

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM



THE KING'S (THE CATHEDRAL) SCHOOL PETERBOROUGH WAR MEMORIALS



THE KING'S (THE CATHEDRAL) SCHOOL
PARK ROAD, PETERBOROUGH, PE1 2UE
ORDNANCE SURVEY REFERENCE: TL 190 990



School Library

The memorials that hang in the school's library and within St Sprite's Chapel at Peterborough Cathedral record the names of former pupils and staff of The King's School, Peterborough known to have died in the service of their country in the course of the First and Second World Wars. This booklet has been written in honour of every Old Petriburgian, known or unknown, who made that ultimate sacrifice.

The details have been compiled from a variety of sources, including records held by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the General Register Office and The National Archives. Some information has also been extracted from contemporary local newspapers held by the relevant Library and Archives Sections, and from other publications. Many details are from The King's School's own archives, including photographs and information kindly given to the school by relatives of those who died.

This booklet owes much to the substantial contributions made by the late Commander C.J.G Willis, Peter Miller, Judith Bunten, Jenny Davies and Trevor Elliott, to each of whom many thanks are due. Their generous and enthusiastic collaboration has been truly invaluable and much appreciated. Grateful thanks are also due to the many individuals and organisations that have kindly provided information from their archives and have granted permission to include photographs from their collections, including The War Graves Photographic Project.

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Whilst great care has been taken to ensure that the details in this document have been accurately transcribed, they are subject to the reader's own verification from original records. Sincerest apologies are made for any error this document may contain.

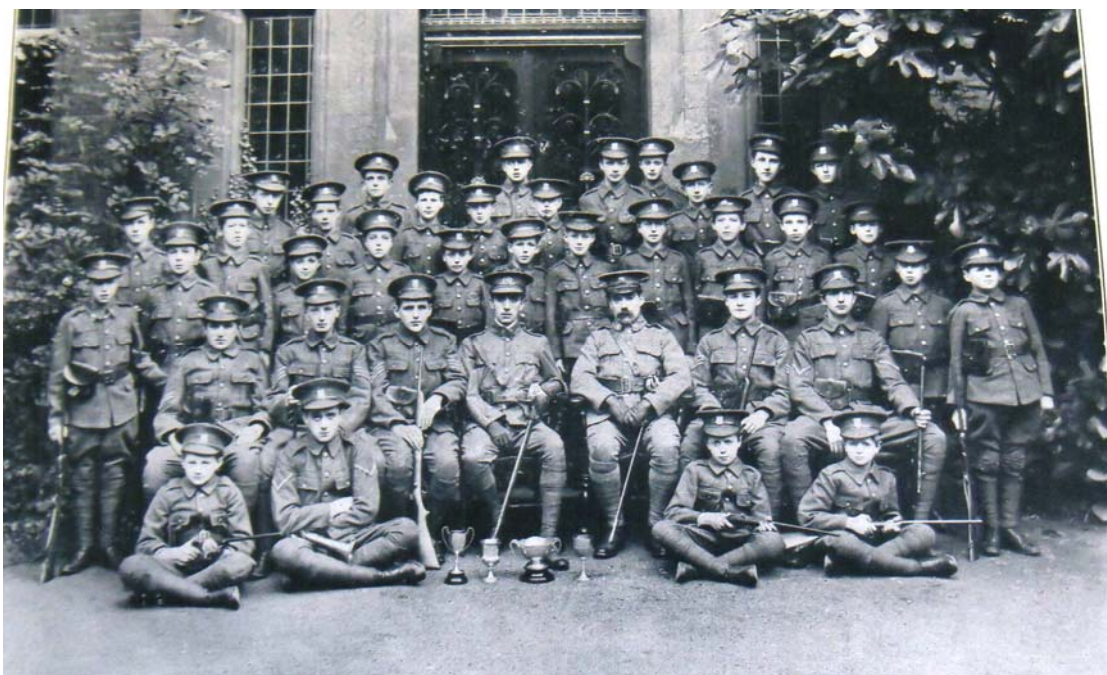
Jane King
November 2015



St Sprite's Chapel, Peterborough Cathedral

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The King's School Cadet Corps: 4th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment, July 1913

WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIALS

A memorial to former pupils and staff of The King's School was unveiled at Peterborough Cathedral on Monday 21st March 1921. It was crafted from Hoptonwood stone and listed the names of the 28 old boys and one Master who were believed to have died during the First World War. It was unveiled by a former Petriburgian, General Sir Herbert E. Watts K.C.B., K.C.M.G., and was dedicated by the Dean of Peterborough. A report of the ceremony appeared in the Peterborough Advertiser on 25/3/1921.

One of the men named on the memorial at the time of the unveiling was E.N.D.T. Cummins. However, the inclusion of his name was an error, as he had not died in World War 1. (Ernest Norman Daunt Travers Cummins was born in Cornwall in 1876. He was admitted as a boarder at The King's School in September 1888. In 1914 he travelled to Malaya, where he became a planter. His disappearance from the UK at that time was probably what later gave rise to the mistaken belief that he had become one of the many casualties of the War. Ernest actually died in Kuala Lumpur many years later, on 28/2/1953).

The error regarding Ernest Cummins must have been realised shortly after the unveiling of the memorial, as it was amended to replace his name with that of Vernon Peed Gaches, whose name had originally been omitted from the inscription. It is for this reason that Mr Gaches' name does not appear in the correct alphabetical order on the Cathedral memorial.

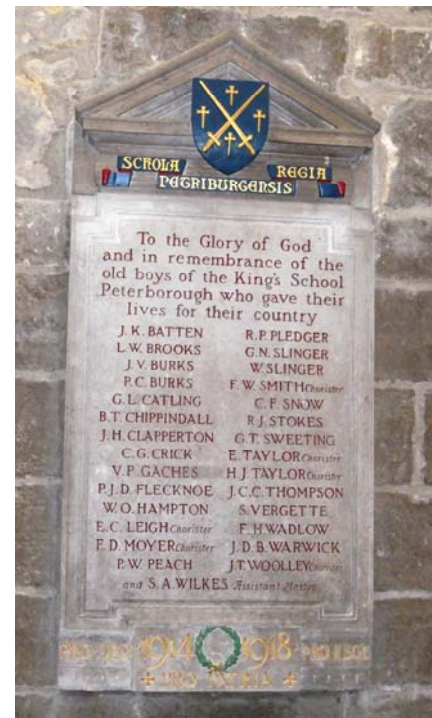
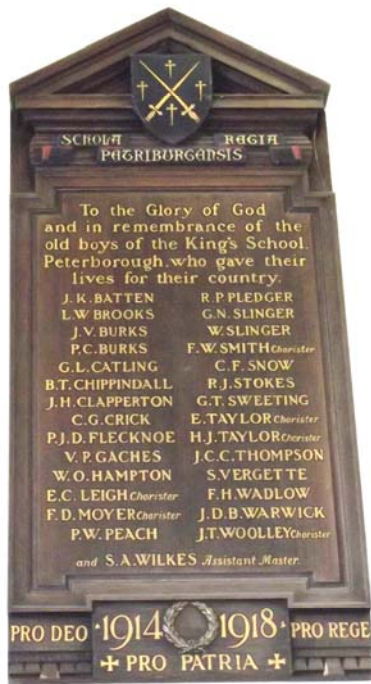
An oak facsimile of the Cathedral memorial was erected in The King's School library during the 1922 summer holiday. It listed the correct names in true alphabetical order. The inscription read:

SCHOLA REGIA PETRIBURGENSIS

To the Glory of God
and in remembrance of the
old boys of the King's School,
Peterborough, who gave their
lives for their country.

J.K. BATTEN	R.P. PLEDGER
L.W. BROOKS	G.N. SLINGER
J.V. BURKS	W. SLINGER
P.C. BURKS	F.W. SMITH <i>Chorister</i>
G.L. CATLING	C.F. SNOW
B.T. CHIPPINDALL	R.J. STOKES
J.H. CLAPPERTON	G.T. SWEETING
C.G. CRICK	E. TAYLOR <i>Chorister</i>
P.J.D. FLECKNOE	H.J. TAYLOR <i>Chorister</i>
V.P. GACHES	J.C.C. THOMPSON
W.O. HAMPTON	S. VERGETTE
E.C. LEIGH <i>Chorister</i>	F.H. WADLOW
F.D. MOYER <i>Chorister</i>	J.D.B. WARWICK
P.W. PEACH	J.T. WOOLLEY <i>Chorister</i>
<i>and S.A. WILKES Assistant Master</i>	

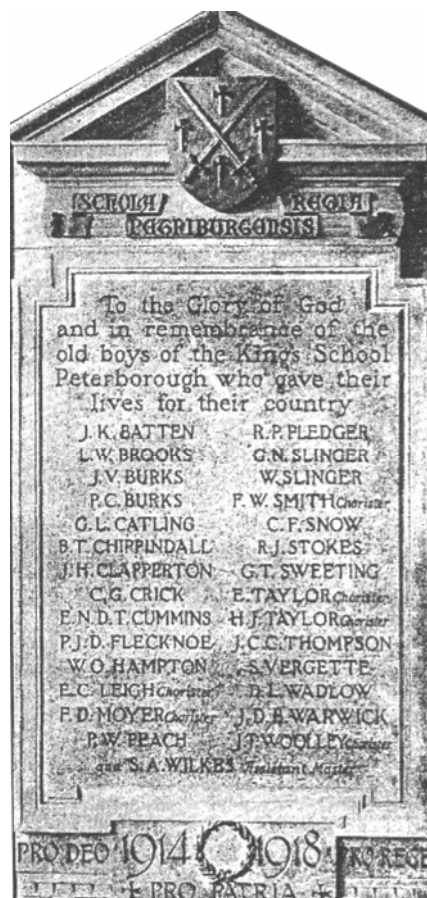
PRO DEO 1914 1918 PRO REGE
 PRO PATRIA



World War 1 memorial within the school library

World War 1 memorial in St Sprite's Chapel

Cutting from the Peterborough Advertiser 25/3/1921, reporting the unveiling of the Cathedral memorial



THIS HANDSOME and DIGNIFIED MEMORIAL in Hupton Wood Stone has been erected in the Winchester Chapel in the Cathedral in memory of old boys of King's School who fell in the war. It was unveiled by General Sir Herbert E. Watts, an Old Petriburian, and dedicated by the Dean of Peterborough on Monday afternoon. On the tablet are recorded the names of the twenty-eight old boys and one assistant master mentioned upon it.

(Ernest Cummins' name was later replaced with that of Vernon Gaches, as per current photograph above).

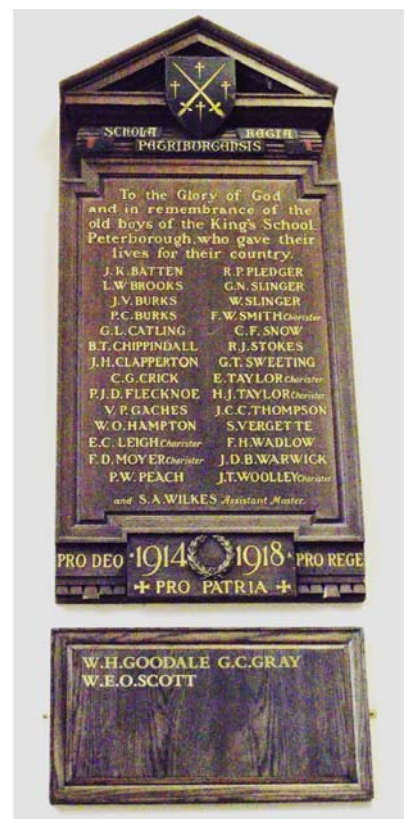
WORLD WAR 1 CASUALTIES



Remembrance 2013



Remembrance 2014



Remembrance 2015

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

Laurence Binyon, 1869-1943

1) Joseph Keith BATTEN

Joseph was born in Peterborough on 20/10/1892, the eldest son of Joseph Batten and Katie Alice nee Hawkes. (His father, an Alderman, was a partner of Batten & Whitsed, Solicitors). On the 1901 census Joseph was living with his parents in Park Road, Peterborough. His mother died on 18/5/1904.

Joseph was educated at The King's School from 20/9/1904 to 30/4/1906, then at Gresham's School, Holt until December 1909. (His photograph below is by kind permission of Gresham's School). He then became an articled clerk in his father's firm. On the 1911 census he was recorded as being a law student, living with his father at Park Corner, Park Road, Peterborough. He later passed his intermediate examination and was within months of qualifying as a practising solicitor when War was declared.

Joseph had joined the Bedfordshire Regiment before the War. He was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant with the 5th Battalion from 15/10/1910 (London Gazette: 8/11/1910). He was promoted to Lieutenant 2/5/1913 (London Gazette: 13/6/1913). He was mobilised 4/8/1914 and promoted to Captain 29/8/1914 (London Gazette: 28/8/1914). In April 1918 he was posted to France, where he joined the 7th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment (Training Cadre). The 7th Battalion's War diary records that he was Company Commander in May and that he left on 17/6/1918 to join the 4th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment, to which he had been attached. (The 4th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment was under the command of the 190th Brigade in the 63rd Royal Naval Division. It took part in the Battle of Albert from 21st to 23rd August 1918, and in the Battle of Drocourt-Queant from 2nd to 3rd September 1918. From 27th September to 1st October 1918 it took part in the Battle of the Canal du Nord, one of the Battles of the Hindenburg Line).

On 27/9/1918 Joseph led his men "over the top". He was struck by a shell and died soon after. He was buried in grave I.A.16 at Moeuvres Communal Cemetery Extension in France (see below). He is also commemorated on his parents' gravestone in Broadway Cemetery Peterborough (see below), on the War memorial at All Saints' Church, Park Road, and in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral. His death was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser, on 5/10/1918, and in The Times on 7/10/1918. A memorial service, held at All Saints' Church on 9/10/1918, was reported at length in the Peterborough Standard on 12/10/1918. Reverend G.H.A. Bagshaw, Curate of St Botolph's Church, Boston, gave an address: "Today we are met together to remember before God, Joseph Keith Batten, who made the supreme sacrifice on September 27th last. It is my privilege, as one who called him friend, as one to whose memory there come so many thoughts of happy comradeship in days that are past, as one who knew something of his sterling qualities, his unswerving devotion to duty, his unselfish care for his men, and of the depth of the faith by which he lived - it is my privilege to stand here and commend him to your prayers." A Chaplain described Joseph as "a splendid fellow, always cheery, and with a wonderful humour all his own". Joseph's Army service record is held by The National Archives, reference: WO 374/4740. It records that he specifically asked his executors to do nothing regarding his estate until a year after his death. (His brother, Robert Henry Guy Batten, born 14/6/1895, also attended The King's School. He, too, served in World War 1. He enlisted with the Public Schools Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers and became a 2nd Lieutenant in the Northamptonshire Regiment. He served in France and was gassed during the Battle of Loos in 1915. He was later wounded at Villers in 1916. His promotion to Acting Captain appeared in the London Gazette on 20/12/1918. He died in Benoni, Transvaal, South Africa on 4/12/1933, aged 38).



Joseph Keith Batten
at Gresham's School



Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough



Joseph's grave at Moeuvres
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2) Leonard William BROOKS

Leonard was born on 10/4/1885 in Peterborough, the elder son of John William Brooks and Emma nee Huggins. On the 1891 census he was living with his parents at 3, Church Street, Peterborough, where his father had a baker's shop.

Leonard attended The King's School from 1/1/1898 to 31/3/1899. He then moved to Barton School in Wisbech, where he was recorded on the 1901 census as a boarding pupil. After leaving school he served an apprenticeship with a leading London chef. He then joined the White Star Line and travelled the world as a chef on their ships. He later left and set up his own business as a miller/baker. (On the 1911 census he was staying as a visitor in Emneth, Wisbech). He sold his business in 1915 to join the Army.

He joined the Inns of Court Officer Training Corps as a Private 19/7/1915, regimental number 4953. His attestation form recorded his address as Elm High Road, Wisbech and that he was of very good character. He was a member of No3 Cadet Company on 20/2/1916, when he applied for a commission. (His commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the Hampshire Regiment from 8/6/1916 appeared in the London Gazette 13/6/1916). While serving with the Hampshire Regiment on the Isle of Wight he volunteered for aerial service. He trained at the Military School in Thetford on a Maurice Farman biplane and was awarded his Royal Aero Club Aviator's Certificate on 4/12/1916. He was seconded to the Royal Flying Corps and appointed as 2nd Lieutenant (Flying Officer) on 16/3/1917 (published in the London Gazette 10/4/1917). His service files are held at The National Archives (references: AIR/76/57 & WO 374/9457). They record that he was attached to No 2 Squadron Royal Flying Corps from the 2/8th Battalion Hampshire Regiment.

Shortly after arriving in France, in April 1917, Leonard had cause to use the telephone. By sheer chance he discovered he was speaking to his only brother, Thomas, who was also serving in the Royal Flying Corps. On realising that they were stationed only eight miles apart, they were able to arrange a reunion. (Leonard's brother Thomas, a fellow old Petriburgian, survived the War. He died on 17/5/1943).

On 6/7/1917 Leonard was piloting Armstrong Whitworth FK8 A2726 when he was shot down in a dog-fight with 6 German aircraft. Both he and his Observer were killed. Leonard is buried in grave IV.B.9 at the Bully-Grenay Communal Cemetery British Extension, France, alongside his crewmate (see below). At Peterborough Cathedral, Leonard is named in the Book of Remembrance, which records his address as Avondale, Broadway, Peterborough. He is also named on the Old Bartonians' War Memorial at St Peter & St Paul Church, Wisbech, on the memorial at Peterborough St John the Baptist, and on both Elm and Emneth War Memorials (see below). His father administered his estate.

His obituary appeared on 14/7/1917 in the Peterborough Advertiser, which described him as a "courageous and gallant officer... His kindly disposition and generous nature both treasured by many whose privilege it was to count him their friend". On 7/7/1917 the Air Squadron Commander had written to Leonard's father: "I am sorry to have to tell you that your son was brought down yesterday, and both he and his Observer, Lieut W. Campbell, were killed. They were working with the artillery, and were attacked by hostile machines, and your son's death must have been instantaneous. They are to be buried this afternoon... Your son is a great loss to us, for he was doing exceedingly well. Please accept my deepest sympathy".



Leonard Brooks



Emneth War Memorial



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3) Jack Victor BURKS

Jack was born in Peterborough on 26/7/1897, the second son of Charles Wells Burks and Martha Wyman nee Stanley, and a younger brother of Percy (see next page). His father was a manager for the brewers' firm Messrs Warwick and Richardson. On the 1901 census Jack was living with his parents in Broadway, Peterborough. On the 1911 census he was a boarding student at Barton School, Wisbech.

Jack was admitted to The King's School on 9/5/1911 from Barton School. He was then living with his parents at The Firs, 305 Eastfield Road, Peterborough (see photograph on next page). He played on the School cricket team 1911 and 1912, and on the rugby team 1911-12 and 1912-13. He left King's on 13/4/1913 to become a clerk with Messrs Fox & Vergette, Surveyors and Auctioneers.

Jack was still working for Messrs Fox and Vergette as an auctioneer's clerk when he enlisted in Peterborough on 5/9/1914, as a Private with the 7th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment. His regimental number was 14647. On his attestation paper he gave his age as 19 years and two months, but he was actually only 17 years old. According to his Medal Index Card, he was sent to France on 1/9/1915.

(The 7th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment came under the 73rd Brigade in the 24th Division. It landed at Boulogne on 2/9/1915. After a series of long marches, the Regiment arrived near Auchy. On 25th September 1915, only three weeks after arriving in France, the 7th Battalion went into action at the Battle of Loos. The Long, Long Trail website records that between 25th September and 16th October 1915 the 7th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment suffered 377 casualties, including 11 officers. The total number of British casualties sustained during the Battle of Loos exceeded 61,000, of whom more than 7,000 died. Further details can be found on The Long, Long Trail website: www.1914-1918.net).

According to his Army service record, Jack was reported as being wounded and missing at some time between 25th and 27th September 1915. The Peterborough Advertiser, dated 16/10/1915, reported that his Platoon Lieutenant had written to Jack's family, saying it was feared that he may have been wounded and in hospital, but not yet reported as such. He also wrote that Jack was beloved by everybody in the Battalion. The Advertiser stated that Jack was an expert bomb-thrower, and it was "feared that the worst may have befallen him".

Jack was never found, and was later officially presumed to have died on 25/9/1915, aged 18. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on Panel 91 to 93 of the Loos Memorial in France. (A photograph of the Panel bearing his inscription is available from www.twgpp.org). Both he and his brother, Percy Charles, are commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral and on Peterborough St Mary's War Memorial. Jack is also named on the Old Bartonians' War Memorial at St Peter and St Paul Church in Wisbech (see photograph below).



Jack Burks



Old Bartonians' War Memorial
at Wisbech St Peter & St Paul



Loos Memorial

4) Percy Charles Stanley BURKS

Percy was born in Peterborough on 16/11/1893, the eldest child of Charles and Martha Burks, and the brother of Jack (see previous page). On the 1901 census he was living with his parents in Cambridge House, 152 Broadway, Peterborough. The family later moved to The Firs, 305 Eastfield Road (see photograph below). Percy's mother died in 1908; his father remarried a year later.

Percy was admitted to The King's School on 20/1/1904 from Miss Mays' School. He was cast as a maid of honour ("Firenza") in a school play in 1907. He left school on 7/4/1909 to work at J.R.Smart's accountancy firm. By the 1911 census he was living as a boarder at 372 Camden Road, Holloway, working as an apprentice in the pianoforte trade. When he left England for Australia aboard the *Orontes*, on 27/2/1914, he was recorded on the ship's manifest as a piano tuner.

Percy enlisted at Blackbay Hill, Western Australia on 19/11/1914 as a Private with the 16th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force, regimental number 1456. He was 5ft 7 inches tall, with fair hair and grey eyes. He enlisted as "Charles" and gave his father's address as "Eastfield, Peterborough". His Army service record (as "Charles Burks") is viewable on the National Archives of Australia website: www.naa.co.au. It shows that on 22/2/1915 he embarked at Fremantle on *H.M.A.T. A50 Itonus*. He suffered from recurring bouts of dysentery and was hospitalised at Mudros on 29/7/1915; at Gallipoli on 22/8/1915; and in Malta in August, September and October 1915. He was also treated in October 1915 at Wandsworth Hospital, London and came home to Peterborough to convalesce. He rejoined his unit at Montevideo on 23/2/1916 and was transferred to the Lewis Gun Section of the 12th Brigade, 48th Battalion on 26/4/1916. He boarded the *HMT Caledonia* at Alexandria and landed at Marseilles on 9/6/1916.

On 9/9/1916 the Peterborough Advertiser stated that Percy had been reported as wounded on 6/8/1916 but no trace of him had been found in any hospital. The Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau file for "Charles Percy Burks" can be viewed on the Australian War Memorial website: www.awm.gov.au/people/rolls/R1484074/. It contains correspondence regarding investigations made after his death. Private T. Campbell of the Lewis Gun Section stated that he and Percy were in a shell-hole at the head of their line on 5/8/1916, during the Battle of Pozieres (one of the Battles of the Somme*). Both men were wounded, and Campbell wanted Percy to come with him for treatment, but Percy remained at his post. Stretcher-bearer Private H. Boddam stated that, while carrying another casualty, he saw Percy lying in a shell-hole, badly wounded. He was later told by another stretcher-bearer that Percy had subsequently been killed by a shell. (*Further details regarding the role of the 48th Battalion in the Battle of Pozieres can be viewed at: www.westernfront.gov.au/pozieres-windmill/48th-battalion-at-the-wind).

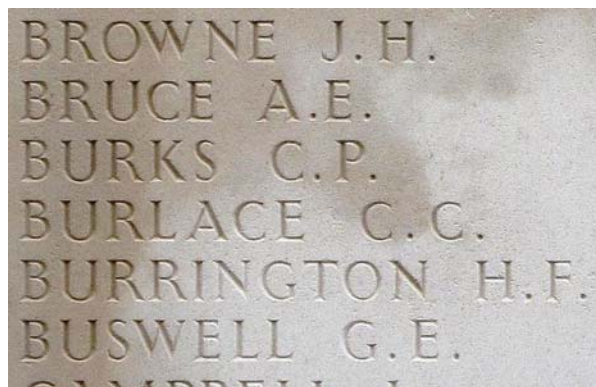
Percy was deemed to have died on 6/8/1916. He has no known grave but is commemorated as "C.P. Burks" on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial in France (see below). He is commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral in the Book of Remembrance, as "Charles Percy Burks". In Australia he is named on Panel 145 at the Australian War Memorial in Campbell, and is believed to be named on a tablet on the State War Memorial at Mount Eliza, Western Australia. His effects, including a Testament, a French book and a photograph, were returned to his father in Peterborough. Percy was engaged when he died. When his fiancée, Florence Quincey, sought news of him from the Australian Red Cross Society she was living at 5 Symons Street, Sloane Square, London. (She is likely to have been the Florence May Quincey, apprentice milliner, who lived at 165 Cromwell Road, Peterborough in 1911).



Percy Charles Burks



Percy & Jack's father, Charles



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5) George Lionel CATLING

The King's School's admissions register records that George was born 22/4/1891, but his birth was actually registered in the St Neot's District in the June quarter of 1892. It appears likely, therefore, that he was born on 22/4/1892. He was born in Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire and was the only surviving son of Walter and Lucy Catling. (Walter and his wife, Lucy nee Solly, were recorded on the 1891 census as proprietors of the Lion Hotel in Kimbolton). By 1901 the family had moved to Cowgate, Peterborough.

George attended The King's School from 19/9/1903 to 31/7/1906. He then moved to the City of London School, where he took a keen and active interest in all matters relating to sport, particularly cricket and football. He was also a Cadet in the Officer Training Corps. On the 1911 census he was living with his parents and elder sister, working at the Peterborough Hotel, Cowgate, of which his father was the keeper.

At some point after 1911 George travelled to Chile, where he worked in the accounts department of the Antofagasta and Bolivia Railway Company. When he returned from Chile to London aboard the *Highland Glen*, on 3/1/1915, he was recorded on the ship's manifest as a "clerk".

George enlisted with the 4th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment in February 1915. He was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant and transferred to the 1st East Anglian Brigade, Royal Field Artillery on 6/7/1915. (The commission was published in the London Gazette on 5/7/1915). His promotion to Lieutenant from 1/6/1916 appeared in the London Gazette on 17/7/1917. He was temporarily appointed as Acting Captain from 25/10/1917 to 20/11/1917 (published in the London Gazette on 14/12/1917 and 8/1/1918 respectively).

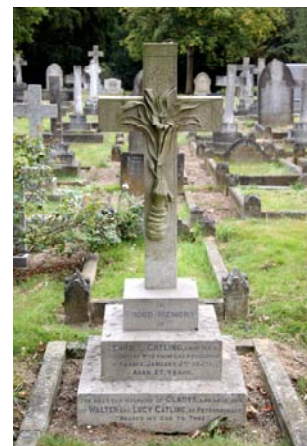
The precise details of George's Army service have not been traced but, according to his obituary in the Peterborough Advertiser on 10/1/1920, he "saw some of the hardest fighting". The Kentish Express and Ashford News, dated 10/1/1920, stated that he had taken "an active part in many important engagements, principally in the Ypres and Passchendaele sectors", and that he was "highly respected by all his brother officers and there is abundant proof of his devotion to his men, and their affection for him".

George was admitted to Rouen Hospital on 12/11/1918 suffering from influenza and gas poisoning. He was demobilised in February 1919. He married Gladys K. Woodcock in June 1919, in the Eastry District of Kent. He died from tuberculosis and measles at The Firs, Broad Downs near Wye on 2/1/1920. He was buried on 7/1/1920 in grave 2557 at the Ashford Cemetery in Canterbury Road, Kent (see photograph below). The inscription on his headstone reads: "In proud memory of George L. Catling, Lieutenant R.F.A., who died at Wye from gas poisoning in France, January 2nd 1920, aged 27 years. The beloved husband of Gladys, and only son of Walter and Lucy Catling, of Peterborough. 'Nearer my God to thee'".

Probate was granted in Peterborough on 20/2/1920 in respect of George's estate, which was administered by James William Woodcock. George is commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral in the Book of Remembrance, which records his last address as the Peterborough Hotel, St Leonard's Street, Peterborough. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's register records that his widow's address was the Fernley Hotel, Ashford, Kent. (Regrettably, no trace has been found at The National Archives of either George's Medal Index Card or his Army service record).



George Lionel Catling



George's grave in Ashford Cemetery
© TWGPP, by kind permission

6) Bertram Thorold CHIPPINDALL

Bertram was born on 2/6/1877, the eldest son of Reverend William Chippindall and Constance Cecilia nee Thorold (and the nephew of Lieutenant-General Chippindall C.B.). Although he was born in Penge, Surrey, his parents lived in Aston, Hertfordshire, where he was baptised on 29/7/1877. The following year his father became Vicar of Tilton-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire. On the 1881 census Bertram was living at the Vicarage there with his parents, brother William, step-sister Beatrice Hockley and step-brother Reginald Hockley.

In January 1889 Bertram was admitted as a boarder to The King's School, where he was recorded on the 1891 census. He was on the cricket team in 1893 and 1894. He was also on the rugby team in 1892-93 and 1893-94, and was on the team that won the rugby Purvis Cup in 1893-94. He left King's on 31/7/1894.

On 12/9/1894 Bertram travelled to Colombo, Sri Lanka aboard *SS Cheshire*. He took charge of a major tea plantation at the Wariagalla Estate near Kandy, working for the Consolidated Estates Company Ltd. The Company Chairman later described him as an "excellent, faithful manager in every respect". Although he often travelled back to England during the ensuing years, Bertram fully embraced his new life in Ceylon, where he became father to three children. From 1900 to 1904 he served as a Private in the Ceylon Planters' Rifle Corps. He was later a Special Constable in the Ceylon Riots in 1915.

He returned to England from Sri Lanka on 13/11/1915, aboard *SS City of Nagpur*. The ship's manifest recorded him as a "tea planter". On 17/11/1915 he applied to join the 3rd Battalion Somerset Light Infantry. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant appeared in the London Gazette on 28/12/1915. On 20/7/1916 he went to France, where he was attached to the 8th Battalion Somerset Light Infantry, in the 37th Division.

Bertram died on 18/11/1916 aged 39, in the Battle of the Ancre. He was buried in grave VI.F.50 at Ancre British Cemetery, Beaumont-Hamel in France. His obituary in *The Times* on 18/12/1916 quoted the comment from his Commanding Officer that "He was setting a fine example of coolness and steadiness under heavy fire, and his death is a great loss to the battalion and to all who had the privilege of knowing him. He was most popular, and a capable officer". Bertram is also commemorated on a memorial at St Peter's Church, Tilton-on-the-Hill in Leicestershire (see www.tiltononthehill.org.uk for photograph).

Bertram's Army service record (held by The National Archives reference WO339/50964) contains documents which show that his date of death was once thought to be 16/11/1916, but that this date was later amended to 18/11/1916. He left a Will, giving his address as Wariagalla Estate, Kandy, Ceylon. He left legacies to his three children and named his half-brother, Reginald Cromwell Hockley, as executor.



Bertram Thorold Chippindall



Bertram's grave at Ancre British Cemetery

7) James Hugh CLAPPERTON

James was born on 21/1/1886 in Broughton, Hampshire, the 3rd son of Dr James Clapperton and Charlotte Etherington nee Vergette. He was baptised on 28/4/1886 in Broughton and was living there with his parents on the 1891 census. After his father, a general practitioner, died on 10/1/1901, Charlotte moved to Lawn House, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough. (She later lived at 119 Lincoln Road, Peterborough).

James was admitted to The King's School as a boarder on 1/4/1898. He played cricket for the School from 1900 to 1903 (as Captain 1902 & 1903). He was also on the rugby team from 1900 to 1904 (as Captain 1902 to 1904). He left King's on 30/4/1904. His interest in sport continued, and he played for the Peterborough Town Cricket Club. In 1904 he was articled as a pupil to a Peterborough dentist, Mr Parris. By the 1911 census James was lodging at 5 Sydenham Terrace, Louth, Lincolnshire. He trained at Guy's Hospital.

James was in practice as a dental surgeon, living at Carlton House, Ringwood, Hampshire, when he enlisted on 20/10/1914 with the Hampshire Carabiniers as a Private, regimental number 1281. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on 26/12/1914. He was living at 15 King Alfred's Terrace, Winchester on 1/2/1915 when he applied for a commission with the 1/3rd Northumbrian Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. His commission as Second Lieutenant from 30/3/1915 was published in the London Gazette on 26/3/1915. His appointment as Temporary Captain from 2/7/1916 appeared in the London Gazette on 27/10/1916. He was sent to France on 3/7/1916 and served with "B" Battery of the 317th Brigade in the 63rd Naval Division. His appointment as Acting Major, with effect from 25/9/1916, was published in the London Gazette on 16/1/1917.

