

T/207401 Sgt Arthur Monk

Kent Yeomanry

East Kent Regiment (The Buffs)

West Surrey Regiment (The Queens)

Researched by Steve Monk
With help from other family members.

2018 - 2020



2019 Steve at Polygon Wood where Arthur Monk fought in 1917

Arthur Monk

Life Synopsis

Born in Rolvenden / Rolvenden Layne on 22nd March 1879

Baptised in St Mary's Church Rolvenden on 22nd June 1879

1881 Census on 3rd April has him living at Wassall in Rolvenden.

1891 Census on 5th April has him living at Wassall in Rolvenden.

1897 Believed to have joined The Yeomanry/Militia/Territorials

He Married Eliza Vine on 24th Feb 1900 in Rolvenden.

1901 Census on 31st March has him at High Road Rolvenden as a Farm Labourer.

1908 He was enlisted into the East Kent Regiment (The Buffs) Territorial Force (Imperial Service)

1909 1st October 1909 Awarded the Territorial Force Efficiency Medal (12 Years' Service) No: 230

1911 Census on 2nd April has him at The Lane Rolvenden as a Farm Labourer.

1916 September saw him sent out to France WW1

1917 5th October Blown up by a shell east of Polygon Wood in the Third Battle of Ypres

Died around February 1971 aged 91 in Rolvenden.

JAN _____ 1918

Sergeant Arthur Monk, of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, who is at present in hospital near Manchester suffering from wounds, is a native of Rolvenden, and although only thirty-eight, has served for a longer period than any other Rolvenden volunteer at present serving with the colours. Previous to the war he served in the Territorials and was with them in camp at the outbreak of war. In September of last year he went to France and on the 5th of October was blown up by a shell, from the result of which he is still in hospital. He has a wife and seven children, their home being at Rolvenden Layne. His eldest son, Private Alfred Monk, of the Buffs, is serving in the machine gun section on home service.



Newspaper cutting & photograph of Arthur Monk around that time.

Arthur Monk – West Kent Yeomanry



Arthur Monk on his horse in the West Kent Yeomanry



Cap Badge



Shoulder Patch

The picture above would indicate that Arthur Monk was in the West Kent Yeomanry

West Kent Yeomanry (Queen's Own)

The regiment was formed on the creation of the Territorial Force in April 1908 and placed under orders of the South Eastern Mounted Brigade. It was headquartered in Maidstone with the squadrons being headquartered as follows:

- A Squadron: Bromley (and drill stations at Catford and Woolwich)
- B Squadron: Dartford (Rochester, Gravesend, Sevenoaks and Woolwich)
- C Squadron: Tunbridge Wells (Tonbridge and Hawkhurst)
- D Squadron: Maidstone (West Malling, Westminster and Woolwich)

230 Pte Arthur Monk – East Kent Regiment. Territorial Force Efficiency Medal

AWARDED THE "T.F.E. MEDAL."

Corps 5th East Kent Regt.

Regimental Number 230.

Surname MONK.

Christian Name A.

Rank Pte

Date of Army Order 274. 1/10/09

Registered Paper _____ Schedule }
Number }

W4889—HP7274 30,000 2/20 HWV(P505) K1444



Territorial Efficiency Medal

Established in 1908, the medal superseded the Volunteer Long Service Medal and the Imperial Yeomanry Long Service Medal when the Territorial Force was formed on 1 April 1908. This followed the enactment of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907, (7 Edw.7, c.9) which instigated a major re-organisation of the old Volunteer Force and the remaining units of Militia and Yeomanry.

The Militia were transferred to the Special Reserve rather than the Territorial Force and were therefore eligible for the Special Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

The medal was superseded by the Territorial Efficiency Medal when the Territorial Force was elevated to become the Territorial Army in 1921.

The Territorial Force Efficiency Medal was awarded to non-commissioned officers and men for a minimum of 12 years' service in the Territorial Force, providing they attended 12 annual training camps. Previous service in other part-time forces including the Volunteer Force could count, while war service counted double. Bars were awarded for further periods of 12 years.

Military Service – Arthur Monk in the Territorial Reserves.



Imperial Service Badge on Breast showing he signed up for overseas service.



Bufs Cap Badge

See next page for stars on right sleeve
these are efficiency stars.

