



## **CHAPTER 9: AND IN THE END**

On February 15th, 1918, the 16th Battalion marched to Mont St. Eloi Station and entrained for Pernes. From there they marched to Sachin, about two miles to the east, where they were billeted under XIII Corps instructions. The last entry in the battalion's War Diary reads:

"February 28th - The total strength of the Battalion (583 other ranks) and the undermentioned officers are posted to the 3rd Entrenching Battalion and proceed to join."

Officers on the Battalion strength at that time were:

### **Headquarters**

Lieutenant-Colonel A. C. Croydon, M.C., D.C.M., Commanding

Acting Major W. D. Coles

Captain and Adjutant J. J. G. Greenwood

Captain A. J. Brightwell

Captain G. A. McK Morant, M.C.

Lieutenant J. M. Barrow

2nd Lieutenant T. S. Campbell

## THE BRADFORD PALS

### **'A' Company**

Captain P. H. Battishill, M.C.  
Captain L. H. Croxford  
Lieut E. Wilson  
2nd Lieut J. R. Brown  
2nd Lieut F. de B. Price  
2nd Lieut L. Crabtree  
2nd Lieut S. S. L. Jackson  
2nd Lieut K. T. Makin

### **'C' Company**

Captain J. D. Ballantyne  
Captain L. L. de Souza  
Lieutenant A. Dickes  
2nd Lieut G. A. Brown  
2nd Lieut A. J. Comerford  
2nd Lieut J. J. Walton  
2nd Lieut A. B. P. Wood

### **'B' Company**

Captain H. S. Nesbitt  
2nd Lieut W. Barrie  
2nd Lieut J. F. Farrar  
2nd Lieut J. P. Lawson  
2nd Lieut L. Parsey, D.C.M.  
2nd Lt. A .L. Pearson, D.C.M.

### **'D' Company**

Captain H. Evans  
Captain E. Murgatroyd, D.C.M.  
Lieut O. V. L. Hough  
Lieut J. L. Richard  
2nd Lieut H. J. Clements  
2nd Lieut J. P. Feather  
2nd Lieut D. G. Garbutt  
2nd Lt. R. W. Jackson, D.C.M.  
2nd Lieut E. Jowett  
2nd Lieut G.L. Lyall  
2nd Lieut J. W. Marsden

### **Attached to Battalion**

Captain C. Roche, M.C., R.A.M.C. (Medical Officer)  
Captain J. Calderbank (Church of England Chaplain)

The 18th Battalion, having spent four days as Brigade support in the Arleux Sector, moved to Bray camp. On February 1st, all officers and other ranks assembled in the camp Church Army hut where Lieutenant-Colonel Carter explained the reasons for disbanding the Battalion and expressed his appreciation of the manner in which all ranks had worked under him.

On the days which followed, drafts began to leave the Battalion, although it was a great consolation to all that the drafts were to other battalions in the Regiment. Officers on the strength at that time were:

Lieutenant - Colonel H. F. G. Carter, M.C., Commanding  
Captain H. L. Dalley, M.C., Adjutant  
Captain M. Clough  
Captain F. W. Whittacker  
Captain L. H. Bakes  
Major A. W. Robinson  
Lieutenant J. L. Wood  
Lieutenant F. R. Kennington  
Lieutenant and Q/ M B. Hammond  
Lieutenant J. R. King

AND IN THE END

Lieutenant F. D. Dams  
Lieutenant E. Williams  
Lieutenant A. Cockenham  
Lieutenant E. A. Ramsden

2nd Lieut A. Atkinson	2nd Lieut G. R. Lorel
2nd Lieut F. G. Baker	2nd Lieut A. S. Penn
2nd Lieut T. E. Dickenson	2nd Lieut H. Salmons
2nd Lieut C. H. Duckworth	2nd Lieut P. H. Scott
2nd Lieut H. Gill	2nd Lieut E. Smith
2nd Lieut J. Gray	2nd Lieut G. W. Smith
2nd Lieutenant J. D. Hollis	2nd Lieut C. A. F. Thornton
2nd Lieutenant W. R. Horner	2nd Lieut J. Whithead
2nd Lieutenant F. H. Hoyle	2nd Lieut J. Whithead
2nd Lieut C. F. Kiddle	2nd Lieut R. B. Wright

On February 11th, a farewell message from the Brigadier, was received:

“The Brigade Commander feels sure that Brigadier-General J. D. Ingles, D.S.O., who is now on leave would wish to express to Lieutenant Colonel H. F. G. Carter, M.C., and Lieutenant Colonel A. C. Croydon, M.C., and all ranks of the 16th and 18th Battalions, West Yorkshire Regiment his deep sense of regret at parting from them as units of the 93rd Brigade. Both these battalions have served in the 93rd Brigade since its formation in May 1915, and have loyally and devotedly upheld the splendid traditions of their Regiment, and have by their good work and efficiency, largely contributed to the high reputation of the Brigade.

