Letters relating to, and from Edward W.Colver and Harry Colver

typed by their great-niece Patricia Altham

September 2006, with addition supplied in January 2008

Background explanation

These letters were sent to my grandmother, Charlotte Beckett (nee Colver). She was known as Lottie or Tots in the family, and as the eldest girl in a family of 5 boys and 6 girls, she was kept busy looking after her siblings, in Rockmount, Ranmoor, Sheffield. Her father Robert Colver ran a well-known Sheffield steel firm with his partner Joseph Jonas; there is a sad post-war story 'For King or Kaiser?' about Jonas and Colver Ltd. A photo of Robert Colver as Master Cutler in 1890 may be seen as Figure 1. (The figure of the Master Cutler was marked on this photo at some point in the distant past by a biro curve.)

Lottie was the eldest sister of Ted and Harry Colver, and at the age of 30 had married Joseph Beckett in 1911. When the letters were sent, the Becketts were living at 1 Alexandra Road, Hampstead, with their two small children Antony and Pamela.

Joseph Beckett was a son of William Beckett, and William's father was Alfred Beckett, founder of Alfred Beckett and sons of Kelham Island, Sheffield. I have just found this lovely picture Figure 2 of the Beckett works, taken by 'Sheffield Tiger'.

My Grandpa Beckett's firm was Beclawat (light engineering) at Acton, founded with his 2 partners Laycock and Watkinson. It seems Beclawat was involved in helping the war effort by making a trench periscope: see below.

My mother Elizabeth, Joe and Charlotte's third child, was born in October 1916, and she inherited all these letters from Granny Beckett.

The 5 brothers of the Colver family were William, Arthur (both of whom died at a fairly early age) Ted (killed June 28, 1915) and Harry (killed December 19, 1915), and Robert (our 'Uncle Bob') who was the only one to survive to a ripe old age.

Granny Beckett's sisters were Mary (who died as a child), Gwladys, Nell, Elsie and Margery. At least two of these are mentioned in the letters below. Also mentioned in the letters is Evelyn. She was Ted's fiancee. Mum remembers her well: she was Evelyn Seaman (who sadly never married.) Harry also had a sweetheart, Mary Langley (see Harry's will, below).

Ted mentions 'Moscar Bun' in one of his letters. The Colvers went shooting from Moscar Lodge. You can see Moscar Lodge on the right hand side of the

Figure 1: Robert Colver as Master Cutler, Sheffield, 1890.

Becketts on Flickr - Photo Sharing! http://www.flickr.com/photos/sheffield_tiger/3180475466/

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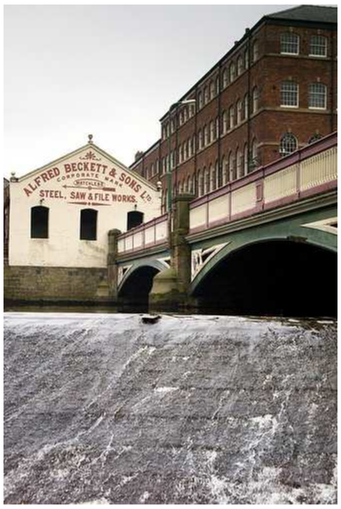

Alfred Beckett old Steel Saw & File Works, by the River Don and Ball Street Bridge

Uploaded on January 8, 2009
by Sheffield Tiger

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Figure 2: Alfred Beckett and sons, by the River Don.

A57 from Sheffield to Manchester, just before the Ladybower Dam.
The letters and cards are quite clearly written, with the occasional spelling error or omission (left uncorrected by me). Some of the letters in the collection are typed copies of the originals: I surmise that my 2nd cousin Stephanie Colver may have some of the corresponding originals as she inherited a lot of correspondence relating to Harry Colver (He was the godfather of her father Robert, who was always known as Robin.)
The new book 'Images of War: Flanders 1915' by Jon Cooksey is based on Harry's photograph album. This book prompted me to look again at the bundle of letters, cards, newspaper cuttings that Granny Beckett had obviously treasured so much. Mum has identified her Aunts Florrie (nee Wragg, she became an aunt by marriage, after she married Uncle Bob), Gwladys, Nell and Margery in a picture at the beginning of this book.

(letter from Sir Joseph Jonas)
Letter from Grand Hotel Bellevue, Berlin,
dated March 14, 1910
My dear Lottie,
I heard a rumour before I left home and tonight this rumour has been confirmed and I am awfully pleased. Joe is a very lucky fellow and I wish you every happiness. I just wrote him to congratulate him.
Harry and Eddy have been to dine with me tonight and we made your health the toast of the evening and all drank it heartily (Even Eddy).
Eddy is not a bit surprised and professes to have practically known all about it.
Eddy came and told me about it, having heard from his Mother almost at the same time I heard from my Father. I shall be seeing the Ehrhardts and other of your friends here so I shall be able to give them the news.
As I hope to be home before Easter I shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you when I will offer you my congratulations and wishes again viva voce
Yours sincerely
Joe Jonas
I sent ? a wire

Postcard, postmarked Berlin, March 14, 1910, to
Miss Colver, Rockmount, Ranmoor, England
Heartiest Congratulations
I am delighted at the news. I am going to award Joe the V.C. for bravery, and you (a) long-service medal in the Spinsters' Reg
Best love, Ted.
Remark: Now that my mother is well into her 90's, she has let slip that the Colvers were always rather snobbish about the Becketts, which perhaps goes some way to explain why Joe Beckett had to be very persistent in his pursuit of Lottie Colver: her sisters did not approve of the match.

Letters from/about Ted, 1915

Letter dated Feb 2/15, from Rockmount, Ranmoor, Sheffield.
Headed paper, with a family crest I had never seen before, FACTA NON VERBA
Dear Tots,
Very many happy returns of the day.
I am at present at home for 4 days leave before going out to the 'Front', which we are hoping to do in about 10 days time.
I am hoping to see you before I leave as Mother says that she is asking you to come over on Thursday, as I'm leaving in the evening.
I hope Pam and Antony are keeping fit and that Pam is now talking well.
Hoping Joe is fit and drilling hard.
I remain
Your loving brother
Ted.

1st West Riding Field Coy R.E.
29th Division
Kineton
Warwicks
no date

Dear Lottie,
Can you do me a favour and try and get me a Map Case somewhere in Town like the enclosed sketch. It should be about 8" or 9" square. Leather outside and the maps show when open just like a music case. Also can you get me from Burroughs and Welcome's a small case of active service medicines. I believe they are making up small sets of useful things such as Veg Laxitives, Dover's (?) Powders, Opium or Morphia Tablets (in case of wounds) Quinine and Formamints etc.
We like this place immensely as it is in the heart of the Warwickshire hunting district and as we have been favoured with lovely weather we have been able to go several long Route Marches round by Edge Hill. We are very busy equipping and hope to be ready early next week, when we expect the King will inspect us somewhere near Stratford.
I will let you know when so that if you like you can come over and see us then.
We are going to have dinner with Lady Willoughby de Broke this evening and on Saturday with the M.F.H. of the Warwickshire Hunt.
I must end now with love to Joe and the kiddies.
Ever your loving Brother,
Ted

Note: Ted enclosed a diagram of the mapcase he wanted.
Note: Granny Beckett kept all the letters, telegrams and newspaper cuttings in a small tan leather case, which perhaps was the map-case in question.

