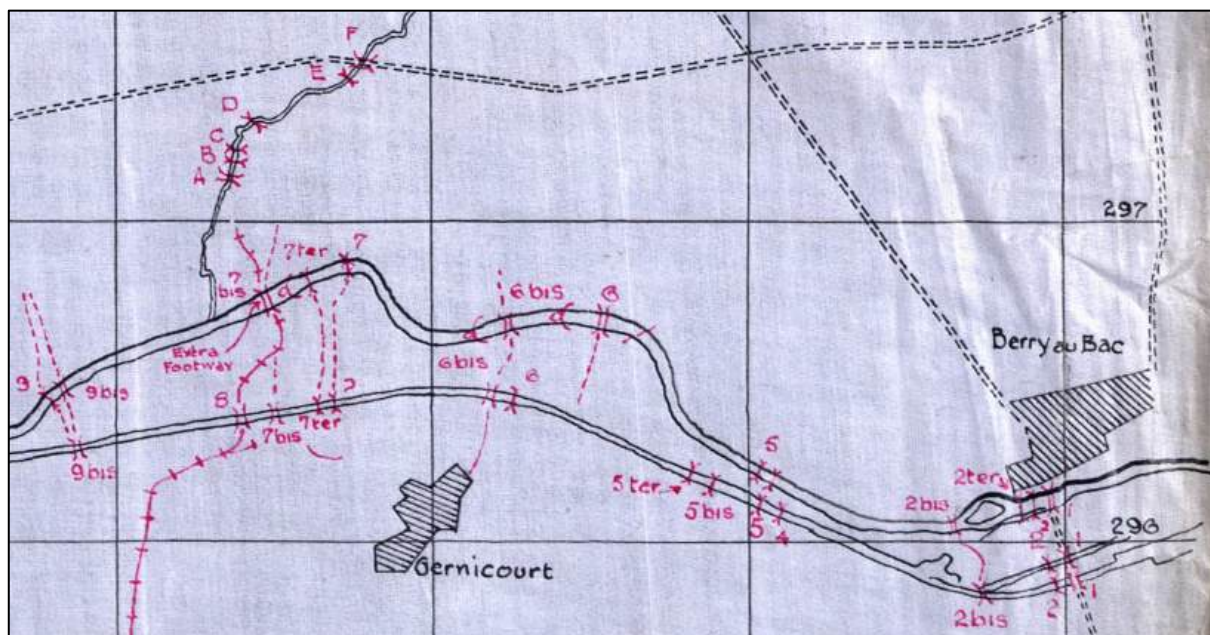
1 Field Company, R.E.

8 Machine Guns from 8th M.G. Battalion.

The probable direction of an enemy attack would be from the North East through BERRY-au-BAC and MEGOU and along valley and low ground in 221. 295.



Bridges across the canals and waters north of Gernicourt were to be blown as part of the defensive scheme by 15 Field Company RE, with an attack expected from the north east and thorough Berry au Bac.





27TH MAY, 1918.

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There was a very heavy mist the whole night, and this mist increased in density towards morning and was accentuated by the hostile gas and smoke shell.

At 1 a.m. the enemy bombardment commenced. It consisted of trench mortars from light up to very heavy calibre on the Outpost Zone, and artillery further in rear.

