

**War memorial outside the Church of All Saints, Belwell Lane, Four Oaks, Sutton
Coldfield**

Author: Paul Harrison in collaboration with the Sutton Coldfield Great War Project, July 2025



Image authors own

Location

The war memorial is located at the front of the Church of All Saints, Belwell Lane, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, B74 4TR. It sits at the western end of Belwell Lane at the junction with Four Oaks Road, Walsall Road and Streetly Lane.

All Saints Church

According to the church's website, "The growth of suburban Birmingham at the beginning of the 20th Century led to a scheme to build a new church in the parish of St James, centred on Mere Green. The Church of All Saints was consecrated in 1908 by Charles Gore, Bishop of Birmingham. The Parish of All Saints was given independence from St James' in 1920."

The building was designed by Edwin Francis Reynolds although it was never completed to the original design (there are steps leading to a tower which was never built) and a vestry was added in 1954, and a large extension was constructed in 1965.

The War Memorial

The memorial is a tall sandstone cross located in front of the church porch by the roadside. It features a Latin cross on top of an octagonal shaft standing on a tall plinth with a single-stepped base. The memorial stands in an area paved with black bricks and a lighter coloured stone. It is enclosed to the rear by a curved stone wall with a gate allowing access to the church. Two shallow benches are incorporated into the wall, for the placement of floral tributes.

The four sides of the plinth carry bronze plaques with the inscriptions and commemorated names. The plaque to the front (south) face carried the principal dedicatory inscription and is ornamented with a laurel wreath. It reads, "IN MEMORIAM/ GLORIOUS THEIR FORTUNE/ SPLENDID THEIR FATE/ THEIR TOMB AN ALTAR/ FOR MOURNING./ THEY HAVE REMEMBRANCE/ FOR LAMENTATION/ PRAISE/ 1914 - 1919/ PRO PATRIA". The names of the fallen are listed with rank and regiment.

The memorial was designed by Edwin Francis Reynolds, who also designed the church. It was paid for by public subscription, at a cost of £753. It was unveiled by Brigadier General Sir John Barnsley VD DL on 25th September 1920. The memorial commemorates 36 local servicemen who died in the First World War. In 2006, the memorial was restored with £4,000 raised by the congregation and a grant of £2,000 from Birmingham City Council.

Edwin Francis Reynolds (1875-1949) was a Birmingham architect who rose to prominence during the local flowering of the Arts and Crafts movement in the 1890s. He was inspired by W R Lethaby, who designed several houses in the area. Reynolds also produced several Arts and Crafts houses at Four Oaks.

The war memorial outside is a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry Number: 1433680) and was first listed on April 5th, 2016. It was listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- Historic interest: as an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on this local community, and the sacrifice it has made in the First World War;
- Architectural interest: a tall memorial cross by E F Reynolds;
- Group value: with All Saints' Church (Grade II*).



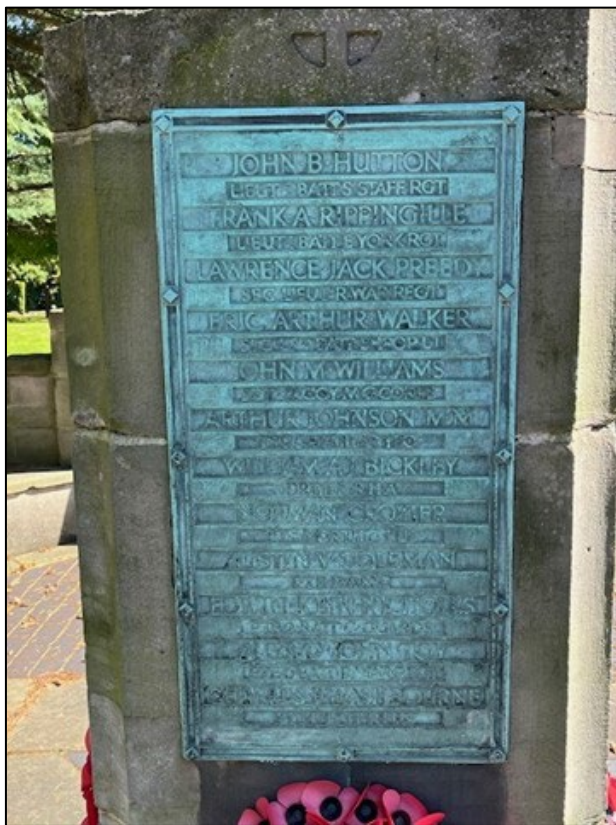


Image of the plaque on the West face of the memorial (image authors own)



Image of the plaque on the East face of the memorial (image authors own)

Names of the men featured on the memorial

Arnold	Oliver Vaughton
Bennett	George Thomas
Bickley	William Alfred James
Bushell	Roland
Cashmore	John
Clarke	Nathaniel Fuhrmann
Coleman	Austin Vernon
Crozier	Norman
Danks	Walter
Gilbert	William
Goodwin	William Collett
Greener	Leysters Llewellyn
Hodson	Arthur Coke
Humphris	Bert Harold
Hutton	John Barnabas
Johnson	Arthur
Lakin	William
Larnach	Primrose Logan
Lucas	George
Martin	George Russell Courtenay
Nicholls	Edwin John
Preedy	Lawrence Jack
Reeve	Herbert Joseph
Rippingille	Frank Alexander
Sanby	Harold Ernest
Sanby	William Worthington
Sandon-Turner	Russell
Simpson	George
Streather	George
Toy	Alfred John
Turner-Taylor	Sidney Arnold
Waldron	Robert William
Walker	Eric Arthur
Washbourne	Charles John
Williams	John Morris
Winkley	Sydney Joseph

Second Lieutenant Oliver Vaughton Arnold **2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment**

Oliver Vaughton Arnold was born on March 14th, 1888, at 10 George Road in Edgbaston, Birmingham. He was the youngest son of Charles Frederick Arnold, a solicitor, and Annie Mary Arnold. He was baptised on September 5th, 1888, in South Hampstead, London.

In 1891, he was 3 years old and living with family at 10 George Road in Edgbaston.

In 1901, Charles and Annie lived at 14 Frederick Road, Edgbaston. Oliver was 13 years old and a boarder at Sywell House Boys School in Rhyl, Wales and at some point, he also attended Shrewsbury School. By 1905 he was living at the Red House, Four Oaks according to Law Examination records. He served 3 years as an apprentice with Wilmott, Fowler & Wilmott in Birmingham until 1909.

In 1911 he was 23 years old and living with family at the Red House, Hartopp Road, Four Oaks, which was a substantial property. He was single and his occupation was "Auctioneers pupil". In 1913 he was a surveyor working at 160 Edmund Street, Birmingham.

He originally applied for a place in one of the Birmingham City Battalions of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and his name was included in a list of applicants in the Birmingham Daily Post on September 7th, 1914 where he was listed as residing at The Red House, Four Oaks. However, he eventually enlisted at Birmingham Town Hall with the 18th (Service) Battalion (1st Public Schools) Royal Fusiliers on September 15th, 1914. He was posted as a Private (regimental number 1211) on September 15th, 1914, until he was discharged on being granted a commission on January 26th, 1915. The London Gazette dated January 26th, 1915, records that "The understated to be second lieutenants, on probation. Dated 27th January 1915, unless otherwise stated: (among others) Oliver Vaughton Arnold, 6th Battalion, Worcester Regiment".

His service record¹ states that he was 26 years and 6 months old when he enlisted. He was 6 feet ½ inch tall, weighed 194 pounds and had chest measurement of 41 ½ inches. He had a fresh complexion, brown eyes and auburn hair. His physical development was described as good, and his religion was Church of England. He wore glasses.

His medal card states that he served at Gallipoli, though it is not clear on what date and with which battalion. The 6th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment were a reserve battalion, although the 4th and 9th battalions of the Worcestershire Regiment served at Gallipoli. According to the Great War Forum² where a member referenced the 4th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment war diary, on July 4th a 2Lt Arnold joined and a 2Lt Arnold departed sick on July 12th, 1915, so it appears that whilst he was at Gallipoli, he was not there for long. The monthly Army Lists consistently listed him as being with the 6th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment until July 1916³, when he was listed as serving with the 2nd Battalion on attachment from the 6th Battalion⁴.

Oliver Vaughton Arnold married Florence Sybil Gates on May 3rd, 1916, at the Parish Church in Stoke Damarel, Devon. He was 28 years old and a Second Lieutenant in the 6th Royal Worcestershire Regiment. His given address was Raglan Barracks which was located nearby in Devonport. Florence Gates was 23 years old and lived at 11 Winchester Road, London NW.

The battalion war diary recorded that on July 21st, 1916, they were at Bazentin in the Somme region, and it was a quiet day though the front companies were shelled. They were relieved in the evening and marched to camp at Becourt. It then states that Second Lieutenant O.V Arnold was wounded but no further details were given. He was subsequently evacuated back to hospital in England.

¹ <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C1084333>

² <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/314981-second-lieutenant-oliver-vaughton-arnold-2nd-battalion-worcestershire-regiment>

³ <https://digital.nls.uk/british-military-lists/archive/107992704>

⁴ <https://digital.nls.uk/british-military-lists/archive/107095033>

Second Lieutenant Arnold died of his wounds on August 11th, 1916, aged 28 at the London Free Hospital. He died from blood poisoning caused by a stomach wound. He was later buried at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery, Plot A "C" 375. He was mentioned twice on the same page of the Birmingham Daily Post on August 14th. These articles apparently mistakenly report that he was wounded on July 11th but there is no mention of this in the battalion war diary. The Army Lists records mentioned above indicate that must have been at the front only a matter of weeks before he was wounded.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as, "Son of Charles Frederick Arnold, of Wentworth Cottage, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield; husband of Sybil Arnold, of 11, Winchester Rd., Swiss Cottage, London."

According to Probate records, he had resided at the Red House, Four Oaks. He was a surveyor and auctioneer and was a Second Lieutenant attached to the 2nd Worcestershire Regiment.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, and Victory Medal. He left his effects to his wife Florence Sybil Arnold who also received a pension of £100 per annum as his widow. She was living at 11 St. James Terrace, Plymouth. The 1921 Census records Florence Sybil Vaughton Arnold as being a 26-year-old widow living at 11, Winchester Rd., Swiss Cottage, London. It was a large house with 11 rooms and a live-in domestic servant. Florence died in March 1973 at Hove, Sussex.

According to the Sutton Coldfield News dated August 19th, 1916, "Oliver Arnold was the son of Mr and Mrs Charles Frederick Arnold of "The Red House", Hartopp Road, Sutton Coldfield. He had been educated at Shrewsbury School and worked for the family firm of Auctioneers and Estate Agents at 3 Waterloo Street, Birmingham. He was the husband of Sybil Arnold of 11 Winchester Road, Swiss Cottage, London."

His older brother William Noel Arnold also served in the war. He was an officer in the Royal Field Artillery and won the Military Cross in 1917. He survived the war though was wounded three times, the final wound resulting in a broken jaw and his left arm being amputated.

MARRIAGES.

ARNOLD—GATES.—On the 3rd inst., at Stoke-Damarel, Plymouth (by the Rev. G. S. Ponsonby), Oliver Vaughton, Second Lieutenant, 6th Worcester Regiment, youngest son of Charles Frederic Arnold, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, to Sybil Florence, only daughter of Captain T. F. Gates, 11, Winchester Road, N.W.

From the Birmingham Daily Post, May 6th, 1916

SEC. LIEUT. O. V. ARNOLD (DIED FROM WOUNDS).

The death has occurred in London, from wounds received in action on July 11, of Second Lieutenant Oliver Vaughton Arnold, of the Worcestershire Regiment. He was the younger son of Mr. C. F. Arnold, of Four Oaks, and 28 years of age. He obtained his commission in January, 1915.

From the "Roll of Honour" column of the Birmingham Daily Post, August 14th, 1916

ROLL OF HONOUR.

ARNOLD.—Died on the 11th inst., in London, of wounds received on the 11th ult., Oliver Vaughton Arnold, Second Lieutenant, Worcestershire Regiment, the dearly loved younger son of C. F. and A. M. Arnold, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, and beloved husband of Sybil Arnold, aged 28. No flowers, by request. Pro Patria.

From the "Casualties Among Midland Officers" column of the Birmingham Daily Post, August 14th, 1916



Gravestone of Second Lieutenant Oliver Vaughton Arnold at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery



Inscription on the gravestone of Second Lieutenant Oliver Vaughton Arnold at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery⁵

⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98210873/oliver-vaughton-arnold>

22477 Private George Thomas Bennett
10th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

George Thomas Bennett was born in 1883 to George and Emily Bennett in Derby. He was baptised at St James, Derby on December 3rd, 1883. In 1891 he was 7 years old and at school, living at 7 Church Road, Derby and in 1901 George was living with family at 39 Cummings Street in Derby. He was 17 years old and a house painter.

By 1911, George was living on his own at 3 Four Oaks Common Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. He was 27, single and working as a house painter. George married Ada Jane Barber in the district of Solihull in July 1911. Earlier that year, Ada was 24 years old and living at "Meriden", Walsall Road, Four Oaks. She was employed as a domestic nurse. The 1921 Census shows that they had three children; Lucy Lillian Bennett born 1912, Kathleen Mary Bennett born 1913, and George James Bennett born 1915. All three children were born in Four Oaks. On the 1914/15 Electoral Roll, George T Bennett was listed as residing at 3 Four Oaks Common Road, Sutton Coldfield.

He appears to have started his service with the 2nd Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment before transferring to the 10th Battalion of the same regiment. His service record has not survived.

George was admitted to No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station Hospital in France on February 18th, 1917, suffering from chronic bronchitis. He died of the illness on active service on February 25th, 1917, aged 33. He was buried at Plot VI. C. 42 Puchevillers British Cemetery, France. The cemetery in which he is buried was constructed next to the 3rd and 44th Casualty Clearing Stations on the Somme. Plots I to V, and almost the whole of Plot VI, were made by those hospitals before the end of March 1917⁶.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915

His widow Ada Bennett continued to live at Four Oaks Common Road according to the 1918 Electoral Roll though she may have moved soon after this date as George's pension records state that his wife "Ada Jane Bennett, of 1, Oak Cottages, Warstock, nr. Birmingham received his pension". In 1921 she was living at 1 Oak Cottage, Prince of Wales Lane, Warstock/Solihull Lodge (the same address as above) with her three children but by 1939 she lived at 35 Brook Lane, Billesley, Birmingham with her daughter Kathleen. Ada died in 1955 aged 68 in Kidderminster.

⁶ <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/57401/puchevillers-british-cemetery/>

88181 Driver William Alfred James Bickley
L Battery. 15th Brigade Royal Horse Artillery

Born in Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield in 1893, William Alfred James Bickley appears to have been the youngest child of John and Mary Bickley. He was baptised on July 9th, 1893, at Sutton Coldfield, St. James Church, Hill (Mere Green), Sutton Coldfield. Tragically it appears that his father died aged 39, soon before he was born.

In 1901 he was living with his widowed mother and siblings in a cottage on Clarence Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. By 1911 he was living with his mother and two of his brothers at "Wrens Nest", Clarence Road, Four Oaks. He was 17, single and a domestic gardener.

William joined the Royal Horse Artillery, who according to the Long, Long Trail Website, were "armed with light, mobile, horse-drawn guns that provided firepower in support of the cavalry and in practice supplemented the Royal Field Artillery". According to the Great War Forum, his regimental number indicates that he enlisted in early November 1914.⁷

The Long Long Trail website states that XV Brigade, "Was formed at Leamington Spa in January 1915. It came under command of the new 29th Division and was made up of a headquarters unit, three batteries (B, L and Y Batteries RHA), and an Ammunition Column. It went to Egypt and Gallipoli with the division and returned to Egypt in January 1916. The brigade then moved with the division to France in March 1916 and remained with it for the rest of the war".⁸ It is not clear exactly when William joined his unit. He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal which indicates he went overseas sometime after 1915. According to the Great War Forum, it is possible he served in Egypt prior to moving to France although this cannot be proven. Egyptian service earlier in the war didn't qualify for a 1914-15 star.⁹

In May 1918, William was admitted to hospital for 29 days with Influenza, being returned to duty on June 24th, 1918. His hospital recorded his religion as Church of England.

The battalion war diary records that in from September 1st to the 4th 1918, the 15th Brigade Royal Horse Artillery were employed in operations with the 87th Infantry Brigade where they pushed the enemy back through Bailleul and Steenwerk to the line of the Lys around Armentier. During this operation, it recorded that single guns operated with infantry with success. However, the brigade experienced great difficulty in making up roads for itself in advance of the Pioneers and during these operations the position of L Battery was badly shelled with one officer wounded and 7 other ranks killed and wounded.

William was killed in action on September 4th, 1918, aged 25 most likely during the above action. He was buried at Pont-D'achelles Military Cemetery, Nieppe, France, plot III. C. 27. He was buried next to a comrade of the same regiment who died the same day. Nieppe was recaptured by the 29th Division (of which the 15th Brigade Royal Horse Artillery were part of) on September 3rd, 1918. The military cemetery at Pont-D'achelles was begun in June 1917 and used by field ambulances and fighting units until the German advance in the following April. It was used by the Germans during their occupation, and it was resumed by the British in September and October 1918¹⁰.

He left his estate to three of his brothers and his sister-in-law. William is also commemorated on a triptych at St James Church, Mere Green.

The following was featured in the In Memorium section of The Sutton Coldfield News from September 6th, 1919, "In fond remembrance of Driver W Bickley 29th Division Royal Horse Artillery killed in action 2 September 1918, fondly remembered by Mr & Mrs Pheasant & Family". Thomas and Sarah

⁷ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/318331-88181-driver-william-alfred-james-bickley/#findComment-3398303>

⁸ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/brigades-of-the-royal-horse-artillery/>

⁹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/318331-88181-driver-william-alfred-james-bickley/#findComment-3398314>

¹⁰ <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/19200/pont-d-achelles-military-cemetery-nieppe/>

Pheasant and their children were listed as living next door to William and his family at Clarence Road in both the 1911 and 1921 Census' so it is likely they who left the tribute in the newspaper.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Brother of Mr. E. Bickley, of 2, West View, Lichfield Rd., Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham."

William Bickley's brothers; Edward Thomas Bickley, John Bickley and Charles Bickley also served in the war. Edward and John survived but Charles was killed in action September 27th, 1918 (France & Flanders) aged 35. Charles Bickley is commemorated on the St James Church Roll of Honour (Mere Green, Sutton Coldfield).



Gravestone of Driver William Alfred James Bickley ¹¹



St James Church Roll of Honour (image courtesy of Tina Ambrose)

¹¹ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56050819/wilfred-alfred_james-bickley

Second Lieutenant Roland Bushell
A Battery. 282nd Brigade Royal Field Artillery (Territorial)

Roland Bushell was born in 1887 in Handsworth, Birmingham and was the only son of Herbert and Juliet Bushell. In 1891 he was 3 years old and living with his family at 44 Francis Road, Lozells, Aston. In 1901 he was 13 years old and living with his parents and two sisters at "The Hawthorns", Oakland Road, Moseley, Birmingham.

By 1911 he was 23 years old and living with his family at Hambleton House, Upper Colwall near Malvern. He was 23, single and a manufacturing jeweller, most likely working with his father who was in the same trade.

Roland Bushell married May Ellis in Hamstead, London on October 5th, 1912. He was 25 years old and working as a manufacturing jeweller, living in Colwall near Malvern in Herefordshire. May Ellis was 25 years old and lived at 27 Broadham Gardens, Hampstead, London. The 1915 Trade Directory for Birmingham records him as living at 58 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

He was promoted from the ranks from Gunner with the 3rd South Midland Field Artillery Brigade and commissioned in 1916. The London Gazette dated January 12th, 1917, states ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY - Cadet Roland Bushell to be 2nd Lt. (on prob.). 23rd Dec. 1916". He had two regimental numbers, SMFA Bde Gnr 3425 and RFA. T.F. 836681.

He was sent to France in January 1917. He was sent home in June 1917 as the result of an accident when an ammunition wagon drove over him, then he was sent back to the front in August 1917.

He was serving in Belgium at the time he died. His Colonel wrote that on September 26th, 1917, Roland Bushell was rendering aid to an injured man when he was severely wounded when a shell burst. He died soon afterwards.

Second Lieutenant Roland Bushell died of wounds on September 26th, 1917, aged c30. He was buried at Gwalia Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, Plot II. C. 16. At the time of his death, Roland's parents were living at "Shillingford", Hartopp Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield.

The Sutton Coldfield News dated 13th October 1917 reported that, "Roland Bushell was the only son of Mr and Mrs Herbert Bushell of "Shillingford", Hartopp Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. He was the husband of Mrs M Bushell of 58 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham and he was educated at Greenhill School, Moseley, Birmingham."

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal which indicates he went overseas sometime after 1915.

Probate records state that his effects were left to his widow, May Bushell, of 58, Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. She later lived in Hove and Roland's medals were sent to her at Flat 5, St Aubyns Court, St Aubyns, Hove Sussex on March 16th, 1922. May married Thomas F Stubington in Steyning, Sussex on December 12th, 1923.

BUSHELL.—On the 26th ult., killed in action, Second Lieutenant Roland Bushell, R.F.A.

Extract from the Roll of Honour section of the Birmingham Daily Post, October 9th, 1917

CASUALTIES AMONG MIDLAND OFFICERS.

SEC. LIEUT. ROLAND BUSHELL (KILLED).

Second Lieutenant Roland Bushell, Royal Field Artillery, was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Bushell, of Four Oaks, and late of Colwell. He was educated at Greenhill School, Moseley. He received his commission last December, and went to France in January, and came home in June in consequence of an accident, an ammunition wagon having passed over him. He returned again to France in August, and his colonel writes that "he came back in the best of spirits and was carrying on excellently in every respect, making friends in every direction by the capable and fearless way he was performing his duties." On September 26 he was rendering aid to an injured man when he was severely wounded by a shell bursting, and died shortly afterwards.

Extract from the Birmingham Daily Post, October 6th, 1917



Gravestone of Second Lieutenant Roland Bushell¹²

¹² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11404667/roland-bushell>

4766 Private John Cashmore
9th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

John Cashmore was born in Shustoke, Warwickshire, in 1894 to William Charles and Emma Cashmore. In 1901 he was 6 years old and living with family at Back Lane, Shustoke. By 1911 he was 16 years old and working as an errand boy at a hardware store. He was living at 9 Four Oaks Common Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield with his parents and two younger brothers.

He enlisted in Warwick with the 9th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment. The following information was obtained from the Great War Forum website. On June 17th, 1915, the 9th Royal Warwickshire, embarked at Avonmouth, and reached Mudros, in the island of Lemnos, on July 9th. Four days later they landed on Beach V. near Cape Helles. For two weeks they served off and on in the trenches, losing 3 officers killed and of other ranks; 9 were killed and 28 wounded. On July 29th the battalion returned to Lemnos, and on August 3rd embarked again for Anzac Cove, where they were to take part in a large attack.

Sir Ian Hamilton's plan was to endeavour to gain the heights of Koja Chemen (or Hill 971) and the seaward ridges by an advance from Anzac Cove, simultaneously with a new landing to be made further north at Suvla Bay. The whole ridge, of which Koja Chemen is the highest point, is called Sari Bair. Underneath it on the north lies a long spur known as Rhododendron Ridge, below which a wide water course, split into two forks, both called Aghyl Dere, leads up to Koja Chemen.

The 9th Royal Warwickshire landed in the early morning of August 4th. During the first two days (August 6th – 7th) of the attack they were in divisional reserve, but advanced up Aghyl Dere. On August 8th they crossed Bauchop's Hill to the ridge beyond, part going to relieve the 9th Worcester at the head of Aghyl Dere. The New Zealanders had captured Rhododendron Ridge on the previous day, and on August 8th followed up their success by winning Chunuk Bair at the southern end of the main ridge.

The crisis of the attack came on August 9th with the assault of Koja Chemen. Three battalions—the 9th Royal Warwickshire, the 6th South Lancashire, and the 6th Gurkhas, reached the crest, whence they could look down on the waters of the Dardanelles and seemed to have victory in their grasp. But the troops on the right, through no fault of their own, were late, and when the Turks rallied to a counter - attack, the men were forced back to the lower slopes from whence they started. One company of the Royal Warwickshire held on, till they were surrounded, and, as it is supposed, all perished. Next day the Turks attacked in the early morning with disastrous results. The trenches were enfiladed by machine-gun fire, and since no supports were available it was impossible to hold the remainder of the crest on Chunuk Bair. When at night the Royal Warwickshire was withdrawn to reserve no officers and only 248 men were left. During the four days 5 officers were killed, 9 wounded and 1 missing; of other ranks 57 were killed, 227 wounded and 117 missing.

Private John Cashmore was killed in action on August 10th, 1915, at Gallipoli aged 21, most likely during the action described above. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Panel 36 to 38. He is also commemorated on the family grave at St James Church, Hill, Sutton Coldfield. There is also a John Cashmore listed on the Kenilworth War Memorial, Abbey Fields, Warwickshire, although it is not clear if this is the same man¹³.

His pension went to his mother and his war gratuity to his father. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His older brother Private Daniel Cashmore of the 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards also died in World War One on April 13th, 1918, and is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium.

¹³ <https://www.roll-of-honour.com/Warwickshire/Kenilworth.html>



Image of Private John Cashmore from IWM website¹⁴



Private John Cashmore is commemorated on the family grave at St James Church, Hill, Sutton Coldfield¹⁵

¹⁴ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/744201>

¹⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/186357103/john-cashmore>

Second Lieutenant Nathaniel Fuhrmann Clarke **Royal Flying Corps**

Nathaniel Fuhrmann Clarke was the son of Edward and Edith Clarke. He was born in Wellington, New Zealand on October 22nd, 1885. By 1891 he had arrived in England living with an aunt and uncle at "The Oaks", Woodmanston, Surrey. Also present were his brother, cousins and nine live in servants indicating his aunt and uncle were wealthy and lived in a large property.

In 1901, Nathaniel F Clarke was a boarder at Bromsgrove School, Worcestershire. He was 15 and was born in Wellington, New Zealand. Meanwhile his parents and four of his siblings were living at 59 Stanmore Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. By 1911 his family were living at "Enderwood", Lichfield Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. Nathaniel Clarke was not found on the 1911 census.

Upon leaving school he went to work for Messrs George Clarks, Marine Engineering Works in Sunderland. He then went to Chile to work in the nitrate fields, then after that contract ended, he became an assistant manager for the Aranoa Railway Company. While in Chile, he got married on January 3rd, 1914, at Valparaiso. He and his wife Anita Beatrice Clarke had a daughter named Frances Beatrice on October 26th, 1914, in Coronel, Chile. At the start of the war, he asked to be released from his contract but was not released until late 1916.

The Ship Orita arrived at Liverpool on September 25th, 1916, from Chile, last stopping at Rio Janeiro. The ships manifest recorded that Nathaniel Fuhrmann Clarke, aged 30, Accountant of Victoria Chambers, 5a Temple Row, Birmingham was a first-class passenger along with his wife Anita Beatrice Clarke, aged 33 and daughter Frances Beatrice Clarke, aged 1. It appears that Victoria Chambers, 5a Temple Row, Birmingham, was the company address of his father Edward F Clarke, as he is listed there in various trade directories.

A service record for Nathaniel Clarke was found on the National Archives website. He enlisted with the Royal Flying Corps on November 2nd, 1916, at Birmingham aged 27 years and 11 days. He was 5 feet 7 inches tall with a chest measurement of 40 ½ inches. His given occupation was accountant, and his address was Victoria Chambers, 5a Temple Row, Birmingham. He was given the regimental number 68170. He joined at South Farnborough on November 16th, 1916. He was discharged from his services having been selected for appointment as a Second Lieutenant with the Royal Flying Corps (13th Training Squadron) on March 16th, 1917. The London Gazette dated 10th April 1917 states, "General List (R.F.C.). The undermentioned cadets to be temp. 2nd Lts. (on prob.) : - 17 Mar. 1917. Nathaniel Fuhrmann Clarke.(among others)".

He was killed on June 1st, 1917, aged 32, as a result of a flying accident near Wokingham, Berkshire. He was flying a BE2c with Air Mechanic First Class W Fozard, who was also killed. A report into the crash concluded that it was, "Impossible to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the cause of the accident", presumably partly because the machine was wrecked. The opinion was that machine had been deemed in a satisfactory condition for flying and that it was stalled on ascending after making a successful landing¹⁶.

He was buried in Sutton Coldfield Cemetery, Plot B "C" 251 (not a Commonwealth War Grave). He is also commemorated on a triptych at St James Church, Mere Green. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Edward Clarke; husband of Anita B. Clarke, of 108, Oakwood Court, Kensington, London."

At the time of his death, he was married and had one daughter. His wife, Anita B Clarke, resided at 108 Oakwood Court, Kensington, London. His parents were Mr and Mrs Edward F Clarke of "Enderwood", Lichfield Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. One of his younger brothers, Frederic Alexander Clarke, received the Military Medal whilst serving as a stretcher bearer with the New Zealand Forces.

Probate was granted in October 1918 in London to Anita Beatrice Clarke, widow. Subsequently, it is not known what happened to either Anita Beatrice Clarke or Frances Beatrice Clarke after the war.

¹⁶ <https://www.rafmuseumstoryvault.org.uk/archive/clarke-n.f.-nathaniel-fuhrmann>

AIRMAN'S FATAL FALL.
MIDLAND OFFICER WHO RETURNED FROM CHILI TO JOIN UP.
 As a result of an aeroplane accident which occurred on Friday at Hurst, a small village near Reading, Lieutenant Nathaniel F. Clarke, Royal Flying Corps, and First Air Mechanic W. Frozard lost their lives.
 Lieutenant Clarke is the elder son of Mr. E. F. Clarke, a well-known consulting engineer in Birmingham, who resides at Four Oaks, and was for some time a member of the Sutton Coldfield Council. Lieutenant Clarke was 33 years of age, and married. He returned to this country from Chili to join the forces, and obtained a commission in the Royal Flying Corps.
 At Saturday's inquest it was stated that the machine fell 60 feet soon after it had ascended. Lieutenant Clarke sustained a fractured base of the skull, and died without recovering consciousness.
 A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.
 Lieutenant Clarke's body will be brought home by motor hearse, and the funeral will take place on Wednesday.

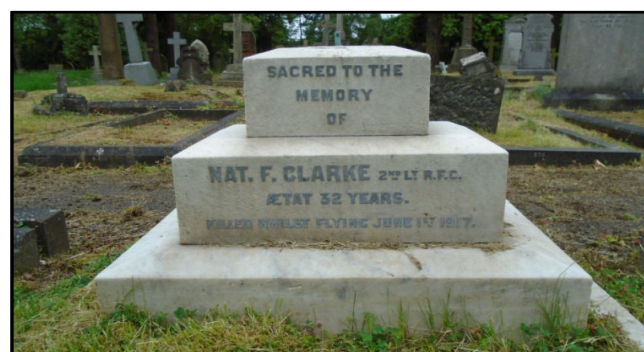
Extract from the Evening Dispatch, July 4th 1917



Image of Second Lieutenant Nathaniel Clarke

4503.
 CLARKE, Nathaniel Fuhrmann
 c/o E. F. Clarke, 5a, Temple Row, Birmingham.
 Born: 22nd October 1885 at Wellington, New Zealand
 Nationality British
 Rank, Regiment, Profession 2nd Lieut. R.F.C.,
 Certificate taken on Maurice Farman Biplane
 At Military School, Thetford
 Date 31st March 1917
 Accidentally killed 1st June 1917.

Great Britain Royal Aero Club Aviation Certificate



Grave of Second Lieutenant Nathaniel Fuhrmann Clarke at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery¹⁷



St James Church Roll of Honour (image courtesy of Tina Ambrose)

¹⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98210877/nathaniel-fuhrmann-clarke>

90806 Private Austin Vernon Coleman
Royal Army Medical Corps, 60th General Hospital

Austin Vernon Coleman was born on June 15th, 1897 in Edgbaston, Birmingham to Frank C and Gertrude Coleman. In 1901 he was 3 and living with family at 28 Selwyn Road, Edgbaston / Ladywood. By 1911 he was 13, at school and living with family at "Llanrhos" on Four Oaks Road, Sutton Coldfield. He was educated at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, Sutton Coldfield, then Epworth College, Rhyl. He subsequently worked as a salesman in Messrs. Wilkinson and Riddell, wholesale drapers based at 42 Cherry Street, Birmingham.

He enlisted with the Royal Army Medical Corps Territorial Force as Private 256 in Handsworth on May 25th, 1915, he was single and 18 years old. His given profession was Salesman, and his religion was Unitarian. His medical was conducted at Holt in Norfolk. He was 5 feet 5 inches tall and weighed 130 pounds and his chest measurement was 34 inches. He joined the 3/1st North Midland Mounted Brigade Field Ambulance, later transferring into the 2/1 N.M.M.B.F.A. as a Bearer with the number 90806.

He trained in the UK, mainly in Norfolk, and was hospitalised twice with influenza in April and August of 1916. He was re-posted to the Regular Army Eastern Command on 7 February 1917 and left for France from Southampton on June 9th, 1917, arriving at Le Havre on the 10th. He then travelled from Marseilles on June 21st, 1917, arriving at Salonika on June 23rd.

From January 1916 the Headquarters for the XVI Corps was based at Kirechkoi, 2km northeast of Salonika. In September 1916 the 60th, 65th and 66th General Hospitals were set up in the area; the high and healthy country was thought to suit the treatment of the soldiers suffering from illness.

He was admitted to the 60th General Hospital (the hospital where he served), on August 18th, 1917, with dysentery. He was reported as "Dangerously ill" on August 25th, 1917, and his condition fluctuated over the next two months. He eventually died of illness there on October 17th, 1917, aged 20. He was buried at the Kirechkoi-Hortakoi Military Cemetery, Greece, plot 22.¹⁸

His personal belongings were sent to his father at 56 St Agnes Road, Moseley (presumably his business address) in February 1918. These included: a body belt, letters, 2 notebooks, diary, dictionary, safety razor with blade in a case, pocketknife, pair of folding scissors, pencil case, postcards, pair woollen socks, pair woollen gloves, clothes brush, identity disc, tobacco pouch, woollen scarf, 13 handkerchiefs – 2 with lace edges, metal watch, leather pocket wallet, 3 pairs of spectacles in cases, brushes, prayer book and a chess set in a bag.

