

Families of Wartime Loose

A look into the lives and families of some of the men and women of the Loose area who died in the Two Great World Wars



Photograph by Sally Carss

Introduction

One of the first meetings regarding a suitable war memorial in Loose took place on December 1st 1920. This meeting, which was very well attended, was convened by the Parish Council and took place in the Loose Council schools. Various suggestions were advanced which included an institute, a cenotaph, a bed in the West Kent General Hospital, tablets in the parish church and chapel, a lych gate, a monument on the village green, a hut as a parish hall and a recreation ground.

Mr Raymond Smith proposed that steps should be taken to provide a memorial hall and this was seconded by Major Smith. Mrs Coulter proposed that a cross be erected in the cemetery—afterwards amended simply to the erection of cross. This was seconded by Miss McAlpine. A long discussion ensued and Mrs Forster then proposed that a cross be erected in memory of the fallen, and at the same time, a fund be collected for a parish hall. There was already a reserve fund for a parish hall that stood at £300 and her proposal meant that those who desired to contribute to a cross could do so and those who desired a parish hall could subscribe for that purpose. Mrs Wintour seconded this proposal. After much further discussion and argument the proposition was eventually carried and a committee to consider the carrying out of the scheme was appointed as follows:

The Rev. W Gardner-Waterman, Mrs Gould, Mrs Wightwick, Mrs Forster, Mrs Wintour, Majors F D Thomas and Smith, Captain Thorn, Dr Jones and Messrs. J Barker, L Barker, W Goulden,[Golden], R Hodge, G Marsham, K McAlpine, T Richards, W S Taylor and Liuk.

Eighteen months later, in July 1922 the honour of unveiling the memorial was conferred upon Private Harold Harris, late of the 6th Battalion The Buffs, East Kent Regiment. Harold, who had served in Flanders with his battalion, had suffered the loss of his sight but thanks to his special training at St Dunstan's Hostel he had been able to set up a small boot repairer's business in the village.

The memorial, situated in the churchyard extension, takes the form of a Latin cross and is mounted on a square pedestal. On the front of the cross is a crusader's sword in bronze, whilst on the square pedestal are panels of Aberdeen granite on which the names of the fallen are inscribed—together with the inscription:



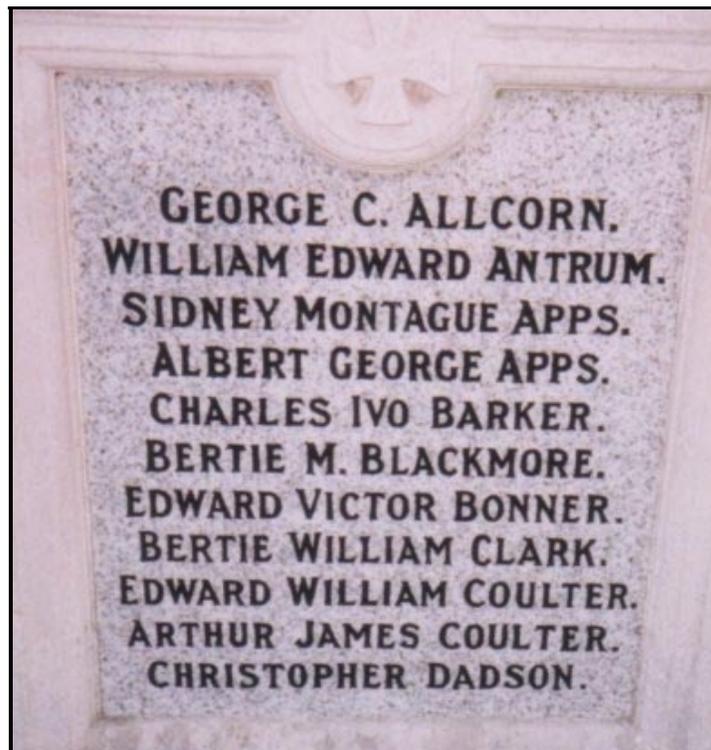
To the glory of God and in grateful memory of the men of Loose who gave their lives for their country in the Great War of 1914-1918

With the exception of the sword and panels, the whole memorial is worked in Portland stone. The work was executed by Mr H Cole of Boughton Monchelsea and was designed by A W Smith F.R.I.B.A.

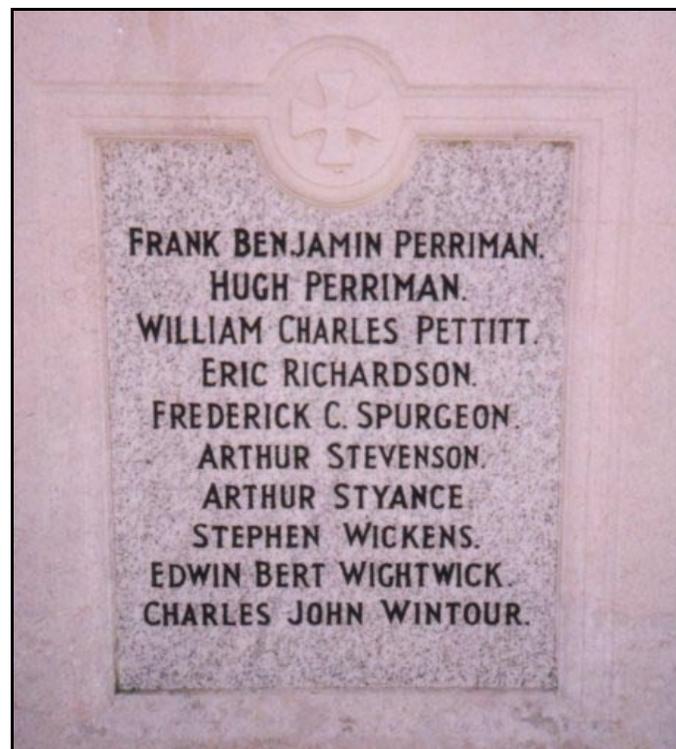
Introduction (continued)

The 41 First World War names appearing on the Loose Memorial are:

1. George E Allcorn
2. William Edward Antrum
3. Albert George Apps
4. Sidney Montague Apps
5. Charles Ivo Barker
6. Bertie M Blackmore
7. Edward Victor Bonner
8. Bertie William Clark
9. William Edward Coulter
10. Arthur James Coulter
11. Christopher Dadson
12. Frank Doughty
13. David Ezra
14. John Greville Fulkes
15. Frederick Golden
16. James Golden
17. John Hugh Gould
18. John Gladstone Grey
19. William E Gladstone Grey
20. William Charles Gurr
21. George Hodge
22. Albert Jenner
23. Arthur Jenner
24. Reginald E Jones
25. Lewis John Kember
26. Alfred Vernon Langley
27. Harold Larkin
28. Fred Ernest Longley
29. Victor Masters
30. Frank Herbert Moon
31. William Edward Norris
32. Frank Benjamin Perriman
33. Hugh Perriman
34. William Charles Pettitt
35. Eric Richardson
36. Frederick C Spurgeon
37. Arthur Stevenson
38. Arthur Styance
39. Stephen Wickens
40. Edwin Bert Wightwick
41. Charles John Wintour



Introduction (continued)



Introduction (continued)

The 24 names of those who lost their lives in the Second World War were added later:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Vivian J Back | 13. John H Lucking |
| 2. James J Body | 14. Norman W E Manning |
| 3. Kenneth A Bray | 15. George E Martin |
| 4. Norman Cloke | 16. Frank Meakin |
| 5. George R Collins | 17. Harry Meakin |
| 6. Norman G Coulter | 18. Geoffrey C Mercer |
| 7. Alfred C Culver | 19. Robert E Mercer |
| 8. John A Goulds | 20. Francis T Nolan |
| 9. Reginald L Graefe | 21. Stanley O Pierce |
| 10. Owen S Hare | 22. Gordon A Scull |
| 11. Ronald C W Heather | 23. Edward R Tadman |
| 12. Fred Lavender | 24. Philip E Taylor |



At the unveiling ceremony in 1922, the Rural Dean, who delivered the address, chose as his text:

“What are these arrayed in white robes and whence come they?”

“In the first place”, he said, “those words applied to those wondrous revelations granted to Saint John, but might they not also apply to those who were being commemorated that day—the great multitude who had laid down their lives for others?”

“They had gone from all quarters of the globe. Some were middle-aged, some were full of manly triumph and some, like Jack Cornwall, V.C. were boys, and [all] answering the call of King and Country.

‘Whom shall I send and who will go?’ was the country’s call, and one and all answered her”

Introduction (continued)

“They faced the mud and slush of Flanders; the sand and flies of Mesopotamia; the icy blasts or waters of [the] Northern Seas; the fever-haunted jungle of German East Africa; the Alps in Italy and the horrors of Gallipoli.....”

As Private Harris unveiled the memorial the hymns ‘*For All the Saints*’ and ‘*O Valiant Heart’s*’ were sung. The Last Post and The Reveille were sounded by two buglers from the Queen’s Own West Kent Regiment followed by the National Anthem.



Photograph provided by Myrtle Harris

As well as the 65 men named on the memorial, other names have come to light whose names, for reasons unknown to us, have not been inscribed on our memorial. Profiles of these people (where details have been discovered) have been included in this study. Maybe it will be possible at some future date to rectify these omissions and have their names inscribed on our memorial:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. George William Broad (Linton) | 10 Charles Martin |
| 2. Vallance Cruttenden | 11 Aubrey E Dunscombe Moore |
| 3. Ian Duncanson | 12 Leonard G Norman |
| 4. Roy Duncanson | 13 Gwendoline Peach |
| 5. Una Duncanson | 14 Harry Quested |
| 6. Harry Thomas Golding | 15 Edward Smythe |
| 7. Lee Hadler | |
| 8. John Henley | |
| 9. Cyril or Herbert Lane | |

Introduction (continued)

Others, who received honours or were reported missing, and who were (presumably) lucky enough to return home, have also come to light:

1. Private E Bowes (MM)
2. Corpl. E J Clifford (missing)
3. Sergeant J Coomber (MM)
4. Frederick William Debenham
5. Corpl. T W Jupp (POW)
6. Lieut. C M Pearson (MC)
7. Corpl. P Pronger (DCM)



What we have discovered about the 87 afore-mentioned men and two woman of our village and surrounding areas, appears in the following pages, in alphabetical order of names – adding some flesh and family background details (more in some cases, than others) to what has been, for far too long, just a list of names inscribed on a monument – (or not; as the case might be!)

Information in the press regarding casualties of World War Two was not readily available:

Confidential Notice (ref: C36191 50,000 11/39)

“The names of all those who lose their lives or are wounded or reported missing while serving with the Royal Air Force will appear in the official casualty lists published from time to time in the press.

Any publication of the date, place or circumstances of a casualty, and particularly any reference to the unit concerned, might give valuable information to the enemy, and for this reason, only the name, rank and service number are included in the official lists.

Relatives are particularly requested, in the national interest, to ensure that any notices published privately do not disclose the date, place or circumstances of the casualty, or unit.

The press have been asked to co-operate, in ensuring that no information of value to the enemy is published.

Introduction (continued)

Sources and Credits

Documents and other sources consulted include:

- The Commonwealth War Graves Commission web site. (CWGC)
- Contemporary Kent Messenger reports.
- School records.
- Census returns.
- Local street directories.
- Various Internet sites.
- Loose Swiss Scout archives.
- Loose Area History Society archives. (LAHS)
- Family details from various individuals

Particular thanks are extended to the **Allen Grove Local History Fund** for a grant enabling further research, and to the **Loose Swiss Scouts** for permission to quote from the documents in their archives.

Details of the men & women appear in alphabetical order rather than chronologically, to eliminate the need for an index.

Margaret Chapman (01622 746630) - MChap53767@aol.com



Private George Charles Allcorn

Royal Army Service Corps (M2/1496280)

Died: Thursday 3 July 1919, aged 26
Resting place: Maidstone Cemetery (I.T.75)
Est. d.o.b: 1893
Enlisted: 10 November 1915

George was the son of William and Mary Allcorn of *1 Clara Villas (now 489 Loose Road)*. He died at Keycol Hill Sanatorium, Sittingbourne as a result of Tuberculosis—contracted whilst on active service in France.

At the time of the 1901 census William and Mary, together with sons Alfred & Herbert, were living in Willington Street. William was a gamekeeper & Alfred a gardener and domestic servant.

Six weeks after George enlisted, he was sent to Egypt, attached to a heavy artillery battery. After three months there he was ordered to France where he served with various batteries, but principally with No 22 Heavy Artillery Group, until he went into hospital on February 23rd, 1918. He remained in hospital and sanatoriums at Lewisham, Ipswich and Sittingbourne until his death.

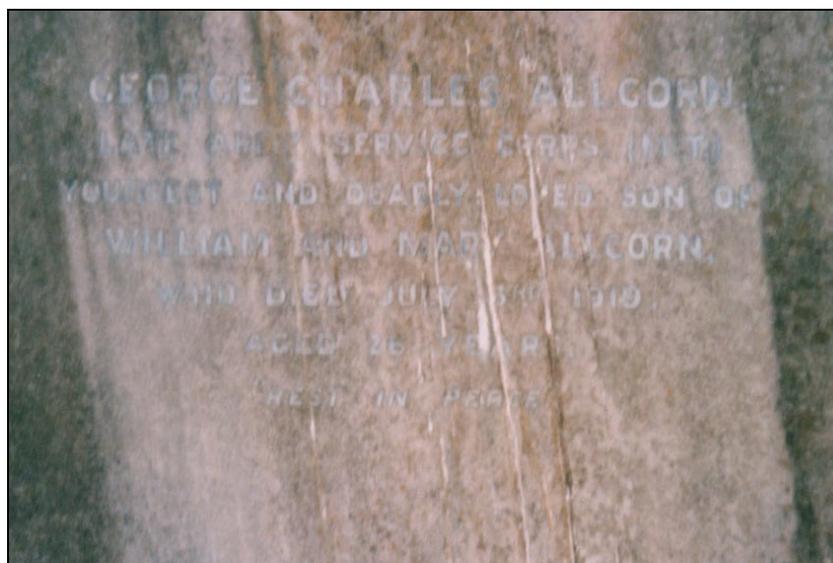
Prior to entering The Service George was employed for three years as a chauffer at Charles Arkoll's Stores in Stone Street, Maidstone. He was, by all accounts, a young man of sterling character and of an amiable disposition; always striving to do his duties to the last degree. He made many friends and was valued as a good servant wherever he was employed. He bore an excellent character in the Army.