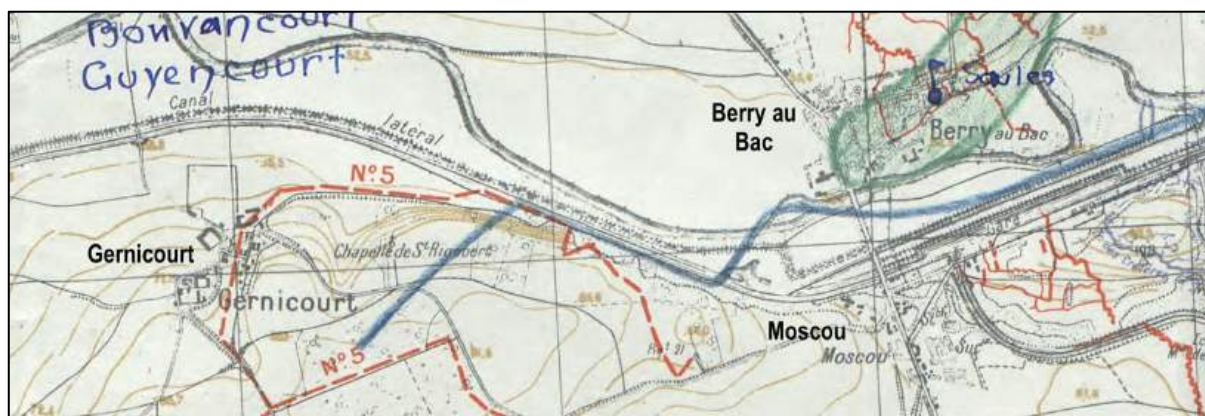
The battery areas were very heavily bombed with H.E. and gas shell and the Battle Zone received a terrific bombardment from all natures of Artillery. Added to the gas the enemy carried out area shoots where the batteries were located, and by 6 a.m. most of the guns North of the River were out of action. The GERNICOURT DEFENCES also received a very heavy gas and H.E. bombardment.

2nd Field Company War Diary notes the barrage at 12:45 am on the 27th May when the company was a few hundred yards from the trench and they became broken up.

2.45am Enemy barrage comes down on company when a few hundred yards from trench. Coy becomes broken up.

The CO of 2nd Field Company and 2/3 men reached their trench positions around 2am, joined by No2 section about 3:15am, totalling only 30 men. They held the trench until around 9:15am then being forced back around 200 yards to a trench east of Gernicourt. They held this line for about an hour before turning to occupy a trench at a right angle due to the German attack on their flank.

The major with two or three sappers reached the position about 2.0 am. At about 3.15 am they were joined by No 2 section which had gradually made its way through the woods up to the position. The trench was held until about 9.15 am when the party - 30 strong, all ranks - was forced back about 200 yds and took up a fresh position in a trench East of GERNICOURT. This position was maintained for an hour, when owing to the enemy attacking on the flank, it became necessary to occupy a trench running at right angles to the former direction.





A trench at Gerincourt (photo late 1917)



German troops watching shells exploding near Berry au Bac in the attack on the 8<sup>th</sup> Division zone 27<sup>th</sup> May (later in the day)



The German troops quickly advanced and crossed bridges not blown up to the west of Gernicourt, outflanking the defenders on both sides.

It appears that the enemy first crossed the river West of LA PECHERIE and then penetrated into the BOIS DE GERNICOURT, and so turned the flanks and rear of the troops which were holding the line of the River and Canal South of PONTAERT on the Westward and the GERNICOURT DEFENCES on the Eastward.

Casualties suffered by R.E. detailed to destroy the bridges amount to 10 Officers and 176 Other Ranks.

German troops crossing the canal and waterways 27<sup>th</sup> May 1918





Message sent at 10 25am 27<sup>th</sup> May 1918 from the CO 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company stating he had only 29 men with him in a trench east of Gernicourt.

Copy of message from  
Major Grant

Capt West MC 299

2ND  
FIELD COMPANY,  
R.E.

No. ....  
Date .....

Am in a trench in front of one occupied last night running E of GERNICOURT. The Hun has crossed the canal by GERNICOURT bridge not blown up. Only 29 men with me and Gardner. Mummel slightly wounded.

27/5  
10.25am

GENERAL  
3 JUN. 1918  
3rd DIVISION

R Grant  
Major RE  
CO 2<sup>nd</sup> Coy RE



Details of the fighting on the GERNICOURT Position are difficult to obtain, but apparently this position was turned from the S.W., for the enemy having got into the BOIS DE GERNICOURT, pushed on Eastwards through the BOIS POUPEUX and so got round the defenders of the GERNICOURT Position. The garrison including the French Territorial troops apparently put up a good fight, but they were surrounded and overpowered.

By 12:30 the enemy were occupying the same trench as the company on both flanks and the order was given to withdrawal. Leaving in small parties the men had to fight their way through the surrounding enemy troops. Only 7 made it back to the rendezvous at the transport lines.

