

HARRIETSHAM TIMES

News from April 1917

West Kent Woman's War Agricultural Committee

At the end of March a meeting was arranged by the committee and held at the Working Men's Club. Col. J. C. Campbell took the chair, and Miss Bradley, the representative for the Maidstone and Hollingbourne district, spoke on the cultivation of gardens and allotments, and women's work on the land. Mr. E. J. Miller gave a short address on the nutritive value of various kinds of food, on which much discussion arose, and Mrs. Watson exhibited some samples of bread and scones made of barley and oats mixed with wheat flour.

Mrs. Watson as Village Registrar appointed by the Committee, with the indefatigable help of Col. Campbell, had obtained a complete survey of the gardens and allotments in the village. It was found that a little additional land was needed for allotments, which Mr. A. Ambrose and Mr. W. Betts willingly provided. Miss Bradley impressed upon the meeting the desire of the Government that every village should be self-supporting as regards vegetables. Through a member of the Men's War Agricultural Committee, himself a big grower, Miss Bradley had been able to offer seed potatoes to the villages at very reasonable rates, and Mrs. Watson had obtained orders in Harrietsham for 29½-cwt. These potatoes have since been delivered, and we trust will give satisfaction. We will endeavour to

publish each month recipes that save on wheat flour.

Death of May Murfit

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Harrietsham resident May Murfit aged 31. We reported in October 1916 that her husband C.S.M. George Murfit had been taken as a prisoner of war and being held at Dülmen, in Westfalia.

W. J. H. Leaney Killed in Action

We have received news that William James Harry Leaney was killed in action on 11th April. He was born in Harrietsham on the 8th January 1899

His father, William Leaney, was the Railway Porter before being killed fighting for the army in South Africa. Being orphaned William James Harry Leaney spent two spells in the Fulham Road Workhouse, London before living with his uncle at their farm in Burham, Kent.

In January 1915 he moved with his uncle, Ernest John Leaney to start a new life in New South Wales in Australia. William enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on the 26th May 1916 and travelled back to England on the 7th October 1916 to fight in France. On the 11th April, he took part in the Australian offensive at Bullecourt, this combined attack with the British was one of the first offensives using the new British Tanks. William was one of the 1,800 Australian soldiers that died on the 11th April, his body was never recovered.