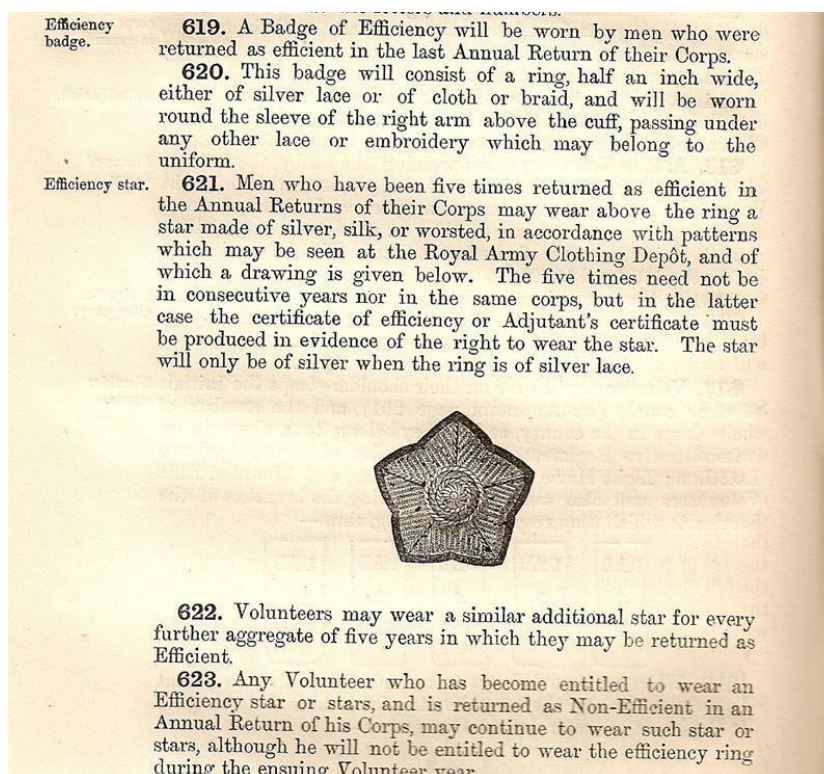
The picture above of Arthur Monk in his East Kent Regiment (The buffs) uniform would have been pre-World War One as there are no medal bars on his left breast, on the right breast is the Imperial Service badge, sergeant stripes on his sleeves and the efficiency stars on his right cuff.

The Territorial Force Imperial Service Badge was a short-lived decoration of the United Kingdom awarded to those members of the Territorial Force (TF) who were prepared to serve outside the United Kingdom in defence of the Empire, in the event of national emergency. The conditions of enlistment for the TF laid down at their creation in 1908 did not allow for soldiers to be sent for service overseas against their will, as the TF was intended for home defence. However, any man could volunteer for the Imperial Service Section and serve abroad in times of war, which entitled him to wear this badge.

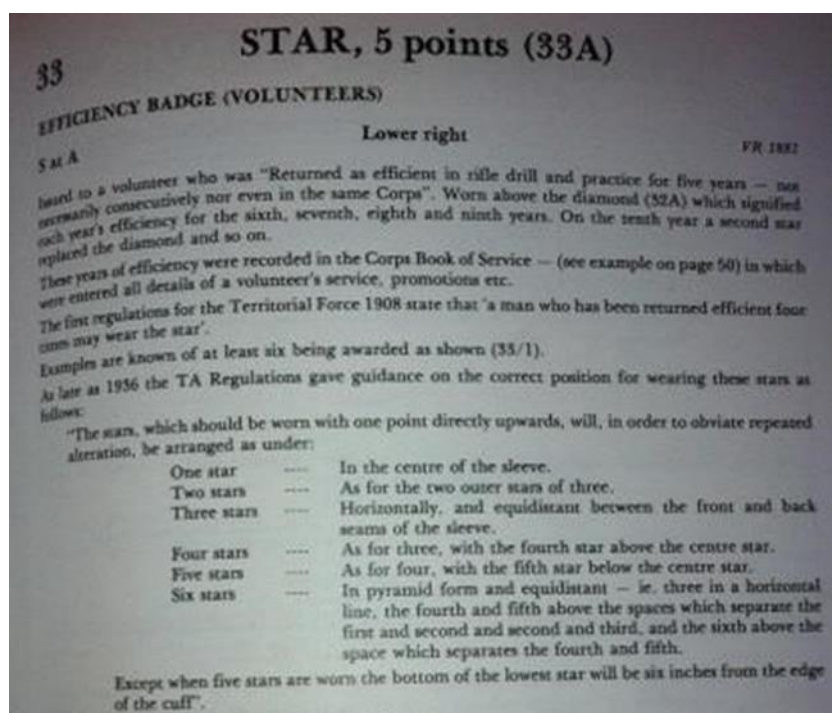
The badge was worn on the right breast of the uniform. It was not compulsory for the badge to be worn.

This badge became obsolete when the Territorial Force was elevated to become the Territorial Army.

Arthur Monk – Efficiency Stars.



Description (above)



Sergeant Arthur Monk had 4 Stars showing 20 years of efficiency.



The Territorial Force War Medal was a campaign medal awarded to members of the British Territorial Force and Territorial Force Nursing Service who served overseas in World War I. It is the rarest of the five British Great War medals.