230 The enemy was occupying same trench as coy. on both flanks  
 pm The order was given to withdraw. The withdrawal had to be carried out in small parties which had to fight their way through the surrounding enemy. Only about seven of the party made their way right back to the transport lines. Of the other sections, about 24 OR's returned to the transport at about 4 pm

D. H. & L., London, E.C.  
 (A:293) Wt 180g Maps 100,000 1/75 Sch 22a. Form C/218/4

German troops advancing 27<sup>th</sup> May 1918



Overview of the German attack on the right sector:

The 25th Brigade on the right of the 24th, occupied a curved line which formed the right flank of the Chemin des Dames position, and faced northeast round to south-east, on two low hills with a depression between them, the right wing being roughly parallel to the Aisne, and a quarter to three-quarters of a mile from it. On the left was the 2/Royal Berkshire, next on the right the 2/Rifle Brigade, each with two companies in the front trenches. The support and reserve companies of the Rifle Brigade were responsible for the line further south where the Aisne separated the British from the Germans, whilst further

south again, near Berry au Bac, were two companies of the 2/East Lancashire. The enemy attacked the northern half of the sector with tanks, and also crossed the Aisne and made a converging attack on the weakly held southern part of the line. Heavy casualties had been suffered in the bombardment, and by 5 a.m., though some parts of the front line held on until surrounded, the enemy was through both the Forward Zone and the Battle Zone, and the few survivors of the two and half battalions involved fell back across the Aisne.

The brigade headquarters, north of Berry au Bac, had been surrounded before it was known that the front line had gone, and the staff had to fight their way out to the Gernicourt Defences, the brigade major being killed..

The 15th Field Company R.E. in the 8th Division area, and the 446th in the 50th Division area, as the troops retired, blew up or burnt practically all the bridges over the Aisne and its canal in the British sector behind them, on the responsibility of the engineer officers on the spot, from Berry au Bac (inclusive) to Maizy (exclusive for which the French were responsible). The 15th Field Company, which had blown up the bridge over the Miette at 7 a.m., accounted for all in the divisional sector except one, 22; the 446th, for 15 out of 19, suffering a good deal from bombardment, losing 4 officers and 46 men, and thus having the strength of its parties considerably reduced.

The village of Gernicourt, as already mentioned, stands well above the river and commands all the ground to the front, but it was liable to be turned through the woods on the east. The garrison, two companies of the 22nd Durham L.I. (Pioneers), the 2nd Battalion of the French 23rd Territorial Regiment (less one company), eight British and sixteen French machine guns, was reinforced in the early morning of the 27th by two companies of the 2/East Lancashire and by parts of the 2nd and 490th Field Companies R.E. and after the attack on the front zones, some survivors of the forward battalions also joined it. About 5 a.m. orders were sent by the 8th Division for the 1/Sherwood Foresters and 8 machine guns to move up from divisional reserve at Roucy to the Bois de Gernicourt, on the left of the Gernicourt Defences. They reached the north edge of the Bois de Gernicourt about 7 a.m., in time to see all the bridges over the Aisne canal in this sector, except one, blown up, and to take up a position to prevent the enemy from crossing the Aisne canal, from which position they gained touch on the right with the troops holding Gernicourt. The only intact bridge being under heavy fire, the Germans were held up here for some hours. Meanwhile, other Germans, after taking Berry au Bac, found a practicable crossing west of that place, and advanced on the wood southeast of Gernicourt. A right defensive flank facing east was formed to stop them, and here also the attack was held for a considerable time. On the other flank, the enemy, who had crossed the Aisne and the canal between the Bois de Gernicourt and Pontavert, apparently by a temporary bridge was able to enfilade the Sherwood Foresters with machine guns.

A left defensive flank was therefore formed at the north-west corner of the Bois de Gernicourt, facing west. Pressure on both flanks continued, and about 1 p.m., when nearly surrounded, the survivors of the Sherwood Foresters and the garrison of the Gernicourt Defences retired to the Green Line, and the guns of the CX Brigade R.F.A. (25th Division) and a trench group besides a number of heavy guns had to be abandoned. Isolated parties continued to resist even up to 2 or 3 p.m. Less than ten companies had held up twelve enemy battalions for over six hours.