1st West Riding Field Coy
Kineton
no date

My dear Tots,
Please excuse my not having written before to thank you for getting me the mapcase and medicine chest which are exactly what I wanted, but I hope I shall have no occasion to use the latter.
We have had a very busy week equipping and I spent all my spare time with Evelyn in Stratford. Unfortunately our car broke down on Sunday and wasnt right until Tuesday so they couldn't see as much of the country as they should have liked.
On Wednesday we went on a long Route March with all our new vehicals and Margery got some very good photos of us. Tomorrow we are going out all day and shall have a sandwich lunch in Mr King's (Eric's uncle) park. Mrs Scott, Monica and Nell are staying there the weekend and will be taking photos of us in all our paraphanalia of war. The inspection by the King didn't come off last Thursday much to everyone's disappointment but we expect it will take place just before we move off, and we don't know when that will be as several of the Regiments which have come from India are down with 'Flu'.
I hope Joe brings out something good in the trench periscope, we have one here which is quite good and very simple but it might be improved by having the frame made telescopic like camera tripod legs. Two mirrors about 2" × 3" are quite big enough; if they were made of Nickel Silver like a small pocket mirror I have, it would be a great improvement as the great trouble is that the mirrors get so easily broken, and are very hard to replace.
Small diagram of periscope in righthand margin
If he brings out a good one tell him I will send him an order immediately.
We are having simply glorious weather just now and yesterday I took my Section Cyclists out Mapreading and had a most enjoyable and instructive ride round Edgehill and a Windmill from which Oliver Cromwell watched the battle from.
I'll let you know if the Inspection, when it does come off, is public or not and then perhaps you could come up and see it.
With love to the children
I remain your loving brother
Ted

1st West Riding Field Coy
Kineton
Sunday Feb 28/15

My dear Tots,
I am so sorry to hear from home that Pamela has been so very ill and do so hope that the dear little girl is now well on to recovery. I hope Antony is keeping fit and well and being very good and that Joe is finding trade a bit better.
We still very busy training and equipping and don't know when we shall go out as they are keeping the Infantry back to get properly acclimatised as the last lot of troops from India went across to France too soon and suffered badly from Malaria and chills.
Yesterday afternoon just as we were finishing work the hounds came near the village so the Major, Eric, Bertie and I had our horses saddled and went off for an enjoyable afternoons hunting which we hope to be able to repeat again in the near future. The people round here are awfully nice and we get scores of invitations to dinner and tea but as we are doing a lot of night digging and marching we have to refuse most of them.
We were out on a "Road Report" March the other day and the Map Case proved most useful and so much handier and more inconspicuous than the one I had before. Hugh wants to know where it came from as he says he must order one. Hugh and I always compete as to who is the more up to date in equipment etc. He has got a Medicine Box exactly like the one you sent me.
I am so pleased to hear from Mother that Papa is showing marked signs of improvement and hope it will continue.
I must end now as I have to go and inspect the Guard before going to bed so love to all and hoping to hear that Pamela is quite well again.
I remain
Your loving
Brother
Ted

Copy of typed letter, dated May 14, 'From Ted'
My dear Mother,
Very many thanks for your letter of the 22nd, which arrived this morning together with Land and Water. Very pleased to hear that Papa is still improving and getting out now the weather is improving. You would like the weather here, it is lovely and fine every day, if a little too hot during the middle of the day for working. It has now turned warmer at night and as we have our new blankets with us and the Artillery fire is not so near it is quieter, we manage to sleep very well in our dugouts. We're up every morning with the sun and kept very busy road making and preparing water-supply. We are still feeding on Bully beef and biscuit but as they now issue us with dried veg: we have the lot made into a very excellent stew with the aid of an Oxo cube. We are looking forward to parcels of eatables from England by the next mail which should arrive any day now. Very pleased to hear about Minnie Colver and hope both Mother and child are doing well. We have all written to Winnie Britain. Glad to hear that Lottie and the Children are all fit and well again. Tell Antony I will send him a Turkish bayonet sometime. The Turks amuse themselves every morning by

shelling the road on which we are working for about an hour, but as the whole place is just a huge human rabbit warren we drop into a neighbouring trench and watch the fireworks until it is over and then proceed with our work again. The papers and illustrateds which are sent out to us are very acceptable indeed as it gives us something to read in the middle of the day when we are resting and also lets us know even if a little late what is happening in France. Now that things have got fairly well going we have a daily pamphlet called the 'Peninsular Press', which contains the official news from England and France, but what is lacking in news etc is amply made up for by rumours and wonderful ones they are too; with the result that we daren't believe anything unless we see it in writing from a relaible source. I met some of Tom Wragg's company the other day, who told me he was still in Alexandria with their base party.
As I must go and do some more work, I will end with love to all,
Your loving son
Ted

letter in envelope marked 'PASSED BY NO 2283 CENSOR'
postmark 'Field Post Office D29, MY 14 15'
(presumably May 14, 1915)
This letter is in pencil, in quite small writing, and a bit harder to read.

Somehere in Turkey
May 9/15

My dear Lottie and Joe,
Very glad to hear that both you and the children are fit and well again and that a change will do you all good. As you most probably know we have now been fighting for two weeks, having landed on Sunday April 25/15, and we did have a time of it. The noise and smell from the naval guns, which were quite close into the shore, was appalling and everyone of us had a headache. But now we have grown quite used to the racket and even go to sleep with guns firing quite close. It is fearfully hot here during the day, but bitterly cold at nights and for the first few days on land we didn't manage to get much sleep, but now we have got our vehicles on land we can make ourselves more comfy in dugouts. We are at present road making on the sides of a deep ravine and have built ourselves a grand home in the cliff side, sheltered from the flying shells and bullets. We've covered it with pine branches to give us shade and generally made it as comfy as possible. We have been doing our cooking in our Messtins over our ordinary wood fire, but expect my 'primus' up today. We are very well fed indeed, drawing exactly the same rations as the men. Breakfast consists of Tea, sugared, without milk, bacon and biscuits (very hard but jolly good)
Dinner. Tea again, Bully, biscuit, cheese
Tea. Bully biscuit jam Tea
Rum, lime juice and cigs are provided once a week. So you can see we don't do badly even on active Service. And we are hoping to get bread issued in a day or two. Of course we supplement it with a little chocolate but our supply is running very short indeed. We allow ourselves one 1^d bar of Mexican per