He left his effects to his father who also received his war gratuity. In September 1919, his memorial plaque and scroll were sent to his father at Llanrhos, Four Oaks Road, Sutton Coldfield. Austin's grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as being the "Son of Frank C. and Gertrude Coleman, of 69, Station Rd., Wylde Green, Birmingham". His family were living at this address at the time of the 1921 Census. He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal, and these were sent to his father in February 1922 at 69 Station Road, Wylde Green, Birmingham.

Private A V Coleman is commemorated on page 234 of the 'Birmingham City Battalions' book by Sir William H Bowater. He is listed on his employers page, who were Wilkinson & Riddell Ltd who were Warehousemen & Wholesale Drapers of 42 Cherry Street, Birmingham. His elder brother Stanley A Coleman had also served as a Private in the Cyclists Corps.



Grave of Private Austin Vernon Coleman

¹⁸ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21489007/austin-vernon-coleman>

S/365306 Private Norman Crozier
Army Service Corps

Norman Crozier was born in 1884 in Lozells/Handsworth to William Armstrong Crozier (a manufacturing jeweller) and Emily Bell Crozier. In 1891 he was 6 years old, a scholar and living with family at 1 St Peters Road, Handsworth. He was baptised at St Silas Church, Lozells on October 15th, 1884. The family were living at 31 Burbury Street, Lozells. In 1901, he was 16 years old and working as a Goldsmith. He was living with his family at 11 Wye Cliff Road, Handsworth.

By 1911, he was living with family at "Somerfield", Manor Hill, Sutton Coldfield. He was 26 years old, single, and working as a Goldsmith (dealer).

Aged 29, he married Flora Crisp on March 26th, 1913, in Huddersfield. His profession was Director and address was "Bradley", Mayfield Road, Wylde Green, and he was recorded at the same address on the 1914/15 Electoral Roll.

He was living at 55 Burnage Hall Road in Levenshulme, Manchester when he enlisted. He doesn't appear to have served abroad as there are no medal roll records for him. He was serving with the Army Service Corps Reserve Supply Personnel Depot (Bath) and was last seen alive on January 15th, 1918. He was found drowned on January 16th, 1918, in the Southampton Docks. He was 33 years old. An inquest into Norman Crozier's death was held on January 18th, 1918, details from which were reported on in the Hampshire Independent and are included below. The verdict was death caused by drowning, however there was insufficient evidence to show how he came to be in the water. His pension ledger card recorded his cause of death as "Accidentally drowned, whilst on active service".

Norman Crozier was buried at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery, Plot A. 392 (not a Commonwealth War Grave). He left his effects to his widow, Flora Crozier, who also received his war gratuity and a military pension.

Norman Crozier was listed as being in the Northumberland Fusiliers on the Four Oaks War Memorial. No record of him being in that regiment has been found although he could have transferred earlier in his military career.

No obvious ties to Four Oaks have been found for Norman Crozier, however his parents and other family members were recorded as living at "Grey Stones" on Four Oaks Road on the 1921 census. Flora Crozier was living in Levenshulme, Manchester at the time of the inquest but subsequently cannot be traced. A pension ledger card for Norman listed Flora as living at "Abbotsford", Blackroot Road, Four Oaks, though no date was provided.

MARRIAGES.
CROZIER—CRISP.—On the 26th ult., at St. John's Church, Huddersfield, Norman, youngest son of W. A. Cozier, The Driffold, Sutton Coldfield, to Flora, second daughter of Mr. Albert Crisp, Huddersfield.

Clipping from The Lichfield Mercury, April 4th, 1913



Memorial stone for Private Norman Crozier at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery¹⁹

SOLDIER DROWNED AT SOUTHAMPTON.

Mr. H. K. Pope, borough-cornet, held an inquest yesterday at the Southampton Coroner's Court relative to the death of Private Norman Crozier, A.S.C., aged 33 years.—Flora Crozier, living at Levens-hulme, Manchester, widow of the deceased, gave evidence of identification, stating that her husband was a commercial agent by occupation. She last saw him alive on Wednesday week in his usual health, and he was going abroad.—Capt. John Anderson Peters, R.A.M.C., stated that on Wednesday morning he was notified that the deceased was in the water in the Docks quite close to the starboard side of a ship. He was brought to the quayside, where artificial respiration was carried on for an hour and ten minutes unavailingly. Subsequently he was taken to the mortuary. Death was due to drowning. The bruise on the left side of the head was caused, in his opinion, by a fall, and probably made him unconscious, so that he could not save himself or call out. He understood deceased was not missed before being found in the water.—Gunner Stanley Pearce gave evidence as to seeing deceased in the water, and assisting to get him on to the quay, where everything possible was done to bring him round. It was quite possible, for deceased to have fallen overboard and to have struck his head on the rolling chock, midship, which extended about 2ft. from the side of the vessel.—Dock Police-constable Collins testified to having searched the body in the presence of Capt. Peters.—The jury returned a verdict that the deceased died from drowning, but there was not sufficient evidence to show how he came in the water.

Clipping from the Hampshire Independent dated January 19th, 1918, regarding the inquest into Norman Crozier's death

¹⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98210879/norman-crozier#view-photo=222345361>

R/692 Serjeant Walter Danks **10th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps**

Walter Danks was born in 1884 to Frederick and Ann Danks in Allesley, Coventry. He was baptised at Alleseley, near Coventry on January 6th, 1884. His father was a labourer. In 1891 he was 7 years old and a scholar and living with family at Wall Hill, Alleseley.

A Walter Danks was found on the 1901 census at Chelsea Barracks, St George Hannover Square, Belgrave. He was 20 and born in Coventry and a soldier with the 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards. It is not clearcut if this is the same person due to the discrepancy in his given age. In 1901 his family were living in Highfield Road, Corley, Coventry.

Walter Danks was not found on the 1911 census; he may have been serving as a soldier abroad. In 1911 his parents were living at 87 Coles Lane, Sutton Coldfield.

His service record shows that he enlisted in Westminster, Middlesex, with the Kings Royal Rifles on 5th September 1914. His age is given as 32 but I think he was 30. He was single and his occupation was commission agent. His address appeared to read 7 Brassborough Street, Victoria, London. His parents and his brother Thomas were listed as next of kin and they were all living at "Rangemore" Cottage, Whitehouse Common, Sutton Coldfield. From the available records, it is not clear if Walter Danks ever lived in Sutton Coldfield. Walters pension ledger cards listed his mother as living at "Willow Bank", Clarence Road, Four Oaks. On the 1916 Electoral Roll, Frederick and Ann Danks were recorded at 11 Four Oaks Common Road, Sutton Coldfield.

He embodied at Winchester on September 7th, 1914, and was posted on September 9th, 1914, to the 7th battalion, and then to the 10th battalion on September 16th, 1914. He was promoted to Corporal on September 18th, 1914, and then to Lance Sergeant on December 5th, 1914. He was further promoted to Sergeant on January 25th, 1915.

His battalion formed at Winchester on September 14th, 1914, as part of K2 and came under the orders of the 59th Brigade in 20th (Light) Division. During training, they moved to Blackdown, then in February 1915 to Witley and then in April to Hamilton Camp (Stonehenge). He, along with his battalion landed at Boulogne on July 21st, 1915. They moved to Fleurbaix for trench familiarisation. In 1916 they saw action at the Battle of Mount Sorrel and then were on the Somme in the Battles of Delville Wood and later, Guillemont²⁰.

On September 3rd, 1916, his battalion attacked Guillemont. The war diary recorded that 'C' Company stormed the enemy's front line prior to commencement of British barrage. This took the enemy completely by surprise and they were overcome with little resistance. However, heavy casualties resulted from their own barrage. The objective was taken, and a new line was consolidated 100 yards forward of their objective and they held their gains despite being sniped at and heavily shelled until relieved on September 5th²¹. Although the action succeeded, the battalion incurred casualties totalling 10 officers and 263 other ranks.

Serjeant Walter Danks was killed in action during the attack and capture of Guillemont (Somme) on September 3rd, 1916, aged 32. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval memorial in France, Pier and Face 13 A and 13 B.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Frederick and Ann Danks, of 11, Four Oaks Common Rd., Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham".

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

His war gratuity and effects were paid to his father Frederick, and his mother received his pension. His personal effects were sent to his father at 11 Four Oaks Common Road, Sutton Coldfield in August 1917. Walters parents were living at the same address at the time of the 1921 census.

²⁰ <https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/battalion.php?pid=6483>

²¹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/87476-10krcc-man-died-of-wounds-18-sept1916/>

28009 Private William Gilbert

10th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

William Gilbert was born in Sutton Coldfield in 1895 to John and Lucy Gilbert. In 1901 he was 5 years old and living with family at No. 2 Station Cottages, Station Drive, a road which led from Lichfield Road to Four Oaks Station, where his father worked as a plate layer. He was still living there with his family in 1911, he was then 15 years old and employed doing odd jobs at a piano manufactory.

Prior to enlisting he worked at the Yote Manufacturing Company, Mere Green Road, Four Oaks. They were manufacturers of small accurate parts and wheels in brass and steel.

William was attached to the Lewis Gun Section (these were machine guns) of his battalion. In October 1917, he appeared on the War Office Daily List No. 5402 as being eligible for a wound stripe though the nature of his wound and how and when he obtained it are not known.

Between March 21st and March 26th, 1918, his battalion saw much action and heavy fighting and it is likely he was injured at this time.

The battalion had left Vittoria Camp at Barastre for front line trenches south east of Beaumetz on March 21st. The battalion was subjected to heavy shelling on both the 21st and 22nd and then was involved in heavy fighting on March 23rd. The battalion was attacked by a numerically superior force and was pushed back, taking part in a fighting withdrawal, with some companies standing their ground and fighting to the last man, thus allowing others to retire. The battalion was in reserve trenches by March 27th having taken very significant casualties with over 300 killed wounded and missing in the period.

William Gilbert died of his wounds aged 22 on March 28th, 1918 in France. He was buried Denain Communal Cemetery, France, Plot B. 60.

Denain was a German hospital centre during the greater part of the War; and from November 1918 to March 1919, the 33rd Casualty Clearing Station was posted in the town. The Communal Cemetery was used by the Germans to bury their soldiers and (in 1917 and 1918) 153 British prisoners²². A British plot was made at the south east end, after the capture of the town; and after the Armistice the graves of the prisoners and other British graves were regrouped beside it. This information indicates that William was wounded, captured and died at the German military hospital a few days later. On taking advice from the Great War Forum²³, this was confirmed by records held by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)²⁴.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal which indicates he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

His effects and war gratuity were paid to his father, John, and his mother received his pension. William is also commemorated on a plaque at Four Oaks Methodist Church, Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield, which was close to the family home.

The following was featured in the In Memorium section of The Sutton Coldfield News from March 3rd, 1919, "In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private William Gilbert, 10th Royal Warwickshire Regiment who was killed in action on 22.3.18. 'Too far away thy grave to see: but not too far to think of thee'. Ever in the thoughts of mother, father, brothers and sisters". His older brother, John Howard Gilbert, served in the war with the Royal Engineers and survived.

²² <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/33000/denain-communal-cemetery/>

²³ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/314950-possible-pow-record/>

²⁴ <https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/en/File/Details/2741598/3/2/>

G i l b e r t, W.

Nr.28009, R. War.

Kriegslazarett.

Extract from Totenliste (Deceased list) held in Red Cross archives confirming that he was in a Kriegslazarett (war hospital) when he died



Gravestone of Private William Gilbert²⁵

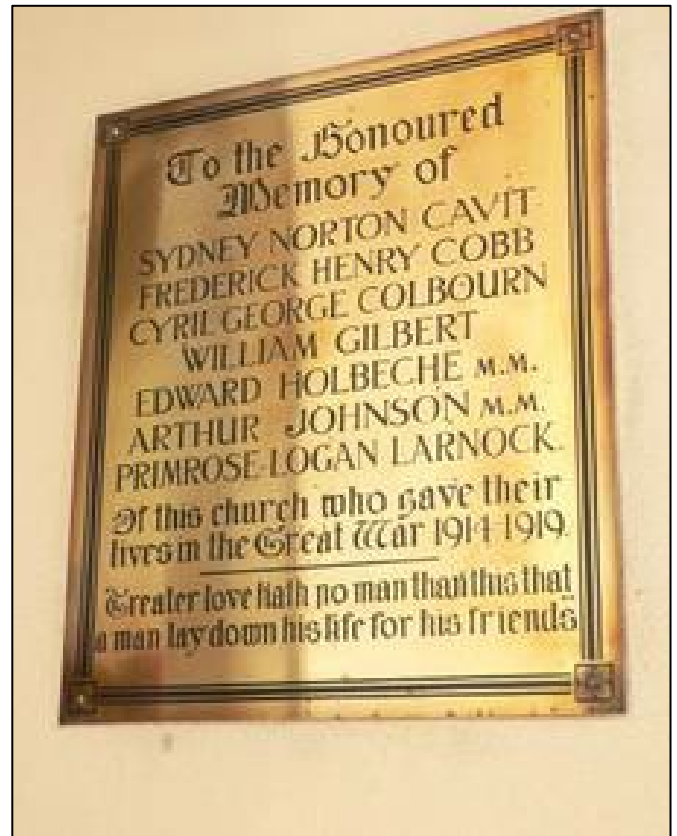


Image of memorial plaque at Four Oaks Methodist Church²⁶

²⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25245663/william-gilbert>

²⁶ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/38628>

109975 Gunner William Collett Goodwin
224 Siege Battery Royal Garrison Artillery

William Goodwin was born in 1882 at Colletts Brook in Sutton Coldfield to Joseph and Jane Goodwin. Prior to his birth, the 1881 census recorded his parents living with their six children on Jockey Lane in Sutton Coldfield. His father was a farmer. He and his older sister Honor were baptised at St James Church, Hill on September 9th, 1880. Their address was Collett's Brook and his father's occupation was Carpenter. His given date of birth was September 20th, 1882, though it was very difficult to read.

In 1891, he was an 8-year-old scholar living with his now widowed mother and an older brother at Watford Gap, Sutton Coldfield. In 1901 he was living with his mother and an older sister on Church Lane, Hill (now St James Road, Mere Green). He was 18 and a bricklayer.

William married Clara Knapp at the parish church in her home town of Wycombe, Leicestershire on August 1st, 1910. In 1901 she was a domestic servant living in Lichfield Road, Mere Green, Sutton Coldfield. At the time of their marriage, he was 27 years old, and Clara was 25. He was a bricklayer living at St James, Hill (most likely Church Lane).

In 1911 William was working as a bricklayer and living on Clarence Road with his wife Clara and his mother Jane who died the following year. William and Clara had a daughter named Nancy on July 6th, 1912, born in Sutton Coldfield.

William was recorded as one of the Banking Stewards for the Sutton Coldfield Branch of the Operative Bricklayers' Society from 1914-1916.

On December 10th, 1915, he enlisted (probably under the Derby scheme) in the Royal Garrison Artillery at Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire aged 33 years and 81 day. His address was Clarence Road, and occupation was bricklayer. He was called up in July 1916.

He served in France from January 11th, 1917, until August 8th, 1917, when he was wounded by shrapnel in his right thigh. He spent a long time in hospital in the UK being treated for his wound and other medical issues including failing eyesight. He was initially treated at Graylingwell War Hospital in Chichester and later served at home being stationed at The Tower, London.

On December 31st, 1918, his body was found on the railway line near Butlers Lane bridge, Four Oaks, and he was assumed to have committed suicide having been struck by a train. He was 36 years old. His wife told the subsequent inquiry that William had been on leave since December 19th, 1918, and was due to return to service on December 30th, 1918. She said that he had been depressed about his health (including colic pain in the stomach and the effects of gas from his military service) and that he believed he was going blind.

An obituary in the Sutton Coldfield News dated January 4th, 1919, read, "William Collett Goodwin resided in Clarence Road, Four Oaks. Prior to enlisting he was employed as a bricklayer. He enlisted in July 1916 with the RGA. He was gassed and wounded in July 1917 and since that time had been under medical treatment by military doctors. He came home on leave on 19th December and was due to return on 30th December 1918. At times he was depressed and complained of colic pain in the stomach and bad eyes. He thought he was going blind. He committed suicide by lying down on the railway track near Butlers Lane Bridge."

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

He was buried at St James Church, Mere Green, plot 5. 30, and was also commemorated on a triptych at the same church. His effects and war gratuity were paid to his widow Clara who also received his pension. She received his medals at Clarence Road in 1921 and later lived at Tower Road, Four Oaks.



Gravestone of Gunner William Goodwin²⁷



St James Church Roll of Honour (image courtesy of Tina Ambrose)

²⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/178618243/william-c-goodwin>

Captain Leysters Llewellyn Greener MC **2nd/6th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment**

Leysters Llewellyn Greener was born on April 11th, 1893, to Charles E Greener and Harrier H Greener in Erdington. His family owned a well-known firm of gunmakers in Birmingham. In 1901, he was 7 years old and living with family at "Strelina" on Chester Road in Erdington. The 1911 census shows that his family were living at Rookery House, Hartopp Road, Four Oaks, and that he was aged 17 and a boarder at Rugby School, Horton Crescent, Rugby. He had previously attended Oakfield Prep School, Binley Road, Rugby. He was at Rugby School from 1907 until 1911²⁸, he was in the Officer's Training Corps and captain of both the school rugby and shooting teams. He was also in the gymnasium team. Upon leaving school, he entered the family firm of W.W. Greener, Gunmakers.

He joined the Territorial Force around 18 months prior to World War 1 and was granted his commission in 1913. This was recorded in the London Gazette dated June 27th, 1913, thus, "5th and 6th Battalions, The Royal Warwickshire Regiment. Leysters Llewellyn Greener (late Cadet Corporal, Rugby School Contingent, Junior Division, Officers Training Corps) to be Second Lieutenant. Dated 22nd March 1913". The Great War Forum mentions reports of him taking part in shooting competitions both for his school and in the army from The Times.

He was mentioned (amongst others) in the London Gazette dated November 2nd, 1914, thus, "6th Battalion, The Royal Warwickshire Regiment; the undermentioned Second Lieutenants to be Lieutenants. Dated 3rd November 1914: - Leysters L. Greener". He served in their 1st/6th Battalion. He was mobilised on the outbreak of war serving on Coast Defence and spent several months with his battalion getting kitted out and training for active service before being posted overseas to France on March 22nd, 1915.

According to articles published in the Sutton Coldfield News, "He was wounded in the eye when a fuse he was examining exploded causing him to be in a London hospital for Christmas 1915". Another provided more detail stating that, "He lost his right eye in in an explosion in 1915". This was recorded in the battalion war diary on September 24th, 1915, thus, "In Trenches. Lt. L.L. Greener and 2/Lt J. Walker accidentally wounded". The battalion were in trenches near Foncquevillers at the time. Apparently, his wound was received during grenade throwing practice when a detonator exploded in his hand. He left the 1/6th Battalion on September 24th but did not get sent to England until October 20th, 1915, presumably having spent time in a Field Hospital somewhere in France. He eventually lost the sight of his right eye. He was only passed fit for general service again in September 1916.

He was mentioned in the London Gazette again on June 3rd, 1916, as, "Greener, R. War. R., T.F 2nd Lt. (temp. Lt.)" having been awarded the Military Cross, a bravery award available to officers only. A brief article in the Coventry Evening Telegraph dated November 20th, 1916, stated that "Among the recipients of honours at the investiture by the King at Buckingham Palace on Saturday was the following- Captain Leysters Greener – Military Cross". He received the award from King George V for consolidating a mine crater whilst under enemy fire. This award was noted in the battalion war diary on June 10th, 1916. It is not clear why it took so long for him to receive the award since the action took place a year earlier. An entry on the Great War Forum relates that the award was for an action that took place on June 14th, 1915, in trenches at Ploegsteert, Ypres. The Germans blew a mine near the British front-line trenches. The next night 2nd Lt Greener took a party to the lip of the crater and kept Germans at bay whilst a trench was dug from British front lines to the crater. For this, he was awarded the MC which was the first for the Division.

The Army Lists record that he became a Temporary Captain on September 5th, 1916, and subsequently was transferred or attached to the 2nd/6th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment as Company Commander. According to the Great War Forum, he acted as Sniping Officer using his own weapon and sight. He was promoted to Captain on June 30th, 1917.

The 2/6th Battalion saw action during March 1917 when the Germans retreated from areas of the Somme after the great battles during 1916 and the British moved forward to occupy the old German

²⁸ <https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/sub-image/643448001/greener-leysters-llewellyn-uk-historical-documents-library-1900-1960>

trenches. However, the enemy knew exactly the position and condition of these newly occupied trenches and therefore could accurately target their artillery fire to maximum effect. They had also constructed superior trenches which they now occupied.

After fighting on this front, the 2/6th Battalion, which was in the 61st Division, was transferred to the Belgium sector around Ypres where they were involved in the hellish fighting conditions of the Third Battle of Ypres also better known as Passchendaele.

Another transfer saw the 61st Division sent back to France for the Battle of Cambrai. The 2/6th Battalion were posted to the area around La Vacquerie to reinforce units under attack and were involved in very hard fighting for several days.

Captain Leysters Llewellyn Greener MC was killed in action aged 24 on December 5th, 1917, at La Vacquerie, France. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Cambrai Memorial, Louveral, France, C24, Panel 3.

At the time of his death, the 2nd/6th Warwicks (182nd Brigade, 61st Division) were occupying part of the Hindenburg Line on Welsh Ridge, between Bapaume and Cambrai, at the end of the Battle of Cambrai.

The captured German trenches faced the wrong way, which meant that the Germans could attack down their old communication trenches to the old front trench. 'B' Company were engaged in heavy fighting on December 5th when Germans attempted to bomb their way down Emden Trench to the 2nd/6th Warwicks. The Battalion was also subjected to heavy shelling.

The Germans nearly gained the line but were repulsed; it was here that Captain L. L. Greener MC was killed at the end of Emden Trench.

There was a lack of ammunition and Mills grenades as these, together with water and rations, had to be fetched 26km from the Quartermasters base, behind the original 'jumping off' line.

After 12 hours of fighting the Germans were finally driven back.

From December 3rd to the 7th, the Battalion lost 4 officers killed and 11 wounded, with 29 killed, 101 wounded and 2 missing amongst the other ranks, including Private Larnach (see later in this document).

After his death, his colonel wrote, "He was killed by a shell after setting an example of extraordinary gallantry for day after day. His Company was holding that part of our Front which was most constantly attacked, and I consider it chiefly due to your son that the Germans did not break through. I should have done my utmost to get him the D.S.O., if he had lived." (this gallantry award could not be awarded posthumously).

The chaplain wrote, "I saw your son last Monday morning at Battalion Headquarters; he was most cheerful as he grappled with a very difficult situation; indeed, the work which he had to do in the line before his death was enormously important. Everyone is speaking of his gallantry."

His former Colonel wrote, "The feelings of affection and esteem, which I always entertained for him, were changed to those of admiration, when he distinguished himself by being the first Officer in the whole Division to be recommended for the Military Cross."

Leysters Llewellyn Greener was also commemorated in the 'Birmingham City Battalions' Book of Honour, edited by Sir William H Bowater, Hon. Colonel 14th Battalion RWR. He was entered under his grandfather's company (a firm of gunmakers) Roll of Honour – W.W. Greener of St Marys Square, Birmingham as Captain L.L Greener – killed (page 296). He was also commemorated on a memorial at St. Matthew's Church, Oakfield School, Rugby, Warwickshire, at the Chapel at Rugby School and on the war memorial in Barmouth, Gwynedd, where his grandfather W. W. Greener had a holiday home.

In addition to the Military Cross, he was also awarded British War Medal and Victory Medal. Although I've been unable to find record of its issue, he presumably was awarded the 1914-15 Star too as the war diary recorded him as being in present at the front in September 1915.

His estate was left to his father Charles Edward Greener (a gunmaker). His address was given as St Mary's Square, Birmingham according to his probate details, most likely his business address.

Much of the above information was found on the Great War Forum²⁹.

²⁹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/121602-captain-leysters-llewellyn-greener-mc/#comment-2551297>



Image of Captain Leysters Llewellyn Greener MC from IWM website³⁰

Sec. Lieut. (Temp. Lieut.) Leysters Llewellyn Greener, R. War. B., T.F.

Lieut. Greener is the son of Mr. Charles Greener, of Four Oaks, and is twenty-three years of age. He was educated at Rugby. Lieut. Greener joined the Territorials about eighteen months before the outbreak of war, receiving his commission in the 6th Warwicks in February, 1913. While in the trenches he met with an unfortunate accident, losing his right eye through the accidental explosion of a fuse.

Clipping from the Birmingham Daily Post, June 3rd, 1916, regarding award of Military Cross

Captain Leysters Llewellyn Greener, Royal Warwickshire Regiment (T.F.), son of Mr. Charles Greener, of Four Oaks, has been killed in action. Captain Greener, who was 24 years of age, joined the Territorials about eighteen months before the outbreak of the war, receiving his commission in the 5th Warwickshires in February, 1913. He went to the front in the early days of the war, and was awarded the Military Cross in June, 1916.

Obituary from the Birmingham Mail, December 12th 1917



War Memorial at Barmouth featuring the name of Captain Leysters Llewellyn Greener MC³¹



Image of panel from the Cambrai Memorial featuring the name of Captain Leysters Llewellyn Greener MC

³⁰ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/1451879>

³¹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/121602-captain-leysters-llewellyn-greener-mc/>

S/11565 Rifleman Arthur Coke Hodson
11th Battalion Rifle Brigade

Arthur Coke Hodson was born in Birmingham in April 1877 to Charles James and Mary Southwick Hodson. At the time of the 1881 census, he was 3 and living with (among others); his father (an architect) and older sister Mary as lodgers at 32 Bath Street, Birmingham. This building was a pub named the Racquet Court. Arthur's mother had died in 1881, and his father was listed as being a widower.

On the 1891 census he was recorded as being 15 years old. He was a scholar and living at 16 Trafalgar Road, Moseley, Birmingham, with his grandmother Mary Hodson and his older siblings, Helen and Charles.

Arthur Hodson was not definitively found on the 1901 census. The closest match was an Arthur C Hudson was found living as a boarder at living at 58 Baston Road, Croydon. He was 25, single and working as a stationary engine stoker and gave his birthplace as Birmingham. Typographical errors are common on census records so it may or may not have been Hodson, misheard or misspelt as Hudson.

In 1901, his father Charles and brother, also named Charles, were living at "Cottage" on Belwell Lane, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. The main occupants of the house were Arthur's sister, Mary, her husband and their children.

By 1911 he was 34 years old, single and a visitor at "Berwyn", Walsall Road, Four Oaks. His profession was house painter. He and his father Charles were staying with his sister Mary and her family at the same address.

Arthur Hodson enlisted with the Rifle Brigade in London on May 31st, 1915. He gave his age as 35 though it appears he was actually 38 years old. He was single and worked as a painter. His given address was Walsall Road, Four Oaks, likely the same address as his father who was listed as his next of kin, Charles Hodson of "Berwyn", Walsall Road, Four Oaks. Arthur was 5 feet 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches tall, weighed 140 pounds and his chest measured 36 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. He had defective teeth and a deformed toe on his left foot but was otherwise fit to serve as a soldier. His siblings were listed as; Charles E Hodson, 46, soldier in Africa; Herbert Hodson, 39, soldier now in Four oaks, Mary Annie Margaret King 47 of Four Oaks; Elizabeth Matthews 37 of London and Ellen Louise 35, of Clifton, Bath.

He was sent to the regimental barracks in Winchester on June 2nd, 1915, for training and was posted to France on December 1st, 1915.

Rifleman Arthur Coke Hodson died of wounds at 5.55pm on February 13th, 1916, at the 6th Red Cross Hospital at Etaples, France, aged 38, just over two months after arriving in France. Although he is mentioned by name in the battalion war diary as dying from his wounds, it is not clear when or how he sustained them. His service record records he was admitted to 10 Casualty Clearing Station on February 5th, 1916, with multiple shrapnel wounds. However, the battalion war diary doesn't mention any casualties on the 5th or preceding days. He was buried at the Etaples Military Cemetery, France, Plot VI. C. 15.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Charles James and Mary Southwick Hodson, of Berwyn House, Walsall Rd., Four Oaks, Birmingham. Native of Birmingham". Arthur was unmarried and left his estate to one of his sisters, Mary Annie Margaret King (a widow). He left his effects to his father who also received his war gratuity.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His medals, memorial plaque and scroll were sent to his father as were his personal possessions which included 2 discs, 1 belt, 1 knife, 1 pencil, 1 purse, 1 packet of photographs and letters, 1 ring, 1 pair of scissors, 1 pair gloves and other illegible items.



Gravestone of Rifleman Arthur Coke Hodson

52310 Rifleman Bert Harold Humphries

1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles

Bert Harold Humphries (sometimes spelled Humphris) was born in 1892 in Aston, Birmingham to George Frederick and Emma Humphries. In 1901 he was 8 years old and living with his family at 14 Clarendon Street, Aston Manor. His father had died in 1894 and his mother, Emma, had remarried to a man named William Bristol, as Bert and all of his older siblings were listed as being step daughter/son.

By 1911 he was 18 years old, single, and living with his brother at 7 Four Oaks Common Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield. His given profession was domestic gardener. Bert's mother was living at "Hillfield", Wentworth Road, Four Oaks, working as a cook in the household of Chrissie Halew Peart.

On November 12th, 1915, Bert married 21-year-old Beatrice Ada Allen at All Saints Church, Four Oaks. He was 23 years old and a Milkman. Both were listed as living in Four Oaks at the time of the marriage.

He initially enlisted in the 7th Royal Warwickshire Regiment (regimental number 268198) before later transferring to the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles (regimental number 52310). According to a brief obituary published in the Sutton Coldfield News on January 18th, 1919, Bert resided at 3 Four Oaks Common Road at the time he enlisted, and he had been employed by Mr J Burnett of Little Aston. This is likely to be John Burnett, who at the time of the 1911 census was a farmer at Home Farm, Little Aston.

The 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, as part of the 36th (Ulster) Division, took part in the Battle of Courtrai in mid-October 1918. According to the war diary, the battalion were moved to Worthington Farm near Dadizeele in support of the 15th Battalion. On October 14th, 1918, the 1st Battalion passed through the 15th, east of Moorselle and attacked Gulleghem (a village to the east of Ypres) without artillery support. They were held up by three belts of barbed wire and heavy machine-gun opposition about 500 yds west of Gulleghem. Later that day, they again attacked Gulleghem attempting an outflanking movement but only progressed 200 yards³². The days casualties were 3 officers wounded and from the other ranks; 24 killed, 92 wounded and 8 missing. They were later reinforced by 24 other ranks. The following day (October 15th) they again attacked Gulleghem but this time with artillery support and along with their sister battalions successfully liberated Gulleghem. The 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles successfully reached their objective by 10 am east of Gulleghem where the 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Rifles passed through their ranks and reached the Corps objective of Heule. The 1st Battalion were required to return to the front line later that day to plug a gap between the 2nd Battalion and the troops of the 9th Division. The cost to the battalion was 1 officer killed and 3 wounded plus 3 other ranks killed, 24 wounded and 1 missing.

Bert Humphries was killed in action on October 15th, 1918, aged 26, most likely as part of the above battle. He was buried at Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium, Plot II. B. 17. Many of the men killed in the actions detailed above were buried where they fell and moved to the British cemetery in Dadizeele in 1920.

The war memorial lists him as being a Lance Corporal however all other documentation regarding him records him as being a Private. He may have been an acting Lance Corporal when he was killed.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of George Frederick and Emma Humphries, of 7, Four Oaks Common Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham".

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915. His effects were left to his widow, Beatrice Humphries, who also received his pension and war gratuity. She later remarried in June 1920 to William E C Walkley in West Bromwich.

³² <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/238930-1st-battalion-royal-irish-rifles/#comment-2396129>



Gravestone of Bert Humphries³³

HUMPHRIES, BERT HAROLD. Reg.
No. 52310. Rank, Rifleman, 1st Royal
Irish Rifles ; killed in action, France, Octo-
ber 15, 1918.

Extract from the Irish World War 1 Casualty Roll of Honour

³³ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12520142/bert-harold-humphris>

Lieutenant John Barnabas Hutton **5th Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment**

John Barnabas Hutton was born on June 11th, 1891, in Walsall to Arthur William and Alice Mary Hutton. In 1901 he was 9 years old and living with family at "The Elms", Sutton Road, Walsall. John was educated at Northaw Preparatory School³⁴ (a small school near Potters Bar in Hertfordshire) and at Malvern College. On the 1911 census he was recorded as being 19 years old and a student at Budbrooke Barracks, the base of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. His family were living in "Wayside", Rosemary Hill Road, Streetly. He studied at Birmingham University where he gained his Bachelor of Science in Engineering in 1912. Whilst at university he was a member of the Officer Training Corps.

Upon completing his education John began employment as an assistant engineer at the John Russell and Company Limited, Alma Tube Works (Cyclops Works) Walsall where his father was the works manager³⁵.

He volunteered on the outbreak of war and was soon became an officer. He was mentioned (amongst others) in the London Gazette in August 1914 thus, "5th Battalion, The South Staffordshire Regiment; the undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants. Dated 26th August 1914: — John Barnabas Hutton (among others)". He was drafted to France on March 2nd, 1915, and was promoted to Lieutenant in May 1915.

On Wednesday October 13th, 1915, his battalion attacked the Hohenzollern Redoubt as part of the Battle of Loos. According to the Great War Forum, "The attack commenced at 2pm and almost immediately numerous casualties fell to the emplaced German machine guns. The battalion took their first objectives and attempted to make further advances by the use of grenades. Although small gains were made, the troops had to abandon these the following day. Only the western face of the redoubt was captured³⁶.

