New Urban Council.

MR JOHN WISEMAN ELECTED CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR.

The Vicar and the Rights of Members.

The first special meeting of the members of the newly-constituted Barnard Castle Urban District Council, convened for the election of chairman and the formation of committees, was held on Thursday night. Mr H. Walker presided pro tem, and there were also present Messrs R. Woodhams, W. Hodgson, C. Smith, J. Wiseman, T. Thompson, R. Arrowsmith, J. Guy, F. Wilson, C. Hedley, Rev. H. W. H. Bircham, J. I. Dawson (clerk), and H. E. Raine (surveyor).

The Election of a Chairman.

The Clerk read the certificate of election, and the new members having signed the statutory declaration accepting office, Mr Arrowsmith said he thought the late Chairman (Mr Walker) had had a somewhat arduous year, and especially for seven or eight months. He thought, moreover, that Mr Walker had passed through the ordeal very satisfactorily, and had earned the grateful recognition of the ratepayers and the Council as well, and it would only be an act of courtesy if they re-elected the retiring chairman for the coming year. He moved a proposition accordingly.

Mr Guy, having already sat under the presidency of Mr Walker, had great pleasure in seconding the nomination.

Mr Woodhams: With all due respect to yourself, I am one of those who think the honour of chairman should go round in turn, and I have pleasure in nominating Mr Wiseman, who has been a member of nearly every committee and various sub-committees, and the work that he has done very fully qualifies him for the office of chairman. I have, therefore, great pleasure in proposing him for election to that position.

Mr Smith: Do you nominate him because it is his turn, or on account of his qualification?

Mr Woodhams: He is the next senior member who has not held the office of chairman.

The Chairman: That does not matter.

The Vicar: I have great pleasure in seconding the proposition. I quite agree with what the proposer has said. So long as there are gentlemen on this Council who are quite qualified to hold the position of chairman, and who have not held the office, we should not re-elect a chairman, however good he may be. It is a very great advantage to occupy the chair. You get more behind the scenes than you can possibly do as a member, and in Mr Wiseman we have one who is specially qualified. He is an educated man, a good speaker, and a man who would do well as a magistrate, which position he would hold ex-officio as chairman of this Council. Moreover, Mr Wiseman is highly respected and is trusted by all classes, but especially by the poor. A large number of working people look up to him with trust and admiration, and I say this with a full recognition of the excellent way in which you (Mr Walker) have discharged your duties in the past year. But I think you should not occupy the chair for another year so long as there is any member suitable for the position, and who has never passed through the chair.

Mr Smith: Mr Bircham has put the thing in quite another light, and I shall let my objection slide. He intimated in that case, in the future, it would be just as well to name the senior member, and elect him accordingly.

Mr Woodhams: I beg to rise to a point of order. I did not raise the question of seniority at all.

Mr Smith: You said 'turn.'

The Vicar: Has Mr Smith held the office?

The Clerk: Not during the term of office of any other member except Messrs Walker and Woodhams. Of those who were members when he was chairman he is the senior.

Mr Wiseman: My position is simply this. In the ordinary way, so far as Mr Smith is concerned, of the present members there are only he and myself who were members at the time he was chairman. So far as relates to the post of chairman, and the position obtaining on the Council, it is this. Along with Mr Wilson we are the senior members who have not previously occupied the post at any other time.

Mr Smith observed that if they were going to stick to precedent he would remind them that the late Mr York occupied the chair twice, and Mr Hall had also occupied the chair twice. If they were going to adhere to precedent let them do so, but if they talked about "turns," or whose turn it was, then he would remind them that it was his "turn," but he was not caring anything at all about it.

The Chairman said he felt very ill-at-ease, for he now understood it was a case of "turn." But the question before them was—were there any other nominations?

Mr Hodgson: I have pleasure in proposing Mr Smith.

Mr Wilson: I second the nomination.

Mr Hedley: I propose Mr Wilson as chairman.

