



MISS MARY (DAFFODIL) CHRISTINE BROOKS

VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENT (VAD)

DIED 6TH MARCH 1917 AGED 21

Mary, the only daughter of the local solicitor, James Lane Brooks of Lamb, Brooks and Bullock and Mary, née Harris was born on 28 February 1896 in Odiham. She had four brothers, Henry James, who survived the war and was awarded the Military Cross and Distinguished Service Order, Gerald Harris and Robert (Bobby) Courtenay. The family lived in the Long House in the High Street. At the outbreak of war, Mary's father became chairman of the Local Recruiting Committee, which had a Recruiting Officer in the High Street¹ and, after the war, chairman of the War Memorial Committee.

During the war Mary did voluntary work², initially at Tylney Hall Hospital, which had opened in October 1914 and closed at the end of October 1915. There were 50 beds in the hospital and patients were received from the Cambridge Military Hospital in Aldershot. It specialised in surgical operations³. From October 1916 Mary helped at the Church Institute Canteen at Littlemoor Camp, near Weymouth. It was while she was working in this voluntary capacity that she celebrated her 21st birthday, contracting influenza on the same day⁴. She developed complications and was admitted to Casterbridge Nursing Home, St Peter, Dorchester, where she died of acute nephritis and cerebral thrombosis on 6 March 1917⁵. Mary is buried in Odiham Cemetery.

¹ The Hants and Berks Gazette, 12 September 1914

² Report of 'Death of Miss Brooks' in the Hants and Berks Gazette, 10 March 1917

³ Information about Tylney Hall Hospital kindly supplied by the British Red Cross Archives department.

⁴ Report of 'Funeral of Miss M C Brooks', the Hants and Berks Gazette, 17 March 1917

⁵ GRO death certificate dated 10 March 1917.

