



Southborough & High Brooms

First World War Walking Trails

***Revealing the history of local people,
places and events***

**This trail was developed with assistance from
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with additional historical research by
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All trails are accessible digitally at www.kentww1 on 100 miles tab, where you will find a link to an app.

Travel information:

By car: The postcode for the start of the Southborough Trail is TN4 0RU and for the High Brooms trail it is TN2 3 XE

By Train: The train station is at High Brooms

Parking: There is a car park in Pennington Road for the Southborough Trail the post code is TN4 0SJ. The car park at High Brooms Station is small (postcode TN2 3XE) , there is some on street parking.

Places of rest / Facilities: There are no public toilets

Walking Advice – Health and Safety

Some of the locations shown on our maps can be dangerous, particularly coastal areas where the incoming tide may cut off routes, and cliff edges may be prone to collapse. Always check local safety information before travelling, and use caution when visiting.

Our maps and points of interest are provided for historical information only. If you are not familiar with the area, always walk with an appropriate OS map.

For schools and groups, a pre-visit should be undertaken by the organiser. Any educational walks or visits must be arranged in advance through e-Go.

Please view the following websites for important health and safety information for walking:

- gov.uk – Rules for Pedestrians
- www.walkingandhiking.co.uk – Health & Safety When Walking

Always use designated crossing points even if they are not shown in any walking guidance, neither Kent in WW1/ 100 miles for 100 years nor any associates assumes any liability for loss , damages or injury whist following this trail.

Disclaimer

Kent in WW1/ 100 miles for 100 years has used reasonable endeavours to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within the trails. Despite every effort to the contrary, errors, omissions or discrepancies may have occurred in preparation of these. Neither Kent in WW1/ 100 miles for 100 years nor any associates assumes any liability for loss or damages incurred due in part or in whole to such errors.

For more information please visit www.kentww1.com

Trail specific information

Green Trail: Please be aware that the route runs along a steep hill from Stop 1 to Stop 2 and further to Stop 3.

Note: text in 'burgundy' shows directions to a particular stop.

Glossary

VAD is the abbreviation for the Voluntary Aid Detachment formed before the War of members of the Red Cross and members of the St John Ambulance. These men and women were mainly volunteers and served in various roles including nursing, as stretcher bearers, cooks and drivers.

Introduction

The communities of Southborough and High Brooms were very close, with many of the residents working together either in the large estates locally or in the various local industries such as The Highbrooms Brick and Tile Company.

When War was declared the first thing that was noticed by local inhabitants was that the post office had been open all day Sunday 2nd August until 2a.m. Monday morning and then again all through the nights of the Tuesday 4th and Wednesday 5th August 1914 as urgent summons were being sent to men in the Territorials to rejoin their regiments post haste.

Local large houses, such as Crothers in Southborough, became Red Cross Auxiliary Hospitals and Alec Brook, Photographer, 60 Edward St., Southborough, Kent, would go to Crothers and take photographs of those convalescing. The Royal Victoria Hall and Park House were also used as hospitals; the Royal Victoria Hall was used to treat Belgian wounded soldiers.

The event which had the most impact on the communities of Southborough and High Brooms was the sinking of HMS Hythe on 28th of October 1915. The Third Fortress Company had been raised in Southborough and so many local men were on board the Hythe when she sunk- 129 of the 154 lives lost in this event were local men. In such small communities the impact was felt by all, as these were men who had attended the local schools, played for the local football teams, and left families who lived locally.

Please see page 21 for a Roll of Honour for the men from Southborough and High Brooms, including the streets where they lived, who fell in the First World War.

Southborough and High Brooms Trails

Main Trail

Distance 2 miles (3.3 km)

1. St Peter's Church

Start here, TN4 0RU



St Peter's Church was full on Sunday 21st November 1915 for the **memorial service** held in honour of the Kent Fortress Royal Engineers from Southborough who had died in the HMS *Hythe** disaster.

Seats were reserved for the relatives and friends of the dead, and many local people had to be turned away due to lack of space. Between **50 and 60 officers and men** from the unit's Gillingham headquarters attended, including some of Southborough hero Captain David

'Reggie' Salomons' Company. The congregation stood as the **Southborough Roll of Honour** was read out loud by the Rev WW Martin. At the end of the service, many were moved to tears as the Engineers' Company buglers sounded the Last Post from the church's gallery.

St Peter's was at the heart of the community during the First World War. **Harvest festival fruit and vegetables** collected by the church were donated to the local hospitals and the church was used by the nurses and patients of **Crothers Red Cross VAD hospital**.

The Kent & Sussex Courier reported that news of the armistice on Monday 11th November 1918 was received quietly at first in Southborough but celebrations gathered pace fast. **A thanksgiving service held at St Peter's Church at 3.00pm** was impressively attended with enthusiastic singing of the National Anthem launching the proceedings.



Sources: *Sevenoaks Chronicle* and *Kentish Advertiser* various dates, *Kent & Sussex Courier* Friday 26 November 1915, 15 November 1918

*for more about the HMS *Hythe* disaster please see number 6 on the Green Trail, Silverdale Road and the item about the Drill Hall Speldhurst Road

2. Southborough War Memorial

Turn left onto Church Road to Stop 2 the War Memorial

The **Southborough War Memorial** is shaped as a Cross and located on the village green at the crossroads for London Road and Church Road. The **207 names** listed also show the regiment and rank of the men who died. The memorial was created by **A. Burslem and Sons**; a local firm in Tunbridge Wells who made many local memorials such as at Leigh, Speldhurst and Wadhurst and over 10,000 individual memorials.

Source <http://www.iwm.org.uk> www.iwm.org.uk/memorials
www.burslem.co.uk/about-us-memorials/



3. 1 Victoria Road, Marguerite Rainier

Turn right down London Road to Victoria Road. On the corner you will see 1 Victoria Road.

Marguerite Rainier (b 1886) was the daughter of retired Admiral John Harvey Rainier and Mrs Georgina Rainier, her father died in 1915. She **enlisted with the Kent VAD in October 1914** and became a nursing member in April 1915 - nursing at local VAD hospitals Crothers, Royal Victoria Hall and West Hall and served until January 1919.

Both she and her mother supported the VAD by fund raising; which Marguerite fitted around giving over **9,000 hours of nursing service**.

Fund raising was vital for the VAD Hospitals as, although they were paid a grant for each patient, it was insufficient to cover all outgoings.

Marguerite's brothers, **John and Daniel**, were both officers in the Royal Navy and survived the War.

Sources British Red Cross, <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk> and various newspapers

Service Record for Marguerite Rainier, Kent 94. The form includes fields for Name, Address, Date of Engagement, Date of Termination, Particulars of Duties, and Hours served. The record shows she served from October 1914 to January 1919, with 8000 hours of service.

Handwritten VAD service record for Marguerite Rainier, Kent 94. The record includes fields for Name, Address, Date of Engagement, Date of Termination, Particulars of Duties, and Hours served. The record shows she served from October 1914 to January 1919, with 8000 hours of service.



4. 52 London Road, Thomas G Hearnden

Proceed on down London Road to Springfield Road, 6th turning on the right. On the corner is 52 London Road.



Thomas Godfrey Hearnden was a **corn and coal merchant** with premises at 52 London Road, Southborough and on Monson Road, Tunbridge Wells. He was a member of Southborough Urban District Council, and lived on Yew Tree Road (at the time of the 1911 census).

He **advertised corn meal as an ideal food for poultry** being raised by local people in order to supplement the rations.

Thomas Hearnden was also a member of a council committee set up to manage the distribution of coal to poor

families.

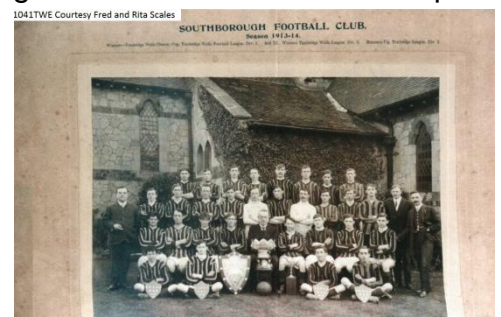
When Southborough Football Club was suspended during the First World War; Mr Hearnden took responsibility for their ground (See Southborough Football Club).

