

From the "Bexhill Chronicle", issued on 7th April 1917

CORPL F. SEWELL'S HEROIC DEATH

SHOT WHILE LEADING AN ATTACK

Widespread regret was caused on Saturday, when the news of the death in action of Corpl. Fred Sewell, Bedford Regiment, became known. Corpl. Sewell was the popular and well-known second partner in the firm of Sewell Bros., of the Devonshire Hotel.

The first intimation of his death arrived on Wednesday, 28th ult., when a telegram was received from his brother-in-law, saying, "Heard rumour that brother been wounded. Have you any news?". On Saturday another telegram arrived, which read, "Freddie made the supreme sacrifice on 15th". No further official confirmation came until Tuesday, when Mrs Fred Sewell received the following letter: "It is with my deepest sympathy that I write to inform you that your husband, number 23440 Corpl. Sewell, was killed in action on the 15th inst. He was leading an attack on a strongly fortified village, when he was shot, and died at once. During the short time he had been in my company he made himself universally popular, and his death is a great loss to his many friends in the regiment. He was buried where he fell on the following day. With deepest sympathy, L. H. KEEP, O.C. 'C' Coy, Bedford Regt., B.E.F."

The late Corpl Sewell joined up in May, 1916, when he was drafted to the Northants Regiment. Afterwards he was transferred to the 28th Reserve Training Battalion, and when selected as a member for a foreign service draft was attached to the Bedford Regiment. He had resided in Bexhill since 1892, and was 36 years of age. A keen sportsman, he took great interest in its various branches, particularly football. He was secretary to the old Bexhill Football Club, and was a very good player, particularly at centre-half, and many old Bexhill football players will remember his prowess on that position. He was also a billiard player of some standing, and since the outbreak of war helped to found the Tradesmen's Stretcher Bearers Association, in which he took an active interest up to the time of enlisting. The Devonshire Hotel was closed till 6 p.m. on Wednesday in memory of the deceased corporal.

Mrs Fred Sewell and Mr R. Cecil Sewell, on behalf of the family, desire to express their grateful thanks for the numerous messages of sympathy and appreciation.

From the "Bexhill-on-Sea Observer", Saturday, April 7th, 1917

LEADING AN ATTACK

How Corporal Fred Sewell Fell

We regret to record the death of Corporal F. C. Sewell, the second of the three brothers who have been so long known and respected in connection with the Devonshire Hotel, Bexhill. The first intimation came last week in a cable message to Mr R. C. Sewell, from his brother-in-law, asking if he had heard any news of Mr F. C. Sewell, and conveying a report that he had been wounded. Mr R. C. Sewell replied, and also communicated with the headquarters of Corporal Sewell's Regiment in London.

On Saturday, at 2.30, a telegram was received from the brother-in-law, who is a sergeant-major in the New Zealand Hospital Unit, and has been in France for a considerable time "Freddy made supreme sacrifice, 15th."

Cpl F. C. Sewell joined up last May about the same time as several other well-known townsmen. He was highly popular and in touch with everybody practically in the town, particularly in sporting and athletic circles. He was a noted billiard player and for some years Secretary of the Bexhill Football Club. He took great interest in football.

After joining up last May, he was attached to the Northants Regiment. He went through the N.C.O.'s Class, and was transferred to a Reserve Training Battalion. Subsequently, he was put in a draft for active service. Just before Christmas he went out to France, and was attached to the Bedfordshire Regiment.

The sad news was received with the greatest regret at Bexhill. The flag at the Devonshire Hotel was at half-mast on Saturday. The earlier rumours had, in some measure, anticipated the grave news, and everyone deplored the loss of such a popular young townsman.

Mr Sewell would have been 36 years of age this month. Much sympathy is felt for his widow, who has received the following letter from the Captain of his Company (Captain Keep), "It is with my deepest sympathy that I write to inform you that your husband was killed in action on the 15th inst. He was leading an attack on a strongly-defended village when he was shot and died at once. During the short time he had been in my Company he had made himself universally popular and his death is a great loss to his many friends in the Regiment. He was buried where he fell on the following day. With deepest sympathy."