



Private Harry Cutts



Regiment(s)	1/4th (T.F.) Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment 1/5th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers
Service number(s)	Z9546 48139 57454
Cause of death	Died of wounds
Date of death	23rd July 1918
Place of death	Unknown, France
Age at death	19
Burial place	Bertrancourt Military Cemetery, Somme
Places of commemoration	L'Anneau de la Mémoire, France Emmanuel Church Brush Memorial Loughborough Carillon
Connection to Emmanuel Church	Parents married at Emmanuel Church Member of Emmanuel Church Bible Class

Harry Cutts was born in Loughborough in 1899. He was the son of Hezekiah Cutts and his wife Jane (née Lester), born 25th September 1866 in Thringstone, Leicestershire¹. They were married at Emmanuel Church on 28th February 1886. He was one of 11 children but only Harry, his brother Herbert and sister Ethel survived to adulthood. The Cutts family lived at 48 Ashby Road. After Harry's father died in 1900, Harry's mother became a hosiery seamer, working from home. In the 1911 census she had become a wardrobe dealer. Harry worked at the Brush Electrical Engineering Company prior to enlistment.

Harry's service records have not survived but the Carillon Museum collection includes documents and letters donated by a relative, Mrs Karen Smith, from which his service career can be reconstructed.

Harry was medically examined on 14th Feb 1917 and passed "A" (fit for general service). He was attested for conscription on 3rd March 1917 at Loughborough recruiting office. This may have been his 18th birthday. He joined the 1/4th Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment and undertook 14 weeks of basic training at Wigston starting on 18th February 1918 and then at several locations in North Lincolnshire. At this stage his service number was 48139.

After completing his training Henry and his company landed in Boulogne on 12th June 1918.

However, he was transferred to the 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers as Private 57454 at some unknown date before 26th June 1918. The reason for this transfer is unknown, but it meant that from then on the separation allowance to his family was paid by their regimental office in Preston which must have been inconvenient for his family.

When Harry joined the Lancashire Fusiliers, he was assigned to 13 platoon of D Company. They had recently relieved the 1/5th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment at a position known as K19 C60 in the Bertrancourt area of the Somme Region. There Harry spent his first few days improving the British trench positions and carrying out night patrols under intermittent

¹ Information from her passport, document 29.

shell fire from both HE and mustard gas. On 1st-2nd July the battalion were relieved by the Manchesters and withdrew to camp at Bus woods for cleaning equipment, bathing and training. On 6th and 7th July D company formed a working party at Fort Bertha. They again relieved the Manchesters in the front line on 10th July. The following days were relatively quiet, and the battalion provided numerous working parties before relieving the 1/8th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers in an adjacent section of the front with D company on the left. Between the 18th and 22nd of July a series of patrols attempted to establish forward British positions but failed to do so². Harry was wounded by a sniper on the 22nd July 1918 and died the following day in hospital. He was 19 and had been in France little more than a month.

His possessions were returned to his mother who was then living at 48 Ashby Road, Loughborough. In addition to his army wages Harry's mother was granted 5 shillings a week by the Brush Mutual Aid Fund from 1st April 1918 to relieve hardship caused by his loss of civilian earnings. It is unclear if this continued after his death.

Harry was buried in Bertrancourt Military Cemetery, Somme, Plot 2, Row E, Grave 32. His mother chose the inscription "Until the day breaks and the shadows flee".

Harry's younger brother Herbert was conscripted in June 1918 but as far as is known didn't see active service. Either Herbert or Ethel also served as a Munitions Volunteer.

Harry is remembered at Emmanuel Church, on the Brush Memorial, and on the Carillon. Given his home address it is likely that he attended Rosebery Street, school in Loughborough but is not on the school memorial.



Harry Cutts in civilian clothes (LOUWM:2016.21.2) and in the uniform of the Leicestershire Regiment (LOUWM2016:21)

² Source: Regimental War diary of the 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers



Private Harry Cutts death plaque (LOUWM:2016:21.1)



Harry Cutts mother and sister Ethel visiting his temporary grave June 1921 (LOUWM:2016:21.5) and his CWGC headstone at Betrancourt Cemetery

Papers of Harry Cutts

The papers of Pte Harry Cutts are [catalogued in the collection of the Loughborough Carillon Tower War Memorial Museum](#).