Officer per day. But look forward to being able to increase the ration when our supplies arrive from England. We are hoping that some will arrive in the mail of which part was delivered today. We had a great luxury the other day in a piece of cake which we bought while in Alexandria a month ago and which we found in our mess basket the other day. It tasted none the worse for being stale. How I should just love a mouthful of Moscar Bun.
We get absolutely tired of (??) and hearing aeroplanes overhead as there is nearly always one patrolling somewhere near. German Tanks occasionally come over and drop bombs on the shore but are quickly driven off by our machines. We saw quite an exciting chase the other morning, but unfortunately our Bi-planes were not quite fast enough for the Tank (?), so they didn't do him in. We've got our horses with us but don't get much chance of using them yet. The weather has been beautifully fine, only had one wet night and it just happened that we had to go into the trenches and had no greatcoats with us so got the full benefit of getting soaked thro' and sitting in the cold for several hours, but funnily enough it doesn't seem to have any ill effects. In the landing I slipped off the gangway and fell into the sea and got wet thro' but soon dried in the sun and last night tripped up when marching down this nullah(?) and fell into a pool but fortunately had plenty of blankets etc in the dugout so was able to sleep in comfort and found my clothes dry this morning when I wanted to get up. Its the first time since we've landed that I've gone to bed without my boots and breeches on. We allow ourselves one wash a day if it is procurable and as we are near the sea can occasionally get a bathe, but as our valises with spare underclothing has gone astray we haven't managed a change in that quarter.
Well, I must really end now so heaps of love to you all and hoping the children are keeping fit and good
I remain
Your loving brother
Ted

E.W.Colver

Copy of typed letter headed 'From Ted, Monday May 17th.'
My dear Gwladys and Margery,
Very many thanks for your two letters which arrived here today. As they send the letters up as they are sorted, we get bits of mail nearly every day. I got a letter from Mother about four days ago, and one from Evelyn yesterday, and I hear that there are still more letters to come and we hope parcels as we are now quite out of chocolate and other luxuries. Evelyn says she sent me some biscuits and with your chocolate we should be well off for a few days.
We are still having glorious weather and are enjoying ourselves as well as can be expected under war conditions. We are all quite used to the noise of the guns and are getting quite expert at knowing whether the shell is coming our way and if it is time to slip into the nearest dug-out. We have had a rest today, the first

proper one since we've been on shore and as our valises turned up yesterday, we indulged in the luxury of a bath (the 2nd in 3 1/2 weeks) and a change of underclothing (also the first since we've been ashore), so am feeling quite nice and clean for a change. I don't know when we shall get another chance.
There's really very little to tell you, as anything of real interest would be deleted by the censor. We are still keeping very fit except for Eric, who has had to go to Alexandria into hospital.
We are wondering if Simpson will have left England with his detachment to join us.
I wish I could paint, with all the different troops and uniforms amid the beautiful scenery. The orchards and fields and blue sea beyond and the towering mountains of Asia and the islands showing above the horizon are a wonderful setting for the drama of war. It's rather different I should think, to the mud and dirt of Flanders, but the fighting is none the less severe here though it's nothing like as hot as it was at first.
Glad to hear that the Girl-Guides are flourishing. Shall I send them a War souvenir as a Mascot.
Give my love to all at home and remember me to everyone in Sheffield.
With love
I remain
your loving brother
Ted

Biscuits and chocolate just arrived from Evelyn.
May 18th

Copy of typed letter headed 'From Wilfred, May 22'

It appears that this is a letter to Harry, in France, from Ted's friend and fellow-officer Wilfred Seaman, who was the brother of Evelyn. Mum remembers Wilfred: he was gassed in the war and survived, but only as an invalid.

We have come to the conclusion that life out here is infinitely preferable to life in France. I am sitting in a palatial dug-out on a Turks carpet in Khaki drill shorts, bare knees, and puttees and a thin shirt and that's all! The sun is **terrific**, but we have delightful sea breezes and wonderful views. The aerodrome is quite near, so we see a sort of model Hendon all day.
I have sent home copies of our official Rag, which E. will show you when you see her, it is rather amusing. I am sorry to hear of our political troubles at home, but think the arrangement will be better.
Your Pater is wonderful. I am glad to hear that he is out again. I have just

been riding round our area and ran across Ted standing in a deep gully, having an animated confab, with a Worcestershires sub: Ted had a couple of biscuits enclosing a slab of chocolate, in one hand! and was munching as usual! His parties were working near by on a culvert and road improvements, I happened to be near a battery just before, over which 6 shrapnel burst, but all I got was a few whizzing fuses, the brass cap that is, which buried themselves in the ground nearly.

Another of our boys was slightly wounded today, he was working on the road where my gees were, and a stray bullet caught his shoulder bone, Ted's horse was there and also got a flesh wound.

We have made a great improvement in this place in a month. Now we have good roads and cross roads and paths and wells everywhere. Sign boards and direction boards and horse-troughs. All fords and gullies are bridged. Steps made of ammunition boxes are made down all steep cliffs leading to the beaches. We have made cliff and hill roads and main-roads for motors. It looks odd to see Triumph motor bikes ripping past our bivuoac at all times of the day; in the Gallipoli Peninsular.

We are going to have another service tomorrow morning.

23.5.15 Just had above service, very touching, all the fellows sang well and the service does a lot of good, I think.

Had a bathe today in lovely clear water, but there is a submarine out in the bay, so I was expecting a stray torpedo from one of our T.B.D.'s to miss the German sub and land on our shore. A lovely rock-coast, no-one about; big ships firing like the d—l somewhere about 10 miles up the coast, where the Australians are, but that did not affect me.

I had a small adventure last night, prospecting for a road for armoured Rolls Royces. I had to go up to the Sikhs trenches to prospect, and just as I got up to the front trenches, after walking for about 3/4 hour and riding 1/2 hour, the Indians crept out over their parapet and disappeared towards the Turks trenches 40 yards away, fire was promptly opened from the latter trenches and I had a fairly lively 1/2 hour dodging stray bullets, until I got back to safety. This sort of thing occurs frequently, at first it was uncanny, now I am used to it.

24.5.15 Have just had 5 hours sleep in the last 48; am half dead. Was working on a mountain road last night with about 2 N.C.O.'s and 50 Infantry. Everytime you turn round, they sit down or go off in the dark. Another mail in today. Will wait for it before I close.

Later They won't give us our mail until tomorrow, so will close now. Two shells just dropped, one behind and one in front of our dug-out 6 yds away. Both Doddy and I covered with bits, What a life! Still merry and bright. The shells had steel caps, brass must have given out, I suppose.

Our daily routine here is:-

Reveille. 5am. Breakfast 5.30 am. Bacon. Biscuits. Tea and Jam.

Works Parade 6.30 am Roads. Wells. Boring (?). Barbed wire entanglements.

Dinner. 12 noon Bully stew with dried potatoes and veg: added. Biscuits,

Tea and Plum and Apple jam. **2.0 Works to 6. Tea 6pm. Bed 7-30** No lights
A rumour of bread and fresh meat and vegetables is running round.
Rum is issued at the rate of two teaspoonfuls per man per week, and tobacco 2 oz per man per week or cigarettes; also sometimes Lime-juice in lieu of Rum; and Marmalade in lieu of jam. Such is life on the Gallipoli P.
Have just returned from my afternoon circuit and a shell dug a hole in the road within a minute of my riding down past our horselines, so I have had two 'good-lucks'.

