

Your Haslemere

The Newsletter of The Haslemere Society
Spring 2026

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Chairman's Welcome

Chris Harrison



Welcome to our Spring 2026 newsletter. We start, as usual, with planning matters. Howard Brown brings us up to date on the Red Court site and the Society's contribution to the consultations now under way. Like many of you, I'm concerned that the Government's targets for our area will be extremely difficult to meet.

You'll also find the latest we've heard on the two Royal School sites. Then, on a more upbeat note, Liz Burton shares news from the Haslemere Biodiversity Group and flags a few dates for the diary.

On the heritage side, Shelley Jarrett-Tomes, Marketing Officer at Haslemere Museum, looks back on the museum's 100 years in its current home. The museum was founded by Sir Jonathan Hutchinson, and Richard Mason follows with news of the Society's latest blue plaque—also for Sir Jonathan—now displayed on his original home on Inval Hill. Still with Haslemere's heritage, Gareth David reports on the next steps for our historic signal box, including its handover to a newly formed trust. The aim is to protect the building and, in time, open it to the public.

The arrival of the railway, of course, changed Haslemere for good—and it's one reason writers were drawn to the area, including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Dr Ollie Randall gives us a taste of his new book, *Writers in White*, which features Sir Arthur among a group of turn-of-the-century writers with a serious commitment to cricket. Ollie will also be joining us at our summer party at Undershaw, Sir Arthur's home, where you'll be able to buy copies of the book (and, no doubt, have them signed).

My wife, Shirley, shares another moving story of one of Haslemere's lost sons: Private Alfred Thomas Oliver Moore. Despite a severe visual impairment that would have been reason enough to avoid military service, Alfred was determined to enlist. He was posted to German East Africa, where he died from a devastating malarial infection. And to finish on a lighter note, Simon Mackie signs off with another of his topical cartoons.

You may have noticed that Di Keeley has decided to step back from compiling the town's calendar of events. We're very grateful to Di for all her work on this over many editions. If you're looking for a simple overview of what's on locally, I can warmly recommend *This is Haslemere*, a volunteer-run website that gives a great snapshot of just how much is happening in our town.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Planning Update

By Howard Brown

Over the past year, Haslemere has seen the opposed development on Red Court approved, which is on land within the protected National Landscape, prompting concern among many residents.

The Haslemere Society has been approached by those wishing to better understand and respond to these changes, particularly in light of increased national housing targets.

As the scheme proceeds, one of the first visible changes will be along Midhurst Road, where the well-known tree canopy— often described as the “Gateway to the South Downs” will be destroyed simply to allow site access. While the need for housing is recognised, there is ongoing discussion about how best to balance this with the protection of the local environment.



Waverley Borough Council noted that delivery of new homes on this site is unlikely to help the immediate five-year requirement. The Inspector did not seem to take this into account and controversially granted permission. Strong Public opinion (opposition) was given a low weighting, which shows the Government’s determination to build wherever, with no regard for protected National Landscape, as laid out in their policies.

Within the Red Court area, the previously approved allotment site on Scotland Lane (opposite the original Gatehouse) has since been followed by an application for a large executive dwelling. During the planning approval meeting, a Liberal Democrat councillor abstained from voting stating that the proposal appeared to be a “Trojan Horse” intended to facilitate a future change of land use.

This concern now seems justified, as an application has subsequently been submitted for a large executive house on the same plot. While this has raised some questions locally, the Society considers the proposal limited in its wider landscape impact.

There is still some uncertainty around further details for development at Red Court West Field, including housing mix, scale, and layout. Additional applications may be required before plans are finalised.

Looking ahead, nationally the planning policies continue to evolve, including proposed updates which in our opinion will be attempts to soften the protection of communities and landscapes outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework; plus the reduction of the role of Statutory Bodies such as the Surrey Hills AONB.

The Society has contributed to these consultations, with a focus on protecting the National Landscape and supporting well-planned, appropriate development. We do, however, support the provision of new housing where it is suitable and sustainable, and will continue to monitor developments and keep members informed.

