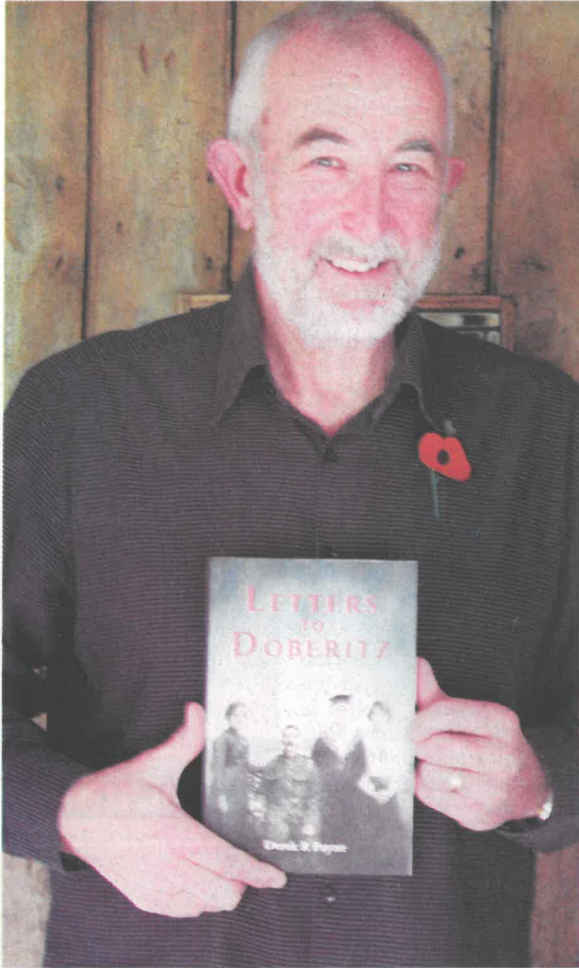


# Remembrance Sunday 2018

– 11th November –

First World War Centenary 2014 – 2018

## Local author commits family story to new novel



Local author, Derek Payne, pictured with his novel, *Letters to Doberitz*.

***Letters to Doberitz* is based on a true story of Love and War that has waited 100 years to be told. It has been turned into a novel by High Littleton resident, Derek Payne, in time for the anniversary of the end of WWI.**

Published by Austin Macauley on 31st October and available in all good book shops, the story is both intriguing and unique, as father and son endure very different wars. Set between the front line, a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany and the family back home in Bristol, this is a particularly compelling story as the author and the cover designer are direct descendants of the four main characters in the book.

Sometimes truth is more incredible than fiction, and this is one of those times!

Derek explains: "My book is based on a true family story that I first heard about when I was a child.

"Five years ago, I thought the story so unique, I set out to record it for future generations of my family so it would not be lost to history. When I had finished, several people said, "Wow, what a story," or "This should be made into a book/film!" They say that everyone has a book in them, well, this is mine.

"I have written quirky poetry in the past and I published a book in 2016 under a pseudonym, to raise money for the Children's Hospice South West, which the BBC carried a piece on, but this is my first novel.

"Because I've had other things going on, it took me five years to write, but the lovely family twist is that the great-grandson of William and Annie in the book, Vincent Brown, a Bristol artist (and my second cousin), designed and painted the book cover."

## Remembering my Grandfather with pride



Edwin Brooks, pictured on his Wedding Day in 1917.

**Thank you to local reader, Roger Brooks, who got in touch with *The Journal* to share the story of his grandfather, Edwin John Brooks. Roger also brought us a very precious book of handwritten prayers, hymns and poems that Edwin had taken with him to the front line. Roger tells his story here:**

"Edwin John Brooks lived and worked at Lady Farm, Chelwood, with his parents, George and Mary Ann; his brothers, Harry and George, and sister, Annie.

"In 1911, at the age of eighteen, he enlisted to serve in the Special Reserve in the Third Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment and later went to Blandford Forum Army Camp to carry out his training.

"He saw active service from 10th December 1915, when he served as a Hussar of the Line, a lightly armed Cavalry Soldier, and later as a Rifleman in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. His army number was R41771.

"His service saw him serve King and Country until 9th September 1918, two months before the end of the War, when he was discharged as no longer physically fit for War Service. He had become very ill after drinking dirty trench water.

"My grandfather took with him a handwritten book of prayers, hymns and poems, which he read as he waited in the trenches, which must have provided great comfort from the bombardment of guns and advance from the enemy.

"He returned home safely to his wife, Ellen, but sadly



Edwin Brooks' handwritten book of poems, hymns and prayers, which the family keep safely in his memory.

died in 1929, aged 36.

"I did not get to meet my grandfather, but I am very proud of his actions and service and feel that he and all those who served are heroes and should never be forgotten."

One of the poems taken from the handwritten book is aptly called *Poppies*. It reads:

Roses are for loving  
In the days of June  
In the golden sunlight  
'Neath the silver moon  
Roses are for loving  
Loving dies so soon.

Poppies for forgetting  
When the sad eyes weep  
When the heart is sighing  
Thro' the shadows deep  
Poppies for forgetting  
In a long, long sleep.'



Edwin John Brooks served until 9th September, 1918.

He was discharged after becoming ill from drinking dirty trench water. He died eleven years later, aged 36.