Copy of typed letter headed 'From Ted, June 8th, 1915
My dear Mother,
Very many thanks for your letters and newspapers. I am sorry I have not answered them before but we have been exceptionally busy lately and I have only managed to write to Evelyn today for the first time for a week. For nearly a fortnight until Wednesday June 3rd, I had been making an important trench up a mullah nearly a mile long. I had working parties of 75 men from 4am till 8am and as I was absolutely responsible for the proper construction and drainage of it, I had to spend a good many hours on the works. We finished on Wednesday evening and were ordered to move to a new bivouac where Hugh and his section were, as important work in connection with an intended attack wanted doing. On Thursday morning at 6-30am we moved off and I met Hugh and Bertie at about 8-0am. After discussing the work in hand Hugh and I went round the fire, support and reserve trenches which took us till dinner time and at 2-30 we had to attend a meeting at Bgde Hqtes, and got back about 6-30 and after making arrangements for the following day we had tea and then started to write letters, but we were interrupted by an order from the Major to be ready to move during the night into the trenches so as to move forward when the attack commenced. We of course got no sleep that night except for an hour I snatched whilst waiting for Wilfred to arrive with more detailed orders. We moved again at 4am and got into our first position in the support trenches about 6 o'clock. I then had to find the officers in command of the different working parties which was very difficult in that labyrinth of trenches, especially as in the dark many had got into their wrong places. The bombardment preceeding the attack started about 11 till 12 and was a very violent one too. The noise was terrific and everywhere both where the guns were and over the Turkish trenches was a cloud of smoke and dust. At 12 o'clock the sudden opening of a terrific rifle fire from the Turkish trenches told us that the attack had begun and we moved slowly along communication trenches until about 2-30, we reached our old firing line, where I set on a party digging a communication trench to the first captured Turkish trench. I then went forward to the 2nd Turk trench where I found our Infantry converting it into a trench for their own use; I found all my men had gone astray but they turned up later and we were able to get on doing several important jobs. As a night counter attack was expected we got no sleep again and I was

so weary that I dropped off once when standing talking to another officer. After daylight next morning I got a couple of hours sleep and then on with the work again. All day and it was most terribly hot and water was none too plentiful. In the evening Wilfred sent me up a party of men to relieve some of mine and later Bertie came up to relieve me, but as it was nearly dark by the time I had shown him what I was doing and as also I didn't like leaving part of my section still at work I decided to stay on till next morning. About 11 o'clock Bertie went off to see how they were progressing with the comm: trench, and told me to get a few hours sleep, and then about an hour later I was woken up by my Corpl, who came to tell me poor Bertie had been wounded, at that moment the C.R.E. and Major Dodworth and Hugh turned up and so off we dashed to find out what had happened, poor old Bertie was badly wounded in the stomach and died about an hour later, the Major remaining with him till the end. I went off in search of a Doctor but had to return to the trenches to see that the work was going properly. Soon after I got back the order "stand to arms" was given and just as the first signs of dawn were showing themselves in the sky a heavy fire opened on our trenches on the right. Then we saw men moving across our front to the left and then heavy fire from that quarter. Then just as it was light enough to make things out fairly clearly we saw that the Turks had collected in considerable numbers behind some dead ground and bombed our men out of the trenches, then followed a few exciting moments. The whole line turned and ran except our bit of the line who by cheering and waving wildly and doing a charge across the open succeeded in putting fresh courage into our troops, and they reformed and retook the trenches. I don't know what would have happened to us had they not returned. The Major says he saw me standing on top of the parapet waving my rifle and cheering madly and then blazing away at the Turks; but personally I don't quite remember what I did do. We spent the rest of the day working hard, further strengthening our position and in the evening Wilfred sent up a party to relieve me and my men and we got back absolutely done up at 7 o'clock. I was so done up myself that I collapsed in Wilfred's dug-out and sobbed and laughed hysterically, Wilf gave me Oxo and Brandy and put me to bed and I didn't wake up for 14 hours feeling much better for the rest, but still very done so I rode slowly back to my old dug-out and had a wash, change and sea-bathe and plenty of sleep and now after another day's rest and another bathe am feeling nearly alright again. Hugh was wounded in the arm whilst firing, but it is not anything serious I believe. I saw him walking calmly down a field about 600 yards away during the hottest part of the fight holding his left arm to stop the bleeding. The C.R.E. was very seriously wounded further up the line when leading a Bayonet charge and is not expected to recover as the bullet went through his neck and touched his spine. Our new Subaltern called Carter was injured by a beam falling in one of the trenches and striking the base of his back, but it is hoped it has done no injury to his spine, but he has had to go to Hospital, so now there is only the Major, Wilf and I left and we must thank God that he has brought us through safely. We are hoping to be put on R.E. services of a less strenuous nature for a bit whilst we can rearrange the company. Of course we are all rather upset at poor Bertie's death, but one gets rather callous in time, after six weeks of warfare it hasn't the same effect as it would have had earlier on. We have received several parcels of good things from Evelyn (and?) Margery which have been much appreciated by both Officers and men.

June 9th

Eric has unexpectedly turned up today from Alexandria looking very fit and well and quite recovered from his operation and keen and ready for work. He has turned up at a very opportune moment. We are moving our bivouac tomorrow and are going to join up with the London Field Company, as our Company is now so small that we couldn't take any decent sized job alone now. Eric and I went for a swim this morning. The Major wouldn't let me resume work until tomorrow morning, but I am now quite recovered and ready to do my bit once more. The Turks still have a very disconcerting habit of suddenly shelling anywhere and six shells have just dropped in our camp without any warning, and then off they went and shelled somewhere else. We still hear all sorts of wonderful rumours as to the state of the war elsewhere and don't know how much to believe as our Daily paper has not appeared for the last day or two as the Printing Office is being enlarged or moved. I have sent Evelyn some photos which I hope arrive safely. I am going to try to get my films home as they will only get lost or spoilt out here. I am so glad to hear that Papa is so much better and am looking forward to seeing him again. Have read all the accounts in the papers of our doings and they are very good indeed. There is a very good sketch in the Illustrated Sunday Herald, of May 16, of the men landing from the River Clyde; if a bit far-fetched it gives a very good impression of what it was like landing.

Tell Margery that she must read Hilaire Belloc before sending it on to me as he is very good indeed on the Dardanelles fighting and is quite right every time. Well Mother I think I have told you everything so will end now. Let me know how Harry is getting on, I am writing to him tonight.

Love to all

Your loving son

Ted

Please thank Margery for her letter and Gwladys for hers.

Copy of typed letter, dated 9th June, 1915.

This letter is presumably from Ted to Harry. The address given is

Gallipoli Peninsula, TURKEY.

Dear Old Sport,

Very many thanks for your long and interesting letter of May 11th. Sorry have not answered it before but much too busy. Glad to hear that you and all your Battn. are fit and well and we all wish them the very best of luck 'somewhere in France'.