John Barnabas Hutton was killed in action on October 13th, 1915, during the above attack. He was 24 years old. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial at Dud Corner Cemetery, France, Panel 73 to 76. He is also commemorated on the war memorial at All Saints Parish Church, Streetly, Foley Road East, on a plaque at Pleck Road, Walsall, at the site of the former Cyclops Ironworks, on a plaque in St. Matthews Church, Walsall and on a plaque at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston. The Walsall Observer, which printed his photograph shortly after his death, ran the headline "Territorials lost in Gallant Charge". His was one of forty-two photographs of local men killed in the same action.

His next of kin given on his medal roll was his father, AW Hutton living in "Roxidie", Hartopp Road, Four Oaks. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

³⁴ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/155995-cyclops-works-memorial/>

³⁵ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/33222-birmingham-university-officer-training-corps/#comment-268476>

³⁶ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/313909-sb-36-d-for-frederick-fletcher/#findComment-3340261>

5th Bn. S. Staff. R.—Sec. Lieut. J. B. Hutton to be lieutenant (May 16). Pte. J. P. Thorne to be second

Clipping from Birmingham Daily Post June 24th, 1915

HUTTON, JOHN BARNABAS, Lieut., 1/5th Battn. South Staffordshire Regt. (T.F.), 3rd s. of Arthur William Hutton, of Wayside, Streetly, Birmingham, Manager for John Russell & Co., Ltd., Engineers, Walsall, by his wife, Alice Mary, dau. of John Hunt, of Thursfield; b. Walsall, 11 June, 1891; educ. Northaw Preparatory School; Malvern College, and Birmingham University (where he was in the O.T.C., and took his B.Sc. degree in 1912), and, on leaving college, was employed with John Russell & Co., Ltd., as Assistant Engineer, during which time he showed exceptional ability, both technically and in the handling of men: volunteered on the outbreak of war; was gazetted 2nd Lieut. 5th South Staffordshire Regt. 26 Aug. 1914, and promoted Lieut. May, 1915; went to France in March, 1915, and was killed in action during an attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt 13 Oct. following. His Colonel wrote: "He was one of the most promising officers in the battalion, and his name would shortly have been sent forward for promotion to Captain. If there was any responsible work which required careful attention, I could always depend upon his doing it thoroughly, and I had the greatest confidence in him. His quiet, modest demeanour was an additional claim on the regard which we all had for him, and I can assure you that all his surviving comrades feel his death as a keen personal loss. . . . Of all the subalterns I lost on 13 Oct. your son was the one I could spare least. Universally popular, full of promise, and with a quiet reserve of strength, he will long live in our memories." *Unm.*

Extract from De Ruigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1918



LIEUTENANT J. B. HUTTON,
(Local Territorials.)
Wayside, Streetly.

Image from aforementioned page entitled "Territorials lost in Gallant Charge" from the Walsall Observer, October 23rd 1915

The casualties so far notified amongst the officers of the 5th South Staffords are as follows:—

Captain L. Cozens (killed).
Captain W. Millner (killed).
Lieutenant J. B. Hutton (killed).
Major J. Lees (wounded).
Lieutenant N. M. Bates (wounded).
Lieutenant H. J. Wheway (wounded).
Lieutenant W. E. Wrigat (wounded).

Lieutenant J. B. Hutton, who was killed on the 13th inst., was the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Hutton, of "Wayside," Streetly, Sutton Coldfield. Aged twenty-four years, he obtained his commission in August of last year, and was promoted in May last.

From a column entitled "Losses of Staffordshire Regiments",
Birmingham Daily Post, October 22nd, 1915

An official notice has been received that Lieutenant J. Hutton, of Streetly, near Walsall, who belongs to the 1/5 South Staffordshire Regiment (T.F.), was killed in action on 13 October. Lieut. Hutton was a son of Mr. A. W. Hutton, managing director of the Alma Tube Works, Walsall, and the first report received was that he had been wounded.

Clipping from the Evening Dispatch, October 21st 1915

SUTTON OFFICER'S DEATH.

Lieutenant J. B. Hutton, 5th South Staffordshire Regiment, who was killed in action in France on October 13, was the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Hutton, of Wayside, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, and was 24 years old.

Extract from the Birmingham Daily Mail, October 21st, 1915



Lieutenant John Barnabas Hutton³⁷



Image of panel from the Loos Memorial featuring the name of Lieutenant John Barnabas Hutton



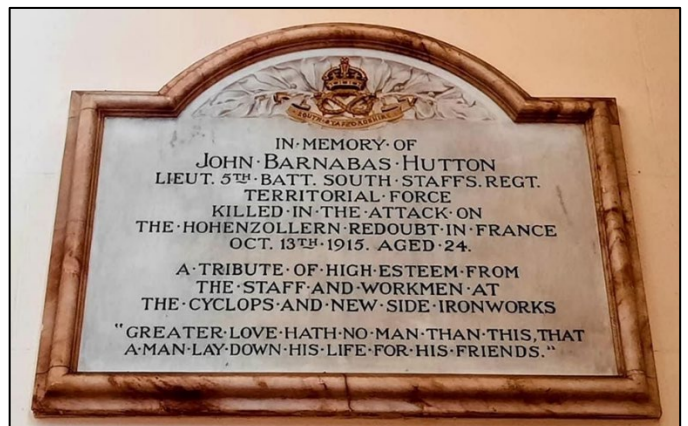
Memorial plaque on the site of the Cyclops Ironworks, Pleck Road Walsall, opposite Walsall Manor Hospital. In 2002, this plaque was replaced by that shown to the right as this earlier stone memorial had deteriorated over time³⁸



Memorial plaque on the site of the Cyclops Ironworks, Pleck Road Walsall, opposite Walsall Manor Hospital. In 2002, this plaque replaced the earlier stone memorial shown on the left³⁹



Image of memorial plaque at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston (image courtesy of Emily Brennan)



Memorial in St Matthews Church, Walsall

³⁷ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/2032076>

³⁸ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/155995-cyclops-works-memorial/>

³⁹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/155995-cyclops-works-memorial/>

203036 Private Arthur Johnson MM

1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Arthur Johnson was born in Sutton Coldfield on September 19th, 1891, to Arthur and Sarah Ann Johnson; he was a twin brother to Harold. They were both baptised on November 22nd, 1891, at St Peters Church, Little Aston. His fathers occupation was Labourer, and their address was Little Aston. In 1901 he was 9 years old and living with his family in a cottage on Clarence Road, Four Oaks.

By 1911 he was 19, single and still living in Clarence Road with his parents and two of his siblings. He was employed as a butcher.

He appears to have enlisted with the Warwickshire Yeomanry (regimental number 3434) but transferred to the 1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment (regimental number 203036).

Arthur was awarded the Military Medal (an award for bravery). According to the Great War Forum, his award was for action in August 1917. The war diary records that he was presented with his medal at St Jan Ter Bizen on September 12th, 1917, by the Corps Commander⁴⁰. This was later reported in the London Gazette dated November 2nd, 1917, thus, "His Majesty the KING has been graciously pleased to award the Military Medal for bravery in the Field to the undermentioned Non-Commissioned Officers and Men: - (amongst others) 203036 Pte. A. Johnson, R. War. R. (Warwick). That Gazette relates to August 1917 for Ypres/Flanders. It is not clear for what act of gallantry he was awarded the medal. His battalion saw much action in August 1917 including spells occupying waterlogged and extremely muddy front-line positions under heavy artillery fire. Then followed a successful local attack on Hillock Farm by B Company on the 19th and on the 22nd and 24th, larger scale and costly attacks on pillboxes in awful conditions near St. Julien, part of the The Battle of Langemarck⁴¹.

In October 1917, his battalion took part in The Battle of Broodseinde. The 1st/5th Warwicks (143rd Brigade, 48th Division, XVIII Corps) were to the north east of St Julien when their Brigade attacked on October 4th, 1917. The 143rd Brigade consisted of the 1/5th on the right, 1/6th in the centre, 1/7th on the left, with the 1/8th in support. At 6.00am the British barrage fell, the intense noise wiped out hearing, but the accuracy of fire prevented any reply. The 1/5th Warwicks went over the top and advanced into the mud. The Battalion was caught in a belt of snipers and machine-guns in shell holes and the battle broke up into a series of duels between small, isolated parties. Many platoon leaders and section commanders became casualties. They persevered and captured their objectives, Vale House and Winzig, but the left company took severe casualties from heavy fire from a machine-gun post. 150 Germans were captured, but the four Battalions lost 12 officers killed, 15 wounded and 1 missing, with 765 other ranks as casualties.

Private Arthur Johnson was killed in action in the above battle aged 26 on October 4th, 1917, at St Julien in Belgium. He was buried at Dochy Farm New British Cemetery, Belgium, Plot II. C. 8. Several men from his regiment who were killed on the same day are also buried in the same cemetery. His headstone inscription, "Thy Will Be Done", was chosen by his older sister, Miss N Johnson of 21 Tower Road, Four Oaks. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website (which mistakenly recorded his age at death as 31) details Arthur as the "Son of the late Arthur and Sarah Johnson, of Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham". It was in the same action that Captain Russell Sandon-Turner, also of the 1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, was killed.

In addition to the Military Medal, he was also awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

His war gratuities were paid to his brother Harold and older sister Nellie. He is also commemorated on a plaque at Four Oaks Methodist Church.

⁴⁰ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/315224-private-arthur-johnson-mm/#comment-3355709>

⁴¹ <https://archive.org/details/5thbnwarwickshirereg/page/55/mode/2up>

AWARDS OF THE MILITARY MEDAL.

LOCAL SOLDIERS HONOURED.

In a supplement to the "London Gazette," giving the names of non-commissioned officers and men who have been awarded the Military Medal or a bar to that distinction, are the following:—

A BAR TO THE MILITARY MEDAL.

200983 Sergt. F. Oretton, R.W.R. (Tyseley).
39688 Lce.-corpl. F. D. Rainbow, R.A.M.C. (Leamington Spa).

MILITARY MEDAL

840636 Gnr. F. Bosworth, R.F.A. (Bedworth).
242542 Pte. H. Dean, R.W.R. (Atherstone).
840657 Gnr. J. Fardon, R.F.A. (Bedworth).
840700 Bomdr. T. R. Harper, R.F.A. (Coventry).
01929 Sergt. (A. Sub-Cond.) A. E. Harris, A.O.C. (Coventry).
44786 Sergt. A. G. G. Harvey, R.G.A. (Coventry).
845256 Bomdr. S. Hulme, R.F.A. (Coventry).
203036 Pte. A. Johnson, R.W.R. (Warwick).
38211 Gnr. R. Oldknow, M.G. Corps (Coventry).
241790 Pte. C. F. Rice, Worc. R. (Atherstone).
R.6456 Lce.-corpl. S. Young, K.R. Rif. C. (Tamworth).

Clipping from the Coleshill Chronicle November 10th, 1917

FRANCE	
Awarded "The Military Medal."	
Surname	Johnson
Christian Name	A
Rank	Pte
Corps	1/5 th Bn. R. War. R. (I.F.)
Regimental Number	203036
Date of Gazette	2-11-17
Registered Paper	68/121/302-109435
68/Gen. No./2780 (M.S. 3).	GD7670 6000 4-16 11VV(P1432) W16652-H3504 10,000(0) 2/17 H17/011

Military Medal Index Card from The National Archives (reference WO 372/23/126034)



Gravestone of Private Arthur Johnson⁴²

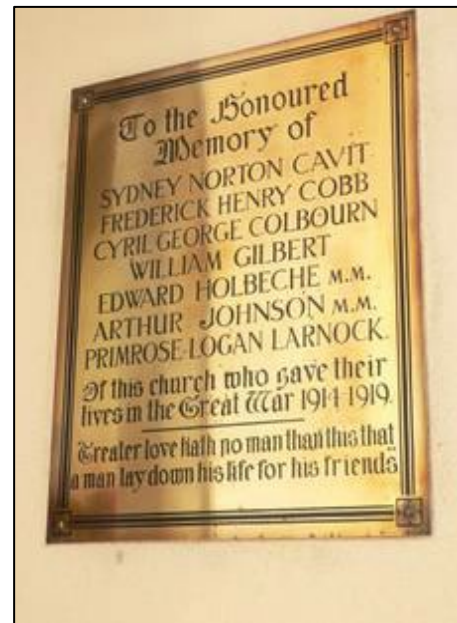


Image of memorial plaque at Four Oaks Methodist Church⁴³

⁴² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15991687/arthur-johnson>

⁴³ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/38628>

91995 Gunner William Lakin **230th Siege Battery Royal Garrison Artillery**

William Lakin was born in 1882 in Sutton Coldfield to Charles and Elizabeth Lakin. In 1891 he was 9 years old, a schoolboy and living with family at Long Lane (modern day Clarence Road), Hill Hook, Sutton Coldfield. By 1901 he was living with his family at a farm on Clarence Road. He was 18 years old and worked as a General Labourer.

William Lakin married Emily Lucas on November 26th, 1903, at Little Aston Church, Shenstone, Staffordshire. William was 21 years old, and Emily was 25.

In 1911 he was living with his wife and their 3 young children (one of their children had died) in a small house on Clarence Road, Four Oaks. He was 29 years old and a domestic gardener. William's father, by then a widow, lived next door to him along with two of William's siblings.

On December 10th, 1915, he enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery (probably under the Derby scheme) in Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire aged 33 years and 8 months. He was 5 feet 10 inches tall and had a chest measurement of 38 inches. His address was Clarence Road, and his given occupation was gardener. He was employed as a gardener by Mr Frank Edge of Rosemary Hill Road.

By that time, he had 5 children who had all been born in Sutton Coldfield; Thomas, born March 1st, 1907, Wilfred, born November 24th, 1908, Victor, born November 24th, 1910, Sidney, born March 22nd, 1913, and Winifred Mary, born April 18th, 1915.

After enlistment, he was placed in the army reserve and was later called up on June 5th, 1916, when he was posted to the Citadel in Plymouth. He then trained in Britain at various Depots until July 27th 1917, when he arrived in France. William Lakin was killed in action, aged 35, one month later on August 24th at Zillebeke near Ypres, Belgium. According to the war diary, he had been one of 22 gunners sent as reinforcements to 230 Siege Battery on August 17th, 1917. At 4am on August 24th, he was one of 3 men killed (another man was injured) when a shell hit their dugout. He was reported in The Sutton Coldfield News from September 15th, 1917, to "have been asleep in a dug out when a shell killed him instantaneously."

He was buried at Perth Cemetery (China Wall), Belgium, Plot II. C. 10/11⁴⁴. His war gratuity and effects were paid to his widow Emily, who also received a military pension. His possessions were sent to his widow which included; 2 discs, correspondence, photos, pipe, pocket book, wrist watch, purse and wallet. He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal, which were received by his widow in 1921.

The following was featured in the In Memorium section of The Sutton Coldfield News from August 23rd, 1919, "In loving memory of my dear husband, Gunner William Lakin, who fell in action on August 24th, 1917. Reunion our abiding hope."



Gravestone of Gunner William Lakin

⁴⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11152076/william-lakin>

202992 Private Primrose Logan Larnach **2nd/6th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment**

Primrose Logan Larnach was born in Birmingham on March 15th, 1898, to John Logan and Mary Ann Larnach. He was baptised on May 8th, 1898, at St Mary the Virgin Church, Aldridge, Staffordshire. His fathers occupation was Architect, and their address was Brick Yard Row, Aldridge. John Logan Larnach was listed in the Kelly's Directories for 1883, 1888, 1890 and 1892. He was a lithographic printer based at 11 Broad Street, Birmingham.

In 1901, Primrose was 3 years old and living in a Private Cottage on Mere Green Road, Four Oaks, with his parents and younger brother. His fathers occupation was given as Architect and Artist. By

1911 he was living with his mother and younger two siblings at Ivy Cottage, Belwell Lane, Four Oaks. He was 13 years old and at school. Primrose attended Bishop Vesey's Grammar School between 1909 and 1912. His father was not found on the 1911 census. Mary Larnach had been married for 14 years and had four children, one of which had died.

According to the Sutton Coldfield News dated March 13th, 1915, his father, an artist named John Logan Larnach, died on March 6th, 1915.

He enlisted in the 1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment and later transferred to the 2nd/6th Battalion of the same regiment.

Primrose Logan Larnach was killed in action in France on December 5th, 1917, aged 19. He has no known grave as is commemorated on Panel 3 of the Cambrai Memorial, Louveral, France.

At the time of his death, the 2nd/6th Warwicks (182nd Brigade, 61st Division) were occupying part of the Hindenburg Line on Welsh Ridge, between Bapaume and Cambrai, at the end of the Battle of Cambrai.

The captured German trenches faced the wrong way, which meant that the Germans could attack down their old communication trenches to the old front trench. 'B' Company were engaged in heavy fighting on December 5th when Germans attempted to bomb their way down Emden Trench to the 2nd/6th Warwicks. The Battalion was also subjected to heavy shelling.

The Germans nearly gained the line but were repulsed; it was here that Captain L. L. Greener MC was killed at the end of Emden Trench.

There was a lack of ammunition and Mills grenades as these, together with water and rations, had to be fetched 26km from the Quartermasters base, behind the original 'jumping off' line.

After 12 hours of fighting the Germans were finally driven back.

From December 2nd to the 7th, the Battalion lost 5 officers killed and 11 wounded, with 29 killed, 101 wounded and 2 missing amongst the other ranks, including Private Larnach.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

He is also commemorated on a plaque at Four Oaks Methodist Church.

The following was featured in the In Memorium section of The Sutton Coldfield News from December 7th, 1918, "In ever loving memory of Private P L Larnach who fell in action December 5th, 1917. Never forgotten by mother, brother and sister".

10523 Private George Lucas
1st/6th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

George Lucas was born in early 1888 in Aldridge, Staffordshire to William Henry and Rose Lucas. He was baptised on January 9th, 1888, at St Mary the Virgin Church, Aldridge, Staffordshire. William's occupation was Labourer. Their address is difficult to decipher but appears to read "Bourne Villas" a location presumably in Aldridge.

In 1891, he was 3 years old and living with family on Long Lane (now Clarence Road), Hill Hook. In 1901 and then aged 13, he was living with family in a Cottage on Clarence Road, Four Oaks. He was working as a Telegraph Messenger.

By 1911 he was 23 years old, single and working as a Domestic Gardener. He was living with his family at Laburnum Cottage, Clarence Road, Four Oaks. He married 24-year-old Kitty Bartram in June 1911 at Little Aston. Prior to their marriage, Kitty had been employed as a live-in domestic servant at a large house on Middleton Road, Streetly. Kitty had a daughter named Gertrude who was born in 1906.

According to the Sutton Coldfield News dated November 24th, 1917, George enlisted on January 11th, 1915. At that time, he lived at "Station Cottages", Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield, and was employed at Little Aston Golf Links as a gardener. He entered France on May 19th, 1915. He was in hospital in England during December 1916 with trench feet and hands. Trench foot was a major problem in the trenches of the Western Front. It was a condition which caused the foot to swell up and begin to decay. It was generally caused by exposure to damp and cold conditions and where blood circulation was restricted.

George Lucas returned to the front June 1917 and was killed in action on August 27th, 1917, near Ypres in Belgium. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium, Panel 23 to 28. He was also commemorated on a memorial plaque at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston. Official records state that he was 27 years old when he died but the information above indicates this was an error and he was actually aged 29. On August 26th, 1917, his battalion had relieved the 5th and 7th RWR who had been taking part in heavy fighting against enemy strongpoints around St Julien near Ypres. Conditions were appalling, heavy rain and shelling had turned the ground into a mass of flooded shell holes and mud. On the afternoon of August 27th, the 6th and 8th RWR renewed the attack. The attack on Winnipeg Farm by the 6th RWR was recorded in the battalion war diary thus, "Advance impossible due to state of ground and fire from MG's and snipers in concrete emplacements". The battalion suffered 3 officers killed, 3 wounded, 25 OR killed, 120 wounded and 14 missing.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. He left his effects to his widow Kitty who also received his war gratuity and a military pension.



Image of panel from the Tyne Cot Memorial featuring the name of Private George Lucas⁴⁷



Image of memorial plaque at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston (image courtesy of Emily Brennan)

⁴⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11950950/george-lucas#view-photo=64732160>

Lieutenant George Russell Courtenay Martin
1st/6th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

George Russell Courtenay Martin was born on July 25th, 1891, in Brentford, Middlesex, to George and Marion Martin. His father was a Saddlery and Harness Manufacturer.

In 1901 he was aged 9 and living with family at "Hartopp Grange", Hartopp Road, Four Oaks. He and his younger sister Kathleen Marion Martin were baptised on August 30th, 1906, at Christ Church, Folkestone, Kent. The baptism records state their abode to be Sutton Coldfield and his father's profession to be "Manufacturer". According to the Sutton Coldfield News dated July 15th, 1916, "He was educated at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, Lickey Hill School and Repton". In 1908 he was employed as a saddler at his father's firm.

By 1911 he was living with his family at Hartopp Court, Hartopp Road, Four Oaks. He was 19 years old and working with his father at a wholesale saddlery and leather goods manufacturers. Only limited details were provided on the 1911 census about his father, George Martin senior, whose name was crossed out, he may have been away on business. His next of kin (father) was listed at this address on this medal roll card.

He enlisted 2nd/6th Royal Warwickshire in September 1914 and became a Second Lieutenant soon afterwards. The London Gazette dated 24th November 1914 states, "6th Battalion, The Royal Warwickshire Regiment; The undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants. Dated 19th October 1914: - George Russell Courtney Martin (among others)".

He was later appointed as a temporary Lieutenant as recorded (among others) in the London Gazette dated July 8th, 1915, "6th Battalion, The Royal Warwickshire Regiment. The undermentioned Second Lieutenants to be temporary Lieutenants. Dated 9th July 1915:- George R. C. Martin". He was then attached to the 1st/6th Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

His medal card indicates that he landed in France on February 14th, 1916. The regimental war diary noted that Lt R.C Martin joined for duty on February 16th, 1916, at Fonquevillers, France.

The regimental diary recorded that he was killed on the opening day of the battle of the Somme as the regiment took heavy casualties attacking the Quadrilateral from Mailly. Despite this, he was reported as wounded and/or missing in a local newspaper two weeks later and was mistakenly reported to be a prisoner at Schwarmstedt, near Hanover in Germany in November 1917.

On July 1st, 1916, the opening day of the Battle of The Somme, the 1st/6th and 1st/8th Territorial Battalions of the Royal Warwicks (temporarily attached to the 11th Brigade, 4th Division), were to attack over the Redan Ridge between the villages of Serre and Beaumont Hamel. They faced the formidable German strongpoint known as the Quadrilateral in land now occupied by the Serre Road No. 2 Cemetery.

The 1st/8th Royal Warwicks led off into No Man's Land followed after a few minutes by the 1st/6th Royal Warwicks. Shells and machine guns decimated the ranks, but the Battalions still made good their objectives; the Quadrilateral and cutting beyond it.

The 31st Division on their left and the rest of the 4th Division on their right could not attain their objectives. By 11.00am there was only one officer, 2nd Lt. J G Cooper, who remained untouched in the vicinity of the Quadrilateral. There were a handful of Warwicks left, amongst heaps of dead and dying, to defend the position from counterattacks from the front and both flanks. In the evening the remaining troops were ordered to withdraw.

The 1/8th Royal Warwicks lost their CO, Lieutenant-Colonel E. A. Innes and suffered 588 casualties - 170 of which were never found. The 1/6th suffered 457 casualties, with 110 men never found.

Lieutenant George Russell Courtenay Martin was killed in action on July 1st, 1916, in France, aged 24. He was buried at Miraumont Communal Cemetery, France, Plot C. 5. It is believed he was initially buried by the Germans, but his body was moved to Miraumont Communal Cemetery after the war.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal which appear to have been sent to his father at Hartopp Court, Hartopp Road.

OFFICERS WOUNDED & MISSING.
 Brettall, Sec.-Lt. F. A., Ryl. Warwicks;
 Caddick, Major A. A., Royal Warwicks;
 Clarke, Second-Lieut. A. E., Royal War-
 wicks; Martin, Second-Lieut. G. R. C.,
 Royal Warwicks; Winkley, Second-Lieut.
 S. J., Royal Warwicks.

From the Birmingham Gazette July 14th, 1916

THE ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT.
 In glorious and immortal memory of
 Capt. A. B. Rabone, Lieut. J. E. B. Dixon,
 Sec. Lieut. J. Balkwill, Sec. Lieut. R. Price,
 Sec. Lieut. A. E. Clarke, Sec. Lieut. R. V. Rose,
 Sec. Lieut. H. L. Field, Sec. Lieut. W. P. Wheeler,
 Sec. Lieut. G. R. C. Martin, Sec. Lieut. S. J. Winkley,
 Sec. Lieut. C. T. Morris-Davies,
 Non-commissioned Officers, and Men, who fell in the assault
 on the Quadrilateral between Beaumont Hamel and Serre,
 July 1, 1916.

Clipping from the Birmingham Daily Post, July 2nd, 1917



Image of Lieutenant George Russell Courtenay Martin from IWM website⁴⁸



Gravestone of Lieutenant George Russell Courtenay Martin⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205385281>

⁴⁹ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/115228630/george-russell_courtney-martin#view-photo=86216104

17207 Private Edwin John Nicholls 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards

Edwin John Nicholls was born in Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield in 1892 to Charles and Sarah Nicholls. He was baptised on December 11th, 1892, at St. James Church, Hill, Mere Green. His fathers occupation was labourer, and their given address was Four Oaks Common.

In 1901 he was 8 years old and living with his family at 3 Blackberry Lane, Four Oaks. By 1911 he was still living in Blackberry Lane with his father (now a gardener) and one of his brothers. Edwin was 18 years old, single and a domestic gardener. At the time of the 1911 census, his mother Sarah was a patient at the Sutton Coldfield Cottage Hospital. She and Charles had been married for 41 years and had 9 children, 3 of which had died.

During research for Edwin, a hospital admission record was found for a Private SS Nicholls of 2 Company 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards being treated for "Inflammation of Connective Tissue, Right Leg" on February 26th, 1917, by the No 34 Casualty Clearing Station. The soldier had the same surname, regimental number, regiment and was the same age as Edwin at the time, the only differences being the initials and battalion. A search of "17207 Nicholls" in the military records section of Find My Past produced no other records of an SS Nicholls. Therefore, I believe it is reasonable to assume this record relates to Edwin and his initials were incorrectly recorded. Furthermore, that at some point between him being treated for his injury and his death, he transferred from the 1st to the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards. In addition to the above information, the record states that his religion was Church of England and that he'd been in service for 1 year and 4 months, 6 months of those having been with the field force.

The 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards took part in the Battle of Cambrai which began early in the morning of November 20th, 1917. Initial allied advances were remarkable⁵⁰. However, by November 22nd, a halt was called for rest and reorganisation, allowing the Germans to reinforce. From November 23rd to 28th, the fighting was concentrated almost entirely around Bourlon Wood and by November 29th, it was clear that the Germans were ready for a major counter attack. On November 30th, 1917, the Guards Division was called forward to help stem a German break through and on that same day, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions Coldstream Guards counter attacked at Gouzeaucourt, without artillery support, and in spite of intense machine gun fire, regained the lost positions.⁵¹

Edwin John Nicholls was killed in action on November 30th, 1917, in France aged 25, most likely during the above battle. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France, Panel 2.⁵²

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915. He left his effects to his father Charles who also received a military pension, and his war gratuity was paid to his brother Thomas. It appears that Charles Nicholls died aged 73 in April 1919. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him Edwin as the "Son of the late Charles and Sarah Nicholls".

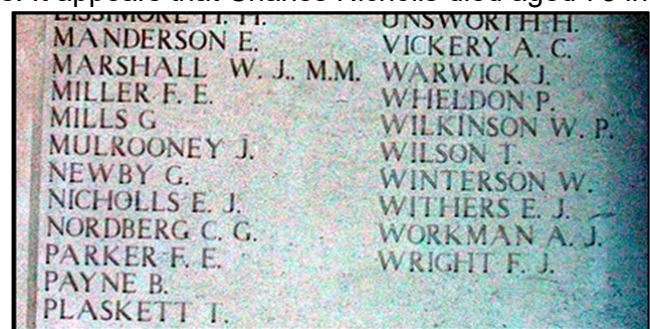


Image of panel from the Cambrai Memorial featuring the name of Private Edwin John Nicholls

⁵⁰ <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/79300/cambrai-memorial-louverval/>

⁵¹ <https://www.facebook.com/coldstreamguards/posts/cambrai-1917-1918-world-war-i-france-flanders-27th-november-1917-the-1st-battali/921451904550044/#:~:text=30th%20November%201917%20The%20Guards,fire%20regained%20the%20lost%20positions>

⁵² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56028853/edwin-john-nicholls>

Second Lieutenant Lawrence Jack Preedy 1st Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Lawrence Jack Preedy was born in Aston, Birmingham on June 5th, 1898, to Jonathon and Gertrude Preedy.

In 1901 he was aged 2 and living with his parents at 59 Boulton Road, Handsworth. His father was a jewellery maker. By 1911, he was 12 years old, at school and living at 3 Broughton Road, Handsworth, with his parents and younger brother. His father was a Jewellery Manufacturer. Following three years at a private preparatory school, Lawrence was educated at King Edwards Grammar School, New Street, Birmingham. He later played for Sutton Coldfield Cricket Club and was an organist at All Saints Church, Streetly. A later obituary indicates he was an 'Associate in Music' before joining the army.

He enlisted as a Private into the 2/28th (County of London) Battalion (Artist's Rifles) Officer Training Corps on his 18th birthday on June 5th, 1916. At the time he enlisted he resided at "Inglenook", Blackroot Road, Sutton Coldfield. He was later commissioned as a Second Lieutenant into the 4th Special Reserve of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and was later attached to their 1st Battalion. According to the London Gazette dated August 25th, 1917, he was appointed to the Special Reserve of Officers from his Officer Cadet Unit, to be a Second Lieutenant from August 1st, 1917, with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was posted to their 1st Battalion at Wolff Camp in Belgium on September 30th, 1917. He went on leave from February 20th, 1918, until March 3rd, 1918.

Lawrence Jack Preedy was killed in action during an attack on enemy positions near Arras in France on March 31st, 1918, aged 19. He has no known grave and is commemorated at the Arras Memorial, France, Bay 3. He is also commemorated on the Old Edwardians Roll of Service.

According to a letter from his Colonel, he was killed instantly in the act of leading his men to recover lost ground. According to a letter from his Lieutenant he was shot through the head by a sniper and killed instantly whilst trying to rescue a wounded soldier.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. His list of personal effects recorded his next of kin to be his father, Jonathon Preedy.

Much of the above information came from the King Edward School Roll of Honour⁵³ and from an article in the Sutton Coldfield News dated April 13th, 1918.

⁵³ <https://kes.org.uk/RollofHonour/biogs/preedy-lawrence-jack.html>

†PREEDY, L. J. (1912-13, 7)

Pte., 28 Lond. R. (Artists Rif.). 1917 Sec. Lt., 1 R. War. R.
Nov. 1917 France. Killed, nr. Feuchy, S. of R. Scarpe, Mar. 31,
1918, in attempting to bring in a wounded man.

Extract from the Old Edwardians Roll of Service, King Edwards School, Edgbaston, Birmingham⁵⁴

PREEDY.—On the 31st ult., killed in action, Second Lieutenant L. J. Preedy (Associate in Music), the beloved nephew and pupil of Arthur W. Wilcox, F.I.G.C.M., 13 Charleville Road, Handsworth.
PREEDY.—On the 31st ult., killed in action, Second Lieutenant L. J. Preedy, Royal Warwickshire, aged 19, eldest and dearly-beloved son of G. F. and J. Preedy, Sutton Coldfield.

From the Birmingham Daily Post, April 9th 1918

Sec.-Lieut. L. J. Preedy, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, reported killed in action on March 31, aged 19, was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Preedy, Sutton Coldfield.

From the Birmingham Mail dated April 9th 1918



WW1 Memorial Plaque for Lawrence Jack Preedy⁵⁵

⁵⁴ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/3584493>

⁵⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/124931049/lawrence-jack-preedy>

Second Lieutenant Herbert Joseph Reeve **1st Battalion Herefordshire Regiment**

Herbert Joseph Reeve was born on January 25th, 1895, in Kings Norton, the youngest son of William James and Mary Ann Elizabeth Reeve. He was baptised on May 17th, 1895, at All Saints Church, Kings Norton. His family lived at 16 Goldsmith Road, Kings Heath at the time.

In 1901 he was 7 years old and living with family at Four Oaks Villa, Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield. He was educated at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School where he was considered a fine athlete and excelled at swimming.

On December 6th, 1909, he registered with the Merchant Navy in Glasgow, aged 14. He was indentured as an apprentice until 1913 and bound to Dunlop & Sons. By 1911 he was living with his parents at "Grasmere", Clarence Road, Four Oaks. He was 16 years old, single and an Apprentice Sailor in the Merchant Sea Service. His father was a pianoforte tuner/teacher. After an accident, he went to work for his father in the musical profession.

He enlisted with the City Battalions of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment on September 2nd, 1914, aged 19 years. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on September 25th, 1914. He transferred to the 1st Battalion Herefordshire Regiment (regimental number 1995) on November 11th, 1914, to be with his brother Robert who was a farmer in Herefordshire. However, Robert William Reeve transferred to the RAF and became a Captain who was later awarded the D.F.C (Distinguished Flying Cross).

Lance Sergeant No.1995 Herbert Reeve embarked at Devonport on SS Euripedes on July 16th, 1915. He was amongst 25 officers and 750 men who landed at 'C' beach, Suvla Bay, Gallipoli (as part of 158 Brigade, 53rd Division) on August 9th, 1915. The battalion was mentioned in despatches in August 1915 (by General Sir Ian Hamilton in command of the Dardanelles Expedition) for their part in the landing: "The 1st/1st Herefordshire, which attacked with impetuosity and courage between Hetman Chair and Kaslar Chair about Azmak Dere on the extreme right of his line",

He was later commissioned as an officer as recorded in the London Gazette dated August 20th, 1915, "The Herefordshire Regiment. The undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants. Dated 21st August 1915: — Private Herbert Joseph Reeve (among others)".