(The 63rd Naval Division took part in the Battle of the Ancre in November 1916, the Operations on the Ancre from January to March 1917, and also in the Arras Offensive in April 1917. It was engaged in the Battle of Vimy Ridge from 9th to 12th April 1917, as part of the Arras Offensive).

James received gunshot wounds to his left arm and ankle on 20/4/1917. He died from acute septicaemia on 7/5/1917 in the Duchess of Westminster Hospital at Le Touquet. He was buried in grave XVII.C.14 at the Etaples Military Cemetery in France (see below). He is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, and on Paston War Memorial at All Saints' Church, Paston (see below). He died intestate and his sister, Muriel Annie Ward, was granted Letters of Administration.

James' Army service record, under the rank of Captain*, is held by The National Archives, reference: WO 374/13761. (*Under Army regulations, James ceased to be Acting Major as soon as he left the battlefield and was admitted to hospital, as he was no longer in command of a Battery). His death was announced on 12/5/1917 in the Peterborough Advertiser, under the headline "Noted Peterborough Cricketer Slain". The report stated that his sister had travelled to France after hearing the news of his injury. The report commented that: "In his regretted death there passes one of the finest examples of a British gentleman and sportsman".

(James' brother Henry also died in World War 1. He joined the Northamptonshire Regiment c1915 as a Private, later moving to the 2/4th Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. He died of wounds on 14/9/1918 and was buried in grave I.B.22 at La Laiterie Military Cemetery in Belgium. His obituary was published in the Peterborough Advertiser on 28/9/1918. He, too, is named on the Paston War Memorial).



James Clapperton in 1906



Paston All Saints' lych-gate



James' grave © TWGPP

8) Cyril George CRICK

Cyril was born in Peterborough on 30/11/1896, the second son of George Alfred Slack Crick and Jessie nee Thacker. (His father was a corn merchant). On the 1901 and 1911 census he was living with his parents at Springfield, Thorpe Road, Peterborough. He had four siblings: Leslie, Mary, Gilbert and Nancy.

Cyril joined The King's School on 19/1/1905 from Miss Exley's private Preparatory School. He left King's on 31/7/1912 and moved to Gresham's School at Holt in Norfolk, where he was in the Officers' Training Corps. In 1913 he joined his father's business.

Cyril joined the 2nd/1st Huntingdonshire Cyclist Battalion. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant from 7/3/1915 appeared in the London Gazette on 5/3/1915. On 25/5/1916 he went to France, where he was attached to the 2nd/ 8th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment, which was then in the 183rd Brigade, 61st (2nd South Midland) Division. He was promoted to Lieutenant from 25/8/1916 (posthumously published in the London Gazette on 21/9/1917). He came home on leave from 16th to 26th July 1917, returning to the Front on August 12th.

Cyril was shot through the head and died instantly on 27/8/1917 aged 20, at St Julien in the Ypres Salient. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on Panel 154 on the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium. In a letter to Cyril's mother, his commanding officer Colonel L. Billen wrote: "Dear Mrs Crick, I write to offer you my very sincerest sympathy in the loss of your son. He led his platoon into action and most courageously tried to get them forward under very heavy machine gun fire. He was always ready to do anything for his men; in fact, so much so, that I have had to speak to him at times for doing everything himself. I regret his loss very much and can only offer you the consolation that his death was a brave one and he died instantly. Please accept this short note of sympathy". A fellow officer described Cyril's death as "heroic" and "a big blow to his men, who with us recognised Lieut. Crick as a man who knew no fear".

A memorial service was held at St John the Baptist Church, Peterborough on Wednesday 5/9/1917, which was reported in the Peterborough Advertiser on 8/9/1917. During the service, Cyril was described by an Army comrade as "kind, thoughtful, straightforward, ever ready to do his share, and beloved of all the boys". The Vicar described him as possessing "an affectionate and unselfish disposition, an unselfish nature- a man who was not only ready to do kind deeds to others, but was always on the lookout for opportunities of doing them".

Cyril is named on the Peterborough St John the Baptist War Memorial. He is also commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral. His father administered his estate. His Army service record is held by The National Archives (ref: WO 374/16574). Further documents are on The King's School's website: www.intranet.kings.peterborough.sch.uk/kingsremembrance/index.html (Cyril's brother Leslie also served in World War 1. He was wounded on 17/7/1917 and was treated in Boulogne Hospital for a gunshot wound to the side. He survived the War and died in 1982, aged 90).



Cyril George Crick
(Peterborough Advertiser: 27/3/1915)



Cyril's inscription on Tyne Cot Memorial

9) Percy James Deane FLECKNOE

Percy was born on 7/1/1888, the only son of James Flecknoe and Mary Ann Bell nee Hortor. (He had an elder sister, Dorothy and a younger sister, Elsie. His father was a butcher). In 1891 he was living with his parents at 10 Church Street, Peterborough. By the 1901 census they had moved to Park Road, Peterborough. (Percy's parents later lived in Orton Waterville, before moving to 6 Victoria Avenue, Hunstanton).

Percy attended The King's School from 1/9/1897 to 31/12/1902. He then became a clerk for English Brothers Ltd (timber merchants). From 1903 to 1906 he was a Private in the Northamptonshire Rifle Volunteers. (He was recorded as 5ft 6 inches tall). From 20/6/1908 to 11/6/1910 he was a Gunner in the Northamptonshire Battery of the Royal Field Artillery, regimental number 4025. He left England in 1910.

Percy sailed from London to Natal aboard *Grantully Castle* on 6/7/1910. In South Africa he worked as a traveller for his uncle, William Edward Hortor, of the Leader Printing Works in Harrison Street, Johannesburg. On 24/8/1914 he enlisted as a Private in the 1st Imperial Light Horse Regiment. His regimental number was 0205. (He served in the German South West Africa Campaign under General Botha). His conduct and character were described as having been "exemplary". He was discharged on 10/8/1915 and, with six of his friends, sailed from Cape Town on the *Llandoverly Castle*. Having landed in London on 19/12/1915, he spent that Christmas with his parents in Hunstanton.

He had applied on 18/12/1915 for a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery. His commission from 6/1/1916 appeared in the London Gazette 11/1/1916. He served with 'B' Battery 158th Brigade before transferring to 'C' Battery 64th Brigade on 10/1/1917. His promotion to Lieutenant from 6/7/1917 appeared in the London Gazette 16/10/1917. He sustained a gunshot wound to the right arm and hand on 17/7/1917. After treatment at a field ambulance and hospital, he rejoined his unit on 11/8/1917.

On 24/11/1917, Percy sustained compound fractures to both legs during the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele). He was taken to the 3rd Australian Casualty Clearing Station, where he died of his wounds at 01:40 on 25/11/1917. He was buried in grave IX.A.11 at the Nine Elms British Cemetery in Belgium, in the presence of his Colonel and other officers and men from his unit.

On 1/12/1917 the Peterborough Standard announced Percy's death. On 8/12/1917 they quoted from two letters his mother had received. Major Hugh Smithson, having described Percy's injuries, continued: "His loss is a severe one to us as well as to you. During all this terrible year he has been my right-hand man; a born organiser, and a wonderful worker. Of his personal courage I cannot speak too highly. He was recommended for the Military Cross in May for an excellent piece of work as forward observing officer, but failed to get it because too many had been given to the Corps...The Battery is very upset at his death; his place will never be filled. He was a great personal friend of mine, and I am too unhappy to write any more...". Percy's family later received a letter from the Bishop of Ontario Edward Bidwell (who had been Headmaster when Percy was at King's). His death was also announced on 1/12/1917 in the Lynn News, which stated he had been home to Hunstanton in October, and that a Christmas card he had sent had arrived on the morning that his parents received the telegram informing them of his death. Two days later, his parents received a field card that Percy had written two days before he died, telling them he was well.

Percy is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, and also on the Hunstanton War Memorial. His Army service record is held by The National Archives under reference WO339/93863. (Further documents relating to him are available to view on The King's School's website: www.intranet.kings.peterborough.sch.uk/kingsremembrance/index.html)



Percy Flecknoe



Percy's grave



10) Vernon Peed GACHES

Vernon was born in Peterborough on 8/12/1879, the only son of George Fitzroy Dean Gaches and Emma nee Row. His father, a solicitor, died on 8/5/1880, leaving his widow to raise Vernon and his sisters, Mary and Gertrude. On the 1881 census, Vernon was living with his mother at 5 Sydenham Villas, Granville Street, Peterborough. His mother remarried in 1882, to Hamnet Hyde Clarke.

In October 1888 Vernon entered The Royal Masonic Institution for Boys in Wood Green, London where he was a scholar on the 1891 census. He left on 21/12/1894 and joined The King's School in Peterborough in January 1895. (He was then living with his guardian uncle, Henry Cecil Gaches, in London Road, Peterborough). He left King's in December 1895 and then served a five-year apprenticeship as a fitter.

Vernon was listed on the 1898 nominal roll of the 1st Northants Royal Engineers, in which he served for three years before resigning. In January 1901 he applied to join the South African Constabulary. (His application form records that he was nearly 5 feet 11 inches tall, weighed 156 pounds, had dark brown hair, brown eyes and a fair complexion. He stated that he could ride, shoot and swim). His application was accepted and he joined the South African Constabulary as a Constable on 27/3/1901 for a three-year term of service. His service number was 324 and he served with Number 1 Troop, S.A.C., "C" (Eastern) Division. He was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal, with 1901 and 1902 clasps (plus clasps for Cape Colony, Orange Free State and Transvaal) in respect of his service during the Second Boer War.

He was serving with "F" Mobile Troop in Heidelberg at the end of his three-year term in 1904. His application to re-engage for a further two years was accepted. Eighteen months later he was granted a six-month paid leave of absence, from 27/9/1905 to 26/3/1906, and travelled back to England on 18th October 1905 aboard the *Kinfaun's Castle*. On 3/3/1906 he applied for a further one-year extension to his service, which was accepted, and he sailed back to South Africa on 10/3/1906 aboard the *Walmer Castle*.

Vernon's South African Constabulary file is held by the National Archives of South Africa. It records that on 24/9/1906 the Central Hotel in Heidelberg burnt to the ground. The Hotel's stock of alcohol was moved to a stable, where it was placed under the guard of the Hotel's billiard marker and the Police. The following day Constable Vernon Gaches was detailed for guard duty from 12 noon to 3 pm. During his shift he "broached the liquor and was drunk", according to a witness. Having admitted being "not sober" and to having absented himself from his post, Vernon was charged and tried the next day. His previous good conduct was taken into account and he was fined £5. The incident was evidently a very rare lapse however as, when he was discharged from the South African Constabulary on 26/3/1907, his superiors stated that Vernon had "proved himself to be a reliable and steady man" and to have "done his work well".

He served in the Natal Police Force for three years during the Native Rebellion. He then served in the South African Vet Corps and Engineer Corps. He was demobilised due to malaria but joined the South African Expeditionary Forces as a Private on 16/2/1917, service number 11845. On 24/2/1917 he embarked at Cape Town on *SS Walmer Castle*, bound for Southampton. Following a short spell in England, he was sent to France, landing at Le Havre on 23/6/1917. He joined the 1st South African Infantry Brigade on 16/7/1917.

Vernon was reported missing in action on 21/9/1917, during the Third Battle of Ypres. He was later presumed to have died that day. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Panels 15-16 and 16A of the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial in Belgium - see below. He is also commemorated on his parents' headstone in Broadway Cemetery in Peterborough (see below). Further documents relating to Vernon can be viewed on the History section of The King's School's website.



Broadway Cemetery



Vernon's inscription on Menin Gate



Wreath laid 2014

11) William Orr HAMPTON

William was born in Pakenham, Suffolk on 23/7/1887, the eldest child of Reverend William Henry and Elizabeth Hampton. He had a sister Evelyn, and a brother Edward who died in 1909. On the 1891 census William was living with his parents in Pakenham, where his father was Curate. (In 1894 his parents moved to Terrington St Clement. In 1897 they moved to the Vicarage at Pondersbridge, Huntingdonshire).

William attended The King's School, Peterborough from 1/5/1900 to December 1900. From January 1901 to July 1906 he attended The King's School, Ely, winning a Bishop's scholarship in 1902 and the Potticary medal in 1905. A fine athlete, he won Ely School's Champion's Cup in summer 1906. He later became a schoolmaster at St Saviour's College, Ardingly. (The photograph below is by kind permission of Ardingly College). College magazine *The Ardingly Annals* described him as notable for his great height and physical strength, a man of wide reading and cultured taste. He took an active role in college life, being on the Sports Committee and playing for the Masters and Boys' football team. He was Honorary Vice-President of the Senior Debating Society, where his wit and humour were evident. He was also Assistant Scoutmaster.

William's Army service file (TNA: WO 339/69372) records that he joined the 77th Field Company Royal Engineers as a Sapper on 27/8/1914, regimental number 42022. He moved to the 79th Company, in which he rose to Sergeant. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant from 8/6/1915 with the 3rd Battalion Norfolk Regiment appeared in the London Gazette on 4/6/1915. He was seconded for duty with the Machine Gun Corps on 27/3/1916 (published London Gazette 8/8/1916). He arrived in France on 4/6/1916. Nine days later he was posted to the 70th Company, Machine Gun Corps, which was in the 8th Division. He signed a Will in the Field on 17/6/1916, naming his mother as sole beneficiary, and took his place in the trenches.

William died in No Man's Land on 1/7/1916, during the Battle of Albert, on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. He was buried about 1500 yards East South East of Authuille Church, but was later re-interred in grave IV.A.2 at the Lonsdale Cemetery at Authuille, France, where he now rests (see below). He is also commemorated on Ramsey War Memorial and on the memorial of The King's School, Ely. At Pondersbridge church he is commemorated on the Parish War Memorial, on the Roll of Honour and also on a separate plaque and flagon; in the churchyard, he is commemorated on his parents' headstone.

On 15/7/1916, the Peterborough Advertiser reported William's death, describing him as a fine handsome lad, standing 6ft 7 inches tall, and "a great favourite wherever he went... loyal and patriotic and a splendid example to other young men... devoted to his men". Pondersbridge villagers were reported to be much distressed at the news of his death, as they had "loved him for his kindness and goodness of heart". The newspaper quoted from a letter sent to William's mother by his Commanding Officer, Captain F. Jessop Weiss: "I am writing to say that I fear your son was killed in action on 1st July. Although he had only recently joined us, he was most popular, both with the officers and his men. We attacked the German lines on July 1st, and your son behaved in a most gallant manner, getting his men and two machine guns forward under very heavy fire. Owing to the heavy nature of the fighting, I regret to say we were unable to personally recover his body, and as we were taken out of the line the same evening, we had to leave the relieving troops to bring in our dead, but I fear there is no hope of his only being wounded, as two of his men saw him dead. In such a case as this, he will, however, be reported as 'Missing believed killed'. I tell you all this so that you will be saved the anguish of vainly hoping that he may still be alive. We have lost a very brave officer and a charming companion. He was settling down to the life out here so well, and was, I believe, quite happy with his lot... he died for his country, and he did his duty fearlessly and well".



Ardingly College staff c1913 (William is standing top right)



William's grave at Lonsdale Cemetery

12) Eric Carruthers LEIGH

Eric was born in Peterborough on 5/12/1895, the youngest son of George Thomas Leigh and Kathleen Mary nee Gibson. On the 1901 census he was living with his parents and grandfather at 4 Narrow Street, Peterborough. His father was a boot dealer.

Eric was admitted to The King's School on 8/10/1906 from Purley House School, Peterborough. He was a Cathedral chorister. In 1907 he took the role of Queen Butterfly (Queen of the Fairies) in the School's production of *Princess Zara*. (The Petriburgian recorded that he had been "a dainty and charming leader of the fairy band", and that his "acting and singing were justly appreciated"). He left King's in 1911, according to the Midsummer 1911 edition of The Petriburgian. On the 1911 census he was working as an architect/ surveyor's clerk, living with his mother, sister and grandmother at 2 Oundle Road, Fletton, Peterborough.

According to his Army service record, Eric was living at 85 Maryon Road, Charlton, London, working as a warehouseman, when he enlisted on 6/8/1915 as a Private with the 16th Battalion Middlesex Regiment. He enlisted in London and his regimental number was PS/2615. He served in the UK until 13/4/1916, when he was sent to France, landing at Boulogne on 14/4/1916. He was appointed as Lance Corporal, but relinquished the appointment on 30/4/1916 and reverted to Private.

Eric was initially posted as missing in action on 1/7/1916. His mother, who was then living at 58 Palmerstone Road, Woodston, made enquiries through the International Red Cross as to whether he had been taken Prisoner of War. (The ICRC Index card, viewable at www.grandeguerre.icrc.org, records that he was serving with A Company, 1st Platoon when he went missing on 1/7/1916. He was later confirmed to have died on that date, aged 20). After the War, he was reinterred in grave II.B.15 at the Serre Road Cemetery Number 1 in France, having been exhumed from his original burial place. (The relatives' form within his Army service record, pertaining to the payment of gratuity, indicates that his mother had moved to "Thorpleigh", Stockens Green, Knebworth, Stevenage by 13th May 1919. Since his father was not then listed as a living relative, he must have died before that date). Eric is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral.

(N.B. Eric's Army service record and his entry in *Soldiers Died in the Great War* show that he served with the 16th Battalion Middlesex Regiment, whereas the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records that he was with the 19th Battalion when he died. From his date of death and location of his grave, it appears that Eric probably died during the Battle of Albert, one of the Battles of the Somme. In July 1916, the 16th Battalion Middlesex Regiment was in the 86th Infantry Brigade in the 29th Division, which took part in the Battle of Albert, whereas the 19th Battalion Middlesex Regiment was in the 41st Division, which is not recorded as having taken part in that Battle. The two other casualties from the Middlesex Regiment buried in Serre Road Cemetery, who both died on the same date as Eric, were from the 16th Battalion. It seems likely, therefore, that Eric was in fact serving with the 16th Battalion at the time of his death).



Eric's grave



Serre Road Cemetery Number 1



13) Frederick Daniel MOYER

Frederick was born on 17/11/1898 in Peterborough, the second son of Frederick William Moyer and Jessica nee Leighton. On the 1901 and 1911 census he was living with his parents at 15 Lincoln Road East, Peterborough. His father was an assistant superintendant in the Post Office.

Frederick was admitted to The King's School in November 1908, from New Road Council School, Peterborough. He was a Cathedral chorister. He left King' in 1914.

According to his Army service record, Frederick was living with his parents at 15 Lincoln Road, Peterborough and working as a tailor when he enlisted at Holborn on 13/5/1915, as a Private with the 18th Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers. (He falsely gave his age as 19 on the attestation form, whereas he was actually only 16. The form records that he was 5 ft 5 inches tall and weighed 126 lbs. He had grey eyes and brown hair). His regimental number was 27678. He was posted to France on 17/3/1916. On 29/3/1916 he was transferred to the 14th Battalion of the same regiment. He was promoted to Acting Corporal on 22/6/1916, at the age of just 17.

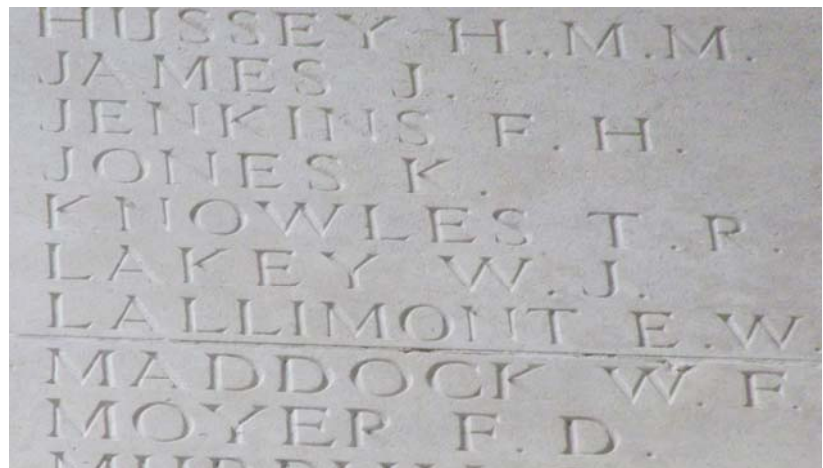
(In 1916, the 14th Battalion was under the orders of the 113th Brigade in the 38th (Welsh) Division. It took part in the fight for Mametz Wood, in the Battle of the Somme. A moving eye-witness account of events at Mametz Wood can be viewed in the 'Stories' section of the website of the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum: www.rwfmuseum.org).

Frederick's Army Service record shows that he was originally posted as missing in action on 9th July 1916. The Peterborough Advertiser, issued on 12/8/1916, reported that Frederick's mother had received his paybook in the post from a wounded soldier who was being treated in Manchester Hospital. It also reported that, on the 6th August, she had received the following letter from the Officer Commanding D Company, Royal Welch Fusiliers: "It is my painful duty to write to you to inform you that your son has been reported as missing since the 11th inst. I have been waiting to see if I could find anyone in the battalion, or brigade, who could give me any information as to when he was last seen, but I regret deeply to say that I am unable to trace any account of him after the time the battalion came into action. I wish to offer you my deepest sympathy in your great loss, and feel it is my duty to say I can offer you no hope as to his return, as I am sure by this time we should have known had he been in the enemy's hands. As his officer, I should like you to know how highly I and my other company officers thought of Corporal Moyer, and what an efficient NCO he made. It may be of some comfort to you to know that he did his duty honourably and bravely during the time he was in action. I pray on your behalf that some word may turn up to relieve your anxiety, but unfortunately I can give you no hope, though it grieves me to have to say so".

Frederick was later deemed to have died on 10/7/1916, at the age of 17. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Face 4A of the Thiepval Memorial in France (see photograph below). His death was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser on 26/8/1916. He is commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral in the Book of Remembrance, which records his last address as 32 Fitzwilliam Street, Peterborough. He is also named on the War memorial at St Mark's Church, Lincoln Road, Peterborough. He left a Will, naming his mother as legatee.



Frederick Daniel Moyer



Frederick's inscription on Thiepval Memorial

14) Percy Walter PEACH

Percy was born on 20/11/1884 in Sutton, Cambridgeshire, the son of Joseph Peach and Elizabeth nee Haddock. His father was an international merchant. On the 1891 census Percy was living with his parents at Airedale, Dogsthorpe Road, Peterborough.

He attended The King's School from January 1896 to June 1900, during which period his father died (in July 1897). By the 1901 census Percy was living with his mother at 29 Mawson Road, Cambridge, working as a bank clerk. (The King's School's Old Boys' Year Book of 1906 recorded him as working at Barclay's Bank). On the 1911 census Percy was staying with his grandparents Benjamin and Louie Haddock in Sutton, Ely. (His mother later moved to Parkfield Avenue, Amersham, Buckinghamshire).

Percy sailed from Liverpool to Halifax, Canada aboard the *Corsican* on 7/3/1912. In Canada, he worked as an accountant. He joined the Legion of Frontiersmen in about 1912, in which he served for three years. (See www.frontiersmenhistorian.info/canada for more information on the Legion).

Percy joined the 45th Battalion, Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force as a Lieutenant on 24/6/1915. His Army service file is viewable on the Library and Archives Canada website www.collectionscanada.gc.ca (His attestation form within that file incorrectly recorded his year of birth as 1885). His service file records that he was 5 ft 9 ½ inches tall, with black hair and brown eyes. He was appointed as Acting Signalling Officer on 5/11/1915. He was living at 459 Cumberland Avenue, Winnipeg and serving with the 106th Regiment Winnipeg Light Infantry when he was declared fit for service on 10/2/1916. He left Canada with his unit 13/3/1916 aboard *SS Lapland*, and arrived in England on 25/3/1916. He became Assistant Adjutant on 6/4/1916 and was attached to the 11th Battalion on 6/7/1916. On 29/8/1916 he was sent to France, where he joined the 52nd Battalion Canadian Infantry (Manitoba Regiment).

The War Diary of the 52nd Battalion (which is available to view on the Library and Archives Canada website) records that Percy joined C Company in the Field at Val de Maison on 11/9/1916, and that he was wounded on 16/9/1916, while in action near the "Zollern [sic] Redoubt". His service file states that he was admitted to No 2 Red Cross Hospital at Rouen on 19/9/1916, with gunshot wounds to the back and abdomen. He was evacuated to England aboard the Hospital ship *Panama*, and was admitted to the London General Hospital in Camberwell on 25/9/1916. Despite undergoing surgery, he died from his wounds on 12/10/1916. He was buried in the north-east corner at St Leonard's Church, Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire. His epitaph reads:

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
LIEUT. PERCY WALTER PEACH
MANITOBA REGT. C.E.F.
DIED OF WOUNDS RECEIVED IN THE GREAT WAR
12TH OCT. 1916, AGED 32 YEARS.
"THY WILL BE DONE".

(Percy is believed to be named on the Amersham War Memorial).



Percy Peach, from the University of Winnipeg Archives Western Canadian Pictorial Index: Image 17503; Contact sheet A0553. Reproduced by their very kind permission



Percy's grave in Chesham Bois. © TWGPP by their very kind permission

15) Robert Portway PLEDGER

Robert was born in Peterborough on 13/3/1892, the second son of Leopold Pledger and Annie nee Blain. On the 1901 census they lived at The Willows, Lime Tree Avenue, Peterborough. (Leopold was a corn merchant; Annie died in 1904). On 20/1/1904 Robert was admitted to The King's School. He was on the cricket team in 1907 and 1908, and the rugby team in 1907-08 and 1908-09. He left in 1909.

On 1/10/1909 Robert and elder brother George (who had also attended The King's School) boarded the *Otranto* and sailed 3rd class to Brisbane, Australia. They set up business as farmers at Goomburra in Queensland. Shortly after the outbreak of the War, both brothers enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force: Robert enlisted on 31/12/1914; George enlisted on 26/12/1914*. (The Army service records of both men can be viewed on the National Archives of Australia website: www.naa.gov.au).

Robert's Army file records that he was 5ft 10 inches tall, weighed 9 stone 8 lbs, and had light brown hair and grey eyes. He enlisted as a Trooper with B Squadron of the 11th Light Horse Regiment, Fourth Light Horse Brigade. His regimental number was 333. The Embarkation Rolls (viewable at www.awm.gov.au) record that he boarded *H.M.A.T. Borda* at Brisbane on 2/6/1915. His Regiment retrained in Egypt as an Infantry unit, having been ordered to leave their horses in Australia. In August he moved to Gallipoli, where he transferred to the 5th Light Horse Regiment on 29/8/1915. On 6/11/1915 he was transported to hospital in Malta suffering from dysentery. He was later admitted at Heliopolis on 14/1/1916, and at Helouan on 21/1/1916, suffering from jaundice. On 25/1/1916 he rejoined his unit, which was then in Egypt, having left Gallipoli on 20/12/1915. (Robert's Army service file records that he suffered recurrent bouts of dysentery/diarrhoea, which necessitated hospitalisation on several further occasions).

Robert transferred to the 11th Light Horse Regiment on 22/2/1916. Having been restored to horse, on 20/7/1916 the Regiment joined the forces defending the Suez Canal. In April 1917 it moved into Palestine and took part in the Second Battle of Gaza on 19/4/1917. During the ensuing months it took part in various actions, including a charge on Sheria on 7/11/1917. (Robert spent ten days at rest-camp in Port Said in October 1917). After Gaza fell on 7/11/1917, the 11th Light Horse took part in the pursuit of fleeing Turkish forces. After rest and retraining in early 1918, the Regiment moved to the Jordan Valley. In August it retrained as a Cavalry unit, in preparation for action against the Turks on the coast of Palestine. On 25/9/1918 it took part in the Battle of Samakh, entailing fierce hand-to-hand combat. (Further information can be found in *The History of the 11th Light Horse Regiment, Fourth Light Horse Brigade, Australian Imperial Forces, War 1914-1919*, by Ernest Hammond, published 1942).

Robert was killed in action on 25/9/1918, during the Battle of Samakh. He was originally buried on 26/9/1918 at Samakh Military Cemetery, beside Lake Galilee, but was later reinterred in grave B.56 at the Haifa War Cemetery in Israel and Palestine. He is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral. He is also named on the Paston War Memorial at All Saints' Church, Paston, Peterborough (see below), and on Panel 8 of the Australian War Memorial at Campbell, Australia. His death was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser on 5/10/1918. He left a Will, dividing his estate between his three sisters and his younger brother (also an Old Petriburgian), Jack Hamilton Pledger**. (*George Pledger survived the War. He sustained a bullet wound to the thigh at Romani on 4/8/1916. He received the Military Cross on 7/9/1918, and was discharged from the Army on 10/9/1919. ** Pilot Officer Jack Hamilton Pledger died in an air-crash in Wiltshire on 4/4/1924. He is buried at Paston).



Robert's grave. © TWGPP, by kind permission.



Robert's inscription on the Paston lych-gate

16) George Nicholas SLINGER (Mentioned in Despatches)

George was born in Accrington, Lancashire on 7/7/1895, the second son of George Nicholas Slinger and Ellen Augusta Lane nee Booth of Ellerbeck, Hollins Lane, Accrington, and the brother of William (see next page). His father was a solicitor. On the 1901 census George junior was staying in Manchester with his grandmother, Frances Booth. He was first educated at Christchurch School, Accrington.

George was admitted as a boarding scholar at The King's School, Peterborough on 7/5/1907. He played for both the School cricket team in 1910 and the rugby team in 1910-11. He passed the Junior Oxford Local Examination with honours. After leaving school, he was articled to his father's legal practice in Accrington. Following the outbreak of War, he assisted in the recruiting department for the 11th Service Battalion (Accrington) East Lancashire Regiment (colloquially known as the Accrington "Pals").

George's Army service file is held by The National Archives, reference: WO 339/27229. It records that he was 5' 10", had light brown hair and grey eyes, and was of good character. He was the first man to enlist with the 158th (Accrington and Burnley Howitzer) Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery on 6/2/1915, and was therefore assigned the regimental number 1. Initially posted to A Battery, within a week he was promoted from Gunner to Corporal on 13/2/1915, and was posted to B Battery three days later. He moved to C Battery on 29/3/1915. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant from 5/4/1915 was published in the London Gazette on 13/4/1915. He served in the UK until sent to France in 1916, arriving at Le Havre on 1/2/1916. He was temporarily assigned to 121st Brigade from 22/2/1916, and returned to the 158th Brigade on 8/5/1916. He was later transferred to the 159th Brigade, on 8/9/1916. According to his obituary in the Accrington Observer and Times, he "established a reputation as a thoroughly efficient and reliable officer... and the unit under his charge distinguished itself on several occasions. He played a gallant part in the severe fighting on the Somme from 5th July to the 12th September". He came home on leave from 28/10/1916 to 6/11/1916.

George was in No Man's Land on 28/11/1916 when he was fatally shot through the head by a sniper. His father wrote to the War Office on 15/12/1916 asking where his son was buried. (The Accrington Pals website: www.pals.org.uk indicates he was initially buried in a German cemetery, where his grave was found the following year marked with the inscription "To a brave British Officer who was killed whilst examining our wire on November 28th, 1916"). His obituary in the Accrington Observer and Times, on 5/12/1916, quoted his Commanding Officer's description of him as "a very gallant officer".

In August 1917 the War Office Graves Registration Service (forerunner of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission) wrote to George's father, informing him that George was then buried on the outskirts of St Laurent Blangy. He now rests in grave I.A.5 at the Point-du-Jour Military Cemetery, Athies, near Arras, France. He is also commemorated on the Accrington War Memorial. According to *The Record of Service of Solicitors & Articled Clerks with His Majesty's forces 1914-1919*, George was once Mentioned in Despatches. His effects (comprising his cigarette case, 2 rings, wrist watch, pen, postcard photos, a letter and some pen & ink sketches) were sent to his family on 19/12/1916.



George Slinger



George's grave & Point-du-Jour Military Cemetery © TWGPP



17) William SLINGER

William was born on 27/3/1894 in Accrington, Lancashire, the eldest son of George Nicholas Slinger and Ellen Augusta Lane nee Booth, and the brother of George (see previous page). On the 1901 census he was staying at Thornton Christchurch, Lancashire with his aunt, Elizabeth Nutter.

William and his brother George transferred from Christchurch School, Accrington to The King's School, Peterborough as boarders on 7/5/1907. Both brothers played on the School's 1910 cricket team. By the 1911 census William was staying with his aunt in Accrington, recorded as being a law student. On 28/5/1914 he was recorded on the passenger manifest of the *SS Agadir* as a "clerk", travelling 1st class from London to Saffi, Morocco. He worked there as a trader for a cotton merchant. Following the outbreak of the War, he returned to England on 21/10/1914 aboard *SS Pangbourne*.