Casualties of the 2nd Field Company RE on the 27th May 1918 were 4 killed 18 wounded 37 missing

Casualties on this day were -			
Officers: Major Grant - missing believed P.O.W.			
Lieut. Clarke and Brammel - wounded and hospital			
Lieut. Gardner - missing			
O.R.s:	Killed -	4	Total casualties 62.
	Wounded	16	
	Missing	35	
	Grossed	3	
		Officers	4
		Sgts	1
		Cpls	4
		Lt Cpls	2
		Lt/Lt Cpls	2

Richard was one of the 37 missing. He was 30 years old.



With details of the action in Gernicourt scarce it is not possible to say what happened to Richard other than as the fighting drew on and the village became encircled he was taken Prisoner of War. Weather in the trenches, fighting his way out in a small party or isolated on his own is not known.



Richard was listed as Missing in the Weekly Casualty List on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 1918.

WEEKLY CASUALTY LIST, JULY 16th, 1918.	
PART VI. W.O.'s, N.C.O.'s, AND MEN (Contd.).	
MISSING.	
ROYAL ENGINEERS.—Abbott 22435 Spr. W. H. (Southampton); Abbruzzese 506205 Pnr. A. L. (Weston-super-Mare); Adam 420010 Spr. D. (Paisley); Adams 169689 Spr. W. R. (Halifax); Alford 17764 Spr. R. (Belfast); Alwynne 532399 Spr. E. (Brighton); Anderson 475935 Spr. C. (South Shields); Ansell 254737 Pnr. F. H. (Southwark, S.E.); Armour 49203 Pnr. A. (Renfrew); Artingstoll 28634 Act. L.-Cpl. J., M.M. (Norton); Ashton 74295 Spr. E. S. (Buxton); Askew 552864 Spr. R. (Doncaster); Aston 74222 L.-Cpl. H. (Birmingham); Atkinson 66859 Spr. W. (Peckham, S.E.); Baber	

On the 15 August 1918 he was noted in Dulmen Prisoner of War Camp. He was noted a Sapper in the Royal Engineers captured at Gerne(i)court on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 1918 (June is a typing error). Date of birth 17<sup>th</sup> January 1888 in Clowne.

Vorhergeheuder Aufenthaltsort – Previous Location – Laon, a city to the north west of Gernicourt used as a ‘Collection Point’.

FIGURE V 31

15 AOU 1918

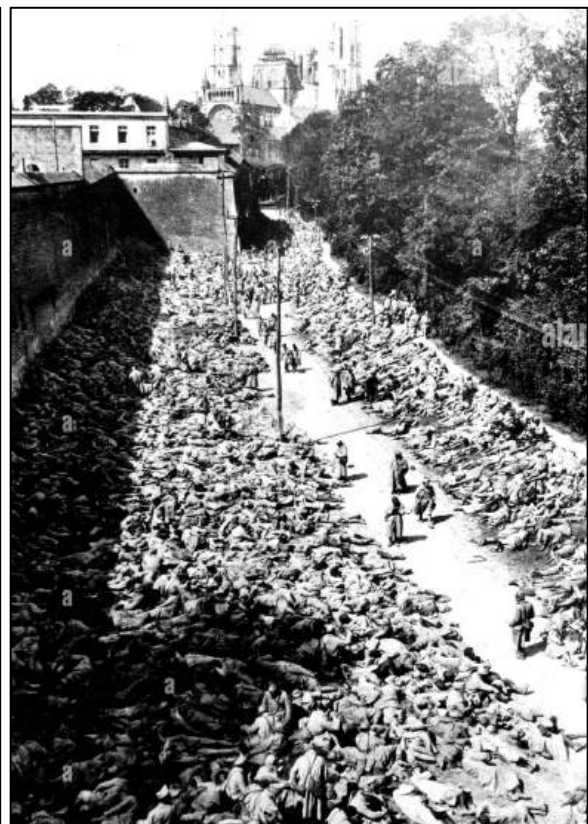
P.A. 33139 COPIE

1	2	3	4	5	6	
Fb. Nr.	a) Familienname	Dienst- grad	a)	Gefangennahme (Ort und Tag)	a) Geburtstag und -Ort	
	b) Vorname (nur der Rufname)		b)		b)   Adresse des nächsten	
	c) nur bei Russen Vorname des Vaters		c) Komp.		c)   vorhergehender Auf- enthaltort	c)   Verwandten
	<i>Dulman</i>					

a)	13	ASKEW	Spr	Royal	Gernecourt 27-6-18	Clown 17-1-88
b)		Richard		Engineers	No	Burton Salmon, Yorkshire.
c)		552864		--	Laon	Wife ( as above )