The medal was established in April 1920 for award to members of the Territorial Force and Territorial Force Nursing Service who volunteered for service overseas on or before 30 September 1914 and served overseas. They had to:

Have been serving with the Force on 4 August 1914; or

Have completed four years' service with the Force before 4 August 1914 and re-joined on or before 30 September 1914.

In addition, provided they:

Undertook, either verbally or by written agreement on or before 30 September 1914 to serve outside the United Kingdom, such agreement being operative after 4 August 1914, and

Have served outside the United Kingdom between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918 (both dates inclusive; the last date was in 1918 although the years on the reverse said 1914-19) and

Did not qualify for the 1914 Star or 1914-15 Star.

A total of 33,944 Territorial Force War Medals were awarded.

As Arthur Monk was not awarded the 1914-15 Star it is probable, he was awarded this medal.

Arthur Monk WW1 Medals



AWARDED TO

Sgt. T/207401

Arthur Monk

Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment)

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
MONK	The Queens R	Sgt T/207401	
Arthur.			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	E/1/10/5244627		
BRITISH	do do		
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K. 1380

Military Evidence



T/207401 Sgt Arthur Monk Discharge Notice

(Note the "S" on the end of his name, it is Arthur Monk, the Rank and service number is right)

ORIGINAL

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the "WAR BADGE."

ROYAL WEST SURREY REGIMENT.

16 AUG 1918
D12112

Regtl. No.	Rank	Name (in full)	Unit discharged from	No. of Badge and Certificate (To be completed at War Office)	Date of:— Enlistment	Discharge	Cause of Discharge (Wounds or sickness and para. of K.R.)	Age.	Whether served Overseas (Yes or No)
66649	A/L/C	MURRAY.	A. 16th Bn.	443 543	18.5.15	10.7.18	2.B.	23.5	Yes.
G/4775	Pte	FROST. DUNGATE.	P. London R.D.	443 574	17.2.15	18.10.17	2(a)(11)	17.11	No.
22302	L/C	ROBERTS.	G. Depot	443 545	20.11.15	29.8.18	*2.B.	38.6	Yes.
207401	Sgt	MONKS.	A. 4th Res.	443 546	2.5.08	9.8.18	..	38.4	..
205393	L/C	JACKSON.	A. ..	443 544	11.12.15	29.8.18	..	36.	..
G/5911	Pte	BROWN.	W. Depot	443 548	31.5.15	22.8.18	..	33.2	..
G/4997	..	SALTER.	H. ..	443 549	2.3.15	30.8.18	..	24.5	..
400	Cpl	PRESTON.	W. ..	443 580	5.9.14	31.8.18	..	42.6	..
18125	Pte	DREW.	T.R. 3rd Bn.	443 581	12.12.15	31.8.18	..	28.10	..
G/12664	..	MANNING.	G. Depot	443 582	7.7.16	31.8.18	..	23.1	..
60045	..	YEOMANS.	E. 3rd Bn.	443 583	12.12.15	31.8.18	..	38.2	..
G/14305	L/C	RISLEY.	T. Depot	443 584	9.12.15	31.8.18	..	24.5	..

No longer physically fit for War Service.
Para 392 (VII) A.R.

I certify that the particulars furnished hereon are correct.

Place Hounslow. Date 17.8.18

I.V. 1697 date. 23 AUG 1918

Signature and Rank of Officer certifying Claimants' service. Captain for Colonel i/c No. 1. Records.

I certify that Badges and Certificates, numbered as above, have been issued to the individuals concerned.

Place Date

Signature and Rank of Officer certifying issue.

W8548—H2222 100,000 10/16 HWY(R15) H14/1206
90—H3835 100,000 4/17

Sgt Arthur Monk – Silver Badge Roll.

Arthur Monk was awarded the Silver War Badge was issued in the United Kingdom and the British Empire to service personnel who had been honourably discharged due to wounds or sickness from military service in World War I. The badge, sometimes known as the "Discharge Badge", the "Wound Badge" or "Services Rendered Badge", was first issued in September 1916, along with an official certificate of entitlement on previous page.



Each badge was uniquely numbered on the reverse. Arthurs was No: 443576

(To be rendered in duplicate.)

REGIMENT OR CORPS. **4627**

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Victory Medal and/or British War Medal granted under Army Orders 301 & 266 of 1919.

On 11/11/19 or on becoming non-effective		NAME	Unit previously served with. Regt. No. and Rank in same on entry into theatre of war	Theatres of war in which served								Charges awarded (to be left blank)	Record of disposal of decorations (a) Presented (b) Despatched by Post (c) Taken into Stock	REMARKS	
Regt. No.	Rank			From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To				
T/207318	Cpl	PEARSON REGINALD	1/7th Middx Regt. 4483 Cpl												
T/207319	Cpl	YOUNG HENRY	7th Middx Regt. 2143 Cpl												
		CHARLES	1st RWS. T/207319												
T/207320	Pte	COOK FRED	1st RWS. T/207320 Pte												
T/207321	Pte	WEISSE HARRY	2nd RWS. T/207321 Pte												
		ROBERT													
T/207401	Sgt	MONK ARTHUR	3/4th RWS. T/207401 Sgt												

I certify that according to the Official Records the individuals named in this ROLL are entitled to the Medal or Medals as detailed above.

