



Local History Collection

31 - Private Charles Austin Elliott

Summer 2026

Researched & written by Sarah Grace



2nd Battalion Canadian Infantry (805597), part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force

For many years if you drove along the Oakley Green Road you may have seen Richard John Elliott (known as Jack) walking in either direction, towards Tesco's on the Dedworth Road or towards Braywood Cricket Club (his 2nd home) or even along the A308 to see a match at the Maidenhead Football club. Jack lived at Pax, Oakley Green Road for most of his life. In the early years he lived with his Aunt Lizzie (dressmaker), Parents Reginald (farmer) and Grace (housewife), and younger sister Elizabeth.

Jack's grandparents; John (Head Gardener) and Emma Elliott, were from the Frome area of Somerset. Following their wedding, in 1875, they moved to Shropshire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Old Windsor, and eventually to Oakley Place Farm, Oakley Green Road. They had 7 children and Charles Austin Elliott (Jack's uncle) was born on May 11th 1883 in Hixon, Staffordshire. Aged 17, Charles was a florist, cultivating, arranging, and selling flowers, often working in small greenhouses and providing floral displays for many social events such as weddings and funerals.

At some time between 1901 and 1911 Charles (known as Chas) emigrated to Ottawa, Canada. Queen Victoria had chosen Ottawa to be the Capital of Canada. Many

young people emigrated to seek better work, prospects, wages, and subsidised passage to Canada. Ottawa was a major hub of the lumber industry.

With his 'sister', Mrs Elizabeth W Raper, Charles lived at 278 Slater Street in Ottawa and worked as a labourer. Slater Street was a busy downtown area within a mix of residential and commercial buildings, including the Ottawa Car Company. It was a major street car route and many jobs were available in manual excavation and construction etc. The area eventually included many Federal buildings.



Slater Street 1910

As a British Dominion, foreign policy decisions in Canada were left in the hands of the British Government, but Canada chose to declare War on Germany in 1914 and the Canadian Expeditionary Force was raised. Prior to WW1 Canada only had a militia in operation. Charles signed up to the C.E.F. on 17.03.1916. His records show that he was 5'8" tall, weighed 155 lbs, a 35" chest, ruddy complexion, blue eyes, light brown hair and was a member of the Church of England. He was considered fit and assigned to the 136th Durham C.E.F. Battalion. This Battalion spent most of 1916 training in Ontario before embarking from Halifax, Canada on the 27th September 1916 aboard the S.S. *Corsican* along with 18 officers and 492 other ranks arriving in Liverpool on October 6th 1916. These soldiers were then absorbed into the C.E.F. 39th Battalion and the 6th Reserve Battalion to serve as reinforcements for the frontline. By October 13th 1916 Charles was training at West Sandling Camp in Kent with the 39th C.E.F. Battalion, an army camp built by McAlpine and Sons in 1914. The training included route marches, practicing 'going over the top', entrenchment and digging trenches.

NON-COMS, OF THE IMPERIAL FORCES

LOCATION OFFICER: LIEUT. E. DUCKWORTH

BUGLERS AND DRUMMERS: 106 BATTALION

THE Pipers: 206 BATTALION

PART OF THE TRANSPORT

IN-SIGHT INSTRUCTION

"LIEUT." THE MASCOT OF THE 106 BATTALION

FEEDING-BRINGING IN THE REEF

THE BUTCHER AND HIS MATE

A FIELD-KITCHEN

THE 106 BATTALION

NON-EX-TIME

PART OF THE DAY'S BREAD SUPPLY

A CORNER OF ONE OF THE KITCHENS

106 CARL R. GORDON STEWART

206 RATE ON PARADE

COM. OTHER: LACAL HUGHES

COL. S. DENSON, C.M.G., A.D.C.

OUTSIDE THE "HAPPY HOME" HUT: THE RADAR

FALES OF GUN YOUNG DOMINION BROTHERS

"ARE WE BOV-HARTED?" STAFF TRAINING

AND SIGNALERS OF THE 106 BATTALION

QUARTERMASTER: CAPTAIN G. H. ERNE

A STRAPPING CHARGER

RATONET EXERCISE

CHANGING THE GUARD: 106 BATTALION

CLEANING UP THE STABLES

CAPT. LAWSON GOING ROUND THE STABLES



On January 4th 1917 Charles was transferred to the 6th Reserve C.E.F. Battalion at Shorncliffe, a purpose-built garrison where Charles would have received instruction in rifle, bayonet, grenade and trench warfare. Most of the C.E.F. troops' uniform was replaced by the superior British one and these troops were kept 'occupied' from the 5.30 am reveille to 10pm. Charles moved back to West Sandling, then Hastings and by March was in Seaford and St. Leonards.

