



AUCHMAR ADVOCATE

Published by Friends of Auchmar

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Volume 8 Issue 4, Autumn 2024

BEYOND THE FRONT DOOR

Inside the Auchmar Manor House: Telegrams and Letters

TODAY, THE Great War memories and stories reside in Battalion and Regimental ledgers and journals, live life in personal family letters and diaries, step forth curated, from the archives of local and national newspapers, and are documented by dedicated military special collections.

The battlefields in Belgium and France, once vast quagmires of mud over a century ago, are now green. Discoveries of ordnance, uniforms, and buttons still occur when a field is disturbed.

AUTUMN 1914. The industrial growth a decade before brought people to the city. The population was now 100,000.

Great Britain had declared war with Germany in Europe. The Dominion of Canada was at war. So too, was Hamilton Ontario. Thousands of men, young and old, came forward to fill ranks of the first regiments. They came from all walks of life and answered their call to duty.

Ten thousand Hamiltonians would join the Canadian Expeditionary Force.





Canadian Expeditionary Force, Battalion, Scott Park Barracks 1918

Henry Larden, Samuel Dewhurst and Ralph Vidler all worked at the Imperial Cotton Company on Sherman Avenue North. They were among the thousands who left the mills and factories and enlisted, joining the Canadian Expeditionary Force for sense of duty, adventure and other reasons.

At Oak Bank, James and Georgina Young welcomed the Southam and Lucas families for dinner. It was evening where goodbyes were said and well wishes proclaimed. Each family had a son who was preparing for basic training at Niagara-on-the-Lake or in British Columbia.

James Vernon “Bill” Young, Gordon Hamilton Southam, and Frederick Travers Lucas would eventually cross the Atlantic and be sent to the forward echelons of the battlefield.

BELGIUM 1915 The 2nd Battle of Ypres.

The Canadian Regiment had moved to the front to fill a gap in the front line. Throughout April and May, the German Army deployed a new weapon – Gas! The first attack using Chlorine Gas lasted 48 hours. The Canadians took heavy casualties, 6,035 wounded or killed.

Bill Young was one of the wounded. He was taken to the rear lines and eventually sent to England to recuperate. His Commanding Officer, through the War Office, sent a telegram to his parents, James and Georgina, informing them of Bill’s injury.



James and Georgina arranged to visit Bill in England. Alan, Bill’s brother, would look after the family business. They booked passage on the Lusitania, Ticket No.866, Cabin B53 to depart New York on May 1st.

On May 7th, 1915, off the coast of Ireland, the Lusitania was torpedoed by a German U Boat. The Lusitania sank. James and Georgina Young did not survive.

Upon receiving news of the Lusitania, authorities sent telegrams to the families listed on the passenger manifest. Alan and Edna Young received the telegram. They purchased the Hamilton Spectator and Hamilton Herald editions of May 7th and May 8th to read about the disaster. These newspapers would remain in the family for 102 years.

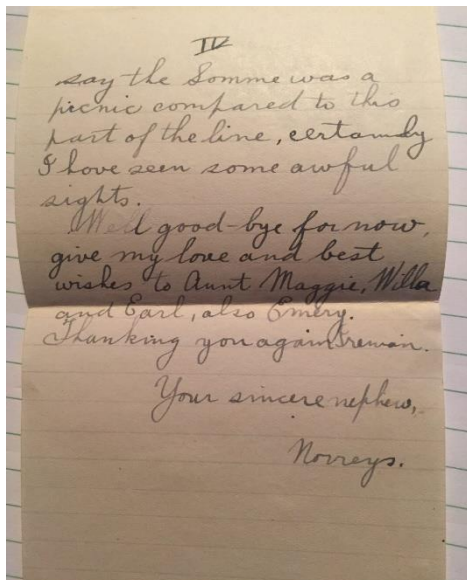
In Ireland, Robinson Pirie, a friend of James and Georgina, wrote a survivors account. He mentioned speaking with them on board, but not seeing them when the ship sank.

The Great War had come to Hamilton and entered Oak Bank by the front door.