Place Barnsley Date 28.10.1920

Signature and rank of Officer certifying. *W. B. M. D.* for Colonel, Infantry Record Office.

Official entry in the log showing entitlement to British & Victory Medals.

Arthur Monk Military Timeline (Guestimate)

Kent Yeomanry or Kent Artillery Volunteers – Evidence – Horse photo, Cap Badge, Shoulder patch

History:

The Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907 was an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom that reformed the auxiliary forces of the British Army by transferring existing Volunteer and Yeomanry units into a new Territorial Force (TF); and disbanding the Militia to form a new Special Reserve of the Regular Army.

In accordance with the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907 the TF was intended to be a home defence force for service during wartime and members could not be compelled to serve outside the country. However, on the outbreak of war on 4 August 1914, many members volunteered for ***Imperial Service***. (Arthur Monk was one of them, see badge on uniform)

Therefore, TF units were split in August and September 1914 into 1st Line (liable for overseas service) and 2nd Line (home service for those unable or unwilling to serve overseas) units.

East Kent Regiment (The Buffs) Territorial

Evidence – Photo of him in Sergeant Uniform, Buffs Cap Badge and Stars on sleeve.

Under the Military Service Act 1916, which introduced conscription, the provisions of the Act which prevented a Territorial soldier from being transferred to a different corps, or a regular unit, without his consent were suspended. This could explain the move to the Queens (West Surrey regiment)

In January 1916 the Military Service Act was passed. This imposed conscription on all single men aged between 18 and 41, but exempted the medically unfit, clergymen, teachers and certain classes of industrial worker.

A second Act passed in May 1916 extended conscription to married men.

It is therefore an educated guess that Arthur Monk was in the East Kent Regiment (The Buffs) in the Territorial Force until May 1916 when he would have been transferred to the Queens (West Surrey Regiment) as being conscripted at that time you could not choose which regiment you joined but were placed where needed. He then went overseas with the Queens.

The Queens (West Surrey Regiment)

Evidence – Medal Card, Newspaper cutting and discharge certificate.

The ¾th Battalion was formed at Windsor in June 1915.

The battalion disembarked at Le Havre on 1 June 1917, it was first attached to the 1st South African Brigade in 9th (Scottish) Division until 23 July, then with 12th (Eastern) Division, finally joining 62nd Brigade in 21st Division on 9 August.

21st Division was engaged in the Battle of Polygon Wood on 29 September, but the inexperienced ¾th Queen's did not make its first attack until the Battle of Broodseinde on 4th October.

Despite the general success of the limited attack the battalion lost nearly half its strength.