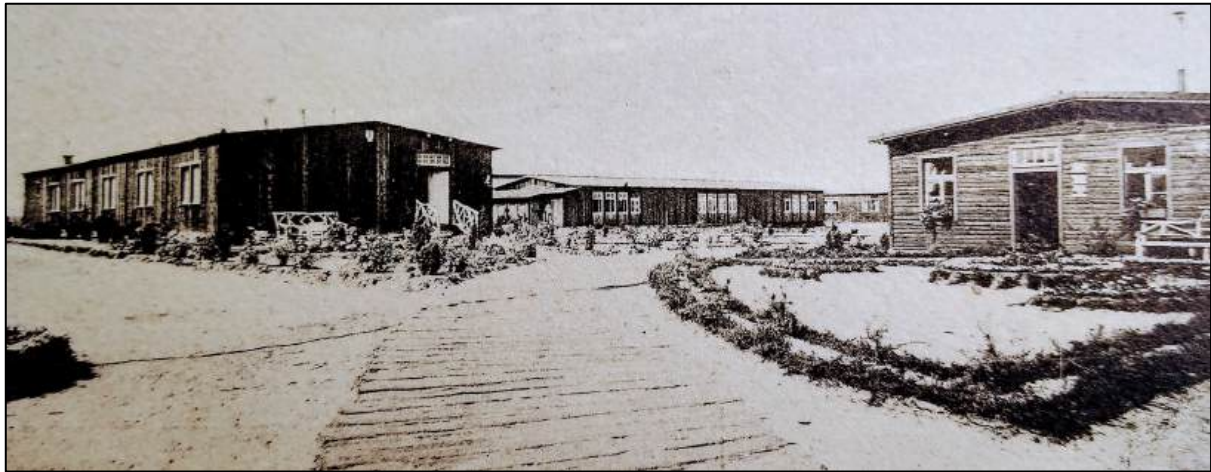
Thousands of British, French, and American prisoners languish at the prisoner collection centre in Laon (the cathedral in the background).



Dulmen Prisoner of War Camp







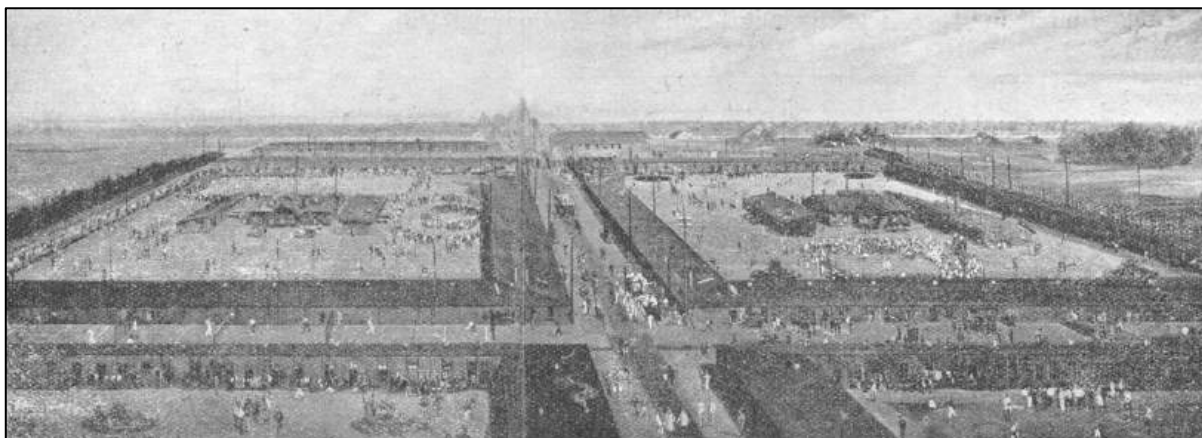
By the 26<sup>th</sup> September 1918 Richard had ben moved to Munster II (Rennbahn) Camp. This paperwork had the correct capture date but the wrong location.

