TWO BROTHERS

CHARLES FARQUHARSON 1880 – 14/6/1917

& FINLAYMORE FARQUHARSON 1891 – 5/51915

AND THEIR BROTHER-IN-LAW

HENRY MALZEY CROOK 1882 – 18/2/1919

In the mid 19th century, Charles John Farquharson left Perth in Scotland, finding work as a gamekeeper as he moved south. He married Lavinia Williams from Sturminster Marshall in 1873. They raised a family of 4 sons and 6 daughters between 1874 and 1893 and lived in Wimborne Road, Lytchett Matravers.

Charles Farquharson was their eldest son. He worked as a farm labourer until, at the age of 30 in 1910, he joined the 2nd Dorsetshire Regiment of the Army. In 1915 he left England to serve with his Regiment in France. It is thought he lost his life, aged 37, at the Battle of Messines on 14th June 1917.

Although that Battle of Messines was a great victory for the British as a whole, it was a sad occasion for the Farquharson family in Lytchett Matravers. Charles's brother Finlaymore (always known as Finlay) had died just two years before aged 24.

Charles is remembered at Torreken Farm Cemetery No.1 in Belgium.

Battle of Messines, battle during World War I, fought June 7–14, 1917, between German and British forces, resulting in a British victory. The capture of Messines Ridge, in southernmost Flanders, Belgium, was a preliminary operation that took place just prior to the Battle of Passchendaele (Third Battle of Ypres). High-explosive mines placed under the German lines were used to devastating effect, and the blast from the explosions could be heard in London some 130 miles (209 km) distant.



Finlay Farquharson was the youngest son of Charles and Lavinia, he was born in 1891. He attended Lytchett Matravers School and in December 1903 he was one of thirteen boys who were excused from lessons to take part in "cover – beating" for the annual pheasant shoot.



Finlay enlisted as a Regular Soldier in Sept. 1907. He served in the 1st Bn.Dorset Reg.

By the start of WW1 he was a L/ Corporal. He died at Ypres, Belgium on 5th May 1915.

Lance Corporal Finlay Farquharson was 24 when he died.

His is one of 54,000 names of men inscribed in the Menin Gate Memorial. The Memorial stands at the entrance of the city of Ypres (now known as Ieper) in Belgium.



It is dedicated to British and Commonwealth soldiers who died in the Ypres Salient during WW1. Through this gate tens of thousands of soldiers passed to the front lines. To this day, each night at 8pm, the Last Post ceremony is held in their remembrance.

One of Charles and Finlay Farquharson's six sisters was Isabella who married Henry Malzey Crook, a soldier based

in Colchester. They were married on 9th September, 1911 at St. Mary's Lytchett Matravers. They had three children: Malzey Charles born April, 1913, Archibald Finlay born December, 1914 and Frances Lavinia born, 1916.

At the onset of WW1 their father (Henry Crook) was serving as a Quartermaster Sergent in the 3rd Field Butchery of the Royal Army Service Corps.

Although the war ended in November, 1918, Henry remained in France and died in Le Harve on 18th February, 1919. During WW1 no battles had taken place in this region but it served as a "rear area" with a major British Hospital and Army Base. It is possible that Henry Crook died in hospital there of wounds received elsewhere in France.

He died aged 36 and is buried in Ste. Marie Cemetery, Le Harve.



THE SEQEL:

Charles John Farquharson, the gamekeeper originally from Scotland, died in February, 1898. He was aged 56 leaving Lavinia (aged 45) a widow. In the 1901 census, 5 of their 10 children were still living with her.

Lavinia Farquharson died in 1920 aged 69. She had lived to see 6 of her 10 children married. As well as being a widow for 22 years, she had suffered the heartache of losing two sons as well as supporting her daughter Isabella and her three children after the death of Henry Crook, her husband and their father.

One daughter, named Lavinia (after her mother), married Arthur George Shiner in August 1921. They had three sons Albert Jack, Finlay (named after his Uncle) and Maurice. They lived in Quarr Cottage at the south end of Dolmans Hill.

The three children of Isabella and Henry Crook: Malzey Charles, Archibald Finlay and Frances Lavinia all went to Lytchett Matravers School. The were popular with their peers and (as was the custom with the local lads) each boy had a nickname. Charles was known as “Dinky” and Archibald was “Nibble”.