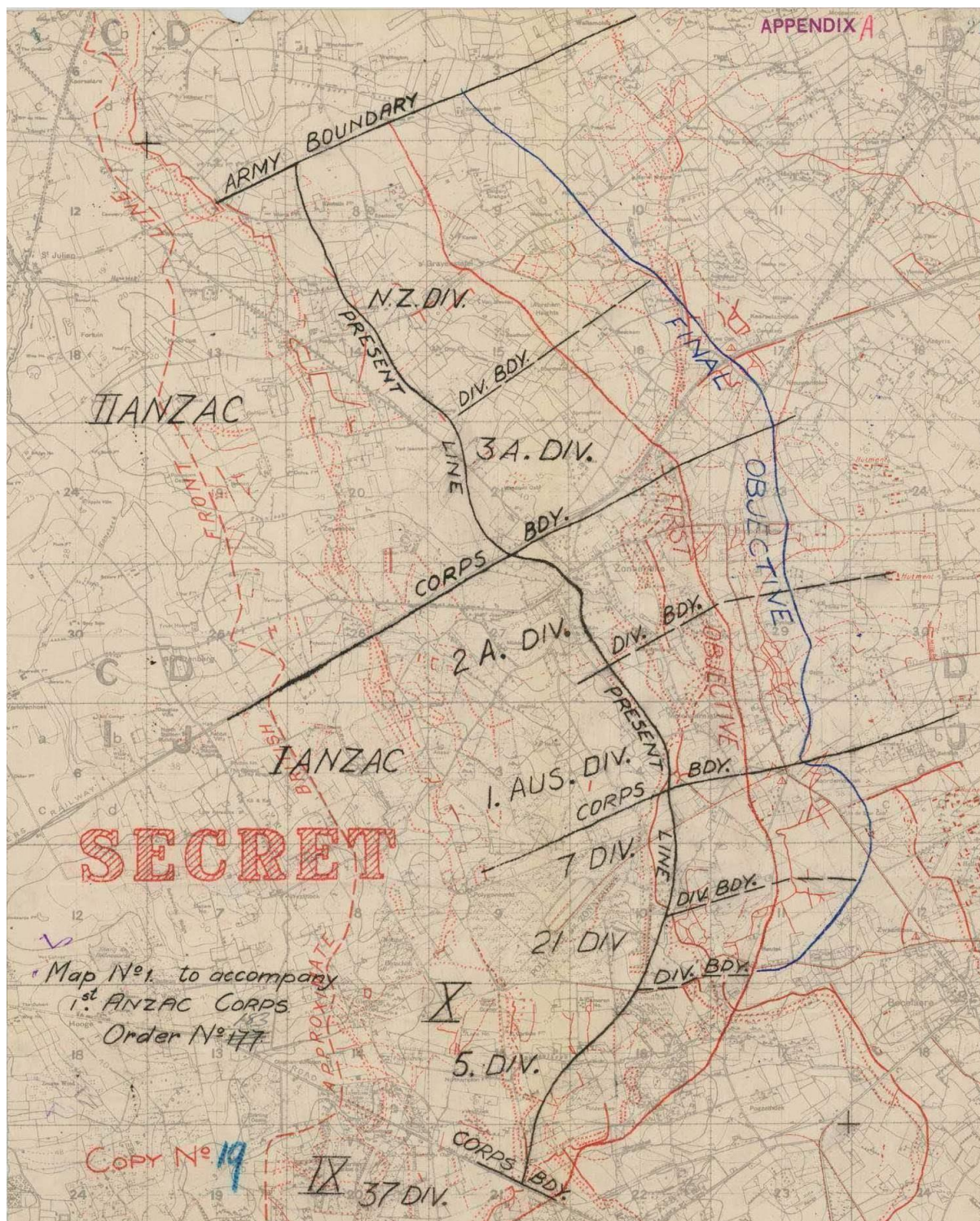
The division was then sent in as reinforcements to try to stem the devastating series of German counterattacks that ended the Battle of Cambrai on 2nd-3rd December 1917

On 11th February 1918 ¾th Queen's was disbanded.

Arthur Monk in France & Flanders WW1.

The 3rd battalion of The Queens (Royal West Surrey Regiment) was a territorial battalion that was formed in 1915 and went overseas in June 1917, joining the 62nd Brigade, 21st Division, in August. Although the battalion spent some time in the line, the battle of Broodseinde on October 4th 1917 was to be its first action.

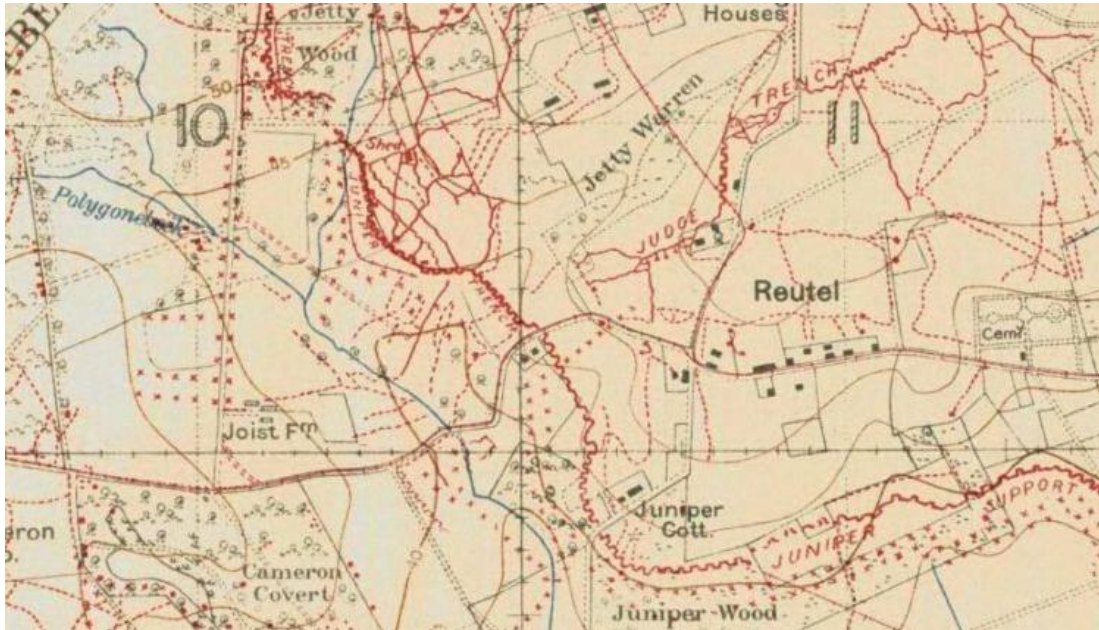
On the night of 2nd & 3rd October the 62nd Brigade relieved the 110th in the front line to the east of Polygon Wood. On the 3rd the men tried to carry out reconnaissance of the area, but it was made difficult owing to the Germans occupying the nearby high ground.