By Royal Warrant, the Army Service Corps added Royal to its title in late 1918. The modern descendent of the ASC is the Royal Logistics Corps.



George Charles Allcorn (continued)

In the Spring of 2004 we finally located George's grave – somewhat overgrown.





William (Billy) Edward Antrum

Although Billy Antrum's name appears on the Loose Memorial, no trace of him can be found on the Commonwealth War Grave Commission Site. However, further research has shown that he was born in 1898 and was buried in Loose churchyard on 12 January 1921 – so he was 23 when he died. Loose Burial records give his last address as 18 King Edward Road, Maidstone.

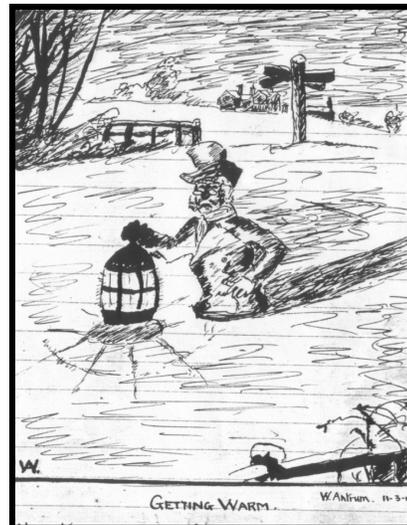
Another document from War Office Records tells us that he was in the Royal Field Artillery – as a driver, which lends credence to the following extract taken from Loose Swiss Scout records in which Richard Tadman quotes from an interview he conducted:

“Mrs Gooch, neé Joan Marie Antrum, clearly recalls her brothers William and Bruce. She said that William left the scouts to join the Royal Artillery and while in France at the end of the war was kicked on the head by a stampeding mule. His brother Bruce, after serving his apprenticeship at Tilling Stevens, moved to Detroit in America where he collapsed and died at the age of 46 years.”

Early scout records mention two boys by the name of W Antrum but it is not clear which, if either of them, relate to this Billy. The sepia photograph (above), is of scout W Antrum in 1915—copied from one found in the Loose Swiss Scout “Birchington” album of that year and could well be ‘our’ Billy. There are mentions of his brother Bruce as well, who wrote:

“Some of the readers of this mag will be interested to know that my brother Bill is not going out to France after all, but to Ripon in Yorkshire so he wrote and told me in his last letter.”

The two sketches which follow were drawn by William Antrum. ASM Fulkes (see his profile) awarded the ship drawing prize to this scout.



William (Billy) Edward Antrum (continued)

Billy was the son of William and Annie Antrum who, when they were first married, lived on Old Loose Hill – first at **The Limes** and later at **Forge Cottage** (now Vale House). William was a Miller. Three of the children are pictured below: William, Bruce and Phyllis, but no trace can be found of Joan Marie (above), she would have been born later than 1901 and will not show up until the 1911 census. The book “*Loose and Linton – A Pictorial History*” which was published in 2004 confirms the details of the 1901 census by telling us that Billy’s parents were William and Annie and that grandfather Edward ran the Village Mill from the 1870s until the early 20th century, and that the family lived at West Lawn.



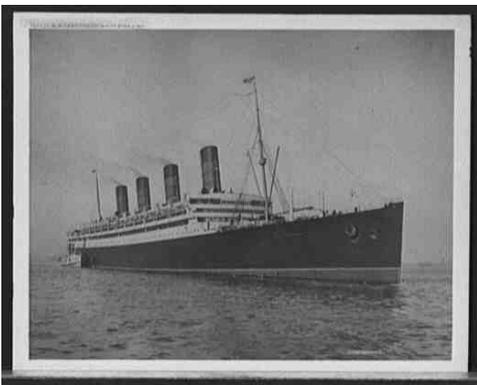
Grandfather Edward



William, Annie & Billy 1898



Bruce, Phyllis & Billy in the garden of The Limes c.1908



Bruce Antrum did, indeed, emigrate to America. A New York Shipping List tells us that he was born in Loose in 1900 and that his last address was 13 Marsham Street. Bruce, a mechanic, sailed from Southampton on 10 October 1925 and arrived in New York on 16 October of that year, bound for Detroit. The ship he sailed on was the *Aquitania*.

Sources: Loose Swiss Scout Archives, census returns, “Loose & Linton Pictorial History”, New York Passenger List, National Archives, Loose Burial Records, FreeBMD



Petty Officer Stoker Albert George Apps

H.M.S. *Vanguard*, Royal Navy (k/16660)

Died: Monday 9 July 1917, aged 24

Memorial place: Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent (23)

Est. d.o.b: 1893

Albert was the second son of Horace & Bertha Apps of *Loose Hill*. He had been in the Navy for nearly five years and although classed as a Leading Stoker in the official list of casualties he was rated P O Stoker in May 1916. His elder brother Jesse was wounded on May 3rd 1917 and was still in hospital at the time of the death of Albert. Horace died in 1939 at the age of 75.

Albert came from a long line of basket makers who lived on Loose Hill. In 1881 his grandfather Jesse and grandmother Emily (who was a nurse), lived in *Lime Tree Cottage*. His father, Horace, married Bertha Waters in 1885 and by 1901 they had 6 children: Jesse, Winnifred, Hilda, then Albert, Kate and Edward.

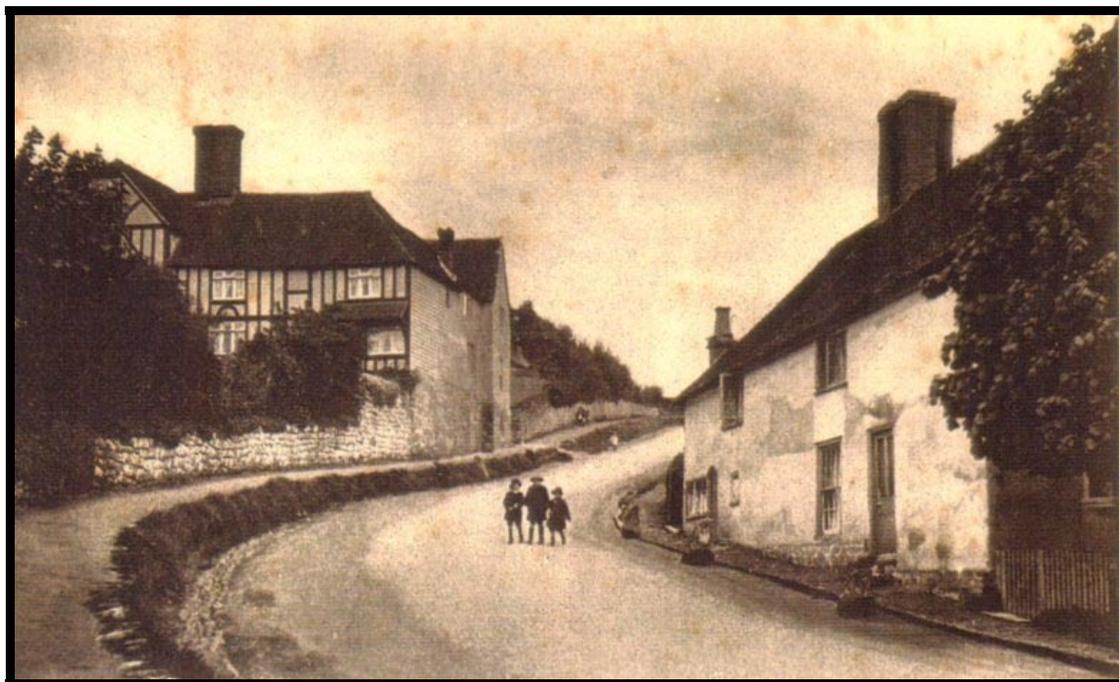
Grandfather Jesse was aged 68 in 1901 and was living in the house next door to Horace and Bertha. Living with him were, his daughter Margaret, granddaughter Blanche K Marchant and grandson Sidney Montague Apps. By this time Jesse was a widower. His daughter Margaret was still un-married but Sidney, her son (cousin to Albert) was also destined to die in the same war.



Albert was aboard *H.M.S. Vanguard*, on 9 July 1917 when, at about 2200 hours, whilst lying at anchor in Scapa Flow, one or more of her magazines blew up. She sank instantly. Of the men on board only two were rescued but, as leave was being given at the time, a total of 97 actually survived out of a ship's company of over 800. A definitive reason for the cordite explosion has never been found.

HMS Vanguard at sea shortly before her loss

Albert George Apps *(continued)*



Lime Tree Cottage where Albert lived (right) in 1901 (date of this photograph unknown)



Private Sidney Montague Apps

7th Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (266725)

Died: Friday 12 October 1917, aged 19

Memorial Place: Tyne cot Memorial, Zonnebeke, West Vlaanderen, Belgium (Panel 106 to 108)

Est. d.o.b: 1898

Sidney was the son of Margaret Apps, of *Loose Hill* who later married George Gray . On December 22nd 1917, Mr & Mrs Gray made an appeal in the Kent Messenger for any news of Montague, as he had been reported missing and all efforts to trace him had thus far been in vain.

Sidney had been 18 when he joined the Kent Cyclists, and on going to France was transferred to the Royal West Kent Regiment. A card received by his parents on October 12th, intimated that he was well and active but subsequent official information showed that he had been in a charge on that day and was numbered amongst the missing. He died three months after his cousin Albert whose family home was next door to his.

Sidney (or Monty, as he was most probably known, since he is named as Montague on the CWGC site) died in the third battle of Ypres - or *Paschendaele* as it is most commonly spoken of, which in reality was merely the last scene of this, the gloomiest drama in British military history.

The third battle of Ypres began on July 31st 1917, although it was not really a battle, but rather a campaign with the fighting more defined than the purpose. It was doomed before it began - by its own destruction of the intricate drainage system in this part of Flanders. By October the weather was appalling , with rain each day from the 4th, and on the afternoon of the 8th it became torrential, with the meteorological experts saying that no improvement could be expected .

Nevertheless, General Haig gave the order on the 10th, for a fresh attack on the 12th and after renewed rain on the 11th, the would-be dash for *Paschendaele* ended with the attacking troops, save those who perished in the mud—Monty among them, back almost on their starting line. One can only wonder at the horror of it all.

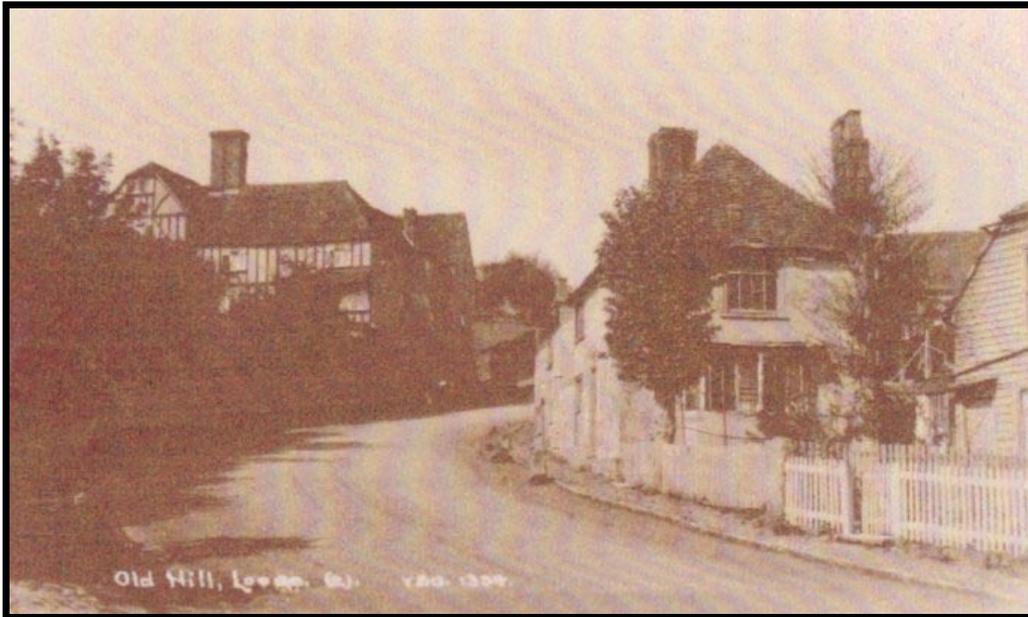
The Tyne Cot Memorial to the missing forms the N.E. boundary of the Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is located 9k N.E. of Ieper town centre, on the Tynecotstraat (N332). The names of those from the U.K. units are inscribed on panels arranged by Regiment under their respective Ranks.

Private Sidney Montague Apps *(continued)*

There are two separate registers for this site—one for the cemetery and one for the memorial. The memorial register will be found in the left hand rotunda of the memorial as you face it. The Panel Numbers quoted at the end of each entry relate to the panels dedicated to the Regiment served with. In some instances where a casualty is recorded as attached to another Regiment, his name may alternatively appear within their Regimental Panels. There are now 11,952 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Tyne Cot Cemetery – 8,365 of them unidentified.

The Kent Cyclists

The Kent Cyclists Battalion were the first mobile units of the Territorial Army and were among the first members of the Regular Army Cyclist Corps in 1914.



