

Leatherhead & District Local History Society

Potted Histories No 86

Fetcham Memories: 1911-1920

A Typical WWI Private House used as a Military Hospital



World War 1 and Fetcham - Local History Group 1

Fetcham U3A Local History Group 1 is researching the impact of WW1 on the Fetcham community. The 1911 Fetcham census was linked to censuses going back to 1841, providing an ancestral trail of the 400 odd adults in the village. Having identified by age the men and young boys who could have served in WW1 the British Army WW1 Medal Roll Index Cards were searched. These refer to the medals awarded to each serviceman giving their name, regimental name and number and sometimes sadly the words "Killed in Action". Just by the sheer number of men involved, there are many possibilities and identical names, hampered by men signing up and giving the more familiar family nicknames, second names or false age, with no particular checks being made. Each of these options is checked a lengthy process in the hope that a service or pension record may be found. These can provide the original enlistment details, name, age, address, height, weight, chest expansion, hair colour and eyes, next of kin, occupation and postings and can be several pages or more of digital images of the originals and are paramount to substantiating a more definite identification.

Some fascinating and deeply sad facts have been uncovered - brothers both being killed in action, a prisoner of war for 9 months, men serving in the East Surrey Regiment, Queen's Royal West Surrey, Royal Field Artillery, East Kent, Royal Army Medical Corp, a Royal Engineer who stated he was unmarried only for a marriage licence to be forthcoming, men returning home, injured or unfit for duty, a young woman born in 1899 and found in Fetcham School Log Books in 1912 and 1913, serving in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps and Red Cross records for hospital orderlies in Leatherhead.

If you can help us with our research please contact Lyn Rozier, email address: local.history1@fetchamu3a.org.uk

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For Information regarding Membership, Lectures and Museum opening hours

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