1. Medical Examination & Classification Certificate of Harry Cutts (Z9546). Issued at Loughborough. Signed Lt Col [unclear]. Dated 14th February 1917. Typed on sepia postcard. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

2. Attestation form of Harry Cutts (Army Form W 3124). Issued at Loughborough. Dated 3rd March 1917. Signed Lt Col [unclear]. Form filled in in black ink on sepia card. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

3. Postcard from Harry to an unknown recipient at 48 Ashby Road, Loughborough. Postmarked Wigston 19th Feb 1918. Obverse cartoon of an army recruit sitting on the back of a turtle captioned "Cheer up, the first 7 years will be the worst" Reverse pencil on plain postcard. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

From Harry

*I am not coming
Cheer up.
Good bye
& Good Luck*

*I am at Wigston
Keep smiling
all*

4. Letter from Harry to his mother. Dated 20th February 1918. Sent from an unknown address in Wigston. Pencil on unlined notepaper headed LOUGHBOROUGH. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother

I am not coming, I am going to Woolwich to pass a Trade Test³. So do not write till we get there. We are going tomorrow. I am alright, I have made allowance. Remember me to all.

God Bless you all

Mother, Ethel⁴ & Herbert⁵.

Keep smiling. Good night

All

I will write as soon as I can.

We keep getting our grub.

From your

son Harry

Remember me to

Mrs Hallam & all

Tell her to tell

Herbert I am in the army

Good luck to him

³ This was common practice for new recruits with no previous military background but who had a trade from civilian life. It implies that Harry had been an apprentice at Brush rather than an unskilled labourer. If a recruit passed the test they would be transferred to a specialist unit such as the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers or Royal Flying Corps. As Harry remained in an infantry regiment he presumably failed.

⁴ Harry's older sister. Born 21st Sept 1897, Loughborough, Married Frederick George Bishop, 1926, Loughborough

⁵ Harry's younger brother, baptised 18th October 1900, Loughborough, died 1952? Loughborough

5. Receipt for a parcel sent to Harry Cutts. Sent to Mrs Cutts at 48 Ashby Road, Loughborough. Dated 22nd February 1918. Printed form completed in pencil on sepia card. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

6. Letter from Harry to his mother. Dated 2nd March 1918. Sent from Riverhead Camp, Louth, Lincolnshire. Pencil on lined YMCA headed notepaper. Two sides. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Reply to *Mother* Company 4th Bat *Leicester* Regt

Stationed at *Louth*

Dear Mother & sister & Brother

I have gone to Louth & I am in Khaki we are stationed in old Factory we went there this Morning you can write to me now as much as you like. We shall have to walk about half a mile for our meals. I would sooner be at Wigston. You send me safety Razor and soap and toot brush. Officer came up and told us what we have got to do. We where coming up the street & a officer came to us and told one of our button was undone and he told us to fasten it. It is a stricked place. Send me some tooth powder as well. Well that all I can say this time.

Good luck to you all & keep smiling.

Remember me to all and Mrs Hallam & all & Herbert

Hallam

Write on the

Letter.

Pte H Cutts 4th Batt

Leicester Regt. C. Company

No 48139.

Louth

Have you got your

allowance

yet

Good night

all

7. Letter from Harry to his mother and family. Dated 19th March 1918. Sent from Riverhead, Louth. Pencil on lined YMCA headed notepaper. Two sides. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother & all

Just a few words to let you know I am alright & I received your letter on Saturday & Ethel on Monday Dinner. Well I have heard we are shifting on Monday but you can write just the same. I hope you are all going on alright and is Herbert got the winner for the War [unclear]⁶ well we are going on another March on Tuesday they say we going under canvas. We send our washing in on Saturday & get our clean washing on Sunday Morning. Well I shall be glad when I done my Training, and I shall be glad when I get a leave to see you, but that won't be yet. His Herbert still going out with Harry Shipman⁷ & just Remember me to her. You know we don't have much time to write but I do think of you all just the same. I have to write when I get the chance. So if you do not hear from me for a time you need not be afraid, I will write as soon as I can. Well I cannot same any more this time but I have wrote the letter to my aunt [unclear] it only wants a envelope now then I shall post it. Well I am sending a shilling for Me to save and our much have I got saved now. Well I cant send any more than that because I want the rest for grub. Well I will finish now remember me to all. It has started to rain a bit. Well Good night & Good Luck & keep smiling.