The little weather-boarded house on the right-hand edge is where Sidney Montague lived in 1901. To its left is Lime Tree Cottage where his cousin Albert lived. *(Date of this photograph unknown)*

Old Loose Hill

The bottom of the garden of *Sugar Loaves*, on the site of the present garage of *Brook Vale*, is the area in which *Lime Tree Cottage* once stood. The present *Sugar Loaves* is a modern bungalow, which took its name from an older building which was pulled down about 1962. This older building was once an off licence where George Gray was licensed to sell beer. The present day *The Limes*, with what was, in the recent past, a little weather-boarded garage (but now known as *Elm Cottages*) next door has a 1582 date stone on its back wall. Earlier in the 20th century it was a private school for a while, whilst in the mid 19th century it was a cottage and shop and later became a public house - *The Rising sun*.

In the 1881 census the order of enumeration lists *Loose Working Men's Club* (the present day Post Office), then three other dwellings on Loose Hill before listing *The Limes*. Next door is *The Public House* and then *Lime Tree Cottage*, then numbers 1 and 2 *Vine Vale Cottages* and then crossing the road to *Bridge House*. This order of enumeration suggests that what is now known as *the Limes* was, in 1881, *The Rising Sun* with the cottage next door being then known as *The Limes*.



Leading Aircraftman Vivian John Back

2923 Squad. R.A.F. Regt. Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 1267263

Died: Wednesday 8 November, 1944 (aged 24)
Resting Place: Phaleron War Cemetery, Greece. (4.B. 10)
Est. d.o.b: 1920

Vivian was the son of Alfred and Daisy Back, but we have been unable to trace the family on census returns.. .

2923 Squadron – the only detail of this squadron I could find on the Internet is that it was at Ras el Ain, Palestine during 1944, and that it disbanded on 1 June 1946.

Second Lieutenant Charles Ivo Barker

6th Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment



Died: Friday 17th March 1916, aged 24
Resting Place: Bethune Town Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France (111.K.1)
Est.d.o.b: 1892
Enlisted: August 1914

Charles was the 6th son of Levi & Harriet Barker of *Sherbold Cottage, Loose*.

He was first educated at Bishops Stortford Grammar school under the headmastership of the Rev. C G Duffield and afterwards at Maidstone Grammar School.

He joined the Royal Garrison Artillery at Southsea on August 3rd, 1914 and was gazetted to the 9th East Kent Regiment (The Buffs) on February 9th, 1915. He left for France in October 1915 and was subsequently attached to the 6th Royal West Kent's and after a few more months, was given command of his company.

His mother, Harriet, received the following letter from the Commanding Officer of the battalion:

"It is with great regret that I have to break the sad news just this moment received, that your son died from wounds in hospital today (17th March, 1916). He was wounded on the night of the 14th whilst in command of his company during a German attack. From the short time I have known him he was, in my opinion, a most gallant and promising officer and his death will be a great loss to the battalion. All ranks, I am sure, will join with me in condoling with you in your sad loss. His body will be buried in the civil cemetery at Bethune."

An additional paragraph in the Kent Messenger reported:

"Charles' old fellows at Maidstone Grammar School will recall the many fine innings he played at cricket on the recreation ground, and will mourn the loss of so good a companion and sportsman. He will be remembered as an enthusiastic member of the Loyal Invicta Lodge (6545 I.O.O.F., M.U.) Four other sons of Mr & Mrs Barker have attested for the Army."

Charles Ivo Barker (continued)

At the close of 1915, the first serious effort to obtain unity of action between the Allies was made, and a conference of leaders of the French, British, Belgian & Italian armies, with representatives present from the Russian and Japanese, was held at Joffre's headquarters in December. As a result they adopted the principle of a simultaneous general offensive in 1916 by France, Britain, Russia and Italy. In view of the rawness of the British troops, it was recognised that time must be allowed for training, so the offensive could not begin before the summer of 1916, although it was hoped to carry out preliminary attacks to wear down the enemy's strength. But in January both Joffre and Foch gave Haig a clear intimation that it was for him to carry out this preparatory task, and that they did not intend to take the offensive until he had done so.

The keynote of the tactical plan at Verdun was a continuous series of limited advances, which by their menace should draw the French reserves into the mincing machine of the German artillery. Each of these advances was itself to be secured from loss by a short but intense artillery bombardment. By this means the objective would be taken and consolidated before the enemy could move up his reserves for counter-attack. Although the Intelligence branch at French General Headquarters gave early warning of the German preparations the Operations branch were so full of their own offensive schemes that the warnings fell on deaf ears.

The German bombardment began on 21 February and from then until 24 February the defenders' line east of the Meuse was crumbled away as by the erosion of the tide..

Joffre was now aroused so far as to entrust the defence to Pétain, for whose use reserves were assembled. On 6 March the Germans extended the attack to the west bank of the Meuse; but the defence was now stiffening, the numbers balanced, and the immediate threat to Verdun was checked.

A slight lull followed, and during it the Allies of France made efforts to relieve the pressure on her. The British took over the Arras front from the French Tenth Army, their front becoming now continuous from Yser to the Somme; the Italians made their fifth attack, though in vain, on the Isonzo front; and the Russians hurled untrained masses on the German front at Lake Narocz, near Vilna, where the slight gains were soon lost through a counterstroke. These efforts did not prevent Falkenhayn pursuing his attrition offensive at Verdun. The advances were slight but they were cumulative in effect, and the balance of loss turned definitely against the defenders.

On June 7th Fort Vaux fell, but for Charles Barker his war was over. He had been caught up in these preliminary attacks and had paid the ultimate price.



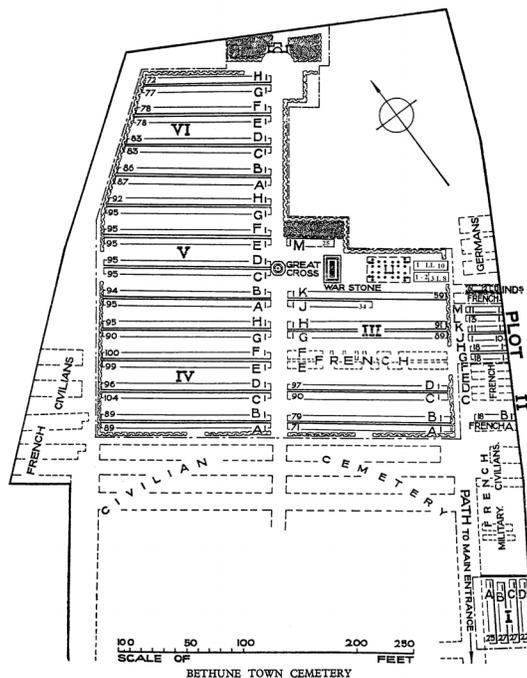
For much of the First World War, Bethune was comparatively free from bombardment and remained an important railway and hospital centre, as well as a corps and divisional headquarters. The 33rd Casualty Clearing Station was in the town until December 1917. The cemetery contains 3,004 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. It was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Bethune is 29 k north of Arras.

Charles Ivo Barker (Continued)



Bethune Town Cemetery ↑ Cemetery Plan ↓



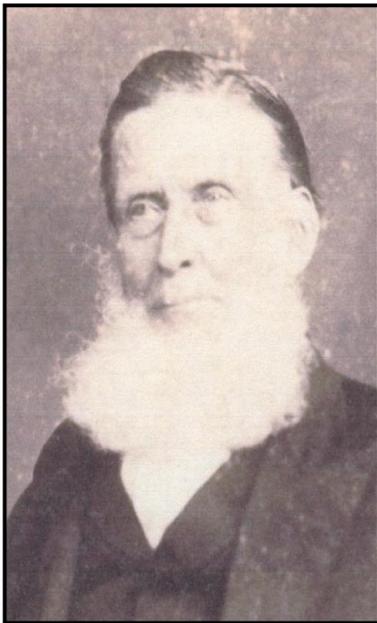
Charles Ivo Barker (continued)

The Barker family comprises many influential and colourful personalities; these are all documented on the web site of Jilly Coles - Charles' second cousin three times removed. I contacted Jill by email who promptly sent the photograph of Charles Ivo which appears at the beginning of this profile.

To begin with the eldest of Charles' family of whom we have some details:

James Barker Snr. (Charles' great grandfather) was born 31 January 1778 in Haverford West, Pembrokeshire, South Wales, and died in Loose 25 February 1855. His wife was named Ann. They had eleven children:

One of these children was:



James Barker 1806 – 1872

James Barker (Charles' granduncle) who was born 12 April 1806 in Loose. He married Avis Kidwell on 10 October 1830 in Rochester and died in Maidstone 26 July 1872. James and Avis had nine children. James was a papermaker.

Another of the children of James Snr. and Ann was:

Joseph Barker Snr. (Charles' Grandfather), who was born on 1 February 1811 in Bearsted. He married Ann Sells at Bearsted on 14 January 1838 and died in Loose on 24 June 1878. Joseph & Ann had twelve children, and they lived in *Shernold Cottage*, which, upon Joseph's death, was inherited by his son John, who at the time was living at 21 Earls Court Terrace, Kensington.



Joseph Barker Snr. 1811 - 1878

Levi Barker (Charles' father) was born 5 November 1849 at Shernold Cottage, and lived there all his life. He died 4 November 1938 – on the eve of his 89th birthday. He married Harriet Wood (*date unknown*) and they had 7 sons and 6 daughters.

Levi was the third son of Joseph & Ann and a brother of Sir John Barker, founder of the firm of Messrs J Barker & Co, Drapers of Kensington. Another brother was Joseph, who for many years was chairman of Bearsted Bench.

Until a year before his death, when his health first showed signs of breaking down Levi had displayed remarkable vitality. He had a genial personality and had made a great number of very loyal friends.

At an early age he became connected with the brewery trade, and when he was about 19 he joined his father and elder brother, Joseph, in their business as brewers. The premises at that time, were situated at the rear of the Papermakers Arms. The Brewery was later sold to help fund the Kensington Stores of Sir John.

Charles Ivo Barker (Continued)

The call of the land and an open-air life was irresistible to Levi and within a few years he disassociated himself with the brewery business and took up farming. Abbey Gate Farm became his charge until he retired in about 1913.



Levi Barker 1849 - 1938

When Levi died the Loyal Invicta Lodge of Odd Fellows at the Papermakers Arms mourned the loss of one of their most valuable members. He was one of the oldest original members, being number 1 on the books. The lodge was opened in 1883 and Levi was made its first Noble Grand. In his second year with the lodge he was appointed a trustee, a position he held for nearly 40 years. He had always shown a particular interest in the juvenile movement of the lodge.

Over the fireplace in the Lodge Room was a bronze Memorial tablet, which Levi presented. It contained the names of 81 brothers who had lost their lives in the Great War. In 1935 Brother Levi presented new regalia to the Lodge.

Few men could have taken a greater interest in Kent cricket than Levi. He was a member of the Kent County Cricket Club. He was also one of the first members of the old Hayle Place Cricket Club and was also associated with the Mote Club for many years.

Although he lost his left hand in an accident during his early twenties he never lost Prowess at cricket. He was a sound bat, but excelled mainly at fast bowling. County matches were always a source of great pleasure to him. He followed the Kent team all over the county and to many of the neighbouring counties as well. In fact, so keen

was he that he used to arrive at cricket grounds long before the gates were due to open in order to obtain the best view of the game.

During his latter years almost every player in the Kent team became Levi's acquaintance, and no days gave him greater pleasure than those on which he entertained the Kent players at his home.

Levi idolised Frank Woolley, the prince of left-handed batsmen. He saw Kent's famous "veteran" make his first century at Tunbridge Wells.

It was a great disappointment to Levi that he could not go to Tonbridge to see Woolley make his last appearance on the ground where his county cricket career had started. After that match Levi telephoned Woolley to congratulate him. Kent's chief idol replied that if he came to Tunbridge Wells he would make a century especially for him. Levi went, and Woolley hit up well over 100.

To instil enthusiasm into young players of the Kent Club, it was a habit of Levi to give each player £1 when they made a first century. He had a rare album of autographed snapshots of most of the Kent players and a wall in his home was adorned with large photographs of the MCC Australian touring teams of three seasons. Each photograph bore the autograph of all the players appearing on it.

Levi took a special pride in gardening and in this respect was never happier than during the time his sweet peas were in bloom. He built up a national reputation for growing sweet peas. At his home were many handsome cups and prizes which he had gained at shows in various parts of England. His proudest trophy was the *Cory Cup*, won at the National Sweet Pea Society's show in London.

In 1935 he exhibited his exquisite blooms at the Hastings show, open to all England, and secured 10 first prizes in addition to two premier trophies. At Faversham and Tonbridge shows he invariably walked away with most of the awards.

Charles Ivo Barker (Continued)

Another favourite bloom of Levi was the chrysanthemum. At the time of his death a greenhouse at the rear of his home was ablaze with the colour of the finest blooms he had ever grown.

Levi was also a keen shot and up until three years before his death had his private shot at Coxheath. He found great enjoyment in following the hounds, particularly the Linton Beagles. He was present at Lord Cornwallis' first and last beagle meet. Levi thought nothing of walking 10 miles to a meet, following the hounds all day, and then walking home at night.

The funeral of Levi took place at Loose with the Rev. Neville Hare officiating. Family mourners were: Mr and Mrs [Dorothy] C W Peach, Mr and Mrs [Edith] F J Buckett, Mr and Mrs [Alice] Percy Boyles, Mr and Mrs [Lillie] Percy Moss (sons-in-law and daughters), Mr and Mrs Frank Barker, Mr and Mrs Arthur Barker, Mr and Mrs John Barker (sons and daughters-in-law), Mr and Mrs Frank Barker (brother and sister-in-law), Mr J L Moss (grandson [of Lillie & Percy]).