Mr Smith: More the merrier. (Laughter).

Mr Thompson: I second Mr Wilson's nomination.

It was then agreed to take the vote by ballot, and the Chairman ruled that they must not vote for more than three.

Mr Woodhams: When I was made chairman it was done by open voting.

Mr Smith: At that time, Mr Woodhams, there were only two nominations.

Mr Woodhams: Yes.

The Vicar: Can we avoid this, Mr Chairman? It is very unpleasant.

Mr Smith: I think I would stand by the rule, and vote for three. It has been the custom before.

The Clerk: You may vote for one less than the total number.

The Vicar: I shall vote for the man I want in. It is perfectly legal.

Voting by Ballot.

The first round in the voting resulted as follows:—Walker, 4; Smith, 7; Wiseman, 6; and Wilson, 4. Two names only were then submitted to ballot, Messrs Walker and Wilson having dropped out. The final figures were: Smith, 5; Wiseman, 6.

Mr Smith: I move that Mr Wiseman now take the chair.

Mr Woodhams: I second that.

Mr Wiseman said he thanked them very much for the honour they had done him. He was very proud to occupy the position, and he could assure them that he would set up to the responsibilities, and to the best of his ability he would endeavour to discharge the duties faithfully. He was sure that they would with him all hope that the crisis through which their country was passing would have ended, with victory on their side, before the termination of this his year of office, and that a lasting era of peace may have commenced. Again he thanked them for having elected him chairman.

The Late Chairman Thanked.

Mr Wiseman had now again great pleasure in asking the Council to place on record their appreciation of the excellent services rendered during the past year by Mr Walker, the retiring chairman. It had been an arduous and a trying time, and he had discharged the arduous task excellently. Mr Wiseman, therefore, asked the Council to show their sense of Mr Walker's devotedness, and accordingly moved that a record of his services be entered upon the minutes.

Mr Smith seconded the motion, which was suitably and appropriately acknowledged by Mr Walker.

Formation of Committees.

Mr Smith counselled that they revert to the old arrangement of having six members each on the Sanitary and Works Committee. The plan had worked advantageously, and not the least commendable feature was that the members became experts at their work, and took an interest in it. Since the committees respectively had been composed of twelve men it had been demonstrated once more that what was anybody's business was in reality nobody's business. Besides it would be much easier for the Council itself, for, in the larger bodies as now constituting the committees, there was really no necessity for any meetings, because the Council itself could transact the business, the full members being equally admitted to both. He moved that they go back to the old arrangement.

The Clerk said he had checked the attendance at the committee meetings, and had found that the Works Committee (6), had an average of 5; Sanitary Committee (12), an average of 7; and the Finance Committee (12), had an average of 6. The percentage was 90 in favour of small committees as against 60 per cent. in the case of the large committees.

Mr Wilson seconded Mr Smith's resolution, and remarked that, the smaller the committees the better.

Mr Walker opposed the proposed change, and observed that it had been said that they could prove anything by figures. He thought everyone who liked to do so should attend the meetings of the Sanitary Committee, which were at all times an important gathering.

Mr Arrowsmith, in the course of the discussion, complained of elected members of committees not attending.

The Clerk remarked that if they wanted the work well done they should entrust it to small committees. In the case of large committees they might as well have two Councils going, as the sending out of notices amounted to that.

The question was discussed at further length, and eventually it was agreed that the Works Committee and the Sanitary Committee each consist of six members, and that the Finance Committee be composed of the chairman of each committee, the chairman of the Council, and three elected members of the Council. This principle being accepted, the actual election of the three members of the Finance Committee was adjourned.

The Right of Members to Attend Any Committee Meeting.

The Vicar proposed that any member who was not on any special committee may attend the meetings of the committee if he thought fit, at any time, but, of course, he would not be allowed to speak or to vote. He thought anyone who was elected by the ratepayers had a full right to know everything which was going on. Any member who took a special interest in the work surely had the right to go and listen to the transactions of the committee, and become acquainted with the basis upon which they formed their report. For nine years he had exercised the right at Portsmouth as a member of the Board of Guardians, and this with the approval of an excellent Clerk who was their adviser.