What next for the Royal School sites? *By Chris Harrison*



Many of you will have noticed the sign outside the Comrade's Club on the High Street advertising the Royal School with the slogan "come and visit us", as well as the signpost at the top of Wey Hill. Sadly, as members will know, the Royal School closed for the last time in September 2025.

By way of background, around five years ago the school ran into financial difficulty and was rescued by United Learning, which acquired both the Hindhead and Farnham Lane sites. The plan was to move the senior school to Hindhead and release Farnham Lane for development. However, after recognising the strengths of the Farnham Lane site—and, more importantly, the severe planning constraints in Farnham Lane because of its proximity to the Special Protection Area at Hindhead Common—United Learning changed course, closed the Hindhead site and sold it to Cala Homes. Cala then applied to convert the original Grove School building into 20 flats and build a further 90 houses on the site.

The two schools were then consolidated on the Farnham Lane site. Unfortunately, the school struggled to attract younger pupils—no doubt influenced in part by the difficulty of access—so that, in the final year, Years 1–6 had already closed. With numbers continuing to fall, and further pressure from Government changes affecting private schools (including VAT, business rates and higher National Insurance charges), the decision was taken to close.



With support from the Surrey Arts and Crafts Society and Pevsner, we were pleased to succeed in having the original Grove School building (shown above) on the Hindhead site

listed. Cala Homes has now withdrawn its application, and we understand that issues with both fresh and foul water management on the site were a factor. It may also be relevant that Legal & General, Cala's owner, has been seeking to sell the housebuilder, and that lowering the site's profile could have been seen as helpful during that process. For now, the site is essentially derelict, and we do have concerns about the condition of the Grove School building.

As for the Farnham Lane site, it is currently being used as a Metropolitan Police firearms training centre, while also being marketed for sale at £6 million. We understand there are several interested parties, and the leading contender is reportedly considering executive homes. If so, it remains to be seen how this would sit with the Special Protection Area restrictions, including the position that future owners would not be permitted to keep pet cats. The Society will keep a close eye on both sites and will comment when any new proposals come forward.

Back to nature with Haslemere Biodiversity

By Liz Burton



Conservation Update (Swift, Hedgehogs, HNRS)

Haslemere Biodiversity has had a busy spring, with residents getting involved in projects that support the wildlife living closest to us.

Our **Swift Project** continues to grow, with new nest boxes going up across the area end April/early May and more households joining the effort to protect this much-loved species.

We also hosted a packed **Wildlife Gardening evening on hedgehogs** with Dr Sophie "Hedgehog" Rasmussen at the Museum, and we're now exploring a community-led hedgehog project to help create connected "hedgehog streets" and support residents who want to install hedgehog houses.

Alongside this, we're launching the **Haslemere Nature Recovery Strategy (HNRS)** consultation; a series of public events in May and June where residents can explore local habitat data, understand the pressures facing our tree-scape, hedgerows, streams, grasslands & heaths and help shape the projects that will guide nature recovery over the coming years.

Without active planning now, the woods and green spaces we enjoy today won't be the same for future generations, and this is a chance for the community to help secure that legacy.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Haslemere Nature Recovery Strategy; public workshops

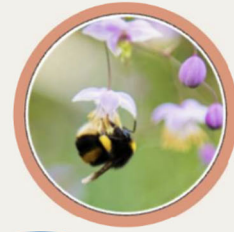
Join us for a series of free drop-in sessions exploring the habitats that shape our shared landscape and how we can strengthen wildlife corridors across the area. These are shown on the leaflet below:

NATURE RECOVERY

COMMUNITY DROP IN EVENTS

Help plan the future for local habitats

Join us to view the latest local data, understand the pressures facing our landscapes, and help shape practical projects for nature recovery across the area.