Others present included: Messrs. Frank Woolley, "Tich" Freeman, Major F D Thomas, Dr L Taylor (jnr), Messrs. C E Twyman, E A Waite, T F Bunting, W Peach, F Haigh, E Rumbelow, H J Clarke, R Humphrey, J Cloke, S G Jenkins and E Randall Martin, Major and Mrs F D Thomas, Mr and Mrs Rivers Loe, Miss Gigger, Mrs J Bray, Mrs Coulter, Mrs Wright, Miss Apps, Mrs Thirkell, Mrs Norton, Mr and Mrs George Fenner.

Stone Street Club was represented by Messrs. George Gabriel, F Robinson, P Boorman and W Boulden. The Loyal Invicta Lodge of Oddfellows was represented by Messrs. E Mercer, W Grey, G A Kennett, G C Quinnell and D Fenner.

Flowers were sent by: Frank, Kate, Kathleen and Winnie; Annie, Allison, Frank, Gladys, Harry and Betty; Arthur, Kathleen and Trevor; Chum and Dorothy; Lily, Percy and Jack; Trensham and Annie; J Barker; Edith and Fred; Mrs Gould; Clara, Lusby, Gladys, Len ---- Walker; Mrs T Peach and family; Mrs ---- Creed and sons; G F French; Loyal Invicta Lodge, IOOF, MU; Ben and Florrie S----wick; Mr and Mrs G A Kennet; Mr and Mrs Kent and Maggie; Mr and Mrs ---- Waite; Mr and Mrs G Wakeford and ---

Last Will and Testament

Levi appointed his son Arthur Sidney Barker, and son-in-law Percy John Moss as executors and trustees of his will. He made the following legacies:

- To Arthur Sidney Barker £10
- To Percy John Moss £10 (provided they accept the Executorship)
- To daughter Dorothy Peach £250
- To grandson Henry Levi Barker £100
- To grandson John Levi Moss £100
- To his gardener George Wakeford £20 (if still in his employ at Levi's death)
- Freehold known as *Timbuctoo*, situate in Loose to son John Barker, absolutely free of duty

If the estate was sold, and after all expenses had been settled, the residue was to be divided into six equal parts and one such part to be paid to the children of son John – upon attaining the age of 21 years. One 6th to the children of daughter Edith Buckett, one 6th to daughter Alice Boyles, one 6th part to daughter Dorothy Peach, one 6th to son Arthur Sidney Barker and the remaining 6th to daughter Lillie Annie Moss.

Complicated instructions were set out regarding the possible sale of Shernold Cottage.

The will was dated 22 April 1938 in his presence and two witnesses:

- Sydney G Jenkins, Clerk to Messrs. Whitehead Thomas Urmston, Solicitors, Maidstone
- E Dixon, 473 Loose Road, Maidstone – chauffer.

Charles Ivo Barker (Continued)



Sir John Barker 1840 - 1914

Sir John Barker, Bart (Charles' uncle) was born 6 April 1840 in Loose and died 16 December 1914 at his home in Bishops Stortford. He married Sarah Waspe on 1 November 1864 and they had four children.

Upon John's death the Live Stock Journal (18 December 1914) had this to say:

"The greatest figure in the world of Polo pony breeders passed peacefully away at his residence The Grange, Bishop's Stortford, on Wednesday at 10.45am.... Sir John Barker, Baronet, the man who set out with a fixed aim – to evolve a playing pony that should be bloodlike, be full of quality, be gifted with speed, stamina, and over and above all should be able to carry a rider weight playing so strenuous a game, that a pony with matchless and stupendous strength in its compact form could attempt to essay it.

The good work that Sir John Barker accomplished in this aim – for he succeeded beyond the measure of even his greatest dreams – will live long after him. His large-heartedness did not deter him from imparting to all and sundry that wealth of knowledge and of wisdom he had learned in the greatest school of all, the school of experience, acquired from years of experimenting in the fashioning of the future breed, the Polo-bred pony, of whom it might be said at this moment is the aristocrat of all our national pony types.

Sir John invited competition and asked for others to come into the ring to secure a fall, perchance a victory, from him. His periodical sales of young stock and made ponies gave to others the opportunities of ranging future generations of stock against his in the ring, and these two last seasons the awards, not only at the Royal Agricultural Hall, but at the Royal Show and in the country, have gone to many different owners. At one time it was truly a case of "Eclipse first and rest nowhere.

Although his son-in-law, Mr Tresham Gilbey frequently ranged his own-bred stock alongside that of Sir John's, and often beat the exhibits from The Grange, with those from Whitehall, the two studs, laid fundamentally upon much the same lines, held pride of place so long that their filling up of all the prize list with their stock became something like a joke that reached its merriest mood at the annual dinner of the Polo and Riding Society. It was at this yearly function that the late Sir John Barker was always so prominent a figure in the rare banter that took place between a coterie of pony breeders, and particularly between Sir John and Mr George Norris Midwood, who at the last show reaped a full measure of reward and, for once, could claim that the Stortford pre-eminence had at last been broken. That Sir John's cheery presence will be missed from the shows and councils of the National Pony Society is but to state an empty fact.

We reiterate that no one will ever be able to gauge the good that Sir John did the cause of Polo pony breeding. Formerly the Polo pony was bred anyhow and picked up anywhere – in fact, it was a misfit. As the fame increased in popularity there followed great scarcity of ponies, and players found that types suitable for their requirements were difficult to secure."

Establishing the Breed

The founding of *The Grange Stud* in 1898 was chiefly experimental, but no trouble or expense was spared to carry out the work to a successful issue. He started with an open mind and sought to solve the problem on what might be called common-sense lines.

Realising that to meet the position a pony of a certain height and type was required, possessing intelligence, handiness, stamina and speed, he formed the opinion that pony blood should be chosen as the foundation stock, and in selecting suitable mares decided to use only those that had proved their worth and value in playing the game – in other words, to breed only from known quantities – the idea being that not only would 'like beget like' in type, but would be likely to take readily to the game.

Charles Ivo Barker (Continued)

Then came the question of the sires, and when, looking carefully over what had already been attempted in the way of breeding Polo ponies, he decided to purchase the half-bred pony sire *Sandiway*, bred by Sir Humphrey de Trafford. He was by Sir Walter Gilbey's celebrated thoroughbred stallion *Rosewater*, out of *Cuddington*, a well-known playing and prize-winning mare belonging to Sir Humphrey de Trafford, who was one of the pioneers in the endeavour to breed Polo ponies.

Sandiway proved to be a remarkable sire, mating perfectly with the blood-like mares selected for the foundation of the stock, and much of the success of *The Grange Stud* in its earlier years was due to the influence of this impressive stallion. The influence of Sir John's experiment has extended to every part of the world where lovers of the pony are found

Many Interests and Pursuits

Besides his polo ponies, John Barker had many interests and pursuits. He contested Maidstone in the Liberal interest in 1888 and again in 1898, but was unsuccessful on both occasions. On his third fight however, in 1900, he was elected but subsequently lost his seat. In 1906 he was returned for Penrhyn and Falmouth, which he represented until 1910. He was one of the Aldermen elected to serve on the first London County Council. The dignity of a Baronetcy was conferred upon him in 1898.

Among the other offices he has filled from time to time were those of President and member of the Council of the National Pony Society, President of the Essex Agricultural Society, president of the Newspaper press Fund, president of the Early Closing Association, and a member of the Royal Agricultural Society, the Hackney Horse Society, the Hunters' Improvement Society.

John was a keen sportsman and lover of the open-air life (as was his brother Levi). He loved agricultural pursuits, including fruit growing and horse-breeding. Shooting was an especially favourite form of sport with him. He was a member of the Reform, National Liberal and Automobile Clubs.

He was also chairman of Paquin Ltd and was financially interested in the Echo evening Newspaper during the later stages of its existence and had also, an interest in the short-lived Morning Herald.

Kensington Stores

John was born in Loose in 1840. His father, as we have seen, was a prosperous brewer in the area. At the age of 13 John was apprenticed to a draper in Maidstone, and subsequently worked as a junior assistant at Folkestone and Dover.

Having completed his apprenticeship he went to London, and after brief periods of service with two other employers in Westbourne Grove, engaged himself to Mr Whiteley, who was then carrying on business in a small way. From this time onwards Mr Whiteley's business made rapid headway, John being the owner's right-hand man. In a few years John was made manager at a salary of £300 a year. He soon wanted a further increase, and Mr Whiteley agreed to double his salary if he doubled the business in the next year. The business was doubled and so was the manager's salary! Mr Whiteley's business continued to expand, and John asked to be taken into partnership. Mr Whiteley offered to increase his salary to £1,000 a year, but could not see his way to making him a partner, whereupon John left him and entered into partnership with Mr (afterwards Sir James) Whitehead. A business was opened in a couple of shops in High Street, Kensington, and Mr Whitehead found the necessary capital.

The business of John Barker and Co. developed even more rapidly than Mr Whiteley's had done, and shop after shop was taken in. John bought out his partner, and not long after decided to transfer his business to a limited liability company, of which he was to be chairman, the capital being fixed at £250,000.

The business expanded even more rapidly and at the time of John's death in 1914, upwards of sixty houses were incorporated in the premises, while the company's staff numbered nearly 2000. There were a total of 65 departments and the business stood as a striking testimony to the energy and initiative bestowed upon it by its founder in all the stages of its development.

Charles Ivo Barker (Continued)



The Grange, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire

Sir John farmed about 300 acres of land at the Grange, primarily for pleasure. From the first, horse breeding was the principal feature in his farming enterprise, as was perhaps to be expected from his proximity to and friendship with Sir Walter Gilbey. Sir John at one time bred both shires and Hackneys, but the Hackney stud was dispersed in the closing years of the 19th century to make room for the Polo and other ponies with which unprecedented success had been achieved.

He also owned one of the largest and best of the few flocks of Syrian sheep in this country. He took a keen interest in local and county agricultural affairs, and was President of the Essex Agricultural Society.

Sir John's funeral took place at St Michael's Church in Bishops Stortford. A special restaurant car train was arranged to leave Liverpool Street Station in the early afternoon – the same train returning at 3.30pm.

John left an only daughter, Annie Sarah, who was married to Mr Tresham Gilbey – the third son of his great friend Sir Walter. His only son lost his life at an early age as a result of an accident while riding in Kensington. We must presume that daughter Lily Maud and one son (either William Joseph or Henry John Westbourne) must have died in infancy.

Joseph Barker JP (*Charles' uncle*) was born in Loose in about 1842. He married Isabella Sarah Castle in June 1867 in Malling and died in May 1931 in Kent. He and Isabella had nine children and they lived in Hill House, Loose.

Like his brothers, Joseph pursued many interests. He was chairman of Bearsted Petty Sessions, and anticipating the occasion of Joseph's eighty-ninth birthday in 1930, Mr W H Whitehead, Clerk to the Bearsted Court, paid tribute to him at the close of business for the day, shortly before the occasion:

"Mr Joseph Barker is probably the senior presiding magistrate in the whole of Kent and has set up a record with his twenty years of service as chairman of the Bearsted Bench, a position in which he followed the late Sir Charles Whitehead, father of the present Clerk to the Court, in July 1910. He has been a County magistrate in the Bearsted Division for the past thirty-five years, being first appointed to the Commission of the Peace on April 10th, 1895. He is also one of the senior magistrates for Maidstone, with another record of thirty years of service on the Borough Bench.

Mr Joseph Barker, like his more famous brother, the late Sir John Barker, of Kensington, is a native of Loose, and in early life was engaged in the brewing business, eventually succeeding to the brewery founded by his father. The brewery was later sold out of the family and is not now in existence."

Charles Ivo Barker (Continued)

Joseph was a life-long Liberal, and for many years was closely identified with the municipal and political life of Maidstone. Records show that he was first elected to the town council in 1884, defeating the late Mr C Pell in the Stone Street Ward. The voting on that occasion was: Barker (L) 439 and Pell (C) 351. Joseph was re-elected in the Jubilee year of 1887 and continued to hold his seat unopposed at the November elections in 1890 and 1893. In 1895 he was elected Mayor of Maidstone and two years later again served the Mayoral office. On November 9, 1898 he was made an Alderman. Joseph continued to hold this seat until his retirement from municipal office in 1904.

Another record to which Joseph can lay claim is that he was the oldest customer of the Maidstone branch of the Westminster Bank, his name having been on the books for some 30 years.

He was too, the senior surviving member of the Maidstone Club, in Earl Street and for the last 35 years of his life had been chairman of Messrs. Wm Hobbs and Son Ltd. in Lower Stone Street.

For twenty years he had been a member of the Kent Discharged Prisoners Aid Society

Nowhere was Joseph more revered than here in Loose, having been a member of the Loose Parish Council since its formation. He repeatedly held the office of Chairman. The record of his long and valued service would not be complete without a reference to the fact that for forty years he was a member of the Maidstone Board of Guardians, a work in which he took a great interest.

Joseph spent his eighty-ninth birthday quietly surrounded by members of his family, at Hill House, where he resided with his daughter Mrs Isabel Gould (see profile of John Hugh Gould for details on Isabel). It was in the beautiful garden at Hill House that he chatted over events of his long life with a representative of the *South Eastern Gazette*, with a power of recollection that belied his great years.

Maidstone's Bitter Years

Recalling the days when he was Mayor of Maidstone, Joseph referred particularly to the year of the great typhoid epidemic in 1897, a bitter year, as he said, for the borough. He spoke with pardonable pride of the fact that he raised by public appeal some £30,000 for the relief of the stricken people of Maidstone. Tunbridge Wells alone sent him a thousand guineas

"To restore confidence in the borough after the epidemic," he said, "I invited the Lord Mayor of London (Sir Horatio Davis, of Wateringbury Place) and the Sheriffs of the City to visit Maidstone. The Lord Mayor is a personal friend of mine, whom I often visited at the Mansion House, came down with the Sheriffs. I entertained them to a banquet in the Corn Exchange and a reception at the Brenchley Gardens, and invited the inhabitants of the borough to meet them".

