



Wimborne in World War One

By Jemma Dart

Age 8-13 Category (Aged 13)

Charlie trudged home after a long day at work in the fields. As he continued up the path his girlfriend Ethel was waiting for him, a small brown envelope in her hand and a tear rolled down her cheek. He carefully prised the envelope out of her hand and read it, it was the recruitment form to sign up to the Blandford regiment, as they needed more men in France to help with the war. Ethel already knew it was a certain death sentence. The two of them perched on the doorstep of the house not knowing what to do next.

They both knew if Charlie didn't sign up, he would have to go to a tribunal in the town hall. He had no choice, he carefully signed the form and folded the paper back up and sent it back to Blandford. They both just sat there and prayed for Charlie's safety and wellbeing. As I watched both of them, just sat there and watched the grandfather clock in the dining room. Their minds busy about other thoughts and about how Charlie had lived in Wimborne since an infant, he was going to miss it. I could tell from the way he looked and longingly stared out the window for this war to be over.

Several days passed and it was time for Ethel to say goodbye to Charlie till the war was over and hoping they would see each other again. Ethel was saddened by the sight of Charlie leaving for the war, he had basic training from when he went to the training centre at Blandford, a few days before leaving for France. Ethel stood there and watched with tears rolling down both cheeks.

The following month, a small white envelope with untidy writing came through the door, with a stamp from the army. I watched Ethel open the envelope hesitating to see what was inside. It was from Charlie safe and well, (I can tell you that we now know that generals checked the privates letters so nobody knew what really happened). As I looked down upon Ethel she re-examined the letter again and again, as she missed Charlie so much. Christmas came too soon for Ethel and she was surrounded by her family, but as I looked down once again I met a scared Ethel as there was a spot for Charlie but it was left empty.

January came and went and so did other months, the pain of Charlie not being there lessened just a fraction on Ethel, until mid May when a small, creased, brown envelope came through the door stamped with the army's symbol on it. Ethel once again opened the letter it read:

To the family of Charles J Brown we are sorry to deliver the painful news that Private Brown has died.

As I looked upon Ethel, in her hand lay a death penny. Shocked she just rested there at the doorstep weeping; she hoped Charlie's soul was free now.