Whilst he was in the Dardanelles, Herbert Reeve saw a good deal of active service and was spoken of as a promising young officer. His Captain referred to him in a letter, in which he said, "When I last saw him, it was just about the time I was wounded. He was doing his duty well and fearlessly, and the work on which he was engaged required plenty of pluck and intelligence under the most exhausting conditions. With two men he made his way back to the base with an important message, and returned safely with the answer, besides doing other work on his own initiative which meant considerable exposure to the enemy's fire".

The conditions at Suvla Bay were very poor, there was a great shortage of water and illness was rife. Second Lieutenant Reeve became ill on September 17th, 1915, and was sent to hospital. He was evacuated to H.M. Hospital Ship Salta which sailed for Malta. Herbert Joseph Reeve died of illness (dysentery) aged 20 on September 24th, 1915, on HM Hospital Ship Salta, near the Dardanelles. He was buried on September 25th, 1915, at Pieta Military Cemetery, Malta, plot B. XIV. 1.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of William James and M. A. E. Reeve, of "Grasmere," Clarence Rd., Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham. Born at King's Norton, Birmingham".

Herbert Reeve is also commemorated on both the Bishop Vesey's Grammar School Roll of Honour and the YMCA Roll of Honour.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

REEVE, HERBERT JOSEPH, 2nd Lieut., 1/1st Battn. The Herefordshire Regt. (T.F.), 2nd s. of William James Reeve, of Grasmere, Clarence Road, Four Oaks, Birmingham, Music Trader, by his wife, Mary Ann Elizabeth, dau. of William Glover; *b.* King's Norton, co. Worcester, 25 Jan. 1895; educ. Bishop Vesey Grammar School, Sutton Coldfield, and on leaving there went to sea, into the Arctic regions, twice to the Pacific, and other voyages. After the outbreak of war he joined the Herefordshire Regt. as a Private, with his elder brother, 2 Sept. 1914; quickly gained promotion, and was given a 2nd Lieutenancy 21 Aug. 1915; went to the Dardanelles 16 July, 1915, and died on H.M. Hospital Ship Salta 24 Sept. following, from nervous prostration after dysentery, contracted while on active service. Buried in Pieta Cemetery, Malta [Grave No. 1, Row 14B]. His Colonel, Captain and comrades all wrote, saying that he did his duty well and fearlessly, and that the work on which he was engaged required plenty of pluck and intelligence under the most exhausting conditions. He was a good all-round athlete, but excelled at swimming, being a prominent member of the Sutton Coldfield Club, and won many prizes, including the Coronation Medal; *unm.*

Extract from De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour



Second Lieutenant Herbert Joseph Reeve⁵⁶

Court, Reginald Walter Southwood,	2/Lt.
Jones, Frederick Thomas Aberay,	"
Marshall, Ambrose,	"
Reeve, Herbert Joseph,	"
Vaughan, Charles,	"
Watts, John Howe,	"
Wells, Norman Albert,	"

Excerpt from the Herefordshire Regiment Roll of Honour 1914-1919, published in 1932 by the Herefordshire Regiment Old Comrades' Association⁵⁷



Gravestone of Second Lieutenant Herbert Joseph Reeve⁵⁸

SECOND LIEUTENANT H. J. REEVE, OF FOUR OAKS.

News has been received at Four Oaks of the death of Second Lieutenant H. J. Reeve, aged 20, the son of Mr. W. J. Reeve, of Grasmere, Clarence Road, Four Oaks. Lieutenant Reeve joined the Hereford Regiment with his elder brother in the early days of the war as a private, but quickly gained promotion. He went out with his regiment to the Dardanelles about three months ago. He saw a deal of active service there, and was given his commission as second lieutenant. He unfortunately contracted dysentery, and died on September 24.

He received his education at the Sutton Grammar School. Of fine physique, standing over 6ft. in height, and being well proportioned, he was a good all-round athlete, but excelled at swimming, being a prominent member of the Sutton Coldfield club. He won many prizes, including the Coronation medal.

Clipping from the Birmingham Daily Post, October 11th 1915

⁵⁶ <https://www.royalsuttoncoldfieldgreatwarproject.co.uk/pro-patria-mori-bishop-veseys-grammar-school-great-war-memorial-2/>

⁵⁷ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/3689774>

⁵⁸ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15269902/herbert-joseph-reeve>

Lieutenant Frank Alexander Rippingille
East Yorkshire Regiment attached to 2nd Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)

Frank Alexander Rippingille was born on December 31st, 1893, in Sutton Coldfield to Frank and Florence Rippingille. His father, Frank Sidebotham Rippingille, was a managing director at Rippingille Albion Lamp Co. Ltd, Aston Brook Lamp Works, Aston Road North, Birmingham, makers of oil stoves and motor lamps.

In 1901 he was 7 years old and living with family at "Hillside", in Bishops Road, Sutton Coldfield. Frank joined Bishop Vesey's Grammar School in 1905 and was a good athlete. By 1911 he was 17, single and a schoolboy living with family at "The Cottage", Belwell Lane, Four Oaks. Frank left school in 1911 and spent a year at Birmingham University until September 19th, 1912, when he went to Sandhurst for officer training.

The London Gazette dated August 7th, 1914, records that "The undermentioned Gentlemen Cadets, from the Royal Military Academy and Royal Military College, to be Second Lieutenants: — Regular Forces, The East Yorkshire Regiment, Frank Alexander Rippingille" (among others). His (somewhat rapid) promotion to Lieutenant appeared in the London Gazette on December 9th, 1914. Sadly, by that time, it seems that he had lost his life.⁵⁹

2nd Lt. Rippingille was regular soldier in the East Yorks but was attached to the 2nd Battalion Duke of Wellington's Regiment (13th Brigade, 5th Division, and II Corps) of the original BEF that landed in Le Harve on August 16th, 1914. The Medal Index Card for 2nd Lt. Rippingille indicates that he embarked on September 8th, 1914, so he appears to have left Britain for France with the 1st Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment as their war diary records that they set sail from Southampton on SS Cawdor Castle on the same date. They arrived at St Nazaire, France on the evening of September 9th and disembarked the following day. The war diary of the 2nd Battalion Duke of Wellington's Regiment recorded him joining them with a draft of several officers on September 16th, 1914.

On November 9th, 1914, the Battalion was attached to the 9th Brigade in dugouts on the south side of the Menin Road about 1km East of Hooze. 'B' Company, with 2nd Lt. Rippingille, were sent to support the Lincolns holding a forward position around Heronthage Chateau, to the south of the Menin Road. By 2am on November 11th, 1914, the rest of the Battalion had moved forward north of the Menin Road, beyond the Veldhoek Chateau together with 40 men of the Royal Scots Fusiliers.

The Battalion War Diary recorded, "At about 7am the enemy commenced to shell the whole position, from the firing line to the Reserves and continued a most furious bombardment till about 8am when it abated — At this time a message came back from 'B' Company saying, "Am very hard pressed but will hang on as long as possible".

The German 2nd Guard Grenadiers Fusilier Battalion (Winckler's Composite Guard Division) led the assault and pushed the 2nd DWR back into the Veldhoek Woods and then to the chateau. However, the Germans were unsupported on their flanks and the 2nd DWR and other troops then counter-attacked and gained most of the lost ground back.

2nd Lt. Rippingille was reported as being shot in the knee and left behind as the Prussian Guard advanced; he was reported as missing to the Red Cross on November 11th, 1914. The war diary entry for the 11th of November recorded him as being missing. On November 19th, 1914, he was listed as "Missing" on the Casualty List issued by the War Office.⁶⁰

After receiving the telegram informing them that their son was missing, Frank's parents wrote many times to the War Office, the Battalion, the Red Cross, and the American Consul in Birmingham to help contact the Germans to find out if Frank had been captured. He was reported as missing in several publications around November 23rd to 27th 1914, below being a typical example.

⁵⁹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/315495-lieutenant-frank-alexander-rippingille/>

⁶⁰ [https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/search?docQuery=\(keywords:F+rippingille\)](https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/search?docQuery=(keywords:F+rippingille))

His father was still appealing for information on Frank in June and July of 1915. However, it was later determined that Lieutenant Frank Alexander Rippingille had been killed in action on November 11th, 1914, at Ypres, Belgium, aged 20. He has no known grave and is commemorated at the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium, Panel 21 and 31.

He is also commemorated on the Bishop Vesey's Grammar School Roll of Honour and on a cross at St. Oswald's Church, Lythe, North Yorkshire. Contemporary newspaper reports link the family to North Yorkshire; it appears they had a holiday home there.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Frank S Rippingille of Winchester House, Victoria Square, Birmingham".

He was awarded the 1914 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His effects were left to his father who had two addresses, Winchester House, Victoria Square, Birmingham⁶¹ and "Highgate", Walsall Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield.

His younger brother Second Lieutenant Eric Rippingille, also an Old Veseyan, served with the East Yorkshire Regiment and survived the war.

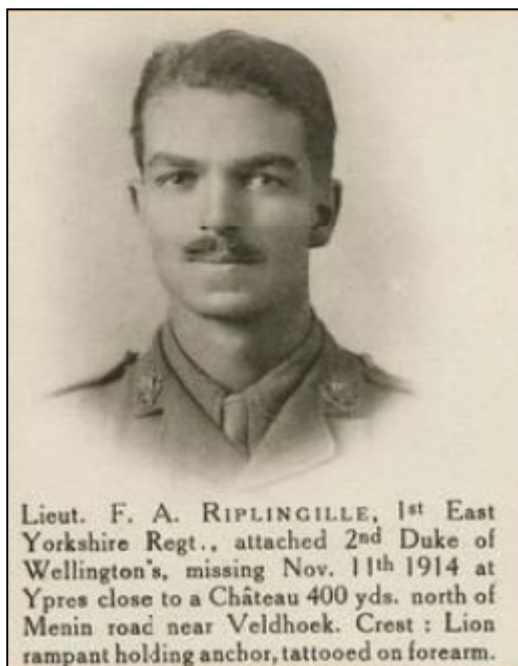
⁶¹ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/3750545>

MISSING
RIPPINGILLE, 2nd Lt F. A., East Yorks.

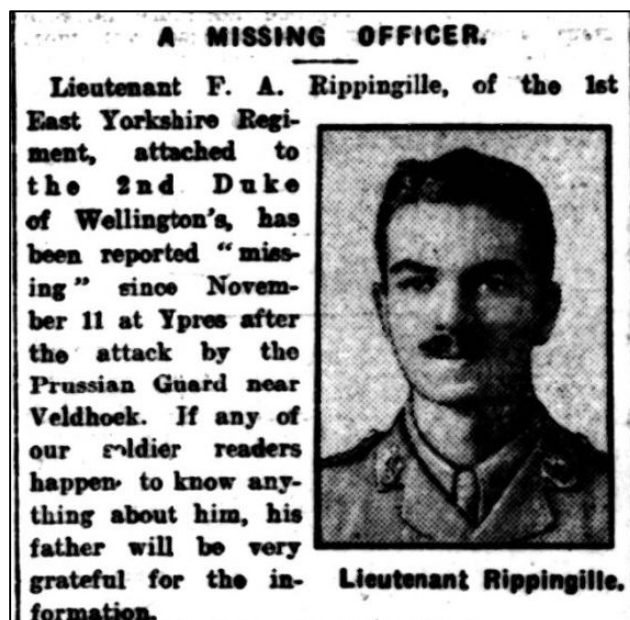
Clipping from the Daily Express dated November 23rd, 1914

FOUR OAKS.
 Local Lieutenant Missing.—Lieutenant F. A. Rippingille, of the East Yorkshire Regiment, attached to the Duke of Wellington's, has been reported missing since November 11th, after the attack by the Prussian Guards at Ypres. Information would be welcomed by his father, Mr. D. S. Rippingille, of Highgate, Four Oaks.

Cutting from the Lichfield Mercury, June 11th, 1915. The exact same wording was used in a piece featured in the Birmingham Daily Post on June 10th, 1915



Lieutenant Frank Alexander Rippingille. Image from IWM website⁶², presumably taken from a newspaper cutting appealing for information on his whereabouts



Clipping from Reynold's Newspaper July 18th, 1915



Memorial plaque at St Oswald's Church, Lythe, Scarborough



Image of panel from the Menin Gate Memorial featuring the name of Lieutenant Frank Alexander Rippingille⁶³

⁶² <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205387807>

⁶³ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12021838/frank-alexander-rippingille#view-photo=24655269>

B/1626 Serjeant Harold Ernest Sanby
9th Battalion Rifle Brigade

Harold Ernest Sanby was born in Newcastle Upon Tyne in August 1884 to Arthur Hill Sanby, a commercial traveller, and Ellen Sanby. In 1891 he was living with his grandparents and uncle at "Riversdale", Blackfield Lane, Broughton, Salford. He was 7 years old and at school. In 1901 he was aged 16 and living with his family at "Ivanhoe", St Agnes Road, Moseley, Birmingham. His occupation was Assistant at a Lace Warehouse. By 1911 he was a boarder at 23 Brundretts Road, Chorlton-cum-hardy, near Manchester. He was 27 years old, single and a working as a waterproof goods buyer. He was recorded as a boarder at the same address on the 1915 Electoral Register.

He enlisted in Manchester aged 29 on August 28th, 1914. His medical was conducted in Manchester on the same day. His given occupation was "Buyer" and his service record states that he had previously served in the Worcestershire Yeomanry Reserve. He was 5 feet 9 inches tall and weighed 144 pounds and his chest measurement was 37 inches. He had black hair, grey eyes, a fresh complexion, and a scar on his chin. His religion was Church of England.

He joined his regiment at Winchester on September 1st, 1914, as a Rifleman and was promoted to acting Corporal on April 6th, 1915. He embarked to the Western Front on May 20th, 1915, arriving the following day. He was promoted to Corporal on July 6th, 1915, and again to acting Serjeant on August 6th, 1915, three days before he was killed.

Serjeant Harold Ernest Sanby was killed in action on August 9th, 1915, in Belgium. He was around 31 years old. He was initially buried but his grave was subsequently lost, likely due to the area being subjected to repeated shelling. As a result, he is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres, Belgium, Panel 46 - 48 and 50.

An obituary in the Sutton Coldfield News dated August 21st, 1915, stated that, "He gave up a good position with a Manchester firm (T H Rigby) to enlist as a private with a number of his friends. He had repeatedly refused a commission. Whilst in the trenches, the senior sergeant was wounded and Sanby was placed in charge of the platoon. Whilst engaged in leading an attack in which the Germans used burning liquid, he was struck on the head by a piece of shell and expired soon after."

Probate records state his address as Brundretts Road, Chorlton-cum-hardy, near Manchester. Administration was granted to Thomas Wilson, a cigar manufacturer. It is unclear if Harold ever lived in Sutton Coldfield. The connection with Four Oaks appears to be that his parents lived at "Wellfield", Hartopp Road during the war before later moving to "The Gables", St. Gregory Road, Stratford-on-Avon.

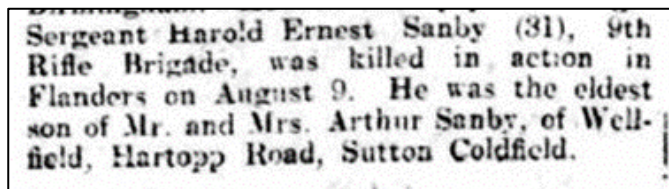
His possessions including a fountain pen, disc, photos, letters, metal watch and a coin were sent to Thomas Wilson in May 1916. His memorial plaque and scroll were sent to his father at the "The Gables", St. Gregory Road, Stratford-on-Avon in November 1919.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. These were received by his father in June 1920, January 1921 and July 1921 respectively.

His brother William Worthington Sanby was also killed in the war (see below entry).



Extract from the Manchester Evening News, August 13th 1915



Extract from the Walsall Observer, August 21st 1915

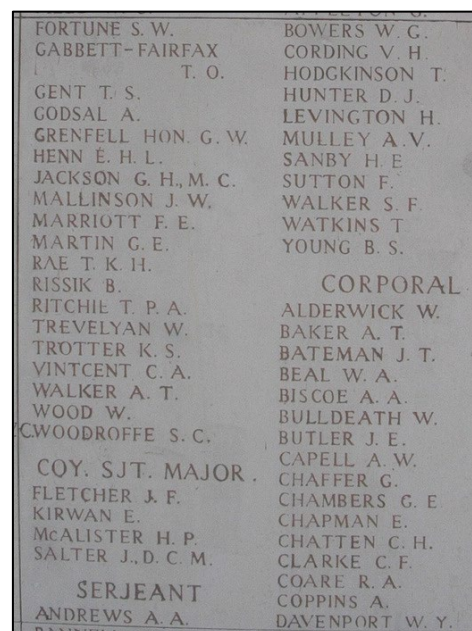


Image of panel from the Menin Gate Memorial featuring the name of Serjeant Harold Ernest Sanby⁶⁴

⁶⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12024855/harold-ernest-sanby>

Second Lieutenant William Worthington Sanby
20th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers (1st Tyneside Scottish)

William Worthington Sanby was born in Kings Norton on August 9th, 1895, the youngest of nine children born to Arthur Hill Sanby and Ellen Sanby. His father was a commercial traveller for a sewing cotton manufacturer. In 1901 he was 5 years old and living with his family at "Ivanhoe", St Agnes Road, Moseley, Birmingham.

He attended King Edward's School, New Street, Birmingham from 1909 until 1911⁶⁵, having previously been a pupil at Woodrough School in Moseley. By 1911 he was living with family at Hazelwell Hall in Stirchley, Birmingham. He was 15 years old and a schoolboy.

He joined the 14th (Service) Battalion (1st Birmingham) of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment on its formation in September 1914 and soon became a Lance Corporal (regimental number 764). He was granted a commission in the Northumberland Fusiliers as a Second Lieutenant as reported on May 11th, 1915, in the London Gazette, "20th Battalion (1st Tyneside Scottish) - William Worthington Sanby to be temporary Second Lieutenant. Dated 27th April, 1915". He went to France for active service in January 1916.

Second Lieutenant William Worthington Sanby was killed in action July 1st, 1916, on the first day of the Battle of The Somme, France. He was 20 years old. His battalion were attacking La Boisselle. A sap mine was exploded at 7.28.am and the 20th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers attacked down Mash Valley across 800 yards of no man's land. The attack was cut down by machine gun fire. A few isolated parties made the front line but were all killed. The total battalion losses for the day were 584 officers and men.

He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, France, Pier and Face 10 B 11 B and 12 B. He is also commemorated on the King Edwards Grammar School Roll of Honour⁶⁶.

Probate records state his address as "Wellfield", Hartopp Road, Sutton Coldfield. He left his effects to his father. His parents moved to "The Gables", Stratford-on-Avon apparently soon after his death.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

His brother Harold Ernest Sanby, also died in the war (see above entry) and two other brothers also served in the army.

⁶⁵ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/3891391>

⁶⁶ <https://kes.org.uk/RollofHonour/biogs/sanby-william-worthington.html>

Second Lieutenant William W. Sanby, Northumberland Fusiliers, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sanby, Neilfield, Hartopp Road, Four Oaks, is officially reported killed in action. Lieutenant Sanby, who was at years of age, was educated at King Edward's School, New Street, and joined the 1st City Battalion on its formation. In the spring of 1915 he was granted a commission in the Northumberland Fusiliers, and went abroad on active service in January last. One of Sec.-Lieutenant Sanby's brothers, Harold E. Sanby, Rifle Brigade, was killed in action in August last. Another brother, Private Arthur A. Sanby, Westminster Dragoons, is on active service, and a fourth brother, Leslie O. Sanby, also joined the 2nd City Battalion.



[Photo: Osborn.]

2ND LIEUT. W. W. SANBY.

Extract from the Birmingham Mail, July 10th 1916

†SANBY, W. W. (1909-II, g)
1914 Pte., 14 R. War. R. Apr. 1915 Sec. Lt., 20 North'd Fus.
Jan. 1916 France. Killed July 1, 1916.

Extract from Old Edwardians Roll of Service, King Edwards School, Birmingham⁶⁷

KILLED.

SEC. LIEUT. W. W. SANBY.

Sec. Lieut. William W. Sanby, Northumberland Fusiliers, who has been killed in action, was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sanby, Neilfield, Hartopp Road, Four Oaks. The deceased officer, who was twenty years of age, was educated at King Edward's School, New Street, and joined one of the Birmingham City Battalions on their formation. In the spring of 1915 he was granted a commission in the Northumberland Fusiliers, and went abroad in January last. Sec. Lieut. Sanby's eldest brother, Harold E. Sanby, Rifle Brigade, was killed in action in August last. Another brother, Pte. Arthur A. Sanby, Westminster Dragoons, is on active service, and a fourth brother, Leslie O. Sanby, also joined one of the Birmingham Battalions.

Extract from the Birmingham Daily Post, July 11th 1916

SECOND-LIEUTENANT WILLIAM W. SANBY.

Second-Lieutenant William W. Sanby, Northumberland Fusiliers, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Arthur Sanby, Four Oaks, Warwickshire (formerly of Manchester), and nephew of Mr Bernard J. Sanby, The Homestead, Sandiway, Cheshire, was 20 years of age. In the spring of 1915 he was granted a commission, and went on active service in January last. One brother, Harold E. Sanby, Rifle Brigade, was killed in action in August last; another brother, Private Arthur A. Sanby, Westminster Dragoons, is on active service; and a fourth brother, Leslie O. Sanby, is also in the army.

Extract from the Newcastle Journal, July 17th 1916

⁶⁷ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/3891391>

Captain Russell Sandon -Turner

1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Russell Sandon -Turner was born in Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield in 1882 to James and Alice Sandon Turner. He was baptised on June 18th, 1882, at St John's Church in Walmley. The family lived at "The Poplars", Wylde Green and his father was a Gun Manufacturer.

In 1891, he was living with family at "Claremont" Four Oaks. He was 8 years old and a scholar. He was educated at Newhall College and Bishop Vesey's Grammar School.

In 1901 he was living with siblings at "The Rookery", Hartopp Road. He was 18 years old and an art metal worker. The 1901 census recorded his father as a boarder at Congrave House, Danby, North Yorkshire. He was listed as a widower and the Managing director wire works. Alice Sandon-Turner, his mother died in 1899, and James Sandon-Turner remarried later in 1901.

Russell Sandon-Turner married Madeline Dagmar Tucker in 1907 in Aston. Sadly, she died aged 25 in August 1909. Russell Sandon-Turner was not found on the 1911 census but his father, step mother and two of his siblings were living at "Wood Bank", Hartopp Road.

Russell was a member of Sutton Coldfield Hockey and Swimming Clubs. Before enlisting he was employed as the Secretary of the Aston Chain & Hook Co. based on Bromford Lane, Erdington.

He originally enlisted on September 5th, 1914, in Birmingham as a Private (regimental number 14/314) in 14th (Service) Battalion (1st Birmingham) of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was in 12 Section, III Platoon, A Company. He was included in the list of applicants to the City Battalions in the Birmingham Daily Post on September 7th, 1914, listed as residing at Woodbank, Four Oaks.

He gained a commission to Second Lieutenant as recorded in the London Gazette on September 15th, 1915, "Russell Sandon Turner to be Second Lieutenant. Dated 8th September, 1915". He entered France on October 16th, 1915. He was promoted to temporary Lieutenant as reported in the London Gazette on July 18th, 1916, "Roy. Warwick Regt. The undermentioned 2nd Lts. to be temp. Lts. : — R. S. Turner. 14th Dec. 1915 (among others)". The war diary recorded that he sometimes undertook the role of acting Adjutant (the principal administrative staff officer) of the battalion in 1916 and that he was wounded on July 18th 1916, though it is not stated how.

Russell Sandon Turner and Cicely May Grove were married Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield on June 28th, 1917.

Later that year he was promoted to acting Captain as reported in the London Gazette on September 22nd, 1917, "Royal Warwickshire Regt.—2nd Lt. R. S. Turner to be - actg. Capt. whilst commanding A, Company. 28th June 1917". Prior to this, he had been acting as a machine gun officer and "he was wounded in the back whilst endeavouring to recover lost guns" (Sutton Coldfield News, October 13th, 1917).

The 1st/5th Warwicks (143rd Brigade, 48th Division, XVIII Corps) were to the north east of St Julien when their Brigade attacked on October 4th, 1917. The 143rd Brigade consisted of the 1/5th on the right, 1/6th in the centre, 1/7th on the left, with the 1/8th in support. At 6.00am the British barrage fell, the intense noise wiped out hearing, but the accuracy of fire prevented any reply. The 1/5th Warwicks went over the top and advanced into the mud. Captain Turner fell, almost at the starting point, leading 'C' Company into battle. The Battalion was caught in a belt of snipers and machine-guns in shell holes and the battle broke up into a series of duels between small, isolated parties. They persevered and captured Vale House and Winzig, but the left company took severe casualties from heavy fire from a machine-gun post. 150 Germans were captured, but the four Battalions lost 12 officers killed, 15 wounded and 1 missing, with 765 other ranks as casualties.

Captain Russell Sandon -Turner was killed in action during the above battle, aged 35, on October 4th, 1917, at St Julien, Belgium. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium, Panel 23 to 28. He is also commemorated on the family cenotaph at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery and on a plaque inside All Saints Church which reads, "In loving memory of

Russell Sandon Turner Capt. 5th Royal Warwickshire Regiment. Killed in action at St. Julian, Flanders Oct 4th, 1917, aged 35. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"⁶⁸. It was in the same action that Private Arthur Johnson MM, also of the 1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, was killed.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. He left his effects to his older brother Arthur James Turner. Russell's address was given as Copsewood, Tudor Hill, Sutton Coldfield on his medal card and his war gratuity was paid to his widow Cicely May Turner at the same address. His brother-in-law was Second Lieutenant Percival Allen Grove, also an Old Wesleyan, who also was killed in the war.



Image of the family cenotaph at Sutton Coldfield Cemetery featuring the name of Russell Sandon-Turner and his first wife Madeline⁶⁹

TURNER—GROVE.—On the 28th ult., at the Parish Church, Sutton Coldfield (by the Rev. T. Everard Henson, Chaplain to the Forces, assisted by the Rev. P. Barber, Vicar of All Saints', Four Oaks). Russell Sandon Turner, Captain Royal Warwickshire Regiment, third son of Major J. S. Turner, Wood Bank, Four Oaks, to Cicely May, younger daughter of Allen Grove, "The Cedars," Sutton Coldfield.

From the Birmingham Daily Post, July 2nd, 1917

Captain Russell Sandon Turner, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, whose friends have been officially notified that he was killed in action on October 4, originally joined a City Battalion, and received his commission about two years ago. He was promoted captain in July, 1916, and had previously, as machine-gun officer, been wounded. He was 35 years of age, and was educated at Sutton Coldfield Grammar School and Newhall College. He was secretary of the Aston Chain and Hook Company, and was a member of the Sutton Hockey and Swimming Clubs, and was also attached to the old Sutton Volunteers (South Staffords). He was a son of Major J. S. Turner, Wood Bank, Four Oaks.

Extract from the Birmingham Mail, October 13th 1917



Image of Captain Russell Sandon-Turner⁷⁰



Image of panel from the Tyne Cot Memorial featuring the name of Captain Russell Sandon-Turner⁷¹

⁶⁸ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/38634>

⁶⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/180512180/russell-sandon-turner#view-photo=157011925>

⁷⁰ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/4525127>

⁷¹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13828412/russell-sandon-turner#view-photo=64626728>

52469 Rifleman George Simpson
8th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own)

George Simpson was born in 1880 in Coleshill and was the eldest son of William and Mary Ann Simpson, both of Coleshill, Warwickshire. He was baptised on July 4th, 1880, in Coleshill. In 1881, he was 11 months old and living with his parents and older sister at Lower High Street in Coleshill. His father was a Farm Labourer and his mother a Dressmaker. He was still residing at Lower High Street in Coleshill in 1891. He was then 11 years old and a scholar and living his family. He was at the same address in 1901, by which time he was 20 years old and working as a domestic gardener. He was living with his parents and five younger siblings.

He married Beatrice Clough on October 27th, 1906, at All Saints Church, Hockley in Birmingham. He was 26, a gardener and living at 26 Goode Street, nearby. They had a daughter named Josephine on December 17th, 1907, who was born in Sutton Coldfield.

In 1911 he was 30 and living at Four Oaks Farm, Clarence Road. He was a domestic gardener and living with his wife Beatrice who was 27 years old, daughter Josephine aged 3 and his younger brother Thomas. The home had 4 rooms. They had another daughter named Beatrice on May 3rd, 1911, who was also born in Sutton Coldfield.

He enlisted into the Warwickshire Yeomanry at Sutton Coldfield on December 3rd, 1915, he was 35 years and 216 days old. His address was Four Oaks Farm, Clarence Road, Four Oaks, and his occupation was Gardener. He was 5 feet 7 inches tall and had a chest measurement of 36 ½ inches. He was in Britain from December 29th, 1915, until he arrived in France on October 17th, 1917. He had been in hospital with influenza from April 24th to 26th 1916.

At some point in 1917, he was transferred to the Lewis Gun Section (these were machine guns) of the 8th Battalion (Leeds Rifles) of the West Yorkshire Regiment and given the regimental number 52469. In January 1918 he was treated for Trench Foot.

Rifleman George Simpson died of wounds in a military hospital on May 26th, 1918, in France. He was officially recorded as being 36 years old and the below article states he was 39, but I believe he was actually 38. He was buried a Bagneux British Cemetery, Gezaincourt, Somme, France, Plot II. A. 28. The battalion war diary recorded that on the morning of May 24th 1918, B Company of the battalion (located near Souastre) had been subjected to an attack by a hostile raiding party which had been preceded by a short but heavy barrage on the trench in which they were working. The enemy captured one officer and fourteen other ranks and suffered one officer injured and fourteen other ranks wounded. It's probable that George Simpson was one of those men.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of William and Mary Ann Simpson, of Coleshill, Warwickshire; husband of Beatrice Simpson, of 5, Hill Village Rd., Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham."

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal which were received by his widow at 5 Hill Village Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, in December 1920 and March 1921 respectively. His widow also received a military pension and his war gratuity. His memorial plaque and scroll were delivered to her in February 1920 at 5, Hill Village Road.

COLESHILL AND THE WAR.
DEATH OF PTE. G. SIMPSON.

Private G. Simpson died on May 26th from wounds received on the previous day in France. Private Simpson was the eldest son of Mr. W. Simpson, of Coleshill. He was 39 years of age, and enlisted in December, 1915, in the Warwickshire Yeomanry, being transferred last year to the Lewis Gun Section of the West Yorkshire Regiment. He leaves a wife and two children. The following letter was received by Mrs. Simpson from the army chaplain:—

May 26th, 1918.

Dear Mrs. Simpson,—I regret to inform you that your husband, Private G. Simpson, has not got over his serious wounds, and after long hours of unconsciousness passed away quietly this morning. It seemed barely possible for him to recover yesterday, and now he has passed to rest you have this consciousness that he suffered very little pain, and was brought into this hospital, where he was surrounded by love and care to the last. His body will be laid to rest very reverently in the military cemetery of this village, Giziancourt. Your husband met his crisis in a brave spirit, and you will bear your cross in the same grace. You will not be separated from your loved one, for the spirit world is not far away, and that great Divine Humanity will be near to help you bear your burden.—Believe me, yours most sincerely,

FREDERICK W. TIZZARDS, C.F.

Extract from the Coleshill Chronicle, June 8th, 1918

179307 Sapper George Streather
78th Field Company Royal Engineers

George Streather was born in Brigstock, Thrapston, Northamptonshire in January 1887 to John George Streather and Ann Rebecca Streather. The family still lived in Brigstock in 1891, by which time George was 4 years old. His father was a Mason.

In 1901 George was 14 years old and working as a "Lad at a Brass Tube Factory". He was living with his family at 43 Langley Road, Bordesley, Birmingham. His father was now a Foreman Bricklayer.

By 1911 he was 24 years old and residing with his family at "Garden Cottage", Clarence Road, Four Oaks. His occupation was Bricklayer, as was his father's. The Streather family became well known house builders in the area. His parents had had 5 children, 2 of which had died.

George Streather married Lily Bishton in 1911. They had two sons, Neville born on September 1st, 1912, and Raymond Louis born April 21st, 1914.

George was listed as living at Clarence Road on the 1914 Electoral Roll. On the 1915 Electoral Roll his address was given as "Aetria", Clarence Road.

It appears from his medal index card that he enlisted as a Private in the Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (regimental number 49321) and later transferred to the 78th Field Company Royal Engineers who were part of the 17th (Northern) Division.

On March 21st, 1918, the 78th Field Company Royal Engineers were working on defences between Hermies and Havrincourt. This would have included improving trenches and wiring.⁷²

The relevant war diary listed that during the above action, 1 sapper was killed and 9 were wounded, George Streather was included in that list. Later that day he was transferred by the 53rd Field Ambulance and admitted to No 3 Casualty Clearing Station with "Gunshot wound of the upper extremities (arm)". Sapper George Streather died of his wounds aged 31 on March 28th, 1918. He was buried at Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No. 1, Somme, France, Plot V. D. 27.

From February 1916 to April 1918, medical units based at Doullens continued to bury in the French extension (No 1) of the communal cemetery. In March and April 1918, the German advance and the desperate fighting on this front threw a severe strain on the Canadian Stationary Hospital. The extension was filled, and a second extension begun on the opposite side of the communal cemetery.⁷³

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915. His widow Lily received a military pension and his war gratuity. She was recorded as living with her children and a boarder at "Aetria", Clarence Road on the 1921 Census and later at "Lyncroft", Grange Road, Four Oaks (from her pension records).

It appears that George Streather was a cousin of Frederick Streather, who also died in the war.

⁷² <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/315536-78th-field-company-royal-engineers-march-21st-1918/>

⁷³ <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/8101/doullens-communal-cemetery-extension-no-1/>

5188 Private Alfred John Toy
1st/6th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Alfred John Toy was born in 1891 in Sutton Coldfield to Alfred and Elizabeth Toy. His father was a Carter and Wheelwright.

In 1901 he was 9 years old and living with family in a cottage on the corner of Clarence Road and Blackberry Lane, Four Oaks.

By 1911 he was 19 years old, single and living with his brother and now widowed father at "Sunnyside", Walsall Road, Four Oaks. His given occupation was journeyman cabinet maker. Alfred Toy is listed in the Electoral Registers from 1910-1914 as living in a dwelling house at "Sunnyside", Four Oaks Common, but it is not clear if this is referring to Alfred John, his father Alfred, or both men. I suspect it's his father and that both father and son were residing at the address.