"Things were pretty bad in Maidstone at that time," Joseph recalled, "People were afraid to come to the town. To give you an idea of how scared people were; When I got into the train at St Paul's Station on one occasion and happened to mention that I was the Mayor of Maidstone, the carriage was very soon empty. I did all I could to restore public confidence in the borough and through the whole period of the epidemic kept my family a school in Maidstone. My daughter, Mrs Rivers Loe, was the Mayoress that year, and she worked very hard in the typhoid epidemic."

Joseph was proud of his position as Chairman of Bearsted Petty Sessions, in a Police Division which had a wonderful record for public sobriety. "Since I have been Chairman," he said, "I don't think there have been twenty cases of drunkenness before the Court."

Invited to express his view as Chairman of Justices, as to whether he had observed any diminution in the amount of crime in the past thirty-five years, his response was not so satisfactory. "No", was the emphatic answer, "There is as much crime now as when I first went on the Bench. We are much more merciful and let offenders off more easily. I asked a man once, who came before me, whether he was guilty. He replied, "Yes, guilty under the First Offenders Act".

Sources: Kent Messenger 25/3/1916; CWGC; Liddel Hart's History of the First World War; 1881 & 1901 census. Jilly Coles (descendent), Times newspaper, London Gazette

Private Bertie Mercer Blackmore

“A” Company, 2nd Battalion the Buffs (East Kent Regiment) (L/6857)



Died: Tuesday 28th September 1915 aged 32
Memorial: Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France (Panel 15-19)
Est.d.o.b. 1883

Bertie was a country boy, born in Marden and brought up in Goudhurst. He married Louisa Maud Thatcher in 1908, and at the time of his death she was living at 2 **Barnet Lane, Under Hill, Barnet, Herts.** Whether or not this was Bertie's family home we do not know. They also had two young children.

Bertie was an army reservist and was called up at the outbreak of war. On 20th October 1914, near Lille, he was wounded through the thigh by shrapnel, but returned to action on 27th April 1915. He finally fell in action at the great advance on Loos, by enemy machine gun fire.

The Battle of Loos was fought in support of Joffre's offensive in Champagne. It is remembered today as the battle in which very heavy casualties were suffered by only partially trained troops and for the first use of poison gas by the British. When the gas was first turned on it carried fairly well over the German trenches on the right, but on the left, it was a failure—drifting back and upsetting the attack. Those who were able to advance were soon stopped, and slaughtered by the un-gassed German machine-gunners. Nevertheless, a fresh assault was ordered which was only abandoned after the brigade commanders had protested against the '*useless sacrifice of life*'. This was the scenario in which Bertie gave his life.

Census records show that his grandfather, Amos Mercer, was a shoemaker. Amos also farmed 3 acres in Goudhurst. His son, Amos, was also a shoemaker in 1881. Harriett, (Bertie's mother) had married Lewis Blackmore in 1873 at Cranbrook but by 1901 she was a widow so Lewis obviously died at a young age.

In 1901 Bertie was a general labourer, whilst his brother Amos, 10 years older than Bertie, was an apprentice groom & gamekeeper at Goudhurst. Prior to joining up Bertie had been working for Mr Foster Clark at Boughton Mount, which probably accounts for his name being inscribed on the Loose Memorial.

His funeral was held at Goudhurst on Sunday October 10th, 1915 during which time the flag on the church tower was at half-mast in respect of his memory. Harriett, his widowed mother was living at **Iden Green** with her aged mother (who was 96) but by this time Amos had died. It was reported in the *Kent Messenger* that old Mrs Mercer had, in the course of one month, lost two nephews and three cousins.

Bertie Mercer Blackmore (continued)

Loos-en-Gohelle is a village about 5k north-west of Lens. The Loos Memorial forms the side and back of Dud Corner Cemetery where over 1,700 officers and men are buried, the great majority of whom fell in the Battle of Loos. The Memorial commemorates over 20,00 officers and men who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay, and who have no known grave. It covers the period from the first day of the Battle of Loos to the date of the Armistice.



The Loos Battlefield photographed from Dud Corner. The British Troops first used poison gas here on 25 September 1915



The Loos Memorial to the Missing at Dud Corner Cemetery, commemorating over 20,000 British officers and men.

Bertie Mercer Blackmore (Continued)

Mystery!

Bertie's mother Harriett was already a widow in 1881- her husband Lewis Blackmore had died in that year. So where did Bertie (b. 1883), Emma (b. 1886) and Harry (b. 1889) come from. We know that we have the correct family census extracts because many of them are mentioned in the funeral report.

Photographs and plan of Loos Memorial can be seen in the profile of Bertie William Clark.



James (right) with an unknown friend

Sergeant James Joseph Body
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (1467695)

Died: Tuesday 4 January 1944 (aged 23)
Memorial: Runnymede Memorial, Surrey (Panel 225)
Est. d.o.b: 1921

James was the son of Edward and Hannah Body and was married to Mae Clemantina Olive Boniface of Maidstone. He had two sisters and two brothers. The family home was *Brooklyn*, Bridge Street. In 1943 his cousin, Eric Munn, went to visit his aunt Hannah at Brooklyn and stayed there for a couple of months, during which time James was on leave from the R.A.F. so the cousins met up. Eric had been given a Puss Moth model aeroplane for Christmas and they would fly it in a nearby field (Brookfield). This was the last time that James and Eric were to meet.

James was posted as 'missing' on 4 January 1944, aged 23. He was flying a Wellington Bomber, XLN661-E, which took off from Westcott at 23.10 hours for a navigation exercise that involved the crew in flying over the North Sea. They were all lost without trace.

As well as James, the Air Gunner, the crew were:

- Flight Sergeant **Henry William Arthur Blackwood** (aged 21) RNZAF (421846)– from Dunedin, Otago, New Zealand. Runnymede Memorial Panel 263.
- Sergeant **Raymond Miller** (aged 21) RAAF (426133) Unit 11 Op. Training – from Coorparoo, Queensland, Australia. Runnymede Memorial Panel 262. Australian memorial 127.
- Pilot Officer **Harry Richard Willis** (aged 20) RNZAF (429932) – from Fendalton, Canterbury, New Zealand. Runnymede Memorial Panel 263
- Sergeant **John Henry Jaeger** (aged 31) RAF (1331468) – Married to Nellie - from Plumstead, London. Runnymede Panel 232
- Sergeant **Leonard Douglas May** (aged 19) RAF (1620247). Runnymede Panel 234
- Flight Sergeant **William Henry Hare** (aged 19) RAAF (419992) – from Rochester, Victoria, Australia. Runnymede Panel 260. Australian Memorial Panel 123. William was born in Victoria and was a farmer before enlistment and lived in a place called Bamawn.

(Both Henry Blackwood and Harry Willis are given the Runnymede panel number of 263 on the CWGC site)

James Joseph Body (continued)

Westcott, Bucks. (10 miles SE of Bicester, by A41) still has all the buildings and runways from when it was a Wellington Operational training Unit. The station was the home of the Wellington-equipped No.11 O.U.T. from September 1942, and used on some operations until May 1945, when transport aircraft brought in freed prisoners of war. Although the airfield closed in August 1945, the site has been used since April 1946 for rocket development, and many of the original buildings are in commercial use as the Westcott Venture Park. New buildings have been added and the runways are obstructed, but the original station survives. Near the entrance, B-1 Hangar 5 stands, where the Allied Prisoners of War were taken on return to Britain.



James went to Boughton Monchelsea School, and later, worked at Tilling Stephen's on the electrical side.



The Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede commemorates by name over 20,000 airmen who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known graves. They served in Bomber, Fighter, Coastal, Transport, Flying Training and Maintenance Commands, and they came from all parts of the Commonwealth. Some were from countries in Continental Europe which had been overrun but whose airmen continued to fight in the ranks of the Royal Air Force.



Corporal Edward Victor Bonner

10th Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (G/8202)

Killed in action: Thursday 20th July, 1916 (aged 29)

Resting Place: London Rifle Brigade Cemetery,
Comines-Warneton, Hainaut, Hainaut, Belgium
(11.D. 38)

Est. d.o.b: 1887

Edward was the second son of Edward J and Isabel Bonner of *Coniston, Loose* (according to a Kent Messenger report). He met his death by a stray shot while leaving the trenches. He had joined the 10th Battalion at Penenden Heath with great enthusiasm and took up signalling. He sat an examination at Aldershot, which was open to the whole division - both officers and men, and came out top; an achievement for which he was heartily congratulated by his Colonel. He was offered promotion but he declined because it would have meant separation from his county Regiment. He was as popular and meticulous at the Front as he had been in camp, and important signalling duties had been in contemplation for him had he survived.

A letter of appreciation was sent to Edward's sister by one of his officers:

'Dear Miss Bonner-I am afraid this letter will be the first intimation to you, of very bad news indeed. It is with the greatest sorrow that I have to tell you of the death of your brother, Corporal Bonner, who died last night. He was walking back to headquarters last night about 8.30 along a trench and had stopped for a moment to speak to a friend when a rifle bullet hit him-going in at one shoulder and out the other. The bullet must have been a stray shot, as he was under cover from view at the time.

As soon as I heard the news I hurried over to the wounded dressing station and found that the doctor had dressed his wounds and he was about to be removed to the next dressing station. He was only semi-conscious and did not appear to be in any pain. I spoke to him, but I'm afraid he did not recognise me. The doctor told me that he was afraid there was very little chance for him, but I still hoped that his great virility might pull him through.

However, I heard later that he died after reaching the next dressing station. I cannot tell you what this loss means to us-more especially to myself, who had had so much to do with him for the past year. He was the life and soul of headquarters, and during all the time I have known him I have never heard a single grumble from him. As a soldier, these qualities made him invaluable, and he also, besides being an expert at his work of signalling, knew how to get the best out of others and there was not a man who would not have done anything for Corporal Bonner.

A man said to me this morning 'I would rather it had been me than him, sir', and I think that's how we all feel. But after all, our loss is nothing compared to yours and your father's, and to you our deepest sympathy goes. Your brother's death came as a great blow to me-he was more of a friend than anything else to me. My very deepest /Sympathy, and, I don't think it is too much to say, the sympathy of the whole Battalion goes to you."

Corporal Edward Victor Bonner (continued)

We can see from the above letter that Edward’s mother had pre-deceased him, but there is no clue as to which sister the letter was addressed—Edith would have been about 46 at the time, and Kate 34.

Before joining up Edward was employed at the North Western Railway Company’s branch in The Broadway, Maidstone. For many years he had been in St Faith’s choir and he was a member of the Church Council as well as assistant secretary of the C.E.M.S. He had also identified himself with various other forms of parochial work. He was also an avid supporter of the Church Institute, having been associated with it from early youth - especially it’s athletic side. For most of the time he was secretary of one or other of the football sections. He was on the committee of the cricket club and worked hard in connection with the efforts for the acquisition of its new athletic ground.

Edward’s brother’s William and Alfred were both in the services, and Alfred was in France at the time Edward died.

The London Rifle Brigade Cemetery is located 15k south of Ieper town centre, on a road leading from the Rijselseweg, N365, which connects Ieper to Wijtschate, Mesen, Ploegsteert and on to Armentieres. The commune of Ploegsteert, which contains a large number of British War Cemeteries, remained in British hands during the greater part of the war, but it and the cemeteries were in German possession during part of 1918.

The Cemetery was begun by units of the 4th Division in December 1914, and used by fighting units and Field Ambulances until March 1918. It owes its name to the 22 buriels of the London Rifle Brigade (which belonged to the 4th Division) contained in Plot 111 and made in January, February and March 1915.

1881 Census

21 Perryfield Street, Maidstone

Edward I Bonner	Head	33	Brewers Labourer	Maidstone
Isabel Bonner	Wife	31		Maidstone
Edith S Bonner	Dau	8	Scholar	Maidstone

1901 Census

11 Medway Terrace, Waterside, Maidstone

Edward J Bonner	Head	54	Brewers Labourer	Maidstone
Isabel Bonner	Wife	51		Maidstone
Edith S Bonner	Dau	30 (U)	Dressmaker	Maidstone
Kate S Bonner	Dau	18 (U)	Dressmaker Improver	Maidstone
Albert H Bonner	Son	16	Pupil School Teacher	Maidstone
Edward V Bonner	Son	14		Maidstone
Alfred J Bonner	Son	6		Maidstone
William C Bonner	Son	9		Maidstone
Maria Smith	Sister	49? (widow)	Rag Sorter at Paper Mill	Maidstone
William G Smith	Boarder	52? (widower)	Gaol? Company’s Labourer	Rotherhythe

Sources: CWGC; KM 29/7/1916 & 5/8/1916, 1881 & 1901 census

Private E Bowes M.M.

(Not named on the Loose Memorial and presumed to have eventually returned home from the war)



In the Kent Messenger dated 30 November 1918 it was reported that Private Bowes, whose home was at **The Laurels, Loose**, had received a bar to his medal. He was home on 14 days leave when he was presented with the Military Cross at Maidstone Barracks. He had served for 2½ years in France.





Flight Sergeant Kenneth Arthur Bray

158 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
(1323878 - Air Gunner)

Died: Friday 31 March 1944, aged 23
Resting Place: Rheinberg War Cemetery, Germany (10.B.25)
Est.d.o.b: 1921
Enlisted: 1941

Kenneth was the youngest son of Phillip & Annie Bray of *Rose Cottage*, (behind the present day *Barcham Court*), **Loose**. His wife was Elizabeth—from Helston, Cornwall. They had married in March 1943 and Elizabeth was in the W.R.N.S. at the time Kenneth was killed. He took part in many air operations over enemy territory before giving his life. Before joining the Royal Air Force in 1941 he had worked at the Southern Railway West Station in Maidstone. He was born in Loose and went to the Council School. He had 8 brothers & two sisters.

