

## CORPORAL H SPARKE (8947)



(Suffolk Regiment)

Corporal Harry Sparke was born in **Shimpling** in 1894 to Alfred and Ellen Sparke. The 1901 Census shows the family (Harry aged 7) living in Brands Lane, **Lawshall**, and the 1911 Census had them living in New Barns, **Cockfield**, presumably moving to **Bradfield Combust** between 1911 and the start of WW1. In his teenage years Harry was a farm labourer and his father a horseman. The 1911 Census shows that Harry had 7 siblings; one of his 3 sisters was Alice, who was mother of our 2 remembered WW2 RAF brothers Derrick and Gerald Savoy from Lodge Gates on the village green.

Corporal Sparke served with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment and prior to WW1 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Suffolks spent most of its time based in India. In WW1 the Battalion was almost totally decimated as a fighting unit after over eight hours of incessant fighting at the Battle of Le Cateau on 26 August 1914. Those remaining alive were taken captive by the Germans, spending the next four years as prisoners of war and not returning home until Christmas Day 1918. For Corporal Sparke, at the time of his death the Battalion, which was then part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, was in trenches at Vierstraat in Belgium. The month of March 1915 was quiet for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Suffolks apart from the daily attrition from trench warfare. They sustained 140 casualties during the month yet were not sent 'over the top' or had to repel any serious attacks.

Corporal Harry Sparke (8947) was killed in action on 25 March 1915 and was posthumously awarded the Victory Medal, the British War Medal, and the 1914/15 Star.

Corporal Sparke died aged 21.

He is laid to rest in the Suffolk Cemetery, Vierstraat, Belgium; this cemetery was started in March 1915 by the 2nd Suffolks and contains 47 WW1 heroes, eight of them unidentified.



Suffolk Cemetery, Vierstraat



*Remembered With Honour*