BATTLE OF THE SOMME 1916.

The Somme offensive was a large battle, causing hundreds of casualties by the hour, with little advancement. Regiment after Regiment stepped from the trenches into artillery and gunfire, only to be cut down.



The immense scope of war and numerous battles were brought home in the daily lists and articles which the newspapers printed.

The early letters written about training were sent home filled with optimism, bravado and friendships made. Later letters were censored as the men spent months in the trenches at the front.

Henry Larden, Sam Dewhurst and Ralph Vidler would see Belgium and France. They would never see Hamilton again. Letters from the War Office arrived first at the Larden and Vidler family homes in September and October of 1916. Henry and Ralph were killed during the Battle of the Somme. Henry was 27 years old, Ralph was 24.

That October, on the 15th, a telegram was sent to the Southam family. Their son, Major George Hamilton Southam had died during the Battle of the Somme. G.H. Southam was 30 years of age.

VIMY 1917. Late Winter.

The Canadian Battalions and Regiments had trained. The creeping barrage of artillery fire would hold the German soldiers, forcing them to hunker down in their trenches and bunkers while the Canadians advanced to take the Ridge. That was the working tactic.

All was not quiet. Snipers and machine guns covered the No Mans Land. Artillery shells fell on the Canadian Corps during the lead up to Vimy. It is unknown when Travers Lucas last wrote home to family. On March 1st, a telegram from the War Office arrived at his parents' home. Travers was 34 years of age.



Canadian Troops on Vimy Ridge 1917

CANADA'S ONE HUNDRED DAYS 1918.

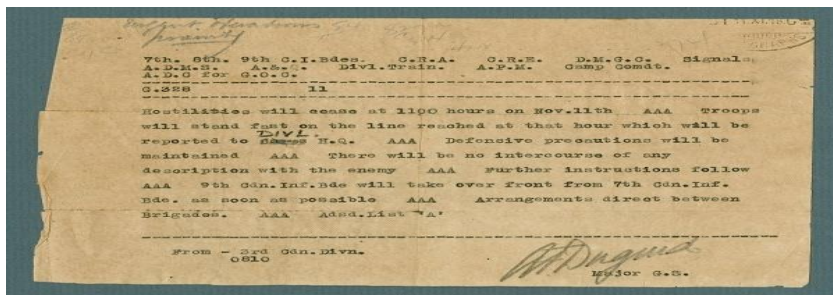
No street or avenue, no boulevard or court, and no laneway, drive and road was left untouched by the war in Europe. Sadness and grief filled the front porches, back steps, parlours and dining rooms as people shared their loss. On Sundays, the churches were filled.

By 1918, it had been four very long years. Later, historians would call the final battles "Canada's 100 Days." The letters and telegrams arrived in large batches daily. Passchendaele was one.

The Battle of the Scarpe happened in August. Four days of heavy fighting. Among those on the casualty lists was Private Sam Dewhurst. On Lottridge Street in Hamilton, there was little comfort and no joy. A letter arrived informing the Dewhursts that Sam was a casualty. Sam was 21 years of age.

NOVEMBER 1918.

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the artillery barrage ceased, the gunfire went silent and the weapons were laid down. Truce had been agreed upon.



Ralph Vidler is buried at the Vimy Memorial.

Henry Larden is buried at the Vimy Memorial.

Sam Dewhurst is buried in Upton Wood Cemetery, France.

George Hamilton Southam is buried at Albert Communal Cemetery Extension.

Frederick Travers Lucas is buried at Villers Station Cemetery.

James Vernon "Bill" Young returned home to Hamilton.

TODAY, there are plaques in churches commemorating those who served in the Great War and twenty years later, in World War II.



Major Gordon Hamilton Southam is commemorated at the H.A.A.A. grounds in Hamilton.

There are two plaques at the Imperial Cotton Company (The Cotton Factory) which honour and commemorate those who went to war and never came home again. Among the names are Ralph Vidler, Sam Dewhurst and Henry Larden. Look for them.

When we attend events and visit exhibits at the Cotton Factory, there remain, untold stories, chapter and verse, about the lives of the men and women, who walked the stairs and floors more than a century ago.