William's Army service record (ref: WO 339/78080) is held by The National Archives. It records that he joined the 11th Battalion East Lancashire Regiment as a Private on 9/11/1914, regimental number 15622, and that he was 5' 10" tall, with light brown hair and blue eyes. His commission as Temporary 2nd Lieutenant, effective from 7/12/1914, was published in the London Gazette on 12/1/1915. He was posted to the 12th Battalion, but later served on attachment with the 1st Battalion. His appointment as Temporary Lieutenant from 1/3/1916 was published in the London Gazette on 19/5/1916. He was the Brigade's Physical Instructor before going to France in September 1916. Shortly after arriving he was appointed second in command of a Prisoner of War camp. He was invalided home in November 1916. He returned to France in January 1917 but, for medical reasons, spent four months at the base, where he acted as Assistant Adjutant. He rejoined his Regiment in May 1917. He came home on leave on 9/7/1917, returning to the Front on 19/7/1917.

On his first active duty after returning, William was killed by shellfire while leading his Company up to the firing line on 23/7/1917 (eight months after his brother). He is buried in grave A.15 at Hervin Farm British Cemetery, St Laurent-Blangy, less than a mile from George's grave (see photograph below). His obituary in the Accrington Observer and Times on 4/8/1917 quoted a letter from his Commanding Officer: "He was my Acting Adjutant, when we were last in the line, and I therefore had ample opportunity of judging his character. He frequently used to accompany me round the line, both by day and night, and I always found him a good companion by reason of his cheerfulness and great courage... The battalion mourns the death of a very gallant youngster". William's Chaplain had sent his sympathies to the family and to William's fiancée, commenting that William had gone "out of his way to be kind and helpful" to him. William's belongings were returned to his father, including his diary, damaged gold wrist-watch, a mascot, letters and photos and pressed flowers. He is commemorated on the Accrington War Memorial. He left a Will, naming his father as executor. (The Slinger family suffered a succession of tragedies within a few short years. George Nicholas Slinger senior married Ellen Augusta Lane Booth on 26/4/1893. They had four children, one of whom died as an infant. Their three surviving sons, William, George and Tempest, all served in World War 1, as did George senior himself. Ellen Slinger died on 28/2/1915, aged 49; George junior was killed in action in November 1916, aged 21; William died in July 1917, aged 23. George senior, who served as a Major in the East Lancashire Regiment, survived the War. He married Esther Simpson in 1918 and returned to Accrington. He died from bronchial pneumonia on 16/12/1923, aged 58. Within eight years, mother, father and two sons had died. William and George's brother, Tempest, survived).



William Slinger



William's grave & Hervin Farm British Cemetery © TWGPP

18) Frederick Wardale SMITH

Frederick was born in Peterborough on 17/3/1891, the son of Charles Lewis Smith and Mary Ann nee Wardale. His father was a railway engine driver.

Frederick attended The King's School from 1/9/1900 to 31/7/1906 and was a Cathedral chorister. On the 1901 census he was living with his parents at 26 Lime Tree Avenue, Peterborough. The family had moved to Wardale House, Lime Tree Avenue, Peterborough by 1908. (According to the Probate Index, Frederick's father died on 29/4/1908). By the 1911 census Frederick was living with his mother at 67 Midland Road, Peterborough, and was working as an ironmonger's assistant. (His mother later moved to the Almshouses in the Minster Precincts, Peterborough).

Frederick's Army service file records that he was working as an apprentice at Messrs Amies, Ironmongers, when he enlisted as a Gunner with the Northamptonshire Battery of the Royal Field Artillery on 29/1/1909. He was just over 5 ft 5 inches tall. His regimental number was 4129. He left the Army on 27/1/1913, having completed 4 years service.

Following the outbreak of World War 1, he re-enlisted and was appointed as a Corporal with the Northamptonshire Regiment. He later became a Lance Sergeant with the same regiment. His regimental number was 14810. He was sent to France on 1/9/1915. At the time of his death, he was serving with the 6th Battalion.

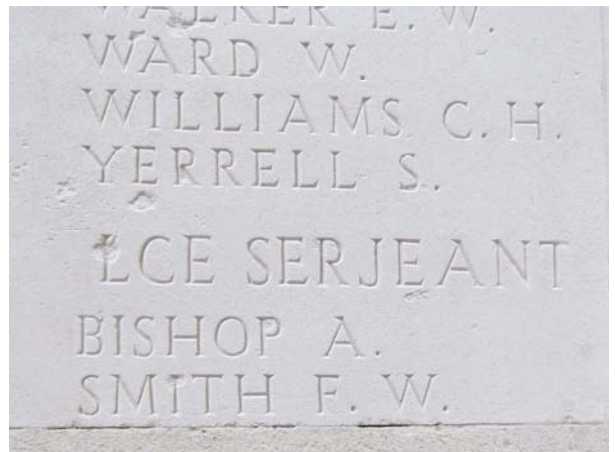
(The 6th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment was in the 54th Brigade in the 18th (Eastern) Division. It began embarkation for France in July 1915 and fought on the Western Front throughout the War. From July 1916 it took part in the Battles of the Somme).

Frederick was killed in action on 14/7/1916 at Bois des Troncs during the Battle of Bazentin, one of the Battles of the Somme. The Peterborough Advertiser, issued on 19/8/1916, reported the following letter, sent to Frederick's fiancée, Miss A. Dobson, by his Commanding Officer, Colonel Ripley: "Your fiancé, Sergt. F.W. Smith, was killed by machine gun fire on July 14th, instantaneously, as far as I can gather, whilst gallantly leading his platoon in the capture of Trones Wood [sic] by the Northamptonshire Regiment. We were unable to bury our dead during the time we were there, owing to intense artillery fire, but he is now probably buried where he fell, bravely doing his duty".

Frederick has no known grave but is commemorated on Face 11A on the Thiepval Memorial in France (see photograph below). He is commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral in the Book of Remembrance, which records his last address as 38 Eastfield Road, Peterborough. He is also named on the War memorial at St Mark's Church, Lincoln Road, Peterborough. There is a memorial stone to him on his parents' grave in Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough (see below). He left a Will, naming his mother as executrix.



Broadway Cemetery inscription to Frederick



Frederick's inscription on Thiepval Memorial

19) Charles Foote SNOW

Charles was born in Peterborough on 4/12/1887, the eldest son of William Henry Snow and Fanny Maria nee Foote. His father was a cabinet maker and furniture dealer. On the 1891 census Charles was living with his parents at 11 North Street, Peterborough. They later moved to Compton House, 21 Westgate, Peterborough.

Charles attended The King's School from September 1898 to March 1899. On the 1901 census he was a boarder at Hunstanton Boys' High School. He was also educated at Barton School, Wisbech. On leaving school he trained as a dental surgeon. He served an apprenticeship in dental technical work in Formby, Lancashire, then entered the Dental School at Guy's Hospital, London. He took a dental diploma at the Royal College of Surgeons and was registered as a dentist on 25/5/1910. He worked as a locum for six months before moving to South Africa, where he became a partner in a dental practice in Kimberley.

From 1912 Charles held a commission as a Lieutenant in the Diamond Field Horse. From 24/8/1914 to 24/3/1915 he served as a Senior Lieutenant in the 7th Battalion South African Infantry (Kimberley Regiment). He was employed as Surgeon Dentist with the SA Defence Force on 25/3/1915 and served as a Captain in the South African Medical Corps throughout the German South West African Campaign.

He sailed from Cape Town to Plymouth aboard the *Durham Castle*, arriving in London on 12/10/1915. His occupation was recorded on the ship's manifest as "soldier". He was commissioned as Second Lieutenant with the Royal Field Artillery with effect from 21/10/1915, which was published in the London Gazette on 26/10/1915. He served with A Battery, 187th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery as a forward observation officer. He was posted to the Front on 1/5/1916.

Charles died from a head wound at midday on 30/6/1916, killed at his post at an observing station by a shell from a field gun. He was buried in grave II.C.30 in the London Rifle Brigade Cemetery at Comines-Warneton, near Ploegsteert in Belgium (see photograph below). His obituary, printed on 8/7/1916 in the Peterborough Advertiser, described him as "a pattern of a patriotic Englishman... a courageous and gallant gentleman, and a dutiful and loving son". Letters were quoted from Charles' former comrades, who described him as having been "absolutely fearless and quite splendid in his work". A fellow officer wrote: "I have lost one of the best friends a man could ever have. Charles was loved wherever he went... He was a universal favourite with his brother officers, and had the respect and friendship of his men". Charles' death was also announced on page 88 of the British Medical Journal on 15/7/1916. He left a Will, naming his mother as executrix. His address was recorded in the Probate Index as Compton House, 21 Westgate, Peterborough.

Charles is named on the War Memorial Arch at Guy's Hospital, London, on the Old Bartonians' Roll of Honour in St Peter and St Paul Church, Wisbech and on the War memorial at St John the Baptist Church, Peterborough. He is named in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral and is also commemorated on his parents' headstone in Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough. His Army Service record is held by The National Archives, reference: WO 339/47381. (Documents relating to him are on The King's School's website: www.intranet.kings.peterborough.sch.uk/kingsremembrance/index.html).



Charles Foote Snow



Charles' grave in Belgium

20) Robert John STOKES

Robert was born in Brampton, Huntingdonshire on 31/5/1888, the youngest of Thomas and Hannah Stokes' eight children. (His father was a corn cake and coal merchant). On the 1891 census he was living with his parents at the Mill House, Brampton. (His parents later moved to Broadway House, Broadway, Dorset).

Robert attended The King's School as a boarder from September 1898. A keen sportsman, he played on the School's cricket team 1904-1907 (as Captain 1907) and rugby team 1905-1906 & 1906-1907. The Prize List dated 31/7/1907 records that he received six prizes, in categories ranging from Classics to Rifle Shooting, as well as the Good Conduct Prize. (Rather poignantly, in light of later events, in a school Debating Society session in April 1907, Robert argued that the "Art of War" had benefitted from modern inventions, so that "warfare had been raised from mere animal 'scrapping' to a game of science and skill"). He left King's in July 1907 to attend St Catherine's College, Cambridge as a Pearson Gates Exhibitioner, graduating B.A. three years later. Having originally considered taking Holy Orders, he chose instead to enter the teaching profession. He taught at Wixenford School in Wokingham from 1910 to 1914. On the 1911 census he was a visitor at Treffans, 23 Branksome Wood Road, Bournemouth.

He enlisted at Scotland Yard as a Private in the Public School's Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) on 28/12/1914. On 30/12/1914 he wrote to his uncle, wittily describing his experience of the recruitment process. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant from 12/5/1915 in the King's Royal Rifle Corps appeared in the London Gazette on 11/5/1915. He served with the 6th Battalion, attached to the 2nd Battalion, and arrived in France 1/10/1915. He was wounded on 19/11/1915 but wrote to his family, reassuring them that he was fine. After treatment at Le Touquet Hospital, he resumed duty on 10/12/1915.

(In August 1916 the 2nd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps took part in the Battle of Pozieres, one of the Battles of the Somme. The Battalion's War Diary (TNA: WO 95/1272/6) records that, on 20th August, Robert Stokes' two platoons were stationed near High Wood. For several hours they succeeded in repelling a series of violent enemy attacks, during which Robert set "a very fine example to all ranks therein of coolness and complete disregard of danger. He walked up and down under heavy fire encouraging the men and controlling the rate of fire, and the whole situation in his vicinity". When the Gloucester Regiment later arrived to relieve the Company, they had no officer with them. Dispatching his own men back down the line, Robert himself therefore stayed to assist the Gloucesters. He was killed by a shell shortly afterwards. The Battalion War Diary entry for 20th August included the comment: "Other officers of the Coy (Company) have fallen in this way at the head of their own Riflemen, but it has not been given to many to sacrifice themselves, as this officer did, for the benefit of other Regiments, and to set an example of courage and determination under difficult circumstances").

Robert died on 20/8/1916. His family received a letter from Lt P.D. Ravenscroft stating: "... all ranks say that he deserved at least the D.S.O. if not the V.C.". He later wrote: "... we are putting up a cross on Bob's grave, which is at the NW corner of High Wood... I hope to be able to visit the spot in a few days... I should like to see for myself the grave where one of my greatest friends died in quite the most gallant manner I have seen during the war". (In 1920 Robert's remains were reinterred in grave XIX.N.2 at Delville Wood Cemetery). The address on his Will was 23 Branksome Wood Road, Bournemouth. He is named in the Bournemouth Book of Remembrance and on the Wixenford School Roll of Honour in Ludgrove School's Chapel. He is also on the Brampton War Memorial at St Mary Magdalene Church. His Army record is held by The National Archives (ref: WO 339/43223). Documents within it record him as "very popular" and "very well liked" by his men, who described him as a "splendid fellow".



Robert John Stokes...



and his grave

21) Gerard Talbot SWEETING

Gerard was born in Maxey on 15/5/1884, the youngest child of Reverend Walter Debenham Sweeting and Maria Georgina nee Waller. His father was a former Headmaster of The King's School. He had later become Vicar of Maxey. On the 1891 census Gerard was living with his parents at Maxey Vicarage.

Gerard was educated at The King's School from April 1897 to January 1900. He played for both the School rugby team in 1899-1900, and the cricket team in 1899. His mother died 1/11/1900.

Gerard's whereabouts have not been traced on the 1901 census. He was not with his father, who was still living at Maxey. (Reverend Walter Sweeting later moved to Holy Trinity Vicarage, Trinity Road, Rotherhithe, Southwark, where he appeared on the Electoral Register from 1903 to 1907). In 1906 the Petriburgian Old Boys' Year Book recorded that Gerard was working in a stockbroker's office, living at Maxey, Queen's Road, Wallington, Surrey. On the 1911 census he was living with his father at 'Maxey', 3 Queen's Road, Wallington* working as a stockjobber's clerk in the Stock Exchange. His father died on 19/1/1913 in Surrey. (*Number 3 Queen's Road was later renumbered as 30 Queen's Road).

In about 1912, Gerard enlisted in London as a Rifleman with the 1/9th County of London Battalion (Queen Victoria's Rifles). His regimental number was 2292. He served in 'A' Company. Following the outbreak of World War 1 he was mobilised and sent to France with his unit, landing at Le Havre on 5/11/1914. (The Battalion then came under the command of the 13th Brigade in the 5th Division. It took part in the First Battle of Ypres in 1914 and in the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915).

Gerard died on 14/3/1915. He was on look-out duty when he was killed by a rifle grenade that exploded behind his back. On 3/4/1915 the Peterborough Advertiser printed a letter from one of his comrades, who described Gerard as "...the immaculate soldier. He never missed a parade, never went sick, never fell out on a march, and never committed an unsoldierly action, but was always doing his share without grumbling and was ever ready to help others in their tasks. His absence will make a big gap in his old section". He was buried in grave I.F.6 at the Prowse Point Military Cemetery on the Rue St Yvon, near Ploegsteert in Comines-Warneton, Hainaut, Belgium (see photographs below). He left a Will, naming one of his brothers, Walter Bigsby Sweeting, as executor.

Gerard is named on Maxey War Memorial. A stained glass window was also unveiled at Maxey Church by the Dean of Peterborough, on 10th October 1916. It bears the inscription: "To the Glory of God and in proud and loving memory of Gerard Talbot Sweeting, 9th County of London Regt, youngest son of the Rev W D Sweeting, vicar of this Parish, born at Maxey 15th May 1884, killed in action 14th March 1915 while serving his Country at St Ives [sic], Belgium". (Further documents relating to him are available to view on The King's School website:

www.intranet.kings.peterborough.sch.uk/kingsremembrance/index.html).



Gerard Talbot Sweeting



Gerard's grave at Prowse Point



22) Ernest TAYLOR

Ernest was born on 20/7/1895, the elder of two children of Charles Taylor and Annie Elizabeth nee Smart. On the 1901 and 1911 census he was living with his parents at 81 Mayor's Walk, Peterborough. His father was a gardener.

Ernest was admitted to The King's School on 1/5/1906 from Central National School, Peterborough. He was a Cathedral chorister for more than six years. In both 1911 and 1912 he won prizes for Scripture and for Latin. After leaving King's he worked as a clerk in the offices of the Star Pressed Brick Company in Peterborough.

After enlisting at the outbreak of War, he successively served as a Private, Corporal and then Lance Sergeant with the 2nd Battalion Huntingdonshire Cyclists (regimental number 1088), before transferring to the 14th Royal Warwickshire Regiment (regimental number 25042). He later served with the 3rd Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment as a Lance Corporal. He was sent to France on 26/7/1916.

He was invalided home in October 1917, suffering from dysentery and the effects of gas poisoning. He was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant on 18/12/1917 and returned to France in April 1918. He then joined the 7th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment, which was under the command of the 17th (Northern) Division.

When Ernest was wounded in action on 5/9/1918 he wrote to his parents assuring them that he was only slightly injured. He died at Varennes two days later, on 7/9/1918, aged 23. His commanding officer later wrote to Ernest's parents: "He was hit in an attack carried out by the battalion, and in some of the severest fighting we have had during the past six months. He had not been with us long, but he had shown himself to be a capable officer, much liked by his comrades and by his men, and we are all very sorry indeed to have lost him. He was leading his platoon to the support of a company who were being very heavily counter-attacked in a position we had just taken over from the enemy, when a machine gun bullet hit him. I am quite sure if he had lived he would have gained distinction in the service, for he was a good soldier, who used his brains, and thought of his men and their comfort, and that is the best type of officer possible. He was very good when he was hit. There was a considerable number of casualties, but he insisted on waiting his turn for a stretcher along with the others. It may be some consolation to you to know that he did his duty nobly and well". Ernest's Chaplain wrote: "He was such a very nice fellow and liked by all".

Ernest was buried in grave III.M.11 at the Varennes Military Cemetery in France (see below). His death was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser on 14/9/1918, with a further report published on 28/9/1918. There is an inscription to Ernest in Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough, on the gravestone of his brother Edgar, who died 27/10/1906 aged 4 (see photograph below). Ernest is commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral in the Book of Remembrance. He is also named on the War memorials at St Mary's Church and St John the Baptist Church, Peterborough. He had written a Will in the Field, naming his mother as legatee.



Ernest Taylor



Ernest's inscription at Broadway Cemetery.



Ernest's grave

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23) Horace James TAYLOR

Horace was born on 23/6/1893, the son of Alfred and Mary Elizabeth Taylor. (His father was an engine fitter for Great Northern Railway). On the 1901 census he was living with his parents at 250 Lincoln Road, Peterborough. (Between 1905 and 1911 the family moved to 24 All Saints' Road, Peterborough).

Horace was admitted to The King's School from St Mark's Elementary School on 25/3/1905. He was a Cathedral chorister. He was an all-round sportsman and played on both the cricket team in 1910 & 1911, and the rugby team in 1909-10 & 1910-11. The Petriburgian frequently referred to his prowess in athletic events, often commenting on his having succeeded despite his small stature. (In April 1907 the magazine reported that he had set a record time in the steeplechase, stating that he had run "splendidly all the way, and for a boy of his size, completed the course in a creditable time, while his net time (44mins.50 secs.) is quite a record"). He left on 31/7/1911 to attend Peterborough Technical College.

He joined the Northamptonshire Regiment, on an unknown date. His regimental number was 20602. When he later transferred to the 4th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment, his regimental number changed to 33449. He served as a Corporal.

(The 4th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment was a reserve battalion. It was deployed in the Harwich area from the start of World War 1. In July 1916 it was posted overseas, landing at Le Havre on the 25th July. In France, it joined the 190th Brigade in the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division. It took part in the Battle of the Ancre in November 1916, and in the subsequent Operations on the Ancre in 1917. From the 6th to 16th February 1917 the 4th Battalion took part in the action at Miraumont, in which it sustained numerous casualties, including 45 men who were posted as "missing, believed killed").

Horace was killed in action on 14/2/1917, aged 23. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on Face 2C of the Thiepval Memorial in France (see photograph below). He is commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral in the Book of Remembrance, which records his last address as 19 Stone Lane, Millfield, Peterborough. He is also commemorated on the parish memorial at All Saints' Church, Park Road, Peterborough and on his parents' headstone in Eastfield Cemetery,

Peterborough (Main Avenue, grave number 51). On 6/11/1920 the Peterborough and Hunts Standard reported the unveiling of the All Saints' War Memorial. In that report, Horace was described as having been a Bombing Instructor with the British Expeditionary Force. (Horace's only surviving brother, John Alfred, joined the Royal Engineers Postal Section on 26/11/1914, regimental number 47649. He was later transferred to the Northamptonshire Regiment. He survived the War).



Horace's parents' headstone in Eastfield Cemetery.



Park Road All Saints' Church War Memorial



Horace's inscription at Thiepval.



Thiepval Memorial © CWGC, by kind permission.

24) John Cecil Caster THOMPSON

John was born on 15/4/1881, the youngest son of Alderman John Thompson J.P. by his second wife, Mary nee Caster, who he married on 10/8/1869 in Marylebone. (John senior, a renowned master builder, worked on every Cathedral in England during his career. Among his many civil contracts was the erection of The King's School's new premises in Park Road in 1884/85. He served four terms as Mayor of Peterborough). In 1891 John junior was living with his parents at The Lindens, Lincoln Road. His father died on 11/4/1898.

John attended The King's School from 1/9/1890 to 31/12/1892, moving then to Uppingham School. At Michaelmas 1900 he entered Pembroke College Cambridge, from which he graduated B.A. in 1903. According to the *Record of Service of Solicitors and Articled Clerks with His Majesty's Forces, 1914-1919*, in February 1907 he was admitted as Managing Clerk with Blundell, Gordon & Co of 16 Sergeant's Inn, Fleet Street, London. He married Norah Kathleen Davenport on 11/7/1907 at St Mark's Church, Surbiton, Surrey. Their daughter Audrey was born at 12 FitzJames Avenue, Fulham on 2/10/1908. On the 1911 census John and his family were staying with his wife's mother in Kingston-on-Thames. John was stated to be a solicitor. He appeared on the electoral register at FitzJames Avenue, Fulham 1910-1915.

John's Army service record is held at The National Archives (ref: WO 339/24540). It records that he resigned from Blundell, Gordon & Co to join the 28th London Regiment (Artists Rifles) as a Private on 5/8/1914. His regimental number was 1406. (His attestation form records that he had been a member of the Uppingham Cadet Corps for four years. He was 5' 8" tall). On 26/10/1914 he was posted to France to join the British Expeditionary Force, and was commissioned as Temporary 2nd Lieutenant from 1/1/1915 (published in London Gazette on 2/3/1915). He was attached to the 1st Battalion Scots Guards who were in the 1st (Guards Brigade) in the 1st Division. He was nominated for an appointment as Temporary Lieutenant, which was due to take effect from 28/1/1915.

The War Diary of the 1st Battalion Scots Guards (TNA ref: WO 95/1263/2) records that on 25/1/1915 John was with his unit at Cuinchy near Bethune when they were shelled at 7 a.m. Enemy troops swiftly followed the bombardment by storming their trenches. Following this attack, John was initially officially posted as missing. Enquiries were made of the German Red Cross whether he had been taken prisoner, but no trace of him was found. His widow Norah was later told of a statement made by Private M. Gutman of the Scots Guards, who was then a Prisoner of War. He stated he had seen John lying apparently dead in the trenches on 25/1/1915, from a gunshot wound to the head.

John died on 25/1/1915. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Panel 47 of Le Touret Memorial in France as a 2nd Lieutenant of the Artists' Rifles - see below. (As he died before 28/1/1915, his planned appointment as Temporary Lieutenant never took effect). He is also commemorated on Panel 19 of Uppingham School War Memorial (in their chapel), on the Pembroke College War Memorial in Cambridge, and in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral. (John left a Will but as his death was not confirmed Probate was not granted until 1916. His widow was left with no income from January to August 1915. In June she wrote to the War Office, explaining she had needed to settle her husband's bill for Army kit. She continued: "I'm so sorry to trouble you, as I know you must have a tremendous amount of work to do, but I should be grateful if you could let me know if I am entitled to anything, as when my husband volunteered, he gave up everything, and I have managed to do with a little private money I had, as the firm of solicitors my husband worked for of course are paying me nothing". In August 1915 the Army awarded an allowance to her and her 6 year old daughter. Norah never remarried).



John's inscription on Le Touret Memorial. Both photographs © TWGPP, reproduced by kind permission

25) Samuel VERGETTE (Mentioned in Despatches)

Samuel was born on 16/9/1898 at 247 Eastfield Road, Peterborough, the only son of Charles Tomson Vergette and Mary Maria nee Anderson. (His father was later Mayor of Peterborough and was a Temporary Captain in the Northamptonshire Volunteer Regiment in World War 1). On the 1901 and 1911 census Samuel lived with his parents and two sisters at 55 Broadway, Peterborough.

Samuel was admitted to The King's School on 1/5/1906 from Miss Mays' School. On 1/8/1911 he left King's to continue his education at Wellingborough Grammar School, where he obtained his football and cricket colours and was a Corporal in the Officers' Training Corps. In 1914 he left Wellingborough to join his father's firm: Messrs Fox & Vergette, Auctioneers.

He applied for a commission as 2nd Lieutenant with the Lincolnshire Regiment on 28/10/1915, aged 17. The application form records that he was 6 feet tall. His commission with effect from 1/11/1915 was published in the London Gazette 16/11/1915. He trained with the 3/4th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment until he reached the age of 18. He was then posted to France and transferred to the 1st Battalion, which he joined on 22/10/1916. It was under the command of the 62nd Brigade in the 21st Division.

During the following year Samuel became Adjutant to Lt Colonel Lewis Evans V.C. and was Sniping Officer and Intelligence Officer. He was said to have had a bright happy smile and a lovable nature that won him many friends and made him popular with the ranks. (The 1st Battalion Lincolnshire's War Diary records that he scored 33 runs for the Battalion in a cricket match played on 25/6/1917 against the Brigade team, during a short break from the trenches). Letters received by his family after his death prove that he was also held in high esteem by his Brigadier and other superior officers, who valued his services. His promotion to Lieutenant from 1/7/1917 was posthumously published in the London Gazette on 2/11/1917.

From 26th September to 3rd October 1917, the 1st Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment took part in the Battle of Polygon Wood, one of the Third Battles of Ypres (Passchendaele). From 4th to 6th October it took part in the Battle of Broodseinde. During the battle the telephone wires became severed, so Samuel and a fellow officer volunteered to walk a mile under heavy shell-fire to pick up a buried wire and send an urgent message to Brigade Headquarters. Neither man was heard from again. Samuel's action was said to have merited a V.C. but none was awarded. The Peterborough Advertiser reported on 20/10/1917 that he was missing. They published further reports on 27/10/1917 and 3/11/1917.

Samuel is presumed to have died on 4/10/1917, aged 19. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Panel 35 on Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium. In Peterborough he is commemorated at the Cathedral in the Book of Remembrance (which records his address as Priestgate) and on the War memorial at St John the Baptist Church. A service was held at St Benedict's Church, Glinton on 25/1/1920, when a stained glass window and brass plaque were dedicated in his memory. In the Order of Service, tributes to Samuel included one from Brigadier General C.G. Rawling: "He was a splendid boy, full of courage and spirit, and with a brilliant brain. He was the life of the 1st Lincolnshire Regiment, always ready for work, never tired, and a perfect example to all Subalterns. Hardly 19, he had the confidence and knowledge of one five or ten years older". Lt Colonel Evans, V.C. said of Samuel that: "He was a born soldier, full of an enthusiasm to which those under him responded at once... He was, as you will readily understand, loved by all". Samuel was Mentioned in Despatches. His Army service record is held at The National Archives, reference: WO 374/70540. (Further documents are on The King's School's website).



Samuel Vergette



Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium

26) Frank Henry WADLOW

Frank was born on 22/11/1888 in Hampstead, London, the eldest son of Henry George Wadlow and Emily Mary Jane nee Jeffery. His father was a butcher. On the 1891 census Frank was living with his parents at 65 Hillfield Road, Hampstead. (By the 1901 census the family had moved to 'Marylands', Dogsthorpe Road, Peterborough).

Frank attended The King's School from 1/9/1898 to 30/4/1905. On the 1911 census he was recorded as being a tailor and outfitter's assistant, living with his parents.

He was in training as a farmer, and was engaged to Miss Herbert of Cow Pasture Farm, Woodston, when he enlisted in September 1915 as a Private with the Huntingdonshire Cyclist Battalion. His regimental number was 1580. He was later transferred to the 1/1st Battalion of the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, and his regimental number changed to 267565.

(In September 1915, the 1/1st Battalion Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry was under the command of the 145th Brigade in the 48th (South Midland) Division. It took part in the Battles of the Somme in 1916. From 23/7/1916 to 3/9/1916 it fought in the Battle of Pozieres. From 14th to 16th August 1916 it was occupying trenches North-West of Pozieres, near Mouquet Farm, under heavy bombardment).

On 2/9/1916, the Peterborough Advertiser reported that Frank was missing in action, and that his parents had received the following communication from his depot: "On August 15th the company were holding a trench which was being very badly shelled, and no trace has been found of several of the men who were attached to the company".

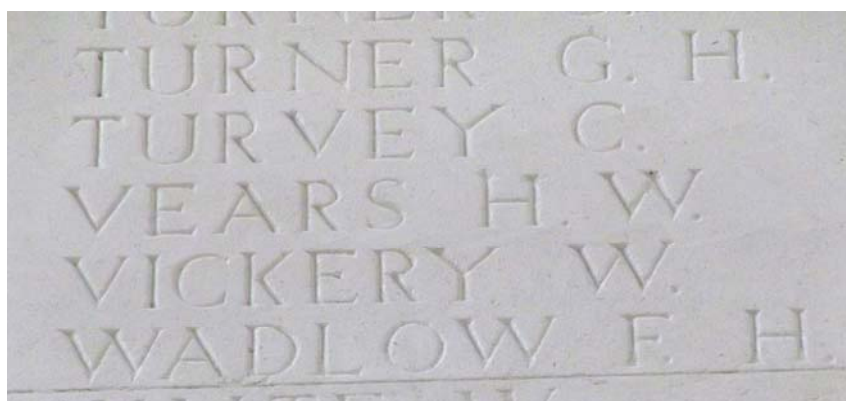
The following week, on 9/9/1916, the Peterborough Advertiser reported that Frank's father had received the following letter from his son's Commanding Officer, Lt R. Gregson-Ellis: "Dear Sir, you will by now have heard the sad news about your son. He was reported missing, but I fear that there is little doubt that he has been killed. His body was never found. He had only been with us a short time, but during that time we had learned to appreciate him. I am wording the sentiments of the whole company as well as my own when I say that he is a great loss to us. I can only offer you my sincerest sympathy in your terrible trouble".

On 30/9/1916, the Peterborough Advertiser reported that Frank's fiancée, Miss Herbert, had received a letter informing her that Frank had been killed by a shell while on sentry duty.

Frank died on 15/8/1916. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on the Pier and Face 10A and 10D of the Thiepval Memorial in France (see photograph below). He is also commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, and on the Paston War Memorial at All Saints' Church (see photograph below). He left a Will, naming his father as legatee.



Paston All Saints' War Memorial



Frank's inscription on Thiepval Memorial

27) John Douglas Barford WARWICK

John was born in Peterborough on 10/6/1893, the elder son of Harry James Warwick and Clara Edith nee Barford, who had married in 1891. John was the grandson of the late Alderman William Barford of Peterborough, and of the late James Warwick of Thorpe Tower.

John's father (an auctioneer and valuer) died on 7/5/1899, leaving his widow to raise their children alone. On the 1901 census, John and his brother James were being cared for by their aunt (Mary Barford) at 103 Park Road, Peterborough, while their mother and young sister were staying as visitors in Yorkshire. John was educated at The King's School Peterborough from 20/9/1904 to 31/12/1906, and then at Gresham's School, Holt from January 1907 to July 1910. After leaving school he worked for Messrs Ellis & Everard Ltd, Coal Merchants, first as a clerk and later as Company Secretary.

John's commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the 5th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment from 15/10/1910 appeared in the London Gazette on 8/11/1910. His promotion to Lieutenant from 2/5/1913 was published on 13/6/1913. He transferred to the 1st Battalion Huntingdonshire Cyclist Battalion on 27/2/1914, and was promoted to Captain on 30/8/1914 (published in the London Gazette 29/9/1914).

Following the outbreak of World War 1, John served with his Battalion on the Yorkshire coast for two years. At his own request, he was posted to France on 23/8/1916. On arrival, he was attached to the 1/1st Buckinghamshire Battalion of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry.

On 10/3/1917, John was commanding 'A' Company in the trenches, to the North-East of Barleux, when a gas shell burst at 4 a.m. at the entrance to their dug-out. John survived the explosion, but died from heart failure five hours later. (According to the Battalion's War Diary entry for that day, all 18 occupants of the trench had died from the effects of the gas-poisoning within 6 hours).