I am sorry to say that after six weeks fighting we have suffered pretty considerably and have lost poor old Bertie Johnson killed last Saturday night, Hugh wounded next day, Carter (a new man from Chatham to replace Eric who left about a month ago with a rupture but returned today) injured at base of spine, and C.R.E. dangerously wounded at same time as Hugh. All during a big Counter attack by the Turks after we had captured three lines of their trenches on Friday.
I was up at the time doing R.E. work for the Hants and their bit of the line was the only bit to stand, the remainder being driven out by the Turks. It was all very exciting - I remember standing on top of the parapet and yelling for them to come back and help as the Turks having occupied their trenches would not advance but tried to bomb us out of our bit, but we got an Enfilade fire down the trenches and stopped the rot.
The right of our line then charged across the open and cut off some of the Turks, and our retiring troops, seeing that, returned and retook the trenches. The C.R.E. was hit whilst leading a Bayonet charge of Sappers. How I came off unhurt I really don't know.
There was only a Subaltern in charge of the Hants and he is being recommended for the D.S.O. I believe. He certainly deserves it. He handled his men wonderfully in a very awkward position. Until Eric turned up this morning, there was only Wilf, Dodworth and myself to run the Company and I was on the rest list suffering from over fatigue and nervous breakdown after the trying experiences. We had been four days working in the trenches without any sleep and finished up with that Counter attack.
I am now at our Base, Bivouac, but unlike France, we can never get right away from the battlefield. Only a few minutes ago six shells fell about 20 yards from my dug-out amongst our waggons and last night a shell fuse came into it. But thank Heaven they have no very heavy guns and not over many Field guns, otherwise we shouldn't be long on the Peninsula I'm afraid. As it is every one wanders about as if on manoeuvres within 1/2 mile of the Turk trenches and risks the few shells they lob over.
We are at present stuck at the bottom of Achi Babi as you will see from the papers, but we are moving slowly forward and I expect will ultimately take it, but it has been very strongly fortified and most of their guns are on rails and only come forward to shoot and then retire into the hill, and so can only be put out of action by a lucky shot catching them when firing.
Like you in France, we suffer from lack of High Explosive, shrapnel doing very little good against the Turk trenches. We captured any amount of German Officers the other day and several German men off the Goeben.
As I expect you have already heard and read, we landed here on April 25th taking part in the "most terrible of all the landings, that on 'V' Beach between Cape Helles and Saddul Bahr". That landing will always be memorable on account of running an old collier, especially fitted with gangways on either side, full of troops deliberately ashore.
Amid a terrific bombardment from the entire French and English Fleet, we steamed slowly towards the shore just as dawn was breaking. The River Clyde

ran ashore about six o'clock, but the water was still too deep to allow of the men leaping from her and wading ashore. A steam hopper and a couple of lighters had been provided against this, but one of the lighters swung out of position and made landing considerably more difficult for the men who had to cross the hopper, two lighters and then a wooden gangway on to a projecting reef of rock, during which they were subjected to a terrific fire from rifles, Maxims and pom-poms.

In the face of this terrific fire two Companies of Munsters tried to land, but some were shot on the gangway and falling into the sea were drowned, others were hit on reaching the hopper or the reef. A few only survived and lay under a bank of sand about 4 ft high which ran along the beach, and which gave them some cover from the leaden storm.

As it was seen that it would mean annihilation to make further attempt in day-light, it was decided to postpone all further movement until dark. Whilst this was going on the Dublins had attempted to land in tows but met the same tempest of fire and very few indeed ever succeeded in reaching the shelter of the shore. Gen Napier and his staff were in one of those boats and were wiped out by a machine gun. It was an awful sight to see those boats approaching the shore, man after man being struck down and when the boats did finally reach the shore, often only under their own momentum, hardly a man was capable of running ashore.

On seeing that the attempted landing had for the time failed, the Cornwallis and Albion and also the Queen Elizabeth opened a furious bombardment on the fort at Sedd-el-Bahr and the Turkish trenches on the hills behind. It was a wonderful and awe-inspiring sight to see "Lizzie's" 15 inch shells smashing into the fort only 200 yards away. The noise was terrific, but it was wonderful to see the fort and village crumble before the fire from the battleships.

Throughout the entire day the River Clyde lay ashore with the men packed like sardines between the decks, whilst the bullets rattled harmlessly against her side. During the morning howitzer fire from the Asiatic shore was directed against the Collier but was kept under by the covering warships in the Straits. Four big shells which fortunately did not explode, however, pierced her, and two falling in the hold occupied by our men killed two and wounded six.

After those shells had struck us we felt like rats in a trap wondering when and where the next would come, but thank Heaven the Fleet did its part well and never gave that Battery another chance. As soon as it was sufficiently dark a fresh attempt was made to disembark and almost the entire force was got ashore before the Turks, suddenly alarmed, opened a terrific fusillade which for a time stopped the remaining troops, which included some Dublins and ourselves, from landing.

We however landed at daylight on Monday and were subjected to fire from snipers posted in the forts and houses of the village. Many of the men jumped into the water from the last lighter and struggled ashore by the reef, and though wet through were soon dried by the heat of the Eastern sun.

A further advance through the village was then tried but for a time was held up by a machine gun placed in one of the towers of the castle, but this was soon

demolished by the Cornwallis who fired straight over our heads at an object only a **few yards** from us, a truly unique experience.
There being no immediate use for the R.E.'s, we held ourselves in reserve to the Infantry, who advanced up through the village of Sedd-el-Bahr which presents an amazing spectacle of battered masonry. Huge Krupp guns were lying about the forts smashed to atoms and quantities of ammunition strewn all over the place. During the advance through the village I was ordered to take up a position with my men in one of the towers of the fort and watch for snipers with whom the village was infested, and from that vantage point was able to watch the Hants do a fine bayonet charge up the slopes of Hill 141.
That night we dug ourselves in above the village and were relieved by the French the next morning. Ours was indeed a wonderful and I can safely say, unique baptism of fire as not only did we take part in probably the greatest landing in history, but we watched a naval bombardment of a fort by some of our most powerful ships from a position barely 200 yards away from the target.
Even then our wonderful experience did not cease as it is not everyone who is lucky enough to see a British Bayonet charge take place under his very eyes. It was a wonderful and inspiring and never-to-be-forgotten sight. It has often been said of the war in France that it is no longer spectacular, but that cannot be said of the war out here, certainly not for the first few days.
Between that landing and the attack I described earlier in this letter, we have been busy doing R.E. work, roadmaking, very necessary in this country; arranging water supply, for though water is more plentiful than we expected it was, wants carefully conserving and protecting.
We have also done a certain amount of barbed wiring and trench draining. As we are **never** out of range of the Turkish guns and rarely work out of range of their rifle fire, we are continually losing men hit by stray bullets or shrapnel. We have now been continuously under fire for 6 1/2 weeks but we are looking forward to quickly shifting the Turk from his present position on the Achi Babi, which he boasts is impregnable, but he said the same of the Peninsula against invasion.
We have a wonderful assortment of troops out here, which certainly adds to the picturesqueness of the place. Gurkhas, Sikhs, Punjabis, Australians and New Zealanders, French troops in their highly coloured uniforms, Zouaves, Senghalese and Algerians. The Australians and New Zealanders have done very well indeed, but with a little bit more discipline and a little less dash they would be better still.
Well, old man, I expect I have bored you stiff by now with our doings so will end. Hope you pull through the beastly war successfully and do great things with the 5th Y. and L.
Remember me to all and give my love etc. to Mary when you write. I hear from Evelyn every week but wish it could be more often.
Well, so long and good luck to you all in France,
Your loving brother, Ted.
Send this letter home when you have read it, as it is a more detailed account of the landing than I have sent them.

