

HARRIETSHAM TIMES

News from February 1917



Young Harrietsham Officer Killed

Universal sympathy will go out to Mr. J. H. Matthews, Headmaster of Harrietsham School and Kate Matthews, in the loss they have sustained by the death of their only son, Captain John Brice Matthews, 7th Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action on the Western Front. Captain Matthews was reported missing on February 14th and his parents received the news that he had been killed on the 27th February. This young officer was only 19 years of age, having been born in July 1897. His name is one more to adorn the Maidstone Grammar School Roll of Honour. He was at school when the war broke out, and although then only 17 years of age, he offered his services in the cause of King and Country immediately, and was accepted, his stature - he stood 6ft. 4in. - being in his favour. Moreover, he had the advantage of military training in the school O.T.C. in which he held the rank of Sergeant. He was given a commission in

the Royal West Kent Regiment and was promoted to Lieutenant in March 1915. He was sent to the Front in the following July. And two months later received his captaincy. After eight months service in the trenches he was slightly wounded. In May 1916, he was on the causality list for the second time, on this occasion for severe shell shock, which necessitated him being sent home. He remained in England till last January, when he returned to the Front. A brother officer writes of Captain Matthews that: "Every officer and man in the Battalion will feel his loss very greatly indeed, and all the more so, from the fact that it has occurred so soon after his re-joining, and he is yet another of the original battalion to fall doing his duty, and no man ever did it better or more cheerfully."

Lent

Lent is always a time for fasting or self-denial, and this year there is a patriotic motive to be added to the religious motive. It is certainly an excellent time to begin to put into practice the requirements of the Food Controller as to voluntary rationing. The avowed object of our enemies is to use the submarine in hope of bringing us so near to famine that we shall be willing to accept an inconclusive peace. One way in which we can defeat their object is by carefully husbanding our supplies of the principal forms of food.

Every household in the land can help win the war by loyally carrying out the requirements of the Food Controller and limiting consumption to 4 lbs bread (or 3 lbs of flour), 2½ lbs of meat and ¾ lb. sugar per head per week.