The 1915 Electoral Register recorded Alfred Toy as living in a dwelling house on Blackberry Lane, but again it is not clear if this is Alfred John, his father Alfred, or both father and son. As above, I suspect it's referring to his father and that both men were residing at the address.

The battalion war diary recorded that they took over trenches between Owillers and Thiepval on August 16th, 1916 and on the 17th, resisted a German counterattack, taking casualties on both days. On August 18th, the battalion took part in an attack on the Leipzig Redoubt that was described thus, "Held up for a short time on right by German strong point but soon succeeded in taking whole objectives capturing 6 officers and 245 other ranks including large number of NCOs".

According to the book *By God they can fight: A history of the 143rd Infantry Brigade*, the battalion had reached its objectives including a strongpoint from which the prisoners were captured. Three machine guns were also taken, and 500 yards of ground gained. Despite the attack being deemed successful, it cost the battalion 6 officers killed and 2 wounded with 23 other ranks killed with a further 90 wounded and 10 missing.

Private Alfred John Toy was killed in action aged 25 on August 18th, 1916, in France, in the above attack. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France, Pier and Face 9 A 9 B and 10 B. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Alfred Toy, of Blackberry Lane, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham".

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

His father received his war gratuity and a military pension.

Alfred's older sister Ethel, married William Dayman in 1915, he too died in the war whilst serving with the Worcestershire Regiment in April 1917.

Second Lieutenant Sidney Arnold Turner - Taylor **12th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment attached to 218th Company Machine Gun Corps**

Sidney Arnold Turner-Taylor was born 1891 in Sutton Coldfield and was the eldest son of Sidney Middleton and Mary Elizabeth Taylor. He was baptised on October 10th, 1891, in Sutton Coldfield and the family were living in Wylde Green at the time.

In 1901 he was 9 years old and living at Luttrell House, Hartopp Road, Four Oaks with his family. His father was in Glasgow, presumably on business. In 1911 he was living with his parents at the same address and was aged 19, single and was working as a Haberdasher, most likely with his father's company.

Some of the following information comes from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Debt of Honour and an obituary printed in the Sutton Coldfield News on April 28th, 1917.

He was educated at Lickey Hills School and Uppingham School. He became a director of his father's company, Messrs. Heaton and Taylor, Ltd., Wholesale Shoe Mercers based in Crooked Lane, Birmingham. He was a member of Sutton Coldfield Swimming Club and a member of Handsworth Rugby Club.

It appears he married Elizabeth Moore in the district of Aston in late 1913.

He joined the Royal Warwickshire Regiment at the outbreak of war and was commissioned into the Worcestershire Regiment in January 1915 as reported in The London Gazette dated January 8th, 1915, "The undermentioned to be temporary Second Lieutenants. Dated 7th January 1915: — Sidney Arnold Turner Taylor (among others)". His medal card indicates that he went overseas August 1915. He was wounded in the Autumn of 1915 at the Hohenzollern Redoubt during the Battle of Loos. He transferred to the Machine Gun Corps in Autumn 1916 and was sent back to the UK for training.

He was assigned to 218th Company Machine Gun Corps and arrived with them at Le Havre on March 17th, 1917. 218th MGC joined the 8th Division on March 23rd, 1917. By March 29th, they'd arrived at Moislains from which the German forces had made a strategic withdrawal earlier in the month. They'd moved away from the Somme area, evacuating Moislains before going further eastwards to the prepared defensive system known as the Hindenburg Line. As they withdrew, British forces cautiously advanced in their wake, but the going was difficult as the Germans had undertaken a "scorched earth" policy. Much of the village was badly damaged, the war diary records them moving into ruined houses.⁷⁴

On April 1st, 1917, they moved into the line. The war diary is difficult to read but it appears that some of their guns and men were used to support an attack on Gouzeaucourt Wood on April 4th. By nighttime, the wood was occupied by the Royal Berkshire and Lincolnshire Regiments. According to the battalion war diary, Second Lieutenant S A Taylor and Sgt. Jacques were wounded during the attack at Gouzeaucourt. It is believed that Sidney was hit by a bullet whilst trying to aid his wounded section sergeant.

Second Lieutenant Sidney Arnold Turner - Taylor died of his wounds on April 17th, 1917. He was 25 years old. His parents were able to visit him before he died. His death was recorded in the war diary on the entry for the 17th. He was buried at St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, France, Officers Plot B. 5. 30. He is also commemorated with a stained-glass window and plaque inside All Saints Church, Four Oaks⁷⁵.

Probate records indicate he left his effects to his wife, Mary Elizabeth Taylor, widow.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His father applied for his medals in October 1919, address White Hall, 109 Henley-In-Arden, Warwickshire. When his father died in 1940, he left his collection of antique pottery to Birmingham Art Gallery in honour of his son.

⁷⁴ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/battlefields/gazetteer-of-the-western-front/gazetteer-of-the-western-front-moislains/>

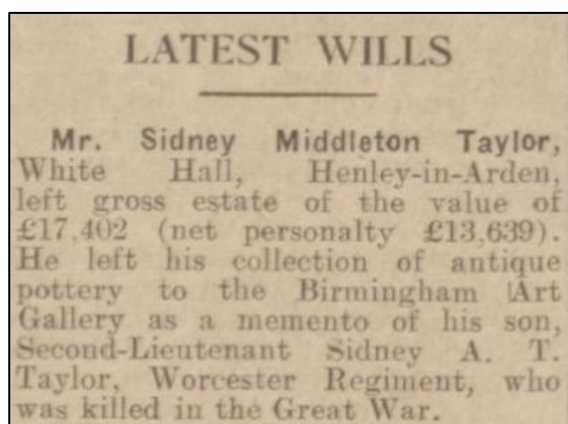
⁷⁵ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/38632>



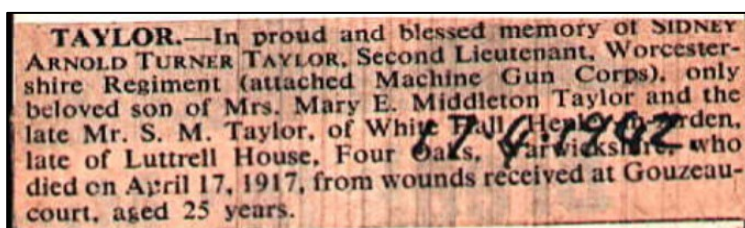
Gravestone of Second Lieutenant Sidney Arnold Turner-Taylor

TAYLOR, 2nd Lt. Sidney Arnold Turner. 12th Bn. Worcestershire Regt., attd. 218th Coy. Machine Gun Corps. Died, 17th April, 1917, of wounds received at Gouzeaucourt on 3rd April. Age 25. Elder son of Sidney Middleton Taylor and Mary Elizabeth Taylor, of Four Oaks, Warwickshire. Educated at Lickey Hills Schools and Uppingham. A director of Messrs. Heaton and Taylor, Ltd., of Birmingham. He joined the Royal Warwickshire Regt. at the outbreak of war and was gazetted to the Worcestershire Regt. in Jan., 1915. Previously wounded in the Autumn of that year at the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Officers, B. 5. 30.

Extract from the From the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Debt of Honour



Extract from the Birmingham Daily Post, October 23rd 1940



Newspaper obituary found on Ancestry.com. Title and date of publication unknown

16314 Private Robert William Waldron **11th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment attached to 15th Entrenching Battalion**

Robert William Waldron was born in 1894 in Sutton Coldfield to William and Florence Waldron. In 1901, he was aged 6 and living with family at Hollyfield Road, Sutton Coldfield. By 1911 he was living with family at Walton Cottage, Lichfield Road, Four Oaks. He was 16 years old, single and working as a carpenter in the building trade.

He was recorded in the register of the trade union for Amalgamated Society of Carpenters & Joiners in 1912 and 1915, the latter of which lists him as being single and having been in the trade for 6 years.

He joined the 11th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment but was later transferred to the 15th Entrenching Battalion.

Private Robert William Waldron died of wounds aged 23 on March 22nd, 1918. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, Pozieres, Departement de la Somme, Panel 18 and 19. The Pozieres Memorial relates to the period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme battlefields.

The memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom who have no known grave and who died on the Somme from March 21st to August 7th, 1918. It appears that there was a delay in establishing what had happened to Robert as he was included on the War Office Daily List No.5594 dated June 17th, 1918, as "previously reported wounded, now reported wounded and missing" and enquiries were made to the Joint War Organisation regarding his status in November 1918 .

In February 1918, as part of the British Army's reorganisation of its divisions, the number of battalions in an infantry brigade was reduced (from four to three) resulting in many (under-manned) infantry battalions being disbanded. Following the disbandment of these infantry battalions in February 1918, the available pool of men was used to bring the remaining battalions up to strength, and to allocate any remaining manpower surplus to twenty-five entrenching battalions. These entrenching battalions were to improve existing defences in anticipation of a coming German offensive but would secondarily provide a reserve force if needed⁷⁶.

The 15th Entrenching Battalion was created on February 21st/22nd 1918 at Wippenhoek and was formed from several disbanded infantry battalions mainly from the Lancashire area but also including the 11th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment⁷⁷. Effectively, Robert was transferred to and not attached to this new unit. By the March 7th, 1918, they were part of 3 Corps, 5th Army. The 15th Entrenching Battalion was heavily involved in defending against the German offensive on March 22nd, 1918, in the area near Roisel, while in support to 66th Division⁷⁸. It's likely that they were employed digging reserve trenches which soon became front line trenches, and the 15th Entrenching Battalion was almost destroyed during the German Spring Offensive of 1918.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as, the "Son of William and F. Waldron of Clarence Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham". He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915. He left his effects to his father who also received his war gratuity.

Robert and his older brother Frederick are included on the Absent Voters Lists from both 1918 and 1919. Frederick survived the war and was found living at Garden Cottage, Clarence Road on the 1921 Census.

⁷⁶ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/story/64493>

⁷⁷ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-infantry-regiments-of-1914-1918/british-entrenching-battalions-of-1918/>

⁷⁸ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/161987-no-15-entrenching-battalion-1918/>

3886	Waldron, Frederick	Garden Cottage, Clarence Road	DM/2/151514 Cpl., 606th M.T. Co., A.S.C.	3886
3887	Waldron, Robert William	Garden Cottage, Clarence Road	16314, R.W.R.	3887

Extract from Absent Voters List, Parish of Sutton Coldfield (Hill Ward) 1919

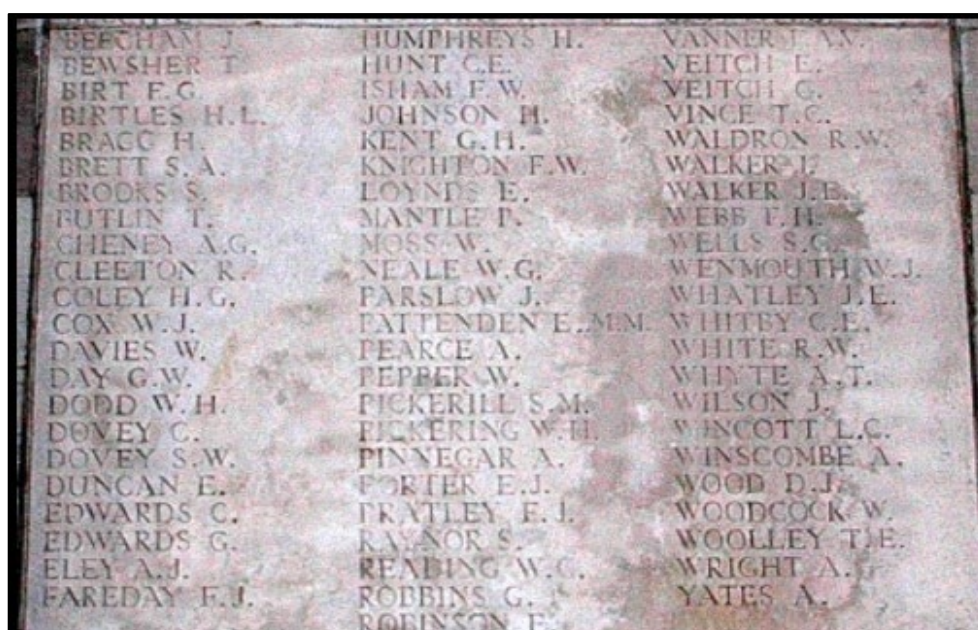


Image of panel from the Pozieres Memorial featuring the name of Private Robert William Waldron

Second Lieutenant Eric Arthur Walker

9th Battalion attached to the 6th Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry

Eric Arthur Walker was born at Temple Road, Dorridge on April 24th, 1895, to parents Thomas and Theresa Sarah Walker. He was the youngest of four children and was baptised at Knowle parish church on July 20th, 1895⁷⁹. His father was manager of T. Walker Ltd, a successful buckle and clothing fittings manufacturer of Brook Street, Birmingham. In 1901 he was 5 years old and living with his family in Temple Road, Dorridge, Solihull.

An obituary printed in the Sutton Coldfield News on December 2nd, 1916, stated that, "He moved to Sutton Coldfield in 1907 and resided at "Avoncroft", Four Oaks". Eric was a chorister at Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield. He was educated at Bishop Vesey Grammar School then briefly attended Warwick School before moving to Denstone College (near Uttoxeter) where he was a member of the Officers Training Corps. Whilst at Warwick School he was noted as being a fine singer⁸⁰. By 1911 he was living with his family at "Ardencote", Luttrell Road, Four Oaks. He was 15 years old, and a manufacturers assistant at a buckle and clasp works, presumably working at his father's business. It is believed that prior to this, he trained as a motor engineer at the Abingdon Works, Tyseley, before being employed by his father.

He was a fair horseman and joined the 1st Warwickshire Yeomanry 'B' Squadron as a Private (regimental number 1963) on March 1st, 1913, when he was 17 years and 11 months old. He was discharged in Norwich on February 25th, 1915, ahead of gaining a commission in 'B' Company of the 9th Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry as reported in the London Gazette, "The undermentioned to be temporary Second Lieutenant dated February 26th, 1915, Eric Arthur Walker (amongst others)". His medal index roll card indicates that he entered France on October 16th, 1915. He was subsequently attached to the 6th Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry.

Second Lieutenant Eric Arthur Walker was killed in action aged 20, whilst trying to locate an enemy sniper, on December 29th, 1915, in France. The 6th K.S.L.I. (60th Brigade, 20th Division) had taken part in the Battle of Loos (September 1915) and were now holding the trenches at la Boutillerie, south of Armentieres, 70 yards from the Germans. Second Lieutenant Walker, who was described by Lt.-Col. E A Wood as 'utterly without fear', was determined to locate a sniper. Despite warnings from his company commander, Captain Stanley Thomas, he was shot through the head. His comrades located the marksman in a tree, trained a machine-gun on it, and within seconds of opening fire the culprit was seen to fall from the branches. Private 12268 William Lewis, who had been Eric's servant, was sniped and wounded in the same section of trench on December 30th, 1915 and he died the next day.

Eric Arthur Walker was buried at Rue-Petillon Military Cemetery, Fleurbaix, Plot II. G. 23. Eric is also commemorated on war memorials at Dorridge and Hockley Heath, as well as at Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club. He was also commemorated on a stained-glass window at Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield⁸¹ and is mentioned on a family vault at Knowle Parish Church.

In addition, Eric Walker was commemorated in the 'Birmingham City Battalions' Book of Honour edited by Sir W H Bowater. He was listed as one of five who worked for Abingdon Ecco Ltd, Tyseley who died out of fifty-seven men who enlisted from the company.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His estate was left to his father.

His father was reported as living at "The Elms", Lapworth, in January 1916, but Eric was described on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Debt of Honour as the, "Son of Thomas and Theresa Walker, of 12, Church Rd., Edgbaston, Birmingham". However, it appears they moved again soon afterwards as Eric's medal roll card gave his father's address as 18 Augustus Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. His parents were recorded as living at 18 Augustus Road on the 1921 census.

⁷⁹ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/story/111375>

⁸⁰ <https://www.warwickschool.org/about-us/head-masters-blog/lest-we-forget>

⁸¹ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/43346>

LAPWORTH.

THE TOLL OF WAR.—The death has been announced in the neighbourhood of Second-Lieutenant Eric Arthur Walker, 9th (attached to the 6th) King's Shropshire Light Infantry. The deceased was the younger son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Walker, of The Elms, Lapworth, being only in his twenty-first year. His death is stated to have occurred on the 29th ult. in France, and will be keenly regretted. The sincere sympathy of the district will be extended to the bereaved family. From later particulars it appears that Lieutenant Walker met his death while trying to locate a German sniper. He was educated at Sutton Coldfield Grammar School and Denstone College, where he was a member of the Officers' Training Corps. On leaving school he joined the Warwickshire Yeomanry, and obtained a commission in February of last year in the 9th Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry. Three months ago he went to France, and was attached to the 6th Battalion. In a letter to the bereaved father his colonel wrote that he knew no fear, and was greatly respected by his brother officers as well as the men who served under him. The captain of his company also spoke of him as a most efficient and capable officer.

Extract from The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, January 7th, 1916

VESEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL OLD BOY KILLED

Second-Lieutenant Eric Arthur Walker, of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, who was killed in France on December 29 while trying to locate a German sniper, was the son of Mr. Thomas Walker, chairman and managing director of Thomas Walker (Limited), Brook Street, St. Paul's, Birmingham, and residing at Lapworth. He was born in 1895, and educated at Sutton Coldfield Grammar School and Denstone College, where he was a member of the Officers' Training Corps. On leaving school he joined the Warwickshire Yeomanry, and obtained a commission in February last in the 9th Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry. Three months ago he went to France, and was attached to the 6th Battalion. In a letter to his father his colonel writes that he knew no fear, and was loved by his brother officers as well as the men who served under him. The captain of his company also spoke of him as a most efficient and capable officer.

Extract from The Erdington News, January 8th, 1916

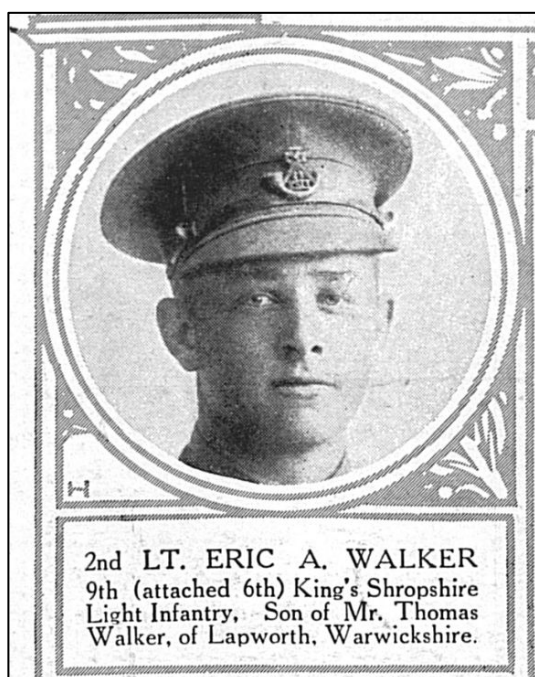


Image of Second Lieutenant Eric Arthur Walker taken from The Graphic, dated January 29th 1916



WARWICK SCHOOL

The names of the Old Warwickians
who gave their lives but are not recorded
on the original memorial plaques

First World War:

E. A. Walker
H. B. Davies
F. E. Smith
C. F. H. Kent
J. G. Faulks
R. D. D.-D. Brownson

Second World War:

R. G. Hart
L. J. Glover-Price
J. F. Harper
G. Faulkner
K. W. Hardiman
H. F. Clarke
J. Coles

Warwick School War Memorial⁸²

⁸² <https://www.warwickschool.org/about-us/head-masters-blog/lest-we-forget>

64387 Private Charles John Washbourne

13th Battalion Royal Fusiliers

Charles John Washbourne was born in Birmingham (possibly in Acocks Green) in 1883 to Albert and Ann Washbourne. His father was a prominent man who worked as a Draper and House Furnisher from his company 'The Jap Co.', of Aston Road, Birmingham, which had several shops across the midlands. He represented the Liberal Unionists in local district councils and was President of the Birmingham and District Retail Drapers Association.

The Washbourne family were not found on the 1891 census. However, the marriage of Charles's elder sister was reported on in the Warwickshire Herald on Thursday May 21st, 1891, in which the family address was given as "Glentworth", Gravelly Hill. The article described how the bride's train was carried by (among others) a "Master C Washbourne". Charles was later educated at King Edward VI Grammar School, Aston.

In 1901, he was 18 years old, single and living with his family at "Blythe House", Sutton Road, Erdington. He was employed as a Hardware Merchants Clerk.

According to a rate book dated 1906, Charles worked out of a property listed as a retail shop, house and workrooms at 11 Smallbrook Street in Birmingham.

By 1911, he was 28 years old and living with family at a very large house named "Hindecliffe" on Bracebridge Road, Four Oaks. He was single and a House Furniture Buyer.

It appears he initially enlisted with the 20th Battalion (3rd Public Schools) Royal Fusiliers with the regimental number 10936. He was later sent to 39 Infantry Brigade Depot in Etaples, France on September 26th, 1916, before being allotted to the 11th Battalion Royal Fusiliers as 64387 a day later. He subsequently joined the 13th Battalion Royal Fusiliers on October 16th, 1916, with the same regimental number. According to the Great War Forum, he was likely sent out to France with the 20th Battalion Royal Fusiliers to replace losses after their battle at High Wood on the Somme, but his draft was sent to another Royal Fusiliers battalion at the Base Depot. His regimental number is indicative of him attesting in late 1915⁸³.

The 13th Battalion Royal Fusiliers were part of 111th Brigade of the 37th Division and were on the Somme for October and November 1916, particularly at the Battles of the Ancre Heights (October 1st to November 11th) and the Battle of the Ancre (November 13th to 19th).

It would seem that it was during this battle that Private Charles John Washbourne was killed in action aged 33, on November 16th, 1916 in France, as the 13th Battalion Royal Fusiliers were involved in action at Beaumont Hamel at that time. He was initially thought to be missing and was recorded as such on the War Office Casualty List dated January 8th, 1917. However, he was later assumed to have died on November 16th, 1916.

He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, France, Pier and Face 8 C 9 A and 16 A. He is also commemorated on his family cenotaph at St. Michael's Churchyard, Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield, with the inscription, "He Willingly Served And Nobly Died". In addition, his name is also included on a memorial at King Edward VI Grammar School, Aston.⁸⁴

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. His estate was left to his father, and both his parents were living at "Hindecliffe" according to the 1921 census. However, by the time Charles' entry in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Debt of Honour was written, he was described as the "Son of Ann Washbourne, of "Hindecliffe", Four Oaks, Warwickshire, and the late Albert Washbourne".

⁸³ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/314981-second-lieutenant-oliver-vaughton-arnold-2nd-battalion-worcestershire-regiment/#findComment-3352829>

⁸⁴ <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/223898>



Image of the Washbourne family cenotaph, including Charles, at Boldmere St Michaels Church, Sutton Coldfield

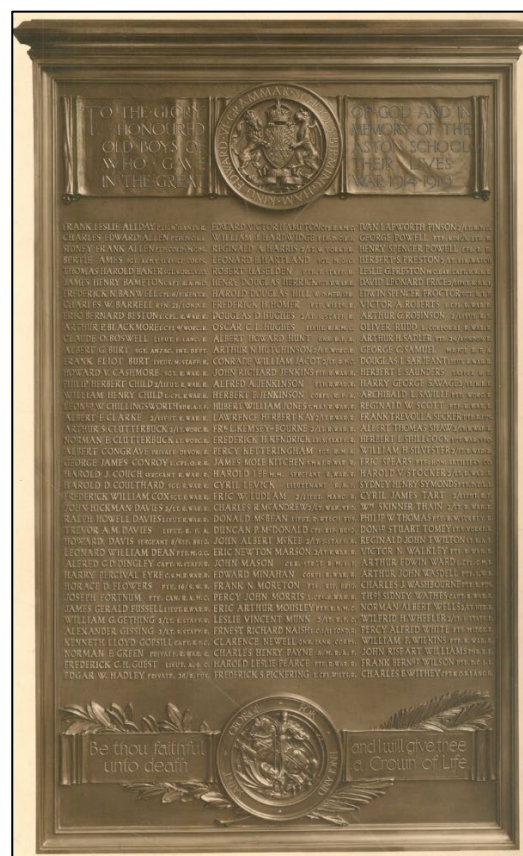


Image of war memorial at King Edward VI Grammar School, Aston⁸⁵, featuring the name of Charles John Washbourne



Private Charles John Washbourne. Image from IWM website⁸⁶, presumably taken from a newspaper cutting appealing for information on his whereabouts

⁸⁵ <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/223898>

⁸⁶ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205390384>

31978 Serjeant John Morris Williams 8th Battalion Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

John Morris Williams was born on July 29th, 1894, in Harrington, near Shifnal, Shropshire to Richard and Laura Williams. He was baptised on September 23rd, 1894, in the parish of Sutton Maddock, Shropshire. His father was a Labourer, and the family lived at "Field Houses", Ryton Road. Both Sutton Maddock and Ryton Road are around 5km south of Shifnal. He started at Ryton Church of England School, Shropshire on September 11th, 1899.

In 1901, he was aged 6 and living with his family in Hinnington, Shifnal, his father was a shepherd. By 1911, he was living with family at 19 Broadway, Shifnal, Shropshire. He was 16 years old, single and working as a farm labourer. There were five people living at the address, which was listed as having only two rooms.

He attested in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment on May 21st, 1915, at Atherstone/Nuneaton. He was 20 years and 10 months old. His given occupation was Baker, and his address was Park Side Cottage, Streetly Lane, Four Oaks. He was 5 feet 6 ½ inches tall and had a chest measurement of 36 inches. He was posted to his regiment at Warwick on May 27th, 1915, and was given the regimental number 11978. He joined the 3rd Battalion initially, then was posted to the 4th Battalion on July 15th, 1915. Both the 3rd and 4th Battalions were training units. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on November 6th, 1915, then to Corporal on January 22nd, 1916, and to Sergeant on April 17th, 1916.

He was transferred to the Machine Gun Corps on April 20th, 1916, and travelled to France on March 4th, 1917, from Folkestone to Boulogne. The following day he went to the base depot for the Corps at Camiers. For reasons unknown he reverted to Private at his own request on March 24th, 1917. On March 31st, 1917, he was posted to the 24th Company of the Machine Gun Corps. The 24th Company appears to have left base camp and gone into the field on April 2nd, 1917. He failed to comply with an order on June 8th, 1917, and his punishment was the loss of 6 days' pay. He was promoted again to Lance Corporal on August 13th, 1917. On January 5th, 1918, he was promoted to Corporal. He had leave in the UK from January 7th to and January 21st, 1918, and rejoined his company in the field on January 23rd, 1918. On February 9th, 1918, he had again reached the rank of Sergeant.

Serjeant John Morris Williams was killed in action aged 24 on May 27th, 1918, in France. He has no known grave and is commemorated at the Soissons Memorial, Soissons, Departement de l'Aisne, Picardie, France.⁸⁷

The 8th Battalion MGC was formed in early 1918 from 23, 24, 25 and 218 MG Companies and was part of IX Corps, 8th Division. It appears that the 8th Battalion Machine Gun Corps were at a place called Berry-au Bac, close to the River Aisne, and that they suffered heavily on the opening day of the Battle of the Aisne, particularly from the opening barrage. According to the Long Long Trail website, "The Battle of the Aisne, 1918 (27 May – 6 June 1918) involved, "A small and tired British force, sent to the Chemin des Dames in exchange for fresh French divisions that went north, was struck and virtually destroyed as part of another German offensive, Operation Blücher".

Serjeant John Morris Williams' memorial plaque and scroll were received by his parents at Park Side Cottage, Streetly Lane. He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal, which were sent to his parents at their later address in Roughley, Sutton Coldfield. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Richard and Laura Williams, of Roughley, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham". His effects were left to his father, and his mother received a military pension. One of John's brothers named William also served in the war and survived.

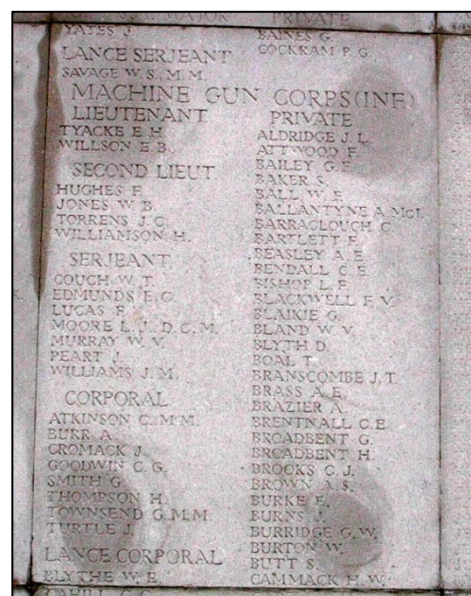


Image of panel from the Soissons Memorial featuring the name of Serjeant John Morris Williams

⁸⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56067999/john-morris-williams>

Second Lieutenant Sydney Joseph Winkley

1st/6th Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Sydney Joseph Winkley was born in 1896 in Handsworth, Staffordshire, to William and Winifred Winkley.

In 1901 he was 5 years old and living with his family at "Ashleigh", Grove Lane, Handsworth. His father was a precious stone dealer.

In 1911 he was 15 and a boarder at Warwick School. His family were living at a large house named "Darnel Hurst", Hartopp Road, Sutton Coldfield. Contemporary reports in the Leamington Spa Courier dated December 23rd, 1910, and December 22nd of the following year, mention Sydney as being a cast member in the Warwick School plays, Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors" and Henry VIII respectively. He was reported in The Birmingham Daily Post, dated July 27th, 1914, as having won prizes for swimming.

He enlisted on September 4th, 1914, with the 15th Battalion (2nd Birmingham) Royal Warwickshire Regiment and was given the regimental number 15/289. According to the London Gazette dated October 6th, 1915, he was promoted from the ranks as it states, "The undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants: Serjeant Sydney Joseph Winkley. Dated 3rd October, 1915 (among others)".

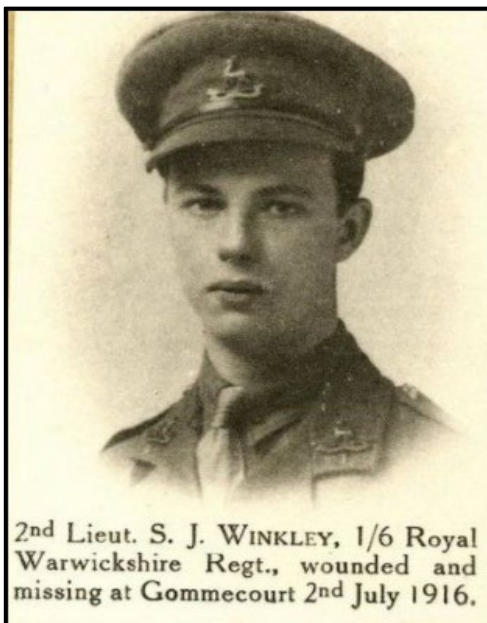
His medal index card indicates that he arrived in France on March 24th, 1916. He was admitted to the No.2 General Hospital in Le Havre with Influenza on March 31st, 1916. He was treated for a total of 10 days. His medical record states that he was aged 20, his religion was Church of England, that he'd been in the field for 1 week and in the army for 1 year and 4 months. The 1st/6th RWR Battalion war diary noted Second Lieutenant S.J Winkley joined for duty on May 8th, 1916, at Courcelle, France.

Second Lieutenant Sydney Joseph Winkley was killed in action on July 1st, 1916, on the opening day of the Battle of the Somme. He was 20 years old. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Pier and Face 9 A 9 B and 10 B, France.

The regimental diary recorded that he was killed on the opening day of the battle of the Somme as the regiment took heavy casualties attacking the Quadrilateral from Mailly. Despite this, he was reported as wounded and/or missing in a local newspaper two weeks later.

On July 1st, 1916, the 1st/6th and 1st/8th Territorial Battalions of the Royal Warwicks (temporarily attached to the 11th Brigade, 4th Division), were to attack over the Redan Ridge between the villages of Serre and Beaumont Hamel. They faced the formidable German strongpoint known as the Quadrilateral in land now occupied by the Serre Road No. 2 Cemetery. The 1st/8th Royal Warwicks led off into No Man's Land followed after a few minutes by the 1st/6th Royal Warwicks. Shells and machine guns decimated the ranks, but the Battalions still made good their objectives; the Quadrilateral and cutting beyond it. The 31st Division on their left and the rest of the 4th Division on their right could not attain their objectives. By 11.00 am there was only one officer, 2nd Lt. J G Cooper, who remained untouched in the vicinity of the Quadrilateral. There were a handful of Warwicks left, amongst heaps of dead and dying, to defend the position from counterattacks from the front and both flanks. In the evening the remaining troops were ordered to withdraw. The 1/8th Royal Warwicks lost their CO, Lieutenant-Colonel E. A. Innes and suffered 588 casualties - 170 of which were never found. The 1/6th suffered 457 casualties, with 110 men never found.

Sydney was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. He was a member of the YMCA and was commemorated on their Roll of Honour. His father died, aged 58, in 1918 and his widowed mother was recorded as living at Darnel Hurst, Hartopp Road with three of her children on the 1921 census.



Second Lieutenant Sydney Joseph Winkley. Image from IWM website⁸⁸, presumably taken from a newspaper cutting appealing for information on his whereabouts

OFFICERS WOUNDED & MISSING.
 Brettall, Sec.-Lt. F. A., Ryl. Warwicks;
 Caddick, Major A. A., Royal Warwicks;
 Clarke, Second-Lieut. A. E., Royal Warwicks;
 Martin, Second-Lieut. G. R. C., Royal Warwicks;
 Winkley, Second-Lieut. S. J., Royal Warwicks.