Plan of attack for the Battle of Broodseinde (Arthur Monk 21st Division)

The action of 4th October was the third of General Plumer's "bite and hold" attacks, carried out to try and consolidate on the recent advances made and take the Broodseinde Ridge, thereby protecting the southern flank of the British line before the drive to take Passendale Ridge. The 21st Division was to advance east and take the village of Reutel and the high ground overlooking it.

At 3am on the 4th the Queen's assembled with three companies in the front line, each with a frontage of about 85 yards. The strength of the battalion was 982 men.



The Battalion was attacking German positions on higher ground, so the Germans held the advantage and had a good view of the attacking troops. Between the Battalion and its objectives were three "beeks" or streams, and because of the shelling the ground was completely churned up, the war diary calling it an "impenetrable morass". The rising ground towards the German positions was covered by barbed wire and there were "mebus" (blockhouses/pillboxes) at the top of the high ground. These would hold 20-30 men, with machine guns and trench mortars covering the approaches.



The area attacked by the Battalion the Polygon "beek" can clearly be seen.



This image is a WW1 trench map imposed onto today's terrain. The black oval marks the approximate area where the 4th Queens assembled ahead of the attack (Moving right towards the German Juniper trench in red) you can also see the "beeks" or streams in Blue and the barbed wired obstacles denoted by crosses in front of the enemy lines.



The area today looking down from the top of the map (Red Star) above.

Zero hour was 6am. And as soon as the British barrage commenced the men moved up behind it. However, negotiating a line of barbed wire caused delays and the men came under machine gun fire from the right flank. It also proved difficult negotiating the Polygon Beek and the marshy ground surrounding it, despite the use of mud mats and a few trench boards. Despite the confusion Juniper trench was reached and successfully assaulted. Many Germans were seen emerging, but in the dark, it was impossible to tell if they meant to surrender or fight, and they were killed.

A German blockhouse was then encountered; a bombing party led by Lieutenant Arthur Byfield Frost attacked the structure and set it on fire with phosphorous bombs, an act for which Frost was awarded the Military Cross. The rest of this portion of the line was captured and the battalion consolidated its position and established Lewis Gun posts.

The Brigade war diary provides a detailed account of the action.

"The bayonet was freely used, and large numbers of the fleeing enemy were shot with the rifle... One mebus was apparently set on fire by a phosphorous bomb and burnt furiously, the whole garrison being shot as they fled or burnt to death before they could emerge".....

A gross case of treachery occurred during the attack near a mebus in Jupiter trench. A German officer surrendered and put his hands up. As Lieutenant Cooper of the 3rd Queens went forward to take his surrender the German officer whipped out his revolver and shot Lieutenant Cooper dead. Before he could do more harm, the German's body was riddled with bullets from the rifles of the men who witnessed the treacherous shot.

On account of an inner compartment of a mebus reopening fire after the outer garrison had surrendered it was necessary to kill all the Germans in the post.

Bayonet work was impossible on many Germans who fled to the rear as they ran without arms or equipment, but they offered good targets to the riflemen.

The battalion had captured 200 prisoners, 15 machine guns and 10 mortars. However, losses had also been heavy: three officers and at least 84 men killed or died of wounds, and 250 wounded; of these 17 were officers including the Lieutenant Colonel, the Medical Officer and the Padre. Total casualties amounted to a third of the battalion's strength prior to the battle. Nearly 90% of those killed have no known grave and are commemorated on Tyne Cot memorial.



The area today showing the starting point and the blockhouse bombed by Lieutenant Frost.

Official war diary entry for the actions on October 4th 1917, believed to be the date that Sgt Arthur Monk sustained his injuries that saw his exit from active service in World War One.

APPENDIX 7.

B/4th Bn. "The Queen's" (RWS) Regt.

A. Narrative of Operations on October 4th,
East of POLYGON WOOD.

At 3.0 a.m. the Battalion commenced to assemble prior to the attack; the night was fairly dark and showery, whilst the hostile artillery was quiet. No difficulty whatever was experienced in concentrating the Battalion: the 2 white tapes which had been previously laid on the flanks of each Company frontage were found of inestimable value.

The dispositions of the regiment were as follows:-

"A" Company on the right.
"B" " in the centre.
"D" " on the left.

They were drawn up in a line from J.10.b.1.0 to J.10.d.1.7, and each Company had a frontage of 85x and a depth of 30x, and were disposed in the normal formation of attack, viz. each Company on a one Platoon frontage.