20 SEP 1918 COPIÉ P.A. 36909

Liste Nr. <u>5</u> <small>(Nr. des Lagers)</small>	<b>Gefangenenliste</b>	Liste Nr. <u>35278</u> <small>(Nr. des Kriegsministeriums)</small>			
<b>des Lagers 11 Münster 1/W.</b>					
abgesandt vom Lag. am <u>31. 8. 18</u>	eingegangen beim Nr.-Min. am <u>4. 9. 18</u>	abgesandt vom Nr.-Min. (N. B.) am <u>14. 9. 18</u>			
Staatsangehörigkeit: <u>Engländer</u>					
1 Fsb. Nr.	2 a) Familienname b) Vorname (nur der Rufname) c) nur bei Russen Vorname des Vaters	3 Dienst- grad	4 a)   Truppen- b)   teil c) Komp.	5 a)   Gefangennahme b)   (Ort und Tag) c) vorhergehender Auf- enthaltort	6 a) Geburtstag u. -Ort b)   Adresse des nächsten c)   Verwandten
1	ASKEW Richard	Pte	2nd. Fd. Coy. R.E.	Gommecourt. 27. 5. 18  Lager Dülmen	17. 1. 88. Houn.  Burton Salmon South Milford. Yorks.



## Munster II Camp



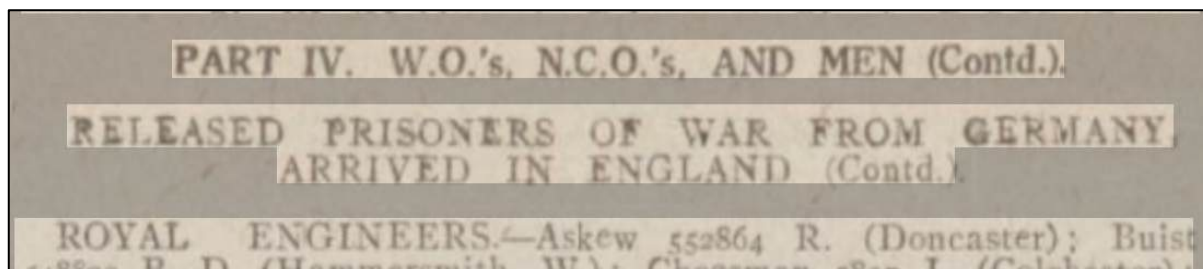
It is assumed Richards family had no information regarding his capture. His military documents show a notification of death on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 1918. Form 104-88 referred to on the card is 'Death notification of a married man' sent from the Territorial Force Record Office to the War Office. This is dated 12<sup>th</sup> July 1918. His wife was noted as 'Widow' living at the School House Hooton Pagnell.

'POW C2 Cas 3.9.18' had been added, it may have been in September 1918 they learned his true fate. (C2 Cas was the Casualty branch of the war office who corresponded with enemy countries and eventually incorporated the Prisoners of War Information Bureau)

Name <u>Askew Richard</u>	Regimental No. <u>552864</u>	Case No. <u>6416</u>	W. 5.
Regiment <u>R. E. 2nd Field Coy</u>	Rank <u>Sgt</u>		
Form 104-88 received <u>12. 7. 18</u>	Date of notification of death <u>24. 6. 18</u>	Form 104-76 received _____	
Date and cause of death _____			
Widow <u>Eva, School House, Hooton</u>		Date of birth _____	
Children: <u>Pagnell, Doncaster</u>			
Name	Date of birth	Date of expiry	Remarks
<u>P.O.W.</u>	<u>29. 9. 18</u>		No. for whom S.A. is paid <u>2</u>
			<u>Alan a line 29/6/20</u>
			<u>notification for C2 Cas LB</u>
Pension <u>Log</u> a week from _____			

Richard saw the war come to an end on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 as a POW in Munster Camp.