John died on 10/3/1917, aged 23. He was originally buried in Achille British Military Cemetery at Flaucourt, but was later re-interred in grave II.L.7 at Hem Farm Military Cemetery, Hem-Monacu in France (see below). He is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, and on the War memorial at St Mark's Church, Lincoln Road, Peterborough. His death was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser on 17/3/1917, which quoted his Commanding Officer's comments that his death would be "a very great loss to this Battalion, both as an officer and as a friend. As an officer he was quite one of the most capable and conscientious I have ever had the pleasure to serve with, and after joining us in September last he very rapidly gained the affection and respect of all ranks". The Chaplain of the Gloucestershire Regiment had written: "I knew him personally and was very fond of him, and he was often very kind to me... I need hardly say that he died doing his duty and trying to help his men".

A report of the memorial service held for John at St Mark's Church, Peterborough on 18/3/1917 was printed in the Peterborough Advertiser on 24/3/1917. At the service, he was described as having been "brave, strong, capable and vigorous". (His promotion to Major was posthumously published in the London Gazette on 21/9/1917).



John Douglas Barford Warwick



John's grave & Hem Farm Cemetery © TWGPP by kind permission

28) Sidney Archer WILKES

Sidney (more frequently known as Archer) was born on 6/11/1880 in the Stourbridge District, Worcestershire, the youngest son of John and Annie Wilkes. On the 1881 and 1891 census he was living with his parents in Kingswinford, Staffordshire, where he was baptised at Holy Trinity Church on 6/9/1893. (His father was a brewer's traveller). Sidney attended King Edward VI School in Stourbridge from 1894 to 1896.

Between 1896 and 1898 Sidney moved to Dunstable. The Luton Times and Advertiser announced on 30/9/1898 that "Archer" Wilkes, of Ashton Schools, had attained 2nd Class in the Diocesan Examinations of pupil teachers on 25/6/1898, in his second year. On 31/3/1901 he was recorded on the census as a student, boarding at 18 Hockmore Street, Cowley St John, Oxford. On 26/4/1901 the Luton Times and Advertiser announced that S. Archer Wilkes, of Church Street, Dunstable had just passed his Matriculation examination at Oxford University. On 3/8/1906, the same publication announced that he had been presented with a roll-top writing desk during the end-of-term ceremony at All Saints' Choir School at Clifton, Dunstable. Sidney then joined the staff at The King's School in Peterborough.

At The King's School he participated fully in school activities. In 1906 he was on a Past and Present sports team (see photograph below). He extolled the virtues of marriage during a meeting of the Debating Society in 1907. He played in goal for the Masters' XI football team, in which his much-appreciated skills frequently saved the match. He also played the role of a page in the 1907 school performance of a farce, *A Night Surprise*, "delighting the audience by his comic actions". He is believed to have left King's in 1907/1908.

Sidney married Alice May Anderson in the Conway District, Caernarvonshire in 1908. On the 1911 census they were living at 140 Kimberley Road, Cardiff. Sidney stated he was an M.A. graduate of Oxford, and that he was working as an Assistant Schoolmaster. The couple later had two daughters.

He joined the 3/4th Battalion Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) as a Private in 'C' Company in February/ March 1916. His regimental number was originally 5131. (Three weeks after enlisting he sent the photograph below, of himself in uniform, to his brother Robert in Ohio). He was later transferred to the 4th (City of Dundee) Battalion, and his regimental number changed to 201465. His commission as Second Lieutenant from the ranks on 30/5/1917 was published in the London Gazette on 15/6/1917. In August 1918 the 4th (City of Dundee) Battalion was in the 44th Brigade in the 15th (Scottish) Division.

Sidney was killed in action on 24/8/1918. He was buried in grave IV.E.13 at Roclinourt Military Cemetery in France*(see below). He left a Will, naming his widow as executrix. His address was recorded on the Probate register as 14 Alfreda Road, Whitchurch, Glamorganshire. He is named on King Edward VI War Memorial in Stourbridge, and is listed in their Roll of Honour booklet (as "Sydney" Archer Wilkes). (*Situating to the north of Arras, Roclinourt Military Cemetery was a frontline cemetery begun in April 1917. It contains 916 Commonwealth burials from the First World War, plus 4 German War graves. Of the 884 identified graves within the cemetery, 27 are men from the Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), who died between 7/4/1917 and 28/8/1918).



Sidney in 1906...



and in 1916



Sidney's grave © TWGPP

29) John Thomas WOOLLEY

John was born in Woodston on 20/9/1893, the only surviving son of Nathaniel Woolley and Eliza nee Bridgewood, who married in 1889. On the 1901 census he was living with his parents at 2 Brick Terrace, Oundle Road, Woodston, Peterborough. His father was a railway signalman. On the 1911 census John was a schoolboy, living with his parents and two sisters, Edith and Florence, at 251 Oundle Road, Woodston.

John was a Cathedral chorister for nine years. He joined the voluntary choir on his seventh birthday and the regular choir two years later. In September 1902 he was admitted to The King's School, where he later obtained a Second Class Honours in the Oxford Senior. During 1907 Speech Day he received prizes for Scripture and Geography. He was on the cricket and rugby teams from 1908 to 1911. (He later played for Peterborough Town Cricket Club). After leaving King's he passed the London University Matriculation Examination in the First Division in September 1911. He was a student-teacher from 16/9/1911 to 25/7/1912 at Fletton County Secondary School, from which he progressed to St John's College, Battersea, London. He played for the College cricket team and, according to the Midsummer 1913 edition of The Petriburgian, he won the Cricket Bat for the highest score of the season. He intended to become a teacher and had already secured a post when he was mobilised.

John's attestation form records that he was living at St John's College when he enlisted on 1/11/1912 at Battersea as a Private in the 1/10th Battalion Middlesex Regiment Territorial Force. (He was 5 feet 10 inches tall). His regimental number was TF/1430. The Regiment was marching to Salisbury Plain for summer manoeuvres in 1914 when War broke out, and they were among the first to be mobilised. John was transferred to the 2/10th Battalion Middlesex Regiment on 28/10/1914. On 18/7/1915 he embarked at Devonport on *HMT Huntsgreen**, with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. He landed at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli on 9/8/1915. (**HMT Huntsgreen* was originally a German passenger ship named the *Derfflinger*, which operated on the Bremen to Suez & Far East service. She was captured by the British at Port Said in 1914, renamed *Huntsgreen*, and used as a British troopship for the rest of World War 1).

The 2/10th Battalion Middlesex Regiment was in the 160th (Welsh Border) Brigade in the 53rd (Welsh) Division. In August 1915 the 53rd Division was in general reserve, supporting of other units in Gallipoli. (*Gallipoli Diary, Volume 2*, by General Sir Ian Hamilton, G.C.B., published 1920, has further details of the campaign. It is available to view at www.archive.org/details/gallipolidiary02hamiuoft).

John was killed in action on 12/8/1915, three days after landing at Gallipoli. His death was announced on 4/9/1915 in the Peterborough Advertiser and Peterborough Standard, which quoted a letter to his parents from his Lieutenant: "As officer in charge of 'C' Company, I wish to express my sincere sympathy with you and your family in their sad bereavement. Pte Woolley was but two paces away from me in the trenches when the regrettable incident occurred. He was brave and undaunted to the end and passed away without suffering any pain. Your son was beloved by his comrades and, perhaps, the most popular soldier in the Company, and by expressing my sincere sympathy I not only speak for myself, but for all the N.C.O.'s and men who remain". In January 1916 John's possessions were returned to his father, comprising a Testament, a diary, a photograph and a case containing a lock of hair and piece of lace. He has no known grave, but is commemorated on Panels 30 and 64 of the Basra Memorial in Iraq (see photograph below). He is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, on Woodston's War Memorial (see photograph below), on the Fletton Ex-Servicemen's Club Memorial, and also on the Fletton County Secondary School War Memorial (now at Nene Park Academy).



John Woolley



Woodston War Memorial



Basra Memorial: © TWGPP by kind permission

The King's School World War 1 Memorial at St George's Memorial Church, Ypres



In July 2005, The King's School erected a brass plaque at St George's Memorial Church in Ypres, commemorating six former pupils. The plaque reads:

IN MEMORY OF THE PUPILS OF
THE KING'S SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH
WHO DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE IN THE YPRES SALIENT
IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-18
Lt C.G. Crick Lt P.J.D. Flecknoe Pte V.P. Gaches
Lt C.F. Snow Rfmn G.T. Sweeting Lt S. Vergette

*

Visits by the School to the battlefields of the First World War began in the early 1920s. Following a gap, they resumed in the late 1970s. Since the 1990s they have become an annual event in the School's calendar, as part of the GCSE History course.

In 2004, The Reverend Canon Ray Jones, Chaplain of St George's Memorial Church in Ypres, invited The King's School to erect a memorial plaque to those ex-pupils who had been killed in the Ypres Salient during the First World War. Following this invitation, detailed research was conducted that identified six such casualties from the School's War Memorial. A plaque was therefore commissioned, inscribed with their names.

The plaque was dedicated in a special service held at St George's Memorial Church on 9th July 2005, conducted by The Reverend Canon Ray Jones. The service was attended by Governors, staff, students, Old Petriburgians and some surviving relatives of five of the six named soldiers. As part of that commemoration, a visit was also made to the graves/memorials of those six soldiers, at each of which a wreath was laid. (See photographs on pages 37 and 38).

*



Students and staff of The King's School at the Thiepval Memorial, during a visit to Flanders.

YPRES PLAQUE VISIT, JULY 2005: wreath-laying



Gary Longman, Headteacher, laid the wreath at the Tyne Cot Memorial at Passchendaele, on the panel commemorating Cyril Crick.



Student, Bona Colton, laid the wreath at the Nine Elms British Cemetery at Poperinge, on the grave of Percy Flecknoe.



Relative, Brian Curtis, and Head Girl, Chloe Gibson, laid the wreath at the Menin Gate, Ypres, on the panel commemorating Vernon Gaches.



Dr Alan Campbell laid the wreath at the Rifle Brigade Cemetery at Ploegsteert, on the grave of his uncle, Charles Snow.



Dick Talbot, Churchwarden of Maxey Church, and King's School Governor, Chris Trotman, laid the wreath at the Prowse Point Military Cemetery at Ploegsteert, on the grave of Gerard Sweeting.



Nick Vergette laid the wreath at the Tyne Cot Memorial at Passchendaele, on the panel commemorating his relative, Samuel Vergette.

WORLD WAR 2 MEMORIALS

The memorial to The King's School old boys who died in World War 2 was unveiled in the School library in a ceremony which took place on the evening of Thursday 14th July 1949. The wooden plaque was unveiled by Colonel Charles W.D. Rowe, C.B. Dedicatory prayers were read by the Dean of Peterborough, the Very Reverend N.C. Christopherson, Chairman of the Board of Governors. Mr Arthur Whittome spoke on behalf of relatives of the fallen in expressing thanks for the memorial. Present at the ceremony were relatives of the fallen, representatives of the Old Petriburgians' Association, and staff and pupils of the School. A report of the unveiling ceremony was included in The Petriburgian magazine in 1949 and in the Peterborough Advertiser published 19/7/1949.

The memorial was crafted from English oak by Mr H.F. Chapman, the maintenance caretaker, and the School's signwriters. The pedimented top incorporated the School badge. The inscription read:

SCHOLA REGIA
PETRIBURGENSIS

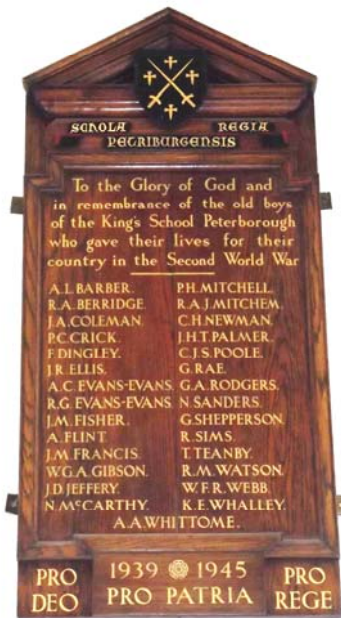
To the Glory of God and
in remembrance of the old boys
of the King's School Peterborough
who gave their lives for their
country in the Second World War

A.L. BARBER.	P.H. MITCHELL.
R.A. BERRIDGE.	R.A.J. MITCHEM.
J.A. COLEMAN.	C.H. NEWMAN.
P.C. CRICK.	J.H.T. PALMER.
F. DINGLEY.	C.J.S. POOLE.
J.R. ELLIS.	G. RAE.
A.C. EVANS-EVANS	G.A. RODGERS.
R.G. EVANS-EVANS.	N. SANDERS.
J.M. FISHER.	G. SHEPPERSON.
A. FLINT.	R. SIMS.
J.M. FRANCIS.	T. TEANBY.
W.G.A. GIBSON.	R.M. WATSON.
J.D. JEFFERY.	W.F.R. WEBB.
N. McCARTHY.	K.E. WHALLEY.

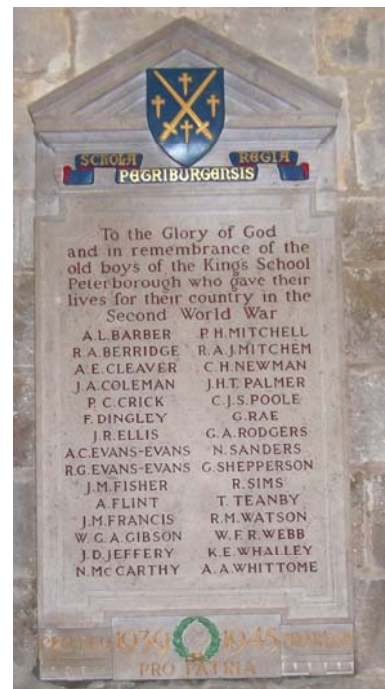
A.A. WHITTOME

PRO	1939 1945	PRO
DEO	PRO PATRIA	REGE

(The memorial within the School library listed 29 names, and was unveiled in 1949. The King's School memorial that hangs in Peterborough Cathedral was unveiled a year later, on 23/10/1950, and included the additional name of A.E. Cleaver).



World War 2 memorial in the school library.



World War 2 memorial in St Sprite's Chapel.

Memorial tablet is unveiled

MEMBERS of the Old Petriburgians' Association, staff, boys of the school and relatives were present at King's School, Peterborough, on Thursday evening, when Mr. Charles Rowe unveiled a memorial tablet to old boys who lost their lives during the last war.

The tablet, which contains 29 names, was dedicated by the Dean (the Very Rev. N. C. Christopherson), chairman of the Board of Governors.

Almost identical in design with that which commemorates those who died in the 1914-1918 war, the tablet had been made in English oak by the maintenance caretaker, Mr. H. F. Chapman.

FORMER 'HEADS'

Nearly 100 were at the ceremony, including the headmaster, Mr. H. R. Hornsby, and two former headmasters, Mr. O. W. Mitchell and Mr. W. F. F. Shearcroft.

Names on the tablet are: A. L. Barber, R. A. Berridge, J. A. Coleman, P. C. Crick, F. Dingley, J. R. Ellis, A. C. Evans-Evans, R. G. Evans-Evans, J. M. Fisher, A. Flint, J. D. Jeffery, N. McCarthy, P. H. Mitchell, R. A. G. Mitcham, C. H. Newman, J. H. T. Palmer, C. J. S. Poole, G. Rae, G. A. Rodgers, N. Sanders, G. Shepperson, R. Sims, T. Teanby, R. M. Watson, W. F. R. Webb, K. E. Whaley and A. A. Whittome.

Peterborough Advertiser 19/7/1949.

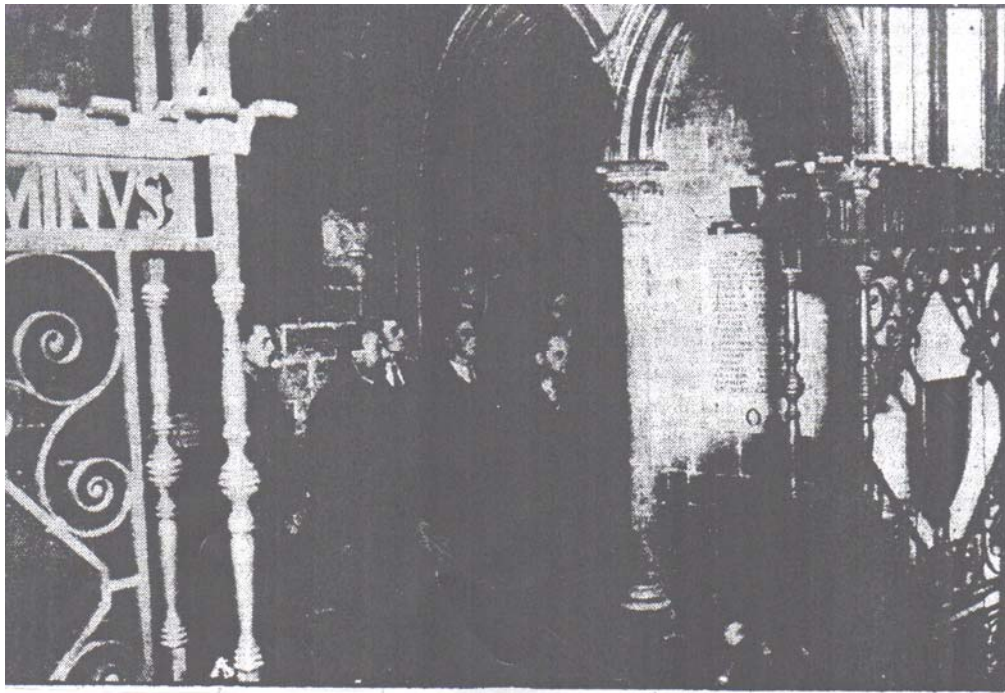
THE WAR MEMORIAL.

Memories of the war came back again on the evening of Thursday, July 14th, when Colonel C. W. D. Rowe, C.B., unveiled the memorial to those Old Boys of the School who gave their lives in the Second World War. Owing to the limited amount of space, invitations were sent to relatives of the fallen and representatives of the Old Petriburgians Association, the Staff, and the present boys. The memorial itself is exactly the same size and form as that erected in 1920 after the first World War. It has been made of English oak by our ever faithful friend, Chapman, and it has been lettered by the firm of signwriters that do all the school work of this kind.

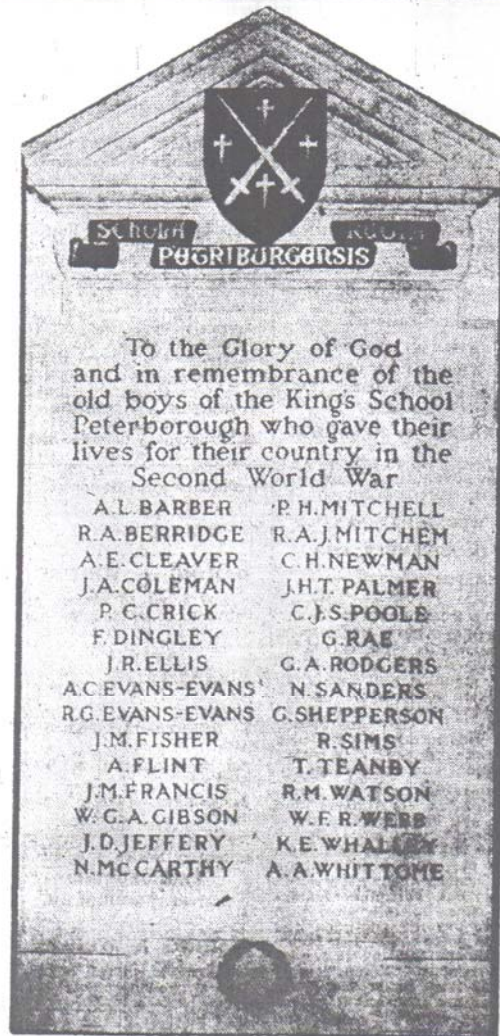
The ceremony itself was very brief. Mr. Larrett said a few words about the part the school played in the war, and then Colonel Rowe—himself on Old Boy—released the flag that shrouded the memorial. The Dean of Peterborough then read the dedicatory prayers. Mr. A. F. Whittome, whose son was one of the twenty-nine whose names are thus recorded, expressed the thanks of the parents and relatives to those who had arranged for the memorial, and the National Anthem brought to an end the short but impressive ceremony.

W.D.L.

Excerpt from the 1949 Petriburgian.



The Bishop of Peterborough (Dr. Spencer Leeson) on Monday unveiled a memorial tablet in the Cathedral to thirty Old Boys of King's School, Peterborough, who lost their lives in the second World War. Above, some of the 150 who attended the service inspect the tablet, illustrated on the left.

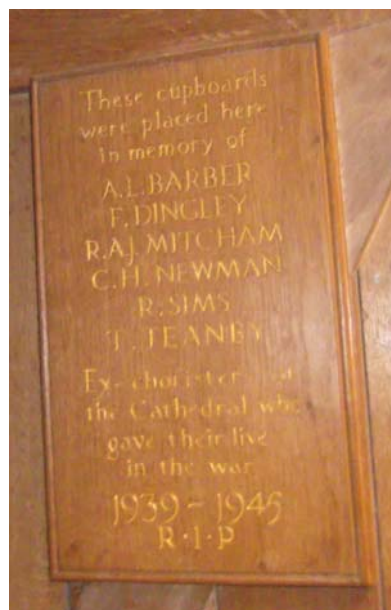


Cutting from the Peterborough Advertiser 27/10/1950.

Unveiled a year later than the memorial in The King's School library, this stone tablet at Peterborough Cathedral included the additional name of A. E. Cleaver, bringing the total number of casualties to 30.

(At some time since 1950, the memorial has been moved from the west to the south wall of St Sprite's Chapel in the Cathedral, where it now hangs).

There is an additional memorial at the Cathedral relating to the six former pupils of The King's School who had been Cathedral choristers and had died in World War 2. Following the War, a range of oak cupboards was installed on the north wall of the Sacristy, to serve as a practical memorial in their honour.



The inscription on the oak board inside the central cupboard door reads:

These cupboards
were placed here
in memory of
A.L. BARBER
F. DINGLEY
R.A.J. MITCHAM
C.H. NEWMAN
R. SIMS
T. TEANBY
Ex-choristers of
the Cathedral who
gave their lives
in the war
1939-1945
R.I.P

(The inscription contains a misspelling: it should have read "R.A.J. MITCHEM").

WORLD WAR 2 CASUALTIES



Remembrance 2013



Remembrance 2014



Remembrance 2015

*When you go home, tell them of us and say,
For their tomorrow, we gave our today*
(Attributed to John Maxwell Edmonds 1875-1958)

1) Anthony Levoir BARBER

Anthony was born in Peterborough on 1/3/1923, the only son (and believed to have been the only child) of Bertram Ernest Barber and Annie Elizabeth nee Levoir, who had married in East Dean near Eastbourne on 11/1/1918. (His father was a printer, who had served in the First World War with the 5th Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment, the Hunts Cyclist Battalion and the Royal Tank Corps). In 1934 the family lived at 306 Lincoln Road, Peterborough. By 1939 they had moved to 40 Norfolk Street, Peterborough.

Anthony, who was known as Tony, was educated at Lincoln Road Elementary School from September 1932 to July 1934. He was admitted to The King's School on 18/9/1934 as a Cathedral chorister. While at King's, he was a member of the Peterborough Swimming Club, and was later described by a contemporary Petriburgian as having been "an excellent High-Board (5m) diver". He left King's on 29/7/1939 and took up a clerkship with the London North East Railway Company. (On 1/9/1944 the Peterborough Standard reported that he had later worked for Messrs Halford). His marriage to Doris Edna Johnson on 9/7/1944 was announced in the Peterborough Standard on 14/7/1944.

Anthony served in the Royal Navy as an Able Seaman. His service number was P/JX354529. He served aboard His Majesty's Landing Craft Flak (Large) 1. Her role was to provide cover to other landing craft against enemy air attack. She took part in the Normandy landings in June 1944.

Just before dawn on 17th August 1944, while taking part in Operation Neptune, HMLCF (L) 1 was struck by a torpedo. The explosion in the aft magazine caused her to sink in minutes, with the loss of most aboard.

Anthony died on 17/8/1944, aged 21, less than six weeks after his marriage. (On 1/9/1944, the Peterborough Standard reported him to be "missing, believed killed"). He has no known grave but is commemorated on Panel 81, column 3 of the Portsmouth Naval Memorial. In Peterborough Cathedral he is commemorated on the Choristers' War Memorial in the Sacristy and in the World War 2 Book of Remembrance in St Sprite's Chapel. He is also named on the St Barnabas' Church War Memorial, which is now held in the collection of the Peterborough Museum & Art Gallery (see below). (Anthony's uncle, James Levoir, also died in World War 2. He was a Petty Officer on *H.M.S. Pembroke* when he died on 3/5/1942, aged 50. He was buried in St Bartholomew Churchyard, Burwash, Sussex).



St Barnabas' Church War Memorial,
by kind permission of
Peterborough Museum & Art Gallery,
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Peterborough Museum & Art Gallery



Anthony's commemoration on Panel 81
of Portsmouth Naval Memorial
© TWGPP, with their kind permission

2) Richard Anthony BERRIDGE

Richard was born in the Huntingdon District on 29/11/1924. He was the youngest son of Frederick Roland Berridge, D.S.O., M.C. and Muriel Dorothy nee Webb, who married in London in 1922. (Fred Berridge had served in the Northamptonshire Regiment during World War 1, during which he had been awarded the Military Cross with two Bars and the Distinguished Service Order. In the Second World War, he was a Lieutenant Colonel, in command of the 6th Battalion Northamptonshire Home Guard In 1945 Muriel Berridge was reported as being a Justice of the Peace for the Norman Cross Division).

Richard was educated at St Margaret's School, Peterborough before joining The King's School on 2/5/1933. (He was then living with his parents in Sawtry, Huntingdonshire. The family later moved to Castle Farm, Barnwell, near Oundle). He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 23/3/1939. He took an active part in school life, playing on the rugby team in 1939 and 1940 and on the cricket team in 1941. He also became Head Boy. Schoolfellows later described him as having been a "tall, thin, very elegant figure and highly intelligent", and possessed of "a genial and warm personality". (Richard's elder twin brothers, Frederick David and Michael John, born 28/2/1923, also attended King's, and their parents were great supporters of the School. A friend later commented that Mr & Mrs Berridge used to welcome an invasion by the Junior School each year, when "haystacks were ruined and ever patient cart-horses suffered the indignity of affording rides to groups of young ruffians". Michael Berridge later captained Northampton Saints' Rugby team and was on the England team in 1949).

In September 1941 Richard moved from The King's School to Laundimer House at Oundle School. *Oundle School Memorials of the Second World War* records that he gained his School football colours and was House Captain of football, cricket and boxing. He left in July 1943 to join the Army.

Richard joined the 2nd Battalion of the Scots Guards as a Cadet in 1943. His regimental number was 307871. His commission as Lieutenant, with effect from 28/1/1944, was published in the London Gazette on 7/4/1944. After a period of training in Scotland, he was posted to Germany in January 1945. (At that time, the 2nd Battalion was in the 32nd Guards Brigade in the Guards Armoured Division. From 8th February to 10th March 1945 it took part in Operation Veritable: the Battle for the Rhineland. Information regarding the Operation can be viewed at www.operation-veritable.com).

Richard died on 9/4/1945, aged 20, of wounds received during a reconnaissance patrol. He was buried in grave 12.J.10 at the Rheinberg War Cemetery in Germany (see below). He is also commemorated on the Barnwell War Memorial at St Andrew's Church, Barnwell, Northamptonshire. His death was announced in The Times on 19/4/1945 and in the Peterborough Standard on 20/4/1945.

(Richard's brother Frederick David, known as David, served as an Army Lieutenant during World War 2, regimental number 258300. He was awarded the Military Cross, which was published in the London Gazette on 19/6/1945, in respect of his gallantry and leadership at Udem on 1/3/1945. He died in 2003).



Richard Anthony Berridge

Photograph from *Oundle's War*, by Michael Downes, reproduced by his kind permission



Richard's grave at Rheinberg War Cemetery
© TWGPP, by kind permission

3) Albert Edward CLEAVER

Albert was born in Peterborough on 24/3/1902, the only surviving son of Walter Herbert Cleaver and Edith Ellen nee Southwell. On the 1911 census he and his parents lived at Glenholme, Broadway, Peterborough. He was educated at New Road Council School before joining Deacon's School on 13/1/1914. He left on 27/10/1915 to work with his father, who was managing director of F.W. Jarrard Ltd, Corn Merchants.

Albert became a director of S.G. Howes Ltd (Tailors and Outfitters) in Cowgate, Peterborough. He was a member of the Peterborough Volunteer Fire Brigade. An all-round sportsman, he was a member of the local Golf, Hockey, Cricket and Tennis Clubs, and was also keen on swimming, boxing, riding and motor cycle racing. In 1936 he married Florence Jessica Northern (a teacher at St John's Girls' School in Bishop's Road). They later moved to "Rosamund", Nunnery Avenue, Rothwell in Northamptonshire.

Albert was still a director of S.G. Howes Ltd, and was also a sales superintendant for the Shell Mex and B.P. Company Ltd at their Preston Lancashire Depot, when he volunteered for the Forces in November 1939. He served as a Lance Bombardier in the 27th Light Anti Aircraft Regiment of the Royal Artillery, regimental number 1524402. He served throughout the North African campaign and took part in the Battle of Tunisia from 17th November 1942 to 13th May 1943. Immediately following that Battle, he wrote a letter to his wife, happily describing the victory. He made no mention in his letter of the fact that he was ill.

Albert died from enteritis at Sousse in Tunisia on 16/5/1943, aged 41. He had been suffering from dysentery and rapidly losing weight, but had refused to report sick. When his comrades tried to wake him, on the morning of the 16th, they discovered that he had died in his sleep. He was buried in grave I.D.21 at the Enfidaville War Cemetery in Tunisia (see photograph below). He is also commemorated on a stone on his parents' grave in Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough (see photograph below). He named his widow as executrix of his Will.

Albert's death was announced in the Kettering newspaper in June 1943, and was also reported in the Peterborough Standard on 11th and 18th June 1943. His obituary in the Peterborough Advertiser on 18/6/1943 quoted from letters received by his widow. His Colonel had written of Albert that: "He always served with cheerfulness and an aptitude for duty, and we are all very sad at his loss". The Padre's letter of condolence read: "I knew your husband very well and we had many long talks together. He was a most loveable man and respected at R.H.Q. and throughout the regiment. There was no one more popular with the lads".

(N.B.: Albert is named on The King's School's War Memorial in Peterborough Cathedral, but not on the memorial in the School's library. There is no record of his ever having attended King's as a pupil, nor has any trace been found of him being otherwise linked to King's. Reports of his death in the Kettering and Peterborough newspapers referred only to his former attendance at Deacon's School, and made no mention of The King's School. His name was not included on Deacon's School War Memorial. In light of these facts, it is possible that his inclusion on The King's School War Memorial at the Cathedral was an error. However, as the School allowed his name to remain on its memorial, the possibility cannot be excluded that he had some currently untraced connection to King's. His details have therefore been included in this booklet, alongside all others who are honoured on The King's School War Memorials).



Albert Edward Cleaver



© TWGPP, by kind permission



Broadway Cemetery inscription

4) John Arthur COLEMAN

John was born in Peterborough on 5/4/1923, the second son of Charles Coleman (a foreman engineer) and Olive May nee Ward, who married in Peterborough in 1918. In 1934 the family lived at 5, Princes Gardens, Peterborough. By 1945 John's parents had moved to 91 All Saints' Road, Peterborough.

John was educated at New Road Council School, Peterborough from September 1932 to July 1934. He was admitted to The King's School on 18/9/1934. One of his school-friends later described him as having been a "quiet, charming, lovely chap", whose nickname was "Cossor". He won the 90 yards Hurdles race as a junior at the 1936 Sports Day and received a First Prize during Speech Day in 1937. He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 31/3/1938. He passed his Oxford School Certificate in July 1939 and left King's on 29/7/1939 to take up a post as an engineer. He later worked for the Food Office.

John joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1942. He trained in South Africa as a Navigator, and was later promoted to Flight Sergeant (Navigator). His service number was 1600603. At the time of his death he was serving in 83 Group Support Unit Flight, within the 2nd Tactical Airforce Command.

According to information very kindly supplied by the R.A.F. Air Historical Branch, on 6/2/1945 John was based at R.A.F. Lasham in Hampshire. He was the Navigator aboard an Avro Anson aircraft being piloted by Warrant Officer Donald Francis Barber. The aircraft crashed at 15:31 hours at Marsham's Farm at Fairlight, near Hastings. Both John and Donald died in the accident. (Their deaths were registered in the Battle District of Sussex).