The Clerk: The resolution is *ultra vires*. A committee has the right to sit without any outsider being present. Any committee can ask any person to be present, whether he is a member of the Council or not, and they can get information from any source they like. But to attempt to give a member the right will lead to great complication, and certainly to misuse.

The Vicar: Will the Clerk give us his authority for saying that it is *ultra vires*? I mean some definite authority beyond his own *ipsi dixit*.

The Clerk: I cannot at the present moment, but I know the law perfectly well. It is the law of the land.

The Vicar said he had not yet found a clerk who was infallible.

Mr Walker, who said he had been told he could not attend committee meetings of which he was not a member, remarked that, as Mr Dawson felt strongly on the subject, it would be well to adjourn the further consideration of the matter until the next meeting, when the Clerk would probably produce his authority.

The Whitsuntide Fixture: a Recruiting Carnival.

The Chairman said there was a meeting of the local recruiting committee last Wednesday, and it had been decided to hold a recruiting carnival at Barnard Castle in connection with the north-eastern cyclists, and the executive were coming through to support the movement. The Council were asked to co-operate with the project, and make it a success, and he asked that three delegates be sent from that body to a meeting to be held in Newcastle, to-day (Wednesday), if the Council were agreeable.—Mr Smith: Is it necessary to appoint three?—Mr Wiseman remarked that the local parliamentary committee, with Lord Barnard as chairman, and himself as vice-chairman; three members of the Council, three members of the volunteer training corps, and the local scoutmaster were the delegates proposed.—The meeting appointed the Rev. H. W. H. Bircham, Mr John Guy, and the Chairman as the Council's delegates, and committee meetings were then held.

Gas in the Stomach is Dangerous.

Physicians recommend the use of Magnesia.

Sufferers from indigestion or dyspepsia should remember that the presence of gas or wind in the stomach invariably indicates that the stomach is troubled by excessive acidity.

This acid causes the food to ferment, and the fermenting food in turn gives rise to noxious gases which distend the stomach, hamper the normal functions of vital internal organs, cause acute headaches, interfere with the action of the heart, and change the blood stream with deadly poisons, which in time must ruin the health. Physicians say that to quickly dispel a dangerous accumulation of wind in the stomach, and to stop the food fermentation which creates the gas, the acid in the stomach must be neutralised, and that for this purpose there is nothing quite so good as a half-a-teaspoonful of pure *bisurated* magnesia taken in a little water immediately after meals. This instantly neutralises the acid, thus stopping fermentation and the formation of gas, and enabling the inflamed, distended stomach to proceed with its work under natural conditions. Bisurated magnesia is obtainable in powder or tablet form from G. Clarkson Harker, The Estate Pharmacy; T. S. Ilsley, Market-place; Mason's Cash Drug Stores, 8, Horse-market; R. W. Raine, Market-place, and Middleton-in-Teesdale; and other high-class chemists and stores everywhere, but as there are many different forms of magnesia it is important that the *bisurated* which the physicians prescribe should be distinctly asked for.

Post-card Maps, showing each Theatre of War in detail, 1d. each, to be had at the "Teesdale Mercury" Office, Barnard Castle.

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BARNARD CASTLE

STATION TIME TABLE,

From 1st OCTOBER, 1914, until further notice.

NOTE.—This Time Table is compiled from Official Sources, and we do not hold ourselves responsible in any way.

