

Good afternoon Brothers and
Sisters of Pagham, I would
encourage you to remember all
of the 21 Sons of Pagham

Due to my Military back ground I'm going to recall events and life that
of L/9956 Pte Earnest Keates 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment and
Army Life in and around his time of service

INTRO

- Army Me
 - Formally of the Blues and Royals Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment
 - Wearing The uniform of the Royal Horse Guards during WW1
 - Home for me is Copyhold Farm Lagness
- Army Pte Earnest Keates 2nd btln RSR
 - L/9956
 - Home for Earnest was Copyhold farm Lagness

Early Earnest

- Son of Charles and Eliza
 - Charles came down to Sussex from London
- Original family name Cates Late 1800's but before 1901 census
- Born 01/03/1895
- Home,
 - One half of Copyhold cottage as 2 families lived there
 - Large half and small half, depending on position on the farm
- School
 - Average class size 60 nationally, although smaller here in Pagham
 - Single sex classes, Male /boys , Women/girls
- Work
 - Agricultural Labourer

Enlistment

- Regular army
- Chichester
 - Enlist for 7 years
 - Join at 18 not posted till 19
 - Recruiting offices besieged all across the south
 - Unrest queuing, normally patient waiting
 - Mounted police
- Solemn Promise
 - King George V, To swear to defend his majesty his heirs and successors.....also required each man to promise to obey the authority of all Generals and Officers set over them.....and the pledge that they would serve as long as the war lasted
 - Done in groups to save time
 - Kings Shilling/ days pay / very similar to my oath of allegiance
- Roussillin Bks
 - Home to RSR since 1700's until RMPs took it over 1960's
 - Volunteers 750k in the first 8 weeks
 - Medicals Tweaked to slow the intake , then relaxed again later in the war
 - Height raised, 5:3 to 5:6
 - Ages 18-38
- Conscription
 - Initial influx of volunteers, not enough due to mounting casualties
 - Lord Kitchener's poster had encouraged over 1 Million to enlist by spring 1915
 - Jan 1916 Military Service act passed in government, May 1916 extended to married men, 1918 age extended to 51

Training

- 3 months (my Basic Training was 18 months)
 - Shortened to 6 weeks during the height
 - Training continued when posted (on the job Training!!!!)
- Daily Routine
 - Mainly drill and fitness
 - Only when instructor's happy would then move onto Weapon Handling/ Shooting /Digging trenches
- Instructors
 - Old Soldiers
 - Over weight (20 Stone Cavalry man being hoisted onto his horse)
 - Unhealthy (Wheeled around in a wicker bath chair)
- Army Struggled , not enough Equipment
 - No Uniforms, many trained in the clothes they enlisted in
 - Kitchener Blues
 - Cardboard cap badges
 - Wooden rifles
- Billeting in Private houses and training in bell tents
 - Conditions , Boots/ Weather
 - Instructors took advantage of the Hospitality of hosts
- No Hard hats or gas masks until 1916
 - Today full body armour!

Royal Sussex Regiment

- Regular army..... Army Numbers
- Raised 23 Battalions
 - 1st and 2nd Battalions
 - Stationed at Woking
 - Part of 2nd brigade of 1st Division
 - British Expeditionary Force
- Landed France August 1914
 - Battle of Marne
 - Battle of Aisne
 - Battle of Ypres
- 11-13 pals Battalions
 - Lowthers lambs / Col Claude Lowther MP, Hurstmoncux Castle
 - 2 days 1100 men of mainly Sussex stock
 - Postings
 - Luck of the Draw
 - India, Peshawar

2nd Battalion RSR (start of WW1 August 1914)

- 1100 strong
- Sent to the Western Front
- 1st Battle of Aisne
- 4 lots of reinforcements 800 men (200 each) Total Battalion strength 1900
- Only 300 survived
- Names are recorded Regimental Chapel in Chichester Cathedral
 - 1st Btln 44
 - 2nd Btln 1723
 - 11th Btln 692
 - 12th Btln 527
 - 13th Btln 729
- News Paper report West Sussex Gazette, 17th December 1914 A letter from Pte E Ford 2nd Btln RSR (injured thinking he's lucky)
 - Marched from Barracks 1100 strong
 - 2 Colonels killed
 - Believe the last Paragraph?
 - We have not lost all these men without having our own back.
 - We have simply mown down the Germans time after time.
 - We spent night after night burying their dead

L/9956 Pte Earnests Keates 19 years old

- Died 14/09/14
- Killed in Action, Vendresse
- Aged 19
- Rest in peace and rise in Glory