The food here is pretty good but for the first three weeks we lived almost entirely on Bully and Biscuit, but now we get bacon, jam, cheese and bread. Also an old Greek has started a Canteen on the beach where sardines, chocolates and fruit can be got at 100% prices.
One great luxury we have here, and that is sea bathing as we are never far from the sea and it is very refreshing bathing in the Gulf of Saros.
Eric and Wilf. wish to be remembered to all their friends in the 5th Y. and L. especially Johnnie Archie and Alf. Carter.
Ted
The above letter was **eight!** *typed pages. (typed pre 1920?)*

1st W.R.Field Co R.E.
29th Division
M.E.F.

dated 29.6.15
Dear Mr Colver,
It is with the very greatest sorrow that I write to tell you that poor Ted was killed in action by shrapnel yesterday, about 1pm during a great advance by the 29th Division.
By the time you receive this letter I trust and expect you will have had official news from the War Office.
I wish to convey to you and Mrs Colver and your family the heartfelt sympathy of the officers and men of the 1st West Riding Field Co R.E. in your great loss.
Poor old Ted died an instantaneous death, being hit in the right shoulder and chest by shrapnel which appears to have crossed inside the chest to the heart.
At the time of his death, he was following Major Fisher, O.C. Royal Fusiliers 2nd Battn to whom he was attached as advising R.E. officer - he was in a small steep ravine running down towards the Aegean Sea, about half a mile South of Krithia, and was completely shielded from all fire, but shrapnel bursts.
His two orderlies were both badly wounded by the same shell.
I saw one of the orderlies Sapper M.J.Howe (of Sheffield) at the R.A.M.C. Dressing Station, he was in great pain and could only tell me that his officer was killed outright by shrapnel.
Sergeant C.Burnand, the N.C.O and the Sappers of No. 2 Section especially wish me to express their sympathy with Lieut Colver's parents.
He was well liked by every officer and man in the company and his loss is most keenly felt.
Immediately I received a report of Ted's death I took out a party to search for him. I have collected some small things he carried on him, which are being sent home by the authorities. His kit and valise etc will be collected and an inventory made, after which Ordnance Department will despatch everything to you.
I will return all letters which may arrive from now onwards, when I can do so, to the sender.
Newspapers I will retain and distribute to his old Section, and Parcels according to contents, I will deal with as I think you would wish me to –

Speaking personally, I have lost one of my very best friends and am quite unable to express my feelings on paper.
I am absolutely heartbroken and feel this great loss most awfully – it is a very bitter ending to a long friendship – poor old Ted – he lived a clean and honest life, always worked hard and did his best for everybody– He died a soldier's death serving his King right well, up to the last minute.
It was only a few days ago that the General in command of the Division, General de Lisle, expressed his pleasure at the work Ted was doing, and seemed very much impressed with his personality.
The C.R.E. also spoke highly of him, the thorough and keen way in which he performed his work and his general willingness – the C.R.E. is very cut up at the loss the 29th Divisional R.E. has sustained.
Please excuse me if I have not expressed myself as I should. I do not like letter writing and am sure you will forgive me.
I personally helped to bury Ted's body today after our Doctor had examined it. I am having a nice cross made and the grave is surrounded by a big barbed wire fence.
The grave is in BRUCES RAVINE, the next ravine South of the one in which he was hit, and it faces East.
I have written Mother and Evelyn, who will no doubt let you see their letters, as I may have given them other details I have omitted in this letter.
I must close now as Major Dodworth is away ill and I still have much to do.
Please write and ask me about anything further you wish to know. I will always do anything I possibly can to help you – With renewed sympathy to you and all your family I remain
Yours very sincerely Wilfred.

and there is a photo of the grave, in its barbed wire fence.

Order of Service sheet
Sheffield Cathedral
Memorial Service Saturday October 9th, 1915 at 3pm
in memory of 2nd-Lieut Edward Watkin Colver, Royal Engineers
and others.

Letters from/about Harry, 1915

Telegram dated 13 Ap 15
To Beckett, 1 Alexandra Rd
Hampstead, Ldn
Can you see me Liverpool Street about 10-15
Harry

Letter dated April 27th 15,
1/5h York and Lancaster Rgt

1/1st W.R.Division
B.E.F.
Somewhere too very near the firing line in France

My darling Tots, Joe and Kids,
Ever so many thanks for your map case, which is a fine one and just what I wanted. The papers are also very acceptable. We get a Mirror here occasionally, perhaps once a week, if lucky.
Have absolutely gorgeous weather here, very sunny and warm in the daytime, but slightly too cold at night, still it has only rained once, when I was out and then it was very late when returning from the trenches.
Suppose you have heard something about my doings from home, but I will just give you a small detailed account.
After leaving you, we had a pleasant journey down to Folkestone. Boated to Boulogne. The crossing was fairly steady. Archie Paul and I had a cabin and managed to snatch a bit of sleep. We disembarked and marched up a fearful hill to a rest camp, where we arrived abt 5 a.m., rather fed up and distinctly warm and rather wet! Our bed was in a ploughed field under canvas, we had no blankets, but seven of us got into one tent and slept off and on. During the next day we put up abt. 3000 tents. Left in the afternoon for a station abt. 6 miles off. Our packs nearly killed us and the roads here are the absolute limit. We had a fine squash in the train, 8 of us in one carriage and 44 men in one truck! We got to our next place about 1 o'clock and to bed about 3. Fearfully tired. Had a good sleep and shave and wash up and next morning felt very fit. Left abt. 10 and marched 10-12 miles. The day was fearfully hot and the men rather fell out too much. Still we got to our new billets fairly safe and sound. All "A" Co^y officers were in one small house, but we were very comfy. We all slept on the ground, which was somewhat hard at first. We had a jolly good time there and were very sorry to leave. Our next billets were very funny and I slept on an ants' nest. The village was quite a pretty place and reminded us of dear old England. We marched here yesterday and are now only half a mile from the trenches. Our new quarters are the best we have had. A farmhouse, quite a large one. We have two bedrooms, sitting rooms(!) and kitchen. Archie and I sleep on the floor and the others in beds. We stand to arms at 2.30 until 3.45 then go to bed again. Am feeling most fearfully fit and looking so. Never looked better and my appetite is huge. They all tease me about it. Have a very slack time here for three days, then go into the trenches for three. The guns here are many and large, about 600 and some 15". Have been in the trenches twice now and am none too keen on them for they are none too safe, still we've come out for them and in we go on Thursday. The Aeroplanes are a fine sight when being shelled, they get very near sometimes, but the fellows are splendid and keep going back all the time. Having plenty of good food and managing to get along quite nicely.
Hoping you are having a really good time at Folkestone and will benefit thereby.
Very fondest love to you all,

Your loving brother
Harry

the above was a 3-page letter in pencil, quite hard to read. I think it originally came in the Envelope addressed to
Mrs J.E.Beckett, Hotel Metropole, Folkestone (re-adressed from 1, Alexandra Road, Hampstead)
dated 1 May 1915.