ARRIVAL OF TRAINS.	DEPARTURE OF TRAINS.
A.M.	A.M.
7 8 Middleton-in-Teesdale	7 12 Bishop Auckland, Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle
7 31 Newcastle, Leamside, Durham, Bishop Auckland	7 40 Kirkby Stephen, Tebay, Appleby Penrith, Keswick
7 35 London, York, Saltburn, Richmond, Darlington	7 40 Darlington, Richmond, Saltburn, Newcastle, York, London
8 36 Middleton-in-Teesdale	7 43 Middleton-in-Teesdale
9 16 Penrith, Appleby, Tebay, Kirkby Stephen	8 40 Bishop Auckland, Crook, Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle
10 2 London, York, Newcastle, Saltburn, Richmond, Darlington *(Wednesdays only)*	9 19 Darlington, Richmond, Saltburn, Newcastle, York, London
10 10 Middleton-in-Teesdale *(Wednesdays only)*	9 21 Middleton-in-Teesdale *(Wednesdays only)*
10 44 Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Crook, Bishop Auckland	10 16 Darlington, Richmond, Saltburn, Newcastle, York, London *(Wednesdays only)*
11 8 York, Newcastle, Saltburn, Richmond, Darlington	11 11 Kirkby Stephen, Tebay, Appleby, Penrith, Keswick
P.M.	11 22 Middleton-in-Teesdale
12 21 Middleton-in-Teesdale	P.M.
12 30 Keswick, Penrith, Appleby, Tebay, Kirkby Stephen	12 33 Darlington, Richmond, Saltburn, York, London
12 59 Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Crook, Bishop Auckland	12 40 Bishop Auckland, Crook, Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle
1 20 Saltburn, Richmond, Darlington	1 24 Kirkby Stephen, Tebay, Appleby, Penrith
2 48 Middleton-in-Teesdale	1 33 Middleton-in-Teesdale
3 30 Keswick, Penrith, Appleby, Tebay, Kirkby Stephen	2 55 Bishop Auckland, Crook, Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle
3 41 London, York, Newcastle, Saltburn, Darlington	3 34 Darlington, Richmond, Saltburn, Newcastle, York, London
4 44 Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Crook, Bishop Auckland	3 43 Kirkby Stephen, Tebay, Appleby, Penrith, Keswick
5 43 London, York, Newcastle, Saltburn, Richmond, Darlington	4 30 Bishop Auckland, Crook, Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle
6 1 Middleton-in-Teesdale	4 49 Middleton-in-Teesdale
6 8 Penrith, Appleby, Tebay, Kirkby Stephen	5 47 Kirkby Stephen, Tebay, Appleby, Penrith, Keswick
7 46 Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Bishop Auckland	6 12 Darlington, Richmond, Saltburn, York, London
8 7 London, York, Newcastle, Saltburn, Richmond, Darlington	6 15 Bishop Auckland, Crook, Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle
9 4 Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Crook, Bishop Auckland	9 12 Darlington, Saltburn, Newcastle, York, London
9 10 Keswick, Penrith, Appleby, Tebay, Kirkby Stephen	9 15 Middleton-in-Teesdale

SUNDAYS.

A.M.	A.M.
9 15 London, York, Newcastle, Saltburn, Bishop Auckland, Richmond, Darlington	7 20 Darlington, Richmond, Bishop Auckland, Saltburn, Newcastle, York, London
P.M.	9 20 Middleton-in-Teesdale
5 50 Penrith, Appleby, Kirkby Stephen	P.M.
6 0 Middleton-in-Teesdale	6 5 Darlington, Richmond, Bishop Auckland, Saltburn, Newcastle, York, London
8 55 London, York, Newcastle, Saltburn, Bishop Auckland, Richmond, Darlington	

St. George's Day.

BOY SCOUTS DEMONSTRATE IN GROVE PARK.

THE MEMORY OF ENGLAND'S PATRON SAINT HONOURED.

Fine Patriotic Address by the Rev. J. Penrose Hodgson.