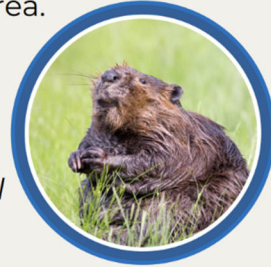


Aquatic Habitats & Water Quality *Wed 13 May*
6.30–8.30pm at the Haslemere Leisure Centre

Heathlands & Grasslands *Tues 19 May*
6.30–8.30pm The Royal British Legion, Beacon Hill

Woodlands & Hedgerows *Sat 23 May*
2–4pm at Grayswood School

Community Spaces & Wildlife Gardening
Sat 4 July, 11am–2pm at Haslemere Town Hall



Everyone is welcome: community groups, families, residents, landowners, gardeners, if you care for nature, these sessions are for you. Tea, biscuits & friendly faces provided.



No need to book, but if you'd like to, or would like more details, here's a QR code:



Book tickets



www.haslemerebiodiversity.org.uk



Connecting precious habitats

All events are free, but booking via <https://tinyurl.com/localnaturerecovery> helps us plan numbers and biscuit supplies.

Haslemere Museum celebrates 100 years on our High Street

By Shelley Jarrett-Tomes, Marketing Officer



Haslemere Museum is set to celebrate a major milestone in 2026, marking 100 years since it moved to its much-loved Georgian building on Haslemere High Street.

To commemorate the centenary, the Museum will present a year-long programme of special events celebrating its rich history, its founder's pioneering vision, and its enduring place in the heart of the community.

The Museum is also launching a centenary fundraising appeal to raise essential funds for the maintenance of its grade II listed building.

One of the oldest museums in the country, Haslemere Museum was founded in 1888 by Sir Jonathan Hutchinson, an eminent Victorian physician and thinker. In 1926, the Museum moved from its home in Museum Hill to its current High Street location.

Hutchinson was a pioneer in museum education, championing open displays and hands-on learning, and believing that museums should be places of discovery for everyone. He said, "Let our education become more objective and concern things rather than books."

Today, Haslemere Museum is one of the largest museums in central southern England. Its collections include more than 240,000 natural history specimens and over 140,000 human history artefacts from around the world, continuing Hutchinson's mission to inspire curiosity and learning across generations.

The Museum operates as an independent charity and relies on fundraising and donations in order to maintain its collections, buildings and grounds. Since the death of Sir Jonathan in 1913, it is only because of generous gifts and legacies that this treasured asset has survived.

The Museum estimates it must raise £900,000 over the next five years for essential remedial works. The centenary presents a unique opportunity to raise awareness of the Museum and its needs.

The centenary programme during the year will include a series of talks from prominent speakers and supporters of the Museum. The talks are kindly sponsored by Clement Windows Group of Haslemere and tickets are on sale via the Museum's website.

In addition to the exhibitions about the history of the Museum, local artists have been invited to submit work for a community art exhibition that will be open during May and June.

With support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, there will also be special exhibitions exploring the history of Haslemere Museum and the changing story of Haslemere High Street over the past century.

The Museum gardens will play host to a 1920s-themed summer fair in June, inspired by the era when the Museum first opened on the High Street.

Full details of the centenary talks, exhibitions and events, as well as the fundraising appeal, are available at www.haslemeremuseum.co.uk/100. Everyone is warmly invited to take part and join the celebrations throughout this landmark year.



Sir Jonathan Hutchinson

Blue plaque celebrates founder of Haslemere Educational Museum

By Richard Mason

Haslemere's Educational Museum exists because of the vision of one man 138 years ago - Sir Jonathan Hutchinson. Commemorating his philanthropy and remarkable career as a surgeon and scientist, his Haslemere home, Inval House, received a Blue Plaque through the initiative of Chris Harrison, Chairman of The Haslemere Society.



Among the guests at the plaque unveiling were Mayor Jean Arrick, Jilly Storey Co-Chair of the Museum and Jane Clayton great granddaughter of Sir Jonathan. Had Sir Jonathan been at the ceremony it's likely, as a man of science two items would have fascinated him concerning his 15th century home.



How could this house with its wooden beams and medieval style sloping roof possibly have underfloor heating, powered by an air source heat pump? Well yes, courtesy of the current owners for the last ten years Stephen and Victoria Vaughan. Victoria explains the house dates back to 1435, which was verified through Dendrochronology.