Address 4th Bat Leicester

C Copy No 48139

Riverhead Louth

⁶ Possibly Menional (sic) memorial. Could this be a reference to early plans for a town war memorial which eventually emerged as the Carillon? If so what competition did Harry's brother Herbert enter? See also document 13 where Herbert is referred to as selecting the winners.

⁷ Unidentified possibly Harriet

8. Letter from Harry to his mother. Dated 30th March 1918, Sent from Riverhead, Louth, Lincoln. Pencil on lined YMCA headed notepaper, 4 numbered pages. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Reply to *Mother* Company C Bat 4th Regt. *Leicester*
Stationed at *Louth*

Dear Mother & all

Well Mother I am just sending a few lines to let you know I am alright, and thank you thank you for your letter the last one that I got on during the week & I thank you for your parcel & letter & I received it today & the tin box will come in very useful. Well it as been raining here since Thursday⁸. Hope you will have a good holiday⁹. Well as it as been raining we have had a lot of rest but we would not had any if it had not. We were going on Thursday afternoon a march with full pack & ammuniton but it did not come off & a good job to. I am glad to see you you all have got a holiday & I hope it keep fine. I hope that Herbert¹⁰ is still going out with Harry Shipman. I shall be glad to see you all but it will not be yet. They sent some of the old soldier on leave so as they can go to France, & they had only been home a few hours & they sent for them back. On Friday Night they sent some of the Notts and Derby out to France. Yes the big Push¹¹ is awful and we have lost some men as Well & they say the Leicester have been through it again. Well I am always thinking of you all. Yes it is a bit hard but still we have got to make the best of it this week we have been learning firing & barnet¹² fighting. Yes we are busy so I cannot always write but I write when I get the chance at night. this week they picked 12 of us for one fire picket & we have to go with rival regiment on & be inspected by a officer. And he read the rule out to us what we got to do. It is in case of fire & air Raid & we have to guard the people. We all have to take our turn at it. Well we should have gone to church on Good Friday but as it rained we did not go but we had to go to the baths at night.

The officer told us we are going away sometime next week but you write just the same it will find me. Did you have any hot cross buns they did not make any here. I shall be glad to see you & I am still got the same pal. Well have

⁸ Thursday 28th March 1918

⁹ Reference to Easter. Good Friday 1918 was Friday 29th March

¹⁰ Harry's younger brother

¹¹ The German Spring Offensive began on March 21st 1918

¹² (sic) bayonet

you got your full allowance money. And have you got any from the Brush¹³. They only gave some of us 7/- this week, Some of us. But I am alright just the same.

How much money have I got saved. Well Mother I cannot say very much more this time but I will be glad when it is over they say they think this Push will be the Final, let us hope so. Well his the fowls still laying I hope they are. I shall always be glad to here from you all I was drilling one day this week and I saw George Hague¹⁴ & I see he is a Corporal. They said When I came up their were plenty of Loughborough lads up here, but I have only seen G. Well I cannot say any more this.

*But Good Luck to you all & keep smiling, & Ethel Remember Me to Fred, Mrs Hallam & all
& Herber Hallam¹⁵ as Well.*

*Well Good
Night*

*Pte Harry Cutts No 48189 C Company
4th Leicester, Riverhead Louth¹⁶
Lincoln.*

¹³ See letter from Brush Electrical Engineering Company to Mrs Cutts dated 30th April 1918

¹⁴ Probably Sergeant George Hague, 241432 7th Bn, Leicestershire Regiment, killed in action 8th October 1918. See Loughborough Roll of Honour.

¹⁵ Unidentified. There were several Hallam families in and around Loughborough in 1918 but none of them match these Christian names

¹⁶ No photographs of this camp have been identified so far.

9. Letter from Brush Electrical Engineering Co Ltd Mutual Aid Fund to Mrs Cutts. Dated 30th April 1918. Signed A Cutler on behalf of the committee. Typed on Brush Electrical Engineering Co Ltd headed paper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

Notifies Mrs Cutts that the committee have awarded her 5/- a week which she has to collect in cash every Saturday at the factory entrance gates between 10:30 and 11:30am.