THE FRIENDS OF AUCHMAR

Partnerships, Events and News

Friends of Auchmar Annual General Meeting 2024.

The Friends of Auchmar Annual General Meeting was held on September 25, 2024 via Zoom.

President Diane Dent delivered the Presidents' Address which highlighted the successful participation of the Friends of Auchmar at Auchmar during Doors Open Hamilton 2024.

Also, discussed and voted upon were the legislative articles to align with the Ontario Non Profit Corporation Act (O.N.C.A.) which was required by October 2024.

The current Board of Directors of the Friends of Auchmar stepped down and a new Board of Directors was voted in.

Thank you to the previous Board of Directors and welcome to the new Board of Directors.

To learn more about the Board of Directors, visit www.friendsofauachmar.ca

Upcoming Events.

Currently, there are no upcoming events. Visit the website www.friendsofauachmar.ca for more information.

National Trust of Canada -APT Joint Conference 2024.

The conference will be held in Montreal, Quebec, November 12-16, 2024. The theme of the conference is Building Bridges: Connecting Places and Practices.

Participating in the conference are the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals and the Indigenous Heritage Circle

A call for papers and presentations is posted the National Trust of Canada website.

For more information, visit info@nationaltrustcanada.ca

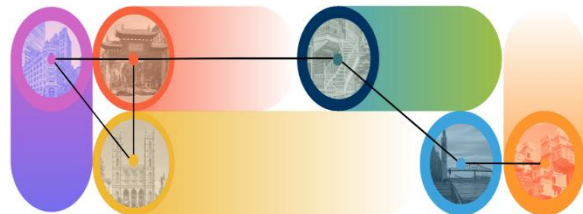
National Trust – APT Joint Conference 2024

November 12-16, 2024
Montréal, Québec



Building Bridges

Connecting Places, Cultures, and Practices



THE PHOTO GALLERY

This issue, the Photo Gallery travels back to the Great War Years.

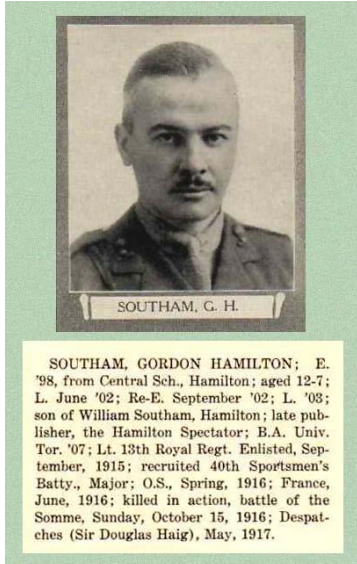
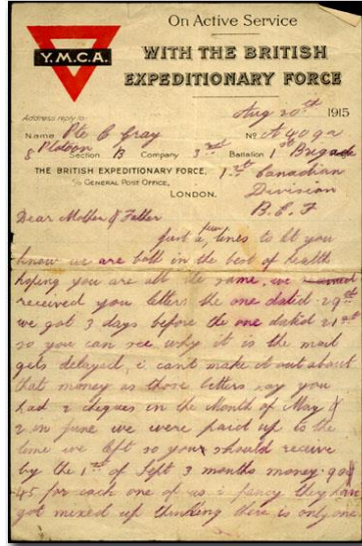
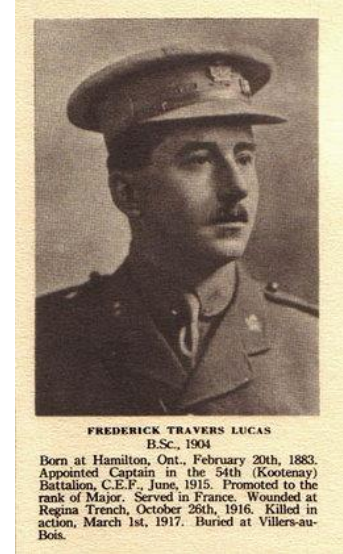


Photo courtesy of Marika Pirie
 Photo fournie gracieusement par Marika Pirie

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Fill in only-Unit, Number, Rank and Name.