St. George's Day was honoured by a demonstration of local Boy Scouts in Grove Park, Barnard Castle, on Friday evening, on which occasion the Rev. J. Penrose Hodgson delivered an excellent address. The festival of England's patron saint, which in pre-Reformation days was kept with national religious fervour and rejoicing, has been sadly neglected for many generations, and it is only in comparatively recent years that organised efforts have been made to restore the 23rd of April to its place of honour in the calendar. The Royal Society of St. George has done much to promote a more general observance of St. George's Day, which is also Shakespeare's Day, and the same day of His Majesty the King. For patriotic reasons alone the festival of St. George should appeal to the hearts of all Englishmen, and it will, no doubt, some day be celebrated with the same spirit of enthusiasm as is St. Patrick's Day in Ireland, St. David's Day in Wales, and St. Andrew's Day in Scotland.

There was a good muster, and the Boy Scouts marched from the scout-room to Mr John Smith's residence at Grove Park, who kindly gave permission for the use of his grounds. Here they were met by members of the committee of the local association.

Loyal and Encouraging Speech by the Superintendent Wesleyan Minister.

The Rev. J. Penrose Hodgson then addressed the assembly, and in the course of an admirable speech said: I have been asked to make a few remarks expressing our feelings on this occasion. I am sure you will agree with me that St. George's Day stirs our hearts like the sound of a trumpet, for it reminds us of what is best in our national history. The saluting of the flag of our beloved empire calls to the front the best that is within us. Uppermost in our hearts is a feeling of devout gratitude that we are blest with one of the wisest and most large-hearted kings who ever graced a throne. Every day increases his hold upon the people's hearts. We think of him to-day with respectful love, and renew the pledges of our loyalty. From the throne of Britain goes forth not only the pure light of just laws but the cheering light of a great example, and the inspiration of a mighty hope. It is in our love and loyalty to the throne we find our unity. We no longer think of our differences amongst ourselves, but cheerfully stand back to back keeping off common foes. We are also here to-day to congratulate the Boy Scouts upon the success of their movement. We are proud of you. We congratulate you upon your members, your efficiency, and your prospects. In these great days you are determined to contribute your share in making our land strong and truly free. You are preparing yourselves to maintain everything that is pure and true in our national life. You, too, are prepared like our brave soldiers to "stick it." For you there is to be no shirking, no shuffling, and no trifling. By careful training of the mind for energetic thought and eager application of the hand to useful service and, above all, by keeping your hearts pure and true, you will carry on the nation's progress. In self-knowledge, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice you will realize your best ambitions. All the good things we enjoy to-day we owe to the spirit of unselfishness. We think of the noble example of men like General Gordon. Let us ever strive to live in the spirit of the words written upon his memorial in St. Paul's Cathedral: "Sacred to the memory of George Gordon, who ever gave his sympathy to the suffering, his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, and his heart to God." (Loud applause).

This was followed by an exhibition of signalling by Scout F. Hopper, Patrol Leader G. Bowman, Patrol Leader T. Clarkson, and Patrol Leader A. Stembridge. The proceedings in Grove Park terminated by the saluting of the Union Jack. Miss Holmes, the secretary, released the flag and took the salute. The troop then went for a short march.

Streatlam and Stainton War Relief Fund.