10. Letter from Harry to his mother. Sent from Red Farm, Norton Somercotes, Lincolnshire. Dated 12th May 1918. Pencil on un-headed, un-lined notepaper folded into a four page booklet. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother

Just a few lines in answer of your letter as I have received it today. Well I have wrote a letter during the week I expect you have got it be now. Well if you are going to send a parcel send now to this place as we have shifted from Byes Hall¹⁷ and gone a bit further away to a place called Red Farm¹⁸, as if you have not sent it on, send to the last name I have mentioned. I am going on alright but I shall be glad to see you and I expect to be home at 14 weeks and I shall be in the 12th week tomorrow¹⁹. Yes I thank Harry for is Photo and I think it is a good one. Yes it would be nice if I could get for the Holiday²⁰ but it will be a week later because I shall not be done the training till a week later. I wshould liked to come for the the holiday week then I could have gone out with them in the day time but it can't be helped. Well Ethel it no use grumblng We don't suppose we shall get much leave they are only giving 48 hrs leave. But I am hoping to get the six day. so as I can have a trip and be glad to see the dear old home once more. Yes I hope Herbert is saving some of his overtime money & are they still making the ottoe²¹ down the Brush. Yes I am very pleased to hear. Mother you are getting allowance from the Brush if it is only a little bit it comes in alright. Because the 9/6 you get from the army is not much and you no I would be pleased to hear you got it. From the Brush. Well is Mrs Spicer²² still working Burder²³ yet and still making Bombs for them. And is Parnell²⁴ still their and does he do any more ordering about. Well Ethel I went on guard last night and it was a bad night to, it poured of rain down nearly alnright and I was glad when morning came. You know I was guarding the coast. We have 2 hrs on & 4 off and go on another ¾

¹⁷ Byes Hall (sic) refers to Pye's Hall, a country house built by a lawyer Henry Pye of Louth in 1851, requisitioned by the War Office 1915-1918, demolished in 1972.

¹⁸ See [ML117461 - Red Farm, North Somercotes - Lincolnshire Heritage Explorer](#)

¹⁹ This implies that Harry's basic training started on 18th February 1918. That fits with his first extant postcard to his mother from Wigston dated 19th February 1918.

²⁰ Probably Whitsun celebrated on May 19th 1918

²¹ Ottoe (sic) probably Avro. Brush built a few Avro 504C training planes 1916-1917

²² unidentified

²³ Unidentified. Could be a factory located in Burder Street, Loughborough which certainly existed in WW1

²⁴ Unidentified presumably a foreman

hrs. But I was glad when the night was over. Because I was wet threw and I am telling you the truth I would sooner be in Bed & all the while I was on guard I was thinking of you all at home.

Well Ethel I can't say any more this time because I am tired now and I will tell you more news when I get my leave. Well remember me to Fred and all. Good night Mother, Sister & Brother. God Bless you all and good luck to you all.

New Address

Keep Smiling

Red Farm, North Somercotes

Lincolnshire

Write soon as you can



Pye House, Louth

11. Postcard from Harry to his mother and family. Postmarked Norton Somercotes, Lincolnshire²⁵, 7th June 1918. Obverse, coloured picture of a destroyed wood in winter captioned "Remembrance". Reverse black ink on postcard. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother & all.

I have arrived safely²⁶. Will write a letter as soon as I can. With love

Harry

²⁵ A small village on the Lincolnshire coast between Mablethorpe and Cleethorpes..

²⁶ It is unclear where Harry had arrived. One possibility is that he had been granted 48 hrs home leave before sailing for France and is letting his mother know that he has returned safely to camp.

12. Letter from Harry to his mother. Sent from London. Dated 11th June 1918.
Pencil on un-headed, lined notepaper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith 26th
July 1918

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother

Just a few lines to let you know we are setting sail for France and I am writing this letter in the YMCA in London²⁷. While we wait for the 12 clock train coming in. Well I do not no much knews but we have been travelling all day and it looks like us travelling all night as well. Well I hope you are all going on all right and I am in the [unclear]. Bjut do not write till I write first. Well I do not have any more news this time But remember me to all. Will tell Mrs Hallam I shall look for Herbert²⁸, and I shall tell him you cannot go in queue and get your Greens. Well Cheer up Mother & the best of luck.

*From Your Son
Harry*

Keep Smiling.

