



A family portrait, taken on July 11, 1954. From left, Dick Robinson's sister, Rosie, Edie Leger, nee Appleton, Edie's brother, the Rev Fred Appleton, Dick Robinson's mother, Elizabeth, and Dick Robinson. CONTRIBUTED PICTURES

# Search for window on a brutal war

A HUNT is on for missing sections of a diary detailing the harrowing experiences of a nurse who served on the Western Front during the First World War.

Edith (Edie) Appleton moved to the Island in the early 1920s and stayed at Buddlebrook House, Brighstone, until her death in 1958.

She worked as a nurse for the duration of the war and described her memories of working close to the Western Front in a diary, which she kept between 1914 and into 1919.

Her great nephew, Dick Robinson, who lives in Gloucestershire, had the diaries passed on to him and decided to have the stories published.

He set up a website about them and Edie's life in 2008 and extracts from the diaries were published by the BBC in 2009. They have also been turned into a book, *A Nurse at the Front, the Great War Diaries of Sister Edith Appleton*, which was published this year, in association with the Imperial War Museum.

However, some extracts of the diary are still missing and Dick is planning to visit the IW in July in the hope of finding someone who may

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have known her or anybody who could help to find the missing extracts.

They could be in a variety of formats — either as typed pages, a handwritten journal or in an old-fashioned exercise book.

Edie lived at Buddlebrook House with her sister Lil, and brother, Fred, who was vicar of Mottistone and Brook.

Dick recalled the neighbours at Buddlebrook were the Sheath family. Their two daughters, Doris and Edna, looked after Dick and his sister as children.

He said: "I remember the house with huge affection. It had a wonderful garden, particularly for small children. It would be fantastic to find the missing parts of the diary and to meet people who knew the Appleton family and Edie in particular."

● Anyone who can help Dick find the missing extracts, or knows of anyone who can help, can contact him directly, either by e-mailing [dick@gardencottage.org.uk](mailto:dick@gardencottage.org.uk) or by phone, on 01386 700613.



Edie sits on the running board of a Morgan three-wheeler, surrounded by relatives and holding a chicken. The picture was taken at Buddlebrook House, Brighstone, in the mid-1920s. CONTRIBUTED



The original diaries.