John's death on 6/2/1945, at the age of 21, was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser on 9/2/1945. A joint funeral was held at Oundle Parish Church on 10/2/1945, for John and his friend and crewmate Donald Barber. The pall-bearers for the two coffins were all N.C.O.s from the R.A.F., and included men from 83 Group Support Unit Flight, to which both John and Donald had belonged. John was buried in section L.L., grave 23 at Oundle Town Cemetery; Donald Barber was buried in the adjoining grave. A report of the funeral was published in both the Peterborough Advertiser and Peterborough Standard on 16/2/1945. (The Peterborough Standard mentioned that John's elder brother had been serving in the Royal Navy since before the War. It also reported that their sister was then a Corporal in the W.A.A.F. and that their younger brother was an Air Cadet, and was awaiting entry to the Fleet Air Arm).

John is recorded in the Second World War Book of Remembrance that is on display in St Sprite's Chapel at Peterborough Cathedral. (The Book of Remembrance records his last address as 73 Vere Road, Peterborough).



John's grave in Oundle Town Cemetery

5) Peter Charles CRICK

Peter was born in Peterborough on 10/1/1910, the second son of Charles William Crick and Ettie Gertrude nee Payne, who had married in Peterborough in 1899. On the 1911 census he was living with his mother and siblings at “Dryden House”, 101 Lincoln Road, Peterborough. (His father, a corn merchant, was staying in Eastbourne on the night of the 1911 census). Peter’s mother died on 25/9/1937.

Peter attended The King’s School from 17/9/1918 to 4/11/1921. He continued his education at St Piran’s School, Maidenhead, moving later to Oundle School (Dryden House), which he attended from 1924 to 1927. He was a keen sportsman and enjoyed playing golf, rugby and squash. (After leaving school he joined Peterborough Rugby Club, where he was a regular player and one-time vice-captain. He played part of a season for the Northampton “Saints” and also played for the Leicester “Tigers” Rugby Team).

On leaving Oundle School, Peter initially worked for Barclays Bank before entering the field of insurance. In 1928 he was working for the Royal Insurance Company in Peterborough. He later spent two years working for Messrs Kodak Ltd in London and Glasgow, before returning to the insurance field. Before the War he was an inspector for the Employers’ Liability Assurance Corporation Ltd.

Having formerly been a Cadet Lance Corporal in the Oundle School Contingent, Junior Division of the Officers’ Training Corps, in 1934 Peter joined the Territorial Army, in the 84th East Anglian Field Brigade of the Royal Artillery. His appointment as 2nd Lieutenant from 18/4/1934 appeared in the London Gazette on 17/4/1934. He was promoted to Lieutenant from 18/4/1937 (London Gazette: 11/5/1937). He later transferred to the 86th East Anglian (Herts. Yeomanry) Field Regiment on 1/11/1938 (London Gazette: 24/3/1939). His promotion to Captain from 2/4/1939 appeared in the London Gazette on 27/6/1939. Following the outbreak of World War 2 he served as a Captain in the 104th (Essex Yeomanry) Regiment of the Royal Horse Artillery. His regimental number was 62714. He served in England until March 1941, when he was posted to India. He later served in Iran, before being sent to Egypt.

Peter was wounded on 28/10/1942, during the Battle of El Alamein, and taken to hospital. He died later the same day, aged 32. He was buried in grave V.G.25 at El Alamein War Cemetery in Egypt (see below). He is named in the World War 2 Book of Remembrance in St Sprite’s Chapel in Peterborough Cathedral. He is also commemorated on his parents’ grave in Eastfield Cemetery, Peterborough: on grave 4174, Block 11 (see photograph below). On 20/11/1942 the Peterborough Standard listed him as “wounded”. It published his obituary on 4/12/1942. Peter’s Will was proved in 1943.

(Peter’s three brothers, Trevor, Kenneth and Maurice, also served in World War 2. Trevor served as a Commander in the Royal Navy. He received the Distinguished Service Cross and was awarded an O.B.E. on 5/12/1944 “for great courage and skill under attack from the air”. He died in 1997. Kenneth served in the RAF. He was promoted to Squadron Leader in 1941 and was Temporary Wing Commander from 1/7/1945. He died in 1980. Maurice rose to Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery. He was taken Prisoner of War following the fall of Singapore. His father received the news of his capture in December 1942. He remained a Prisoner of War in the Far East until his release in September 1945. He died in 1979).



Peter Charles Crick



Eastfield Cemetery inscription



Peter’s grave. Photo © TWGPP

By kind permission of Oundle School.

(From *Oundle School Memorials of the Second World War, 1939-1945*)

6) Frank DINGLEY

The King's School admissions register records that Frank was born on 27/1/1920. His birth was registered in Peterborough in 1920. He was the only child of William Cockram Hubert Dingley and Annie nee Flint, who had married in Melton Mowbray in 1918. In 1932 the family lived at 184 Walpole Street, Peterborough. (William was a tool-maker and fitter in the machine shop at Baker Perkins Ltd). Frank joined King's on 21/9/1932, having formerly attended Lincoln Road Council School. He was a Cathedral chorister and server. A good friend and contemporary Petriburgian later described Frank as having been "tall, elegant and very bright", and to have enjoyed playing with Hornby railway sets as a boy. The Easter 1935 edition of The Petriburgian stated he was due to be confirmed by the Bishop in Peterborough Cathedral on 4th April. On the 19th and 20th December 1935 Frank was in the cast of the School's production of the comic opera *Merrie England*. After leaving school on 16/12/1935 he joined the staff at Baker Perkins' Westwood Works in Peterborough as an engineering draughtsman.

On his Army attestation form, Frank's date of birth was incorrectly recorded as 27/8/1919. He enlisted at Northampton on 11/10/1939. His regimental number was 1882119. His Army service record shows that he originally served in the Royal Engineers as a Sapper. He was just over 6 feet tall, with brown eyes and brown hair. On 21/12/1939 he was appointed as Acting Lance Corporal. He was engaged in clerical duties at the War Office at that time. He was promoted to Corporal on 16/2/1940. On 21/10/1940 he was taken on the strength of the Camp Commandant at the War Office. On 17/8/1941 he was medically examined and passed A1. On 7/3/1942 he transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps as an Acting Sergeant. He was appointed as Acting Staff Sergeant on 18/4/1942. He was substantively promoted to Sergeant on 5/8/1942. On 10/9/1942 he was appointed as Acting Warrant Officer (First Class), Staff Sergeant Major. He was granted the substantive rank of Staff Sergeant on 15/10/1942. On 2/2/1943 he was admitted to hospital. On 25/6/1943 he was discharged from the Army as permanently unfit for Military service, due to pulmonary tuberculosis. His service record states that he had served only in the UK, and that his conduct had been exemplary. At the time he was discharged for treatment at Papworth he held the rank of Staff Sergeant. On 1/7/1943 the Army rejected his application for a pension, deeming that his tuberculosis was not caused or aggravated by War service.

Frank died from pulmonary tuberculosis in Papworth Everard on Friday 12/11/1943, aged 23. His funeral at Peterborough Cathedral on Tuesday 16th November was conducted by the Precentor. Among the many mourners were Frank's parents, his fiancée (Miss G. Brown) and colleagues from both the War Office and from Baker Perkins Ltd. Following the service, he was buried at Broadway Cemetery in Section 2, Lodge Plan Div 1, grave number 212 (see below). On 19/11/1943 the Peterborough Standard printed a report of the funeral. He left a Will, naming his father as executor. His parents were later buried in the adjoining grave. (His mother died on 22/9/1956; his father died on 3/5/1962). In addition to being commemorated on The King's School's War Memorials, Frank is also named on Baker Perkins' Westwood Works Memorial and on St Barnabas' Church War Memorial, both of which are now held in the collection of the Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery (see photographs below, by their kind permission). At Peterborough Cathedral he is commemorated on the Choristers' War Memorial in the Sacristy and in the Book of Remembrance in St Sprite's Chapel. (Frank is not listed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. A request submitted in 2015 for him to be added to the casualty registers was rejected by the National Army Museum. Although Frank was passed A1 by the Army on 17/8/1941, and the tuberculosis from which he died first became manifest while a soldier, there is insufficient available evidence that his condition was caused or aggravated by his War service).



Frank's grave in Broadway Cemetery



Baker Perkins' and St Barnabas' Church War Memorials,
© Copyright resides with Peterborough Museum & Art Gallery,

7) John Robert ELLIS

John was born in Peterborough on 28/2/1922, the eldest son of Frank Joe Ellis and Lillian nee Mantle, who married in Oakham in 1921. (Frank Ellis was the manager of a pianoforte warehouse in Westgate, Peterborough and was the organist at Wentworth Street Methodist Church). In 1928 the family lived at 154 Oundle Road, Peterborough. By 1939 they had moved to 95 Taverner's Road, Peterborough.

John joined The King's School from Woodston Infant School on 18/9/1928. A contemporary Petriburgian later described him as having been a "very well-turned-out, precise chap". He achieved Grade IV in Music in 1935 and was awarded a Reading Prize in both 1935 and 1936. He was cast as a page in the School's 1936 production of *Saint Joan* (see photograph below). He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 4/3/1937.

When he left King's, at the end of 1939, John initially became a journalist. He later worked for the Income Tax Collection Department. He married Betty May Jellings in 1942, in the Battersea District. Their son was born later that year.

John served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve as a Sergeant (Air Bomber) in 50 Squadron. His service number was 1471352. In 1944, 50 Squadron was operating out of RAF Skellingthorpe as part of Bomber Command.

(On the evening of 18th March 1944, 846 aircraft from Bomber Command, comprising 620 Lancasters, 209 Halifaxes and 17 Mosquitoes, took off for their target of Frankfurt. Twenty two of those aircraft were lost during the operation. (*The Bomber Command War Diaries, An Operational reference Book 1939-1945*, by Martin Middlebrook and Chris Everitt, has more details). Avro Lancaster I serial number ED308 VN-J was one of the aircraft which took part in that operation).

Lancaster serial number ED308 VN-J took off from Skellingthorpe at 19:15 hours on 18/3/1944. The crew comprised Pilot Officer W.J.K Miller, Sergeant C.W.T. Case, Flight Sergeant H.J. Rouse, Sergeant J.R. Ellis, Sergeant L.E. Newbold, Sergeant G.T. Howe and Sergeant E.C. Lehman RCAF. According to the research of Hans L. Grimminger, it was shot down by a night-fighter and crashed at 22:20 hours (German time) at Gross Gerau, NW-Darmstadt, Hessen in Germany.

John Robert Ellis, George Tennant Howe and Edgar Clarence Lehman all died on 19/3/1944. They were originally buried at Gross Gerau. After the War they were reinterred in Durnbach War Cemetery in Germany, where they now rest in adjoining graves. The remaining members of the crew survived the crash and became Prisoners of War. Pilot Officer W.J.K. Miller (service number 54175), Flight Sergeant C.W.T Case (service number 1819583), and Flight Sergeant H.J. Rouse (service number 1317908) were all held at Stalag Luft 1 West in Barth Vogelsang in Germany. Flight Sergeant L.E. Newbold (service number 157628) was held at Stalag Luft 4 in Sagan and Polaria, Poland.

John is buried in grave 1.H.16 at the Durnbach War Cemetery. (Edgar Lehman is in grave I.H.14. George Howe is in grave I.H.15). On 7/4/1944 the Peterborough Standard reported him as missing. He is named in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral and on the Wentworth Street Methodist Church War Memorial (which was removed to Westgate Chapel and rededicated in November 1984).



John Ellis as a page in 1936



John's grave at Durnbach War Cemetery.
Photograph by kind permission of Paul Willing

8) Anthony Caron EVANS-EVANS, D.F.C., Mentioned in Despatches

Anthony was born on 24/1/1902 in Cardiff, the eldest child of Arthur Anthony Evans and Margaret Ann nee Evans and the brother of Roland (see page 53). On the 1911 census the family lived at 7 Saxon Villas, London Road, Peterborough. They later moved to Stilton. Anthony joined The King's School from Fletton Secondary School on 20/9/1917. He was a keen sportsman and, in 1921, reached the heavyweight final of the Public Schools' Boxing Championship. He left King's on 1/4/1921 to attend University College, Nottingham.

In 1921 Anthony joined the Royal Army Ordnance Corps as a Private. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant with the 5th Northamptonshire Regiment, Territorial Army from 14/6/1923 was published in the London Gazette on 22/6/1923. On 8/7/1924 he became a probationary Pilot Officer in the Royal Air Force (London Gazette: 15/7/1924). On 18/7/1924 he sailed from Liverpool to Egypt aboard the *Lancashire*, serving with the Middle East Command. (Ships' manifests are held re his later voyages). He was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant Flying Officer on 8/3/1926 (London Gazette: 27/4/1926). In 1927 he became the Signals Officer at Upper Hayford Aerodrome. He was commissioned as a Flying Officer on 1/9/1928 (London Gazette: 18/9/1928) and was injured in an aircraft accident a few months later. He was later promoted to Flight Lieutenant on 14/5/1930; to Squadron Leader on 1/4/1937; to Wing Commander on 1/3/1940 and to Group Captain on 1/6/1942. (London Gazette: 13/5/1930; 2/4/1937; 12/3/1940; 3/7/1942 respectively). He served as Commanding Officer of No 34 Operational Training Unit in Pennfield Ridge, Canada from April 1942 to 6/2/1943. He was then appointed as Station Commander at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire. His service number was 19018.

In 1944 Anthony was Mentioned in Despatches (London Gazette 2/6/1944). In 1945 he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (London Gazette 13/2/1945). The award was announced on 16/2/1945 in the Peterborough Standard, which commented that he had: "participated in action against heavily defended enemy targets and on one occasion was forced to abandon his aircraft by parachute*. Despite this trying experience, he has continued to show undiminished enthusiasm for operational flying. As Station Commander, he has set a splendid example to the operational crews of his Squadron. His fine leadership has been chiefly responsible for the outstanding successes achieved by the squadrons of the station". (*Believed to refer to Wellington R1238 KO-H, piloted by Anthony, which took off from RAF Marham at 18:14 hours on 11/2/1941. The crew baled out over Wicken Bonhunt in Essex).

At 17:07 hours on 21/2/1945, Avro Lancaster bomber serial number NE165 OL-Y of 83 Pathfinder Squadron took off from RAF Coningsby on a mission to the Mittelland Canal near Gravenhorst, Germany. Aboard was a highly experienced and decorated crew. Anthony Evans-Evans (D.F.C.) was the pilot. The seven other crew were: Squadron Leader William Wishart (D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar); Flight Lieutenant William Fitch (D.F.C., G. M.); Flying Officer Desmond Ball (D.F.M.); Flying Officer Clifford Coombes; Flying Officer Sidney Marsh; Flight Sergeant Richard Takle and Pilot Officer Edwin Hansen.

When they were ten miles short of their target, Anthony's crew was stood down from the mission. Just after banking to return to base, the aircraft was attacked by a Luftwaffe night-flier and caught fire. Anthony gave the command to bale out but only one member of the crew, Edwin Hansen, managed to do so before the aircraft went into a spin. It crashed to earth at 20:45 hours at Gertruda Farm, near the village of De Rips in the Netherlands, killing the remaining seven members of the crew.**

Anthony died on 21/2/1945, aged 43. He is now buried in grave VIII.D.5 at the Mierlo War Cemetery in the Netherlands (see next page). His six crewmates are buried in adjoining graves. On 2/3/1945 the Peterborough Standard announced that he was missing in action. The Times printed his obituary on 10/8/1945. He left a Will, naming his widow, Joyce, as executrix. (He had married Joyce Mary Emerton in 1930 in Peterborough. They lived at Stilton House, Stilton after their marriage. They had a son and two daughters, one of whom was born four months after Anthony's death). Anthony is commemorated on the Stilton War Memorial. On 20/2/2011 a memorial was unveiled at Gertruda Farm in the Netherlands, to honour Anthony and his crewmates. It was erected by local farmer Sjoerd Ypna who, as a young boy, had witnessed the plane crash on 21/2/1945.

(**The sole survivor, Edwin Harold Hansen, was a member of the Royal Australian Air Force, service number 415648. His service record is viewable on the National Archives of Australia website: www.naa.gov.au . Page 4 of his Casualty Repatriation File (A705) has a report of the fatal crash).



Anthony Caron Evans-Evens D.F.C., M.I.D.



Roland Gwynne Evans-Evens

(Anthony, Roland and their two brothers adopted the double-barrelled surname of Evans-Evens in their early twenties. Both Anthony and Roland are commemorated on the War Memorial tablet at Stilton Memorial Hall. Their brothers, Howard and Ewan, also old Petriburgians, both served in WW2. Howard rose to Group Captain in the RAF and was twice Mentioned in Despatches; Ewan rose to Lieutenant in the Northamptonshire Regiment. He was captured before Dunkirk and spent the rest of the War as a prisoner, see page 84. Further details of all four brothers are recorded on pages 143-145 of *The Petriburgian* of 2012).

9) Roland Gwynne EVANS-EVANS

Roland was born in Peterborough on 24/11/1913, the youngest son of Arthur and Margaret Evans, and the brother of Anthony - see page 51. (Roland and Anthony's father, Arthur, had married Margaret in 1901. He fought in the Boer War and in the First World War, during which he was awarded the Military Cross and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In civilian life, he worked for the General Post Office, and became their Chief Engineer in Jerusalem).

Roland was admitted to The King's School as a boarder on 20/9/1921. He was a keen sportsman and played for the School's rugby team in 1929-30, 1930-31 and 1931-32. He passed the Oxford School Certificate Examination at Christmas 1930. He was Captain of School House in 1931-32. After leaving, on 6/12/1931, he and one of his brothers went into partnership as proprietors of a garage in Stilton. Roland married Hilda Spink in 1938. They lived at Senva House, Stilton after their marriage.

He joined the RAF in 1941. His service number was 123750. His appointment as Aircraftsman 2nd Class was published in the London Gazette on 24/7/1942. He was promoted to Flying Officer on 28/12/1942 (published in London Gazette on 18/5/1943) and to Flight Lieutenant in 1944. He served in 2804 Squadron RAF Regiment.

(The RAF Regiment was originally formed for the purpose of defending RAF airfields. In January 1942, King George VI signed a Royal Warrant for "a corps formed as an integral part of the RAF". The Regiment later developed into a mobile unit and was used in an attack role. Further details on the Regiment can be found on the RAF website: www.raf.mod.uk/rafregiment/history and at www.rafweb.org/Regiment2.htm).

On 2/10/1944, Roland was out with a patrol of three armoured cars, reconnoitring the front line in Belgium. As they approached a crossroads that was overlooked by buildings, he suspected that an ambush lay ahead. Having therefore instructed the patrol to halt under cover, he dismounted to go forward alone to investigate. He was shot in the leg by a sniper but managed to return fire. When his patrol went forward to assist him they came under attack from heavy machine gun and mortar fire, during which Roland was hit by a mortar shell.

Roland died on 2/10/1944, aged 30. He was initially buried with military honours near a wayside Calvary. He was later reinterred in grave VI.D.16 at the Leopoldsborg War Cemetery in Belgium (see photograph on previous page). His widow, Hilda, administered his estate. His obituary was published in both the Peterborough Advertiser and Peterborough Standard on 20/10/1944. In a letter to Roland's widow, his Commanding Officer had written: "I am writing to try to express in some small way my sympathy in the loss of your husband. He came to me on a course when I commanded the battle school, and he was always so unfailingly cheerful and hardworking that it was a pleasure to have him. I have been down to see his flight, who were quite lost without him... From a personal look at the ground I feel sure that he carried out a very gallant little patrol. By seeing that his armoured cars did not close up, and were ready to move off, after already being turned round, he saved many more losses". The padre and other officers also sent letters of consolation, in which they extolled Roland's courage and leadership.



Roland on the 1930-31 Rugby team.



Stilton Memorial Hall tablet, on which Roland and his brother Anthony are named.



10) John Michael FISHER B.A.

John was born on 29/9/1918 in Peterborough, the second son of Reverend Thomas Frederic Fisher B.A. and his wife Edith Marion nee Jones, who had married on 27/6/1911 in Newport Holy Trinity Church, Monmouthshire. (Following curacies in Pillgwenlly 1909-1913 and in Ramsey and Bury 1913-1917, Thomas was Vicar of Holme from 1917 to 1927. He then became Rector of Stilton). The family was living in Stilton Rectory when John was admitted to The King's School on 21/9/1932 from Fletton Secondary School. (John's parents later moved to Llangrove, Herefordshire).

An excellent sportsman, John often featured in *The Petriburgian*. Described by a schoolfriend as a "very fast bowler", he was on the School cricket team in 1935, 1936 and 1937. He was also on the rugby team 1934-35, 1935-36 and 1936-37 (Captain) and hockey team in 1935, 1936 and 1937. (He played hockey for the County in 1937). He was a prefect and became Head Boy in 1936. A contemporary later said of him that he could "quell a recalcitrant Third Year class with one look" and described him as having been the "epic school hero". He played John de Stogumber in the School's 1936 production of *Saint Joan*.

In summer 1936 John passed the Oxford School Certificate with credits in English, European History, Mathematics and Physics. He left King's on 24/7/1937 to attend Selwyn College, Cambridge, from which he later graduated Bachelor of Arts. His intention was to study for the Church. He was offered a place at Salisbury Theological College, and was due to commence there in September 1940, but instead joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. His service number was 102556. He completed his RAF training in Moosejaw, Canada. His commission as Pilot Officer on 22/6/1941 appeared in the London Gazette on 29/8/1941. He was assigned to 122 Squadron, which was then stationed at RAF Catterick in Yorkshire. The Squadron moved to RAF Scorton in Yorkshire in October 1941.

On 25th January 1942 John piloted Spitfire serial number AD545 on a mission to intercept enemy craft approaching the coast. He had completed his mission and was returning to base when his aircraft crashed in a snow-covered gully on Spaunton Moor, East Yorkshire. (The crash is thought to have been due to adverse weather). Having failed to return to base, he was posted as missing on 25/1/1942, which the Peterborough Standard reported on 20/2/1942. Due to the remoteness of the crash-site, the wreckage remained undiscovered until six weeks later, when it was chanced upon by a shepherd on 18/3/1942.

John was officially listed as having died on 25/1/1942, aged 23. His funeral took place on 21/3/1942 at Stilton. Two of his brother officers attended, including Flight Lieutenant F.B. Day, who had accompanied him on his last flight. Following the church service, John was buried in grave 87 at Stilton Cemetery. The funeral was reported on 27/3/1942 in the Peterborough Advertiser, which described John as having been "esteemed by all with whom he came in contact".

The *Petriburgian* in 1942 reported: "The news that P.O. J.M. Fisher had been killed on active service was a cause of deep regret to the School and to his many friends. Among those who remember him, his name has always been associated with energy and determination. From the time of his entry into the School in 1932 he showed both grit and skill in his games, a sphere in which he developed a fine leadership, a quality which was utilised in his last year as Head of the School. John Fisher was never a neutral or half-hearted, and no-one was surprised that the end of his Cambridge days, which had been devoted to preparation for the Church, should find him in the uniform of the R.A.F."



John on the 1935 Rugby team...

and on the 1937 Hockey team

John's grave at Stilton

11) Alfred FLINT

Alfred was born on 7/12/1912, the only son of Harry Flint and Lilla Evelyn nee Lambe, who had married in the North Witchford District, Cambridgeshire in 1906. (Harry was a farmer at Eldernell, near Coates, Whittlesey). Alfred had two elder sisters: Francis Evelyn and Lilla May.

The admissions register records that Alfred joined The King's School on 27/4/1923 from Whittlesey National School. At that time his parents' address was Albany House, Whittlesey. He left King's on 27/7/1926 and moved with his parents to Leicestershire. According to information kindly supplied by Wellingborough School, Alfred joined them in September 1926 as a boarder in Platt's House. The school magazine, the Wellingburian, records that he was confirmed in the Chapel there in 1928 and once represented his House in cross-country. He left in 1929. According to the Leicester Mercury dated 11/12/1941, prior to joining the Forces he had worked for five years in Leicester for Henry Wigfall and Sons Ltd.

Alfred joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve as a Sergeant (Observer). His service number was 1163046. He completed his training in Canada. He became engaged to Miss Joan Ashworth of London.

On 5/12/1941, Alfred was one of the crew of Wellington I serial number L4348, of 20 Operational Training Unit, which took off from RAF Lossiemouth for a navigational training exercise. Wireless contact was maintained until 15:14 hours, at which time the aircraft was homeward bound. It crashed at 16:00 hours. At 16:42 hours the burning wreckage of the aircraft was spotted on the ground, 14 miles west of Strathy Point in Sutherland, Scotland. The cause of the crash is not known. There were no survivors.

Alfred died on 5/12/1941, two days before his 29th birthday. On 11/12/1941 the Leicester Mercury and Leicester Evening Mail announced his death and stated that his funeral was to be held the next day. He was buried at St Peter's Church, Braunstone, Leicestershire (see below). He is also commemorated on the RAF Roll of Honour for Braunstone & District, which was unveiled at Braunstone Civic Centre on 15/9/2010. (See the Braunstone Town Council website:

www.braunstonetown.leicestershireparishcouncils.org/the-war-years.html). His obituary appeared on 12/12/1941 in the Peterborough Advertiser, which stated he was a former member of the Leicestershire Car Club and held a silver cup. The 1944 Probate Index recorded his last address as 430 Braunstone Lane, Braunstone. His mother administered his estate. (Alfred's father had predeceased him). The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records his mother's address as Bushby, Leicestershire.

Three of Alfred's crewmates were buried at Wick Cemetery in Caithness: Sergeant Anthony McCoy RAFVR, Sergeant Malcolm Edward Kent RAAF* and Sergeant Allan Wilson RNZAF. The pilot, Flight Sergeant Harold Sidney Goss RAFVR, was buried at Watford Cemetery.

(*The Casualty Repatriation file, barcode 1058175, in respect of Alfred's crew-mate, Malcolm Edward Kent, service number 404470, contains details of the crash. The file is available to view on the website of the National Archives of Australia: www.naa.gov.au . Further details, including photographs of the crash-site, can be viewed at www.aircrewremembered.com/raf1941/3/Gossharold.html).



Alfred's grave at Braunstone

12) James Montague FRANCIS

James was born on 12/6/1919, at Werrington House, Werrington, the only son of Charles Edward Francis and Fanny nee Procter, who had married in Rochdale in 1914. He had an elder sister, Catherine (known as Peggy). His father worked as an engineer for Baker Perkins Ltd.

James was educated privately by Katherine and Constance Back at their school in Lincoln Road, Peterborough before he was admitted to The King's School on 2/5/1930. At that time he was living with his parents at 5 Lime Tree Avenue, Peterborough. At King's, where he was known as "Jimmie", he passed his Junior Oxford Examination. One of his schoolfellows later described him as having been intelligent and "very tall" with an "exceptionally smart appearance". In 1936 The Petriburgian announced that he had gained his Oxford School Certificate, with credits in English, French and Art.

After leaving King's, James worked in the Peterborough City Corporation Treasurer's Department. He was a member of the Peterborough Branch of the National Association of Local Government Officers, and at one time assisted their cricket team. He spent most of his leisure time studying, and in July 1938 he passed the intermediate examination of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries. His studies towards the Institute of Municipal Treasurers and Accountancy examination, which he was due to sit in January 1940, were interrupted by the outbreak of the War.

He was called up in March 1940 and posted to the Essex Regiment as a Private, regimental number 6020049. Shortly afterwards, he was taken ill with a cold, which developed into bronchitis. In April he was moved to a military hospital in Woolwich, where his condition deteriorated.

James died of pulmonary tuberculosis in the Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich on 11/5/1940, aged 20. His death was announced on 17/5/1940 in the Peterborough Standard, which reported his father's comment that James "had never been of strong physique". It also reported that James "had many friends and was popular with fellow members of the Corporation staff". His funeral, which was reported in the Peterborough Advertiser on 17/5/1940, was held at St Barnabas' Church, Peterborough on 16/5/1940. He was buried in grave 4208, Block 11 at the Eastfield Cemetery, Peterborough.

James' death was announced in 1940 in The Petriburgian, which stated that his loss was especially felt by his friends of the Cricket Club, and remarked that he had been "the ideal of the sportsman, modest and kindly, but helpful and hardworking on occasions beyond number. And now that he has died in the Royal Herbert Hospital at Woolwich, we know that his colleagues in the Service had time to find him as good a companion as did all of us in the fields of peace".

A year after James' death, his father died (on 25/7/1941). James' mother, Fanny, died in 1967. They were both buried in the same grave as their son at Eastfield Cemetery.



James' grave at Eastfield Cemetery

13) William George Arthur GIBSON

William was born in Yeovil on 29/8/1923, the only son of William George Gibson and Charlotte Emily nee Holmes, who had married in the parish of St Saviour, Hammersmith on 14/9/1918. (William senior, who had served in the Royal Flying Corps in World War 1, became a Director of the Aeronautical Corporation of Great Britain Ltd when it was incorporated in 1936. The company bought the Aircraft Accessories Ltd factory in Walton, Peterborough from Frederick Sage Ltd. Consequently, the Gibson family moved temporarily to Peterborough in 1936).

William junior was living with his parents at 48 Fletton Avenue, Peterborough when he was admitted to The King's School on 30/4/1936 from Huish's Grammar School in Taunton. He was at King's for only one term before the family moved to 34 Douglas Park Crescent, Bearsden, Glasgow.

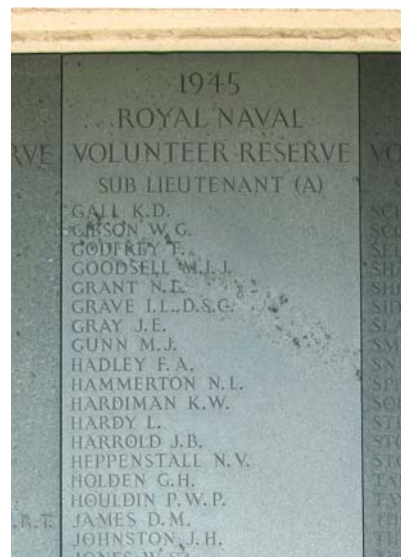
William joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. He became Acting Sub Lieutenant in 1943. The February 1944 Navy List recorded his seniority date as 29/8/1943, and that he was a qualified Pilot in the Fleet Air Arm. He served aboard the Fleet Aircraft Carrier *HMS Indefatigable*.

(*H.M.S. Indefatigable* was launched in December 1942 and was commissioned on 3/5/1944. Her first active mission was to take part in attacks on the German Battleship *Tirpitz* in Norway, in Operation Mascot (17/7/1944) and Operation Goodwood (22nd/24th/29th August 1944). Following modification for Pacific service in October/November 1944, she then sailed for action in the Far East, as part of the Eastern Fleet).

According to the website: www.894rmsquadron.homestead.com, William joined 894 Squadron of the Fleet Air Arm on 8/12/1943. In March 1944 he was involved in an incident on *HMS Indefatigable* in which his aircraft (LR852) suffered damage. In a further incident, in January 1945, he had to bail out after the under-carriage of his aircraft (NF602) failed. He was unhurt and was rescued by *HMS Whirlwind*.

On 1/4/1945 *HMS Indefatigable* became the first British ship ever to suffer a hit from a kamikaze attack. It resulted in the death of 14 men. (Descriptions of the event can be viewed on numerous websites, including www.wartimeheritage.com/storyavaughan & www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/28/a3904328. The website of the H.M.S. Indefatigable Association has further information: www.hmsindefatigable.co.uk).

William died on 1/4/1945, aged 21. He has no grave but is commemorated on Bay 6, Panel 4 of the Lee-on-Solent Memorial in Hampshire. (The Lee-on-Solent Memorial Register records that he was Mentioned in Despatches). He is believed to be commemorated on the Wootton War Memorial at St Peter's Church in Oxfordshire, and also on the Cornerstone of Peace Memorial on the Pacific island of Okinawa. A short obituary was published on 20/4/1945 in the Peterborough Standard, which reported that William's parents were then living at Kenya House, Boar's Hill, Oxford. His father administered his estate.



Lee-on-Solent Memorial, Hampshire and William's inscription. © TWGPP, by kind permission

14) John Denzil JEFFERY

The King's School's admissions register shows that John was born on 21/1/1919 and was the ward of his grandmother, Mrs L. Jeffery, of 35 Albany Road, Northampton. (On the 1911 census, John's grandparents, Fred and Lucy Ann Jeffery, stated that they had only one surviving child. This being so, their daughter Frances must have been the mother of John).