Good Night

²⁷ The YMCA had numerous dormitories in London which housed over 1 million men during WW1 as well as refreshment stalls at the main railway stations. It is unclear which of these Harry is referring to.

²⁸ Possibly Private Herbert Hallam, born Loughborough 1897, Service number 241916, Kings Own Scottish Borderers, survived the war.

13. Postcard from Harry to Herbert Cutts at 48 Ashby Road, Loughborough. Postmarked Boulogne. Undated but must be 12th June 1918. Timed 3pm Wednesday. Obverse black and white photograph of the Globe Hotel, Boulogne then run by the Salvation Army. Reverse black ink on Carte Postale. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Herbert

*We have just come off the boat & just had our dinner, it was lovely on the water, hardly any time to write it is all travel. This postcard is the Photo of the Place we are in now having dinner. I will write again.
Love from²⁹ Mother & Ethel x*

²⁹ (sic) to

14. Letter from Harry to his mother. Sent from unknown location in France.
Dated 26th June 1918. Pencil on un-headed, un-lined notepaper. Donated
by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother

Just a few lines to let you know I am still alive and I hope you are going on alright. Well there his not much News this time. Well I hope Herbert is going on alright and now he 18, I expect he expect his paper³⁰. But tell him to wait. Well you know I am in the line now I have been in since Saturday. Well tell Ethel it is alright but it will be glad when it is all over so we can come home. Well there is not much news but remember me to all and remember me to Mrs Hallam as Well and every one as well. But mother write as often as you can. I have had know letters yet from you. But I expect we shall get them in time. From your

Son Harry

*Address. 1/5 Lancs Fus. D. Coy³¹
13th Platoon, No 57454
B.E.F.
France*

Keep Smiling

³⁰ Presumably his conscription papers (see Document 11).

³¹ Harry's papers provide no comment or explanation of this change of regiment.

15. Certificate of registration of Herbert Cutts (fitters apprentice) 188/ 232523 F (Harry's younger brother) under the National Registration Act 1915 (The Derby Act). Dated 18th June 1918. Black print on green card. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 1918.

16. Post card from Harry to his mother informing her of his transfer to the Lancashire Fusiliers (Army Form W 3752). Sent from an unknown location in France. Undated. Printed and completed in pencil on sepia card. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

17. Letter from Harry to his mother. Sent from an unknown location in France. Dated 5th July 1918. Pencil on YMCA headed, lined notepaper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Just a few lines to let you know that I am going on alright hoping to find you the same. Well there is not much news, but I thought I would write while I got the chance. Well could you send me some writing paper & and envelopes as it is hard to get round here. Well have they done the photo, yet they are taking them a long while don't you think so. Well I can't see any Loughboro boys out here³². Well I hope Herbert and Ethel is going on alright but it seems a long while since I had a letter from you and I am anxious to get some news from you. Well I shall be glad to see you again but we have got to make the best of it. Well remember to Mrs Hallam & all of them at home. Well I don't know any more news this time, but did you get that 10/- note that I sent for you to save for me. Well I will close with best of luck from your Son Harry.

Address.

1/5 Lance, Fus. D Coy 13 platoon. No 57454.

Keep smiling.

B.E.F.

France.

Write back soon.

³² This implies that his was an individual transfer to the Lancashire Fusiliers and not an entire draft of the Leicesters as sometimes happened when decimated units were merged.

18. Letter from Harry to his mother. Sent from an unknown location in France: Dated 8th July 1918. Pencil on un-headed, lined notepaper. Three numbered pages. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother

Just a few lines to let you know I am going on alright hoping to find you the same. Well I have received your two last letters & I received your parcel this afternoon and I got everything alright. Well the photo of me, I think is a good one, and I gave the other to one of my pals³³. Well I am writing to you now as this writing pad and envelopes have come in very useful as I could not write until I had got some as it is a job here to get some. Yes I glad to see you do not forget me and I am glad to see you write back straight away.

Yes I got the letter two days go and I thought the parcel had gone west but I got it any way. The writing Pad & (unclear) & case are very useful but the writing pad is a bit to big to put in my pocket, but I can put it in my pack till I want to use it but the next one you send me try and get one smaller. Well we get pretty fair and they have started giving us supper so that better. yes you will have to have one of you all. Well there is no more news this time but when you send the cake & tarts you tie them up well. Well the chocolate and rock are going down well but we can buy chocolate out here but it is a job to get it. Well we are having fine weather out here but it is very hot to.