158 Squadron

The squadron was formed in May 1918 and disbanded in November of that year.

The squadron reformed in February 1942 at Driffield from a nucleus provided by No 104 Squadron, equipped with Wellingtons until June when Halifaxes arrived. At the same time the squadron moved to a new home at East Moor and then in November, to Rufforth. In February 1943, the squadron moved to what would be its main wartime home of Lissett, and from it operated as part of Bomber Command's main force for the remainder of the war. Halifax 111 aircraft arrived in January 1944 and at the same time 'C' Flight was used to provide the basis of No 640 Squadron, which immediately moved to Leconfield.

After the war, the squadron together with the rest of No 4 Group, was transferred to Transport Command and began receiving Stirlings in June. These were taken to Stradishall in August, from where it conducted trooping flights to the Middle East and India until disbanding on 31 December 1945.



Kenneth was an Air Gunner and would have flown a Halifax 111.

Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)



Phillip & Annie Bray (Kenneth's parents) on the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary (According to Gordon Kitchenham the area of *Bray Gardens* is named for Phillip)

Philip was the son of Walter Thomas Bray , who was born about 1842 and lived on Loose Hill. It is not known if this refers to Old Loose Hill or the area between the Walnut Tree and Loose Green, which was known as Loose Hill. Walter was a fruit dealer and was married to Rose..

Phillips brother Albert (*Kenneth's uncle*) had two daughter's: Kathleen who married a man by the name of Nunn and Elizabeth, who was always known as Betty Bray. Among the photographic collection of the Loose Schools (*held by Helen Gallavin*), is a newspaper article (undated):

Farewell to School Helper

A silver teapot was one of the gifts presented by children & staff to retiring kitchen assistant Kathleen Nunn (néé Bray) of Loose Junior School. The headmaster, Peter Harrington, also presented Mrs Nunn with a flower arrangement. She had worked for nearly 25 years at the school and her two grown up children were once pupils there.

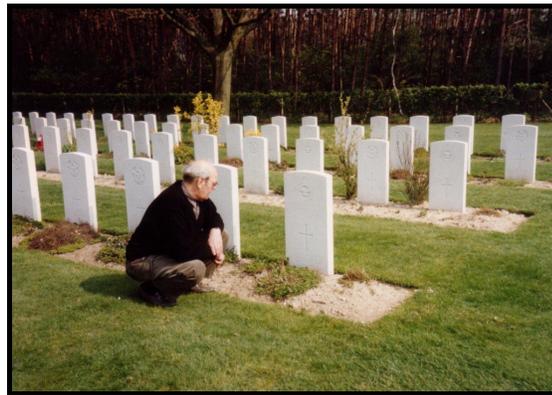
Kenneth's ancestry is very complex and will take much time to unravel. Although we have identified the brothers and sisters mentioned previously, we haven't yet been able to unravel all the intricacies of the family. It is certainly inextricably intertwined with the **Golden's & Noakes** since his sister Dorothy Isabel Bray (always known as Dolly) married Leslie John Kitchenham in 1926. Leslie and Dolly were the parents of Gordon Kitchenham who presently lives with his wife (Hazel Gammon) in Coxheath, and it is Gordon & Hazel who have been able to fill some of the gaps for us.



Kathleen being presented with her silver teapot & bouquet

Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)

Interestingly, somewhere along the line, another of the young men killed in the Great War (Arthur Styance) is also connected with this family group (being the brother of Hazel Gammon’s grandfather, Ned Styance!) – and also with the Coulters, through the marriage of Albert James Coulter and Daisy Eva Styance in 1934, which links seven, or more, of the names on the Loose Memorial into one family network!



**Photographs of Kenneth’s grave
at Rheinberg Cemetery** (taken by his nephew
Gordon Kitchenham who is seen in the above photograph)



Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)

When **Ernest John Kitchenham** married **Alice Noakes**, they lived for many years at **Hill Crest, Loose**. (now 610 & 612 Loose Road) They both died in 1940 leaving two sons and four daughters to mourn their deaths. This family has been traced via obituary notices and some census records – although it is impossible, at this stage, to link *all* the Kitchenham's together! The one child of Ernest and Alice that we could not trace was Ernie, which made us wonder if he had left the country or whether he had died without us noticing the fact! He did eventually turn up in South Africa, as you will see.

Alice and Ernest's six children were:

- Leslie John Kitchenham (who married Dolly Bray)
- May Kitchenham
- Nora Emily Kitchenham (who married Sydney Ernest Pearce)
- Winifred Bessie Kitchenham (who married Alfred John Muttitt)
- Ernie Kitchenham
- Betty

Leslie John Kitchenham married Kenneth's sister **Dorothy (Dolly) Isabel Bray** on 27 November 1926 at All Saints' Church in Loose. (*sister & brother-in-law of Kenneth*)

Leslie was a coalman and chimney sweep in Loose. When he was 21 years old he lost an arm in an accident with a steam wagon when working in Postley Quarries. He was the driver and was cleaning the engine at the end of the day, when it suddenly started by the steam letting off. This was in the days of steam engines on the roads. His arm was trapped, and at the hospital, was amputated below the elbow. He was afterwards fitted with a hook to replace his lost left arm, and he started his own haulage business. He was the local coalman until he died. According to Gordon, Leslie's son, he used to terrorise the children with his hook! His sons worked with him until he retired after which, they both went to work at Tovil Mill.

A Kitchenham family group at Hawthorne Cottage.
(Back) Les, Nora, May & Ernie (front) Betty, Alice & Gordon



Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)

This delightful picture shows shows Leslie before he lost his arm, with his sisters Nora, Winnie & May



Les & Dolly – (notice hook)

Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)



For Les & Dolly's Golden Wedding Anniversary celebrations in November 1976, a party was held at the Bull Inn in Linton and among the guests was a surprise visitor – Leslie's brother Ernest (*on the right in the picture below*). Ernest had flown in from South Africa and it was quite a meeting since the brothers had not seen each other for nearly 30 years.

At this time, Leslie and Dolly were living in *Holmesdale Close*, Loose. Other guests at the party were Leslie's four sisters and they were all unaware that Ernie would be flying in. He had married a South African girl and made his home there.

Leslie, Dolly & Ernie Kitchenham at the reunion



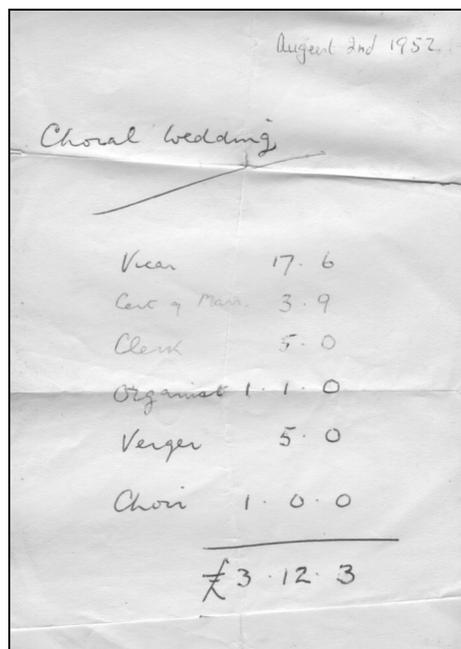
Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)

Ernest with his grandson Jason, in South Africa



Dolly and Leslie's son **Gordon Leslie Kitchenham** (*Kenneth's nephew*) and his wife **Hazel Gammon** live now in Coxheath.

They were married at All Saints', Loose, on 2 August 1952. It was an extremely wet and rainy day. The cost of the wedding (as we can see from the following receipt) was a total of £3.12.3d and the reception afterwards was held in the Papermakers Arms.



Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)



Gordon was at one time, a fireman. He is in the centre of the photograph below. There was a very bad fire in the Barming area in the 1950s at which Johnnie Hawkes died. Des Latham was also very badly injured in this fire, having fallen through three floors. He (Des) was also a postman in Boughton.

Des Latham, Johnny Hawkes, Gordon Kitchenham, Les Edwards, Jack Lawrence



Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)

Nora Emily Kitchenham married Sydney Ernest Pearce on 1 July 1939 at All Saints' church, Loose.

Nora and Sydney Pearce – one of the bridesmaids is Nora's sister Winifred



Nora & Sydney Pearce



Nora & Sydney Pearce



Kenneth Arthur Bray (continued)

Winifred Bessie Kitchenham married Alfred John Muttitt on 28 December 1941 at All Saints', Loose.

This is as far as we have got with unravelling the Bray/Kitchenham family. As it so closely linked with the Golden/Noakes families, a further study of the James Golden profile might unravel some of the intricacies.

Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger, Parish Magazines, Hazel & Gordon Kitchenham, Gina Peters (Canada), Peter Martin, Census 1881 & 1901



Private George William Broad

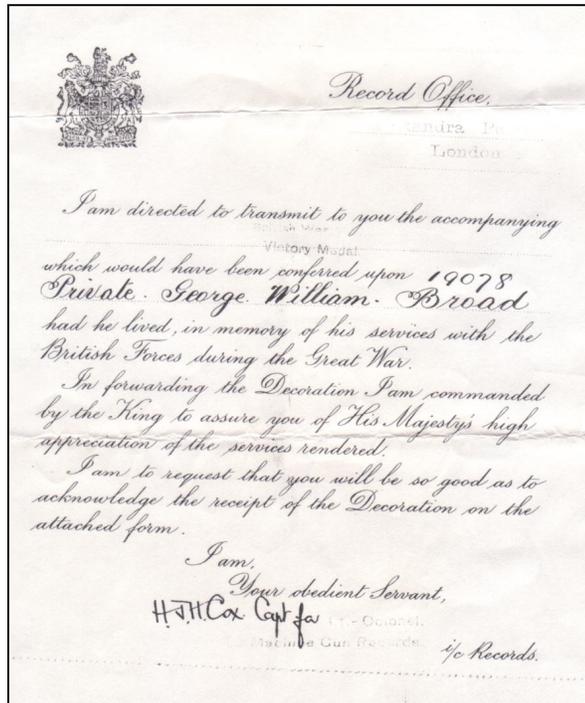
Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) (19078)

Died: 27 July 1917, aged 28

Memorial Place: Monchy British Cemetery (I.D.21)

Dob: 31 January 1889

George was the son of John (b.12 March 1849) and Mary Ann Broad (b.6 September 1850). The family home was at Loddington but by the time George enlisted he was living and working on Rankin's Farm with his brother John. His name appears on the Linton War Memorial, rather than on that of Loose, but since his descendants live in, and have been connected with, Loose, over the years, he has been included in this survey.



George was with the Machine Gun Corps in Monchy-Le-Preux when he died. The company, on that day, had fired 1000 rounds at hostile aeroplanes which were active throughout the day over the front line. The weather was warm and there were two casualties – George and his comrade C.W. Pashler. The third member of his team was wounded but no name is mentioned in the war diaries. Before this fatal day, in May, the Division had captured Roeux; on May 16th they had moved to billets at Arras; on May 17 they had moved again, and on May 19 had moved to billets at Montenescourt. June was mostly taken up with Church Parades and training at Liencourt and although there had been hostile activity throughout, there had been no casualties up until George and his comrade on 31 January. George and his mate are now buried side by side.

Monchy British Cemetery is a 'front-line' cemetery, which means that the men are buried in the region in which they fell. Forty of the 37th Division are buried here. The cemetery stands among ploughed fields on an open plateau. It covers an area of 3,098 square yards and is surrounded by a thorn hedge and a low curb and planted with hawthorn and crab-apple trees. The register records particulars of 552 British and Canadian burials.

George's memorial plaque (right) has come down through the family and is now in the possession of his grandniece Maureen Chappell.

The document (above) pertaining to his Victory Medal is in safe keeping with his grand-nephew Eric Watson.



George William Broad (continued)



(Top) George's grave and a general view of the Monchy Cemetery.
(Below) Alan Watson (left) & Eric Watson (resting his hand on the grave of C.Pashler)

George William broad (continued)

George was part of a large farming family which moved around as, and where, work was to be found. Much of this work was on the Linton Park Estate.

His sister **Ada** (b.19 February 1875) had a natural child named **Ethel** (b.18 February 1897), who became a housemaid at the Estate, until she married **George Tolhurst** (who was the waggoner at Linton Park and looked after all the horses) and went to live in Coldblow Cottages in Loddington Lane. **Ethel** always kept in contact with the Cornwallis family – in particular with Lady Julia Cochrane, who helped out by passing down clothes for the children. There were eight little Tollhurst's living in the tiny Coldblow Cottage at one time:



Ethel Broad aged 21

Bernard (a twin)	b.6 July 1923
Elsie (a twin)	b.6 July 1923
Margaret	b.10 April 1925
May	b.15 December 1927
Donald	b.7 September 1929
Maureen	b.12 August 1932
Helen	b.3 April 1936
Eileen	b.17 September 1939

Ethel had to work on the farm as well as her father (who was there for 29 years) as Coldblow were tied cottages,

The birth of twins came as a surprise to her, as she thought she was carrying only one child. Tradition had it, that if Dr Taylor turned up for the confinement, then the child would be a boy. If, on the other hand, the nurse came to deliver the child, then it was sure to be a girl.



Florence Broad aged 36

On the night of July 6 Dr Taylor arrived, so it was a sure bet that the child would be male. But there were problems and the nurse had to be sent for. Nurse Newell lived in a little black-boarded thatched cottage in *The Street*, Boughton Monchelsea, but it wasn't long before she arrived on her bike with her little Gladstone bag and Ethel must have wondered what was going on! But the tradition held good and Ethel had one child of each sex!