Sources: Kent & Sussex Courier Friday 1 June 1917 and various other dates

5. 68 Springfield Road, the Mills Family

Proceed along Springfield Road to number 68.

Albert and Elizabeth Mills of Springfield Road, Southborough had **four sons and three sons-in-law** serving in the Army during the First World War. Despite numerous injuries and near misses, from shrapnel wounds to explosions, **they all survived**.

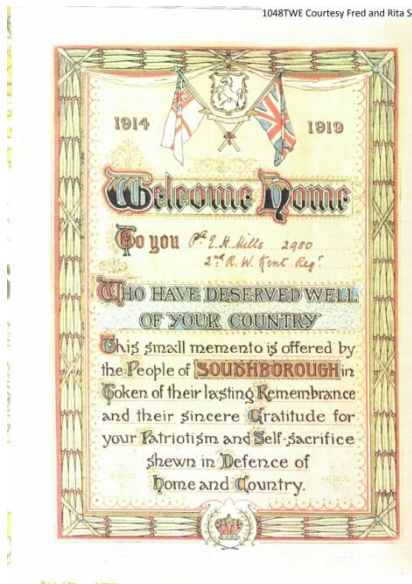


William (born 1885), worked for **Cave Edwards grocery** in Tunbridge Wells and on 9 March 1916 applied for exemption from service at a sitting of the regular Southborough Tribunal. **With three brothers serving overseas and a sick father**, William was supporting his mother, father and a female relative. Absolute exemption was granted, but in **January 1918** the Courier reported that Private W Mills (Gloucester Regiment) of 68 Springfield Road was in **hospital in Italy**. He had joined up in **October 1916** and was sent to France and then onto Italy in June 1917. At **Christmas 1918 William** arrived home on 14 days' leave from Italy after two years' service.

Fred Mills (born 1886) joined the Army **aged 18**, serving for three years before transferring to the Reserve. At the outbreak of war he was recalled and was at the Front during the early battles of the conflict. In **October 1914** a piece of shell smashed one of his arms and it was feared he would lose it. Fred recovered though and after serving at home for some time **was sent to the Front again in the spring of 1916**, where he was injured once again. By the summer, Lance-Corporal Fred (Royal West Kent Regiment) was in hospital again (in Cardiff), after being **buried for four hours** following an explosion on 26th July 1916 which killed several of his comrades. He made it **home on leave in October 1917** but on his return to France was taken ill again and spent a great deal more time in hospital. During the later stages of the war, Fred was moved into **the Labour Battalion (Corps)** which often took men who had been injured and were unable to serve on the frontline. At Christmas 1918 he was in a Cheshire hospital, the Great War certainly having taken its toll.



1246TWE Courtesy T Firth



1048TWE Courtesy Fred and Rita Scales

The youngest Mills boy, Ernest (born 1892), joined the Royal West Kent Regiment in September 1914 and served in **Mesopotamia (the Middle East) from October 1915**. In **April 1919** he finally **returned** to his Southborough home.

Elizabeth and Albert Mills also had two older sons (Herbert and Albert), Frank (born 1888) and four daughters (Kate, Rose, Lily and Violet).

Sources: Kent & Sussex Courier Friday 10 March 1916, 4 August 1916, 25 January 1918, 27 December 1918, 18 April 1919

6. 18 Edward Street, F Piper POW

Continue along Springfield Road then turn left onto Edward Street. Number 18 is on the right.



1243TWE Courtesy T Firth

Frederick William Piper, a Corporal in the Leicester Regiment, went **missing on 23rd March 1918** at Bullecourt in northern France. His wife Edith was relieved to receive a postcard at their home, 18 Edward St, Southborough on **26th July 1918** (sent on 10th April) from him saying that he was alive and **a prisoner of war**. His PoW index card reads: "According to letter of family 27th July 18 is prisoner in Germany at Parchim".

During World War I, 10 million men and women (civilians as well as servicemen) were captured and held in detention camps. The Germans built almost **300 PoW camps**, 170 for the British; conditions were challenging, with most British captives in **forced labour schemes**.

Parchim was based at a former cavalry drill ground three miles from

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in northern Germany. The camp itself held **25,000 men** and up to 45,000 more were registered in nearby work camps, so Fred may have been held at one of these.

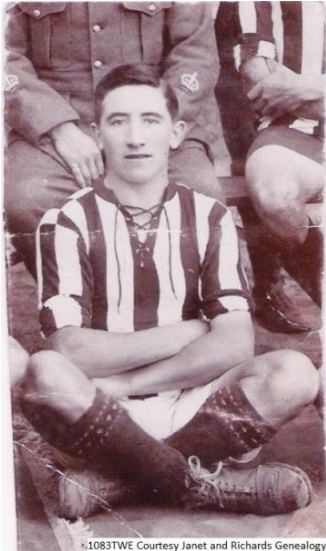
Sources and more information: *Kent & Sussex Courier* Friday 2 August 1918

<https://grandequerre.icrc.org/en/File/Search#/3/2/224/0/British%20and%20Commonwealth/Military/piper>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world-war-1/505464/British-prisoners-of-war-and-the-Kaiser>

7. 30 Edward Street, Herbert Silver

Carry on along Edward Street and number 30 is on the right.



Herbert John Silver was born in October 1894, the youngest son of Henry Charles Frank Silver and Elizabeth of Forge Road, Southborough. Herbert **attended Miss Lovell's school in Prospect Road** from 5-7 years of age. He later went to St. Peter's School on the common. Elizabeth died in 1908, leaving Bert, his father, and two brothers and two sisters. He left school at the age of 14. His **first job was a house painter** at Holden House.

When war was declared he joined up and was posted to **India** with the Royal West Kent Regiment serving as a **signalman**. By this time the family was living on Edward Street, Southborough. **Bert's brother Percy** saw a great deal of action in India during the war and afterwards in Iraq, leaving the Army in 1922 as a Lieutenant.

Bert was demobbed in May 1919 and returned to house painting and **his beloved sporting activities**. In March 1934, he married Emily Unsted and they had one daughter, **Rita**. During the **Second World War**, **Bert** served his country once again working in a munitions factory and the **Home Guard in Oxford**. Bert was affectionately known as *Punch*. He died at the age of 90 in 1985, a keen sportsman his whole life.

Source: *Rita Scales, Bert Silver's daughter*

8. 13 Western Road, the Moon Family

Take Western Road on the left to number 13.



On 1st June 1916, **Gunner Harry Moon** of the 13th Canadian Field Artillery, and second son of Walter and Anne Moon of 13 Western Road, Southborough was severely wounded in Belgium and died in hospital the following day. Harry's mother received very personal letters from both **the sister-in-charge** who cared for him initially after he was hit by a shell splinter in his chest, and the **hospital chaplain** who was with him when he died.

The **22-year-old** had belonged to the Southborough Kent Fortress Royal Engineers before leaving England for **Canada**. There he had joined the **Canadian Field Artillery** and volunteered for overseas service as soon as war broke out. He had been at the Front since **September 1915**.

Harry was **the first of four brothers to be killed in action** during the war, in a devastating three-month period for the family. On **4th July** Sergeant **Walter Moon** of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry was lost in the Battle of the Somme, and Corporal **Charles Moon** of the 6th Battalion Royal West Kent Regiment was killed in action in **late August**. By the end of August Mrs Moon had received yet another letter, informing her of the death of her

fourth son, **John** (Royal Navy). John had joined up a week after his 18th birthday and had not reached 19.