After being transferred to the 2nd Battalion C.E.F. on April 21st 1917 Charles was on a troop ship from Folkestone to Calais on April 22nd 1917 and arrived in the field on April 27th 1917. By May 4th 1917 Charles was being treated in Calais No 35 general hospital for a shrapnel and gunshot wound to his right thigh. He was moved to the hospital in Boulogne on May 28th 1917 and discharged on June 7th 2017 to the rest camp and eventually returned to the field on June 29th 1917 and rejoined the 2nd Battalion on July 7th 1917.

WEST SANDLING CAMP.

THERE'S an isolated, desolated spot I'd like to mention,
Where all you hear is "Stand at Ease," "Slope Arms,"
"Quick March," "Attention."

It's miles away from anywhere, by Gad, it is a rum 'un,
A chap lived there for fifty years and never saw a woman.

There are lots of little huts, all dotted here and there,
For those who have to live inside, I've offered many a prayer
Inside the huts there's RATS as big as any nanny goat,
Last night a soldier saw one trying on his overcoat.

It's sludge up to the eyebrows, you get it in your ears,
But into it you've got to go, without a sign of fear,
And when you've had a bath of sludge, you just set to and
groom,

And get cleaned up for next Parade, or else, it's "Orderly
Room,"

Week in, week out, from morn till night, with full Pack and
a Rifle,

Like Jack and Jill, you climb the hills, of course that's
just a trifle.

"Slope Arms," "Fix Bayonets," then "Present," they fairly
put you through it,

And as you stagger to your hut, the Sergeant shouts "Jump
to it."

With tunics, boots and puttees off, you quickly get the habit,
You gallop up and down the hills just like a blooming rabbit,
"Heads backward bend," "Arms upward stretch," "Heels
raise," then "Ranks change places,"

And later on they make you put your kneecaps where your
face is.

Now when this war is over and we've captured Kaiser Billy
To shoot him would be merciful and absolutely silly,
Just end him down to WEST SANDLING there among the
Rats and Clay,

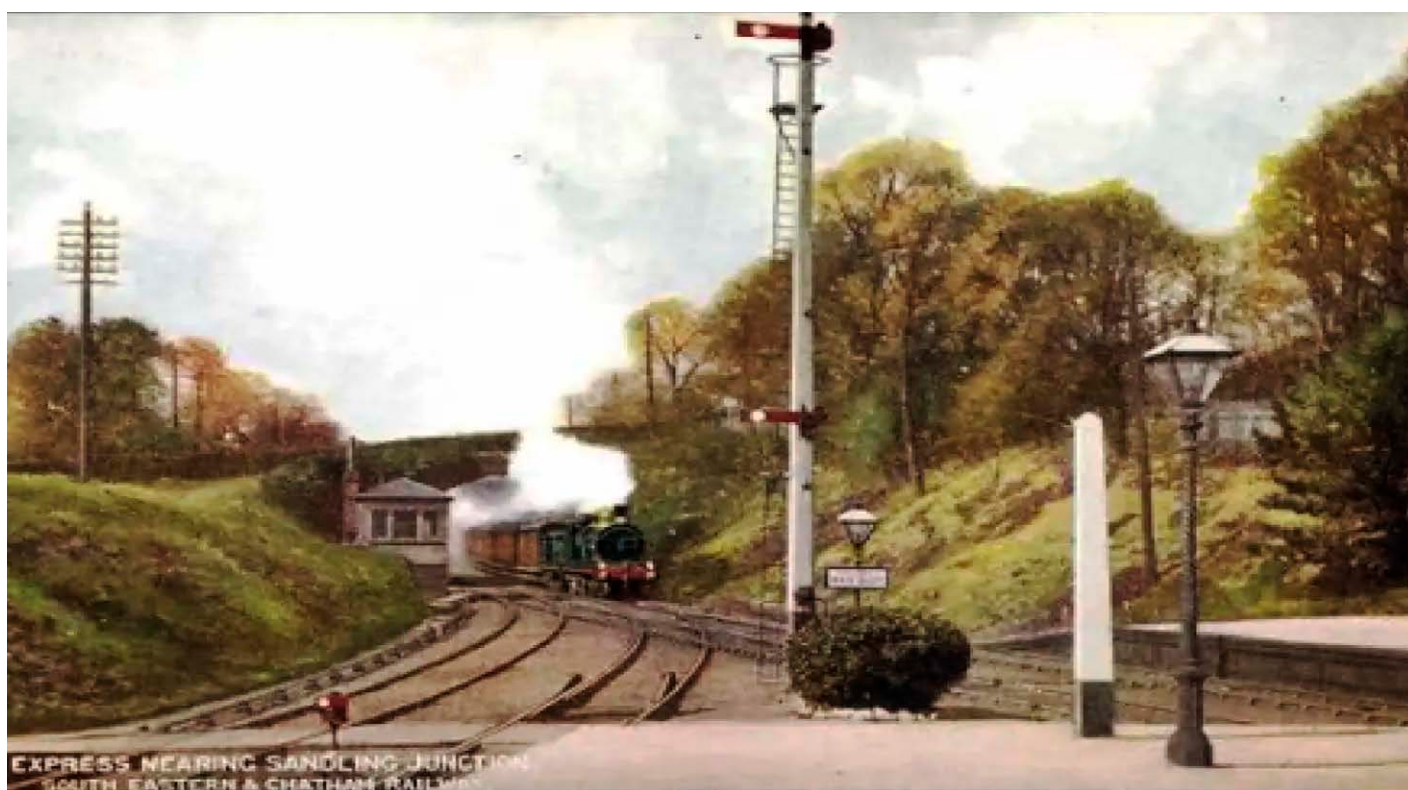
And I'll bet he won't be long before he droops and fades away.