John attended Stimpson Avenue Council School, Northampton before joining The King's School as a boarder on 20/9/1929. He took an active part in school events. Among other plays in which he acted was the 1936 production of *Saint Joan*, in which he played the Archbishop. He was on the cricket team in 1935 and 1936; the rugby team in 1934-35 and 1935-36; and the hockey team in 1934, 1935 and 1936. (During the 1935 Christmas holidays he played hockey for Rushden Town). He was also a Boy Scout. School-friends later described him as a ginger-haired "Brylcream boy". He was a prefect and Head of School House during his final year. When he left on 26/7/1936, to become an apprentice to a leather manufacturer, a fellow-boarder wrote in *The Petriburgian* that he would be greatly missed for his leadership and sporting prowess, which had "brought distinction on us on the playing field".

John served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. His service number was 128889. His appointment as Corporal on 5/9/1942 was published in the *London Gazette* on 30/10/1942. His later promotion to Flying Officer from 5/3/1943 was posthumously published in the *London Gazette* on 15/6/1943. He served in 102 Squadron. After training in America he was posted to a Bomber station.

John was one of the crew of Halifax II serial number JD149 DY-H which took off from RAF Pocklington in Yorkshire at 23:26 hours on 27/5/1943. It was part of a Bomber Command mission, targeting Essen in Germany. The aircraft's last transmission was on 28/5/1943 at 01:40 hours, when it called for assistance. It was shot down 4 minutes later, by a night-fighter being piloted by Lt. Heinz Grimm, and crashed in the Waddenzee near Hippolytushoef in the Netherlands, killing all aboard.

John died on 28/5/1943, aged 24. He was buried in Plot C, Row 13, Collective grave 378-380 at the Wieringen (Hippolytushoef) General Cemetery in the Netherlands. His headstone reads: "Eager and young, he feared not to die for honour and his kind". His six crewmates were buried in adjoining graves: Samuel Zareikin (Royal Canadian Air Force); Jack Lowings (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve); Ronald Fewtrell (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve); Kenneth Smith (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve); Thomas Heslop (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve) and Harry Entwhistle (Royal Air Force).

On 10/9/1943, the *Northampton Independent* reported John as missing, stating that in his last letter to his grandmother John had hinted at having experienced "a premonition of his non-return from a raid". His grandmother was reported to have said that John "always carried his mascot – a rabbit's foot – with him, but having mislaid it, he had on this raid to take off without it". The *Northampton Independent* dated 14/1/1944 reported John's presumed death and again referred to his last letter home, in which he had paid tribute to his grandmother "who had brought him up from infancy".

John is commemorated in the Roll of Honour of St Peter & St Paul's Church, Abington, Northamptonshire. A headstone in that churchyard is inscribed: "Jack Denzil (Fly. Officer) R.A.F., grandson of Fred and Lucy Ann Jeffrey, missing, believed killed May 27/28, aged 24 years". He was also named (mistakenly as "J.W. Jeffrey") on the Peterborough Scouts' Roll of Honour, unveiled at Trinity Street Peterborough 28/11/1951.



John Jeffery in 1935...



and in 1936



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15) Neil McCARTHY

Neil was born in Edith Weston on 7/12/1909, the second of six sons of May nee Hardy and John Payne McCarthy, who had married in Wisbech in 1906. He also had a sister. On the 1911 census he was living with his parents in the School House, Christchurch, Wisbech, where his father was Headmaster. The family moved to Whittlesey about 1914. (Neil's father later became a Justice of the Peace).

Neil attended Broad Street Boys' Council School, Whittlesey before joining The King's School on 21/9/1920 as a day scholar. (The family was living at 1 Broad Street, Whittlesey). He was a very popular all-round athlete. He was on the cricket team 1926 and 1927, and the rugby team 1925-26, 1926-27 and 1927-28. In 1927-28 he was Captain of St Chad's House. He was a prefect and was a Corporal in the Cadet Corps. In 1928 he received Third-Class Honours in the Local Examinations, with a Distinction in History.

After leaving King's in 1928 he went to Canada aboard the *Aurania* on 16/6/1928, working as a clerk for the Hudson Bay Company (fur traders). He returned to England on the *Aurania* on 2/1/1929. From October 1930 he studied at Saltley College, Birmingham, where he was Captain of Athletics 1931-32 and set a long-jump record of 20 feet 10 ½ inches. (According to the Peterborough Standard dated 11/7/1941, he taught at Hereward School, March. As he was mentioned in The Deaconian, it seems he also taught at Deacon's School). In 1933 he became Headmaster of Greetham School near Oakham. In 1934-35 he won his County (Cambs) colours for athletics, excelling at javelin, long jump and flat racing. He remained in close contact with The King's School, invariably returning as a visitor for sports days, and playing for the Old Boys' cricket team. After his father died in 1936, his mother went to live with him at Greetham.

Neil resigned his post as Headmaster of Greetham School in August 1940 to join the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve as a Leading Aircraftman. After training in Canada he was commissioned as a Pilot Officer from 16/3/1941, which was published in the London Gazette on 16/5/1941. His service number was 64291. He joined No 10 Operational Training Unit at RAF Abingdon.

On 7/7/1941 he was in command of Whitley Mark V aircraft serial number Z6476 when it took off from RAF Abingdon for a night navigation exercise. At approximately 01:15 hours, having strayed from its course, the aircraft descended to 2,000 feet in order to locate its position. It hit a barrage balloon cable, caught fire, and crashed to the ground at Warple Road, Quinton, Birmingham with the loss of all six crew.

Neil died on 7/7/1941, aged 31. He was buried in grave 20.B.8 at Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey on 10/7/1941. One crewmate, Gerald Farbrother, was buried in the adjoining grave. Another, George Buckingham R.C.A.F., was buried in the Canadian section of the cemetery. The other three crewmen were buried in their home towns: Donald Lowson D.F.C. in Harrow (St Mary); Simon Drummond in Saltwell Cemetery, Gateshead; James Graney in Sacriston (St Bede's) Roman Catholic Cemetery in Durham.

Neil's death was reported on 11/7/1941 in the Peterborough Advertiser, which stated he was popular among contemporaries at King's, "where his all-round athletic prowess aroused their highest admiration ... He was an exemplary schoolmaster of the Rutland School and was beloved by his scholars and a large circle of friends". The 1941 Petriburgian described him as a "fine cricketer and sturdy rugger player" who would "be remembered with affection by many Old Boys". His mother was his executrix. (All five of Neil's brothers served in WW2. Only two months after Neil's death, his younger brother Ivor was killed in action, on 30/9/1941, while serving as a Flight Sergeant in the RAFVR. He is named on the Runnymede Memorial. Both he and Neil are named on the Greetham War Memorial in St Mary's Church. Another brother, Roy, became a Squadron Leader, and was awarded the Air Force Cross on 31/8/1943).



Neil McCarthy



Neil's grave at Brookwood

16) Philip Holme MITCHELL

Philip, known as Pip, was born in Peterborough on 31/3/1914, the only child of Philip Henry Mitchell and Anna nee Holme, who had married in Clitheroe, Lancashire in 1904. His father was a corn merchant. (On the 1911 census Philip's parents had been living at 77 Granville Street, Peterborough. The family lived at 33 Lime Tree Avenue, Peterborough by 1922. Anna died on 10/2/1930, just before Philip's sixteenth birthday, at which time the family was living at 42 Princes Gardens, Peterborough).

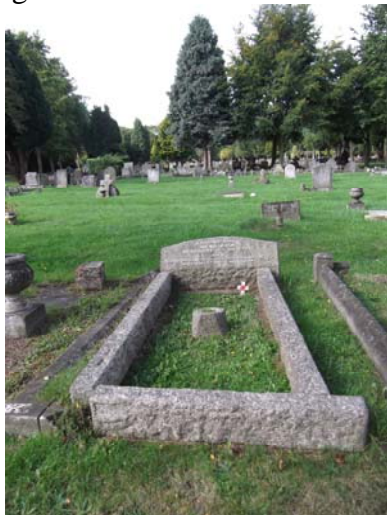
Philip was admitted to The King's School on 21/9/1922, from Peterborough High School. One of the things that he is recorded as having greatly enjoyed at King's was taking part in the Christmas productions of Gilbert and Sullivan operas. In the Oxford Local Examinations in July 1931, he received his School Certificate, with Credits in English, History, French, Chemistry and Art. At Speech Day in 1931, he received a prize for Drawing. After he left King's, in 1931, he was articled to Messrs Buckle and Sons, Solicitors. His father died on 8/7/1933.

Philip volunteered for the Royal Army Service Corps early in the War and rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant. He was discharged from the Army on medical grounds in September 1942. After a short period of rest, he joined the staff of Peter Brotherhood Ltd, in which he worked in the clerical department. Pursuing his interest in theatre, he was a member of the Peterborough Playgoers' Society. He also belonged to the Rambling Club.

Having been taken ill at work on Friday 6/8/1943, Philip was admitted to Peterborough Hospital, where he died two days later from cerebral thrombosis/malignant hypertension. (His death was registered by his uncle, who gave Philip's last address as 42 Princes Gardens and his occupation as "Solicitor's clerk"). A report of his death was published on 13/8/1943 in the Peterborough Advertiser, which stated that his funeral service had been held at St Mark's Church in Peterborough on 11/8/1943. In addition to his relatives, among the many who had attended the service were representatives from The King's School, from his previous employers, and friends from both the Rambling Club and the Playgoers' Society. Philip's former comrades in the British Legion had sent a wreath.

Philip was buried in Section 7, grave 2924 at Eastfield Cemetery, Peterborough, in the grave of his uncle, John William Holme. His estate was administered by James Herbert Maxwell, Insurance Manager, and George Buckle, Solicitor. He is not listed in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers, but is commemorated in the World War 2 Book of Remembrance in Peterborough Cathedral.

The 1944 edition of The Petriburgian reported that "Many Old Boys were shocked to hear of the tragic death of Pip Mitchell... Pip had a quiet and retiring nature, but he made many friends wherever he went. His interests lay in the fields of music, books and acting, on which subjects he was a well-informed critic. He was a man of culture and of good taste in things artistic, and a lover of the countryside. We shall remember him for these things, for his good nature and sense of humour, and not least, for the quiet courage and fortitude with which he bore many months of ill-health and suffering".



Philip Mitchell's grave at Eastfield Cemetery

17) Roy Albert James MITCHEM, Mentioned in Despatches

Roy was born in Cheltenham on 6/1/1917, the only son of Francis Albert Mitchem and Emily Victoria nee Alexander, who had married in Cheltenham in 1912. He had an older sister, Iris. Francis Mitchem was a cabinet maker. In 1927 the family was living at 14 Alderman's Drive, Peterborough. They later moved to 342 Fulbridge Road, Peterborough.

Roy was admitted to The King's School from Albert Place Elementary School on 16/9/1927. He was in St Chad's House. He won a writing prize as a Junior in 1928. He was a Cathedral chorister and was confirmed by the Bishop in Peterborough Cathedral on 26/3/1931. He was cast as one of the pirates in the School's Christmas 1932 production of *The Pirates of Penzance*. He received a prize for Manual Work at Speech Day in 1933. He left King's on 17/12/1932 and became an assistant in the men's tailoring and outfitting department of the Peterborough Co-operative Society Ltd in Park Road.

In February 1940 Roy enlisted as a Private with the 2nd Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. He was posted to Malta six months later. His regimental number was 6094576. He was wounded in July 1942 during enemy bombing of the island's fortress. He was Mentioned in Despatches in recognition of gallant and distinguished service in Malta, which was published in the London Gazette on 12/10/1943. He continued to serve in Malta until July 1943, when his Battalion moved to North Africa.

(On 12/11/1943, German forces landed on the Greek island of Leros. The 2nd Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment was one of the units sent to the island in an attempt to thwart the invasion. The Battle of Leros lasted until 16/11/1943, when all surviving Allied troops were forced to surrender).

Roy died on 16/11/1943, on the last day of the Battle of Leros. He was buried in grave 2.D.11 at Leros War Cemetery in Greece. The announcement that he was missing in action appeared in the Peterborough Standard on 31/12/1943. A report of his death was printed 28/1/1944. His obituary was published on 4/2/1944 in the Peterborough Advertiser, which stated that Roy had been in Signals. A memorial service for him was held on 5/2/1944 at All Saints' Church, Paston, Peterborough. On 21/4/1944 the Peterborough Advertiser reported that his parents had received Roy's Mentioned in Despatches Certificate. He died intestate and his father administered his estate. The Probate index recorded his last address as 342 Fulbridge Road, Paston.

Roy is named on Paston War Memorial at All Saints' Church, Paston and on the memorial of the Peterborough & District Co-operative Society Ltd. At Peterborough Cathedral he is commemorated on the Choristers' War Memorial in the Sacristy and in the Book of Remembrance in St Sprite's Chapel.



Roy's grave at Leros War Cemetery
© TWGPP, by kind permission



Paston War Memorial at All Saints' Church, Paston

18) Charles Hugh NEWMAN

Charles (who was usually known as Hugh) was born in Peterborough on 22/6/1915. He was the son of Charles Edward Newman and Amelia Elizabeth nee Reynolds, who had married in Thrapston in 1906. (On the 1911 census the family was living at 145 Eastgate, Peterborough). His father, who was the proprietor of a boot shop, died on 13th August 1930.

When Charles was admitted to The King's School from New Road School on 29/4/1926 the family was living at 82 Eastgate, Peterborough. He was a Cathedral chorister. One of his contemporaries at King's later described him as having been an "academic, quiet person; very intelligent". After leaving King's on 25/7/1931, Charles became a music salesman with Messrs J. Claypole and Son in Bridge Street. He was a member of the Peterborough Choral and Orchestral Society. (His interest in music was evidently shared by some of his siblings, as one of his elder sisters, Phyllis, later became a well-known contralto).

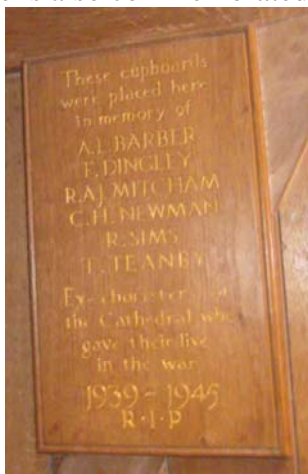
He joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve and served as a Flight Sergeant (Pilot) with 77 Squadron. His service number was 1201836. He married Dorothy Pick in Lancaster in 1940. Their daughter was born in Peterborough in 1943. Charles came home on leave for her baptism on 21/3/1943.

Charles had flown close to fifty missions over Germany and Italy by March 1943. On Saturday 27/3/1943 he piloted a Halifax bomber on a raid on Berlin. Following his safe return, he told a reporter: "At first I thought we were not going to see the city - the clouds were so thick all the way. Then, when we were almost on top of it the clouds began to split up. It was just like looking down into a great arena, with Berlin in the middle. Just before we got into clear sky we saw the defences starting. The guns went off as soon as the first flares went down. It was a moderate barrage, with shells bursting high. Searchlights caused us more trouble than the flak. There seemed to be hundreds of them, and I counted eight big cones with about 20 beams in each. It was pretty exciting, trying to dodge them- nipping in between and weaving about. They held us once, just for a second, but I dived and was in the dark again".

On 29/3/1943 at 22:06 hours, Halifax serial number JB842 KN-E, piloted by Charles, took off from RAF Elvington in Yorkshire to take part in a further bombing raid on Berlin. On this mission their aircraft crashed in the Fehmarn Belt, near Ostersoien in Denmark, killing all seven of the crew.

Charles died on 30/3/1943, aged 27. He was buried in collective grave 2.L.12-16 at the Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery in Germany. Three of his crewmates (Flight Sergeant Ronald Brough, Flying Officer John Armstrong and Flying Officer Anthony Metcalf) were also buried in the Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery. The body of another crewmate (Sergeant James Donald) was found in June 1943, and was buried in Svino Churchyard in Denmark. The other two crew members (Flight Sergeant Archibald Smith and Sergeant Edwin Bowen) have no known grave and are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey.

Charles left a widow and a two-month-old daughter. On 2/4/1943, both the Peterborough Advertiser and the Peterborough Standard reported him as being missing in action. (The Advertiser mentioned that his wife was then living in Kent Road, Peterborough). At Peterborough Cathedral, he is commemorated on the Choristers' War Memorial in the Sacristy (see below) and in the Book of Remembrance in St Sprite's Chapel. He is also commemorated on St Mary's Parish War Memorial).



Choristers' War Memorial at Peterborough Cathedral



Charles' grave.

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19) John Harold Tearl PALMER

John was born in Huntingdon on 31/10/1919. (His birth was registered as “Harold”, but he was always known as John). He was the eldest son of Harold John Palmer and Constance Pauline nee Butler, who had married in Huntingdon in 1915. His father was a farmer.

When John joined The King’s School as a boarder on 16/1/1934 from Ramsey Grammar School his family lived at 141, Great Whyte, Ramsey. He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 4/4/1935. At King’s, John was a member of the Arts and Sciences Society. He played Ladvenu in the School’s 1936 production of *Saint Joan*. He was on the rugby team 1935-36 and 1936-37 and on the hockey team 1936, 1937 and 1939. In 1936 he passed his Oxford Higher School Certificate (with a credit in Physics) and became a prefect and highly popular Head of School House. Friends later described him as tall and well-built, adding that he was kind and “used to laugh a lot”. In spring 1937, a glowing tribute to him was printed in *The Petriburgian*, which mentioned, among his many other achievements, that he had been responsible for starting the House Library. After leaving on 24/7/1937, he became a pig breeder.

John was living at Hawthorns, Great Whyte, Ramsey when he joined the R.A.F. in March 1939. His service number was 42020. His commission as Acting Pilot Officer from 29/4/1939 appeared in the *London Gazette* on 19/5/1939. He trained at Desford and at Kinloss, where he received his Flying Badge on 11/8/1939. His appointment as Pilot Officer from 6/11/1939 was announced in the *London Gazette* on 20/2/1940. He was in 90 Squadron on 17/11/1939 when he took off from RAF Upwood in Blenheim I serial number L1350, to practice flying on one engine. He was injured when he overshot the landing area.

On 11/7/1940 he was serving in 82 Squadron. He took off from RAF Watton in Blenheim IV R3690 UX-, heading for targets in Bordeaux. During the sortie the aircraft crashed. Though badly burned and suffering concussion and shock, his first thoughts are stated to have been for the welfare of his crew (Sergeants K. Howard and K.W.J. Farley), who later testified to his “outstanding bravery and fearlessness”. He was treated in Edith Cavell Hospital, Belgium before transferring to a Prisoner of War camp in Germany. While imprisoned he was promoted to Flying Officer from 6/11/1940 (published *London Gazette* 14/2/1941), and later to Flight Lieutenant from 6/11/1941 (published 20/1/1942).

John remained imprisoned until his death in a German camp hospital on 6/12/1942. He was buried in grave 8.E.37 at the 1939-1945 Berlin War Cemetery in Germany (see below). On 12/2/1943 the *Peterborough Advertiser* commented that he was “a very fine character, beloved by all who knew him, and bravely bore his long incarceration and illness”. The report included the message that Lieutenant Patrick Butler had sent to John’s parents: “His tremendous spirits brought humour and life to all our Company. Towards the close his great fortitude never failed him, and the day before his death he recalled that it was time he wrote home again, and when I suggested his dictating the letter to me he replied: ‘No, I’ll do it myself tomorrow’. The following afternoon he went to sleep and passed away quietly in the evening”.

John’s “heroic and gallant death” was recorded in 1943 in *The Petriburgian*, which commented he would be remembered for “his cheerfulness, and the enthusiasm with which he took to all that he did, and which brought him so many friends, and such solid success in the form-room, and enabled him to become an officer and a pilot of great promise in the R.A.F. We remember his abiding affection and loyalty for home and school and country, and his brave suffering through long weakening months. We remember him as one worthy to be among those young heroes who helped to save England in her darkest hour, and we salute him. Ave frater atque vale!”. (He is named on Ramsey War Memorial).



John... and his grave

©TWGPP

20) (Christopher) John Stafford POOLE

Christopher John was born on 27/12/1919 in Peterborough, the younger son of Stafford George Poole and Lillias Helen nee Clarke, who had married in Leicester in 1908. (His parents lived at Chesterfield House, Bishop's Road, Peterborough in 1911). His father was a mains engineer for the Peterborough Corporation. In 1928 the family lived in Broadway. They later lived at 62 Priory Road before moving to 28 Cromwell Road, Peterborough by 1937.

Invariably known by his second name, John attended Peterborough High School before joining The King's School on 18/9/1928. He was confirmed at Peterborough Cathedral on 21/3/1934. He was a member of the Arts and Sciences Society and played the English soldier in the School's 1936 production of *Saint Joan*. He was on the 1936-37 rugby and 1937 hockey teams and won cups in 1937 for the One-Mile Senior and Cross-Country Senior races. A contemporary described him as "a great character; great at games; one of the few pupils who dared to challenge W.D. Larrett's* authority (in a nice way!)". (*Deputy Headmaster). John left on 24/7/1937 to work as a clerk at the Alford branch of Barclays Bank.

He joined the R.A.F. on 15/8/1938. His service number was 580416. His service file shows that he joined as an Aircraftman 2nd Class, but was appointed as a Leading Aircraftman the following day. He was based at RAF Acklington from 14/11/1938, in 26 (T) Group. He transferred to 52 Squadron at RAF Upwood on 23/1/1939 as an Acting Sergeant. He joined 103 Squadron at RAF Benson on 22/5/1939, and was promoted to Sergeant on 21/7/1939. He was among the earliest trainees at Desford and was part of the Advanced Air Striking Force, which was in action before Dunkirk. Apart from a short spell of home-leave in February 1940, he served continuously in France from the outbreak of the War.

In May 1940 John was a Sergeant (Observer) in 103 Squadron. He was one of the three-man crew of Fairey Battle 1, serial number K9270 PM-, which took off from Betheniville in France at 13:45 on 10/5/1940 for a low-flying bombing raid against enemy columns on the Bascharage to Dippach road. According to the M.O.D. Air Historical Branch, K9270 PM- was shot down near Hotton in Belgium. (The Casualty report, held by The National Archives under reference: AIR 81/276, indicates the plane crashed at Linger in Belgium, as does Vol. 1, page 270 of *Bomber Command Losses*, by W.R. Chorley).

John died on 10/5/1940, aged 20. He was buried at Mont St Jean Cemetery, but was later reinterred in grave III.E.10 at Hotton War Cemetery in Belgium (see below). One of his crewmates, Sergeant Olaf Arthur Hutchinson, rests in the adjoining grave. (The other crew member, Temporary Warrant Officer Charles Henry Lowne, who was piloting the aircraft, survived and was taken Prisoner of War. After receiving hospital treatment he was held at Stalag 357, Kopernikus in Poland. He survived the War).

On 17/5/1940 the Peterborough Standard announced that Stafford Poole had received a telegram informing him his son was "missing, believed killed". The report commented that John "had a pleasant personality and was liked by all". On 30/8/1940 his parents received a message from the Red Cross, erroneously informing them that their son was being held as a Prisoner of War. Notice of his officially presumed death was reported in the Peterborough Standard on 17/8/1945. John's brother, Geoffrey, administered his estate.

In 1940, The Petriburgian announced that John was missing, and wrote of him: "He attended the School from 1928 to 1937, and was a boy who, through his very pleasant disposition, proved most popular among his schoolfellows. He distinguished himself in most branches of sport, holding both Rugger and Hockey colours, and at the same time showed himself as an excellent long-distance runner". (John is named in the World War 2 Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, and is also commemorated on the War memorial at St Mark's Church, Peterborough).



John Poole



Hotton War Cemetery

21) George RAE

George was born at 4 Dormer Place, Leamington, Warwickshire on 3/6/1922, the only child of George Rae and Sophie Lillian nee Barrett. His father was then a fitter in the Post Office Engineering Department. The family lived at 163 Leam Terrace, Leamington. George gained a Warwickshire County scholarship in 1932 when he entered Leamington College. His father was transferred to Northamptonshire in 1934 and promoted to Inspector. Consequently, the family moved to 111 Northfield Road, Peterborough.

George joined The King's School on 17/1/1935. Contemporaries described him as a quiet and very intelligent, auburn-haired boy. An outstanding sportsman, he gained his colours for hockey and rugby, and captained the cricket team. (He was on the cricket team 1936-40, the rugby team 1937-39 and the hockey team 1939/40). He also excelled in academic studies, particularly in Science. He passed the Oxford School Certificate in 1937, and later passed the Oxford Higher in 1939, with Distinctions for Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics. He was a highly popular Captain of St Chad's House in 1939-40 and became Head Boy in 1940. In his final year at King's he won a Hulme Exhibition to read Natural Sciences at Brasenose College, Oxford. He deferred the scholarship to enlist in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve on 28/8/1940.

George's R.A.F. service number was 1179958. He was trained in England and, in October 1941, qualified as a fighter pilot. He set a record for his unit by flying solo after only 6 hours and five minutes dual. When on leave during his training, he spent some time back at The King's School, carrying out experiments in the School's laboratory. He was assigned to 112 Squadron as a Flight Sergeant (Pilot) and volunteered for service in the Middle East in March 1942. (From June 1942, 112 Squadron was based at RAF Amriya in Egypt, operating as a fighter-bomber unit. It flew Curtis Kittyhawk fighter aircraft in support of ground troops prior to, and during, the Battle of El Alamein).

On 2/10/1942, George was piloting Kittyhawk serial number AL192 which took off from LG.90 in Egypt on a practice flight. Ten minutes after take-off the aircraft suddenly burst into flames. George tried to land, but was unable to do so, and was killed when the aircraft crashed to the ground. He died on 2/10/1942 aged 20, and was buried in grave XXXIII.D.7 at the El Alamein War Cemetery in Egypt (see photograph below). His Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader Billy Drake, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, paid tribute to his keenness and popularity with both ground and air crews. George's death was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser on 16/10/1942.

In 1943, The Petriburgian announced George's death, commenting his career at School "had included exceptionally good exam. results, school colours, the captaincy of cricket, and the headship of the School. He had great qualities, which, except to his friends, seemed hidden behind his shyness and reserve. He had begun to lose this reserve in his contacts with R.A.F. life, and could feel that the world was a place where a man might retain his personal ambitions and yet live at ease with his fellows. He said typically, on hearing that he might be sent to the Middle East, 'I am going to learn all I can'. He was given too short a time of a life where there was so much to learn. He leaves to his parents and his friends, sadness, but the sense of a great honour".

(In 1944 his parents endowed the George Rae Memorial Prize for Physics at The King's School, which is still awarded annually at Speech Day. He is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral and on his parents' gravestone in Eastfield Cemetery, Peterborough - see photograph below).



George Rae



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George's parents' headstone

22) George Andrew RODGERS

George was born in Peterborough on 23/5/1914, the only son (and believed only child) of Robert John Rodgers and Arabella Ann nee Williamson, who had married in Hull in 1912. His father was a butcher.

When George was admitted to The King's School on 21/9/1920 the family lived at 3 Huntley Grove, Peterborough. They had moved to 231 Eastfield Road by 1925. (George's father died aged 35 in Strathwell Lodge Nursing Home, Thorpe Lea Road, Peterborough on 29/8/1925, leaving Arabella to raise George alone. The School's Governors granted partial exemption of the tuition fees, to enable George to remain a pupil). George was awarded a Writing prize as a junior pupil in 1926. He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 11/3/1929. At Speech Day on 21st November 1929 he received a prize for Manual Work and Drawing. He was a keen sportsman, and played on the 1930 School cricket team. He left King's on 26/7/1930 to serve an engineering apprenticeship with Peter Brotherhood Ltd.

George was living with his mother at 231 Eastfield Road, Peterborough when he joined the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Reserve as an Engineer. His marriage to Mary Smillie at St Oswald's Episcopal Church, Glasgow was announced in the Peterborough Advertiser on 28/6/1940. He was brought ashore from his ship the following month and admitted to a naval hospital for surgery, which was reported in the Peterborough Advertiser on 12/7/1940. He joined the crew of the Merchant Navy vessel *M.V. Darkdale* (*Glasgow*) on the day that she commenced sea-trials (14/11/1940). She was a Dale class tanker.

On the night of 21/10/1941 George was serving as Fourth Engineer Officer aboard the *Darkdale* which was anchored off Jamestown Harbour in St Helena, carrying a cargo of 3,000 tons of fuel oil, 850 tons of aviation gasoline, 500 tons of diesel oil and lubricating oil. Shortly after midnight she was torpedoed by the German submarine U-68. She exploded and later sank, with the loss of all 41 souls on board. She was the first British ship sunk south of the equator in World War 2. (Detailed accounts of the incident, and of the history of the *Darkdale*, can be viewed on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary website: www.historicalrfa.org/).

George died on 22/10/1941, aged 27. He is commemorated on Panel 34 of the Tower Hill Memorial in London (see below). He is also named in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, on St Mary's Church War Memorial and on the Darkdale Memorial Plaque on the Cenotaph in Jamestown, St Helena. (It is possible, but unconfirmed, that he was also the "George Rogers" named on Woodston's War Memorial). A report of his presumed death, which referred to him as a Sub-Lieutenant and included his photograph, was published on 7/11/1941 in the Peterborough Advertiser. The report stated that he had "been in hospital for nine weeks before joining his ship recently", and commented that "in social contacts [he] was deservedly held in high esteem". It also mentioned that his widow, whose father had died two weeks earlier, was staying at Mull with her mother when she was informed that George was missing. (The record of medals awarded to George is available to download from The National Archives, catalogue reference: BT 395/1/83801. It records that his discharge number was R160981).

According to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary website, the Master of the *Darkdale*, Captain Thomas Herbert Card, who had been ashore at the time she was hit, later wrote a letter of sympathy to the family of each man who had died, to which message he added: "The Officers and Crew of the Darkdale were a fine body of men. No praise of mine can be high enough for them, and it is with bitter regret and everlasting sorrow that I have left them 'asleep' in the deep waters of St Helena".



George Rodgers



23) Neville SANDERS

Neville was born in Peterborough on 12/8/1912, the only son (and believed only child) of Gerald Henry Sanders and Alice nee Lunn, who had married in Peterborough in 1908. His father, who was usually known as Henry, was an electrical engineer. On the 1911 census, Henry and Alice were living at 10 Manor House Street, Peterborough.

When Neville was admitted to The King's School, on 27/4/1920, the family was living at 91 Taverner's Road, Peterborough. They later moved to 124, Lincoln Road, Peterborough.

After leaving King's, Neville became a director of George Andrews Ltd, Radio and Electrical Engineers, of Broadway, Peterborough. The company relocated to Skegness in 1932. (It was listed in the telephone directories at Broadway, Peterborough up to 1932. It started to be listed in the directories at Lincoln Road, Skegness in the same year). Neville married Kittie Fanthorpe in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, in 1933. Their daughter was born the following year.

Neville joined the Army in December 1939. He was engaged in radio-location duties and served in Norway with the Expeditionary Force in 1940. On 5/1/1942 he was posted to India. He was serving as a Corporal when he was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant on 9/7/1942, which was published in the London Gazette on 25/12/1942. (The announcement of his promotion to Lieutenant has not been traced). He transferred from the 7th Light Cavalry to the 4th Battalion of the 12th Frontier Force Regiment. His regimental number was EC/5211. (The 4/12th Battalion was part of the British Indian Army and served in India and Burma).

Neville died on 11/5/1944, aged 32. He is buried in grave 10.J.3 at Kirkee War Cemetery in India. He left a widow and nine-year-old daughter. His death was announced on 26/5/1944 in both the Peterborough Standard and the Peterborough Advertiser, which mentioned that Neville's parents were then living in Firbeck Avenue, Skegness. His death was also announced in The Standard in Skegness on 24/5/1944.

(N.B. An "N. Saunders" is named on the Skegness War Memorial, at St Matthew's Church. None of the "N. Saunders" listed in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers for World War 2 has a recorded link to Skegness. The inscription may possibly therefore be a misspelling and relate to Neville).



Neville's grave at Kirkee War Cemetery. © TWGPP, by kind permission

24) Geoffrey SHEPPERSON

Geoffrey was born in Huntingdonshire on 15/4/1925, the third son of Jack Shepperson and Kate nee Greenwood of “Royston”, 6 School Lane, Ramsey. He had two elder brothers, Jack and Hubert, and a younger brother, Gerald, who accidentally drowned, aged 3. Their father was a grazier and cattle dealer.

Geoffrey attended The Abbey School, Ramsey from 1935 until Christmas 1938. On 16/1/1939 he was admitted as a boarder at The King’s School in Peterborough, where he was nicknamed “Shep”. He was confirmed by the Bishop in Peterborough Cathedral on 23/3/1939. A very keen and able sportsman, he played on the cricket team from 1939 to 1941 (scoring 100 runs against The King’s School, Ely in 1939), and on the 1st XV rugby team during the 1940/41 and 1941/42 seasons. He was also good at hockey and athletics, and was awarded full School colours. Contemporaries described him as having been a “superbly natural and powerful athlete” and “the Ian Botham of the cricket team”.