The house-to-house collection in April for the purpose of providing material for garments and for contributing to one of the national relief funds resulted as follow:—(a) Collected by Mrs Wright—Mr Ralston, 10s; Mrs Sayer, 5s; Mr H Bradley, 2s 6d; Mr Allerdice, 2s 6d; M.H., 2s; Mr A Matson, 1s; E.W., 1s 6d; R.H., 1s; E.W., 4s; Miss Rogerson, 1s 6d; Mrs Ayres, 1s; Mrs Langan, 1s; Mr J McQueen, 1s; Mr P Langstaff, jun., 4s; Mr A Gibbon, 2s; Mrs Gibbon, 1s; Mr W Sharpe, 1s; Mrs Macdonald, 6d; Messrs Metcalfe, 2s; Mrs E Kitcher, 1s; Mr M Rogerson, 1s; Mr G Stokeld, 2s; Messrs Dodds, 5s. (b) Collected by Miss M Crockatt—Mr J W Dawson, 1s; Mr W Wilson, 2s 6d; Miss E. Wilson, 3d; Mr G Wilkie, 2s 6d; Miss P. C. Dewes, 1s; Mrs Walker, 1s; Mr J Spencer, 1s; Mr A Adams, 2s 6d; Mr W Crockatt, 4s; Mr A Crockatt, 2s; Miss M Crockatt, 1s. (c) Collected by Miss E Bewick—Mr Bewick, 4s; Miss Bewick, 2s 6d; Miss E Bewick, 1s 6d; Miss N Bewick, 1s; Mr W Bewick, 2s; Mr R Bewick, 2s; Mr H Bewick, 1s; Mr W Bell, 6d; Mr J W Morton, 1s; Mr G Rogerson, 1s; Mr J Crockatt, 6d; Mr M Longstaff, 6d; Mr R Walton, 1s; Mr W Peacock, 6d; Mrs Rutter, 1s. (d) Collected by Miss J Langstaff; Mr P Langstaff, 4s; Mr T W Langstaff, 1s; Mr H Langstaff, 6d; Miss I Braithwaite, 1s; Mrs E Langstaff, 2s; Mrs White, 3d; Miss Shaw, 2d; Mrs Robinson, 3d; Mr J Shepherd, 6d. (e) Collected by Miss Murray—Mr J Garbutt, 6d; Mr A Macdonald, 6d; Mrs E Lowes, 6d; Mrs Addison, 3d; Mr G Addison, 1s 6d; Mr J Stoddart, 1s; Mr F Stoddart, 6d; Mr Jas. Guy, 8d; F.W.J., 5s; M.J.L., 1s; Mr R Murray, 2s; Mr A Taylor, 1s; Mr T Gibbon, 1s; Mr F Gibbon, 1s; M.W., 6d. (f) Collected by Miss Stout—Mr Raine, 6d; Mrs Stout, 6d; Mr J W Stokeld, 1s; Mrs Stokeld, 1s; Mr F Dawson, 5s; Mr R Harrison, 1s; Mr G Lowes, 6d; Mr G Wilkinson, 1s. Total amount collected for the month, 26 9s 4d.

Now that the Lambing season is here Farmers will be able to obtain a good, fresh stock of Sweet Nitre, Laudanum, Veterinary Homœopathics, and Lambing Oils and Teats, at lowest prices, from G. Clarkson Harker, Chemist (opposite Galgate entrance to Auction Mart), Barnard Castle.

The War.

GRAPHIC LETTER FROM THE TRENCHES.

To the Editor of the "Teesdale Mercury."

DEAR SIR,—I have just received a letter from a young nephew in the First Surrey Rifles, now forming part of the British Expeditionary Force in France, which will, I think, interest your readers. I have seen many accounts, but do not think that anything I have read has given me such a vivid idea of the scenes now being enacted as this letter has done. You will observe that it is a continuation of a former letter, which described the voyage across the Channel, and the landing in France.—Yours faithfully, OWEN S. SCOTT.

Bowes Museum, 24th April, 1915.

17th April, 1915.

"As I've a few moments to spare, I'll try and recollect where I left off before, and continue my experiences, including the eight days I've just completed in the trenches.

"Another day's march brought us to a farm, where three of us had a farm cart for our home, the remainder faring similarly in lofts, etc. We made ourselves as comfortable as possible in our home; the hens laid by day, and we by night!

"The place reminded me very much of Hendon on an enlarged scale. Aircraft of every description soared aloft all day long, and to witness an aeroplane being shelled is a fine sight, though doubtless for the onlooker only!

"Unexpectedly we received orders to 'move off,' so with our possessions on our backs we 'moved off,' nobody knew whither until we had covered many weary miles of French roadways which had been made but which the steamroller had forgotten—much to the detriment of our ankles. The sound of guns drew nearer and nearer, and the word passed down the ranks, 'trenches to-night.' Guides attached themselves to us, and we still proceeded, passing old battlefields where graves with rough wooden crosses would intimate that ten, twenty, or thirty (as the case might be) of such-and-such a regiment were buried, while in some instances men were lucky enough to get a single six feet, with, perhaps, a few primroses planted on them.