It wasn't until January 1919 that Richard eventually arrived back home in the UK, listed in the Weekly Casualty List of the 7<sup>th</sup> January 1919 'Released Prisoners of War from Germany Arrived in England'





Richard returned home to his wife and 2 children in Hooton Pagnell and took up work as a carpenter, his pre war profession.

In late July 1919 'Peace Celebration' was held at Hooton Pagnell Hall where the three men of the village including Richard were presented with a 'Leather Case' purchased with the unexpended village POW fund. Eckington Woodhouse and Staveley Express 26<sup>th</sup> July 1919

## **GARDEN PARTY AT HOOTON PAGNELL.**

### **Delightful "Peace" Function.**

The peace celebrations at Hooton Pagnell took the form of a garden party at Hooton Pagnell Hall, Mrs. Warde-Aldam inviting the whole of the village to join her there. The beautiful lawns had been festooned and laid out for lawn games. Tea tables and buffets were set up under the trees, and the trees themselves were hung with fairy lamps. Mrs. Warde-Aldam had cancelled her intention of going away for the week-end, saying she could not bear to be away from Hooton Pagnell on such an occasion. The festivities began with a cricket match between soldiers and civilians, followed by a tea for the children. Afterwards the whole of the village repaired to the hall for a buffet tea. Mrs. Warde-Aldam was assisted in her hospitable task by the following ladies: Miss Taylor, Nurse Dorothy, Nurse Flora, Nurse Joan, Miss Cumper, Mrs. Gawthorpe, Mrs. MacNaught, Mrs. R. Seels, Miss E. Hill, Miss Edith Hill, Mrs. Belk, Mrs. Turnbull, Miss Alice Hills, Mrs. J. Sargent, Mrs. Stanley, Mrs. Hiley, Mrs. Tarr, Mrs. Bland, Mrs. Hugill, and Mrs. Coles. The following gentlemen acted as stewards: Col. E. B. Wilson, D.S.O., the Rev. E. Brunning, Messrs. H. Allatt, R. Askew, J. Barlow, T. Belk, E. Birkinshaw, F. O. Bland, W. G. Elford, A. Gawthorpe, J. Grasse, L. Hill, C. Hoggett, W. Hugill, A. Massey, C. Parkin, J. Sargent, L. Sargent, H. V. Sargent, R. Seels, G. Stanley, W. J. Stanley, and W. Turnbull. After tea a merry Victory peal was rung out from the village church, and all the company went to church for a short thank-

giving service, conducted by the Rev. E. Brunning (the Rev. H. A. Kearney, vicar, being from home).

After the festive gathering, had re-assembled on the lawn, there were presentations to seventeen Hooton Pagnell soldiers. In all, this village has sent thirty-four men to the Forces, and half that number have so far returned. In distributing to the returned soldiers engraved silver match-boxes, Mrs. Warde-Aldam said she was more thankful than she could say that they had been delivered from the terrors and dangers of the war. The village welcomed them home very heartily, and had never ceased to think of them and pray for them while they were away. They held in honour and reverent regard the eight men who had given their lives. They were very proud, too, of the fact that military honours had been won by their soldiers. Col. St. Andrew Warde-Aldam had won the D.S.O., and two brevets, and had been thrice "mentioned." Col. E. B. Wilson had also won the D.S.O., and Sergt. Parkin Coates, the first Hooton Pagnell soldier to win distinction, had been awarded the D.C.M. Their hearts were very full to-day of welcome, of joy and thankfulness, and also it must be said, of anxious hope for the future peace and well-being of the country.

Mrs. Warde-Aldam also presented to three Hooton Pagnell men who have been prisoners of war in Germany, handsome leather cases. The recipients were Cpl. R. Grasse, Cpl. Frank Stoker, and Cpl. R. Askew. These presents were provided from the unexpended balance of the village prisoners of war fund, the money being collected by Mrs. Hellewell and Mr. E. Birkinshaw. After the presentations there was dancing on the lawn, followed by illuminations. The whole proceedings were much enjoyed.