Well I close with best of love from your son Harry. Yes you are write we catch plenty of Fleas Yes I do not have any more news but Cheer up & keep smiling & and the best of luck to you all.

Remember me to all.

³³ Unidentified

19. Letter from Harry to his mother. Sent from an unknown location in France. Dated 17th July 1918. Pencil on un-headed lined notepaper. Two numbered pages. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 1918.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mother

Just a few lines to let you know I am going on alright well I expect you will have received my last letter with the France note³⁴ in, be when you have got this one. Well there is not much news this time but perhaps when I get a letter from you their will be some news of some sort to tell you. Well hoping you are going on alright and having fine weather as it as been awful up here it as rain every day up to now but Cheer up and lets hope it will soon be over. Well remember me to all, and tell Ethel to put the money away for me & tell her to remember me to Fred³⁵. Well does Herbert still fine the Winners yet³⁶ I wished I was with him to help him out. Well I will close with Best of love From

*Your Son
Harry*

Wait & see.

Keep Smiling.

Address.

1/5 Lancs Fus. D. Coy.

13th Platoon, B.E.F.

France

Write Back Soon

as you

can.

³⁴ Probably a French banknote. See document 14 which talks about his mother changing a note for English money.

³⁵ Probably Mrs Hallam's son but who were the Hallam family and why were they so important to Harry Cutts?

³⁶ See also document 4.

20. Letter from Ethel Cutts to Harry³⁷. Dated July 18th, 1918. Sent from 48 Ashby Road, Loughborough. Black ink on unlined paper folded into a four page booklet. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Harry

Hoping these few lines will find you alright. We got your notes safe to mother went and changed them & they gave her 4/8½ & we have put it away. Mother has bought you 2 tins of stuff for fleas etc & she is sending them on so look out for them soon. it will tell you how to use it, it also says it is for the head, but you must let us know if it will do & if it wont we shall have to send you some-thing else, you will see it says on it, it is poison & you must not rub it on any skin is broken Well Dear Harry I think by now you have received mother's Photo. Isnt it good & you have also got the box.

Dear Harry we hope you will be having a rest soon I am sure you can do with one. Herbert says Jack Pearson³⁸ is over this week & he says when he goes back he will look out for you, have you met any Loughborough boys yet, it would be nice if you could, all friends here often ask about you & wonder how you are getting on. I am sure Mother and Herbert and me are always thinking and talking about you & we do wish you was with us, but cheer up Harry & Trust in the Lord & and he will bring you safe through, so you will be able to come home again.

*Well dear Harry we have no more news this time, but will write to you again soon with the very best of luck & best love from all at home
Your Ever Loving mother, Sister & Brother.*

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear Harry you have got 50/- saved now and we are going to put some more so it will mount up for you when you come home.

³⁷ This is the only extant letter to Harry. It was probably found on his person after his death and returned to his family with his other possessions.

³⁸ Unidentified

21. Letter from 2nd Lieutenant W.E. Stott³⁹, platoon commander 13 Platoon, D Company, 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers to Mrs Cutts. Sent from an unknown location in France. Dated 28th July 1918. Pencil on un-headed, lined notepaper. Folded into a four page booklet. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mrs Cutts

I am very sorry to inform you that your son Pte. H Cutts was wounded on the 22nd inst. and I have since learned that he died the following day in hospital. He was hit by a sniper when moving forward with a party to the help of a section of his comrades who had taken up an advanced position⁴⁰. Everything possible was done for him and he was taken away on a stretcher immediately. He was very cheerful and apparently in no pain.

He had not been with us very long but his quiet earnestness of character won the respect and love of all in the platoon.

Will you please accept my deepest sympathy in your loss⁴¹.

Yours sincerely

W.E. Stott

2/Lt.

13 Platoon

³⁹ Not recorded as a casualty by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Believed to have survived the war. Nothing else known.

⁴⁰ This account matches the regimental war diary of the Lancashire Fusiliers available online at the National Archives 1/5 Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers | The National ArchivesWO-95-2654-2_02.

⁴¹ Neither this letter nor the following letter from the Chaplain makes any mention of the return of Harry Cutts possessions to his mother.