"We halted at a village; everybody was quivering with excitement; a noted Highland Regiment had had tea for us, and after a half-an-hour we resumed our march. The sound of rifle fire was distinct; the night was turned into day by the sky-fires, in which the Germans excel. Pushing forward in single file, our guides led us across fields teeming with communication lines and barbed wire entanglements; many a fall did we get before we reached the trenches. Rain had begun to fall, making the clay like ice, but eventually we arrived behind the earthworks which were to be our homes for a few hours. Side by side with our Highland friends we fixed our bayonets, charged our magazines, and posted the sentries, while the remainder took stock of the immediate surroundings. Rain was now falling heavily, and we all took our turns at 'look-outs'; as day-break everybody stood by to repel any attack which might be made.

"It is impossible to describe the scene. No writer, artist, or camera could depict it. You have to see it fully to realise the awfulness of war. Houses which had been shelled or burnt to the ground surrounded us on every side, the inhabitants having left in a hurry, taking only a few possessions with them; large factories with thousands of pounds' worth of machinery, so much scrap-iron; a church completely gutted; not even the dead had been able, but human bones were strewn all over the ground. These were a few of the sights I saw.

"All day long the bullets were whistling by, machine guns and artillery would send their blue of lead, or, perhaps to be stopped by some unlucky person. At dusk the working parties would turn out with picks and shovels to make advance trenches, and we all took our turn. I must admit I had a peculiar feeling the first few minutes I was under fire, but it soon wore off, and now we feel a certain amount of indifference.

"Our Highland friends we relieved, and now we had a sector of front to ourselves; at times we advanced over unprotected ground, exposed to the Germans' fire; up would go a sky-flare—down we would drop prostrate on the ground; there would be a sound of bullets whistling by, but we pushed forward again when the flare died out; this would happen several times before we reached the advance trench in course of making. Large and small holes torn in the ground by the shells, some big enough to turn a horse and cart in, are now filled with water. On one occasion I fell into one of those holes in the dark, waist deep in water, and for practically the remainder of the time was ankle-deep in mud and water, and we didn't suffer from a shortage of rain while there.

"At one time only two hundred yards separated us from the Germans, when we were in what we called 'The Butts.' I could distinctly hear them singing and working, and a loud shout would go up when an English shell hit their trench.

"We entered the trenches on Good Friday, and I don't think I shall ever forget this Easter holiday. Our casualties were small, and personally I'm looking as fit as a fiddle."

Letter from a Barnard Castle Youth at the Front.

In a letter to his father in this town a local soldier, who was in the trenches on April 4th, says he wrote the epistle in the trenches while the "Jack Johnsons" were sweeping over their heads every ten minutes. We get plenty of cigarettes, but a bit of cake would come in all right. Would you please send me a tin of cocoa if it is not asking too much? We do not receive any money, so you see we cannot buy anything. Such things as sweetmeats would be very nice to eat in the trenches. Would you send me something to read, for we get no news whatever out here? We are having a little fine weather just at present, and I hope it continues. If all the Barney lads could see this picture they would willingly come forward and give a helping hand to the men in the trenches, who have fought so bravely. My Sunday school secretary sent me a little hymn-book and prayer-book, and I think it was very kind of him to think of me. It is a case of here to-day and gone to-morrow. We are constantly on the move, day by day. Give my best respects to all the chaps at Sammy Thompson's, and to my friends also who so kindly ask after me. When the "Jack Johnsons" burst they make a hole in the ground large enough to bury a horse and cart. [The writer of the letter is Private Fred Morley, at the front with the Second Yorkshires.] "We have to be very careful in writing home," he adds.

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Wednesday, April 28th, 1915.