

**A First World War poem  
from Newick, Sussex**



**First World War soldiers marching through Newick**

The poem below was written by Sophia Fanny Turner from 'The Cottage', High Street, Newick, Sussex (the house now called 'Little Cinders'). It appeared in the local newspaper on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1916, about halfway through the First World War.

**'Newick: Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June**

**I stood in my cottage garden fair  
On this lovely Sunday in June.  
Blossom and hay all scented the air  
And the church bells chimed in tune.**

**I listened to the sound of a dear old hymn  
And murmurs of prayer and psalm,  
With songs of the birds rising to Him  
All seemed so peaceful and calm.**

**But what is this ceaseless booming sound?  
That falls on the ear with a thud -  
The guns in France are shaking the ground  
Staining earth with our brother's blood.**

**Oh! Someone's darling will lose his life,  
Someone's heart will ache and break  
In this terrible struggle and strife  
Great sheaves the Reaper will take.**

**'Oh Lord, how long?' we despairingly cry,  
As the guns roar all through the night,  
From 'cross land and sea they sound so nigh,  
Hearts are sore in Sussex this night.'**

It is clearly a very touching poem, written at a time when many young soldiers from Sussex villages, particularly those in the Royal Sussex Regiment, had been killed. Several young lads from Newick had already given their lives for the country... sons who never came home.

The postcard photograph below, showing where Sophia Turner lived, is from about the time when the poem was written.



'The Cottage' in the High Street, Newick

**Information sources...**East Sussex News 7<sup>th</sup> July 1916, electoral registers, 1911 census, Kelly's directories, Parochial Church Council electoral roll (East Sussex Record Office: PAR 428/16/2/1)

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