This would have been right up Sir Jonathan's street as a man of science. Dendrochronology allows the timber used in the house to be precisely dated by its rings which are analysed by specialists who compare the ring patterns from building timbers against "master chronologies" of known dates from the same region and species.

Sir Jonathan originally from Selby had moved to London where he practiced as a surgeon. By 1866 he was renting Weydown Farm for holidays before purchasing it in 1872. He quickly extended what is now known to have been a 15th century open hall farmhouse, building the substantial Victorian residence called Inval House, named after the area (now demolished).

The house mainly served as a summer home but over the years other relatives came to live nearby and eventually it became his main residence until he retired to The Library now known as White Riggs, which is close to Inval.

Sir Jonathan to say the least was distinguished being described in 1927 some fourteen years after his passing as "the greatest practitioner of his time in Europe". He coined the term "Terralism" for his belief that those with knowledge had a duty to share it for the betterment of humanity, helping future generations to evolve into more intelligent beings.

To this end, in 1888, he opened a museum next to his home which is still there today.



Not only did it exhibit stuffed birds, fossils and even an elephant's skull but it was among the first to welcome children emphasising education for all. And they could touch the exhibits because Sir Jonathan believed that people learn as much through touch as through sight.

An added benefit was the lectures he gave there. With his collection of fossils and other specimens ever expanding the museum moved, in 1885, to Museum Hill in Haslemere. By 1922 according to E W Swanton, curator of the museum from 1897 until 1948, even larger premises were needed.

A committee had been established to run the museum and through their efforts and the support of the Hutchinson Trustees the current location, 78 High Street, was purchased. Opening in 1926 it's celebrating its centenary by lectures and events. No doubt Sir Jonathan would have been satisfied by the esteem in which the museum is held today, not only in Haslemere, but in the wider field of education.

June handover for Haslemere Signal Box

By Gareth David



Saturday, 13 June 2026 is set to become a major moment in the history of Haslemere Signal Box, when the now-redundant Grade II-Listed structure on platform 1 at Haslemere Station is finally handed over to the charitable trust that plans to turn it into a working museum.

After more than three years of tortuous negotiations with Network Rail (NR) the charitable trust, formally known as Haslemere Signal Box Educational CIO, but trading as Haslemere Signal Box Trust (HSBT), will be handed keys to the signal box at a ceremony attended by senior executives from NR and South Western Railway.

This date has been selected for a handover ceremony as it coincides with a call at the station by a steam-hauled special, the *Portsmouth Flyer*, which is running that day from London Victoria to Portsmouth Harbour and scheduled to stop to take on water in Haslemere station at around 10.45am.

In the weeks leading up to the formal handover teams of volunteers, including large numbers of NR staff working on the charitable days offered to its employees, will be working to paint and overhaul the signal box, as well as replacing the wooden steps up to it from the platform and creating a fence to secure the box from the station platform.

Haslemere Signal Box Trust has already leased office above the station booking hall for use as a railway museum to complement the signal box itself, and has been assembling a sizeable collection of signalling and other railway artefacts, with generous donations and loans from a number of local individuals and from societies operating two existing preserved signal boxes, at Romsey and St. Albans.

Among major features of station museum will be working model railway layouts of Haslemere station and another of Midhurst that was kindly donated by the owners of Middleton Press, a railway publishing business now based in Camelsdale and, along with a number of other local businesses, a generous sponsor of HSBT.

At the time of its closure on 25 October 2025, Haslemere was one of three surviving signal boxes on the Portsmouth Direct route, along with those at Farncombe and Petersfield, and gained a Grade II Listing in September 2013, due to its retaining many original features.

This includes an exterior that was largely unaltered since its opening, and the survival inside of an original 47-lever frame and associated block instruments. In addition, the 1895-vintage Haslemere Signal Box is regarded as a rarity, being the only remaining London & South Western Railway (LSWR) Type 4 six-window bay designs to survive and only of only two platform-mounted Type 4 signal boxes.

While the future now looks bright for Haslemere Signal Box, the two others to close in October 2025 had mixed fortunes. Farncombe Signal Box was immediately demolished, while Petersfield is also listed, but being too close to the railway lines for public access has been retained for use by NR.