Bernard was always very dear to Ethel. He was of a very slight build and not very tall. When war broke out he became a Bevin Boy. He had wanted to go into the navy, but was told that he wasn't tall and broad enough. He was told to go into the army. But Bernard had a distaste for killing anything and said he would rather be a Bevin Boy than go into the army and have to use a gun. And so he went off to St. Helen's in Lancashire and was there from 1942 to 1946 when he was invalided out with Silicosis, a lung disease, caused by the exposure to coal dust.

Coal was in short supply in World War 11, so it was decided by the then Minister of Labour, Ernest Bevin, that there should be a ballot to determine whether the conscript should go into the armed services or work in the mines. These conscript miners were given the nick-name 'Bevin Boys'. They came from a whole range of classes and professions. No one was given preference and all were treated the same.

George William Broad (continued)

Training periods ranged from four days to four weeks, and included physical education, days in the classroom, days working in the pit yard and a half day down the pit. 'Bevin Huts' were built in various mining communities to house the influx of Boys, but George lived in 'digs', his landlady being a Mrs Hall.



At the end of his time in St Helen's George was arrested and sentenced to three months in prison because he absentee'd himself from the mines. He used to tell Mrs Hall that he was off to work, but he would hide away somewhere until it was time to go home. When he was arrested he was marched to St Helen's to serve his sentence. But whilst he was in the prison there he developed a dreadful cough and was taken to the hospital where they diagnosed silicosis, and so he was invalided out and sent home. George always worked outside and was to always suffer badly with his chest.

Like his sister **Ada**, George's sister **Florence** (b.20 February 1881) never married, but she too, had a daughter, named Alice (b.19 January 1898).

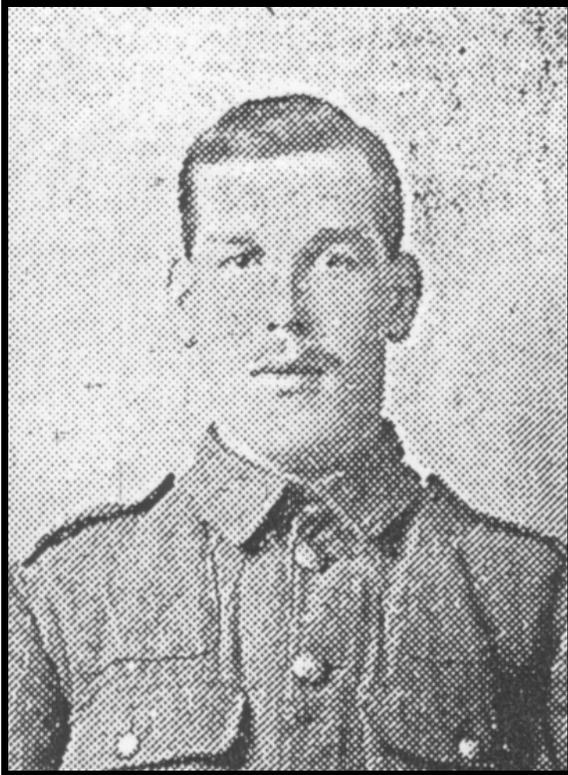
Neither did sister **Edith Ellen** (b.10 May 1883) ever marry and she came to a very tragic end by taking her own life. She was a parlour maid at Loddinton House and used to get up early in order to get things laid up for breakfast, and on one particular morning her sister Ada, who was a cook and did all the catering there, came down to breakfast and could find no sign of Edith. Thinking this strange, Ada made a search of the house – even going up a steep staircase (which was never used) to the top of the house, where she found an open window. Lying on the ground below was Edith. She had broken her neck and died on the way to hospital. According to her grandniece, **Maureen Chappell**, Edith had a cyst on the top of her head which caused her to have the most dreadful headaches, and this, it seems, was at the root of the suicide.

George's sister **Sarah Ann** (b. 6 October 1872 and always known as 'Lall') married **Alfred Watson**. They both worked on the Linton Park Estate and like George Tolhurst, Fred too, worked with the horses as well as being the head cowman. Lall and Fred later moved on to Bockingford Farm where they raised their own family of five children; Sheila, Alan, Rene, Eric and Jill.

George William Broad (continued)

Alan Watson went on to take Holy Orders and became a canon and now lives in overseas. (He actually conducted the cremation service for my own son in 1983). **Rene Watson** (a friend of mine from LooseYouth Fellowship days) married into the Hood family, and it is her brother Eric who has provided some of the information we have about George.

Maureen Chappell (daughter of Ada & George Tolhurst) is the grandniece of George. She and Roger were married at Linton church, as were all the others in the family. Maureen & Roger now live at 57 The Quarries – which right up until the 1960s, was known as Pooles Cottages. It is Maureen who relates all the farming activities in which the family were involved.



Private Bertie William Clark

2nd. Battalion. Royal Warwickshire Regiment (697)

Died: Saturday 25th September 1915, aged 28

Memorial: Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. (Panel 22 to 25)

Est. d.o.b: 1887

Enlisted: Maidstone

Bertie was in the Machine Gun section of the 2nd battalion and had been called up at the outbreak of war.

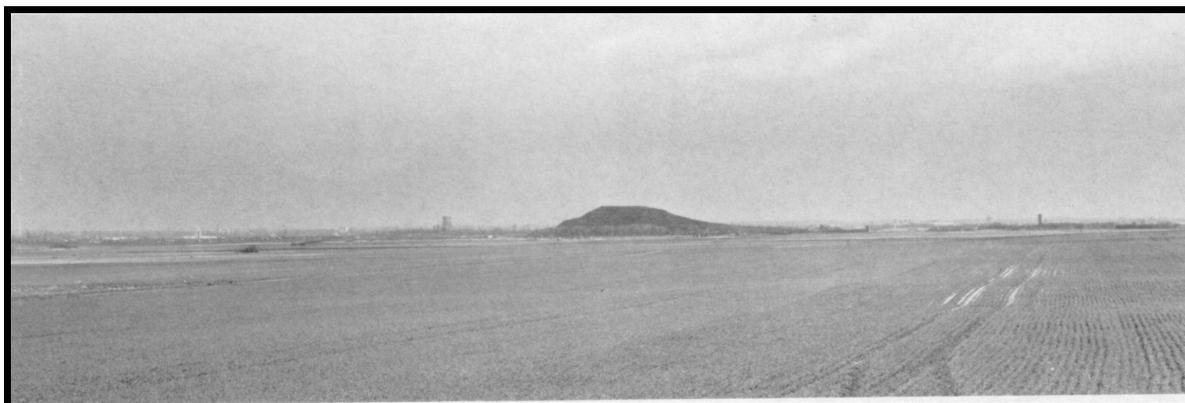
He was born in Langley and had been employed by Major Thomas at Loose Court for three years prior to the war. He had an elder brother at the Front with The Buffs, who had also served in the Boar War.

In a KM report of 25th December 1915 Bertie was reported as "missing" and his mother, Mrs R Clark of **4 Progress Place, Loose**, placed an appeal for any information which his comrades could provide.

The 1901 census tells us that his mother was already a widow by this time and was aged 41. There were two sisters, Florence and Lucy, and two brothers, Leonard and Albert. They were living at **66 Hardy Street, Maidstone**. His mother was a laundress and washer and his brother Leonard, a printer's apprentice. According to this census they were all born in Maidstone, but the Naval & Military Press give Bertie's place of birth as Langley.

Loos-en-Gohelle is a village about 5k north-west of Lens. The Loos Memorial forms the side and back of Dud Corner Cemetery where over 1,700 officers and men are buried, the great majority of whom fell in the Battle of Loos. The Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay, and who have no known grave. It covers the period from the first day of the Battle of Loos to the date of the Armistice.

Bertie William Clark (Continued)

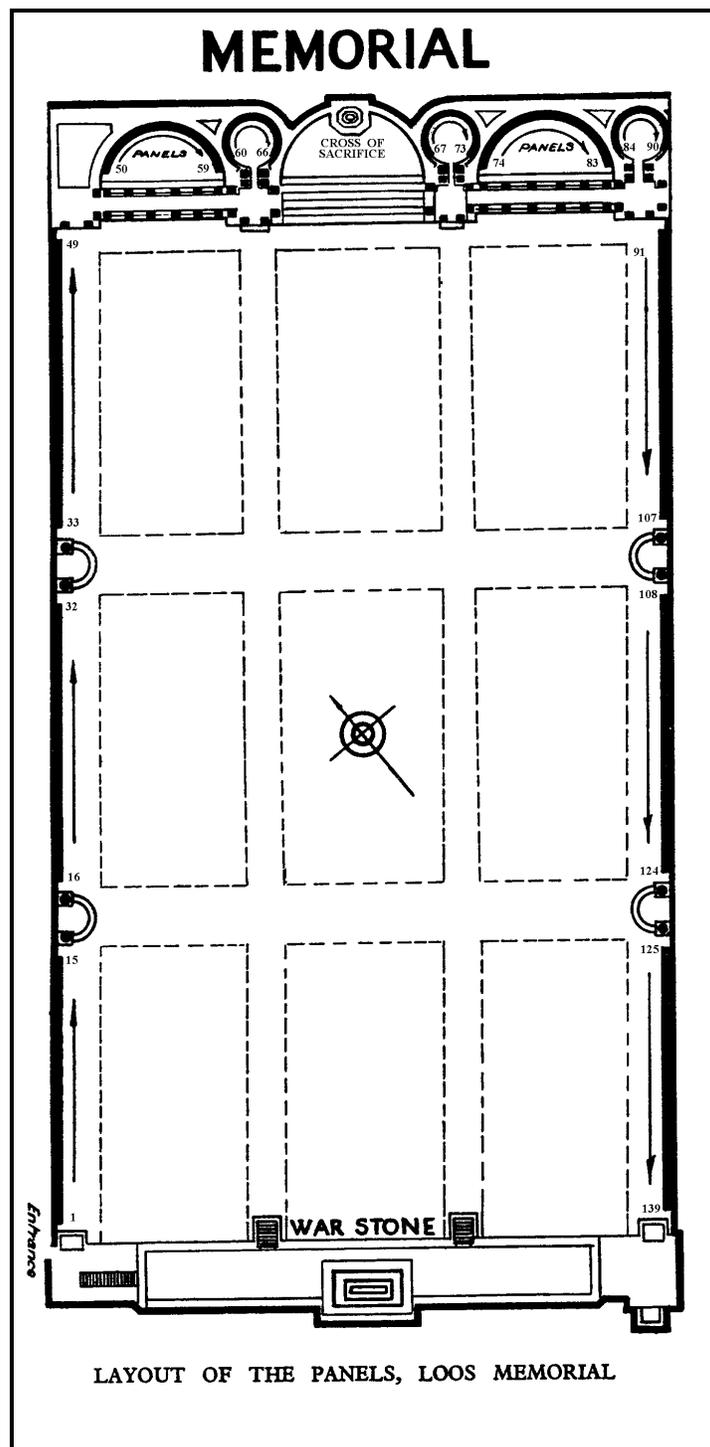


**The Loos battlefield photographed from Dud Corner.
British Troops first used poison gas here on September 25th, 1915**



**The Loos Memorial to the Missing at Dud Corner Cemetery,
Commemorating over 20,000 British officers and men**

Bertie William Clark (Continued)



Sources: CWGC; KM 25/12/1915; The Naval & Military Press; census 1901



Corporal E J Clifford

(not named on the Loose Memorial and presumed to have returned home to Loose.)

Reported Missing: 30 April 1918 (aged 31)

Est.d.o.b: 1887

Enlisted: 13 November 1914

It is not known whether or not Corporal Clifford returned safely to Loose. His wife of **3 Brewery Cottages (now 515 Loose Road)** had received news in June 1918 that her husband had been reported missing in Palestine on April 30th.

He had joined up in November 1914 and went to France before moving on to Salonica in 1916. An officer had written to say that Corporal Clifford was both wounded and missing. He was 31 years of age and had three brothers in India—one reported as a P.O.W.

(Not listed on CWGC Site)



Lieut. Norman Cloke

Royal Army Service Corps. (163188)

Died: Thursday 22 June 1944 (aged 32)
Resting Place: Johannesburg (West Park) Cemetery, Gauteng,
South Africa (Mil. Sec. Grave 209)
Est.d.o.b: March 1912

Norman was the son of Joe Cloke of *Elmcot, Linton Road, Loose*. He also had a brother and five sisters. Cicely Beeching (née Redman) remembers going to Maidstone Girls' Grammar School with his sisters Vera & Gladys.

Norman was extremely well-known and popular in Maidstone and there was much sorrow upon the news of his death. He had been educated at Maidstone Grammar School, after which he entered his father's Estate Agent's business in Gabriel's Hill. He later went into business on his own account—as a painter and decorator. He was an all-round sportsman and played cricket for the Mote Club, rugby for the Old Maidstonians and hockey for the Maidstone Hockey Club. By all accounts he had a happy-go-lucky disposition and a host of friends.

Norman was a member of the Territorials in pre-war days, and was under Colonel Harold Fletcher in the R.A.S.C.-- serving with many other young men of Maidstone. At the outbreak of war he was called up, and went to France with the 44th Division. He was a Corporal but was commissioned on the field.

Surviving Dunkirk, he returned to England and was later sent out to Egypt. When he became ill he was moved to Palestine and by Christmas 1943 he was in hospital in South Africa. He died on June 22nd - his family had previously received a telegram stating that he was on the danger list. At one time, there had been hopes of his recovery but complications set in and he finally succumbed to a second attack of double pneumonia.

Norman Cloke (continued)

Norman died in the Military Hospital at Baragwanath in Johannesburg, after 12 months of illness. He had contracted a fever in the desert whilst working with Arab labour in the construction dumps near El Alamein.