"C" Company were in close support, and were formed up in one line of half platoons in file at x interval, their centre being directly behind the left of "B" Company.

2 reserve Lewis Gun Teams moved with "C" Company. There was one subsection of 62nd M.G.Co. on each flank of the Support Company, whilst 2 guns of the 62nd Trench Mortar Battery followed closely in rear of the centre.

The total depth of the battalion was 60x, and the process of assembly was finished by 4.30 a.m.

At 5.30 a.m. the enemy put down a barrage over the assembly positions, to which our artillery retaliated; this continued until Zero hour, but the Battalion suffered no casualties.

At ZERO (6.0 a.m.) our barrage came down 150x in front of our position, the assaulting Troops immediately advancing up to it; they found the "going" rather heavy, but could keep up to the barrage.



Polygon Wood after the battle in 1917 in which Arthur Monk was involved & injured

The first obstacle encountered was a line of concertina and barbed wire along the whole front, which patrols had been unable to entirely clear away, in addition the advance came under heavy enemy Machine Gun fire from the right at this juncture; both these obstructions were successfully negotiated with few casualties.

The POLYGON BARRAGE was then encountered, and proved a serious impediment to the advance, the Companies only possessing 4 mud mats and a few trench boards manufactured from the beds in enemy concrete "pill boxes", and these were found to be insufficient; the marsh and stream were crossed with some difficulty, but the barrage was lost for the time being, and some confusion resulted.

JUNIPER TRENCH was then assaulted, the wire in front forming no serious obstacle; many of the enemy emerged from its shelter, but owing to the darkness it was impossible to tell their intentions, and the majority were killed.

A hostile concrete fortress at J.10.d.8.8 put up some show of resistance, which was overcome by a party of bombers led by Lieut. A. B. Frost, and the structure set on fire probably by 'P' Bombs.

The remaining portion of this German line of defence fell into our hands with no great difficulty.

The Battle of Broodseinde was fought on 4 October 1917 near Ypres in Belgium, at the east end of the Gheluvelt plateau, by the British Second and Fifth armies against the German 4th Army.

The battle was the most successful Allied attack of the Third Battle of Ypres. Using “bite-and-hold” tactics, with objectives limited to what could be held against German counter-attacks, the British devastated the German defence, which prompted a crisis among the German commanders and caused a severe loss of morale in the 4th Army.

Preparations were made by the Germans for local withdrawals and planning began for a greater withdrawal, which would entail the abandonment by the Germans of the Belgian coast, one of the strategic aims of the British offensive.



Battle of Broodseinde 4 Oct 1917

Men huddled in funk holes with corpses in front of them in a railway cutting at Broodseinde.

Having spoken to other family members Sgt Arthur Monk was injured by a shell explosion on 5th October 1917 during this battle. He had shrapnel enter his body on his buttocks and leave his body through his shoulder, lucky to be alive.

He also had a big leather belt which the tale goes he removed “looted” from a dead German soldier by the supply railway line near the theatre of action in this battle.

I vaguely remember him; we used to go down to his house in Rolvenden Layne when I was a child. Despite his war wounds he lived to the good age of 92 or 93 depending on which documents you read. My memories of him are that he was as strong as an Ox even in his old age.

For some reason or another he was always known within the family as Jessie, I still don't know why.



Arthur Monk in later years.

APPENDIX 9.

3/4th Bn. "THE QUEEN'S" (R.W.S.) REGT.

Summary of Operations Oct. 1st to Oct. 10th, 1917.

CASUALTIES. A. Officers.

Oct. 2.	Capt. A. E. Mackenzie, R.A.M.C.	
" 3.	att. 3/4 "Queen's"	Wounded.
	Lieut. L. H. Dakin.	do.
" 4	Capt. M. Frou, A.C. C.V. att.	
	3/4th "Queen's" Wounded (at duty).	
	Lieut. J. J. Brooke	Killed.
	Lieut. A. H. A. Cooper	do.
	Lieut. A. K. Sarrow	do.
	Capt. P. M. Repworth	Wounded.
	Capt. V. F. Samuelson	Wounded (at duty).
	Capt. O. G. Moss.	Wounded.
	Lieut. A. B. Frost	Wounded (at duty).
	Lieut. A. H. Lovell	Wounded.
	Lieut. D. R. J. O'Connor	Wounded.
	2nd Lt. J. Ost	Wounded.
	2nd Lt. J. C. Davis	do.
	Capt. L. J. C. Vidler	Wounded (at duty).
	Lieut. S. J. Mason	do. do.
" 5	Lt. Col. K. A. Oswald	Wounded.
" 6	2nd Lt. G. A. Freestone	do.
" 8	Lieut. P. A. Curteis	do.
" 8	Lieut. G. A. Shaw.	do.