Mrs Moon also had three daughters and a six-year-old son. She had to travel to Bath Hospital to share the news with her husband, a carpenter, who had been ill some time himself. In March 1917, **Charles Moon's parents were sent his military medal for bravery** in the field, awarded in particular for 'holding' a crater alone for 20 minutes after his comrades were all killed or wounded.

Source: *Lives of the First World War*

Kent & Sussex Courier, Friday 9 June 1916, 25 August 1916

9. 60 Edward Street, Alec Brook

Retrace your steps down Western Road and turn left onto Edward Street. Just past the junction with Forge Road is 60 Edward Street.



Alec Brook, a photographer who lived at 60 Edward Street, Southborough used to go to Crothers Auxiliary Hospital and **photograph the convalescing soldiers**. In July 1916, Alec took photos of a sports day for injured soldiers from local Red Cross hospitals, held at Bidborough Court VAD hospital, and sold postcards **to raise money for the hospital funds**. Ten patients from Crothers took part in the event.

Alec (born 1890) became very well known in Southborough after establishing his business around 1915 and **photographing**

numerous local events, often for the *Kent & Sussex Courier*. He married Frances E Poole during the war (1916) and they subsequently adopted a daughter, Gladys. Alec died suddenly in November 1933, aged just 43, after undergoing two operations. At that time he and his family were living at 140 London Road, Southborough.



Sources: *Kent & Sussex Courier, Friday 14 July 1916, 1 December 1933*



10. 5 Forge Road, Fred Anderson

Retrace your steps and turn right into Forge Road walking along to number 5.



Fred Anderson was born in Southborough and lived at 5 Forge Road with his parents Edith Alice Anderson and Edward Anderson and **his three sisters** Nell (later Mrs Gorringer), Norah (later Mrs Baker) and Ethel May (later Mrs Stronghill), who was known locally as Little Ginny or May. Colin Stronghill, Fred's nephew, recalls his mother saying that

they were a **very happy-go-lucky family**, who enjoyed parties and get-togethers.

Fred's father **Edward** was a labourer working for Strange Builders **and enlisted in 1914** serving with the Royal Engineers.

Fred himself **enlisted** with the Bedfordshire Regiment joining the Army in **April 1917**. The 1911 Census records him as being 12 years of age. He would have been 18 when he joined the Regiment in **Maidstone**. The regiment went to France in April 1918.

He died on **1 October 1918 of wounds** and is buried at Sunken Road Cemetery, Boisleux-St Marc, Pas de Calais, France.

His family received a plaque from the government after his death, which is still in their possession.

Source: Sevenoaks Chronicle and Kentish Advertiser Friday 11 October 1918

Information and photo courtesy Judith Johnson

Additional information Kevin Brand



11. The Royal Victoria Hall, London Road

Follow Forge Road until you meet London Road. Turn left along London Road, crossing where safe, to stop 11 on the right just past Western Road. *Please note this is in the process of being demolished and being replaced by Southborough Hub (Sept 2017).*



Southborough's theatre, the **Royal Victoria Hall** was used as an auxiliary hospital. It was mobilised on **14th October 1914** to treat wounded **Belgian soldiers**, with Lady Laura Salomons as its Commandant. Her daughter Vera took on the role of Quartermaster later in the conflict.

Royal Victoria Hall was turned into a hospital in just one week, **equipment donated** and loaned by Southborough's inhabitants and promises of small weekly contributions of fruit and veg made. **Local doctors**, Dr Hutchings, Dr Bayfield and

Dr Martin **offered their services** to treat the patients, with the assistance of Mrs Ferguson and Nurse Stevens

Royal Victoria Hall received its first patients on the afternoon of **Wednesday 21st October**, with the arrival of 16 wounded Belgian soldiers who had travelled by train **from Folkestone to Tunbridge Wells, and then on to Southborough by car**. They were greeted by a large crowd who cheered every soldier. The police and St John's Ambulance members helped **carry those who were unable to walk**. Once settled, the men were given hot coffee and soup.

Sources and more information: Kent & Sussex Courier Friday 23 October 1914, Kent Care for the Wounded

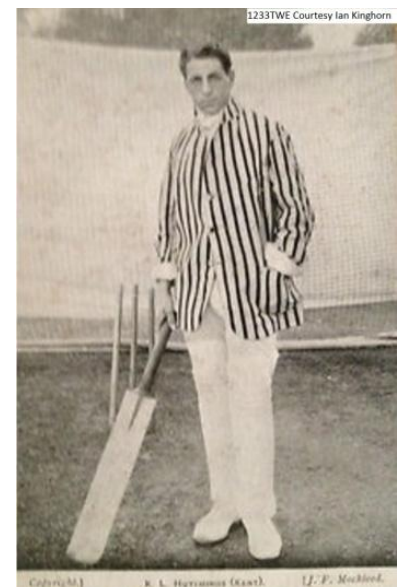
<http://www.southboroughsociety.co.uk/17.html>

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/Who-we-are/History-and-origin/First-World-War/Auxiliary-Hospitals>, <https://www.salomons-estate.com/media/14570/Salomons-Estate-Museum-Brochure.pdf>, <https://belgiansrtw.wordpress.com/category/belgium/>

12. 71 London Road, the Hutchings Family

Keep walking along London Road, round the corner and past Garlinge Road. On the right you will see stop 12, 71 London Road nestled behind hedges and trees.

Edward Hutchings; who was a general practitioner; and his wife Catherine had **four sons**, William (b 1880), Frederick V (b 1881),



John S (b 1882) and Kenneth Lotherington (b 1883). All the boys were educated at **Tonbridge School** and it was there that Kenneth showed himself to be an **able cricketer** by scoring 209 not out in an innings in his final year. Local reports were that he delighted in practicing hitting the ball hard and **when playing with his brothers broke several windows**. He was such a gifted cricketer that he played county cricket as an amateur **for Kent**, including a tour of the Americas, and was part of a **MCC cricket tour to play in Australia**. He scored runs profusely at all levels of the game.

None of the boys followed their father or grandfather into the medical profession but seem to have all been involved in business and Kenneth and possibly John were **in Liverpool** working before the War.

When War was declared **all four brothers volunteered** and Kenneth and John joined the 4th The Kings (Liverpool) Regiment as a commissioned officers. **Kenneth** was first sent to France in 1915 and having returned for surgery (reason unspecified but not injury related) in December 1915 went once more to France in July 1916. He was killed in action on the **3rd September 1916** and is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, having no known grave.

At the time of Kenneth's death **William** was serving in France, **John** was still in hospital in Reading recovering from wounds received in July 1916 and **Frederick** was about to be sent overseas. They were to **survive the War**.

Their mother Catherine was a **volunteer** with the VAD acting as **assistant quartermaster** at **Victoria Hall and Crothers** from July 1915 to December 1918. She assisted with all the ordering of supplies of food, medical supplies and clothing for the patients and putting in the claims for the number of patients being treated and she worked **full time**.



Sources various newspaper articles, the IWM, Commonwealth War Graves and Red Cross

13. 8 Sheffield Road, the Tipping Family

Continue in the same direction along London Road then turn right into Sheffield Road. To number 8 on the right.

The local paper celebrated the **Tipping family** of Sheffield Road, Southborough in February 1915 for their patriotism in serving their country. Father George Tipping had himself served 21 years in the Army, and at the time of the article, he and wife Rosa had **four sons on active service**.

During the First World War, George had retired and was verger and sexton at St Peter's church in Southborough. Sergeant **William Tipping**, 7th Battery, Royal Field Artillery had served 16 years in the Army, joining as a trumpeter aged 15, serving in South Africa and India **before France in WW1**.

Bombardier **Herbert A Tipping** (91st Battery, Royal Field Artillery) had joined the Army seven years before and was stationed in India. Lance-Corporal **Percy Tipping** joined the Signal Company Royal Engineers after war broke out and was stationed in Woking.

Corporal **Harold Tipping** joined up in November 1913 (Special Reserve of the Royal West Kent Regiment) and was transferred to the Signal Company Royal Engineers, stationed at Chatham as a Drill Instructor when the piece was published.