Having finally secured a lease on the signal box, Haslemere Signal Box Trust is now hoping to lease a wedge of derelict railway line near the box, in order to landscape it, display signalling memorabilia, and create a memorial garden to commemorate the lives of the 626 Southern Railway workers who died during World War II.

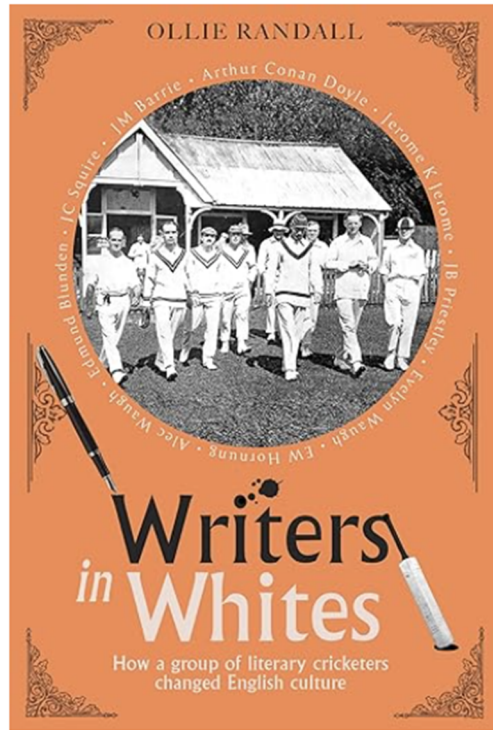
Haslemere Signal Box Trust plans to follow the examples of other preserved boxes by developing the signal box as a visitor attraction that will open its doors several times each month in order to showcase its fittings (lever frame and block instruments) as an example of a heritage British signal box.

A steering committee behind this preservation project combines expertise in rail, civic affairs, communication, marketing and volunteering. Further expressions of interest and offers of memorabilia are very welcome, so to get involved and sign-up to become a Friend of Haslemere Signal Box, please email *the trust's Chairman* [Ken Griffiths](mailto:Ken_Griffiths_ken@haslemere.com) - ken@haslemere.com



Arthur Conan Doyle and cricket

By Dr Ollie Randall



One of the Haslemere area's most famous residents, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, lived locally for exactly ten years (October 1897 to September 1907). I am a writer and a historian, and for the past four years, Doyle's time in the environs of Haslemere has loomed large in my doctoral research.

I have been looking into writers who played cricket together, and why this mattered for their careers and the wider literary landscape.

Doyle was the writer-cricketer *par excellence*, and he became a central figure in my new book, *Writers in Whites: How a group of literary cricketers changed English culture*. The more I dug into the story of Doyle's cricket, the more I realised how entertaining and illuminating this was as a way of understanding the man and the writer.

Doyle, as most readers of this newsletter will no doubt already know, lived in Undershaw, on the edge of Hindhead, rather than in Haslemere proper. His move to Undershaw completed his transformation from a provincial Scottish GP into a Home Counties country gentleman and public personality.

And his cricket activities comprised another part of the same process of reinvention. Doyle unquestionably loved cricket with an abiding passion; but he was certainly aware of its highly beneficial effect on his social and cultural standing. The Undershaw years saw the three most important developments of his cricket career.

Firstly, these were the years when Doyle played a great deal for the highly-prestigious Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC). He made his debut in 1899 and played very regularly for them thereafter; his ten first-class appearances – the apogee of his cricket career – all took place between 1900 and 1907. Every summer he would make the journey between Undershaw and Lord’s Cricket Ground in St John’s Wood, often several times a week.

Secondly, Doyle took to organising an annual country house cricket week. In this way, his grand new home enabled him to play the local squire. Every August from 1898 to 1906, the Undershaw Cricket Week was a central part of his social calendar. He hosted around ten friends to make up a cricket team, and he and his guests played each day against a different local side.

This strengthened his standing as a leader of his social circle, as well as strengthening his community ties with the local area. These Undershaw Cricket Weeks were a highlight of his year, and we should not underestimate the importance he placed on them.