Geoffrey left The King’s School at the end of Christmas term in 1941 and became an Apprentice in the Merchant Navy in 1942. He served aboard the steam freighter *SS Clarissa Radcliffe* (London), on which he successfully completed one return Atlantic crossing.

On Geoffrey’s second trip, the *Clarissa* left New York on 5/3/1943 carrying a cargo of iron ore and bound for Barrow-in-Furness. She was one of 48 merchant ships, plus 2 Landing Ships Tank and a rescue ship that were travelling in convoy SC122, under Captain S.N. White R.N.R. On 6/3/1943 the convoy ran into a violent storm during which it became scattered. By dawn next day, the *Clarissa* was one of eleven ships that had become separated from the rest of the convoy. Ten of the ships rejoined, but the *Clarissa* did not. She was last spotted by one of the escort ships on 9/3/1943, at which time she was an hour’s steaming from the convoy. The escort gave her a course to steer, but she was never seen again.

Geoffrey’s parents were notified on 15/4/1943 that he was missing in action. The news, which arrived on what would have been his 18th birthday, was reported in the Peterborough Standard on 16/4/1943. His photograph was published a week later. The Petriburgian of 1943 reported that he was missing.

Geoffrey is officially recorded as having died on 9/3/1943*, aged 17. He is commemorated on Panel 31 of the Tower Hill Memorial in London (see below). He is also commemorated on a stone at Ramsey Cemetery, on the Ramsey Town War Memorial and on a tablet at the Abbey School, Ramsey. His medal card is held by The National Archives under reference: BT 395/1/88135.

(* Based upon the date of the convoy’s last sighting of the *SS Clarissa Radcliffe*, the 9th March 1943 was taken to be the official date of death of all 55 souls on board, comprising the Master, 42 crew and 12 gunners. The youngest member of the crew was 16 years old. However, according to the research of Martin Middlebrook (*Convoy: The Battle for Convoys SC122 and HX229*, published London 1976), and Kenneth Wynn (*U- Boat Operations of the Second World War*, published London 1998), the *SS Clarissa Radcliffe* is actually believed to have been the unnamed ship that the German U-Boat *U663* logged as having torpedoed and sunk in that vicinity on 18/3/1943. The *U663* was herself later sunk on 8/5/1943 in the Bay of Biscay, with the loss of all hands, having been damaged the previous day by depth charges dropped from a Sunderland aircraft of 10 Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force).



Jack and Geoffrey Shepperson



Tower Hill Memorial © TWGPP by kind permission

25) Ronald Arthur SIMS

Ronald was born at East Ardsley in Yorkshire on 21/5/1920, the younger son of Edward Sims and May nee Thompson, who had married at St Michael's Church, East Ardsley on 2/8/1915. (The marriage register recorded Edward as an Assistant Shunter). When Ronald was only a few months old the family moved to Peterborough. In 1930 they were living at "Cambrai", 73 Alexandra Road, Peterborough. Ronald's father was then working as a Guard with the London North East Railway Company.

Ronald joined The King's School on 19/9/1930 from Lincoln Road Elementary School. He was a Cathedral chorister and King's Scholar, and was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 4/4/1935. He passed his Oxford School Certificate in July 1935, with credits in French, Mathematics, Physics and Art. He left King's on 22/12/1936 and joined the Civil Service staff of the Post Office in Park Road, Peterborough, where he worked as a draughtsman in the engineering department until 1939. His main hobbies were hiking and cycling, but his chief ambition was to fly.

He was commissioned as a probationary Acting Pilot Officer in the Royal Air Force on 2/9/1939, which was published in the London Gazette on 19/9/1939. His service number was 42654. He gained his wings by the end of the year.

In the early hours of Sunday 31/3/1940, Ronald was flying Airspeed Oxford II serial number N4840, of No 11 Service Flying Training School. During his second solo flight that night, the aircraft's port wing struck a tree during the approach to landing back at R.A.F. Shawbury. The aircraft crashed at 3 am.

Ronald died instantly in the accident on 31/3/1940, aged 19. Following an inquest on 1/4/1940, his death was registered in the Whitchurch District, Shropshire. His funeral took place at Peterborough Cathedral on Thursday 4th April 1940. Seven ex-choristers and schoolfellows acted as coffin bearers. Among the congregation were two senior officers from his unit, and Mr W.F.F. Shearcroft and Mr J. Shaw from The King's School. Following a choral service, at which the Dean led the prayers, Ronald was buried in block 17, grave 7059 at the Eastfield Cemetery in Peterborough. His death and funeral were reported in depth in both the Peterborough Advertiser and Peterborough Standard on Friday 5/4/1940. The reports stated that his father was then working in the traffic section of L.N.E.R. at New England, Peterborough.

Ronald's was the third of three former students whose deaths were reported in 1940 in The Petriburgian. It commented that he "had always known that 'safety first' was not a philosophy for a cricketer, and for him also the bat had become 'a banner in the air'". Mr Oliver Mitchell, who had been Headmaster of The King's School at the time Ronald attended, said of him "I knew him as a bright, intelligent and persevering boy". In addition to being named on The King's School's War Memorials, Ronald is commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral on the Choristers' War Memorial in the Sacristy and in the Book of Remembrance in St Sprite's Chapel. (His elder brother, Harry, was also educated at The King's School. He served as a Leading Aircraftman in the RAF in World War 2. He survived the War).



Ronald Arthur Sims



Ronald's grave in Eastfield Cemetery

26) Thomas Edward TEANBY

Thomas was born in Peterborough on 18/10/1922, the only child of George Edward Teanby and Mabel Blanche nee Wood, who both worked for the Post Office before they married. (After their marriage on 28/6/1914 in Peterborough Register Office, they lived at 39 St Mary's Street, Stamford before moving to Crowland House, Crowland. They later lived at 34 Brook Street, Peterborough. George's WW1 Army service record shows he served from 27/7/1916 to 30/5/1919 as a Private in the 8th Worcestershire Territorial Association and in the Labour Corps. Probate records show he died at West London Hospital on 17/10/1935. His widow Mabel never remarried, and raised Thomas alone after her husband's death).

Thomas joined The King's School from New Road Elementary School on 4/5/1932. He was a Cathedral chorister. At Speech Day in 1938 he was awarded a prize for Reading. He was cast as Maria in the 1938 school production of *Twelfth Night*, and as Flute the following year in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. (Contemporaries later described him as a small, "impish" and "lively lad", whose cricket bat "was nearly as tall as he was!"). He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 23/3/1939.

After leaving King's on 29/7/1939, Thomas worked for an engineering company. He later joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve and served as a Sergeant (Air Gunner) in 640 Squadron, based at RAF Leconfield in Yorkshire, as part of Bomber Command. His service number was 1809870.

On 14/2/1945 Thomas was one of the crew aboard Handle Page Halifax B III serial number MZ856 C8-S, which took off from RAF Leconfield at 17:04 hours bound for a night bombing raid on Chemnitz in Germany, as part of Operation "Thunderclap". It was intercepted by a Junkers night-fighter piloted by Major Werner Hoffman, and was eventually shot down by flak at 22:11 hours. It crashed in Neuwirtshaus Forest near Schwarzelbach in Germany. (In 1994 a memorial was erected at the crash site, which is now known as "Flyer Curve". Thomas is named on that memorial, but his surname was misspelt as "Trandez").

Thomas died on 14/2/1945, aged 23. Along with his crewmates, he was initially buried in Schwarzelbach Cemetery. He was later reinterred in grave 5.A.7-10 at Durnbach War Cemetery 1939-45 in Germany (see below). In Peterborough Cathedral he is named on the Choristers' War Memorial in the Sacristy and in the Book of Remembrance. He is named on St Mary's Church War Memorial. (His six crewmates, all from the R.A.F.V.R., were: Henri De Bij, Sidney Ede, Bob Longworth, Frederick Riches, John Ridsdale and Bernard Whitfield. All seven men now rest in adjoining graves in Durnbach War Cemetery. The crew photo below is by kind permission of Aircrew Remembered: www.aircrewmemoired.com/raf1945/4/debijhenri.html).



Thomas Teanby



Halifax MZ856 Crew
Rear: Sgt. Whitfield, Sgt. Ridsdale, Sgt. Teanby and Sgt. Ede
Front: F/Sgt. Longworth, P/O. de Bij and Sgt. Riches (Courtesy Barry and Jean Ede)

Thomas and his crewmates



Thomas' grave at Durnbach War Cemetery...



alongside those of his crewmates

Photographs by very kind permission of Paul Willing at Durnbach War Cemetery.

27) Henry Ronald Max WATSON

Henry Ronald was born in Peterborough on 2/9/1918. (His birth was registered as “Henry”, but he was known as Ronald, or occasionally as “Mac”). He was the son of Arnold Watson and Grace Ethel nee Waite, whose marriage in Doncaster was registered in 1914. Arnold was a railway accounts clerk.

Ronald was educated at Beech Avenue Infants School and at All Souls’ Elementary School in Peterborough before joining The King’s School on 3/5/1928, at which time the family was living at 214 Cromwell Road, Peterborough. (By 1934 they had moved to 1, Granville Street, Peterborough).

Ronald was in the chorus of the 1930 school production of *The Mikado*, and was one of the slaves in the 1932 production of *The Poetasters of Ispahan*. He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 21/3/1932. A keen sportsman, he was the runner-up in both the high jump and the junior cross-country competitions in 1932, and was on the rugby team in 1934-35. (He could also “defend and block all day at cricket”, according to one of his contemporaries). He left King’s on 20/12/1934 to become a grocer. He worked for J Claypole and Son in Bridge Street, Peterborough.

He joined the Royal Artillery at the outbreak of the War, under the name “Ronald Henry” Watson, and attended Officer Cadet Training. His appointment as 2nd Lieutenant from 1/6/1940 was published in the London Gazette on 4/6/1940. He was later promoted to Lieutenant (date not traced). He served with the 77th (Highland) Field Regiment of the Royal Artillery, in the 4th Infantry Division. His regimental number was 134474.

(The 77th (Highland) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery was in action in Italy from February 1944. It was sent to Greece in December 1944, to reinforce a small contingent of Western Allies that were attempting to deal with the Civil War that was then escalating).

Ronald died on 26/12/1944, aged 26. He was buried in grave 18.B.4 at Phaleron War Cemetery, Greece. A report of his death was printed on 5/1/1945 in the Peterborough Advertiser, which stated his parents had received a telegram on New Year’s Eve, informing them that their son had been killed in action in Italy. On 12/1/1945 the Peterborough Advertiser reported that, on January 5th, Ronald’s parents had received a cheerful letter from their son. In his letter, which had been delayed in the post, he had written that he had arrived in Greece on 18th December, having previously been with the 8th Army in Italy. He remarked in his letter that: “The Greeks are friendly and things are quiet, and I hope they remain so”.

Ronald’s estate was administered by his father. The 1945 Probate index recorded Ronald’s home address as 1 Granville Street, Peterborough. He is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance in St Sprite’s Chapel at Peterborough Cathedral and on St Mary’s Church War Memorial.



(Henry) Ronald Watson



Ronald’s grave at Phaleron. © TWGPP, by kind permission

28) Windsor Francis Richard WEBB

Windsor was born in Peterborough on 26/3/1924, the son of Leslie William Webb (an advertising manager and later Secretary of the Town Cricket Club) and Florence Lily nee Harrison, who married in 1921 in Peterborough. He was educated privately by Katherine and Constance Back at their school in Lincoln Road, Peterborough before being admitted to The King's School on 2/5/1933. (The family was then living at 43 New Road, Peterborough. By 1937 they had moved to Edenscourt, 21 Cecil Road, Peterborough).

At King's, Windsor was in the Lion Patrol of the Scouts. On Speech Day in 1936 he received a School prize for Manual Work and Drawing. He left King's on 3/4/1937. After continuing his education at Stamford School, he joined the Berkshire Constabulary. (The minimum age for admittance as a Police officer was then nineteen. As Windsor was beneath this age, he is thought to have worked as a civilian clerk).

He joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in February 1942, service number 1320645. He served as a Sergeant in 207 Squadron. (The squadron's history can be viewed on the Royal Air Force website: www.raf.mod.uk/history/bombercommandno207squadron.cfm . It records that from November 1940 the squadron operated with Avro Manchester aircraft. By June 1942 it had converted to Avro Lancasters. From 21/9/1942 to 13/10/1943 the squadron operated out of RAF Langar in Nottinghamshire).

On 17/10/1942, 207 Squadron contributed 14 of the 94 Lancasters from Bomber Command which carried out a daring low-level daylight raid on the Schneider factory in Le Creusot in France. Windsor took part in that raid. On 30/10/1942 the Peterborough Advertiser reported that it was his third overseas mission.

On 25/11/1942, Windsor was the Air Gunner on Lancaster I serial number R5695 EM-G, which took off from RAF Langar at 15:04 hours. Its target was the Haselunne air-field in Germany. In the course of the mission, the aircraft and all eight crew were lost without trace.

Windsor died on 25/11/1942, aged 18*. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Panel 96 of the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey. His seven crewmates were: Alfred Joseph Parkyn (Royal Canadian Air Force); John James Gallimore (RAF); William John Vandervoort (Royal Canadian Air Force); James Louis Guichard (Royal Canadian Air Force); James McGregor Allan (Royal Canadian Air Force); Jack Slater (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve) and Eugene Edward Chouiniere (Royal Canadian Air Force). (* The Commonwealth War Graves Commission register records his age as 19. However, the General Register Office Birth Index records that his birth was registered in the June quarter of 1924, tallying with the birth-date recorded for him in The King's School's registers. He was therefore only 18 when he died).

Windsor is included in the Roll of Honour on page 126 of *The History of Stamford School*. He was also named on the Peterborough Scouts' Roll of Honour, and is commemorated on the Berkshire Constabulary War Memorial at Thames Valley Police Training College at Sulhamstead (see photograph below, which is reproduced by kind permission of Thames Valley Police Museum).

(The 207 Squadron Association website has details of those named in the Roll of Honour Memorial Book that was deposited in Leicester Cathedral in 1989. Windsor is included on that Roll of Honour. The website also records that, in 1994, a memorial was dedicated at Langar airfield in honour of the 251 members of 207 Squadron who lost their lives while serving at that base, and that a Memorial Book recording details of those casualties is in St Andrew's Church, Langar. Further information is on the Association's website: www.207squadron.rafinfo.org.uk/rollofhonour/).



Windsor Webb



Runnymede Memorial



Berkshire Constabulary WW 2 Memorial

29) Kenneth Edward WHALLEY

Kenneth was born on 22/11/1917 in the Hendon District in Buckinghamshire, the only son of Edward Highton Whalley and Mary Maud nee Francis, who had married at St James' Church in Bethnal Green on 24/7/1909. Edward was a mechanical draughtsman and Mary was a teacher. (On the 1911 census Edward and Mary were living at 19 Downs Park Road, West Hackney. He was recorded as being a mechanical draughtsman for a chocolate and confectionary company. From 1918 to 1931 Edward and Mary were listed on the Electoral Register at 91 Lonsdale Avenue, Harrow. In 1933 the family moved to "Harrowdene", 144 Lincoln Road, Werrington).

Kenneth attended Wembley County School in Middlesex from September 1929 to March 1933. He joined The King's School, Peterborough 2/5/1933. He was confirmed by the Bishop at Peterborough Cathedral on 21/3/1934. He was described by contemporary Petriburgians as having been "studious and intelligent" and a "clever chap"; not keen on sport, but "good at maths/science". He passed his Oxford School Certificate with Honours in July 1934, with credits in English, History, French, Mathematics, Physics and Art, and received five prizes at the 1934 Speech Day. He was Captain of St Peter's House 1935-36, and was a prefect in 1935-36 (see photograph below). He left King's on 26/7/1936 to become a junior technical officer in the aviation industry, at the Aeronca Works.

While at King's Kenneth had developed a keen interest in the problems of flight and of aeroplane construction. At the Aeronca Works, where he gained an Inter-Service Degree, he was "considered to have a brilliant future", according to the Peterborough Advertiser dated 21/11/1941. He was later employed in the Stress Laboratory at the De Havilland Aircraft Company. He learnt to fly at weekends.

Kenneth was called up for service in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in September 1938. His service number was 61941. He was serving as a Sergeant when he was commissioned on 7/2/1941 as a Pilot Officer, which was published in the London Gazette on 4/4/1941. He completed his training as a fighter pilot in Iraq. In November 1941 he was serving as a Pilot Officer with 451 Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force.

(451 Squadron was raised at Bankstown, Sidney on 12/2/1941. It became operational in Egypt on 1/7/1941, flying Hawker Hurricanes in support of Allied operations in the Western Desert. Further details are on the Australian War Memorial website: www.awm.gov.au).

Kenneth died on 12/11/1941, aged 23, when the Hawker Hurricane I (serial number V7353 BQ) that he was piloting was shot down by a Messerschmitt during a reconnaissance flight at Salum, Egypt. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Column 241 on the Alamein Memorial in Egypt (see below). On 21/11/1941 the Peterborough Advertiser reported him as missing in action. His presumed death was announced in the Peterborough Standard on 10/7/1942. He is commemorated on the Werrington War Memorial at St John's with Emmanuel Church, and is also named in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral. His father administered his estate.

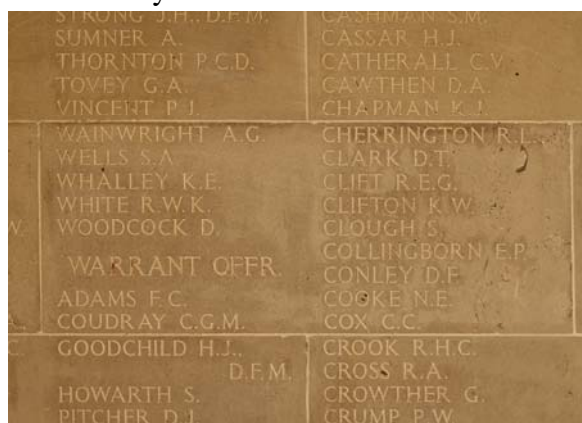
The Petriburgian of 1942 commented: "We very much regret that the death must be presumed of Pilot Officer Kenneth Whalley, who, last November, failed to return to his Unit after a reconnaissance flight in the Middle East ... His Squadron Leader wrote that he was liked for his unassuming ways, and for the willingness and care with which he fulfilled his duties. That is exactly what we knew of him at School".



Kenneth in 1936...



& in the RAF



Alamein Memorial. © TWGPP, by kind permission

30) Arthur Anthony WHITTOME

Arthur Anthony (sometimes known as Anthony, but usually known as “Tony”) was born in Thorney, Peterborough on 26/6/1914, the eldest surviving son of Arthur Frank Whittome and Hilda May nee Keeble, who married at St Pancras Church, London on 1/6/1910. (After their marriage, they set up home at The Green in Thorney, Peterborough. They later moved to Park View, Thorney. Arthur was a Solicitor).

Tony joined The King’s School on 19/9/1924 as a boarder, having previously attended a private school. He was a keen rugby player and was a forward on the School team in 1930-31 & 1931-32. (He later played rugby for Peterborough Town). He was in the Cadet Corps, and in 1930 joined the newly-formed Signalling Squad, in which he won the Old Boys’ Cup for Musketry, as the best shot. He was confirmed by the Bishop in Peterborough Cathedral on 26/3/1931. He left King’s on 6/12/1931 to become a businessman.

He married Freda Beard in the Westminster District in 1939. They lived in Castor at “Three Chimneys”, an old barn that Tony had converted into a thatched cottage. He joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in late 1941. His service number was 1324622. He spent a year in Canada, training for his wings, returning to England in September 1943. He served as a Flight Sergeant (Bomb Aimer).

On 23/4/1944, Tony was completing his training with number 42 Operational Training Unit, which was in No 38 (Airborne Force) within Fighter Command. He was one of the crew aboard Armstrong Whitworth Albemarle serial number V1610 which took off from RAF Ashbourne near Derby on a night training flight. Just before dawn the aircraft was attacked by a Messerschmitt and caught fire. Two of the crew managed to bale out, but the other three died when the aircraft crashed in a field near Boston, Lincolnshire. (The remains of the aircraft were later excavated and are on display at the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirkby Airfield, Lincolnshire. The display bears a plaque commemorating the deaths of Tony Whittome and his crew-mates, Sgt John Hutchinson (Pilot) and Sgt Kenneth Rusby (Navigator).

Tony died on 23/4/1944, aged 29. His funeral was held at Thorney Abbey in Cambridgeshire on 26/4/1944. His coffin, draped in the Union Flag, was carried by six members of the RAF. (The funeral was reported in depth on 28/4/1944 in both the Peterborough Standard and the Peterborough Advertiser). He was buried in grave 448 at Thorney Cemetery. His headstone reads:

SERGT A. A. [TONY]
WHITTOME R.A.F.,
KILLED
BY ENEMY ACTION
WHILE ON DUTY
23RD APRIL 1944,
AGED 29 YEARS.
PER ARDUA AD ASTRA

Tony is commemorated on the Castor War Memorial at St Kyneburgha Church, and also in the World War 2 Book of Remembrance at Ely Cathedral. He left no Will and his estate was administered by his widow, Freda. (Five of his cousins also died in service with the RAF during the War).



Tony in 1930-31...



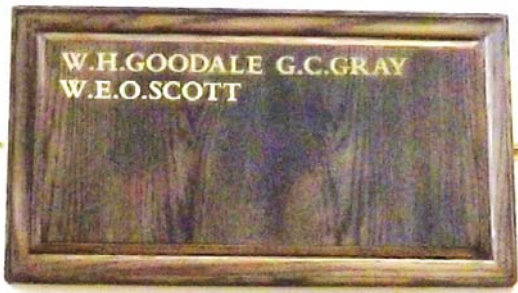
and in later life



Tony’s grave in Thorney Cemetery



ADDENDUM



When The King's School commissioned its memorials in the 1920s and 1940s, immediately following the conclusion of both World Wars, it commemorated all known former students whose deaths had occurred during, or were attributed to, their military service. Some casualties were, however, unwittingly omitted.

At that time, The King's School had boarding facilities, so its students originated from both home and abroad. They left to transfer to a different school, to progress to university, or to take up employment, events that took numerous former Petriburgians out of the local area. Although many remained in contact with the school, some did not. Consequently, news of their later deaths either failed to reach the school at all, or was received after the memorials had been completed, resulting in the inadvertent omission of their names.

During the research into those named on The King's School's War Memorials, details were found of four additional Old Petriburgians, whose deaths occurred during, or were attributed to, their military service during both World Wars. Although omitted from the original inscriptions, it was fitting that their names should be included on the school's Roll of Honour. Two new memorial boards were therefore made within the school, crafted by David Hughes (Design Technology teacher) and sign-written by Jeff Baker (Reprographics Technician), who took great care to match the style and colour of the new boards to the original memorials. The new boards were hung in the school's library, immediately beneath the original memorials so that, from November 2014, Walter Goodale, George Gray, William Hart and Colin Reeves took their rightful place of honour with their former schoolfellows. Since then, a further World War 1 casualty and four further World War 2 casualties have come to light: William E.O. Scott, John William Hobson Bateman, Donald Phillips Durrant, Malcolm Robertson and Robert Stanley Swallow. Their names have now been added to the new memorials. Details of all nine men are recorded in the following pages.

Whilst extensive efforts have been made to trace such cases, the possibility regrettably exists that there may have been further casualties whose deaths still remain unknown to the school, and whose names are therefore still missing from the Roll of Honour. Should any such further casualties become known in future, their names will be added to The King's School's memorials.

*



The cast of The King's School's 1936 production of George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. Among this cast were John Ellis, John Fisher, John Jeffery, John Palmer, Christopher Poole and Colin Reeves, each of whom was later to become a casualty of World War 2.

Lieutenant Walter Henry GOODALE (World War 1)

Walter Henry was born in Farcet on 14/8/1894, the youngest son of John Goodale and Agnes Louisa nee Pigg. On the 1901 census the family was living in Peakirk. (When Walter's father, a farmer, died on 15/4/1910, the Probate index listed his address as The Chestnuts, Peakirk). Walter attended The King's School in Peterborough from 1/9/1904 to 31/7/1907. On Speech Day in 1907 he received 3rd prize for Classics. He then became a boarding pupil at The King's School, Grantham.

In 1906, Walter's eldest brother John had gone to work in Canada. Having left school, Walter and his brother Robert boarded the *S.S. Empress of Ireland* at Liverpool on 5/4/1912 and also sailed to Canada, where Walter initially worked on a farm. On 12/2/1914 he joined The Canadian Bank of Commerce. After the War, the Bank published two volumes entitled *Letters From the Front*. Volume II, page 173, records that on 4/8/1914, while based at their Wadena branch, Walter was at the summer resort of Fishing Lake when news of the War broke. It reports that Walter "undertook to enlist immediately if he could swim across the lake, a distance of two miles. He was successful and enlisted that day, being the first man to do so from Wadena".

He joined the 90th Battalion, Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) Regiment as a Trooper, regimental number 2468. He was mobilised on 14/8/1914 at Valcartier. His two brothers also enlisted. (The Attestation forms of all three are viewable on the Library and Archives Canada website: www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Pages/home.aspx . John was later awarded the Military Cross, the citation for which appeared in the London Gazette on 17/7/1917. Robert served with the 10th Canadian Field Ambulance).

Walter left Quebec on 29/9/1914 and arrived in England 18/10/1914 for training. His unit joined the Canadian Cavalry Brigade on 2/2/1915. (The Brigade was initially sent to France without horses, and served in the Canadian First Division as an Infantry unit. In September 1915 they were restored to horse as Cavalry. Having landed in France on 6/5/1915, the Brigade went into action on 15/5/1915 at the Battle of Festubert. It later fought in the Battles of the Somme, Bazentin, Pozieres and Flers-Courcelette). Against Army regulations, Walter took a camera with him, with which he captured images in the trenches and of the war-torn villages near the battlefields. (Further details, and an article by Bob Randall from the Peakirk magazine *Village Tribune*, can be viewed at: www.rogersstudy.co.uk/medals/goodale/goodale.html Letters written by or about Walter can be viewed at: www.canadiangreatwarproject.com).

Walter was promoted to Lance Corporal in February 1917 and returned to England in March. He became a Temporary Lieutenant from 1/7/1917 (published London Gazette 17/7/1917), and was seconded to the Royal Flying Corps 12/10/1917 (London Gazette: 5/4/1918). He became a Flying Officer on 18/2/1918 (London Gazette: 22/3/1918), so was among the first pilots of the R.A.F. when it was formed on 1/4/1918. (His R.A.F. file is held by The National Archives, reference: AIR/76/187). He married Kathleen May Gibbs in May 1918, before returning to France to serve with 104 Squadron R.A.F., flying a DH9 biplane.

On 1/8/1918 Walter was on his second mission, flying DH9 serial number D2960, tasked with bombing targets behind enemy lines. Having bombed workshops in Treves, his formation came under attack from ground and air. Walter's aircraft's petrol tank was hit and he was last seen being driven down. Initially reported as missing, he was later found to have died on that date. Originally buried at St Jure Cemetery, he now rests in grave 330 at Chambieres French National Cemetery in Metz. He is commemorated on the Peakirk War Memorial. (Walter's widow was expecting their first child, who was born in Royston, Hertfordshire a few months later and named Walter, after his father. He sadly died in 1927, aged 8).



Walter Goodale

by kind permission of Peakirk Parish Council



Walter's grave

© TWGPP, by kind permission

2nd Lieutenant George Cyril GRAY (World War 1)

George Cyril was born in Peterborough on 16/11/1890, the only son of George James Gray and Elizabeth nee Swallow. On the 1891 census he was living with his parents at 3 Dean's Court, Minster Precincts, Peterborough. His father was Chapter Clerk and Private Secretary to the Bishop. On the 1901 census George was living with his parents and sister Lydia in the Minster Precincts.

George attended The King's School from April 1901 to April 1906, when he left to join Gresham's School, Holt. On the 1911 census he was recorded as being a Chapter Office Clerk, living with his parents in the Minster Precincts in Peterborough. In September 1914 he gave up his appointment to join the Army.

He enlisted as a Private with the Suffolk Regiment. His regimental number was 63144. He was later transferred to the Northamptonshire Regiment and promoted to Lance Corporal with the 8th Battalion. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant with the 4th Battalion from 29/3/1915 was published in the London Gazette on 13/4/1915. His Medal Index Card records that he was posted overseas in October 1915.

He fought in Gallipoli and Egypt and was then invalided out of the Army. He resigned his commission on 17/5/1916 (published in the London Gazette 16/5/1916). He later rejoined and was stationed on the East Coast for a time, before being sent to the Western Front. Following active service in Belgium and France, he returned to England.

George married Marion Maudland Woodhouse in Bridlington in June 1920. (Marion was the daughter of Rebecca and William Woodhouse, proprietors of the Post Office at Flamborough).

Following several months of serious illness, George died on 14/3/1921 in Peterborough, aged 30, from a cerebral tumour*. The Petriburgian of July 1921 recorded that his death was due to a disease that he had contracted during his Army service overseas. His funeral service was held on Thursday 17/3/1921, at Peterborough Cathedral, following which he was buried in Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough. The last rites at the graveside were performed by the Dean of Peterborough. Among the many wreaths sent was one from the Old Petriburgians' Association. The funeral was reported in the Peterborough Advertiser on 18/3/1921. (George's parents were later interred in the same grave. His widow Marion died in Bridlington on 13/4/1928, aged 38).

(*Although cancer is not an immediately obvious military-related cause of death, the use of carcinogenic chemicals during World War 1 was common. One such chemical weapon used was mustard gas. An article, "Molecule of the Month", by Rebecca Holland of Bristol University comments: "One of the reasons that exposure to mustard gas must be prevented, rather than cured, is that detoxification is quite difficult due to its insolubility, and that the effects of mustard gas are devastating - essentially, if the inhalation of the mustard gas itself does not kill you, it is very likely to cause cancer later in life". The full article can be viewed on: www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Chemistry/MOTM/mustard/mustard.htm.

Whether George Gray's brain tumour resulted directly from his exposure to chemicals in World War 1 would be impossible to now verify. However, since his death was said at the time to have arisen due to disease contracted during his Army service, he has been included in The King's School's Roll of Honour).



The joint grave of George Cyril Gray and his parents at Broadway Cemetery

Lieutenant William Emiley Oscar SCOTT (World War 1)

William Emiley Oscar Scott was born 7/2/1883 in South Shields, Durham, the elder son of William Emiley Octavius Scott and Mary Ann nee Brown. He was baptised at St Hilda's, South Shields on 7/3/1883. On the 1891 census the family lived in Claremont Terrace in Westoe, South Shields.

William attended South Shields' Boys High School from 23/3/1896 until December 1897. On 1/1/1898 he was admitted to The King's School, Peterborough, at which time the family was living at Belle Vue, Harton, South Shields. At Speech Day in November 1898 he won 3rd prize for History. He was a keen sportsman, and played on the School's cricket team in 1899 and on the rugby team 1898-9 and 1899-1900 (Captain). At Sports Day 1898 he came 3rd in the 100 yards handicap, 2nd in the quarter-mile handicap, 2nd in throwing the cricket ball and 1st in the one mile handicap. He left in December 1899.

On the 1901 and 1911 census William was living with his parents in Harton. In 1901 he was an articled clerk. He was admitted as a solicitor in partnership with his father (W.E.O. Scott & Son) in 1905.

William was a Cadet in Durham University Contingent, Senior Division, Officers' Training Corps. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant from 6/3/1915 in 9th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry was published in the London Gazette on 17/4/1915. His appointment as Temporary Lieutenant from 1/8/1915 was published on 3/9/1915, and his appointment as Temporary Captain from 1/11/1915 was published on 22/11/1915. According to his Medal Index Card, he was sent to France on 14/7/1916.

The War Diary of the 9th Battalion Durham Light Infantry (The National Archives reference: WO 95/2840/4) records that in September 1916 they were deployed near Mametz Wood on the Somme. On 28/9/1916 they relieved the 4th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment in the Front line. During the night they dug a fire trench (which they named "Blaydon Trench") and a communications trench (which they named "Hopwell Avenue"), which were then discovered to have been dug in the wrong position. "A draft of reinforcements arrived at about 7pm, consisting of 2 officers and 53 other ranks".

The War Diary entry for 29th September recorded that at 7:30 am: "A party of bombers under 2/LT Wilson & simultaneously a party of 55 men under 2/LT W.E. SCOTT attempted to effect a lodgement about M.22.b2.2 & M.22.b1.1. Both parties were met by heavy machine gun fire and rifle fire and had to retire". On 30th September the Diary recorded the casualties from the previous three days, including "2/Lieut W.E.O. SCOTT, missing believed killed" on the 29th.