TOTAL:- 3 Killed, 17 Wounded (5 at duty).

B. Other Ranks.

Oct. 1.	1 Killed.	
" 2.		4 Wounded.
" 3	1 do.	10 do.
" 4	49 do.	184 do. 19 missing.
" 5	1 do.	80 do. 1 do.
" 6	4 do.	8 do.
" 7	3 do.	12 do. 1 do.
" 10	4 do.	3 do.

TOTAL:- 81 Killed. 341 Wounded (8 at duty) 81 Missing

PRISONERS.

200 German Officers, N.C.Os. and men were captured by the battalion.

MATERIAL.

8 Heavy Machine Guns.
7 Light do. do.
3 French Mortars.
5 Granaten warfers, were captured and destroyed by the battalion.

Appendix 1:

This will look at regimental numbering in the 5th (Weald of Kent) Battalion (TF), The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) between 1908 and 1914.

The 5th Battalion was formed on the 1st April 1908 and prior to this had been the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, the Buffs (East Kent Regiment). In 1908, as The Territorial Yearbook for that year records, the battalion strength comprised 13 officers and 434 men. 102 men attended camp in 1908 for 8 days and 307 attended for 15 days.

The following year, The Territorial Yearbook for 1910 recorded that the strength of the battalion in 1909 stood at 21 officers and 710 men. At the annual camp at Dover that year, 140 officers and men attended for eight days whilst 551 officers and men attended for 15 days. Camp in 1910 was scheduled to take place with the 4th Battalion from the 23rd July at Dover.

By August 1914, the battalion was headquartered at Ashford, and recruiting in the following parts of the county:

A Company: Cranbrook, with a drill station at Benenden

B Company: Hawkhurst, with a drill station at Sandhurst

C Company: Headcorn, with drill stations at Staplehurst, Marden and Sutton Valence

D Company: Horsmonden, with drill stations at Goudhurst, Lamberhurst, Brenchley, Yalding and Paddock Wood

E Company: Ashford, with drill stations at Pluckley, Bethersden, Aldington and Ham Street

F Company: Ashford

G Company: Tenterden, with drill stations at Lydd, Woodchurch, New Romney, Appledore, Wittersham and **Rolvenden**

H Company: Ashford

The above information about company distribution is particularly useful if your ancestor enlisted with the 5th Buffs prior to August 1914. For argument's sake, if he lived in Ashford he would have been most likely to have joined E, F or H Company; if he was in the immediate vicinity of Sandhurst, B Company would have been the most likely company he served with.

Here are some sample regimental numbers and joining dates for the 5th (Weald of Kent) Battalion (TF), The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

121 joined from the 2nd Volunteer Force Battalion on the 10th April 1908

500 joined on the 3rd February 1909

874 joined on the 7th April 1910

932 joined on the 8th February 1911

1050 joined on the 1st November 1912

1141 joined on the 9th June 1913

1199 joined on the 26th February 1914

1358 joined on the 6th August 1914

Use the regimental numbers above to estimate when a man would have joined this battalion between 1908 and August 1914. For example, if your man's number was 600 and he lived in Headcorn, he would have joined the battalion sometime after 3rd February 1909 and before April 1910. Furthermore, he probably served with C Company.

Promotion from Private to sergeant.

It was all about 'proficiency' - in today's terms perhaps competence is the right word. If you were seen to demonstrate same then you were in line for promotion up the ranks either in your own platoon or company or if there were no suitable gaps in yours but there were in others then you might be moved.

A private could be promoted to sergeant after 12 years of service

Army Reserve:

The Army Reserve underwent a major restructuring in 1908 in the reforms introduced by Richard Haldane, the Secretary of State for War. The previously civilian-administered 'Volunteer Force' was combined with the mounted Yeomanry, while the Militia was renamed the 'Special Reserve'

The changes were not universally popular and caused controversy at the time as Volunteer infantry units lost their unique identities, becoming Territorial battalions of Regular Army infantry regiments. Men were not obliged to serve overseas, although they could agree to do so.

This part-time form of soldiering attracted a number of volunteers and the nickname 'Saturday Night Soldiers' was created for the soldiers whose primary role was that of home defence.

However, in August 1914, after the outbreak of the First World War, territorial units were given the option of serving in France and more than seventy territorial battalions volunteered. Most regiments had a territorial unit (including The Royal Engineers as seen below), and some regiments, such as the London Regiment, were exclusively territorial with no regular army units at all.

When the Territorial Force was introduced in 1908, the service medal 'The Territorial Force Efficiency Medal' was introduced with the new part-time army. It was for long service and good conduct.

Between 1920 and 1930 a further restructure in Britain's reserve army meant that the medal was reclassified as the 'Territorial Efficiency Medal'.