BUT WE'RE NOT DOWNHEARTED YET!

CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE 1914-1919



THE OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE
CANADIAN ARMY IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR
COLONEL G.W.L. NICHOLSON



Boat Express - Sandling Junction

By the end of July 1917 the Canadians and British forces began the 3rd Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele), the attack on Passchendaele ridge. It was a muddy, bloody campaign against the Germans in Belgium. By September the Canadians were brought in and the first assault began on October 26th 1917 to gain 500m, but there were 2,481 casualties and little progress. The 2nd assault on October 30th cost another 1,321 lives and achieved only another 500m. The 3rd assault on November 6th won the town of Passchendaele with another 2,238 killed or wounded. Nine Canadian soldiers earned the Victoria Cross in an area not much bigger than 4 football pitches. The 2nd Canadian Battalion encountered the most opposition from pillboxes at the Northern end of Passchendaele but the Passchendaele ridge was won on November 10th 1917

Charles Elliott was reported missing and then wounded (in hospital) on November 10th 1917 but by December 21st 1917 and then January 4th 1918 he was reported as wounded and missing in the field. He was not confirmed killed in action until March 18th 1918. He had died on November 6th 1917 during the 3rd assault on Passchendaele.



3rd Battle of Passchendaele

The Canadians actions at Passchendaele further cemented their reputation as one of the most effective combat forces in the world and was known as the 'birth of a nation'. The Canadians lost over 60,000 men during the war and it secured them a seat at the Paris Peace Conference and The League of Nations, rather than just being part of the British delegation.

Charles Austin Elliott is remembered on 2 war memorials - Ypres, The Menin Gate Memorial, Belgium, panel 18 - and Braywood Memorial Hall, Oakley Green Road,

Fifield, Berkshire, England. His will left everything to his Mum, Emma Elliott at Oakley Place Farm, Oakley Green Road and his pay (£15 per month) was paid to his sister Elizabeth in Canada.

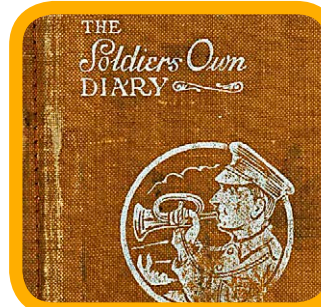
Sadly the Canadian Military did not take pictures of the soldiers as they enlisted. Generally the majority of photos of soldiers were taken by commercial photographers and paid for by the family or the soldiers, for their own personal use. However photos of the 2nd Battalion and other background information can be found by clicking on the links below -



Photo archive

2nd Battalion Canadian Infantry

[click on image](#)



PDF file

The Soldier's Own Diary

[click on image](#)



Youtube video

Answering The Call

[click on image](#)



Youtube video

Into The Bottomless Mud

[click on image](#)



Photo archive

Sandling Camp photos 1

[click on image](#)



Photo archive

Canadian Expeditionary Force

[click on image](#)



Photo archive

Sandling Camp photos 2

[click on image](#)



Blog

Passchendaele Blog

[click on image](#)

In addition to the sources above other references were the
UK CENSUS 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921, and 1939

With thanks to **Thomas Wigley**, Windsor Local History Group, for his assistance in finding the military and ancestral records of the Elliot family.