22. Letter from C.A.H. Lowe⁴², Chaplain, 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers to Mrs Cutts. Sent from an unknown location in France. Dated 28th July 1918. Blue ink on un-headed, unlined notepaper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Dear Mrs Cutts

I am very sorry to have to tell you that your Son Pte. H. Cutts was killed on July 22nd.

He was badly wounded & passed quietly away soon afterwards. Please accept our sincere sympathy. It will be some consolation to you in your deep sorrow to know that he died bravely doing his duty. & no man can live or die more nobly than this.

He was picked out together with a few others to capture a German post, which we had been ordered to take. This very fact will tell you that he already had a reputation for courage & bravery.

He is buried in the British Cemetery at Bertrancourt. One day you will meet up again with him in the Kingdom of God and until then comfort yourself with the thought that he is not really dead but only parted from you for a time.

Believing

[unclear]

C.A.H. Lowe

Chaplain

1/5th Lancs. Fus.

By applying to the Director of Grave Registration Enquiries⁴³ [xx crossed out xx] War Office, Westminster, you may obtain a plot & map of his grave.

⁴² Nothing else known

⁴³ The Directorate of Grave registration and enquiries was a forerunner of the Imperial War Graves Commission established in 1916. It was responsible for marking and recording existing, known graves.

23. Letter from Lieutenant Colonel G.S. Castle, Commanding officer 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers to Mrs Cutts. Sent from an unknown address in France. Dated 29th July 1918. Pencil on un-headed, un-lined notepaper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

*Mrs Cutts
Loughborough*

Dear Madam

It is with regret and deep sympathy for yourself that I have to write & tell you of the death in action of your son 57454 Pte H Cutts who was serving in the Battalion under my command.

It was on the 22nd July 1918. We had captured some forward posts which were held by the enemy, and your son was one of a party who were carrying ammunition & other material forward to the new line. He was hit by a bullet & was taken at once to the dressing station where he died a few hours later. He was buried 24th July 1917 in a British military Cemetery at BERTRANCOURT.

May you find consolation in the fact that your son laid down his life fighting for his King & Country & and to the end was doing his duty. He was a good soldier and will be missed in the battalion.

Yours very sincerely

*G.S. Castle Lt Col
Cdg 1/5 Lancs Fus⁴⁴*

⁴⁴ This is curious. Lieutenant Colonel Castle signed the war diaries of the 1/5th Lancashire Fusiliers for July 1918 but there is very little information available and all the standard sources say that the commanding officer was Lieutenant Colonel Crozier.

24/25

Letter from Mrs Cutts to 2nd Lieutenant W. E. Stott. Sent from 48 Ashby Road, Loughborough. Dated August 13th 1918. Pencil on un-headed, un-lined notepaper. With envelope in which her letter was returned to Mrs Cutts. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript (spelling and punctuation as in the original)

Mrs Cutts
48 Ashby Road
Loughborough
Aug 13th 1918

Dear Sir

I am writing these few lines thanking you for your kind letter informing me of my son's death, it was a very great blow to me as he had only been gone from home 5 month altogether & I know he had not been in your regt many weeks & they all would be strangers to him & I think it was very good of you to let me know. Wishing you the very best of luck. I remain Yours Sincerely

Mrs Cutts

Envelope

Written in red ink on the back:

*Killed in action 8.8.18⁴⁵
[unclear]*

⁴⁵ Confirmed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. Lieutenant William Ernest Stott from Heywood, Lancs was killed in action 8th August 1918 aged 24.. He is buried at Euston Road, Cemetery, Colincamps, France V.G.6

26. Letter from the Secretary of State for War on behalf of King George V to Mrs Cutts. Undated. Signed, Milner⁴⁶. Printed on royal headed notepaper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

The King and Queen formal send condolences for the loss of Harry Cutts. They reiterate that Harry died for freedom and justice.

⁴⁶ Alfred, 1st Viscount, Milner 1854-1925 was secretary of State for War 18th April 1918 – 10th January 1919 so this letter was probably received within a few weeks of Harry's death in August-Sept 1918.