K.R.M.A.S.R.H.
 100-411
 K.A. 103436

Casualty Form-Active Service.

Unit, Regiment or Corps: 54th Overseas Battalion C.E.F.

Regimental No.: 1051480 Rank: Private Name: Graham, Edward Nelson

Enlisted on: Sep-1917 Terms of Service (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) (i) (j) (k) (l) (m) (n) (o) (p) (q) (r) (s) (t) (u) (v) (w) (x) (y) (z)

Date of promotion to present rank: Date of appointment to lance rank: Nominal position on roll of N. C. O.:

Extended: Recaptured: Qualification (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) (i) (j) (k) (l) (m) (n) (o) (p) (q) (r) (s) (t) (u) (v) (w) (x) (y) (z)

Serial	Number of promotions, extensions, transfers, etc., during active service, as recorded on Army Form 10, Army Form 6, 6a or in other official documents. The entry to be placed in each row.	From	To	Remarks
				Decorated with the Olympos Medal on 17th Aug 1918
				Decorated with the Olympos Medal on 17th Aug 1918
25-6-17	OC 15th			Decorated with the Olympos Medal on 17th Aug 1918
OCT 2 1917	1st Lt.			Decorated with the Olympos Medal on 17th Aug 1918
23/10/17	1st Lt.			Decorated with the Olympos Medal on 17th Aug 1918
12/1/17	2nd Lt.			Decorated with the Olympos Medal on 17th Aug 1918

(6)

CONTACT US

LOOKING TO REACH the Friends of Auchmar and not sure how? Do you want to attend our public meeting? Would you like a little bit of information? Do you have a comment? Would you like to become involved? Do you have a memory or story about Auchmar that you wish to share?

Here are the ways:

Website: www.friendsofauchmar.ca

General Information Email: info@friendsofauchmar.ca

Membership: membership@friendsofauchmar.ca

X: @FOAuchmar.ca

Facebook: www.facebook.com/friendsofauchmar

OR

Just come up and speak with us.



PHOTO CREDITS

Page 1: (1) Auchmar Manor (Doug Embleton Private Collection) (2) Auchmar Gazebo (Vasseur & Martin Family Private Collection : Elsie Buchanan Archive) (3) Auchmar Stables and Carriage House (A.V.Young Family Private Collection). (4) Recruitment Poster (Sourced from Canadian War Museum).

Page 2: (1) C.E.F. Battalion, Scott Park Barracks (Canadian Department of National Defense, Library & Archives of Canada, PA 001087). (2) 2nd Battle of Ypres Painting by Richard Jack circa 1920 (Canada War Museum, Library & Archives of Canada C014145).

Page 3: (1) Hamilton Spectator May 7,1915 (on loan to F.O.A. from Heritage Hamilton Foundation). (2) Letter written in the Trench (Trench Letters, Imperial War Museum).

Page 4: Vimy Ridge 1917 (Archives of Ontario 10030684, Reference Code PAN 81).

Page 5: Armistice Telegram (Veterans Affairs Canada; Source George Metcalf Archival Collection; Canadian War Museum CWM 19810257-002). (2) Commemorative Plaques (The Cotton Factory).

Page 7: (1) Maj. G.H. Southam (Canadian Virtual War Museum; Photo -Courtesy of Marika Pirie). (2) Example of Home Letter on YMCA letterhead (Imperial War Museum). (3) Travers Lucas (Canadian Virtual War Museum). (4) Private Ralph Vidler (Imperial War Museum). (5) Private Ralph Vidler (Canadian Virtual War Museum). (6) Casualty Telegram (Imperial War Museum).

Page 9. Auchmar Manor House, Auchmar Estate (Doug Embleton Private Collection).

REFERENCES

1. Berton, Pierre, Vimy.
2. Veterans Affairs Canada. Canadian War Museum, George Metcalf Archival Collection.
3. Imperial War Museum www.imperialwarmuseum.uk
4. Canadian Virtual War Museum