Source: *Kent & Sussex Courier Friday 12 February 1915*



14. Twort's Cricket Balls, Park Road

Retrace your steps down Sheffield Road and back along London Road. Turn left into Park Road, the site of stop 14 is along on your lefthand side nearby to 25 Park Road.



During the 19th and 20th centuries, the manufacture of **cricket balls** was big business for Southborough: a cricket ball even features on the **town's coat of arms**. Twort's, with workshops on Park Road and Draper Street (to the rear of London Road), was one of the companies trading during the **First World War**. Several employees of Twort and the tannery (see below) enlisted to serve.

First class cricket was abandoned in England for the whole of WW1, but **military, school and local matches continued**. A V2 bomb destroyed Twort's wooden factory on Park Road in the Second World War, but it was rebuilt.

Tworts was established in the 1840s, and continued to trade in Southborough in various guises until 1978. The basic materials necessary to make a cricket ball (leather and hop twine) were plentiful locally and **leather tanning was a major industry in the area**. The **tanyard** was on land to the south of **Holden Road** and bounded to the west by **Tanyard Lane**. Foul smelling waste from the tannery flowed past the front of Holden House and into Holden Pond. It was built in the early **18th century** and **did not close until 1922**.



A Cricket ball made by Twort
-courtesy of Ian Kingholm

Sources:

http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/24815/CAA_Southborough.pdf
http://southboroughhcc.hitssports.com/pages/page_4777/history.aspx

15. Park House, 24 Park Road

Continue along Park Road to the junction with Park House Gardens and you will be where Park House stood originally.



Prior to the War **Park House** had been a **school** and a number of its former pupils were killed during the War. It was also the headquarters of the **Southborough Boy Scouts**. When Park House was **requisitioned by the War Office** a squad of the City of London Rifles were billeted there and the local newspaper reports that the **Scouts were giving first aid treatment to any soldiers who injured themselves**.

Park House became a VAD hospital when Royal Victoria Hall VAD Hospital closed in August 1915. Park House received the **first batch of wounded soldiers, 17 in all, on Monday the 1st of November 1915**. Although many of the helpers and nurses came from Southborough, including Lucy Martin from Elm Road who was the cook, others came from as far afield as Nottingham.

Wounded continued to arrive at the hospital throughout the War, **transported by volunteer ambulance and car drivers from the station, usually arriving at the hospital in the early hours of the morning**. In particular it was reported that wounded directly from the battlefield had arrived at Tunbridge Wells train station at **1 a.m. on Monday 3rd July** and by **5a.m. ten of the soldiers were being treated at Park House**; these men would have been injured at the start of the Battle of the Somme.

The local community supported the operation of the hospital with supplies and donations. **Local schoolchildren from Southborough C of E school collected eggs to supplement the patients' diets** and at Christmas time gifts were given for distribution to the wounded.

The hospital closed in January 1919.



16. St Thomas's Church

Carry on along Park Road to your left and turn left into Pennington Road. Walking down the road you will find St Thomas's Church on the right; the final stop of the main trail. Continue down Pennington Road and you will rejoin London Road.

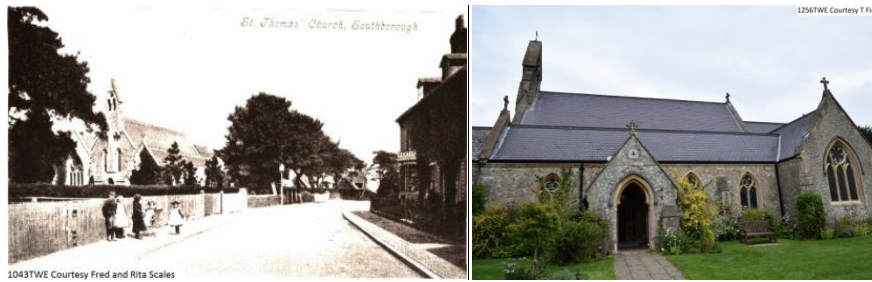


Miss Grace Chaytor Wennington Morley, a **VAD nurse**, of Holden House **married Eric Clarke**, a major in the Buffs (East Kent Regiment) in a huge military wedding at St Thomas's Church, Southborough on the day after **Armistice Day, November 12th 1918**.

The brother of the groom, Rev Kenneth Clarke, and Rev CSP Darroch led the service, which **featured a choir made up of officers and staff of Crothers Hospital** where the bride Grace had volunteered for **four years**. Grace was given away by her brother, Captain Henry CC Morley (the Buffs) and the best man (MH Saimbourne) was also a captain in the Buffs. The bride's bouquet of white heather was tied with **the Buffs' regimental colours**.

When the newly-married couple left the church, **a guard of honour was formed by staff, officers and patients of Crothers**. There was

no reception and no invitations had been sent out, but St Thomas's was packed according to the newspaper report.



Source: Kent & Sussex Courier, Friday 22 November 1918

For more information about the Buffs: <http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-infantry-regiments-of-1914-1918/buffs-east-kent-regiment/>

This is the end of the Main trail for Southborough

Green Trail for High Brooms Distance 1.4 miles (2.3 km)

1. High Brooms Railway Station

Start here, TN2 3XE. [This route runs along a steep hill to Stop 2](#)



Southborough Station, now known as High Brooms, was opened in 1893. From here, local troops would have **left for war or returned on leave**. In May 1914, just a few months before the outbreak of war, **Southborough's Sappers, the Kent Fortress Royal Engineers Territorial Army unit**, paraded to the station and boarded the train here, heading for an outdoor training camp in Dover.

Twenty-three year old Sapper Thomas Henry Saunders of the Kent Fortress Royal Engineers in Southborough was not killed in action, **but had taken an unfortunate fall on a kerb** while posted in Chatham, injuring his spine. Admitted to the Fort Pitt Hospital there, he went on to develop a fatal illness and died on **28th July 1915**.

His military funeral took place on Saturday 30 August 1915, beginning with the arrival of his body at **Southborough Station** by special train from Chatham via Tonbridge. A hearse was waiting at the station and his coffin was placed inside covered with the Union Jack. The funeral cortege, including Thomas's father, fiancé, brothers and sisters and a guard of honour of his comrades, made their way to **St Matthew's Church, High Brooms** for the service and then onto Southborough Cemetery.



Sources: <http://www.southboroughsociety.co.uk/9.html>, Kent & Sussex Courier Friday 6 August 1915
Commonwealth War Graves

2. The Brick Works Freehouse, High Brooms

Turn right from the station and then left in to High Brooms Road and follow the road round as it bears to the left to find stop 2 on your right. This route runs along a steep hill to Stop 3.



The Brickworks tavern was originally the **High Brooms Hotel** and **was opened in 1899**. During the War the Hotel had **three officers from the Infantry Brigade billeted in September 1914**; the rest of the 100 men from the brigade were mainly billeted in public buildings with a few in private houses. The brigade was training at the nearby Territorial Shooting Range.

During recruiting week in **December 1914 there was a lantern show at the High Brooms Hotel** and an open air War Aims

cinema show was held in **April 1918**. Regular meetings of the Hospital Committee were held at the Hotel throughout the War.

Legislation in the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) led to the hours which licensed properties could sell **intoxicating liquor being shortened dramatically**, they were also not allowed to give credit or allow people to buy **someone else a drink (treating as it was known)** and the licensee could be heavily fined if he broke any of the restrictions.

In the walls of this pub can be seen the bricks made at the **local High Brooms Brickworks** which was an important local employer and supplied the bricks from which many local houses are built.

For more information about the Brickworks visit

<https://highbroomssociety.wordpress.com/2013/01/21/the-highbrooms-brickworks-an-overview/>

Sources Kent and Sussex Courier

3. 82 High Brooms Road, John Sutton

Continue along High Brooms Road to number 82, on the right after the junction with Highfield Road.