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Name: <u>Askew, Richard</u>		Regimental No. <u>552864</u>		Case No. <u>4116</u>		W. 5.	
Regiment: <u>R. E. 2nd Field Coy</u>		Rank: <u>Shr</u>		6416.			
Form 104-48 received <u>12.7.18</u>		Date of notification of death: <u>21.10.18</u>		Form 104-76 received			
Date and cause of death:		Date of birth:					
Where: <u>12, School House, Hooton Pagnell, Doncaster</u>							
Children: <u>Pagnell, Doncaster</u>							
Years		Date of birth		Date of expiry		Remarks	
						See for which E.A. is put <u>2</u>	
						Man alive <u>30.1.29</u>	
						Registration in P. Case <u>28</u>	
Pension: <u>18</u>		a week from					
Date awarded:		If refused, reason:					
Papers:							
(1) 10.10.18		10.10.18		10.10.18		10.10.18	

Askew, Eva,		6416.	
School House.			
Hooton Pagnell,			
Doncaster			
Richard			
4116			
552864 Shr. Richard.		Emit 30.1.29	
R. E.		Man alive P.O.W.	

For his war service Richard was awarded the British War and Victory Medals.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regd. No.
<u>ASKEW</u>	<u>R.E.</u>	<u>Spr</u>	<u>552864</u>
<u>Richard</u>	<u>R.E. (T)</u>		<u>4116</u>
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
<u>VICTORY</u>	<u>R.E. 101 B200</u>	<u>48608</u>	
<u>BRITISH</u>	<u>- do -</u>	<u>- do -</u>	
<u>STAR</u>			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Victory Medal and the British War Medal granted under Army Orders		REGIMENT OR CORPS.		of 1918.	
Held by an individual in the Corps in respect of which the medal was awarded.	NAME	Theatre of war in which served	Chap awarded (to be left blank)	Reason of award of decorations	REMARKS
Regd. No.	Rank			(a) Promoted (b) Despatched by Post (c) Taken into Rank	
552864	Spr	ASKEW, Richard	R.E. (T)		
		4116			
		Regal Engineers			
552864	Spr				

In the 1921 census Richard, Evan and 2 children are living in Hooton Pagnell, probably at the Old School House, Richard working as the Estate Carpenter at Frickley Hall.

1	Richard Askew	Head	38	M	married	Yorkshire English	Estate Carpenter	Mrs Ward Aldam	700	Hooton Pagnell
2	Eva Askew	Wife	28	F	married	Yorkshire English	House Duties			64 Road
3	Lucy Askew	Daughter	6	F	Both	Yorkshire English				
4	Lily Askew	Daughter	5	F	Alive	Yorkshire English				
5	Marjorie Oxer	Visitor	17	F	Single	Yorkshire English	none	Visitor		

Registration District.	Registration Sub-District.	Enumeration District.
<u>Doncaster 512</u>	<u>Barnborough 1.</u>	<u>H1</u>
Name of person responsible for making the return. <u>Mr. Askew</u>		
Postal Address <u>Hooton Pagnell</u>		



The old School House Hooton Pagnell.



Frickley Hall nr Doncaster.



On the 15<sup>th</sup> December 1923 Richard and Eva had a son, Thomas Richard Askew 1923.

In the 1939 register the family are living at 29 Jossey Lane, Richard a Joiner and an Air Raid Precautions Warden.

E.D. Letter Code		K.M.G.1.		Borough, U.D. or R.D.		Donley & Arbury		Registration District and Sub-District		A. 512 <sup>A</sup> (2)		
ADDRESS.	SCHEDULE		SURNAME AND OTHER NAMES.	O. V. S. P. or L.	M. or F.	BIRTH-		S. M. W. or D.	PERSONAL OCCUPATION	See INSTRUCTIONS		
	No.	Sub- No.				Day	Year					
29 Jossey Lane	213		1. Mrs. Mary. E.		F	APR	17	W	Unpaid Domestic Duties	HC243/9626		
		2	Askew Richard J.	M	JAN	81	MV	Joiner				
		3	Askew Eva	F	JUNE	92	M	Unpaid Domestic Duties				
		4	Askew Lily	F	JUNE	16	S	Dressmaker.				
			4 Askew Thomas R.	M	DEC	23	S	Joiner.				



Richard and Eva in later life, Richard wearing his WW1 Medal Ribbon Bar.



Richard passed away on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 1953 aged 65.