Edward and Albert Ramsbottom were brothers; the sons of Simon and Sarah Emma Ramsbottom. They were born in Edgworth in 1892 and 1894 and were the cousins of John Ramsbottom and nephews of Thomas (see previous biographies). Neither of their photographs is amongst the collection in The Barlow.

In 1901 the census shows them living at 1 Overhouses. Simon was working as a railway porter and was now a widower as Sarah Emma had died the previous March aged only 41. They had married in 1885.

At this time Edward was 9 and Albert 7, they had an older brother Charles aged 13 who worked at the calico print works, an older sister Louisa aged 11, Robert 7, twin to Albert, Emma aged 4 and Joe aged 2.

By 1911 the family were living at 115 Bolton Road. Simon is still working as a railway porter. Louisa is 21; her occupation is not stated so she is probably caring for the house and family. Charles is no longer at home and Edward, Albert and Robert are all working at the Calico Print Works. Emma and Joe are attending school.

The service records do not survive for Edward or Albert although Edward’s pension record still exists. This shows that he enlisted on 16th November 1914, that he had a fair complexion with blue eyes and dark brown hair. He was 5 feet and 4 inches tall and was 26 years and 1 month old. He was first enlisted into the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment and then the Machine Gun Corps. (Service No: 15909). His pension record shows that he was discharged from the army as he was ‘no longer physically fit for war’. This was following a bullet wound to his right thigh which had caused some paralysis and loss of sensation.

His military character was said to be good and he was described as ‘sober and well conducted during his service and is discharged on account of a gunshot wound to his right thigh’. He served in France for 3 years and 211 days; from 1st April 1914 until 26th April 1917. He was awarded the Victory and British War medals. He was also awarded the Silver War Badge on 14th June 1918, which he could wear to show that he had served and was no longer fit. This avoided any suggestion that he had not been involved in the war.

None of Albert’s service or pension records survive, but his medal roll shows that he was also awarded the Victory and British War medal.
Albert’s Prisoner of War Card still exists and shows that he was also in the Machine Gun Corps. (Service No: 31548). He was captured at Villers-Guislain a village 16 kilometres south of Cambrai. It was held by Commonwealth Forces until it was seized by the Germans on the 1st of December 1917 following the Battle of Cambrai.

Albert was captured on the 30th November. He was held in the Prisoner of War camp at Minden which is in Germany.(16)

However he is mentioned in a newspaper article from The Bolton Journal and Guardian dated 17th January 1919.

This describes welcome home celebrations for prisoners of war at the Barlow Institute.(5)

Research: Katharine Warman

Standard References: 1, 2, 3 plus:

16 Prisoners of the First World War: www.grandeguerre.icrc.org
17 Bolton Journal- 17th Jan 1914

Village Welcome Home.

Edgworth Prisoners of War Entertained.

In the history of Edgworth, Burton, Entwistle and Querlon, Wednesday was a great day, for the villages officially welcomed back the gallant men who had undergone varying periods as prisoners of war. Never was a more hearty, truly British welcome given a body of men. And fine men they looked as they sprang smartly to attention for “The King.” It is a pleasure to record the fact that all of them are now looking none the worse for their terrible sufferings. The Prisoners of War Committee, headed by Major and Mrs. Booth, Miss Barlow, Mr. Humby and Mr. R. Murray had made preparations, becoming the occasion.

A recherche repast was served—turkey, ham, etc., figuring on the menu—the men, their wives, sweethearts or mothers and fathers. A monder cake—with victory across and surmounted by bells—adorned the table. This was cut by Mrs. Booth. The men were received by Major and Miss Barlow. Many were the comparisons drawn by the men as they partook of these good things and referred to their late conditions and laughter reigned as they cracked jokes, whilst smoking their cigarettes.

MAJOR BOOTH AND PUBLIC GENTILITY.

An entertainment was provided, but the capacious Institute Hall was totally inadequate to hold the vast crowd desirous to join in the welcome. The hall was gaily decorated and the platform draped with the Union Jack and streamers above. Major Booth presided, and said he had performed many pleasing duties in his time, but never one so pleasing as this, and in the name of the residents he extended to the 11 men on the platform a hearty and true English welcome. (Applause)

They had gone through untold sufferings for us whilst we were comfortably nestled between the hills. As a result of their labours we had been able to live free from the sound of gun, and free from the ravages of the barbarians, but able to follow our ordinary daily life—apart from rations. It was his pleasing duty to record the magnificent response made to the appeal of the Prisoners of War Committee for funds—an appeal for a noble cause initiated by the "Bolton Evening News." No less than £350 had been subscribed in a very short period. He wished to state publicly how indebted they were to the "Evening News" for the help and advice they had given them, the sympathy extended to them in their difficulties and their readiness to assist them in their efforts.

Proceding, Major Booth said the war had taught them many things. High and low, rich and poor, employer and employed, had fought together in perfect comradeship. He hoped that spirit would be maintained in the years to come and a better feeling between all classes firmly established. In the reconstruction he hoped we should all unite and become one huge army for progress and peace. They were all deeply thankful that the end had come. He then presented to each man a sealed envelope containing a £5 War Bond. As each came forward in turn the hall re- sounded again and again with applause. The following men were recipients, whilst E. Greenwood and A. Warburton have not yet reached Edgworth:—H. Barton, J. Parr, H. McKeown, E. Ball, J. Hayward, A. Nundstroo, W. Warren, T. Greer, W. Duckworth, W. Hough, J. Ridings.

A capital programme was given by Miss M. Briggs (soprano), Miss Miriam Brooks (contralto), Mr. Geo. Knowles (bass), Mr. Teddy Whittle (humorist), and Mr. A. E. Bostock (pianist).