John Sutton was 63 years of age when he was killed at the **Faversham Uplees Factory** on Sunday 2nd April 1916 when 200 tons of TNT exploded. A massive crater 40 yards across and 20 feet deep was **made by the explosion** which was felt as far away as Norwich.

The explosion at the Faversham Uplees Explosive Factory and the death toll impacted on many families around Kent. Although many of the 109 killed were local to Faversham quite a few men travelled for this work, which was better paid because it was so dangerous. If the explosion had occurred on any **other day other than a Sunday the death toll would have been far higher** and women would have been among the dead but as it occurred on a Sunday only the men and boys were at work.

For more information <http://www.roll-of-honour.com/Kent/FavershamExplosion.html>

4. St Matthew's Parish Church, High Brooms

Turn around and you will see St Matthew's Parish Church on the opposite side of the road.

The Parish Church of **St Matthew** houses two **Battlefield Crosses**. One cross belongs to Charles Edward Malpass, the only son of the **Head Teacher of High Brooms Boys School** (as it was called then). On the 1911 census **Charles Edward** was a 16 year old engineering student living with his parents at **34 North Farm Road** on the 1911 census. His father, **Charles Maurice**, was the Headteacher at High Brooms Boys School and his mother **Edith**, an assistant teacher. Captain **Charles Edward M.M.** was serving with the Queen's Own (The Royal West Kent Regiment) when he was killed on **the 8th October 1918** and is buried in the Rumilly-En-Cambresis Communal Cemetery Extension, France. This cemetery, 5 km from Cambrai, contains **80 graves of those who fell in the first fortnight of October 1918**.

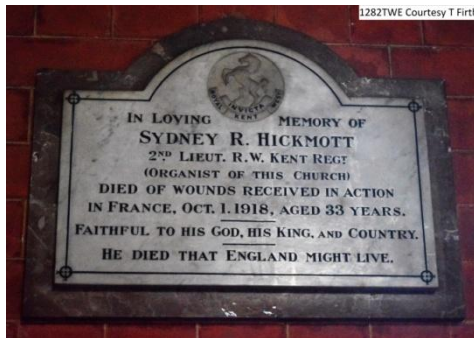


The other cross belongs to **Sydney Richard Hickmott**, who was an **organist in this Church** but lived in Tunbridge Wells. Sydney was a 2nd Lieut. with the 4th Battalion, Queens West Kent Regiment who died at age 33 in Belgium on **October 1st 1918**.

There are 2 individual memorial plaques to them on the western wall of the Church.

The wooden crosses were used as grave markers when men were initially **buried in close proximity** to where they fell or **in cemeteries attached to hospital** - their location would be registered with the **War Grave Registration Service**. However such was the confusion in the major battles that details would be lost, which is why there are so many '**unknown soldiers**'.

After the War, the **Imperial War Graves** gradually replaced the wooden markers with the **Portland Stone headstones**, so familiar to us today. As the replacement and sometimes reinternment was occurring, the families would be offered the opportunity of having the **crosses returned to them** - but they had either to visit in person or arrange to have the crosses shipped back to England. Many families did **not have the money** to do this. Those crosses which were not claimed were often burnt and the ashes scattered on the cemetery.



Southborough is very fortunate to have 2 of these markers from 100 years ago.

Today, St Matthew's is also home to a **memorial plaque dedicated** to the Southborough Sappers who lost their lives on the **HMS Hythe** (see the Drill Hall) on 28th October 1915. The plaque was originally unveiled a year after the disaster on **28th October 1916**, at the **Drill Hall** on Speldhurst Road, but was later **moved to the church**. Commissioned by Sir David Lionel Salomons, there are **129 names** on the memorial, including his son's.



The **Parish Hall** held community events throughout the First World War, from regular services, weddings and local gatherings to funerals and memorial services.

On Tuesday 12th June 1917, a **Food Economy exhibition** was opened at the parish hall by Lady Rhondda, wife of Lord Rhondda the Minister of Food Control.

Free to enter, the 11-day exhibition was organised by the **High Brooms Food Economy Campaign Sub-Committee** and the Southborough War Savings Association. It was designed to demonstrate how to make the **most of wartime rations** and “*make a little go a long way.*” As well as stalls on each of the food groups, bottled fruits and jams and one-pot cookery, featuring food cooked by **local schoolchildren**, there was an area for “*mothercraft*” and “*baby welcome*”.

Source: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/16213>
 Kent & Sussex Courier Friday 15 June 1917
<http://www.roll-of-honour.com/Kent/TunbridgeWellsWW1>

Please check the opening times at www.stmattschurch.org.uk. If you wish to visit the Church outside the opening hours, please contact the St Matthew's Church Office at office@stmattschurch.org.uk or by phone: 01892 618108

5. Cambrian Road, Community Kitchen

Continue along High Brooms Road then turn left into Colebrook Road. Carry on into Holmewood Road and then turn right into Woodland Road. A short way along you will see Cambrian Road.



Along Cambrian Road was the **Adult School** where classes were held for adults concentrating on literacy and numeracy and also **talks and slide shows given**. During the War there were several fund raising events held at the school and also cakes were made by local people to be distributed to local families who had **troops billeted with them**.

Of real importance for the local community was the **Community Kitchen** which was opened in April 1918. These were not charitable as people bought their food but the benefit was that food was **cheaper and the prices were set**. Food prices and shortages

were a real problem and the Government supported the setting up of **community kitchens**; which were managed by a local board and self supporting; because it was far more economical to provide nourishing food in this way and there was less waste.

Source: Various Newspapers

6. 77 Silverdale Road, Peggy Woodford

Continue to the end of Woodland Road and turn right into Silverdale Road. Number 77 is on the right.

Peggy Woodford of Silverdale Road, Southborough experienced the same as thousands of other women of the ‘*Lost Generation*’ when her **beloved fiancé Private Victor James Joseph Ford** of the 10th Battalion Royal West Kent died of his wounds on **10th October 1916 in France**.

Victor was 23 years old and from the nearby village of Rusthall. Peggy and his mother posted the following family announcement in the Kent & Sussex Courier:

“Oh, how our hearts do ache
When we think of how you died;
To think we could not say Good-bye
Before you closed your eyes.
We think of you in silence
No eyes may see us weep;
But treasured in our inmost hearts
Your loving memory we shall always keep.”
- Peggy and Mum

Source: Kent & Sussex Courier, Friday 20 October 1916

Silverdale Road is well known locally because of the large number of men who had lived in this area died as a result of collision of HMS Sarnia and HMS Hythe.

The local residents say that the **postman**, who had to deliver news of their death along this road, became so overwhelmed by the distress and reactions to the news he was giving that he turned back to his depot before he had completed his round.

On 28 October 1915, the troopship **HMS Hythe** was sunk approaching the Dardanelles. HMS Sarnia, another troopship leaving the harbour after disembarking her troops, **collided** with the Hythe, which **was sailing without lights to avoid detection** by the enemy. The Sarnia also was sailing without lights. HMS Hythe went down **in ten minutes**. There were 275 men on board including crew, and 154 of them drowned. **129 of these** were men of the 1st/3rd Kent Field Company, Royal Engineers, from **Tunbridge Wells, Southborough, and surrounding areas**.

Source: Kent Timeline

7. 36 Cambrian Road, Eric Jarrett

Retrace your steps a short way and turn right into Silverdale Lane, then left into Upper Grosvenor Road to the roundabout. Here you will see the other end of Cambrian Road and stop 7 is along on the right handside.



Eric Jarrett was a son of Frederick and Jesse Jarrett who lived at 36 Cambrian Road, High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells with their 8 children. He **worked as a carpenter before** the war, having been apprenticed to Thomas Summer of 21 London Road, for 3½ years.

However, he must have **emigrated to Australia since he enlisted with the 11th Light Horse Regiment at Adelaide, Australia** on 9th December 1914, at the age of 19 years and 10 months. He sailed from Brisbane on 2nd June 1915. On 1st September 1916 he transferred to the Imperial Camel Corps (Australian) and served with them as a trooper (#525). He died **near Jericho, Palestine on 28th March 1918**. He was initially buried near the battlefield, but was later reburied at the Damascus War Cemetery.