From The Birmingham Gazette July 14th, 1916

THE ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT.
 In glorious and immortal memory of
 Capt. A. B. Rabone, Lieut. J. E. B. Dixon,
 Sec. Lieut. J. Balkwill, Sec. Lieut. R. Price,
 Sec. Lieut. A. E. Clarke, Sec. Lieut. R. V. Rose,
 Sec. Lieut. H. L. Field, Sec. Lieut. W. P. Wheeler,
 Sec. Lieut. G. R. C. Martin, Sec. Lieut. S. J. Winkley,
 Sec. Lieut. C. T. Morris-Davies,
 Non-commissioned Officers, and Men, who fell in the assault
 on the Quadrilateral between Beaumont Hamel and Serre,
 July 1, 1916.

Clipping from the Birmingham Daily Post, July 2nd, 1917

TURNER J. 16930	WILLIAMS A. J.	ODWYER A. S.	QUARTERMAN E. R.
TURNER J. P.	WILLIAMS C.	ONSLOW A. D. M.	RICHARDS A. E.
TURNER R.	WILLIAMS H.	PEARSON S. O.	ROSE J. W.
TWEDDLE J.	WILLIAMS J.	POOLE J. R.	ROWCROFT G. A.
TWEEDY E.	WILLIAMS W. A.	PRICE R.	SEFTON J.
TWEEDY E.	WILLIAMSON J.	PURCELL A. J.	SHEPPARD A.
URWIN T. E.	WILLIS F.	RAINBOW A. E.	SHOUGH P. C.
VALLANCE T. E.	WILLIS J.	ROBERTS L. H.	SKELSEY E.
VASS H.	WILLISON J. T.	ROGERS E. H.	SMART H.
VENUS J. N.	WILLS J. G.	ROSE R. V.	SMITH J. B.
VENUS W.	WILLS T. R.	ROWLAND R. E. E.	SMITH L. G.
VINCENT R.	WILSON A. H.	SHUTTLEWORTH	SNEATH T.
VOASE C.	WILSON E.	E. R.	SUMMERS O. D. C. M.
WADE G. H.	WILSON F.	SIMPKIN R. J. H.	TAYLOR R. S.
WAINWRIGHT A.	WILSON G. 682	SMART E. D.	TAYLOR W. A.
WAITE C.	WILSON G. 1463	SMETHAM J. E.	TILSON J. E. D. C. M.
WAKE H.	WILSON G. W.	VIGOR W. P.	TRANER A.
WAKE J.	WILSON I. G.	VOKINS K. E.	VAUGHAN E. G.
WAKE T. W.	WILSON J. J.	WARD N. J.	WALL G. H.
	WILSON R. 1672	WHEELER W. P.	WALTERS W.
WALBURN J. H.	WILSON R. 5063	WILLIAMSON C. G.	WEATHERHEAD J.
WALDEN D.	WILSON R. W.	WINKLEY S. J.	WERR S. E.
WALDEN G.	WILSON T. 763		WHITE C. R.
WALKER E.	WILSON T. 29013	COY S. J. MAJOR	WILLIAMS A.
WALKER F.	WILSON W.	ANTLEY J.	WILLIAMS C. T.
WALKER J.	WILTON W. R.	ASTON F. W.	WOOD E. E.
WALKER R.	WIMMS H.	BRYANT W. J.	WOOD F. E.
WALKER W. 750	WINN J. R.	CANTON I.	WOODWARD T.
WALKER W. 984	WINTER J. 785	DAVE G. H. M. M.	WORRALL W. H.
WALKINGTON F.	WINTER J. 791	IVENS M. E.	YATES T. M. M.
WALL J.	WINTER J. 24241	MAIR R.	
WALLACE C.	WINTER T.	NEALE T.	LCE SERJEANT
WALLACE D.	WISE T.	RUFFLES G. H.	BENNETT A. H.
WALLACE J. 772	WODEHOUSE F. G.	STEPHENSON	BERRY E. B.
WALLACE J. 19442	WONNELL B.	WEA. M. C.	COX F. W.
			CROSS A.

Image of panel from the Thiepval Memorial featuring the name of Second Lieutenant Sydney Joseph Winkley⁸⁹

⁸⁸ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/4830352>

⁸⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12378698/sydney-joseph-winkley#view-photo=269275059>

Notes on Service Records

The primary source of information when researching a World War One soldier is their service record. It comprised several different forms used to record information about the soldier's military career. Every soldier had a service record, although only around 30% now exist. The majority were destroyed by fire at the Army Records Office on Arnside Street in Walworth, London, resulting from an air raid in 1940. The records were later thinned out before going into storage in the 1930s, by disposal of many documents. The quantity and types of forms in a soldier's service record vary greatly from soldier to soldier, as does the quality and legibility of the information they contain, many having been damaged in the fire.⁹⁰ Surviving records have been digitised and are available to view on Ancestry and Find My Past.

Generally speaking, records of officers' service survive but these records are not online. They are held in original format at the National Archives and require an in-person visit to be viewed, and as such, have not been studied as part of this research.

Campaign Medals

At the end of the First World War, campaign medals were issued to eligible military service personnel for active wartime service. There were five British campaign medals: the 1914 Star, the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal, the Victory Medal, and the Territorial Force War Medal. An individual generally received a maximum of three.

The 1914 & 1914-15 Star

Instituted in December 1918, the 1914-15 Star is a First World War campaign medal that was granted to military personnel, and some civilians, who served in a theatre of war before December 31st, 1915, and did not qualify for the 1914 Star.

The near identical 1914 Star was presented to those who served in Belgium and France between 5th August and midnight of 22nd November 1914.



Individuals could only receive one of these two medals. If a man did not qualify for a 1914 or 1914-15 Star, he did not see service in a theatre of war before 1916.



The British War Medal

Instituted in July 1919, the British War Medal initially honoured service abroad between August 5th 1914 and November 11th 1918. It did not matter whether they entered a theatre of war or not. Eligibility was later extended to include service in Russia and mine clearing at sea until 1920. Unlike the 1914 Star and the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal could be awarded to all military personnel who had served during any stage of the war, or who had died on active service.

The Victory Medal

Instituted in September 1919, the Victory Medal was issued for service in an active theatre of military operations between August 5th 1914 and November 11th 1918. The Victory Medals continued to be awarded after the Armistice for the British forces who saw action in North Russia (up to October 12th, 1919) and Trans-Caspia (up to April 17th, 1919). The Victory Medal was issued to all those who received the 1914 Star or the 1914-15 Star, and to most of those who were awarded the British War Medal. It was never awarded on its own.



In terms of interpreting a soldier's military career in the absence of his service record, if a soldier was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal but not a 1914 or 1914-15 Star, he did not see service in a theatre of war before 1916. However, they may have served overseas prior to 1916, but not in countries deemed theatres of war e.g. India, Gibraltar, Malta and Hong Kong, though this does not appear to have occurred with any of the All Saints men.

⁹⁰ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/soldiers/how-to-research-a-soldier/how-to-find-a-soldiers-service-record/>

Medals for Bravery/Gallantry

I've only included below the bravery awards received by the men listed on the Four Oaks War Memorial.



The Military Medal

The Military Medal was first instituted in March 1916 as an award for bravery in the field for Warrant Officers, NCO's, and lower ranks.

The Military Cross

The Military Cross was first instituted in December 1914 as an award for gallantry or meritorious service for officers with the rank of Captain and below, and for Warrant Officers. All awards of the MC were announced in the London Gazette, usually with a citation.



Social Commentary

There are a total of thirty-six men listed on the memorial, including fourteen officers and twenty-two other ranks. Whilst it should be noted that the memorial doesn't include all the casualties from the local area, during the writing of this document, it struck me that studying the men and their backgrounds provided an insight into the social demography of Four Oaks during the early part of the 20th century.

According to Roger Lea's History Spot (Article 9)⁹¹, "In 1800 Four Oaks was a tiny settlement of only twenty houses, scattered around a village green, and many of those were humble cottages where poor farm labourers lived" and that "It was not until the 1890s that the first big houses for wealthy commuters were built in Four Oaks, at the same time as the Four Oaks Park Estate began to be developed". When the railway line to Lichfield was completed in 1884, the newly built station at Four Oaks Park served to make the area even more attractive to the aforementioned wealthy commuters who could travel to their places of work in Birmingham.

In Roger Lea's History Spot (Article 449)⁹², he wrote that when the racecourse at Four Oaks Park closed in 1889, Four Oaks Hall and its park were purchased by Lord Clanricarde, whose agents soon set out Hartopp Road, Luttrell Road, Ladywood Road, Wentworth Road and Bracebridge Road with a view to selling the land off for building. Four Oaks Hall was demolished in 1898.

Sites adjoining Sutton Park were some of the first to be developed, some as large as eight acres and by 1901 fifteen prestigious houses had been built along Hartopp Road backing on to the park, many of them for successful Birmingham businessmen and newly rich manufacturers who relocated to the area from Birmingham and Walsall, moving up to the gentry class. They resided in desirable large properties with several live-in servants.

Census records show that most of the local men who became officers were the sons of these manufacturers and businessmen, many of whom were working for their fathers' companies. These young men had generally attended grammar and private schools.

This is in contrast to the majority of the men of other ranks who mainly lived in much smaller properties. In the early 20th century, Four Oaks was still a predominantly rural area and many of the men resided in houses and cottages scattered along Clarence Road, Four Oaks Common Road and

⁹¹ <https://sclhrg.org.uk/history-spot/101-articles-1-40/1869-four-oaks-9.html?highlight=WyJmb3Vyliwib2FrcyJd>

⁹² <https://sclhrg.org.uk/history-spot/123-articles-441-480/2157-four-oaks-park-1901-449.html?highlight=WyJmb3Vyliwib2FrcyJd>

Blackberry Lane. They were typically employed in blue collar jobs, the most common of which was domestic gardener, presumably working in the grounds of the recently constructed large houses in the neighbourhood.

Statistics

In order to help understand the human cost and scale of the effect of the war on Four Oaks, it is helpful to look at some figures and statistics.

The 1916 edition of Kelly's Directory of Warwickshire⁹³ stated that the population of Hill in 1911 was 3,135. Four Oaks used to be a tiny hamlet in the Hill and Little Sutton Quarter. Today, Hill and Little Sutton come under Four Oaks, as does Mere Green. The 1918 Electoral Register for the Parish of Sutton Coldfield (Hill Ward)⁹⁴, recorded 288 men as absent voters, that is, men away on active service. Whilst not an exhaustive and foolproof source of data, this gives an indication just how many men from the area were serving overseas, using the 1911 figures, this is around 9% of the local population, not an insubstantial amount, though in reality, many more men from the area that weren't on the 1918 register also served overseas.

At time of writing, a total of 92 men from, or with ties to Four Oaks who died as a result of active service in World War One have been identified. Some of the men were included on more than one memorial locally and/or nationally, some on none. The local memorials that feature men also listed on the All Saints memorial are located at; King Edwards Square Sutton Coldfield, Four Oaks Methodist Church, St James Church Mere Green and St Peters Church Little Aston. Other men were identified via internet searches. After the war, public commemoration became a crucial part of acknowledging the suffering and sacrifices so many had made, which is perhaps why some men were listed on more than one memorial locally.

At the start of the war, the British army totalled around 730,000 men. By the end of the war, a further four million had been recruited from England alone.⁹⁵ In the early part of the war, only one soldier from the memorial, a prewar regular soldier, was killed. At this point of 1914 the initial rush to join the army was underway but it would take several months for the new recruits to become fully trained and deployed to France. This is reflected in the fact that only five men on the memorial were killed in 1915 with the deaths occurring no earlier than August of that year. It is perhaps not surprising then that the majority of the deaths occurred from 1916 onwards, with the large scale and costly battles of the Somme and Third Ypres in 1916 and 1917 respectively, along with the German Spring Offensive in 1918, all of which cost a great many British casualties. Coupled with this, the army was growing in size following a drop in volunteers with the introduction of the Group Scheme in 1915 (a sort of halfway house to conscription), and full conscription following in 1916.

Following on from the previous paragraph, Pals battalions are often mentioned during the topic of recruitment in WW1. These were battalions of locally recruited men, usually with some sort of common bond; home town or workplace for example. The idea being that these social bonds would encourage enlistment and create a strong sense of unity. However, these battalions often suffered high casualties, especially during the Battle of the Somme, creating significant impacts on their communities. So, were any of the men on the All Saints memorial members of the Birmingham City Battalions more popularly known as the "Birmingham Pals" (Technically the 14th, 15th 16th Battalions Royal Warwickshire Regiment)? The answer is both yes and no. In the early days of the war, several of the men initially enlisted with the "Birmingham Pals" regiments, but none appear to have served overseas with them, having gained commissions with other units. This fits with the intention that the "Birmingham Pals" would attract "young men of all grades of society engaged in non-manual occupation".⁹⁶

The mechanised nature of modern weapons at the time of the Great War offered terrors of a nature, and on a scale, never experienced before including machine gun bullets, large scale artillery

⁹³ <https://sclhrg.org.uk/research/research-tools/2504-sutton-coldfield-trades-directories.html>

⁹⁴ https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=bl%2fer%2f2018-03-20_14_12%2f00087

⁹⁵ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/some-british-army-statistics-of-the-great-war/>

⁹⁶ <https://moseleians.co.uk/birmingham-pals/>

bombardments, grenades and poison gas, not to mention sometimes desperate hand to hand fighting. It isn't possible to say exactly how all the men from the Four Oaks memorial died, but we can say that the above weapons likely caused most of them. 21 men were killed in action, 9 died of wounds, 3 died of illness with 1 each in the categories of accident, suicide and drowning. The three deaths from illness reflects how aside from the dangers of warfare, all fronts had harsh conditions and many privations in the form of extreme weather, trench foot, malaria, presence of vermin/lice and dysentery from unhygienic living arrangements (instances of sickness were considerably higher in theatres of war with hotter climates). Not forgetting of course, the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918 which killed many servicemen and civilians. Several of the men detailed above died not long after arriving at the front, some had been injured previously and/or been sick and subsequently returned to the front line.

So where did the men serve? In Britain, the First World War is generally associated with the trenches and mud of the Western Front, which is probably fair as the majority of British servicemen were stationed there. However, this isn't how every serviceman experienced the war, as fighting didn't just occur in the fields of France and Belgium, but in the deserts of the Middle East and the jungles of Africa, on the oceans and in the mountains and of course in the air. The locations of death of the men on the Four Oaks memorial gives credence to the notion of the Western Front being the main focus of the war; 22 of the men died in France and 7 in Belgium, 4 died in England, 2 at Gallipoli and 1 in Greece 1. One of the men who died in England had been wounded in France and was in hospital in London when he passed away. It's also worth noting that none of the men were in the Navy and only one was in the Royal Flying Corps, the rest were all in the army.

Another popular idea of the Great War is that of underage soldiers eagerly joining up in the early days of the war, lying about their age to unscrupulous recruiting sergeants. Indeed, it is believed as many as 250,000 boys under the age of 18 served in the British Army in World War One⁹⁷. It isn't possible to say if any of them were from Four Oaks, however whilst some of the men were undoubtedly young when then died, there is no evidence to suggest the men listed on the All Saints memorial were underage. In fact, it appears that one of the older men may have shaved a couple of years off his age when enlisting. Looking at the statistics for the age at death for the men listed on the memorial, the youngest was 19, the oldest 38 and the average age was 27.

Human Cost

Whilst it is important to remember the sacrifices of those who died as a result of the conflict, we should also be mindful of the effects of the war on those who survived. Many men would have returned home suffering with physical and/or psychological damage. Of the six million British soldiers who served, 44 per cent were wounded and 12 per cent were killed, giving a total of around three and a half million casualties⁹⁸.

Aside from the dangers and privations the men endured at the front, they must also have felt fear, worry, exhaustion and even boredom, leading to a dehumanising effect after time. Back home, how did civilians experience the war? Clearly, they suffered bereavements and constant worry about loved ones and losses of friends not just family. All the time while dealing with domestic issues such as food shortages and uncertainty how long the war would last.

Nationally, although not every Briton lost a loved one, around one in nine households suffered a loss, and around one in six families lost a close family member.⁹⁹ Regarding the 36 servicemen on the All Saints memorial, 13 of them were married and 7 of them had children. Some of the men's wives lost brothers too. In a town the size of Four Oaks, it was likely that by 1918 everyone knew somebody who had died in the war. This is represented when we look at the last known addresses of the deceased men when we find many lived on concentrated certain roads. In particular, Hartopp Road and Clarence Road, where 8 of the All Saints men resided prior to the war, nearly half of all the men on the memorial. Other roads with multiple casualties were Four Oaks Common Road with 3 and Belwell Lane and Blackberry Lane with 2 each.

⁹⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-29934965>

⁹⁸ <https://css2.open.ac.uk/outis/docs/publications/OZQBGW.pdf>

⁹⁹ <https://css2.open.ac.uk/outis/docs/publications/OZQBGW.pdf>

With this mind, there can be little doubt that many of the men and their families, knew each other and several suffered more than one loss. Of the All Saints men who died and from the information available; two had brothers killed, one had a brother in law killed, another had a cousin killed and one set of brothers were killed. In addition, many of the men had brothers who served but survived, at least one of whom having been badly wounded.

In addition to the many tributes and In Memoriam submissions from family members to local papers, there is also an example of one being sent in by a neighbour of the fallen soldier (W Bickley), further demonstrating the effect the casualties had on what was a small community.

Many of the men had known each other outside of family circles. There are contemporary newspaper articles featuring several of the men (particularly the ex-grammar school boys) that recorded them having participated in local sporting competitions pre-war, especially athletics and swimming.

It also appears that two men who lived on Clarence Road (W Lakin and WC Goodwin) may have joined up together as they both signed up with the Royal Garrison Artillery on the same day in Sutton Coldfield. Lakin died only a month after arriving at the front leaving behind widow and 5 children, Goodwin took his own life shortly after the war leaving a widow and 1 child.

There are also 2 instances of men on the memorial being killed on the same day. William W Sanby, Sydney Winkley and George RC Martin were all killed on the opening day of the Battle of the Somme on July 1st, 1916. All 3 men had lived on Hartopp Road. Winkley and Martin were in the same battalion and died in the same attack. LL Greener and PL Larnach were in the same battalion, both died in the same action in December 1917.

Perhaps the most poignant of all the examples of the terrible scale of the localised nature of the losses is in the adjacent newspaper clipping. At the bottom are listed In Memoriam, one year on from the opening day of the battle of the Somme, two Four Oaks men, G.R.C. Martin and S.J. Winkley (as mentioned above) who lost their lives that day. This is juxtaposed with the details of an apparently happier event, the marriage of local man Russell Sandon Turner to Cicely Grove. Tragically, Cicely, whose brother, Second Lieutenant Percival Allen Grove had been killed at the front in July 1916, was to become a widow as her husband was later killed in action in October 1917.

TURNER-GROVE.—On the 28th ult., at the Parish Church, Sutton Coldfield (by the Rev. T. Everard Healey, Chaplain to the Forces, assisted by the Rev. P. Barker, Vicar of All Saints', Four Oaks), Russell Sandon Turner, Captain Royal Warwickshire Regiment, third son of Major J. S. Turner, Wood Bank, Four Oaks, to Cicely May, younger daughter of Allen Grove, "The Cedars," Sutton Coldfield.

WARD-VOCKES.—On the 30th ult., at Villa Road United Methodist Church, Handsworth (by Dr. A. Jones, B.A. Litt.), Despatch Rider Leonard Ward, R.N., elder son of Mrs. C. A. Ward, Thornhill Road, to Rose, second daughter of Mrs. E. Vokes, Weston Road, Handsworth.

DEATHS.

BARNES.—On the 2nd ult., of enteric fever, James Hector Barnes, B.Sc., F.I.C., F.C.S., Chief Chemist to the Government of India.

COX.—On the 28th ult., at 64, Swanshurst Lane (late of Oxford Road), Moseley, Arthur James, beloved husband of Mary (née Norrrove) Cox, Secretary of Birmingham Household Supply Association, and Funeral at Yardley cemetery, Tuesday, 11.30. *Prayers please accept this (the only) intimation.*

FLINT.—Thomas Eden, at his residence, "Loofodens," Canford Cliffs, Bournemouth, in his 81st year.

KEELING.—On the 29th ult., at "Ellensleigh," New Road, Bromsgrove, Fanny Adams, widow of the late Rev. E. Blanchard Keeling, in her 70th year.

WINDER.—On the 27th ult., at "Wayside," Four Oaks, in his 61th year, Walter Ashford Winder, D Company, 3rd Battalion Warwickshire Volunteer Regiment, eldest son of W. J. Winder, of Sutton Coldfield. Funeral, R.C. Church, Monday, July 2, 2.30 p.m.

IN MEMORIAM.

EVANS.—In loving memory of Tasher (Royal Warwickshire Regiment), elder son of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Evans, 48, Oakwood Road, Sparkhill, officially presumed killed in action on the Somme, July 1, 1916.

KEY.—In proud and loving memory of James Gordon Key (Jimmy), Lieutenant, 25th Regt., Warwickshire Regiment (seconded for duty to 182nd T.M.B.), dearly loved younger son of E. C. and E. H. Key, "Longmynd," Edgbaston, died of wounds received in action, July 2, 1916. R.I.P.

PAYNE.—In loving memory of my dear husband, Joseph Payne, Sergeant, Royal Scottish Fusiliers, who was killed in action July 1, 1916. A day of remembrance and to recall. Sadly missed, and in silence mourned, by his loving wife and little daughter Mollie.

WASDELL (Jack). the dearly beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Wasdell, of Church Lane, Handsworth Wood, killed in action July 1, 1916. Mourned by those who loved him most.

WILLIAMSON.—In memory of Second Lieutenant Cyril George Williamson, who was killed in action July 2, 1916, the only and dearly beloved son of the late Arthur Williamson and Mrs. Williamson, of "Newlyn," Self Park Road, Birmingham.

THE ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT.

In glorious and immortal memory of

Capt. A. B. Rabone,	Lieut. J. E. B. Dixon,
Sec. Lieut. J. Balkwill,	Sec. Lieut. R. Price,
Sec. Lieut. A. E. Clarke,	Sec. Lieut. R. V. Rose,
Sec. Lieut. H. L. Field,	Sec. Lieut. W. P. Wheeler,
Sec. Lieut. G. R. C. Martin,	Sec. Lieut. S. J. Winkley,
Sec. Lieut. C. T. Morris-Davies,	

Non-commissioned Officers, and Men, who fell in the assault on the Quadrilateral between Beaumont Hamel and Serre, July 1, 1916.

Extract from the Birmingham Daily Post, July 2nd, 1917

Following completion of the above work and the Royal Sutton Coldfield Great War Project¹⁰⁰, a further 12 men from or with links to the Four Oaks area were identified who died in World War One, none of whom are commemorated on the Sutton Coldfield war memorial in King Edward Square. These men are listed below, and their details provided thereafter¹⁰¹.

Bellingham	Alfred James
Bracebridge	Stephen Henry
Campbell	William John
Cussons	Thomas Richard
Deeman	Walter Thomas
Hill	Philip Aubrey
Kingzett	William
Lindner	Philip Edward
Little	Myles John Chislett
Oram	Joseph William
Tomlinson	Alec Frank
Utton	Arthur William Thomas

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.royalsuttoncoldfieldgreatwarproject.co.uk/>

¹⁰¹ They are accounted for in the tally of 92 men (as mentioned above in the Statistics section) known to be from or have ties to Four Oaks, who died on active service in the Great War.

201665 Private Alfred James Bellingham
1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Alfred James Bellingham was born in Tipton, Staffordshire in 1891 to John and Emily Bellingham.

The 1901 Census recorded Alfred as 9 years old and living with his parents and four siblings at The Station House (Blake Street railway station). His father John was the Station Master.

In 1911, he was aged 19 and living with his family at The Station House, Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield. He was working a farm labourer. His two older siblings had died.

He enlisted in the army in Birmingham in February 1915 and served in "A" Company of 1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was a stretcher bearer and had arrived at the front around September 1916.

Private Alfred James Bellingham died of wounds aged 26 on August 11th, 1917. He is buried at Brandhoek New Military Cemetery, Belgium, Plot VI. C. 7. He is also commemorated on a Memorial Tablet at St Peters Church, Little Aston.

It is not clear when or how he was wounded. According to the battalion war diary, in the first week of August 1917, they were out of the line but on the 8th, they moved into the line near St Julien, near Ypres. They endured extremely muddy front-line positions under heavy artillery fire until they were relieved on the 10th/11th August. Total casualties from the 8th to the 11th were seventeen other ranks killed, two officers and forty-four other ranks wounded, Private Bellingham was likely to have been one of them.

The History of the 5th Territorial Battalion described the days preceding his death thus, "From Reigersburg Camp, outside Ypres, they went on to St. Julien and took over the line from the Bucks Battalion. The Steenbeck, formerly a shallow brook, was churned by shell fire into a "slough of despond" that had been a match for several tanks, which were rusting in its slime. Beyond lay a debateable land controlled by scattered pill boxes, advanced posts from the belt of them that marked the Langemarck-Gheluvelt line. In this first tour shelling was heavy, but personal encounters only occurred with strayed Germans".¹⁰²

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of John and Emily Bellingham, of Station House, Blake Street Station, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire."

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. He left his effects to his father, who also received his war gratuity and a military pension.

¹⁰² <https://archive.org/details/5thbnwarwickshirereg/page/53/mode/2up>

Private A. J. Bellingham (25), R. War. Regt., son of Mr. J. Bellingham, Blake Street, station, near Sutton Coldfield. He was a stretcher-bearer for his own company, and had been at the front nearly 12 months. Prior to enlisting in February, 1915, he was employed by Messrs. Holt and Son.

Excerpt from a list of "Casualties Among Midlands Men" in the Birmingham Daily Post, September 1st, 1917



Gravestone of Private A.J. Bellingham¹⁰³



Image of memorial plaque at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston (image courtesy of Emily Brennan)

¹⁰³ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12323341/alfred-james-bellingham#view-photo=2543686>

M2/155220 Private Stephen Henry Bracebridge
265 Mechanical Transport Company - Army Service Corps

Stephen Henry Bracebridge was born in Little Bromwich, Birmingham in 1880, to Stephen and Mary Ann Bracebridge. His father was a police constable. Stephen Henry appears to have been known as Henry or Harry.

In 1881, he was less than one year old and living with his parents at Blakeland Street, Little Bromwich, Birmingham.

By 1891 the family had moved to Sutton Coldfield. The census recorded them as living at Watford Gap, Sutton Coldfield, but judging by the adjacent addresses, they appear to have actually been living at Mere Green Road near St James Church. Henry was 10 years old and a scholar.

In 1901 the family were living at "Private Cottage Police", Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield. His father was still a Police Constable and Henry was aged 20 and working as a Carpenter.

In early 1904, aged 24, he married 27-year-old Edith Goldsby in Little Aston. They had a daughter named Kathleen Harriet who was born on December 1st, 1908. She was baptised on December 27th, 1908, at All Saints Church, Four Oaks. Their address was given as The Mill, Blake Street and Henry's given occupation was Caterer.

By 1907, the family were living at Hill Hook Mill, Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield. He was reported as being the miller in the below article about a dispute he had with a neighbour.

He was in the local papers again in 1909 when he reported as being a caterer living at Hill Hook Mill. He had been accused of three cases of "improper conduct", but all were dismissed.

The 1911 census recorded him living at Hill Hook Mill, Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield. He was 30 years old at working as a "Caterer for pleasure parties". His wife was "Assisting in the business". Presumably he was running a refreshment room at the mill for day trippers visiting the mill and its mill pond. He was recorded as living at Hill Hook Mill on the electoral registers from 1910 to 1914. The mill had previously been used to grind corn but according to a BBC Wildlife webpage, "The local train station at Blake Street was opened in 1884 and was used to bring in children & adults to Hill Hook. By the First World War Hill Hook Mill was already well known to many Sutton and Birmingham people as a popular destination for Sunday School outings etc. Fishing, boating and skating, when the pool was frozen over, would be enjoyed by all. A small amusement park was located on the field overlooking the mill pool. There were swings, roundabouts and an old railway carriage and other buildings where afternoon tea was served to the visitors. The mill pool was also used by fishermen and was well stocked with pike".¹⁰⁴

According to a booklet describing the history of Hill Hook Mill, in 1911, Stephen Bracebridge applied artificial respiration to a young man who fell into the mill pool and almost drowned and apparently this prompt action saved the young man's life.¹⁰⁵

On February 1st, 1913 Henry and Edith had a son named Neville.

Henry attested in the Army Service Corps on February 2nd, 1916, in Birmingham at the age of 35. Part of his service and medical records survive though they are damaged and difficult to read in places. His occupation was Caterer. He was 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighed 210 pounds and had a chest measurement of 42 inches. His physical development was described as very good though he was recorded as being slightly obese and had slight rheumatic pain in what (appears to read) his left big toe.

Confusingly, one page of his service record states that on February 4th, 1916, he arrived at Grove Park and on another page, he's listed at Osterley Park on that date. These were two separate training establishments in the London area, both of which acted as a depot for receiving ASC recruits, then

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/hill-hook-history>

¹⁰⁵ <https://sclhrg.org.uk/research/original-research/2475-hill-hook-corn-mill.html>

training and testing them as MT drivers. It may be that he went to Grove Park initially, then to Osterley Park for further training. According to the Great War Forum, at Osterley Park the “men spent several weeks in training, each had to learn to drive 4 types of vehicles, not exceeding 8 mph, and the training routes included Marble Arch, Hyde Park Corner, Oxford Circus and Pall Mall.”¹⁰⁶¹⁰⁷

All Mechanical Transport Companies were part of the Lines of Communication and were not under orders of a Division, although some (unusually known as Divisional Supply Columns and Divisional Ammunition Parks) were in effect attached to a given Division and worked closely with it. Those in the Lines of Communication operated in a wide variety of roles, such as being attached to the heavy artillery as Ammunition Columns or Parks, being Omnibus Companies, Motor Ambulance Convoys, or Bridging and Pontoon units. Soldiers who served in the Mechanical Transport usually had the letter M as a prefix to their number.¹⁰⁸

Each Division of the army had a certain amount of motorised transport allocated to it, although not directly under its own command. The Divisional Supply Column Companies were responsible for the supply of goods, equipment and ammunition from the Divisional railhead to the Divisional Refilling Point and, if conditions allowed, to the dumps and stores of the forward units. Used, of course, where loads were heavy. A Company initially comprised 5 officers and 337 other ranks of the ASC, looking after 45 3-ton lorries, 16 30-cwt lorries, 7 motor cycles, 2 cars and 4 assorted trucks for the workshop and stores of the Supply Column itself.”¹⁰⁹

On March 31st, 1916, he was promoted to Lance Corporal and paid Lance Corporal on April 16th, 1916, at Bulford. He was classified as fit for active service on December 6th, 1916. He appears to have been transferred and reverted to Private on May 13th, 1917. He embarked from Portsmouth on June 9th, 1917, arriving in Boulogne the following day. He then served with various Mechanical Transport Companies of the Army Service Corps in ammunition columns for different artillery units. He was serving with the 265/Ammunition Column when admitted to hospital.

His records state that he had a gunshot wound (this term was also used to record shrapnel wounds) to the elbow and mouth though it is not stated how and when he received them. The available description of his facial wounds starts on March 31st, 1918. He was suffering from a severe infection of his face, most likely from a contaminated wound in his upper lip. He had a fever and was delirious.

Stephen Henry Bracebridge died of his wounds, aged 38, in hospital at Rouen on April 2nd, 1918, and is buried at St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Plot P. VII. I. 1A. The cause of death was Erysipelas of Face, a bacterial infection of the upper layer of the skin, which in modern days would most likely have been successfully treated with antibiotics. He is also commemorated on a Memorial Tablet at St Peters Church, Little Aston.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. He left his effects to his widow, who also received his war gratuity and a military pension.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the “Son of Stephen and Mary Ann Bracebridge, of Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham; husband of Edith Bracebridge, of Newport House, Augusta St., Llandudno”. This address was recorded on her pension index card.

The aforementioned BBC website indicated that Edith and her two children, “stopped on at the mill at a reduced rent”, though “in 1919 the lease for Hill Hook Mill was then sold to a Mr Holt of Blake Street along with Hill Hook Farm”. She was recorded at Hill Hook Mill on the 1919 electoral register. Edith was not found on the 1921 census. An Edith Bracebridge was living at 579 Holly Lane, Erdington

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/42428-company-5-ascmt-osterley-park/>

¹⁰⁷ <https://historicroadways.co.uk/ww1-blog-014-grove-park-asc.html>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-army-service-corps-in-the-first-world-war/>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-army-service-corps-in-the-first-world-war/army-service-corps-mechanical-transport-companies/>

according to the electoral registers of 1928 and 1929. She was living at Kingsbury Road, Erdington when she died in 1929.

SEQUEL TO SHOOTING A SWAN.—Two cases resulting out of the shooting of a swan were heard at Sutton Coldfield yesterday. The parties were Stephen Henry Bracebridge, miller, Hill Hook Mill, and Richard Sadler, farmer, Blake Street. In the first case, Sadler summoned Bracebridge for using threats. He stated that on the morning of January 6 Bracebridge, after referring to the shooting of a swan, said, "Dick, you are nothing but a dirty cur for shooting it," adding, "If it was not for taking the law in my own hands I would take hold of you and break you straight through the middle." In the second case Bracebridge summoned Sadler for maliciously killing his swan. For the defence it was contended that the bird was in a pitiable condition, and the wing towards the tip had gone quite dead, showing that a wound had been there a considerable time. The wing, it was stated, had become frozen to the ice, and in freeing itself the bird had torn it. There were a lot of blood marks about, and in shooting it the defendant only desired to put it out of its misery. The Bench fined Sadler 10s. and costs for killing the bird, and ordered him to pay 10s. towards its value. The other case they dismissed.

Birmingham Daily Post dated January 16th, 1907

SUTTON COLDFIELD.
SERIOUS CHARGE DISMISSED.—For over three hours the Mayor (Councillor John Norris) and Alderman Emery were occupied at the Police Court on Tuesday morning in hearing evidence in three charges of improper conduct against Stephen Henry Bracebridge (28), caterer, Hill Hook Mill, Blake Street. Mr. S. Smith Dorsett (instructed by Mr. A. H. Adcock) appeared for the prisoner, and pleaded "Not guilty."—Each case was dealt with separately, and the whole were dismissed by the Bench.