Copy of typed letter.
24/6/15 Platoon Sergt A.Medlock
no. 216 A company
1/5 Y & L Regt
B.E.F.
Dear Madam,
In writing the few lines I wish to thank you very much indeed for your splendid present of a wrist watch to me which I received from my Officer your son Lieut H.Colver who I am proud to say I have the honour of being his Platoon Sergt and I can assure you this watch it will be a treasure to me because there are times when in striking a light to see the time in the trenches may cost men their lives so you will see what a great help it will be to me and it is as I say that myself and all my men are proud to serve under so fine Officer as your Son we are all out here for the same purpose we shall not seek danger no more than we can help but should the time come for us to be in any great affair I can assure you Lieut Colver will find myself and all my men with him to the end
I will conclude my short letter to you again thanking you hoping to have a line from you in return
I remain yours
sincerely
Sergt A.Medlock

Copy of typed letter.
From Harry June 25
My darling Family,
Very many thanks for all your dear letters which I am always so very delighted to get, and hear how you are all progressing.
Had a fine long letter from Ted which I enclose. He seems to have had a truly thrilling time; do hope he gets through safely.
We leave here tomorrow night about 7-30, and march 12 to 15 miles not all at once. We go to a place behind Neuve Chapelle. Shall be very sorry to leave here for it has been very quiet and it is sure to be very warm there; still it had to come sometime so we hope for the best.
We are anyway about 3 weeks in reserve; although we are not very keen on it,

still we shall not be in the trenches; most probably road-mending and repairing houses etc.
Am really delighted you like the photos so much; cannot understand why Watson's will not send me mine, I have written to them so often. Yes, I certainly think I am a lot fatter and certainly very fit and quite brown.
Am sure, Mother, it will be a long time before we want more food. It is always very acceptable indeed. I got the lovely Ham, bread, and fruit etc, for which very many thanks.
Has been raining a tremendous amount here since yesterday. Hope it will be fine by tomorrow, as we have to sleep out all night or day which ever we are told to. Aeroplanes see too much nowadays, so we have to go by night. Hope we do alright, we have not marched far for so long with packs on as well. I am trying to get a small cart for our servants to pull and push then I shall not carry very much if I can help it. Think we are going somewhere where the Lloyd's are; may see them on our way.
How many of the girls are at home? they seem to get away as often as before; very pleased they still manage to enjoy going about.
Have seen Fred, Frank Price, Alec Wever and crowd twice since yesterday.
I will write you again very soon. Am rather hard for time now so will close.
Hoping everyone is very fit.
I remain
Your loving Son and Brother
Harry

Fred could have been Col Fred Neill, R.E., who later married Aunt Margery (Mum recognises him, with his moustache, in one of Harry's photos)
I'm not sure who the Lloyd's are, but certainly Aunt Gwladys later married a Lloyd, Leslie I believe.

(newspaper cuttings about 'Battle of Gully Ravine, Our greatest success in Gallipoli, Irresistible British Infantry' by E.Ashmead-Bartlett)
dated approx July 8.
perhaps sent to Harry in France?

Oct 11th
My darling Tots,
Ever so many thanks for your letter of the 7th(?). I also was very sorry my leave has not been granted, but never mind, I hope to see you and Joe to lunch on the 15th. I will ring you up as soon as I can. Am feeling fairly fit. Having quite nice weather now and fairly good time. Plenty of shelling etc but it does not worry us much. I will bring Mary with me, if she comes, which I hope she will. Am feeling as if I want a rest badly. Only wish leave was longer.

Perhaps Maud and George will join us for lunch. Will you ask them. Shall not mind London much in the dark. Am somewhat used to it now. It gets fairly dark and we have to mind where we're going to. I shall spend my first few hours in a hot bath. Have not seen one since I left England last!!
Have you seen my new photos. They are fine, I think.
Hoping and longing to see all your dear faces again.
Your very loving brother
Harry.
Love and Kisses for all.

letter in envelope dated 29 Oct, 15
passed by ?censor
Darling Tots and Joe,
Ever so many thanks for seeing me off. Am feeling somewhat down just at present. Had an awful journey.
The periscope has **not** arrived yet. I hope it will do very soon.
Very fondest love to all
Your loving brother
Harry

Postcard, undated, addressed to Mrs J.E.Beckett, 1, Alexandra Road..
Picture of 'Le Havre – La Villa Aimee'
Arrived safely Fine (?) crossing. Leave tonight.
Same address as of old. Many thanks for yesterday.
Love to all at Alexandra Gardens
Harry

There seem to be no letters sent by Harry in November or December

TELEGRAM from York
To R. Colver Esq, Rockmount, Ranmoor, Sheffield.
dated 22 December, 1915.
Regret to inform your that Captain H.Colver was killed in action December 19th Lord Kitchener expresses his sympathy.
Terrecoff (?) York

Family legend has it, and Mum confirms the story, that when the Colver household at Rockmount received this telegram, a dinner party was in progress. Grandma Colver suppressed the telegram and its dreadful news until the party was over. It is even more dreadful to realise that now she had lost four of her five sons.

TELEGRAM O.H.M.S from Buckingham Palace
To R. Colver Esq, Rockmount, Ranmoor, Sheffield.
dated 29 December, 1915.
The King and Queen are deeply grieved to hear that you have lost yet another son in the Service of his country. Their Majesties offer you their heartfelt sympathy in your fresh sorrow. Keeper of the Privy Purse.

Typed black-bordered letter (undated)
LETTER FROM MAJOR GENERAL E.M.PERCIVAL, COMMANDER OF THE 49th WEST RIDING DIVISION.
Dear Mrs Colver,
I think you may like to know that your son who was unfortunately killed on the 19th was an exceptionally fine officer.
He had great influence over his men, who knew that he made their comforts his special care.
He always set them a fine example and was cheerful in even the most trying circumstances. His brother officers were very fond of him.
I feel that his death means a great loss to the Division.
Please don't think of answering this letter.
Assuring you of my sincere sympathy
Yours sincerely
E.M.Percival.

Typed black-bordered letter (undated)
Dear Mrs Colver,
You will have received from the "A" Office, the news of the terrible loss you have sustained in the death of your son. As your son's Commanding Officer, I feel I must express to you the sympathy of the whole Battalion both officers and men. I fear no words of sympathy can help very much, but you will like to know his death has affected all who knew him very deeply. He was a gallant upright officer and gentleman, and loved by his Brother Officers and men, and he died in action, during a German Gas Attack, fearlessly leading his men, and doing his Duty to the last, and his name is added to "The ROLL of HONOUR".
Arrangements are being made to send home as soon as possible all personal effects, and belongings which belong to your son, these will go through the usual channels, and will I hope reach you safely.
I beg of you to accept my own personal sympathy at your great loss
Yours very sincerely
F.R.S.(?)Rendall, Lieut Col. Comdg 5th York and Lancs.