Eric's mother and brothers, Frederick, Leo and Bernard, made donations in his memory towards the cost of the original war memorial at St Augustine's Church.

Eric's name is also listed on the Tunbridge Wells Memorial, the Crowborough Memorial, the High Brooms Memorial plaque and the **Imperial Camel Corps Memorial** in Victoria Embankment Gardens, London.

First raised in 1916, the **Imperial Camel Corps was a camel-mounted infantry force** operating in the Middle Eastern and African deserts. The Corps played an integral role in several First World War **desert campaigns**, including Palestine and Sinai. The Corps had a small start, with the first companies consisting of Australian troops returning from the Gallipoli campaign. Over time it grew to four battalions and was made up of Australian, New Zealand and British troops. Additional soldiers from the Hong Kong and Singapore Battery were also attached to the Corps.

Source: St Augustine's Church, Tunbridge Wells. The First World War Memorial. A Brief History by Noreen O'Meara, November 2014.

8. John Ball, "Croft Holme", Holmewood Road

Walk back to the roundabout and turn left onto N. Farm Road. After a short walk you reach Holmewood Road on the left where the parents of John Ball lived in "Croft Holme". This is the end of the trail and continuing a short way along N. Farm Road will bring you back to your starting point at the station.



John David Sullivan Leonard Ball was born in Chatham and was the son of John and Mary Ball of "Croft Holme", **Holmewood Road**, Tunbridge Wells.

In 1911, he was serving as a Corporal with the Royal Irish Fusiliers (#9869), but was promoted to Lance Sergeant at the very beginning of the War. **He died of wounds on 3rd October 1914 at the age of**

24. His death was announced at St Augustine's Church on October 18th.

His grave is at Le Mans West Cemetery, France. His name is also recorded on the Tunbridge Wells Memorial.

During the First World War, the Royal Irish Fusiliers raised a total of 14 Battalions and was awarded 40 Battle Honours and 2 Victoria Crosses. The regiment lost 3,300 men during the course of the war.

Source: St Augustine's Church, Tunbridge Wells. The First World War Memorial. A Brief History by Noreen O'Meara, November 2014.



This is the end of the High Brooms Trail

Nearby places of interest

➤ The Crothers, 72 Pennington Road

Large local houses, such as **Crothers** in Southborough, became Red Cross Auxiliary Hospitals during the First World War. The Royal Victoria Hall and Park House were also used. **Initially 72 Pennington Road was used to house two Belgian refugee families.**

Miss Robertina Mary Crothers, owner of 72 and 24 Pennington Road, Southborough, was a doctor's daughter born in Nice in 1862. She offered number 72 as an annexe to the larger auxiliary hospitals in the area in 1915. **Miss Crothers redecorated and adapted the house to accommodate 20 patients.** It became part of VAD Kent 94 and was known as Crothers Hospital.

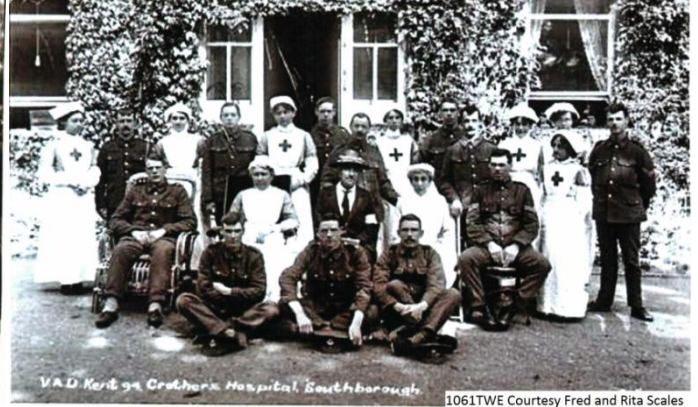
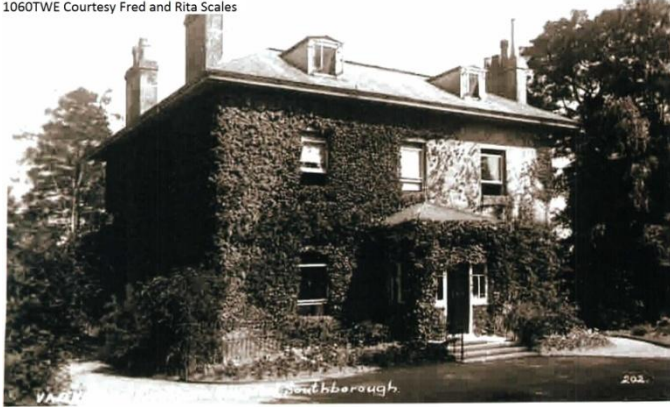
The Lady Superintendent of the local VAD hospitals was Cecilia Ferguson of Bois House, Southborough. Her daughter Phyllis served at Crothers giving 5000 hours of time as a cook and carrying out nursing duties.

Sources and more information: *Kent & Sussex Courier Friday 2 July 1915*

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/Who-we-are/History-and-origin/First-World-War/Auxiliary-Hospitals>

<https://belgiansrtw.wordpress.com/borough-belgian-refugees-committee-1914-1919/>

1060TWE Courtesy Fred and Rita Scales



1061TWE Courtesy Fred and Rita Scales

➤ Holden House, Holden Road the home of Grace MORLEY who married and became Grace Clarke

Grace Clarke (nee Morley, see St Thomas's Church) lived in Holden House on Holden Road. She was a volunteer nurse at Royal Victoria Hall, West Hall and Crothers and volunteered for a total of 8,000 hours during the war. Other volunteers were housekeepers, cooks, cleaners, stretcher bearers, or read to the men.

Many wealthy women wanted to contribute to the war effort by volunteering to help the sick and wounded. For **most this was their first experience of work.** Women were trained by the Red Cross in first aid, home nursing, hygiene and cookery while male volunteers were taught stretcher bearing and first aid 'in-the-field'. VADs (Voluntary Aid Detachment volunteers) **had to pass exams in order** to gain their home nursing and first aid certificates. Authors Agatha Christie and Enid Bagnold (*National Velvet* and *The Chalk Garden*) were both World War I Red Cross volunteers.

Sources and more information: <http://www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/Who-we-are/History-and-origin/First-World-War/Volunteers-during-WW1>



HOLDEN HOUSE.
SOUTHBOROUGH COMMON

1074TWE Courtesy Fred and Rita Scales

➤ Kent Fortress Royal Engineers, Territorial Unit Drill Hall

On 7th August 1914 the Kent Fortress Royal Engineers territorial unit, including David Reginald 'Reggie' Salomons (then Second Lieutenant), **was mobilised for war** and marched from the Drill Hall in Speldhurst Road to Tonbridge Station. Just over a year later, more than 80 of the men died in the HMS *Hythe* disaster on their way to Gallipoli.

At the Kent Fortress Engineers base in **Gillingham the unit undertook training** and became the best bridge-building unit in the Kent Fortress Engineers. In June 1915 they were renamed the 1/3 (Kent) Field Company and **Reggie Salomons was promoted to Captain.**

On 13th October 1915 the unit left their Gillingham headquarters and boarded the troopship *Scotian* at naval base Devonport, headed for the **Gallipoli Peninsular** in Turkey. At the small Greek port of Mudros they were transferred to the **HMS *Hythe*, a minesweeper.** Early on 28th October 1915, the *Hythe* collided with a large British troopship, the *Sarnia*.

The *Hythe* was seriously damaged and sank within a few minutes of the collision. The majority of the crew and troops were lost, the darkness making rescue almost impossible. Captain 'Reggie' Salomons gave his lifejacket to another man and was one of the 154 who died that night, more than 80 from **Southborough and Tunbridge Wells.** The effect on the local community was devastating as these were men who had lived locally, often as next door neighbours.