William was killed in action on 29/9/1916. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Face 14A of Thiepval Memorial in France as Lieutenant W.E.O. Scott (see below). On 5/10/1916 the Newcastle Journal reported that his parents had received a telegram informing them that William was missing. On 12/10/1916 they reported that his parents had received a letter from their younger son, Captain Sidney Scott of the Royal Army Medical Corps, in which he had "conveyed the sad intelligence of the death of 2nd Lieut W.E.O. Scott, his elder brother, whose grave he had visited".

(William was referred to as 2nd Lieutenant in the War Diary/newspaper reports, but is referred to at Thiepval and in the medal rolls as Lieutenant, implying a posthumous promotion). William left a Will, naming his father as his executor. He is named on the South Shields' Boys' High School War Memorial and on the South Shields' Golf Club Roll of Honour.



William as Captain of the 1899-1900 Rugby team

GT	DURHAM LIGHT INFANTRY	DUI
	LIEUTENANT	SERJEANT
	JAMES W. R.	MILLS S.
	SCHOFIELD J. H. C.	MURPHY J.
	SCOTT W. E. O.	O'NEILL J.
	STEWART F. A.	PARKER D.
	TARGET N. A.	PEARSON G. R., D. C. M.
	SECOND LIEUT.	POTTER H.
	BANKS B. C.	RAWLING W.
	BEART V. L. D.	RICHARDSON J. W.
	BEWICK R. N.	ROUNSELY R.
	BIRTLES L.	RUMLEY C. H.
	ROBBY S. F.	SCOTT W.
	RODEN S. S.	SHEARER S.
	BRAIDFORD W.	SHIRES J.
	CHAMBERLAIN	SMALES F.
W. T.	H. F. W.	SMITH J. M. M.

William's commemoration on Face 14A
Photo © TWGPP, by their kind permission

Sergeant (Observer) John William Hobson BATEMAN (World War 2)

John was born on 6/10/1912, the second son of Hobson Bateman and Amelia Elizabeth nee Johnson. His father was an auctioneer and a Governor of King's Lynn Hospital. On the 1911 census his parents were living at 5 Lindum Terrace, Sutton Bridge, Cambridgeshire.

John was admitted to King's as a boarder on 21/9/1922 from Moulton Grammar School. He was confirmed in 1928. He left on 24/7/1928. The December edition of The Petriburgian mentioned that he had entered the West Hertfordshire Agricultural College in St Albans. He became a nurseryman and bulb-grower.

According to his obituary in the Peterborough Standard, he joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1940. His service number was 959540. He served in 221 Squadron, Coastal Command.

On 11/4/1941 Wellington VIII serial number W5653 DF- took off from Limavady in County Derry at 05:55 on Convoy escort duty. The crew comprised: Flying Officer Alfred Patrick Cattley; Pilot Officer James Leonard Montague; Sergeant Francis Kenneth Basil Whalley; Sergeant Brinley Francis Badman; Sergeant John William Hobson Bateman; Sergeant Frederick George Neill. On returning to base at 15:00 hours, in very heavy mist, the aircraft flew into a hill at Fort Lenah, in the Urris Hills of County Donegal, instantly killing all aboard. The bodies were recovered from the crash-site the following evening and taken to the village of Lenankeel, where they were laid out in the local forge before being transferred to England. (Information regarding the crash was published in the Derry Journal in August 2004. It is viewable at www.irishidentity.com/extras/hidden/stories/urris.htm).

John died on 11/4/1941. He is buried in Section Q, Grave 44 in St Matthew's Churchyard, Sutton Bridge (see below). His death was reported in the Peterborough Standard on 25/4/1941 and in the Lincolnshire Echo on 19/4/1941. The latter said of him that "He had taken part in many raids over enemy territory. Before joining up he was a bulb-grower and nurseryman at Sutton Bridge. Sergeant Bateman took a keen interest in sport, and played for the Sutton Bridge Cricket Club". At Sutton Bridge, he is commemorated on the St Matthew's Church War Memorials, both inside and outside, and on a family memorial (in the RAF Memorial Chapel inside the Church, see below) that reads: "This altar and reredos is dedicated to the glory of God and in memory of Hobson Bateman 1881-1942, Amelia Elizabeth Bateman (his wife) 1881-1956, and Sgt.Obs. Jack Bateman (their son) killed April 11 1941. 'At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them'. Erected by James R. Bateman & Ray Bateman, surviving sons of the above H & A.E. Bateman, 1957". John is also named on the Moulton Grammar School War Memorial in All Saints' Church Moulton. His father administered his estate.

(John crewmates were buried in their home towns: Alfred Patrick Cattley is commemorated on Panel 1 at Golder's Green Crematorium; James Leonard Montague is buried in grave 93 at Beaconsfield Cemetery in Buckinghamshire; Francis Kenneth Basil Whalley is buried in Section 109, Grave 220 at Leamington (Whitnash Road) Cemetery in Warwickshire; Brinley Francis Badman is buried on the south side of the Chapel at Varteg Wesley Methodist Chapel in Monmouthshire; Frederick George Neill is buried in Grave A135 at St Gregory's Churchyard in Bedale, Yorkshire. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers incorrectly record that Frederick Neill died on 12/4/1941, rather than 11/4/1941).



John's family memorial



Sutton Bridge War Memorial



John Bateman's grave

Corporal Donald Phillips DURRANT (World War 2)

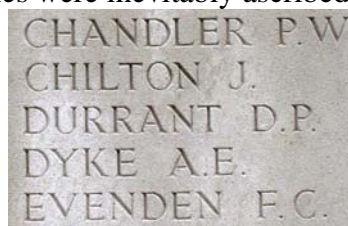
Donald was born on 15/4/1916 in Whittlesey, the only son of Reginald James Adams Durrant and Mabel nee Fox. (His father was a chemist). When he was admitted to The King's School on 12/1/1928, from the Boys' National School in Whittlesey, the family was living at Fern Villa, Station Road, Whittlesey. He was at Kings for only a few months before his father transferred to a position in Radcliffe near Nottingham. Donald therefore left King's on 24/7/1928 and transferred to The Lodge, Radcliffe, before joining Nottingham High School in January 1930. After leaving Nottingham High School, in March 1934, he went to London to work in the hotel business. Soon after the outbreak of the War he volunteered for service in the Army. He was living in London when he joined the Royal Army Service Corps, in which he served as a Corporal. His regimental number was 105133.

On 10/5/1940 German forces embarked on the invasion of Belgium and the Low Countries (Blitzkrieg), advancing at a swift pace into France. Allied forces were compelled to retreat and make their way to the French coast, in the hope of evacuation to England. Tens of thousands were successfully evacuated from Dunkirk between 27th May and 4th June but, during that exercise, many died and were lost at sea. Their bodies were not washed ashore for some while after. Despite the major success of the evacuation, some 67,000 further Allied troops remained in the War zone, making their way to the Channel ports by whatever means available. Civilians were also fleeing the advancing German Army. One of the routes chosen by many retreating Allied troops and civilians took them through Rennes. Shortly before 10am on 17/6/1940, German aircraft bombed the railway station and several trains at Rennes. One of the trains was carrying munitions and catastrophically exploded, sending wagons flying, destroying countless nearby buildings and creating a crater 80 metres long and 5 metres deep. Combined with the ensuing fire, the incident caused the deaths of more than 800 recorded servicemen and civilians. As the trains had been carrying an unknown number of refugees and Allied troops, and the explosion was so violent, the true number of casualties will never be known.

A few hours later the Cunard liner *HMT Lancastria* was lying at anchor 5 miles off St Nazaire. During the preceding hours she had been taking on Allied servicemen and civilian refugees, and was loaded well beyond the 2,200 passengers and crew she had been built to carry. Attempts to compile a passenger manifest were abandoned, with the result that estimates vary widely; between 6,000 and 9,000 men, women and children are believed to have been aboard. Shortly before 4pm the *Lancastria* was struck by four bombs, causing her to sink in minutes. (Further details are on the website of the *Lancastria* Association: www.lancastria-association.org.uk). Although some 1,500-2,000 survived, the majority aboard died. The actual number who died will never be known, but has been estimated at between 6,000 and 9,000*. It was the worst loss of life ever recorded in a British ship. The British press was prevented by a Government "D" notice from printing details of the tragedy at the time, which has resulted in its becoming known as "the forgotten tragedy". Some families had to wait many months before receiving notification of the presumed death of their relative.

Donald died on 17/6/1940, reportedly aboard the *Lancastria*. He has no known grave but is commemorated on Column 133 of the Dunkirk Memorial (see photograph below). His death was announced on 19/12/1941 in the Nottingham Evening Post, which gave his parents' address as Bingham Road, Radcliffe on Trent. The Peterborough Standard announced on 2/1/1942 that he had died on the *Lancastria*. He is named on the Radcliffe War Memorial.

(*Casualties were being washed ashore along a hundred-mile stretch of coast from St Nazaire months after the *Lancastria* sank, some known to have been aboard; some unidentifiable. Countless other casualties were entombed within her when she sank. Combined with the unknowable number/identity of those who died at Rennes railway station and during the evacuation at Dunkirk, some casualties were inevitably ascribed to the incorrect incident).



Donald's commemoration on Dunkirk Memorial. © TWGPP, by kind permission

Major William Victor HART, M.C., T.D. (World War 2)

William Victor Hart was born in Peterborough on 18/9/1912, the only son of George William Hart and his second wife, Mary Anne nee Smith, of 54 Lincoln Road, Peterborough. (George was an outfitter, who died on 25/10/1923, aged 72. Mary later moved to “Charnwood”, 80 London Road, Peterborough).

William joined The King’s School from Bishop’s Road Elementary School on 25/9/1919. He moved to Deacon’s School on 27/7/1921. At Deacon’s he was on the 1928/29 Rugby team. On leaving he was apprenticed to the chemist Mr Calcutt, of the old Narrow Bridge Street, Peterborough and was later with Mr W.E.H. Barnes, and finally Messrs Timothy White & Taylor Ltd, which he joined in 1938. For a time, he captained the Peterborough Town Rugby Football Club and University College Leicester Rugby Team.

He joined the Territorials soon after leaving school. His regimental number was 64774. He attended an Officers’ course at Sandhurst. His commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the 5th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment from 17/4/1935 was published in the London Gazette on 16/4/1935. His promotion to Lieutenant on 17/4/1938 appeared in the London Gazette on 3/5/1938. (London Gazette entries re his later promotions to Captain and Major have not been traced). He married Enid Mary Moseby on 23/9/1939 at St Mary Knighton, Leicester. (The Deaconian magazine recorded him as a Captain at the time). His wife was a Commandant in the A.T.S. They later lived at 80 London Road, Peterborough.

William was home for Christmas 1939 and went to France a few days later. The Northamptonshire Regiment was one of the first to see action and, by June 1940, he had already been Mentioned in Despatches three times. He was in the retreat on Dunkirk in 1940, and was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry in that action. On 7/6/1940 the Peterborough Advertiser announced the award. Stating he was the first from his Battalion to be decorated in World War 2, it reported that his reaction had been: “Heaven knows why I got it; I only did my bit”. The award appeared in the London Gazette on 9/7/1940, as “Lieutenant (temporary Captain) William Victor Hart, The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers [sic]”. He received the award and personal congratulations from His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace on 7/8/1940, which was reported in the Times on 8/8/1940. He also received the Territorial Decoration.

William was killed in action on 28/11/1942. He was buried in grave IV.D.13 at Massicault War Cemetery in Tunisia. He left a widow and four-month-old daughter. He is recorded in the Book of Remembrance at Peterborough Cathedral, and was named (mistakenly as “M.V. Hart”) on Deacon’s School’s War Memorial.

His obituary in the Peterborough Standard on 25/12/1942 stated that he was believed to have been the subject of the following article by a Reuter’s correspondent in Tunisia:

“A small force from a South Midlands regiment fought its way back to British lines with only one casualty- after waging a guerrilla campaign in a desert part of Northern Tunisia.

After having been cut off by some German tanks near Mateur, 30 men, led by a Major from Peterborough, in peacetime a chemist, decided to make themselves as big a nuisance as possible. They first attacked some supply waggons (sic), and quickly making off, they began wandering without means of knowing where they were until an Arab peasant gave them a pocket motoring guide.

They halted German motor transport going to the front by shooting at the back tyres. They sowed mines on the road in front of some tanks, and, ‘beating it’ as fast as possible, heard the mines exploding. They ambushed and knocked to pieces a lorry load of German paratroops. They lived on tea, bread and eggs obtained from Arabs by trading clothing. Having tramped 100 miles, they regained the British lines, many wearing only gym shoes with no socks”.



William Hart in 1928...



and in later life



William’s grave © TWGPP, by kind permission

Aircraftman Colin REEVES (World War 2)

Colin was born in Cleethorpes on 30/3/1921, the only child of Frank Reeves and Minnie nee Boyers, who had married in Cleethorpes on 16/6/1920. (His father was a gardener).

He was educated at Kettering Grammar School from 1932 to 1933, then at Oakham from 1933 to 1934. He joined The King's School as a day pupil on 12/11/1934, at which time the family lived at Church Hill, Castor. When they moved to The Gardens, Blake Hall, Ongar, Colin left King's on 7/6/1935 and transferred to Wanstead High School. He returned to King's as a boarder on 23/9/1935. (His parents later moved to 21 Narrows, Knighton before moving to Hatcliffe, Lincolnshire).

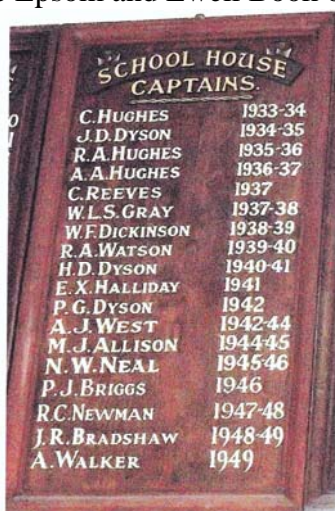
He took an active part in school life at King's. He was cast as Bertrand de Poulengey in the 1936 School production of *Saint Joan* (see photograph below). On 3/4/1936 the Peterborough Standard printed a review of the play, in which it stated that Colin's performance had been that of "a quiet, convinced character". The following year he was cast as Albert in the one-act thriller *A Night at an Inn*. He was on the rugby team as a wing three-quarter in 1936-37. He passed his Oxford School Certificate, in July 1936, with credits in English, Religious Knowledge, English and European History, French, Mathematics and Art. In 1937 he was a prefect and became Head of School House (see photograph of Captains' board below). He left on 3/4/1937 to take up a position of insurance broker's clerk. He worked for The Century Insurance Company of London.

Colin joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve as an Aircraftman 2nd Class on 30/5/1941, according to his RAF service record. His service number was 1441963. He attended Ground Armament School before joining Number 5 Coastal Operational Training Unit. He was posted to the Far East 4/12/1941 (A casualty card is held for him at the RAF Air Historical Branch, who very kindly informed us that Colin was an Armourer, responsible for keeping aircraft serviced and supplied. As Japanese forces advanced in 1942, he would have been one of the ground crew evacuated from Singapore to Java. When Java fell in March 1942, approximately 8,000 surviving Allied personnel, including 2,000 men of the R.A.F., became Prisoners of War. The International Red Cross Committee reported that Colin was being held at a POW camp in Java. From there, he would have been transported and forced to work on construction projects).

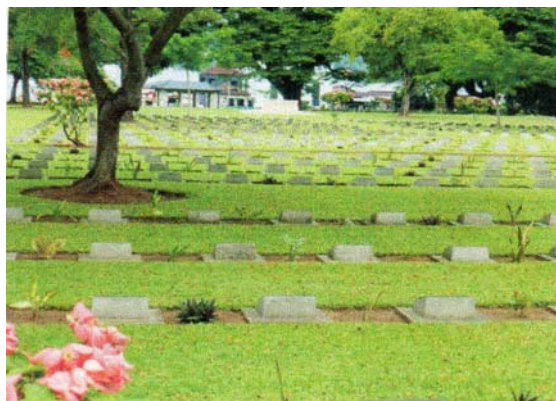
Colin died of dysentery and beriberi in a POW camp on Horoeko Island on 9/9/1943, according to reports later made by his fellow prisoners. He was initially buried on the island, but was later reinterred in grave 4.A.7 at the Ambon War Cemetery in Indonesia, where he now rests. A notice was printed on 9/9/1946 in The Times memorial column, which read: "Reeves: In sacred remembrance of our dearly beloved and only child, Colin, reported to have died on Sept 9 1943, whilst a prisoner in Japanese hands; late of Oakham and Peterborough (King's) Schools, and of The Century Insurance Co., London, aged 22 years. 'But O! for the touch of a vanish'd hand, and the sound of a voice that is still!'. From his broken-hearted Dad and Mum". Probate was granted on 28/1/1947 to Colin's mother, who administered his estate. The Probate Index recorded Colin's address as Hedley Grove, near Epsom, Surrey. (He is not among the casualties listed in the Epsom and Ewell Book of Remembrance).



Colin in 1936, in his role as Bertrand de Poulengey.



Captains' board



Ambon War Cemetery. © CWGC, by kind permission

Malcolm George Holmes ROBERTSON (World War 2)

Malcolm was born on 11/4/1888 at Westbourne Gardens, Kelvinside, Glasgow, the son of Agnes and John Alexander Robertson. (His father was a General Practitioner). On the 1891 census he was living with his parents in the High Street, Stilton. He was admitted to The King's School in January 1899, by which time the family was living in Woodston, Peterborough. (On the 1901 and 1911 census they were living at "Kelvingrove", Palmerston Road, Woodston).

Malcolm took a full and active part in School events. On 21/3/1902 the Stamford Mercury reported that a group of boys from The King's School (including Malcolm) had been shot at during a paper chase. Three were hit with sparrow shot, including Malcolm, who was hit in the knee. None was injured seriously "and the boys scampered off as fast as they could". It clearly did no lasting damage, as he played on the rugby team in 1903-04 and 1904-05. He left King's in December 1904.

On the 1911 census Malcolm was working as a dealer in livestock. On 11/7/1911 he boarded the *Ascania* at Southampton, bound for Quebec. On 31/10/1912 he married Clara Coales at Kamloops in British Columbia. (Clara was a native of Bourne, Lincolnshire. On the 1911 census she had been lodging in Great Titchfield Street in London). Malcolm's address on the Marriage Register was Livingstone Ranch, Kamloops; he was a rancher. A daughter Agnes was born on 19/9/1913 in Vancouver; she died on 14/10/1914 at Lytton.

On 31/7/1915 Malcolm enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. On his attestation form (viewable on the Library and Archives Canada website) he stated he was a police officer, and had formerly served in the Leicester Regiment, the Grenadier Guards and in the Light Horse. He was assigned the regimental number 463360, which later changed to 154518. He served as a Corporal.

Having survived the War, Malcolm resumed normal life. In 1931 he, his wife and their four daughters boarded the *Duchess of Richmond* and sailed to England, arriving on 19/8/1931. He was described on the ship's manifest as a fur trader. Their intended address was Hazeleigh near Chelmsford, Essex. By 1942 the family was living at Fernside, Green Lane, Farnham Common. Malcolm became a Constable in the Police War Reserve, working for the Buckinghamshire Constabulary. According to information very kindly supplied by Mick Shaw, Malcolm was appointed on 27/1/1941. His collar number was 681, and he was posted to Slough. On 8/8/1941 he was awarded proficiency pay of 5 shillings per week, in addition to his salary of 65 shillings per week and 1 shilling per week boot allowance.

On 8/8/1942 Malcolm was on duty with colleague Albert Love, patrolling the Hamilton Road Trading Estate in Slough. At 18:15 hours the area was bombed by a Heinkel HE III in a hit and run raid, the details of which are recorded in The National Archives file ref HO 192/819. Two of the four bombs dropped fell on a Royal Army Service Corps car park, leaving two large craters and causing considerable damage to several vehicles, one of which was thrown 84 feet by the impact. The casualty report stated two policemen (i.e. Malcolm Robertson and Albert Love) and one civilian were injured.

Malcolm and Albert Love both died on 8/8/1942. On 14/8/1942 the Slough, Eton & Windsor Observer reported that Malcolm had died, but did not mention the circumstances. After his funeral at St Mary's Church, Slough on 11/8/1942 he was buried in Stoke Road Cemetery, in plot CE 1417. He left a Will, naming his widow as executrix. He is listed in the Slough World War 2 Book of Remembrance. He and Albert Love are both listed as Civilian War Dead in St George's Chapel in Westminster Abbey, and on the Thames Valley Police Roll of Honour.



Malcolm Robertson's grave in Slough



Slough Book of Remembrance

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Trooper Robert Stanley SWALLOW (World War 2)

Robert was born in Peterborough on 24/8/1921, the second son of Stanley Arthur Swallow and Harriet Ellen nee Tebbutt, who had married on 19/11/1912 in Fletton. (His father had served in World War 1 as a Private, first in the Army Service Corps, and later in the Machine Gun Corps. After the War he became a ladies' hairdresser).

The family was living at 3 Church Walk, Peterborough when Robert was admitted to The King's School on 29/4/1927. While at King's, he was mentioned in The Petriburgian in July 1929 as having come first in the under eights' 80 yards handicap. The Easter edition of The Petriburgian mentioned that he had taken part in a production of *The Sergeant of the Gendarmes*. The family had moved to Market Place, Peterborough by 17/12/1930, when Robert transferred to Deacon's School. At Deacon's he was on the First XV Rugby team in 1937. He left in 1938.

He joined the Tank Corps as a Cadet. On 29/12/1939 the Peterborough Advertiser announced that he was serving in the Royal Tank Regiment, and that his brother John Arthur was serving as an Engineer Officer in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. The Advertiser listed both boys' address as 8 Church Street, Peterborough.

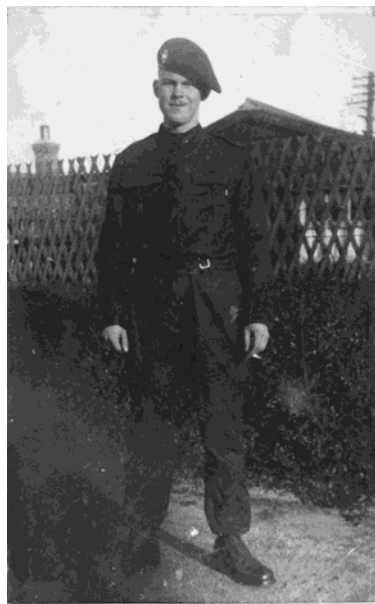
At the time of his death, Robert was a Trooper in the 5th Royal Tank Regiment (Royal Armoured Corps). His regimental number was 7889738. On 28/5/1940 the Regiment sailed for Cherbourg, to lend support to the retreating British Expeditionary Force. (The B.E.F. was evacuated from Cherbourg between 15th and 18th June 1940, in Operation Aerial).

Robert was killed in action on 28/5/1940, aged 18. He is buried in Grave 11 in the Military Plot of Beauvais Communal Cemetery in Oise, France (see below). His death was announced on 21/6/1940 in the Peterborough Standard, which reported him as having died on 27th May. The Standard reported that he had been "a very good sportsman and a genial, happy lad. He had been in France only a short time".

(In September 1939, Robert's only sister, Joan Mary Swallow, had married Ewan Willym Evans-Evans, brother of Anthony and Roland, whose details are recorded on pages 51-53 of this booklet. Ewan was serving as a Lieutenant in the Northamptonshire Regiment in 1940. News that he had been reported as missing in action was received at the same time as Robert Swallow's death. Ewan, who was also an Old Petriburgian, had been taken Prisoner of War. He was held at Camp VII-B in Eichstatt, Bavaria. He survived the War and died in 1991).



Robert on Deacon's 1937 Rugby team...



and in uniform



Robert's grave © TWGPP
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The Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In 1914 Sir Fabian Ware was in command of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross Society in France. Realising that there was no official unit responsible for the marking and recording of the graves of those killed in action, his unit started to record and care for all the graves that they could find.

In 1915 the value of the work done by his unit was officially recognised by the War Office. The unit was incorporated into the British Army, and became known as the Graves Registration Commission. In May 1917 the Imperial War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter, with the Prince of Wales as President. Sir Fabian Ware was appointed Vice Chairman, a post which he continued to hold until 1948.

The Commission continued its work throughout the remainder of the War. Following the Armistice, three eminent architects (Sir Edwin Lutyens, Sir Herbert Baker and Sir Reginald Blomfield) were asked to design fitting memorials to those who had died. Rudyard Kipling was engaged to advise on inscriptions.

Cemeteries were established and graves were brought in from surrounding battlefields and scattered burial grounds and marked with individual headstones. The core principle of the Commission was that all casualties should be treated equally in their commemoration: the headstone of a Private should be of an identical form to that of a Brigadier General.

To honour the many whose graves could not be found, memorials were erected at such places as Loos, Thiepval, Ypres, Tyne Cot and Arras. Their panels were inscribed with the names of those who had no known grave. Casualties from the Royal Navy with no known grave were commemorated on one of three memorials: Chatham, Plymouth or Portsmouth, while those from the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets were commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial in Trinity Square, London. Further memorials were later built to commemorate other casualties without a known grave. The main memorial to such Royal Air Force casualties is situated in Runnymede in Surrey.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission still continues the noble task initiated by Sir Fabian Ware's team. The charity currently has records of 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died in both World Wars, including nearly 831,000 British casualties from World War 1 and more than 452,000 British casualties from World War 2. The Commission's dedicated staff care for cemeteries and memorials at 23,000 locations in 153 countries, ensuring that those who died in the two World Wars will never be forgotten.

The Commission's website, which can be searched for details of Commonwealth casualties, is at www.cwgc.org



Durnbach War Cemetery 1939-1945, Bayern, Germany. Photograph by kind permission of Paul Willing

Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Beaurains Workshop

The Commission is responsible for all aspects of their cemeteries and memorials throughout the world. The photographs on this and the next page (by their kind assent) demonstrate some of the many ways in which staff at their facility at Beaurains contribute to the maintenance of those cemeteries and memorials.



The machines on which new and replacement headstones are engraved.



The completed stones are then dispatched for installation at cemeteries worldwide.



The Commission's carpenters repair and replace wooden structures, such as gates and benches.



Metalwork items, such as cemetery gates, doors and brackets are repaired and created.



A crown from Thiepval Memorial, among the items for restoration.



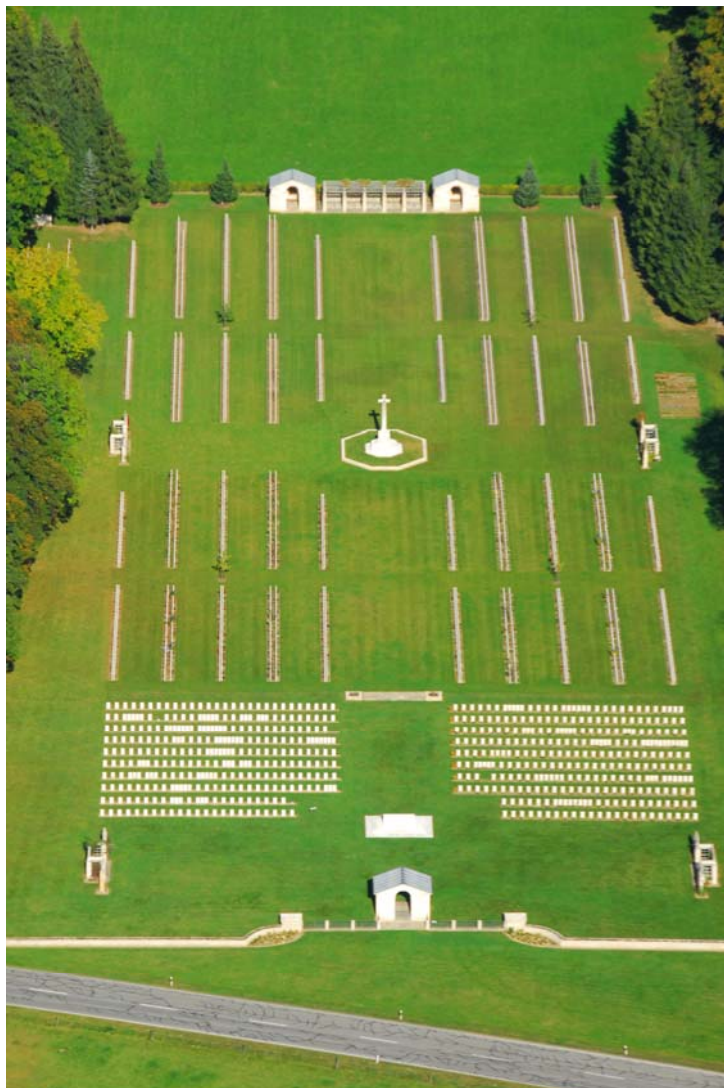
The Commission's Road signs are manufactured.



The completed items are then transported to sites across the globe.



*“Have you forgotten yet?...
Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you’ll never forget”*
(Siegfried Sassoon: “Aftermath”, 1919)



Durnbach War Cemetery in Germany, where John Ellis and Thomas Teanby are buried, alongside 2,932 other World War 2 servicemen, and where the Durnbach Cremation Memorial commemorates the deaths of 23 Indian servicemen. Photographs by kind permission of Paul Willing.



Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey, where Neil McCarthy is buried, in the largest Commonwealth War cemetery in the UK. Covering 37 acres, it commemorates more than 5,000 identified casualties. The cemetery also has French, Polish, Czech, Belgian, Italian and American sections and several War graves of other nationalities.



Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, overlooking the Thames and the riverside meadow where the Magna Carta was sealed by King John in 1215. The Memorial commemorates more than 20,000 airmen of the Second World War with no known graves, among them Windsor Webb.



Delville Wood Cemetery in France, where Robert Stokes is buried; one of 5,523 World War 1 servicemen who are buried or commemorated here. Almost all died between July and September 1916, during the Battle of the Somme.



Serre Road Cemetery No 1 in France, where Eric Leigh is buried, alongside 2,425 other World War 1 servicemen.



Tyne Cot Cemetery in Belgium, containing the greatest number of Commonwealth war graves on one site in the world. It is the burial place of 11,956 World War 1 servicemen and is the site of the Tyne Cot Memorial to nearly 35,000 First World War servicemen of the UK and New Zealand who died in the Ypres Salient and have no known grave. Amongst those named on the Tyne Cot Memorial are Cyril Crick and Samuel Vergette.



Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, commemorating more than 54,000 casualties with no known grave, including Vernon Gaches.



Thiepval Memorial, commemorating more than 72,000 casualties with no known grave including Frederick Moyer, Frederick Smith, Horace Taylor, Frank Wadlow and William Scott.



The Loos Memorial, commemorating more than 20,000 casualties, including Jack Burks.

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Lonsdale Cemetery in France, where William Hampton is among 1,542 burials of World War 1 servicemen.



Haifa War Cemetery, where Robert Pledger is among the 341 burials of servicemen from both World Wars.



Le Touret Memorial in France, which commemorates more than 13,400 World War 1 servicemen who have no known grave, among them John Thompson.



Basra Memorial in Iraq, on which John Woolley is one of more than 40,500 World War 1 servicemen commemorated. They have no known grave.



Enfidaville War Cemetery in Tunisia, where Albert Cleaver's grave is one of 1,551 servicemen from World War 2.



El Alamein War Cemetery in Egypt, where Peter Crick and George Rae are among 7,240 Commonwealth burials from World War 2. The Cemetery contains the Alamein Memorial.



Alamein Memorial, commemorating nearly 12,000 Commonwealth servicemen from World War 2 who have no known grave, including Kenneth Whalley.

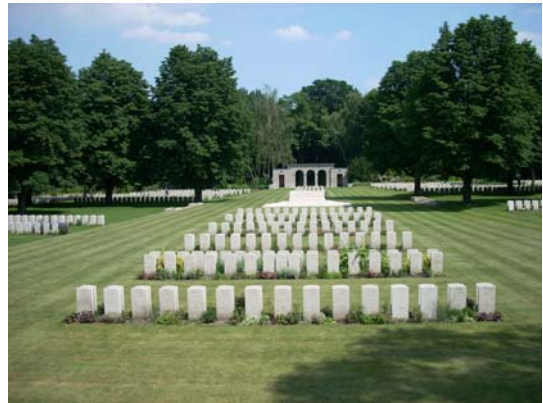


Lee-on-Solent Memorial in Hampshire; commemorating nearly 2,000 servicemen of the Fleet Air Arm who died in World War 2 and have no known grave, among them William Gibson.





Leros War Cemetery in Greece, where Roy Mitchem is among 183 World War 2 servicemen who are buried.



Berlin 1939-45 War Cemetery, where Charles Newman and John Palmer are among 3,595 World War 2 Commonwealth casualties who are buried.



Phaleron War Cemetery in Greece, where Ronald Watson is buried; one of 2,029 Commonwealth servicemen buried here.



Massicault War Cemetery in Tunisia. William Hart is one of 1,576 casualties of World War 2 buried here.