27. Letter from the Ministry of Munitions of War to Herbert Cutts. Postmarked London. Dated December 1918. Standard letter. Signed T.M. Taylor. Typed on Ministry of Munitions headed sepia notepaper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

Letter informs Herbert Cutts that due to the end of war his enrolment as a War Munitions Volunteer⁴⁷ is terminated and thanks him for his service.

⁴⁷ These were people who worked in munitions factories. It is commonly believed that they were always women but this is not true. The term “volunteer” is misleading. These people chose to work in the munitions industry but they were paid, often more than comparable jobs in civilian industries. They were not uniformed but were issued with lapel badges to prove they were not shirking military service. [badge, lapel, British, 'On War Service' badge, War Munitions Volunteers | Imperial War Museums \(iwm.org.uk\)](#). Herbert’s badge does not survive and it is not known which factory he worked in.

28. Document "The Registration and Care of Graves sent by the Director of Graves Registrtrion and Enquiries⁴⁸ to Mrs Cutts. Dated January 23rd 1917. Signed by Fabian Ware. Date received by Mrs Cutts unknown. Closely typed on 2 sides of sepia paper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

The document outlines the history of provision for British graves on the Western Front since 1914 including co-operation with the French government to provide and maintain gravesites.

The document then gives contact details for relatives to get in touch with the Directorate. It stresses that contact must be in writing only but asks for any information that relatives may have about the location of graves.

Finally the document states British government policy about matters including photographs of graves being sent to relatives⁴⁹, and the ban on private memorials or exhumation and repatriation of bodies to the UK⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ The predecessor of the Imperial War Graves Commission

⁴⁹ The location of Harry's grave at Betrancourt was known from day 1 and this site remained accessible as the British army was advancing continuously from July 1918 to the end of the war. Therefore, according to the terms governing photographs, Mrs Cutts should have received a photograph of Harry's grave before the end of 1918. If she did this photo has been lost.

⁵⁰ These rules carried over to the Imperial War Graves Commission as did the leadership of Fabian Ware and remain in force for all WW1 graves.

29. Special passport Number 399351 issued by the Foreign Office to Mrs J Cutts to visit a war grave in France. Dated 21st June 1921. Pink paper in navy blue binding. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

Issued in the name of the Foreign Secretary, Earl Curzon, 21st June 1921. Contains passport regulations, a physical description of Mrs Jane Cutts⁵¹ and a high quality studio photograph. No stamps or endorsements.

⁵¹ No profession is shown. In 1921, at age 54, she was presumably living on savings or any pension she may have received from the army for Harry.

30. Special passport Number 399352 issued by the Foreign Office to Miss E Cutts to visit a war grave in France. Dated 21st June 1921. Pink paper in navy blue binding. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

Issued in the name of the Foreign Secretary, Earl Curzon, 21st June 1921. Contains passport regulations, a physical description of Miss Ethel Cutts⁵² and a high quality studio photograph. No stamps or endorsements.

⁵² Her profession in 1921 is shown as hosiery machinist.

31. Receipt from the Imperial War Graves Commission. Sent to Mrs Cutts. Dated 6th September 1921. Signed [unclear] Ready. Typed and completed in blue ink on white paper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Transcript

Received from Mrs J Cutts

The sum of 10/-

In payment of 34 letters at 3½ per letter⁵³

*for engraving the personal inscription of Private
H Cutts, Lancashire Fusiliers*

*[unclear] Ready
For IMPERIAL WAR GRAVES COMMISSION*

Date 6th September 1921

⁵³ The characteristic white marble headstones were paid for by the government but families had to pay for the personal inscription they chose. Mrs Cutts chose "Until the day breaks and the shadows flee". This matches the 34 letters paid for.

32. Notice (Army Form W 5132) from the War Office to Mrs Cutts. Postmarked Preston, 12th June 1922. Typed on sepia postcard. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

Notifies Mrs Cutts that Harry's medals, the British War Medal and Victory Medal are ready for issue. Asks Mrs Cutts to confirm her address.

33. Formal notice from the Record Office to Mrs Cutts. Set from Preston. Dated 19th June 1922. Signed Lt Col C.G. Daniel c/o records. Printed in decorative font on headed white paper. Donated by Mrs Karen Smith, 26th July 2024.

Summary

Formally awarding the British War Medal and victory Medal posthumously to Harry Cutts.

Conveys the thanks of the King for Harry's service.

Asks Mrs Cutts to acknowledge receipt of the medals.

