

Just another game of football - or was it!

In 1915 Lance Corporal John Beaton wrote a poem which has already featured in the Westmuir village website and in the local Courier and Advertiser. Since then another poem written by John whilst on active service in France has been brought to our notice. Imagine! the Camerons versus the 5th Black Watch enjoying a game of football during a lull in the fighting in war-torn France. [Click Here](#) to read John's account of the football match in the verses he sent home to a friend in Kirrie.



Kathleen Harris and Helen Humphreys

Another astonishing discovery with the poem is that it was printed and sold locally for a mere one penny (1d) in aid of the Fund for sending tobacco and cigarettes to the 5th Black Watch at the Front. It is clear from John's poetry that receiving cigarettes, chocolate, candles and letters brought great comfort to soldiers on the front line. In a few days time it will be the 97th anniversary since John was killed in France, on 9th May 1915.

Following the publication of the Beaton article and the presentation of family papers to the Kirriemuir Museum we had a surprise visit. Kathleen Harris, Victoria Street, a great niece of John Beaton, decided to offer her Beaton family memorabilia to the Museum and amongst the papers and photos was the 'football' poem.

In addition to Kathleen's papers and photos we received another welcome collection of family photos from Bill Beaton, Canada (nephew of John Beaton). Bill, as you may recall from the earlier story is a great Burns enthusiast, so his Burns information and family photographs will be added to the Museum collection. He sent copies of photographs of his grandparents William and Ann, the parents of Lance Corporal John Beaton.

There was only one piece of the puzzle still remaining. We had not been able to establish how the two branches of the Kirriemuir Beatons could be related to Lance Corporal John Beaton yet appear to not be related to each other. Until Bingo! Sincere thanks to Linda Gray who emigrated to Australia with her parents and grandmother, Mary Norrie (Beaton) from Westmuir in the 1950s. Linda persevered and discovered the link. Linda's Great, Great Grandmother was the sister of William Beaton of Mill Street, Grandfather to the Canadian Beatons. The family chart explaining the link will also be taken to the Museum.

Sincere thanks again to all those who contributed to this story.