

BRAVE COMRADE HONOURED.

Last Tribute to Late P.c. Byron.

A deep feeling of respect to the memory of P.c. Wm. Byron was manifested at the funeral, which took place on Tuesday afternoon.

As reported in our columns, P.c. Byron died in the Bute Hospital last Thursday night from the effects of an illness contracted in France. He was a very gallant soldier, who first saw active service in the South African War. He served nine years with the Life Guards, and in 1907 joined the Luton Police Force. He was re-called to his regiment on the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, and served right through the war in France, from the battle of Mons. Although he had illnesses, he came through without any serious casualty, and after a lengthy period in the rank of Corpl.-Major, was demobilised in December, 1918.

P.c. Byron had undergone a tremendous amount of suffering, and since demobilisation had endured a considerable amount of pain without complaint, and it was only when compelled that he withdrew from duty. P.c. Byron made light of an illness which was gradually bringing him to the grave, and although he occasionally mentioned to colleagues in the Force something of his ailments, he refused to regard them as serious. Undoubtedly he is one of those heroes who suffered by the war, but resumed his civil occupation by reason of his great courage and high hope.

He was 40 years of age, and leaves a widow and young family. He was a member of the Comrades of the Great War and also of the Conservative Club, and the flags of these organisations have flown half-mast during the last day or two. P.c. Byron was also a member of the Lord Ampthill Lodge of the R.A.O.B.

The funeral on Tuesday took place at the Church Cemetery, and was of a semi-military character, with a large assembly of police and others walking in the cortege from the widow's residence in Naseby-road to the cemetery. The Comrades' Band, in charge of Mr. H. Lambert, played the Dead March in "Saul" on the way to the cemetery. The coffin was shrouded with the Union Jack, on which rested the deceased's officer's hat and belt, together with beautiful floral tributes. The immediate mourners were the widow, Master Ronald (eldest son), and deceased's sister in law. Aldermen E. Oakley (Chairman of the Watch Committee) and T. Cain were at the cemetery. Chief Constable Griffin attended in full uniform and sword, and the Borough Force was represented by Insps. James and Hunt, six sergeants, and 47 constables. Ex-officers of the force present were Messrs. Hagley, Smith, and Sharp. Supt. Panter, P.s. Clark, and eight constables represented the county force, and P.c. Benz, of the Midland Railway, was also present. There were Comrades in the procession, and members of the R.A.O.B., wearing regalia, and representing the following lodges: "Lord Ampthill," "Brimsley Sheridan," and "Leighton Buzzard." These representatives were Pro. Dimbeck, Pro. Hawkins, Kt. Scrivener, and Bros. Robinson, Weidon, Chilcorn, and Hill. Bro. F. Gammon (Sergt. of the Metropolitan police reserve) represented the Conservative Club. Mr. Wm. Gillam was among the mourners.

On the way to the cemetery the streets were lined by respectful townsfolk, and at the cemetery there was a very large gathering. The service there was taken by the Rev. E. Ruthven Murray, of Christ Church, who was formerly an Army Chaplain. The bearers were six of the deceased's colleagues, P.c.s. Chapman, Rushmer, Riches, Carter, Weedon, and Causebrook. The police formed a cordon round the graveside, and after the Benediction was pronounced, Mr. G. Hopkins sounded the "Last Post." The friends filed round the grave, and the members of the R.A.O.B. in accordance with their custom, dropped dry leaves on the coffin.

There were beautiful floral tributes. The Police Force sent a permanent artificial wreath, and also a beautiful floral cushion of white and red flowers. Other floral tributes were sent by Chief Constable and Mrs. Griffin, the Comrades of the Great War, friends in Naseby-road, and others.

At the Town Council on Tuesday, expressions of regret were voiced at the loss sustained by the Police Force in the death of P.c. Byron; and Alderman E. Oakley, in reply to questions, stated that the Watch Committee would treat the widow and children with all the liberality that the law allowed.