Thirdly, having gained captaincy experience via his Cricket Weeks, Doyle founded the Authors XI in 1899. The Authors XI play a central role in *Writers in Whites*, featuring such players as J.M. Barrie, P.G. Wodehouse and A.A. Milne. The team lasted until 1912, but from 1908 they played just one match each year: the period 1899 to 1907 was its high point.

The Authors XI captured the imagination of many onlookers and newspaper columnists, who detected a magical frisson in this marriage between cricket and literature. Captaincy of the side gave Doyle considerable cultural cachet.

This is really just the tip of the iceberg: *Writers in Whites* ranges much more broadly than this: it starts in 1885 and ends in 1968. It features Evelyn Waugh’s sendup of his Authors teammates; the culture war between the literary cricketers and the Modernists such as Virginia Woolf; and the social upheavals that led to the end of the tradition in the Swinging Sixties.

But Doyle remains one of the most important figures in the book; and his cricketing activities during the Undershaw years are central to his role in my research.

Dr Ollie Randall is a Visiting Research Fellow at King’s College London. He is the author of “Writers in Whites: How a group of literary cricketers changed English culture” (published in May 2026 by Fairfield Books; available on Amazon or via the publisher’s website).

Lost sons of Haslemere: Private Alfred Thomas Oliver Moore (19 Dec 1892 – 28 Mar 1918)

By Shirley Harrison



Service number: 84890

"C" Section

West African Field Ambulance

Royal Army Medical Corps

Alfred Moore's story is particularly unfortunate because he had a perfectly valid reason to stay out of the army – his eyesight. The photo we have from his obituary (above left) is very faded, but it shows an apparently rather delicate young man in glasses. Photo restoration software confirms that interpretation. He had little or no vision in his right eye, and imperfect sight in the left. However, he was determined not to stay at home while others fought and died, and was finally accepted into the Royal Army Medical Corps after being turned down for active service twelve times.

He was not originally a Haslemere boy, but was born in Brighton on 19th December 1892, the third of the four children of Emily (born Wenham) and Oliver Moore, a boiler maker. After leaving the Lewes Road Council School, he worked as a grocer's assistant in Brighton, before moving to Haslemere to work in the provisions department of the International Stores. Later he moved on to the Co-Operative Stores in Wey Hill. He was popular in Haslemere, owing, according to his obituary in the Haslemere Herald, "to his cheery disposition". On 7th June 1916 he married a local girl, Rosina Karn, and settled in a house called "Isleworth" in a newly built area of Haslemere, which was then called the Garden City, near Haslemere Hall. Rosina's father worked as a commissionaire in the cinema on Wey Hill.

Once war was declared, despite his visual impairment, Alfred obviously felt very strongly that he should enlist. Whether this was from a sense of patriotic duty, or from the immense psychological pressure put on men of fighting age to join up, we will never know. It is interesting that his obituary in the Farnham, Haslemere and Hindhead Herald found it necessary to say that "*although he only succeeded in getting into the service on 1st October*

1916, he was *no shirker*", suggesting that he had endured suggestions that he was in some way a coward for remaining a civilian for so long. On his thirteenth attempt, and shortly after his marriage, he was taken on as a non-combatant in the R.A.M.C. Unfortunately, his service record does not give any details about his actual role. He started his training at the R.A.M.C. Depot, Crookham Camp, Aldershot, then moved to Weeton Camp, Blackpool Training Depot, seven months later in May 1917. His fitness level was classified as "category B2", meaning he was deemed able to walk five miles to and from work, and see and hear sufficiently for ordinary purposes. He was therefore considered fit enough for "labour services abroad."

In July 1917 Alfred learned that he was to be posted for duty to "C" section of the West African Field Ambulance based at Morogoro in German East Africa, over seven thousand miles away; news that might have come as a surprise, although he would have been aware that Britain and the Allies had moved against German territories in Africa as soon as war was declared. A "field ambulance" referred to a mobile frontline medical unit not a vehicle. The officers and men manning it did not carry weapons or ammunition. A full-strength Field Ambulance would have been made up of 10 officers and 224 men.