The severance of these battalions from the Brigade is necessary in the interests of the whole army, but that does not lessen the deep regret felt throughout all the remaining ranks of the Brigade.

In times of hardship and danger, the 16th and 18th Battalions of the West Yorkshire Regiment have proved themselves brave, cheerful soldiers and good comrades.

To all ranks of these battalions, the best wishes of the Brigade are tendered for their success and welfare in the future, and they will never be forgotten.”

On February 15th, Lieutenant-Colonel Carter, Major A. W. Robinson, Captain L. H. Bakes, Lieutenant J. L. Wood, Lieutenant B. Hammond, Lieutenant F. R. Kennington, 2nd Lieutenant G. W. Smith and 2nd Lieutenant F. H. Hoyle together with 42 other ranks proceeded by rail to the XIII Corps reinforcement camp at Pernes. The last entry in the Diary, referring to this posting, reads:

“This reduced the strength of the battalion in the field to NIL”.

## THE BRADFORD PALS

So ends the story of the Bradford Pals. No longer the keen boisterous battalions of volunteers who had marched from Bradford three and a half years previously and been thrice decimated in battle, but men who never lost faith for all that.

After the war the survivors formed the “Bradford Pals Old Comrades’ Association” with its headquarters at: ‘Claremont’, Morley Street, Bradford. This Association was active until March 1979.

The King’s Colours of both battalions now hang in Bradford Cathedral, near the side door. However, one cannot fail to comment on the fact that, when peace came, the City which had raised them did not put up a memorial or a plaque to those Pals who did not return until July 1979.

It is fashionable now to write of these men as ‘brainwashed by the system’; ‘carried away by misguided enthusiasm’; ‘men who did not know what they were fighting for.’ Anyone who has had the fortune, indeed the honour, to meet these men, knows this not to be so. In 1976 after spending an evening in the Blighty Club with a group of Old Pals, which included George Morgan, Frank Burn and Frank Hartley, listening to their experiences on the Somme and the other battlefields of the First World War, the author expressed the view that what seemed so incredible was the impression that, if asked to do the same again, they would. Almost as one voice these old comrades replied: “Yes, we would!”

Perhaps the words of Winston Churchill in his book “World Crisis” would make a fitting farewell to these battalions:

If only Generals had not been content to fight machine gun bullets with the breasts of gallant men, and to think that that was waging war.



Field Marshal Haig: “I consider the machine gun to be a greatly over-rated weapon.”  
The photograph is of George Taylor at Serre Cemetery in 1974, taken by Stan Barraclough.

## Aftermath

Have you forgotten yet? . . .  
For the world's events have rumbled on since those gagged days,  
Like traffic checked while at the crossing of city-ways:  
And the haunted gap in your mind has filled with thoughts that flow  
Like clouds in the lit heaven of life; and you're a man reprieved to go,  
Taking your peaceful share of time, with joy to spare.  
But the past is just the same - and War's a bloody game . . .  
Have you forgotten yet? . . .  
Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll never forget.

Do you remember the dark months you held the sector at Mametz -  
The nights you watched and wired and dug and piled sandbags on parapets?  
Do you remember the rats; and the stench  
Of corpses rotting in front of the front line trench -  
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?  
Do you ever stop and ask, "Is it all going to happen again?"

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack -  
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and shook you then  
As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of your men?  
Do you remember the stretcher cases lurching back  
With dying eyes and lolling heads - those ashen-grey  
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and gay?

Have you forgotten yet? . . .  
Look up, and swear by the green of the spring that you'll never forget.

Siegfried Sassoon. March, 1919.

## THE BRADFORD PALS



The Prince of Wales inspects Old Comrades in Bradford in the Twenties.



Survivors of the Pals battalions at Bradford Cenotaph, July 1st, 1977.  
Bradford Telegraph & Argus