Lichfield Mercury dated January 15th, 1909

BRACEBRIDGE Edith of 598 Kingsbury-road Erdington Birmingham widow died 22 September 1929 Administration Birmingham 9 January to Kathleen Harriet Bracebridge spinster and Ruby Grace Moore (wife of Edward Richard Moore).
 Effects £440.

Probate Record for Edith Bracebridge



Gravestone of Private S.H. Bracebridge¹¹⁰



Image of memorial plaque at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston (image courtesy of Emily Brennan)

¹¹⁰ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56260167/s-bracebridge>

Second Lieutenant William John Campbell

Royal Garrison Artillery

William John Campbell was born at Portsea, Hampshire on September 14th, 1878, to William and Elizabeth Campbell. He was Baptised on December 15th, 1878, at St Simon, Southsea. Their address was Eastney Barracks (near Portsmouth), and his father was a Drum Major in the Royal Marine Artillery.

In 1881, he was 2 years old and living with his family at Portsea District Royal Marine Artillery Barracks.

The 1891 census records the family at 1 Mount Pleasant, Botley, Hampshire. William was aged 12 and a "Garden boy". His father was no longer in the military and was living on his own means.

Neither William John Campbell nor his family were found on the 1901 census.

On December 2nd, 1909, he married Amy Gertrude Reynolds at St Peter & St Paul Church, Aston, Birmingham. William was aged 31 and his occupation was Sergeant in the Royal Artillery living at "Defensible Barracks", Pembroke Dock. Amy was 36 years old and lived at 21 Frederick Road, Aston. Her father Joseph John Reynolds was the manager of a nail manufactory.

The 1911 census recorded William and Amy living at 5 Argyll Street, Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire. They were boarding in the household of G H Trevena, shipwright for HM Government. William was 32 years old and a Sergeant in the RGA (Royal Garrison Artillery). By this time, William and Amy had a daughter named Doreen Amy Campbell. She was born on March 18th, 1911, at Pembroke Dock and baptised on April 19th, 1911, at St John, Pembroke. Baptism records state their address as 5 Argyll Street and William's profession as "Sergeant, RGA".

They had another daughter named Molly Elizabeth who was born on August 19th, 1912. She was baptised on September 12th, 1912, at St Paul, Sheerness, Kent. The family address was "The Garrison" and William's profession was "Staff Sergeant RGA". Garrison Point Fort was an artillery fort situated at the end of the Garrison Point peninsula at Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent.

William's MIC (Medal Index Card) states that he entered Singapore on August 4th, 1914. The Straits Settlements were part of the British Empire and garrison was kept there as a defensive presence in during the Great War¹¹¹. According to the Great War Forum, "The Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) operated the coastal guns that protected Singapore. They were manned by the 78th and 80th Companies RGA and Indian Army Gunners from the Hong Kong and Singapore Royal Garrison Artillery (HKS-RGA). A British infantry battalion, and the Singapore Volunteers Battalion formed the garrison troops."¹¹²

His MIC indicates that he had been a Company Quartermaster Sergeant (regimental number 14604) in the Royal Garrison Artillery. A contemporary newspaper article indicated that he went to Singapore as a Sergeant Major and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in 1915.

William John Campbell died on May 25th, 1915, aged 36. No cause of death has been discovered though he is likely to have died of illness. The Royal Artillery War Commemoration Book states that he died whereas the men listed above and below him are stated to have been killed in action or died from wounds.

He is buried at Kranji War Cemetery, Singapore, Grave 37. E. 20. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of William and Elizabeth Campbell, of Hedge End, Southampton and was the husband of Amy Gertrude Campbell, of "Cobo," Lichfield Road, Four Oaks, Birmingham."

¹¹¹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/167408-sgt-george-rowland-morriss-rga/#comment-1629395>

¹¹² <https://www.greatwarforum.org/blogs/entry/2582-rga-singapore-mutiny-1915/>

He was awarded the British War Medal only and not the Victory Medal as Singapore was not considered to be a theatre of war¹¹³. He left his effects to his widow, Amy.

The recent fighting referred in the above article is likely to have been the mutiny by Indian troops that took place in February 1915. The Great War Forum states that, "When war broke out the British battalion was sent to France, being replaced by the 5th Light Infantry of the Indian Army, an all-Muslim unit. In February 1915 a mutiny occurred when the 5th Light Infantry of the Indian Army revolted.

The roots of the mutiny lay with unrest caused through propaganda being circulated advocating Indian independence, poor conditions for the soldiers and weak leadership from the battalion officers. Among the tasks the battalion undertook was the guarding of German crew from the Light Cruiser Emden who took the opportunity to fuel the Indian soldiers unrest. The trigger was an announcement that the battalion would transfer to Hong Kong. However, rumours spread that the battalion was actually destined for Europe to fight the Turks, fellow Muslims.

The mutiny lasted nearly ten days and resulted in the deaths of more than 100 people including six British officers fourteen British soldiers and fourteen civilians. The mutineers casualties were estimated at 200."¹¹⁴

After the war, William's widow Amy received a military pension and was recorded living with her daughters at 'Cobo', Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield in 1921, and in 1939 at 25 Harman Road, Sutton Coldfield.

Amy died in Sutton Coldfield in 1950.

¹¹³ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/277294-templeton-of-the-rga-in-singapore/#comment-2827874>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/blogs/entry/2582-rga-singapore-mutiny-1915/>



Gravestone of Second Lieutenant W.J. Campbell¹¹⁵

The death has occurred of 2nd Lieut. Campbell, of the Hong-kong and Singapore Batt., R.G.A., Blakan Mati, whose remains were interred with military honours. The deceased officer rose from the ranks, and went to Singapore about a year ago as Sergeant-Major of the H.K.S.B. company stationed there. Quite recently he was accorded his first star.

London and China Telegraph dated July 5th, 1915

CAMPBELL Amy Gertrude of 25 Harman-road Sutton Coldfield Warwickshire widow died 9 September 1950 at 611 Chester-road Sutton Coldfield Probate Birmingham 18 December to Doreen Amy Campbell and Mollie Elizabeth Campbell spinsters. Effects £2482 0s. 2d.

Probate Record for Amy Campbell

Much sympathy is felt with Mr. and Mrs. W. Campbell, of Ivy Bank, Hedgend, in the severe loss they have sustained by the death of their only son, Second-Lieutenant W. J. Campbell, R.G.A., which occurred at Singapore on May 25th. The deceased officer participated in the recent fighting at Singapore, and he had a very promising career before him. Mr. W. Campbell, as is well-known in yachting circles, is the secretary of the Castle Yacht Club, and also of the Solent Classes Racing Association.

Hampshire Advertiser dated June 5th, 1915

CAMPBELL, WILLIAM, Lt., k. in a. 6.7.17.
CAMPBELL, WILLIAM JOHN, 2/Lt., d.
25.5.15.
CAMPBELL-JOHNSON, PATRICK SEYMOUR
CAMPBELL, Lt., d. of w. 30.8.19.

Extract from The Royal Artillery War Commemoration Book, 1914-1918

¹¹⁵ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/5451044>

12/1936 Private Thomas Richard Cussons
1st Battalion Auckland Regiment, New Zealand Expeditionary Force (N.Z.E.F)

Thomas Richard Cussons was born on July 8th, 1885, in Beverley, East Yorkshire to John and Annie Cussons. He was baptised on August 4th, 1885, in the Parishes of Saint John and Saint Martin, Beverley, Yorkshire. His father was a Master Tanner and merchant who also served on the local grand jury, and the family lived at Keldgate, Beverley.

In 1891, he was 5 years old and a scholar living with his family at "Newbegin" (Southside), Beverley. In 1901 he was aged 15 and a boarder at Giggleswick Grammar School, Settle, Yorkshire. By 1911 he was living with his father at 49 Keldgate, a large house in Beverley. He was 25 years old and working as a Tanner. His mother Annie was staying with a family named Bettinson in Solihull.

Contemporary newspaper reports state that he had held a commission as Lieutenant in the Beverley Territorials of the East Yorkshire Regiment. He resigned his commission when he emigrated to New Zealand to engage in farming. The newspapers go on to report that on the outbreak of war he joined a Colonial Contingent as a ranker and served in Gallipoli, being afterwards invalided home to England. After recuperating he left to take part in the operations in France.

The above is detailed in his service record¹¹⁶. The record shows that he enlisted on January 12th, 1915, with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and given the regimental number 12/1936. His occupation was Farmer, and his last employer was S Holmes of Brundwood. He was single and gave his last address as being the c/o the Post Office at Hautapu. His next of kin was "John Thomas Cussons (father), care of Miss Bettinson, Herbert's Road, Solihull, Birmingham"¹¹⁷ however this was struck through and his father's address given as Netherseal, 14 Jordan Road, Four Oaks, Birmingham. He stated that he's served 4 years in the Territorial Army.

He was 25 years and 5 months old when he enlisted. He was 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighed 9 stone 11 pounds and had a chest measurement of 31 inches. He had a fair complexion, hazel eyes and flaxen hair.

He served in New Zealand between January 12th, 1915, and April 16th, 1915. He then embarked for foreign service on April 17th, 1915, from Wellington, bound for Suez, disembarking on May 25th, 1915. He was attached to A Company, 4th Reinforcement Draft of the Auckland Infantry Battalion who joined their units at the Dardanelles on June 8th, 1915.

On August 13th, 1915, he was admitted to Hospital Ship Guildford Castle suffering from Neurasthenia (a physical and mental breakdown precipitated by stress of war). He was subsequently admitted to a general hospital in Malta on August 21st, 1915. He left Malta for England on September 16th, 1915, and was in hospital in Leicester from September 24th to 26th October 1915.

On November 10th, 1915, Thomas arrived at a military depot in Weymouth and was returned to active service on January 11th, 1916. He rejoined his unit at Camp Ismailia, Egypt, on January 1st, 1916, from where he left for France on April 6th, 1916.

He was wounded on September 18th, 1916, and admitted to the No1 Australian General Hospital, Rouen, the same day. Private Thomas Richard Cussons died of wounds in the Australian Hospital on September 22nd, 1916, aged 31. It is not clear exactly how he sustained his wounds but according to the Great War Forum¹¹⁸, at the time of his death Thomas was in the 16th (Waikato) Company of the 1st Auckland Infantry Battalion. They were occupying Flers Trench on the September 17th and 18th where they were subjected to a heavy artillery bombardment. He was wounded in the neck, jaw area and had a fractured skull, wounds likely to have been caused by artillery.

¹¹⁶ https://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE13603996

¹¹⁷ <https://media.api.aucklandmuseum.com/id/media/v/321232?rendering=original.jpg>

¹¹⁸ https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/306640-the-nzef-1st-auckland-infantry-battalion-the-flers-trench-system-%E2%80%93-17th-18th-of-september-1916-the-somme/?_fromLogin=1#replyForm

He was buried at St Sever Cemetery, Rouen, France, Ref: B. 20. He is commemorated at St Marys Church Triptych, Beverley¹¹⁹, on the Keldgate Roll of Honour, Beverley^{120 121}, at Giggleswick School¹²², on a plaque at St Firmin's Church, Thurlby¹²³ and on the Auckland War Memorial Museum, World War 1 Hall of Memories¹²⁴.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of John and Annie Cussons of 14 Jordan Road, Four Oaks, Birmingham." His probate record lists his address as "Netherseale", Jordan Road, Four Oaks. This was his parents address, and it's not known if he ever lived there.

He was awarded the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

¹¹⁹ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/34662>

¹²⁰ <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/182473/>

¹²¹ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/7173286>

¹²² <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/name/717740>

¹²³ <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/181702/>

¹²⁴ <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C3596?n=thomas%20richard%20cussons&ordinal=0&from=%2Fwar-memorial%2Fonline-cenotaph%2Fsearch#gallery>

5th Battalion Yorkshire Regiment.—The undermentioned officers, for the 2nd Volunteer Battalion the East Yorkshire Regiment, are appointed to the Battalion with rank of precedence as in the Volunteer force:—Lieutenant-Colonel and Honorary-Colonel John Alfred Staveley, Major (Honorary Captain in the Army) Mark Sykes, Captain and Honorary-Major (Honorary Captain in the Army) James Mortimer, Captain George Jefferson Scott, Captain and Honorary-Major William Albert Wetwan, Lieutenant-William Snowball Walker, Cyril Harvey Pearce, Walter Worthington, John Bowlt Purvis, and Frederick Simpson Staveley, Second-Lieutenants Thomas Richard Cussons and Dennis Henry Walker.

Sheffield Daily Telegraph dated August 1st, 1908

KILLED IN ACTION

Beverley Men Who have Fought and Fallen.

A HEAVY LIST.

The Beverley casualties announced this week include:—Private Richard Cussons, only son of Mr John Cussons, late of Beverley, where he was one of the partners in Cussons's tannery. Deceased, who was a grandson of the late Mr Thomas Cussons, died in the Australian hospital at Boulogne on the 22nd September, as the result of wounds received in action. He was 30 years of age and formerly held a lieutenancy in the Beverley Territorials. Resigning his commission some years ago, he emigrated to New Zealand to follow farming. At the outbreak of war he became a ranker in the colonial contingent and served in Gallipoli, from whence he was invalided to England. Subsequently he was drafted to France on his return to health. His wounds were in the neck and jaw.

Hull Daily News dated September 30th, 1916



Gravestone of Private T.R. Cussons¹²⁵

CUSSONS Thomas Richard of Netherseale Jordan-road Four Oaks **Warwickshire** private Auckland Infantry battalion New Zealand Expeditionary Force died 22 September 1916 in France Probate **Birmingham** 22 November to John Thomas Cussons gentleman. Effects £84 3s. id. 18

Probate details from 1917

¹²⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55944794/thomas-richard-cussons>

291219 Private Walter Thomas Deeman
16th (Royal Devon and Royal North Devon Yeomanry) Devonshire Regiment

Walter Thomas Deeman was born in Coleshill, Warwickshire in 1896 to Thomas and Annie Deeman. He was baptised in Coleshill on October 11th, 1896.

In 1901 Walter was 4 years old and living with his family at High Street, Coleshill, Warwickshire. His father was a Groom and Gardener. The family were still living at High Street, Coleshill, in 1911. The census records Walter was 14 years old with no occupation listed.

Surviving records indicate he initially served as a Private (regimental number 2879) in the 2/7th (Cyclist) Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment, a territorial unit which remained in the UK throughout the war.¹²⁶

He later transferred to the 16th (Royal Devon and Royal North Devon Yeomanry) Devonshire Regiment. In January 1917, the 1/1st Royal North Devon Yeomanry (Hussars) merged with Royal 1st Devonshire Yeomanry to form the 16th (Royal 1st Devon and North Devon Yeomanry) Battalion, the Devonshire Regiment and came under orders of 229th Brigade.¹²⁷

On May 7th, 1918, the 16th (Royal 1st Devon and Royal North Devon Yeomanry) Battalion, Devonshire Regiment landed at Marseilles, France, with 74th (Yeomanry) Division. It served in France and Flanders with the division for the rest of the war.¹²⁸

By August 1918, the 16th Devons were taking part in the Hundred Days Offensive and from August 21st to September 3rd, 1918. They were fighting in the Second Battle of the Somme (Second Battle of Bapaume). On the evening of September 1st, 1918, the 16th Devons, attached to 229th Brigade, 74th Division, took over trenches from the 58th Division east of Bouchavesnes. They had orders to attack the German lines at 0530 the next morning. At zero hour on September 2nd, the West Somersets led the attack with the Fifes and Forfars in support. A and B Companies of the 16th Devons were to follow them up. As they passed Moislains, the Devons were to veer off to clear the village, believing that little opposition, if any, would be present. However, as they went forward, the West Somersets and the Fifes and Forfars were enfiladed with gunfire from trenches near the village and suffered terribly. As A and B Companies of the Devons went forward they ran into a hail of machine gunfire. They too suffered terribly and were stopped at the outskirts of Moislains.¹²⁹

It is likely that it was during the above action that Private Walter Thomas Deeman was killed, on September 2nd, 1918, aged 21. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial, Panel 4, France. This Memorial bears the names of over 9,000 men who fell in the period from 8 August 1918 to the date of the Armistice in the Advance to Victory in Picardy and Artois, between the Somme and Loos, and who have no known grave.¹³⁰

He was originally listed as missing on War Office Daily List No. 5700, dated October 19th, 1918 and an enquiry was made to the British Red Cross & Order Of St John Enquiry List of Wounded & Missing in November 1918. However, it was later confirmed or assumed that he had died on September 2nd, 1918. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Thomas and Annie Deeman, of The Cottage, Sherifoot Lane, Hill, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham". His father received a military pension.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

¹²⁶ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-infantry-regiments-of-1914-1918/devonshire-regiment/>

¹²⁷ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-yeomanry-regiments-of-1914-1918/royal-north-devon-yeomanry-hussars/>

¹²⁸ https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/Royal_North_Devon_Yeomanry#First_World_War

¹²⁹ <https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/view.php?uid=235235>

¹³⁰ <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/79200/vis-en-artois-memorial/>

Captain Philip Aubrey Hill **2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers**

Philip Aubrey Hill was born on December 13th, 1873, in Crickhowell Breconshire, Wales. His father was a Surgeon. In 1881 he was 7 years old and a scholar living with his family at 18 High Street, Crickhowell.

By 1891 he was aged 17 and a boarder at Uppingham School, High Street, Uppingham, Rutland & Leicestershire. He had previously been educated at Llandaff Cathedral School, Cardiff. He studied at Caius College, Cambridge University where he served with the Cambridge University Rifles. He gained a B.A. in 1895 and an M.A. in 1901.

The 1901 census recoded him as being 28 years old and an Assistant Schoolmaster living and working at Bishop Vesey Grammar School, Sutton Coldfield. He had joined the school staff in 1895. In 1902 he left to become Headmaster of St. Andrews School in Kent.

On April 23rd, 1902, he married Ethel Grace Sadler at Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield. Ethel was 24 years old and lived at the Moat House, Sutton Coldfield. Her father, Richard Hurst Sadler was a solicitor. Philip was aged 28, a Schoolmaster and his address was St Mary, Shortlands, Kent.

The couple had a son named Philip Hurst Picton Hill on May 11th, 1903, who was born in Bromley, Kent.

In 1911, Philip was 37 years old and a Headmaster living and working at St Andrews Boys Preparatory School, Bromley Kent. His wife and son were living with him at the same address.

Philip was commissioned into the Brecknockshire Battalion (Territorial) of the South Wales Borderers on October 14th, 1914, as reported in the London Gazette dated November 10th, 1914 thus, "The undermentioned to be Lieutenants' (temporary). Dated 29th October, 1914: — Philip Aubrey Hill. Spyridion Mavrojani (late Cadet, Harrow School Cadet Corps)."

His Medal Index Card states that he went to France on January 22nd, 1917. He was by that time, attached to the 2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers who took part in the Battle of the Somme, attacking Beaumont Hamel on July 1st, 1916, where it suffered heavy casualties. The battalion was subsequently reformed and by March 13th, 1917, Captain Hill was in command of "A" Company, 2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers.

On April 22nd, 1917, the 2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers (87th Brigade, 29th Division), entered the line facing the village of Guemappe. It was not intended to launch an attack at that time however a fresh attack had to be improvised to divert German reserves away from the French counterattack on the River Aisne to the south. At 4.45am on April 23rd, A, B and C Companies left their trenches and attacked northeast from Monchy le Preux. Their immediate objectives were the German trenches at the eastern edge of the Twin Copses, just short of the Bois des Aubespines. The covering barrage fell very short causing some casualties, but all the Companies, reinforced by D Company, gained their objectives. Considerable sniping and shellfire impeded consolidation and the construction of strong points 300m beyond the German trenches. Captain Hill, who despite being wounded in the advance, had stayed in command of A Company, was shot by a sniper and killed. The Battalion was relieved before dawn on April 24th having had 7 officers and 69 men killed with 2 officers and 159 men wounded.

Captain Philip Aubrey Hill was killed in action on April 23rd, 1917, aged 43. He has no known grave and is commemorated on Bay 6 of the Arras Memorial, Fauborg-d'Amiens Cemetery, Arras, France.

He is also commemorated on the Garden of Remembrance, Crickhowell, Llandaff Cathedral School, South Glamorgan, the Uppingham School Memorial and Bromley war memorial.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Dr. P. E. Hill, of Latham House, Crickhowell, Brecknockshire; husband of Ethel G. Hill, of Crossway Cottage, Four Oaks, Warwickshire."

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. He left his effects to his widow. In 1921 Ethel was 43 and living with her widowed mother at Norland, Blackroot Road, Sutton Coldfield.

Much of the above information came from Dave Phillips' excellent work "Pro Patria Mori - A History of those Old Veseyans who gave their lives in the Great War".¹³¹

MARRIAGE.—The marriage arranged between Philip Aubrey Hill, St. Andrew's School, Bromley, Kent, only son of P. E. Hill, Latham House, Orlowell, and Ethel Grace, younger daughter of R. Hurst Sadler, The Moat House, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, will take place at Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield, on April 23rd.

Radnor Express dated March 20th, 1902

HILL.—May 11, at St. Andrew's School, Bromley, the wife of Philip Aubrey Hill, of a son.

Bromley Journal and West Kent Herald dated May 22nd, 1903

Brecknockshire Battalion, South Wales Borderers.—The undermentioned to be captains (temporary); dated October 29:—Arthur John de Winton (late captain and honorary major 1st Buckinghamshire Volunteers), William Baker Dixon (late captain this battalion), Herbert Graystone (late captain 3rd Battalion, the Buffs, East Kent Regiment), Cecil Frederic Gilbertson (late captain 5th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment), and Edward Aubrey Thomas (late captain 24th Middlesex Post Office Volunteer Royal Engineers). The undermentioned to be lieutenants (temporary); dated October 29:—Philip Aubrey Hill, Spyridion Mavrojani (late cadet Harrow School Cadet Corps), the Hon. Francis

Western Mail November dated 11th, 1914

SCHOOL ROLL OF HONOURED DEAD.

Another list of "old boys" of Uppingham School who have died while in the service of their country contains the names of over twenty officers. The following were killed in action:—Second-Lieut. (acting Captain) Richard Walter Brown, Wiltshire Regiment, aged 22 years; Lieut. Eric James Ptolemy Thurnburn, of the Cameronians, attached Royal Scots, 19; Second-Lieut. Kenneth Cothay Bonnell Storey, Berks. Regiment, 19; Lieut. George William Mason, Liverpool Regiment, 22; Capt. Robert Robertson Morrison Lumgair, K.O.S.B., 26; Major Frank Wm. Dust, M.C., R.F.A., 27; Lieut. Richard Elkanah Hownam Healey, Royal West Kent Regiment, 31; Capt. **Philip Aubrey Hill**, South Wales Borderers, 43; Second-Lieut. Herbert Shaw Smith, Royal Scots, 19; Second-Lieut. Maurice John Lee Walker, Royal

Grantham Journal dated July 21st, 1917

¹³¹ <https://www.royalsuttoncoldfieldgreatwarproject.co.uk/pro-patria-mori-bishop-veseys-grammar-school-great-war-memorial-2/>

CRICKHOWELL OFFICER KILLED.

The sad news was received on Tuesday that Capt. Philip A. Hill, only son of Col. P. E. Hill, R.A.M.C. (T.F.) retired, and Mrs Hill, of Latham House, Crickhowell, had been killed in action in France. Serving in the S.W. Borderers, he was leading his men in an advance on the 23rd April last (the anniversary of his wedding day), and, although slightly wounded, managed to reach the objective, when he was shot by a sniper. The gallant officer, who was about 43 years of age, was not only popular at Crickhowell, but was also extremely popular with his men. Universal sympathy is extended to Dr. and Mrs Hill in their affliction, Capt. Hill being their only son, and also with Mrs P. A. Hill and her only son. Always of a cheery disposition, Capt. Hill's loss will be severely felt by a large circle of relatives and friends. He was formerly connected with the 2/1st Brecknocks, receiving his commission in that battalion on Oct. 14th, 1914. Recently he was mentioned in Western Command Orders for gallant work in assisting crews of schooners in peril at Dale in November last. He went to France at the end of January last.

Brecon County Times dated May 3^d, 1917



Image of Captain Philip Aubrey Hill

War Notes.—A marble tablet has been fixed in S. Edmund's Church to the memory of the late Capt. P. A. Hill, only son of Dr. and Mrs P. E. Hill, of Latham House. It is surmounted with the badge of the Brecknockshire Battalion S.W.B., and the inscription is as follows :—"In brave and honoured memory of Philip Aubrey Hill, Captain, Brecknockshire Battalion (T.F.) S.W. Borderers, killed in action near Monchey-le-Preux, France, on April 23rd, 1917. Aged 43 years. He died the noblest death a man can die, fighting for God, and Right, and Liberty, and such a death is Immortality."—Over a fortnight ago news

Brecon County Times dated December 19th, 1918

HILL Philip Aubrey of Latham House Crickhowell **Breconshire**
captain H.M. Army died 23 April 1917 in France Probate
04 **London** 7 August to Ethel Grace Gill widow.
Effects £155 7s. 2d.

Probate Record for Philip Aubrey Hill

74999 Private William Kingzett 20th Company Royal Army Medical Corps

William Kingzett was born in 1878 in Kings Heath, Birmingham, to Charles and Mary Ann Kingzett. His father was a Domestic Gardener.

In 1881, William was 2 years old and living with his family at Clifton Cottage, High Street, Sutton Coldfield. This property was adjacent to the Royal Hotel.

By 1891, William was a scholar, aged 12, and living with his family in a cottage in Mere Green. It was probably on Lichfield Road close to the Fordrough.

The 1901 census records William as a boarder living at 37 Coles Lane, Sutton Coldfield. He was 22 years old and worked as a House Painter.

Later that year he married 26-year-old Alice Mary Nicholls at St Peters Church, Little Aston. They had a son named Arthur Sydney on March 3rd, 1902, and a daughter, Olive Mary on August 5th, 1906. Olive was baptized on September 1st, 1906, at St James Church, Hill. William was recorded as being a Painter living at Crown Lane. The couple had another son named Stanley William in 1909 who sadly died in infancy the same year.¹³²

Electoral rolls record William living at Mere Green between 1903 to 1905 and at 1 Crown Lane, Four Oaks from 1906 to 1909.

By the time of the 1911 census, William was living with his wife and two children on Walsall Road, Hill Hook, Little Aston. He was 32 years old and a House Painter. The census records that both their children had been born in Sutton Coldfield and confirms that Mary given birth to another child that had since died.

Little can be ascertained about his military service. It appears that he enlisted in Birmingham and served with the 20th Company Royal Army Medical Corps, which was a training unit based at Tidworth, Wiltshire.¹³³

Private William Kingzett died aged 38 on December 30th, 1916, at Fargo Military Hospital in Wiltshire. The given cause of death was "Cellulitis after vaccination on active service" and septicaemia. He was buried in the graveyard at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston on January 5th, 1917, where he is also commemorated on their memorial inside the church.

According to the Great War Forum, 20th Company RAMC "provided the personnel for 7th Field Ambulance and No.2 Stationary Hospital, both of which served in France and Belgium". It appears that William didn't serve in a theatre of war as there is no record of any medal entitlement for him. Presumably the vaccination which led to his death was given in advance of him serving overseas.

William left his effects to his widow who also received his war gratuity and a military pension. Her pension records list her address as Hill Hook, Sutton Coldfield.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Husband of Alice Mary Kingzett, of 7, Forge Lane, Little Aston, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham". Alice and her two children were living at the same address at the time of the 1921 census.

¹³² https://www.stpeterslittleaston.co.uk/files/ugd/c29696_f0b98ad234a3402b97b01ce161312481.pdf

¹³³ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/285654-20th-company-ramc/#comment-3391901>



Grave of Private William Kingzett. The inscription reads, "Sacred to the memory of Pte. W. Kingzett, R.A.M.C who died at Fargo Military Hospital Salisbury Plain, Dec 30th, 1916, Peace, Prefect Peace." ¹³⁴



Image of memorial plaque at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston (image courtesy of Emily Brennan)

¹³⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/180548566/william-kingzett>

Lieutenant Philip Edward Lindner 224 Squadron, Royal Air Force

Philip Edward Lindner was born on April 4th, 1889¹³⁵ in Solihull, Warwickshire, the youngest of seven children to Frederick William and Lucy Jane Lindner. His father was a merchant. He was baptised on May 10th, 1889, in Solihull. Frederick's father, Maximilian, was born in Germany and came to Britain around 1870, where he was German Vice-consul to Birmingham until about 1895.

In 1891, Philip was 2 years old and living with his parents, six siblings and six domestic staff in a substantial property named "The Hermitage", Lode Lane, Solihull, Warwickshire, where they lived until the house was badly damaged by fire in 1905. The family then moved to Milverton and Leamington Spa whilst the Hermitage was being restored. When works were completed in 1915, Frederick Lindner loaned the house to the Red Cross for use as a hospital.

Of the couple's five sons, two served in the Navy; Murray served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) whilst Leonard Hubert was a Lieutenant-Commander and was killed during the Battle of Jutland in 1916.

The 1901 census recorded Philip as being an 11-year-old Boarder at Arden House School, Henley in Arden, Warwickshire, but by 1903 he had moved to Repton School, Derbyshire, and was a boarding pupil there. His father was listed as living at "The Hermitage", Solihull.

In 1911 Philip was 21 years old and a Clerk for an Export Merchant. He was living with his family and several servants at "Crayton Lodge" a large house at 50 Warwick Place, Milverton, Leamington Spa. His service record states that he was a Director of Lindner's Export Merchants, 25 Broad Street, Birmingham, from 1906 to 1914.

On January 5th, 1915, he married 20-year-old Stephanie Gertrude Baldwin at the Parish Church of St Nicholas, Warwick. Philip was aged 25 and a Soldier living at New Milverton. A newspaper article about the wedding stated that "Mr. Lindner is training with the Public Schools Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment". Philip was a member of the Leamington and County Golf Club. Much of the above information came from the excellent Solihull Life website.¹³⁶

Shortly afterwards, he had become a Second Lieutenant as reported in the London Gazette dated April 19th, 1915, thus "The undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants (on probation). Dated 20th April, 1915, unless otherwise stated: Philip Edward Lindner, 3rd Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment (amongst others)". The 3rd (Reserve) Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment was a training unit that it remained in the UK throughout the war.¹³⁷ On December 8th, 1915, his appointment to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment Special Reserve of Officers as reported in the London Gazette on December 20th, 1915.

On October 17th, 1915, Richard and Stephanie had a son named Richard Philip. He was born in Warwick and Baptised on November 28th, 1915, at St Nicholas Church, Warwick. The records stated Philip to be a Second Lieutenant in the 3rd Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

At some point subsequently, he transferred to the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS), the flying wing of the Royal Navy. On May 21st, 1917, he had become an Observation Officer (on temporary probation) and by November 30th, 1917, been promoted to Observer Sub Lieutenant having passed the full Observers course at Eastchurch, Kent.

The RNAS was incorporated into the Royal Air Force on April 1st, 1918. No.6 Wing RNAS became 224 Squadron which was formed on at Alimini in Italy. They were equipped with the de Havilland

¹³⁵ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/6861787>

¹³⁶ <https://solihulllife.org/2018/07/21/21st-jul-1918/>

¹³⁷ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-infantry-regiments-of-1914-1918/royal-warwickshire-regiment/>

DH.4 but in June 1918 it re-equipped with the de Havilland DH.9. They saw action over Monenegro and Albania.¹³⁸¹³⁹

On July 21st, 1918, Philip was in action as described on the Great War Forum thus, "4 Dh.4 s of 224 squadron were trying to bomb the Bocche, and were unfortunate to have been intercepted by Austro Hungarian fighters who were attempting to intercept an Italian raid on shipping at Antivari.

The aircraft of the k.u.k. Kriegsmarine harried the 4 DH.4s and I suspect put them off their bombing run somewhat. One of the Dh.4 pilots, it's not clear whether it was Lt Chamberlin or Lt Jeaks, reported that B9505 was seen to circle round the Gulf pursued by 2 Phoenix fighters, from which it gradually drew away (the DH4 with a RR Eagle engine had a very good performance). B9505 turned Southwards in the direction of Scutari Lake and was lost to sight. A few minutes later Lt Ellingham saw a machine falling in flames off Platamone Point.

A report from two captured and interrogated Austro-Hungarian aviators stated that B9505 fell in the sea about 2 miles south of Cape Platamone. The DH.4's Observer, Lt Lindner was picked up alive by the AH torpedo boat SM Tb.60T. Their attempts at saving Lindner were in vain as he died on the deck of the Torpedo Boat. Lindner was buried in the town cemetery of Castelnuovo with full military honours. The final fate of the pilot, Lt Eric Bragg was not known. He was not found by the Torpedo Boat."¹⁴⁰

Philip was initially reported as missing and in November 1918 his wife made inquiries of the International Committee of the Red Cross to establish if he'd been wounded or taken prisoner, but no information was forthcoming¹⁴¹. It was later accepted that Lieutenant Philip Edward Lindner, had died on July 21st, 1918, aged 30. He was originally buried at Castelnuovo, Italy but was later moved to Salonika (Lembet Road) Military Cemetery, Greece, Plot 1627¹⁴². He is also commemorated on the Arden House School Memorial¹⁴³ and on the war memorial at Repton School.¹⁴⁴

His wife gave birth to their daughter named Josephine Ann four days after he was killed on July 25th, 1918. She was living at 59 Sandon Road, Edgbaston at the time.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website listed him thus, "Bronze Medal for Military Valour (Italy) Son of Frederick William and Lucy Jane Lindner; husband of Stephanie Gertrude Bigwood (formerly Lindner), of "The Wallands," Lichfield Rd., Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham". He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal and posthumously, the Bronze Medal for Military Valour (Italy). This was in relation his him bombing and destroying a bridge in Albania around two weeks before his death. He left his effects to his widow who also received a military pension.

His widow Stephanie married Wilfred Bigwood at Birmingham Cathedral on September 30th, 1920. The 1921 census records Stephanie and Wilfred living at "The Wallands," Lichfield Road., Four Oaks. Stephanie's children, Richard and Josephine who were listed as stepchildren, were also present. The couple had a son named Peter Guy Bigwood on October 18th, 1921. Wilfred Bigwood had been an officer in the 4th Battalion the Worcestershire Regiment in WW1 and was awarded the Military Cross for bravery in August 1916. He later became a Magistrate, Alderman and Mayor of Sutton Coldfield in 1937-1938¹⁴⁵ and commanded the 6th Warwickshire (Sutton) Home Guard in WW2.¹⁴⁶ Wilfred and Stephanie divorced in December 1939.