It was a long voyage. Alfred left England on 25th July 1917 from Devonport, Devon, on board the troopship S.S. "Corinthic". After a short stopover in Durban, he continued his journey on the "Ingoma", arriving at Dar es Salaam on 20th September. Two weeks later he reached Morogoro by train, 116 miles to the west. The railway line had been captured from the Germans by General Smuts the previous year.



S.S Ingoma in Durban, July 1917.

<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll123/id/81508>

By the time Alfred arrived, the northern part of German East Africa was mostly in British hands, but there was still fighting further south. The clinic at Morogoro mainly treated soldiers suffering from disease, such as dysentery and malaria. Thousands were treated there while the war lasted. Bad cases of pneumonia and blackwater fever were treated outside on the veranda, where it was believed that the fresh air would help them recover.



Alfred was with a mobile unit, so would not have remained at Morogoro for long. The British planned to clear the German forces out of German East Africa over the following months. Alfred would have been deployed hundreds of miles further south to care for the sick and wounded involved in the fighting, but the records do not give us any information about where. What we do know, is that on 20th March 1918 he was admitted to Mingoyo Clinic, close to the east coast on a creek off the Lukuledi River, 400 miles south of Dar-es-Salaam. He was suffering from malaria, which developed into blackwater fever.

Captain Robert V. Dolby, a doctor of the RAMC, wrote a dramatic account in his memoirs of the suffering of soldiers with this much feared complication of malaria, and how they were nursed:

"It was written on their faces as they were lifted from ambulance or mule wagon. There was no need to seek the cause in the scrap of paper that was the sick report. All who ran could read it in the blanched lips, the grey-green pallor of their faces, the jaundiced eye, the hurried breathing. Thereupon came three days' struggle with Azrael's pale shape (the angel of death) before the blackwater gave place to the natural colour again, or until the secreting mechanism gave up the contest altogether and the Destroying Angel settled firmly on his prey. At first, if there was no vomiting, it was easy to ply the hourly drinks of tea and water and medicine. But once deadly vomiting had begun, one could no longer feed the victim by

mouth. Then came the keener struggle for life, for fluid was essential and had to be given by other ways and means. Into the soft folds of the skin of the armpits, breast and flanks we ran in salt solution by the pint. The veins of the arms we brought into service, that we might pour in this vitalising fluid. Day and night the fight goes on for three days, until it is won or lost.... Blessed morphia, too. Brings ease of vomiting and is a priceless boon."

At the time, medical authorities did not know by what mechanism blackwater fever developed, though it was already suspected that large doses of quinine might be a causing factor. It is still not fully understood. The disease is caused by "haemolysis", where red blood cells burst, releasing haemoglobin into the bloodstream and urine, often leading to kidney failure. It is called "blackwater" fever because it frequently turns the urine black. It is thought to be an autoimmune reaction caused by an interaction of the malaria parasite with quinine. Since quinine has been dropped as the first-choice drug to prevent malaria, cases of blackwater fever have also decreased.

The official report into Alfred's illness and death read:

"Private Moore was admitted to this hospital on 20th March, 1918, suffering from Malaria. He was progressing favourably until March 24th, when he suddenly developed Blackwater Fever. His condition gave rise to great anxiety and in spite of every care and attention he gradually became worse and died on 28th March 1918. His last moments were quite peaceful and I do not think he suffered any pain.

He was buried in the Military Cemetery at Mingoyo with full military honours on 29th March 1918."

Communications from Mingoyo were so difficult that Alfred's wife, Rosina, didn't receive a telegram to tell her that he was ill until 30th March, the day after his death. The dreadful news that his illness had been fatal arrived on 2nd April. Rosina never remarried and continued to live with her parents in a house called "The Ascent" on Wey Hill until her death in 1936. There were no children. She chose a verse from 1 Corinthians 15:22 as Alfred's epitaph: "IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE."