Reggie's father, local landowner, scientist and innovator Sir David Lionel Salomons, had originally created the Southborough unit as a cadet detachment in 1912.



Courtesy - Ian Kinghorn

Roll Of Honour – Based on Judith Johnson’s book “Southborough War Memorial” and compiled by Ian Kinghorn for inclusion in this booklet

Southborough - 100 Names

David Reginald Hermon Philip Goldsmith Stern Salomonson	Broomhill
Henry Alcon	3 Bedford Road,
Thomas A Morley	7 Bedford Road,
William Alfred Henry Moon	15 Bedford Road,
James Chilton	23 Bedford Road
Harry Todman	35 Bedford Road
Harry Ernest Lipscombe	39 Bedford Road
George James Brown	41 Bedford Road
Leonard Cheeseman	12 Broomhill Park Road
Henry William Bonwick	?? Castle Street - House No not known
Lewis Walter Bridget	8 Castle Street
Clement Hawkins	13 Castle Street
Robert Bassett	? Charles Street
Percy James Musgrave Tomkin	5 Charles Street
Albert Nye	38 Charles Street
Edward Hollamby	44 Charles Street
Denis Walter Bean	5 Crendon Park
Bernard John Brady	Edward Street - House No not known
Harry Goldbaun	13 Edward Street
Frederick William Saunders	23 Edward Street
Arthur Smallcombe	27 Edward Street
Albert Smallcombe	27 Edward Street
Nelson Colin Taylor	56 Edward Street
Jabez Bridgeland	61 Edward Street
Cecil William Shoesmith	63 Edward Street
Brian Anthony Botten	76 Edward Street
Frederick James Kate	7 Elm Road
Thomas Martin	14 Elm Road
Walter Charles Martin	14 Elm Road
William Henry Young	2 Forge Road,
Frederick Anderson	5 Forge Road,
William Groombridge	6 Forge Road
Alfred Barnsdale Parker	14 Forge Road
Ronald Eldridge	21 Forge Road
Wilfred James Parrott	30 Forge Road
Philip Sale	10 Holden Corner
Edwin Percy Standing	34 Holden Corner
James George Bateman	12 Holden Park Road
Caleb Pearson	42 Holden Park Road
Edward John Pearson	42 Holden Park Road
Herbert William Nye	17 London Road
Arthur George Damper	63 London Road

Kenneth Lotherington Hutchins	71 London Road
Garnett Henry Butler	114 London Road
John Edgar Dunn	114 London Road
Oscar Frederick Maier	121 London Road
Maurice Carter Voile	126 London Road
Percy Duvall	129 London Road
Harry Woodland	132 London Road
Frank Funnell	147 London Road
George T Huggett	4 Meadow Road
William Alfred Crockford	5 Meadow Road
Arthur Smallcombe	9 Meadow Road
Richard John Bristow	10 Meadow Road
Sydney Wyborn Betts	11 Meadow Road
Albert Miller	12 Meadow Road
Ernest Henry Hobbs	19 Meadow Road
James Vesey	36 Meadow Road
Robert Wilmshurst	38 Meadow Road
Stephen Frederick Barden	54 Meadow Road
Alfred John Diggins	17 Norton Road
A W Lurton	9 Park Road
Stanley Nelson Follington	32 Park Road
Allan Sydney Hayfield	21 Prospect road
William Edward Cass	60 Prospect Road
Samuel John Curd Tilley	13 Sheffield Road
Fred Thrower	?? Speldhurst Road
William Alfred James	4 Speldhurst Road
Charles James King	7 Speldhurst Road
Harold John Player	15 Speldhurst Road
John Richard Rogers	19 Speldhurst Road
Charles Henry Pankhurst	33 Speldhurst Road
R Whibley	?? Springfield Road - House No not known
Christopher Moon	1 Springfield Road
Stephen Alfred Funnell	30 Springfield Road
E A Ellis	47 Springfield Road
W J Ellis	47 Springfield Road
Jesse Heasman	54 Springfield Road
William Heasman	54 Springfield Road
William Henry Everest	86 Springfield Road
W F M Ewen	62 Springfield Road
Henry Brown	73 Springfield Road
Reginald Thomas Sotherden	77 Springfield Road
George T Hook	96 Springfield Road
Henry Albert Randall	110 Springfield Road
Albert T Avis	11 Taylor Street
Sidney Turner	12 Taylor Street
Robert Ernest Joyce	17 Taylor Street
Harold Arthur Fletcher	36 Taylor Street
Albert Frederick Richardson	38 Taylor Street
George Arthur Jenner	82 Taylor Street

Hubert Harrowing	29 Vale Road
William Ellingham Rye	33 Vale Road
Charles Moon	13 Western Road
Henry Moon	13 Western Road
John Moon	13 Western Road
Walter Moon	13 Western Road
Mark Thomas Underhill	24 Western Road

High Brooms - 46 names

G Hayman	? Colebrook Road - House No not known
Bernard R Read	13 Colebrook Road
William Henry Young	21 Colebrook Road
Thomas John Harvey	67 Colebrook Road
William Saunders	1 Denbigh Road
Ben Pown	13 Gordon Road
Thomas Godsmark	25 Gordon Road
William Henry Godsmark	25 Gordon Road
Druce Edmund Young	31 Gordon Road
Arthur Archie Brotherhood	10 Great Brooms Road
Ernest Brotherhood	10 Great Brooms Road
Harry Mark Goodfellow	23 Great Brooms Road
Reginald Nye	28 Great Brooms Road
Henry Bird	29 Great Brooms Road
Harry Young	31 Great Brooms Road
Samuel Young	20 High Brooms Road
Harold Fenner	23 High Brooms Road
CE Baxter	51 High Brooms Road
Harry Ball	80 High Brooms Road
George Pierson	94 High Brooms Road
Arthur Thomas Ellis	11 Napier Road
Thomas King	3 North Farm Road
HV Barnett	4 North Farm Road
Sidney Smith	20 North Farm Road
Charles Edward Malpas	35 North Farm Road
HV Barnett	6 North Farm Road
Sidney Victor Taylor	7 Nursery Road
Thomas Frederick James Handley	19 Nursery Road
F Brown	46 Nursery Road
Frederick Bartholomew	47 Nursery Road
A E Stevens	58 Nursery Road
Frederick James Grove	17 Powder Mill Lane
Walter Sellins	11 Silverdale Road
Thomas Peter Bellingham	2 South View Road
James Young	23 South View Road
George Thomas Mugridge	26 South View Road
Stanley Arthur Kimber	32 South View Road

Frederick Turner	40 South View Road
William Henry Salter	9 Stewart Road
James H Scarce	15 Stewart Road
A J Sharp	?? Wolseley Road - house number not known
Cecil John Bone,	1 Wolseley Road
E E Sharp	8 Wolseley Road
T Dunn	19 Wolseley Road
Charles James Scott	33 Wolseley Road
Thomas Henry Saunders	35 Wolseley Road

