38. Sergeant Harry Howard Izzard, age 32

At the outset of War, Britain received overwhelming support from all of its colonies, not least India. Even areas immediately outside of British India offered help – Nepal in total sent 100,000 Gurkhas and the Dalai Lama in Tibet offered 1000 of his troops to the cause. Despite the pre-war fears of unrest in India, Britain could take many troops and most of her military equipment out of India these subsided. Indian troops were ready for battle before most other troops in the dominions.

In total, 800,000 Indian troops fought in all the theatres of the war with 1½ million volunteering to fight. They fought Gallipoli and North and East Africa. In all 47,746 were classed as killed or missing with 65,000 wounded.

The Indian Corps won 13,000 medals for gallantry including 12 Victoria Crosses. ‘The Times’ wrote:

“The Indian empire has overwhelmed the British nation by the completeness and unanimity of its enthusiastic aid.”

Sergeant Harry Howard Izzard, was born in Penshurst in 1885 and lived until at least 1901 with his family in Quarry Cottage, Rogues Hill, Penshurst. His father was Thomas Izzard, a carpenter builder born in Penshurst in 1843 whilst his mother, Elizabeth was born in Ightham in 1853. They had been married 40 years and had lived in Quarry Cottage for at least 30 years. By the time he enlisted in the 1st/4th Battalion, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) at Tonbridge, he was living in West Malling and probably working as a journeyman carpenter

The 1st/4th Battalion was part of the Territorial Force in Tonbridge in August 1914 in the Kent Brigade of the Home Counties Division. On 30th October 1914 it sailed to India, remaining there throughout the war. He died of wounds aged 32 in India on 29th December 1917 and is buried at the Jubbulpore Cantonment Cemetery, India