In the early 1970s, the bodies of British soldiers buried at Mingoyo were exhumed and reburied in Dar-es-Salaam War Cemetery. This cemetery had been created in 1968, when 660 First World War graves had to be moved from Dar-es-Salaam (Ocean Road) Cemetery to make room for a new road. The decision was also made by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to move graves from other smaller Tanzanian war cemeteries to Dar-es-Salaam, as maintenance could no longer be assured.



Dar-es-Salaam War Cemetery, created in 1968

Sources

<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1918/jun/20/military-service-medical-grading>

The Pike Report on German East Africa, W.W. Pike and Andrew Balfour, Swift Press, Nairobi, 1918

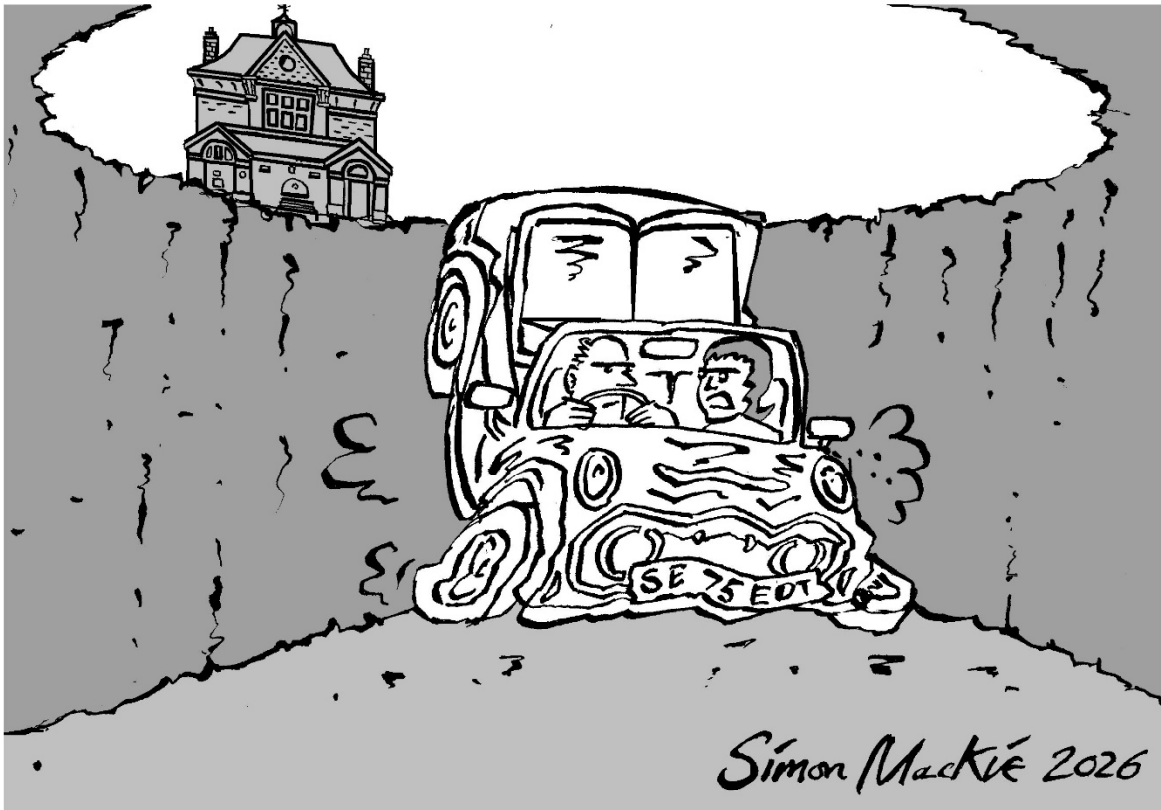
Farnham, Haslemere and Hindhead Herald (Haslemere and Camp edition), 6th April 1918

Sketches of the East Africa Campaign, Robert V. Dolby, 1918, reprinted by Amazon 2021

The Forgotten Front, Ross Anderson, 2014, The History Press

British Army WW1 Service Record of Alfred Thomas Oliver Moore, www.Ancestry.co.uk

Cartoon Time
By Simon Mackie



Are you still trying to tell me that we don't have serious pothole problems in Hasemere?