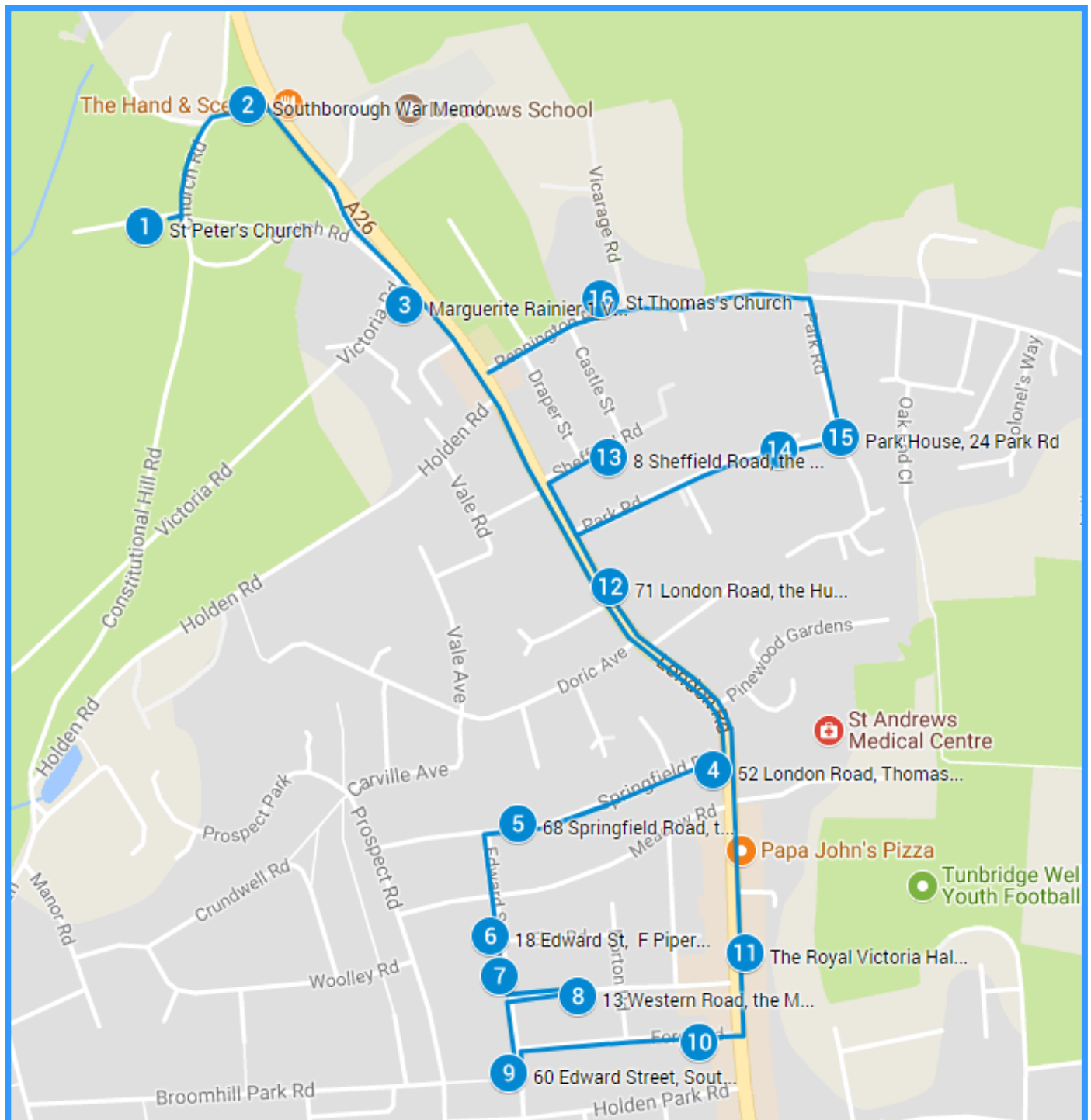
Southborough and High Brooms Trail Quiz

1. Both of Marguerite Ranier's brothers survived the War	True/False
2. People fed their chickens on corn meal bought at Thomas Hearnden's shop	True/False
3. Frederick Piper was a Prisoner of War in Italy	True/False
4. Herbert Silver is pictured wearing his cricket strip	True/False
5. Alex Brook was a photographer who took photos of convalescing soldiers at Crothers to send to their families	True/False
6. Both Frederick Anderson and his father served in the War	True/False
7. The Royal Victoria Hall did not treat wounded soldiers in the War	True/False
8. Twort's made bowling balls	True/False
9. Local schoolchildren collected eggs for the patients of Park House	True/False
10. Grace Morley had been a VAD nurse at Holden House	True/False

When you have completed the quiz don't forget to send your answers to info@kentww1.com to receive your certificate.

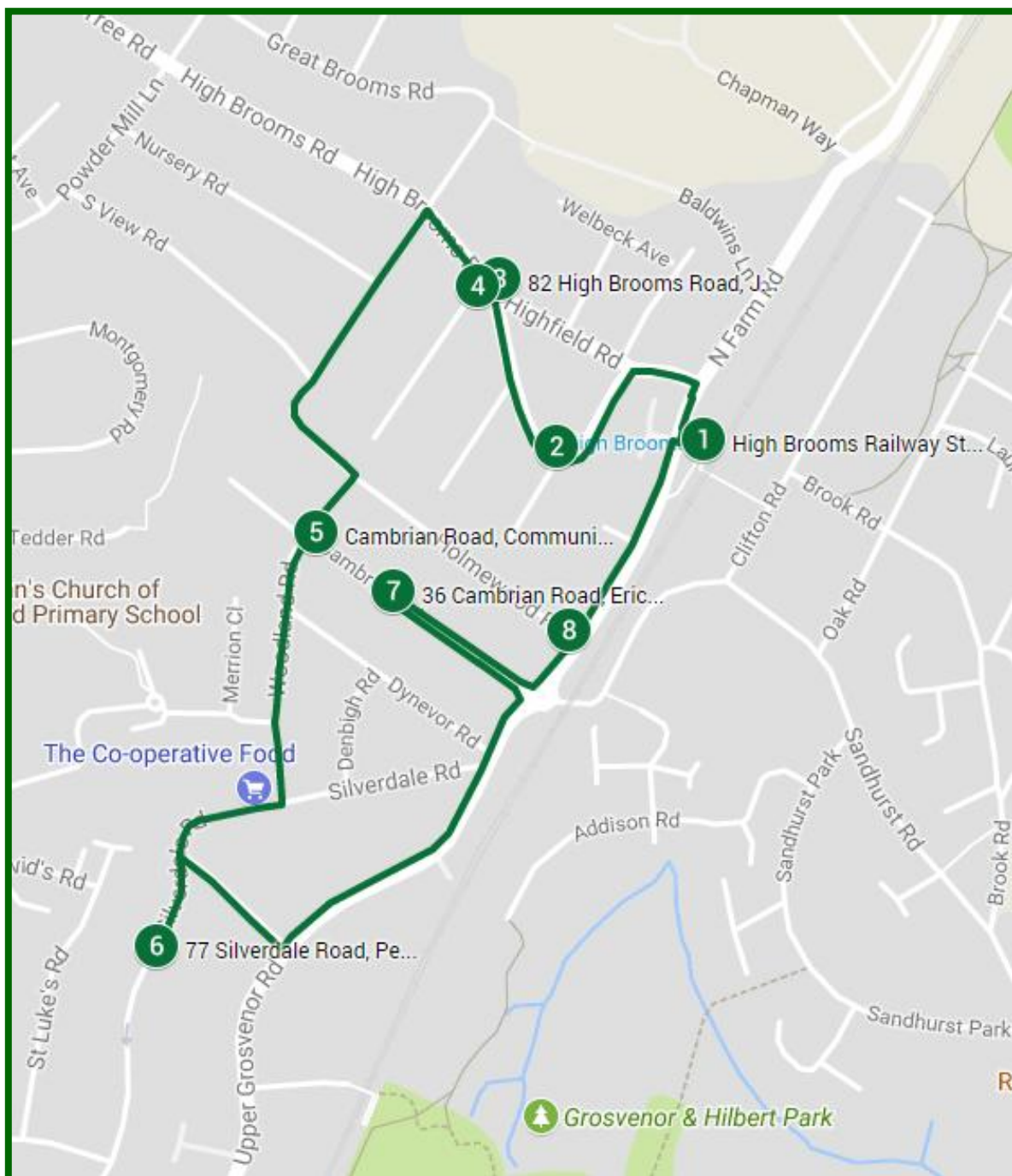
Maps of Trails in Southborough and High Brooms

Main Trail for Southborough



Please note: Blue numbers correspond with the points in the description

Green Trail for High Brooms



Please note: Green numbers correspond with the points in the description

Green Trail: Please be aware that the route runs along a steep hill from Stop 1 to Stop 2 and further to Stop 3.