There is a stained-glass window in memory of Ted and Harry in the North wall of Ranmoor church, Sheffield. As children we used to sit under this window when we went to church, especially on Remembrance Sunday.

Note added January 2008.
My distant cousin Charles Cole has kindly supplied the following extra information.

Captain HENRY “HARRY” COLVER
b. 1890, KIA 19.12.1915 near Ypres in Flanders, interred at Bard Cottage Cemetery, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium - Grave I.I. 14.
Lived at “Rockmount”, Ranmoor, Sheffield. Educated at Leighton Park School. He served as a Captain in the 1/5th Battalion of the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment. His death was announced in The Times on 27th Dec. 1915. The Cemetery where he is buried is located on the Diksmuidseweg road (N369) in the direction of Boezinge. For much of the First World war, the village of Boesinghe (now Boezinge) directly faced the German line across the Yser canal. Bard Cottage was a house a little set back from the line, close to a bridge called Bard’s Causeway, and the cemetery was made nearby in a sheltered position under a high bank. Burials were made between June 1915 and October 1918 and they reflect the presence of the 49th (West Riding), the 38th (Welsh) and other infantry divisions in the northern sectors of the Ypres Salient, as well as the advance of artillery to the area in the autumn of 1917. After the Armistice, 46 graves were brought in from the immediate area, including 32 from Marengo Farm Cemetery a few hundred metres to the south. There are now 1,639 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 39 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate three casualties known to be buried among them. The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.
Harry wrote his last will at the Royal Station Hotel, York on April 11th 1915 and it was proved by Mary Langley, Spinster on 17th Nov. 1916 at Wakefield
Effects:
4,127 pounds 4 shillings and 2 pence. He says:

I HENRY COLVER do leave my nephew and god-child ROBERT LESLIE COLVER the sum of 1,000 pounds. My personal effects to my mother (E. P. COLVER) to do as she likes. The remainder of my estate I leave to my very dear friend MARY LANGLEY, General Infirmary, Stafford or failing her to my nephews and nieces now alive.
....

Lieut: EDWARD WATKIN COLVER, R.E.
b. 1892, KIA 28.06.1915 near Krithia in the Dardanelles (Gallipoli)
Presumably named after Sir Edward Watkin (1819-1901) the great Railway Contractor, who became a household name in England when he helped with the first serious attempt to create the Channel Tunnel. Sir Edward founded the Channel Tunnel Company, which was passed by an Act of Parliament in 1875, but what the connection was to the Colvers is not known. Lived at “Rockmount”, Ranmoor, Sheffield. Educated at Wellington College, Shropshire. He served in the 1st Field Co. and West Riding Royal Engineers and at the time of his death as with the 455th (West Riding) Field Coy of the Royal Engineers. He took part in the original landing from S.S. River Clyde at Sedd-ul-Bahr

on 25th April 1915. The day that is remembered as Anzac Day in Australia through the landings at Suvla Bay.

The River Clyde, a collier that had been rebuilt for the occasion, was to be grounded on V-beach, with 2000 troops on board. Soldiers disembarked onto pontoons down a gangway. Small barges with a capacity of about 40 were also used. However, as the men emerged, they were met by a hail of bullets. Only 21 of the first 200 soldiers made it to the shore. The Cape Helles beaches provided the Turks with perfect defensive positions and the British naval bombardment failed to make an impact. Tim Buckley, a Munster Fusilier on the Clyde described his experience of the landing: "I was talking to the chap on my left when I saw a lump of lead enter his temple. I turned to the chap on my right, his name was Fitzgerald from Cork, but soon he was over the border. The one piece of shrapnel had done the job for two of them."
Sgt J Mc Colgan, was with thirty two men, only six of whom survived. He was shot in the leg. He recalled the landings thus:

"One fellow's brains were shot into my mouth as I was shouting to them to jump for it. I dived into the sea. Then came the job to swim with my pack and one leg useless. I managed to pull out the knife and cut the straps and swim ashore. All the time bullets were ripping around me."

It was a terrible day, and the allied losses are infamous. He survived for a month but was killed in the fighting around Krithia. His death was announced in The Times on 6th July 1915. The following appeared in a local paper at the time of his death:

MR. R. COLVER'S BEREAVEMENT
Presiding at the Sheffield West Riding Court Yesterday, Dr. Sime said that the magistrates desired to express their sympathy with Mr. Robert Colver, a fellow magistrate, in his bereavement. News had been received that Lieutenant E. W. Colver, Mr. Colver's youngest son, had been killed in the Dardanelles.

He wrote his last will on 13th March 1915 and it was proved at Wakefield on 16th Dec. 1915 by Evelyn Mary Seaman, spinster and Robert Colver the Younger, Steel Manufacturer - Effects:
3,280 pounds 11 shillings 4 pence, later resworn to 3,488 pounds 19 shillings. He left the following bequests:

1. I give, devise and bequeath the whole of my estate and effects with any other sums which accrue by virtue of Life or other insurance or salary derived from my civil employment or income from existing capital or regimental or other Government pay in the proportions following:
a. As to three fourths thereof to my fiancee EVELYN MARY SEAMAN absolutely and as to the remaining fourth thereof to all my nephews and nieces in equal shares.
2. Should my father died before me and my estate increased I leave in the following proportions:
a. One half to the said MARY EVELYN SEAMAN and the remaining half to be divided between my brothers and sisters.

3. I appoint the said EVELYN MARY SEAMAN and my brother ROBERT COLVER junior my Executors and Trustees.

His name is commemorated on Panel 23 to 25 or 325 to 328 on the Helles Memorial, Turkey. The Helles Memorial stands on the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula. It takes the form of an obelisk over 30 metres high that can be seen by ships passing through the Dardanelles. The Helles Memorial commemorates the whole of the Gallipoli campaign, so far as the forces of the Commonwealth were concerned in it, and in particular the names of over 20,000 of those with no known grave from the United Kingdom, India and Newfoundland at Suvla, Helles and Anzac, and those of Australians at Helles. There is also a memorial window at St. John's Church, Ranmoor commemorating him and Harry erected by their parents.

Finally, here is a photograph, Figure 3, that was obviously treasured by Granny Beckett. It was probably taken in 1896, and shows a group on the steps the Baslow Hydro, to which the family went for holidays. The Colver parents stayed in the Hydro Hotel itself, and the children were billeted around in various Baslow cottages. Granny B. has written (on a note with the photo) that the back row of the group on the steps consists of

from left to right, Mrs McDougall, Mrs Heinz, Mrs Kay and Harold Kay,

and the front row , from left to right, consists of

Harry Colver, Norah McDougall, Margery Colver, Lottie Colver and Edward Colver.

Figure 3: Young Colvers on the steps of the Baslow Hydro, 1896