¹³⁸ <https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/air/rfc-view.php?pid=21243>

¹³⁹ https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/No._224_Squadron_RAF

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/317635-lieutenant-philip-edward-lindner-224-squadron-royal-air-force/>

¹⁴¹ https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record/browse?id=gbm%2ficrc%2fc_g1_e_15_01_0054%2f0809_0

¹⁴² <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/625079/philip-edward-lindner/>

¹⁴³ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/name/1156983>

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.tapataalk.com/groups/warmemorials/repton-school-t1523.html>

¹⁴⁵ https://cdn.sclhr.org.uk/images/stories/proceedings/V3-Spring_1994-9.pdf

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/one-small-story-terrible-war-peter-shergold/>

LINDNER—BALDWIN.

The wedding of Miss Stephanie Baldwin, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Baldwin, of Ashberry House, Warwick, took place very quietly at St. Nicholas's Church, Warwick, on Tuesday. The bridegroom was Mr. Philip E. Lindner, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. F. Lindner, of The Cedars, Leamington, and the ceremony was performed by the Vicar, the Rev. F. H. Lawson. The church was decorated with palms and white flowers. The bride, who was given away by her father, wore a travelling costume. There was no reception, and only a few relatives and friends were present in church. The honeymoon is being spent in London and Brighton. Mr. Lindner is training with the Public Schools Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment.

Leamington Spa Courier, January 8th, 1915

Lieut. PHILIP E. LINDNER, R.A.F., has been reported missing. He is 29 years of age, and is the youngest son of Mr. F. W. Lindner, "Summer Lodge," Tiddington, Stratford-on-Avon, and a director of Messrs. Lindner and Co., export merchants, of Broad Street, Birmingham. He has been flying in Italy since January last.

Birmingham Daily Post, August 2nd, 1918

The death in action on July 21st of Lieut. Philip Edward Lindner, R.A.F., is officially announced this week. He was the youngest son of Mr. F. W. Lindner, of Tiddington, Stratford-on-Avon (and formerly of The Cedars, Leamington), and he married the youngest daughter of Mr. Baldwin, of Ashberry House, Warwick. Mrs. Philip Lindner gave birth to a daughter four days after her husband's death.

Leamington Spa Courier, August 30th 1918

BIRTH.

LINDNER.—On 25th July, at 59, Sandon Road, Edgbaston, to Stephanie, the wife of Lieut. Philip E. Lindner, R.A.F., a daughter.

Leamington Spa Courier, July 26th, 1918

LINDNER.—Killed in action, on July 21, Lieutenant Philip Edward Lindner, R.A.F., husband of Stephanie Lindner, and youngest son of F. W. Lindner, Tiddington, Stratford-on-Avon.

From the Roll of Honour in the Birmingham Daily Post, August 22nd, 1918

Mrs. Lindner, widow of Lt. Philip Edward Lindner, R.A.F., has received from the Italian Government (through the Air Ministry) their Bronze Medal for Military Valour posthumously awarded to her husband for bombing and destroying a bridge, "Ponte di Kuci (Albania) 7-10 Luglio, 1918,"—to quote the inscription on the Medal. Lt. Lindner was killed shortly afterwards—on July 21st—while flying as an observer. He was the son of Mr. F. W. Lindner, of Summer Lodge, Tiddington, Stratford-on-Avon, and formerly of The Cedars, Leamington.

Leamington Spa Courier, 11th April 1919

LINDNER Philip Edward of 59 Sandon-road Edgbaston Birmingham a lieutenant in the R.A.F. died 21 July 1918 in action in the Adriatic Sea Probate Birmingham 17 July to Stephanie Gertrude Lindner widow. Effects £646 16s. 8d.

Probate Record



Gravestone of Lieutenant Philip Edward Lindner¹⁴⁷

MARRIAGES.

BIGWOOD—LINDNER.—On September 30th, at the Cathedral, Birmingham, by the Rev. H. D. Noel Paterson, Vicar of Bromsgrove, Wilfred Bigwood, fourth son of Mr. Ernest J. Bigwood, The Berrow, Barnt Green, Worcestershire, to Stephanie Gertrude, widow of Lieut. Philip E. Lindner, R.A.F., and youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Baldwin, Ashberry House, Warwick.

Leamington Spa Courier, October 8th 1920

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56565716/philip-edward-lindner#view-photo=147797439>

7443 Sergeant Myles John Chislett Little

1st Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment

Myles John Chislett Little was born around 1884 in Askrigg, North Yorkshire. A record of his birth was not found and some records state him to be two years older than recorded on the census returns.

In 1891 he was 6 years old and a scholar living with his aunt at Yewbarrow Cottage, Eggerslack Road, Grange-over-Sands, Lancashire. In August 1893 he was recorded as a pupil at Crawleyside Church Of England Junior Mixed School in Stanhope, County Durham, where he won a prize for arithmetic.

By 1901 he was 16 years old and a pupil boarding at St Oswald College, Lee, Ellesmere, Shropshire,

The 1911 Census recorded him living as a boarder at 5 Lord Haddon Road, Ilkeston. His occupation was Police Constable in Derbyshire, and he was 26 years old.

He married Louisa May Nicholls at St James Church, Hill on November 8th, 1911. He was a Police Constable living at Glen Villa, Stanton Road, Ilkeston. His age was apparently incorrectly recorded as 28 years old. Louisa was 25 years old and lived at Blackberry Lane, Four Oaks.

There are no available records of his service though as he was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal, that indicates he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

In August 1916 the 1st North Staffordshire Regiment saw much action including attacks on the strongly fortified German second line position around Guillemont and then in the infamous and constantly changing landscape of Delville Wood. The prolonged fighting at the latter from the end of August into early September was especially brutal featuring intense bombardments, counter attacks and hand to hand fighting amid scenes of terrible desolation.

The battalion was relieved on September 2nd; however, the ordeal was still not over. Following the 7th Division counter attack on September 3rd, two companies moved up to reinforce the 9th East Surreys, most of the men under 2nd Lt. Ryley in Devil's trench and the rest in York trench and the front line. 2nd Lt. Ryley had been instructed by his commanding officer to prevent Germans working round in the rear of Edge trench. However, when he was in place, an officer, a sergeant and lance corporal of the 2nd Queens Regiment appeared. 2nd. Lt. Ryley was instructed to co-operate in an offensive in which they planned to attack Delville Wood frontally. The Queens officer did not give 2nd Lt. Ryley sufficient time to report back to his own battalion HQ.

At the appointed time, 2nd Lt. Ryley ordered his men to fix bayonets and with his Lewis gun charged over the ground towards the south east corner of the wood. He was killed almost immediately by machine gun fire and the Lewis gun was knocked out by a shell. Of the 15 men in the two platoons, more than half were killed or wounded. A few men under Sergeant Little reached the German parapet but nobody got into the trench. They were nearly all killed by machine gun fire.

After the battle, the 24th Divisional commander asked for a report on this incident. In his reply, the North Staffordshire commanding officer was clearly very annoyed about the incident. He commented that the action of the 2nd Queens could have been disastrous for the whole British position in the wood.¹⁴⁸

The battalion finally saw the back of Delville wood on 6th September when they moved to Dernancourt. The cost had been a heavy one: five officers were killed and four were wounded; 45 other ranks were killed (65 in total according to CWGC), 155 were wounded and 9 were missing.

Sergeant Myles John Chislett Little was killed in the above action on September 5th, 1916. He is buried at Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval, France, Plot VI. I. 10.

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/232774-1st-battalion-the-north-staffordshire-regiment-on-the-somme-1916/>

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Simpson Little, of Northallerton, Yorks; husband of Louisa May Little, of Four Oaks Common, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham."



Grave of Myles John Chislett Little¹⁴⁹

He left his effects to his widow Louisa, who also received a military pension. Her pension records listed her address as 107A Nottingham Road, Stapleford, Nottingham.

It appears from the 1921 Census that Myles and Louisa had two children as it recorded Louisa May Little residing at Blackberry Lane, Four Oaks. She was a widow and had two children, both listed as "Father dead". The children were Maurice Frederick, aged 9, who was born in Sutton Coldfield and Cyril Leslie, aged 8, whose birthplace was Long Eaton, Derbyshire.

¹⁴⁹ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56585490/myles-john_chislett-little

6157 Rifleman Joseph William Oram
1/8th West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own)

Joseph William Oram was born in 1890 at his family home on Tamworth Road, Lichfield to John and Mary Oram. He was Baptised on September 21st, 1890, at the church of St Michael on Greenhill, Lichfield. His father was a Labourer.

The 1891 census recorded Joseph as living with his grandparents in Little Hay, Shenstone, Staffordshire. He was less than one year old at the time.

In 1901, he was 11 years old and living with his family on Ashcroft Lane, Shenstone, Staffordshire. His father was a "Waggoner on farm".

By 1911 Joseph was aged 20, working as a Labourer and living with his family at Ashcroft, Shenstone.

Joseph married Annie James on August 2nd, 1916, at St. Mary's Church, Weeford, Staffordshire. Joseph was living in Fotherley near Shenstone at the time.

Little can be ascertained about his military service. It appears that he initially served as a Private in the 1/7th Durham Light Infantry (regimental number 5827) before transferring to the 1/8th West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) as Rifleman 6157.

Rifleman Joseph William Oram died of illness on February 18th, 1917 aged 28. He was buried at Humbercamps Communal Cemetery Extension, Plot I. E. 12. France. The Extension on the North-Eastern side of the Communal Cemetery, in part of an old orchard. It was used mainly by Field Ambulances, from September 1915 to February 1917.¹⁵⁰

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Mr. and Mrs. John Oram, of The Homestead, Shenstone, Lichfield and was the husband of Annie Oram, of "Hill Side", Lichfield Rd., Four Oaks, Birmingham".

He is also commemorated on the Shenstone War Memorial.¹⁵¹

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal, indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915. He left his effects to his widow, who also received his war gratuity.

The 1921 census recorded his wife Annie as 26 years old and a widow. She was living in the household of the Issatt family at "Hillside", Lichfield Road, Four Oaks as a general domestic servant.

¹⁵⁰ <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/26507/humbercamps-communal-cemetery-extension/>

¹⁵¹ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/name/298554>

MARRIAGE.

Oram—James.—On August 2nd, 1916, at St. Mary's, Weeford, by the Rev. A. Wheeler Vicar of Hints; Joseph William Oram, of Fotherley, Shenstone, to Annie James, of Thickbroom, Weeford, by Special License.

Lichfield Mercury, August 4th, 1916

Oram.—In loving memory of Joseph William Oram, who died from illness contracted while on active service in France, February 18, 1917.

He called to his eternal God, and did not call in vain,
His Saviour heard his piteous cries and freed him from all pain;
Moved him in life, he is dear to me still,
But in grief I must bend to God's holy Will.

My sorrow is great, my grief hard to bear,
I miss you, dear husband, your love and your care.

Deeply mourned by his Widow,
Mother, Father, Sisters, and Brothers.

From the "In Memoriam" column of the Lichfield Mercury, February 15th, 1918

WAR MEMORIAL.—The Bishop of Lichfield, on the 30th ult., dedicated a war memorial which has been recently placed in the chancel of the Parish Church. The memorial takes the form of a mural tablet of stone with the names inscribed of those parishioners who made the supreme sacrifice in the Great War. The names, arranged in chronological order, are as follow:—1914: Arthur Bates. 1915: Leonard Hawkins, May 22nd; James Lambert, June 8th; David Hackett, June 29th; Harry Oscar Harrison, July; Michael Vallancey Molloy, August 9th; George Arthur Hawkins, September 25th; William Wickson, September 25th; Richard Organ, October; Ernest Bateman, October 10th; J. William Walker, November 22nd. 1916: William Henry Neville, March 17th; John Edward Wickson, July 27th; Thomas Charles Russell, September 3rd; Eric Douglas Smart, November 18th. 1917: Joseph William Oram, February 18th; Cecil Hackett, May 28th; William Godwin, June. 1918: George Bates; Robert Cutten, February; Arnold E. Bevridge, February 11th; Major Wickham, March 22nd; Joseph Jonas, March 23rd; Charles H. Walker, March 23rd; Frederick R. Swain, April 8th; Joseph Henry James, August 11th; Tobias T. Parker, October 7th; George Craddock, October 19th; John Rigby, October 23rd.

Lichfield Mercury, July 8th 1921



Gravestone of Rifleman Joseph William Oram¹⁵²

¹⁵² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/58919046/joseph-william-oram>

268217 Private Alec Frank Tomlinson **1/7th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment**

Alec Frank Tomlinson was born on October 7th, 1890, in Pebworth, Gloucestershire (now in Worcestershire), to Herbert and Annie Tomlinson. His father was a Farm Labourer. The census of 1891 recorded Alec as being less than one year old and living with this family at Front Street, Pebworth.

He started at Inkberrow School in August 1897 along with his older sister Hilda. The admissions book recorded they had previously attended Pebworth School. Alec left school in November 1903. By 1901 census, he was 10 years old and living with his family at Holberrow Green, Inkberrow, Worcestershire.

Alec had a brush with the law according to a report in a local newspaper. Another report relating to the incident recorded him as living at Old Street, Upton-on-Severn. He was working as a Bakers Assistant.

Whether the above incident prompted him to move is unclear, but by 1911 he had relocated to Four Oaks where, on the 1911 census he was recorded as living and working at an address on Walsall Road, Four Oaks, which appears to have been a bakery. Alec was 20 years old and listed as a servant working as a Baker and Deliverer. The head of the household was an Arthur Hall who was a Baker and Confectioner. His wife Selina was also working in the business. Also present were their four sons and a boarder named Samuel Powis who was a teacher. The 1916 Kelly's Directory for Warwickshire lists Arthur Hall as a "baker, grocer & post office, Walsall Road, Four Oaks Common".¹⁵³

He was mentioned as a witness to a road traffic accident near Four Oaks Station as described in the Sutton Coldfield News dated June 17th, 1911. He was described as Alec Tomlinson, journeyman baker, Walsall Road. The article is somewhat hard to follow, it seems that he'd been cycling nearby and hanging onto the back of a car that some witnesses alleged had been speeding. When the car stopped, he ran into the back of it, damaging his bicycle and incurring a few bruises.¹⁵⁴

Little can be ascertained about Alec's war service. He served with the 1/7th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, a territorial unit, and had the regimental number 268217. He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal, indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

According to the Great War Forum, when comparing his regimental number to men whose service records exist, it would appear that Alec was a Derby or Group Scheme recruit who probably attested in late 1915 and would have been mobilised later in 1916. Several men originally allotted to the 11th RWR landed in France on December 24th, 1916, but were posted to the 1/7th RWR on January 13th, 1917. Although not recorded in the war diary, Alec was likely to have been in that draft. His battalion were out of the line and training at the time he arrived.¹⁵⁵

He was reported as wounded in the War Office Weekly Casualty List dated November 13th, 1917. The nature of his wounds is unknown as is where he was injured, but there was usually a three or four week time lag from the incident to the report. Assuming this is the case then he may well have been wounded during his battalions costly but ultimately successful part in the attack against the Broodseinde Ridge, Ypres on October 4th, 1917. The battalion remained in the line where they were shelled until October 7th, when they were relieved and subsequently moved to a relatively quiet sector of the Vimy Ridge where they saw no further action of note until moving to Italy in late November. The war diary entry for October 11th recorded casualties during recent operations as 2 officers killed and 3 wounded, 23 other ranks killed and 140 wounded with 14 missing.

¹⁵³ <https://sclhr.org.uk/research/research-tools/2504-sutton-coldfield-trades-directories.html>

¹⁵⁴ <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0003820/19110617/007/0007>

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/317807-pte-alec-frank-tomlinson-7th-rwr/#comment-3391790>

Alec survived the war and returned to Mere Green afterwards where he was employed at the Mere Green bakery, Mere Green Road, Four Oaks.

In May 1919, he was turning out his employers horse into a nearby field when it kicked him. Alec died of his injuries the next day, aged 28.

He is buried in the graveyard at St James Church, Mere Green. He does not have a Commonwealth War Grave as his death was not attributable to his war service.

However, his grave records his rank, regimental number and regiment and because the circumstances regarding his death were unknown, research was undertaken and the findings included in this document.

hard labour.—A case against Alec Frank Tomlinson, a youthful assistant to a baker at Upton, who was charged with committing an unnatural offence, ended in his discharge. The Hon. R. Coventry, who prosecuted, said that the offence was witnessed by two married women near the station, but after Mr. Farrant, who defended prisoner, had been heard, the jury found the prisoner not guilty.

Gloucestershire Echo, June 6th 1907

Tomlinson 268217 A. F. (Redditch);

From the "Wounded" section of the casualty lists for the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in the War Office Weekly Casualty List, November 13th 1917

SUTTON COLDFIELD MAN'S TRAGIC DEATH.

Dr. Iliffe (Coroner for North Warwickshire) attended at the Sutton Coldfield Police Court to-day and held an enquiry into the death of Alec Frank Tomlinson (28), an employee at the Mere Green Bakery, which took place at the local Cottage Hospital on the night of the 27th inst.

The evidence of his employer, George Golby, was to the effect that on Monday afternoon Tomlinson took his horse from the stable to turn it into a field adjoining. On liberating the animal at the gate it kicked him. He however, made no complaint until the next morning, when his condition became so serious that Dr. Jerome ordered his removal to the hospital, where he died.

In answer to Mr. R. H. Norris (instructed by Mr. W. J. Rabnett, Birmingham), who appeared for Tomlinson's relatives, Mr. Golby said it was not part of Tomlinson's duty to look after the horse.

A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

Birmingham Mail, May 30th 1919

Air Mechanic 3rd Class Arthur William Thomas Utton Photographic Section, Royal Air Force

Arthur William Thomas Utton was born in Edmonton, Middlesex, on October 8th, 1879, to Arthur and Eliza Utton. His father was a carpenter. In 1881 he was 1 year old and living with his family at 8 Skiltons Cottages, Edmonton, Middlesex. The 1891 census recorded him living with his widowed grandmother, aunt and uncle at Icewell Hill, Newmarket, Suffolk. He was aged 11 and a scholar. Arthur and his older sister Gertrude had been orphaned in 1884. By 1901 he was working as a milkman and was living in Surbiton, Surrey.

Arthur married Florence May Lissaman in the Parish Church of Wolston, Warwickshire on September 12th, 1906. His profession was recorded as "Artist" on the marriage banns.

It appears that he had several professions and interests. His first employment was with the Wolesley Sheep Shearing Company but became a milkman by 1901. Later he ran photographic studio at 210 Slade Road, Erdington, Birmingham.¹⁵⁶

Arthur and Florence had a son named Arthur Edward who was born in Wolston near Coventry on May 5th, 1908. On the 1911 census Arthur was 30 years old and working as a photographic artist and hairdresser. He and his family were living at 20 High Steet, Halstead, Essex. His obituary states that he moved to Bromsgrove in 1915 and ran a photographic studio there at 92 High Street.

In July 1917, Arthur was granted a temporary exemption from military service by a Local Tribunal. There were four grounds for exemption:

- if it is expedient in the national interests that he should be engaged in other work, or, if he is being educated or trained for any other work, that he should continue; or
- if serious hardship would ensue owing to his exceptional financial or business obligations or domestic position; or
- ill health or infirmity; or
- conscientious objection to the undertaking of combatant service.¹⁵⁷

Given his employment as a photographer, it is likely his exemption was due to financial or business obligations. It is not known if he received exemptions prior to or after the one he received in July 1917.

Arthur eventually enlisted in the Photographic Section of the Royal Air Force as an Air Mechanic 3rd Class (service number 190074) on May 30th, 1918. His obituary states that "He had previously served in the local Company of Volunteers". His service record shows that he was 5 feet 1inch tall and had a chest measurement of 30 inches. He had blue, eyes, light brown hair and a fresh complexion. His religion was Church of England. His given address was "Llanelly", Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove.

In late 1918 and prior to being demobilised, he developed ear trouble and was treated at Winchester Military Hospital. He was subsequently given sick leave. His condition worsened and two operations were required. However, he did not recover, and Arthur died on January 25th, 1919, at the 1st Birmingham War Hospital, Rubery, Birmingham, aged 39. He was buried at Bromsgrove Cemetery, Worcestershire, Plot J. 266. He is also commemorated on the All Saints Parish Church, Bromsgrove Roll of Honour.

It appears that Arthur didn't serve in a theatre of war as there is no record of any medal entitlement for him nor mention of it on his service record.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Husband of Florence May Utton, of Gothic Cottage, Mere Green Rd., Four Oaks, Warwickshire". The 1921 Census recorded Florence as a widow living at 69 Reddicap Heath Road, Sutton Coldfield, with her son Arthur and her mother.

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59586362/arthur-william-utton>

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/soldiers/a-soldiers-life-1914-1918/enlisting-into-the-army/the-1916-military-service-act/>

IMPORTANT NOTICE
 CONCERNING THE
"MESSENGER" PORTRAIT STUDIO,
 HIGH STREET, BROMSGROVE.

ARTHUR W. UTTON desires to state that the Studio is now OPEN for the taking of Photographs, etc., on
TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS, AND SATURDAYS.

Appointments may also be made for other days to suit convenience of customers.

CHILDREN'S PORTRAITURE A SPECIALITY.
 Enlargements, Miniatures, Copies, etc.

Call at Studio for Price List and see Specimens.

Advert in the Bromsgrove & Droitwich Messenger, March 25th 1916

Arthur W. Utton (37), married, B3, photographer, "Messenger" Studios.—Four months.

From a column headed, "Bromsgrove Urban Tribunal" from the Bromsgrove & Droitwich Messenger, July 28th 1917

DEATH.—Mr. Arthur Utton, who was formerly in business at Wolston, has passed away at Bromsgrove after an operation. He married Miss F. Lissaman, daughter of Mr. J. Lissaman, and was well known in the district, and his genial manner left him many friends.

Coventry Herald, February 8th, 1919



Gravestone of Arthur Utton¹⁵⁹

DEATH OF A BROMSGROVE AIR MECHANIC.



PRIVATE ARTHUR W. UTTON, R.A.F.; Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove.

The death occurred on Saturday of Private Arthur William Utton, Air Mechanic in the Photographic Section of the Royal Air Force, previously acting as a photographer at 92 High Street, Bromsgrove, and residing at Llanelly, Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove. The deceased, who was 39 years of age, came to Bromsgrove in November, 1915, when he commenced business at the "Messenger" Office Photographic Studio in High Street. A capable artist, he soon gained the confidence of the public, and the business quickly extended, until it assumed such proportions that there were few families in the district some member of whom had not been photographed by Mr. Utton. In the early summer of last year the deceased joined the forces, entering the photographic section of the R.A.F. He had previously served in the local Company of Volunteers, with whom he was one of the most popular members, his genial and obliging disposition gaining him many friends. Private Utton was looking forward to the demobilisation period, when he hoped to resume and extend his business in the town, but about a month or two ago he developed ear trouble, and was treated in Winchester Military Hospital. Subsequently he was granted sick leave and came home, but he became worse, and while on leave was admitted to the 1st Birmingham War Hospital at Rubery. The trouble developed, and two operations became necessary, but despite all efforts of the medical staff, Private Utton passed away about 2.30 on Saturday afternoon. Deceased leaves a widow and one boy.

The funeral of the deceased took place on Thursday afternoon at Bromsgrove Parish Church and Cemetery, and was conducted by the Vicar (the Rev. H. D. Noel Paterson). The mourners were Mrs. Utton (widow), Master Archie Utton (son), Miss Utton (sister), Mr. and Mrs. Davis, (cousins), Mrs. Tissaman (mother-in-law), and Mrs. A. Tissaman (sister-in-law); and others who attended at the church and followed were Lieutenants F. W. Harvey and Frank Holyoake, Platoon Sergeant W. L. Snell, Sergt. J. S. Cooke, Corpl. W. Long, and Pte. J. Pickering (of the Bromsgrove Detachment of the 2nd V.B. Worcestershire Regt.), Mr. J. Bate, Mr. W. D. Dunster, and Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Heydon. The floral tributes comprised a harp from the Widow and Archie, and wreaths from Miss Utton, Mrs. Tissaman, Mr. and Mrs. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Tissaman and family, Mr. and Mrs. A. Tissaman and family, Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Dunster, and the employees of the Bromsgrove "Messenger" Company. The funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs. T. and E. Grey.

Obituary from the Bromsgrove Messenger, date unknown¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59586362/arthur-william-utton#view-photo=243098534>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59586362/arthur-william-utton#view-photo=94156891>

Lieutenant Frank Trevor Wakeman 4 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps

Frank Trevor Wakeman was born in Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield in 1898 to Frank John and Edith Margaret Wakeman. He was baptised on May 28th, 1898 at Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield. The family address was "The Dene", Four Oaks and Frank John Wakeman worked as an insurance manager.

In 1901 the family were living at "The Dene", Bracebridge Road, Four Oaks. Frank Trevor was 3 years old.

At some point before 1910, the family move to Grange Road, Bushey, Hertfordshire, where they named their house "The Dene", as Frank J Wakeman is recorded as living at that address on the 1910 Electoral Register. In 1911 he and his parents appeared to be on holiday at a boarding house named Solent Cliffs at Cliff Cottage Road, Bournemouth. Present at "The Dene" were Frank's younger brothers, John Dennis and Arthur Stuart, aged nine and one year old respectively, and Ada Thompson, a 45-year-old widow described as a gentlewoman visitor plus two domestic servants. The 1911 census recorded Frank Trevor as 13 years old and a schoolboy. He is known to have studied at Cambridge House School, Margate and West Buckland School, North Devon. He is also listed on the Berkhamsted School memorial, which records that he left the school in 1909.

Frank Trevor initially enlisted in the army as Private 3754 of the 1/28th (County of London) Battalion (Artist's Rifles), in April 1915. He was later commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the 5th Royal Warwickshire Regiment as reported in the London Gazette dated October 16th, 1915, thus "The Royal Warwickshire Regiment. The undermentioned Privates, from The London Regiment, to be Second Lieutenants. Dated 17th October, 1915:- Frank Trevor Wakeman (amongst others)."

According to his Medal Index Card, he went to France January 11th, 1916, and the war diary of the 1/5th Royal Warwickshire Regiment recorded his arrival for duty the following day.

Contemporary newspaper reports state that he was severely wounded in February 1916. No mention of this was found in the battalion war diary (nor was there any further mention of him made in the war diary thereafter), though on March 4th, 1916, he was admitted to Queen Alexandra's Military Hospital at Millbank with bronchitis and discharged on April 20th, 1916. The admission records showed that he was a Second Lieutenant in the 1/5th RWR. He was 18 years old and had been in service for 11 months. The newspaper report goes on to say that he spent six months convalescing before he rejoined his regiment. However, the actual date may have been later as The Supplement to the London Gazette dated June 6th, 1917, reported that as of May 18th, 1917, "2nd Lt. F. T. Wakeman, R. War. R., T.F., and to be secd", meaning that he was being seconded to the Royal Flying Corps.

He apparently spent the winter of 1916 -17 in Egypt, returned to Britain in May 1917. He obtained his 'wings' and in the same month then went to the Front. On August 1st, 1917, and whilst attached to the Royal Flying Corps, he was promoted to Lieutenant as reported in the London Gazette on August 30th, 1917 thus, "ROYAL FLYING CORPS. Mil. Wing. Gen. List.—The undermentioned 2nd Lts. T.F., to be temp. Lts. 1st Aug. 1917 : — F. T. Wakeman, R. War. R (amongst others)". Newspaper reports indicate he was wounded again around this time.

Whilst on active service with 4 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, he flew a Royal Aircraft Factory RE.8 which was a British single-engine biplane with a crew of two used in WW1 for reconnaissance and artillery-spotting¹⁶⁰.

Early on the morning of October 30th, 1917, Frank was piloting an RE8 type aircraft (serial number B5070). He was flying on an artillery observation mission, one of the most common types of sorties carried out by 4 Squadron, when the machine was struck by a shell at around 5000 feet. The aircraft crashed out of control 1/2 mile NNE from the centre of Zonnebeke (about two miles into enemy

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/70000213>

territory and southwest of Passchendaele). Frank was killed and his observer Lt George D Heys was wounded in the incident but survived.¹⁶¹

Lieutenant Frank Trevor Wakeman was killed in action aged 20. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Arras Flying Services Memorial, Arras, Departement du Pas-de-Calais, Nord-Pas-de-Calais.

He is also commemorated on the Berkhamsted School war memorial¹⁶², the Bushey war memorial¹⁶³ and at St Paul's Church, Bushey¹⁶⁴.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. He left his effects to his father.

His parents continued to live at "The Dene" in Grange Road until about 1915, when they moved to 48 Gracechurch Street, E C London¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶¹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/229294-4-squadron-rfc-july-17-to-31-october-17-lt-gda-heys-wia/#comment-2278802>

¹⁶² <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/14588>

¹⁶³ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/14576>

¹⁶⁴ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d600a43c73d470001f3eb68/t/5dc2f9db380bb847d9f82127/1573059038780/191106+A+History+of+St+Pauls.pdf>

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.hertsatwar.co.uk/biographies/169479/frank-trevor-wakeman>

News has been received that Lieut. Frank Trevor Wakeman, of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and the Royal Flying Corps, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Wakeman, of the Dene, Bushey, has been killed whilst flying in France. It appears that he was flying with Lieut. Heys, a grandson of Mr. W. E. Heys, of Aldenham-road, Bushey, who was acting as observer, at a height of 5,000 feet, when the machine was struck by a shell. In the course of a letter to the bereaved parents, deceased's flight commander refers to the high esteem in which he was held by his fellow-officers, and says that he had always shown himself a brave and capable soldier. The letter continues: "His cheerful manner and good fellowship are greatly missed by all, and he was an outstanding example to all pilots, both in his skill and high morale. I am glad to be able to say that even in the last minutes he showed the same spirit of cool-headedness and pluck that was the keystone of his life." Lieut. Wakeman, who was educated at Cambridge House School, Margate, and West Buckland School, North Devon, and was in his 20th year, joined the Artists Rifles in April, 1915, and in October of the same year was given a commission in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He left for France in the following December, and was severely wounded in February, 1916. After six months in hospital and convalescent home, he rejoined his Regiment, and shortly afterwards was transferred to the Flying Corps. After spending the winter of 1916-17 in Egypt, he returned to England in May, and gained his pilot's "wings." He again went to France, was promoted Lieut. in July, and was again wounded.

Watford Observer, November 10th, 1917

Lieut. Frank Trevor Wakeman, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, and R.F.C., was killed on October 30, in his 20th year. He was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Wakeman, of The Dene, Bushey, Herts, and was educated at Cambridge House School, Margate, and West Buckland School, North Devon.

Western Times, November 9th 1917

LIEUT. F. T. WAKEMAN (KILLED).

Lieutenant Frank Trevor Wakeman, Royal Warwickshire Regiment and Royal Flying Corps, who was killed in action on October 30, in his 20th year, was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Wakeman, of The Dene, Bushey, Herts. He was born at The Dene, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, and educated at Cambridge House School, Margate, and West Buckland School, North Devon. He joined the Artists' Rifles in April, 1915, and was gazetted to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in October of that year. He went to France in the following December, and was severely wounded in February, 1916. After six months in hospital and convalescent home he rejoined his regiment, and shortly afterwards was transferred to the Royal Flying Corps. He spent the winter of 1916-17 in Egypt, and on returning to this country in May he obtained his pilot's "wings," and in the same month went to France. He was promoted lieutenant in July, and about the same time was again wounded. His flight commander, who speaks of him as a valuable pilot, reports that Lieutenant Wakeman's machine was hit by a shell whilst flying over the line at 5,000 feet.

Birmingham Daily Post, November 6th, 1917

WAKEMAN Frank Trevor of The Dene Grange-road Bushey **Hertfordshire** lieutenant Royal Warwickshire regiment attached R.F.C. died 30 October 1917 in France Administration **London** 25 February to Frank John Wakeman insurance manager. Effects £262 1s. 8d.

Probate Record for Frank Trevor Wakeman

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<https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/> - Details about the servicemen and where they are buried or commemorated
<https://www.findagrave.com/> - Details and images of the servicemen and where they are buried or commemorated including images of their gravestones and memorial panels
<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/> - Census, birth, marriage, and military service records
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/> - Details about officers promotions and commissions
<https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/80192-war-memorials-glos-staffs-cheshire-derby-other-counties/page/20/#findComment-2123637> - Information on deceased servicemen associated with Four Oaks
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1433680?section=official-list-entry> - Details about the war memorial itself and the reasons for it being a listed monument
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/17349> - Details about the war memorial itself
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/38628> - Details about the plaque at Four Oaks
Methodist Church
<https://kes.org.uk/RollofHonour/index.html> - Information on soldiers who attended King Edwards Grammar School, New Street, Birmingham
<https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/> - Information on individual soldiers
<https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk> - Information on army units and their whereabouts during WW1.
Advice on interpreting service records. Also details about campaign and bravery medals.
<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> - Battalion war diaries, soldiers medal cards and service records
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<https://www.royalsuttoncoldfieldgreatwarproject.co.uk/> - Information on the servicemen commemorated on both the Four Oaks and Sutton Coldfield war memorials from the Sutton Coldfield Great War Project
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<https://astreetnearyou.org/#=undefined&lat=52.590029924854896&lon=-1.8446409702301028&zoom=17> - Information on deceased servicemen associated with Four Oaks
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- I'm most grateful to Tina Ambrose for her help regarding the servicemen associated with St James Church, Mere Green.
- Additional information researched by Sylvia Williams.
- Thanks to Emily Brennan for the image of the plaque at St Peter's Church, Little Aston.

Please note I'm an amateur genealogist and local historian with an interest in World War One. I am not an expert on any of these subjects and acknowledge that some of my interpretations may be incorrect. All information has been provided in good faith but, on occasions errors may occur. Should this be the case, if new information can be verified, please supply it to the author and corrections will then be made.