Lance Corporal George H Collins

Army Catering Corps attd. Royal Artillery (84877)

Died: Wednesday 22 November 1944 (aged 44)

Resting Place: Labuan War Cemetery, Malaysia (P.C.9)

Est.d.o.b: 1900

George (according to the CWGC listing) was married to Mabel Collins of Linton. His parents were George & Elizabeth of Loose Hill.

Labuan, where he is buried, is a small island in Brunei Bay, off the coast of north-west Borneo. The cemetery lies on the right side of the Jalan Tanjong Batu road, which leads from the airport to the town.

We know next to nothing about George, but we do know that his younger brother was a member of the Loose Swiss Scouts.



Harold Collins 1918

On 20 September 1915 Harold wrote in the log book: (his own spellings!)

“Boys, Birchington is getting rather old to us but we still are all happy. I am gald Thorneycroft & Newman is on Coast watching patrol at Margate as we can arrange to meet them sometimes. I am glad that Mr Green made me bank one shillings a week as it as amounted up to 13 shillings and soon will be 1 pound. May the Scout Meetings at home be getting on as fine as if we were up their. I have just past the Cooks, Naturlist and Gardeners badges, and I hope to past more this winter.”
Sct H Collins Swift Patrol.

On 13 January 1916 Scout H.W.V. Archibald Collins wrote:

“Hoping all the boys and TASM Langley at home had a Merry Christmas and wishing them every bit of luck in the New Year. Boys you don’t I was lucky to get two leaves at once. Glad to hear that TASM Langley has joined the Army and hope he will get on alright. Winkle had a letter from Sec Gayler this morn to say he arrived safely, and he has got a good Station at Kingsdown & hoping he will find it as good as Birchington. Wilkey has been elected Hon. Secretary for this patrol & its has gone against the grain (SOME).”

PS Hoping ASM Foulkes at the Front will have a prosperous New Year.

George H Collins (continued)



1901 Census

Loose Hill

George A Collins	Head	36	Digger	Harrietsham
Elizabeth J Collins	Wife	26		Linton
George E Collins	Son	5		Loose
Rose A E	Daughter	2		Loose
Harold W E	Son	2 months		Loose

Sources: CWGC; Losse Swiss Scout Archives; 1901 census, Internet



Sergeant John Coomber

(Not named on the Loose Memorial and presumed to have returned to Loose)

Est. d.o.b: 1886

Sergeant Coomber was awarded the Military Medal for gallant conduct in France in 1917.

He had joined the 120th Battalion Canadians in November 1915, came to England in August 1916 and then went to France to reinforce another battalion in December of that year.

He had been in Canada for five years and was 31 years of age in 1917. Before going to Canada he had been employed at Gurney's Mill for eight years.

In 1918 it was reported in the Kent Messenger that he had been awarded a bar to his Military Medal—another award for bravery and devotion to duty.

The Royal Regiment (Canada)

During the First World War (1914-1919) the 13th Royal Regiment contributed to the 4th Battalion CEF on its formation in September 1914, and later recruited for the 86th, 120th and 205th Battalions CEF. The 4th Battalion served in France and Flanders with the 1st Infantry Brigade (1st Canadian Division), from 12 February 1915 until the Armistice.

The 86th Battalion was reorganised in England as the Canadian Machine Gun Depot on 22nd June 1916, while the 205th Battalion was reorganised in Canada as a Draft Giving Depot Machine Gun Battalion in December of that year.

The 120th Battalion (of which sergeant Coomber was a part), provided reinforcements for the Canadian Corps in the field. During this war, many enlisted in various units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force for service in France and Flanders, namely the 4th, 76th, 120th and 205th Battalions of the CEF.

During the Second World War, the Regiment mobilised **The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry** and embarked for the United Kingdom in July 1944. The Regiment took part in the raid on Dieppe.



John Coomber (continued)

The original Colours of the Regiment were consecrated at Christ’s Church Cathedral in September 1863. These Colours were carried at the Battle of Ridgeway and continued in service for 38 years.

On 14 October 1901, during his Canadian tour, H.R.H. The Duke of Cornwall and York, later King George V, presented new Colours in a ceremony at Victoria Park. The original Colours were subsequently laid up in the Cathedral. From 1901 until the Great War, the Colours were carried by the 13th on all ceremonial occasions.



1901 Census

Loose Hill

John Comber	38	Head	Bricklayer	Born in Loose
Olive Comber	38	Wife		Born in Maidstone
John Comber	15	Son		Born in Loose
Joseph Coomber	14	Son		Born in Loose
Frederick Comber	12	Son		Born in Loose
Ethel Comber	10	Daughter		Born in Loose
May Comber	8	Daughter		Born in Loose
Ewart Comber	6	Son		Born in Loose
Victor Comber	5	Son		Born in Loose
Leonard Comber	2	Son		Born in Loose
Charles Comber	3 mo	Son		Born in Loose



Private Arthur James Coulter

Household Cavalry & Cavalry of the Line (incl. Yeomanry & Imperial Camel
Queen's Own West Kent Hussars (245346)

Died: Thursday 31 August 1916 (age 24)

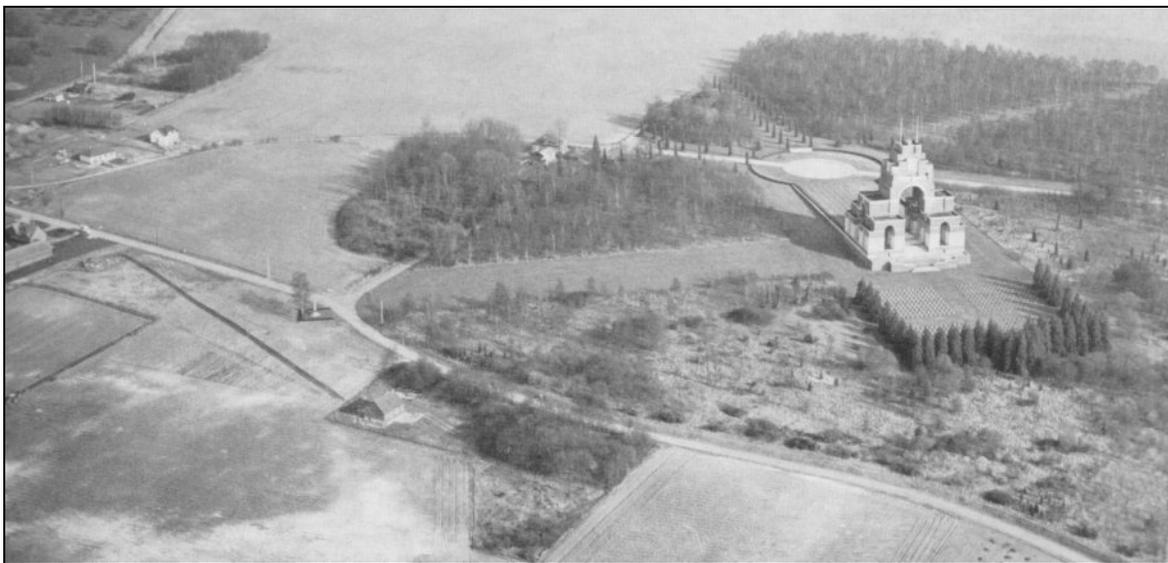
Memorial Place: Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France (Pier and Face I A)

Est.d.o.b: 1892

Enlisted: Maidstone 1915

Arthur was the youngest son of Edward James Coulter and Mercy Smith. He was aged 9 years at the time of the 1901 census, which puts his birth date to circa 1892 which means that his age at death would have been 24. On census returns he was listed as James A, but, as is listed on the CWGC site, he was always known as Arthur. At the time of the 1901 census the family resided at *The Chequers Inn*, but by the time of the First World War they were established at *Church House, Loose*. His brother William (Edward in the 1901 census) died soon after the war, of consumption, and his brother, Albert Leonard – a postman in Rochester, enlisted with the West Kent Yeomanry on November 1915.

Arthur was educated at the Loose National School, and was, for more than six years, a member of the church choir. He was also the organ blower and bellringer. He worked, for a time, as auxiliary postman for the village. After enlistment, most of his training was at Sturry, but he was subsequently transferred to Crowborough until he left, on 7 August, for one of the Battle Fronts where he was attached to the 13th Middlesex. His last letter home was dated 28 August, and he went into action the next day.



The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme

Arthur James Coulter (continued)

Arthur was caught up in the fighting in Deville Wood, (known as Devils Wood to the troops). According to family remembrances his hand had been injured and was wrapped in old rags but he continued into battle and was blown up when a shell exploded.



Mercy Coulter (*Arthur's mother*) was the matriarch of this family and she was one of the most notable characters of Loose in her day. Her life was wholly centred around the church and for 38 years, right up until a year before her death, she was verger of All Saints', Loose. During the Great War she was one of the women of the village who did much to keep the affairs of the community running as smoothly as possible and after the loss of her two sons she threw herself even more vigorously into the church as a palliative to her grief.

"I used to help cover the graves when [there] were no men to do it" she once said. "On one occasion I dug the grave for a little child."

It used to be said that a person couldn't get christened, married or buried in Loose without first going to see Mercy Coulter, probably because it was she who kept the books! Right up until old age she would climb the two flights of stairs to wind the clock on the church. She would also toll the bell – which meant climbing another two flights up to the bell tower to tie a piece of string to the clappers in order to toll the bell, because pulling the rope down below was too much for her. There is a little wooden door on either side of the clock and she would open one of these to look out and watch the funeral procession coming along Church Street.



Mercy would also light the fire in the stokehold and the gas fire in the church, to warm the building. The church was lit by oil lamps, which were housed in baskets on pulleys, which were raised and lowered by means of a rope. Her daughters Dolly and Beatrice would help with trimming the wicks and cleaning and polishing the glasses. They would lay them outside along the front path, to avoid filling the church with paraffin fumes. Her children and grandchildren often accompanied her on her church duties and they too, came to love and revere the church as much as she. They would help her to polish the pews and the pulpit, and to scrub the stone floors. Her little grandson Roy (Hood), still little more than a toddler, would take delight in creeping up the steps to the pulpit to peep over the top to view an imaginary congregation – just as the vicar did when he was reading his sermons, and would be filled with awe. In later years, Roy lavished his care on the church, just as his grandmother had.

Mercy was loved by all who knew her and was known to all and sundry as 'Granny Coulter'. Her knowledge of the history of the church was great and she had a fund of stories and happenings in the district since her childhood – but sadly, these tales seem never to have been written down.

She was at a Mother's Union meeting on the afternoon of 5 October 1939 when she had a stroke. She was taken home by the vicar and friends, but died that night – at the age of 81 years. In a paragraph in the Parish Magazine of November that year, the Reverend Hare (who was to lose his own son fifteen months later in a tragic accident on Ben Nevis) wrote:

"Mrs Coulter passed to her rest on October 5 after a short illness. She never rallied from a stroke she received after a Mother's Union meeting that day. So ended a long and useful life, all of which was spent in Loose. For almost 40 years she was caretaker of the church. An accident a year or so ago, resulted in her having to give up this work, and she was a familiar figure on fine days, sitting in her wheeled chair at her gate by the roadside."

Arthur James Coulter (continued)

Church House had been Mercy and Edward's home for many years after Edward had retired from the Chequers. They had rented Church House and shop – later taking out a mortgage on it. When their daughter, Ada Dorothy (known as Dolly) married George Hood, the young couple also lived in Church House, but as their own family grew they needed more space to accommodate them all, so Mercy agreed to go and live with her widowed daughter Beatrice – Mercy was a widow herself by this time.

So George and Dolly took over the mortgage on Church House and Mercy went off to live with Beatrice in Vale Cottage (the house on the right of the pair next to Vale House).

And so it was outside of Vale Cottage that Mercy used to sit in her wheeled chair. Apparently she and Beatrice didn't always see eye to eye – Beatrice was always a law unto herself, and they had been arguing on the day of the accident, over the lack of butter for their afternoon tea. Mercy had donned her hat and coat and left the house to go to the shop at Church House to get some, only to slip in the icy gully (by Brooks Field) – thus falling and breaking her hip, which was a great trauma in those days. Mercy would lie on her bed with sandbags packed around her for many months – no plaster of Paris in those days! Nobody really expected her to recover, but she rallied and even managed to walk on crutches, but she was no longer able to take care of the church

After Mercy died Beatrice married Alfred 'Old Punch' Jenner. She had been a widow for many years and had been friendly with Alfred for a long while. No doubt he enjoyed her wonderful cooking as well as her company in his old age.

Mercy survived her husband, Edward James Coulter by 18 years. Edward was sexton for twenty three years and when business was brisk Mercy would help with the grave digging. They are buried in the churchyard in the shade of the old yew tree. The grave is still lovingly tended by their grand & great grandchildren and provides a glorious blaze of colour in the springtime.



**Granny Coulter (Mercy) and grandson Roy taking tea at the old vicarage c. 1935
Granddaughter Madge looking over Mercy's shoulder and a pair of Revd. Bury's corgi's in the background.**

Arthur James Coulter (continued)



This photograph of the Chequers Inn (c. 1895) shows members of the Coulter family in the doorway.

Arthur James Coulter (continued)



Members of the 'Hood' family. Ada's husband, George is on the right of the picture. George was a newsagent as well as a cycle maker. Second from left is a Creed boy (the butchers son).



More members of the Hood family. The driver is 'uncle Tom', and next to him is 'uncle Sid'. Second from right is Jack

Arthur James Coulter (continued)



Mercy at the Vicarage

In answer to many enquiries the Commisary General has ruled and directed as follows:

1. It is for the incumbent to prescribe the position and the depth of any grave which is to be dug in his churchyard.
2. It is for the relatives or other persons bringing a body for burial to arrange for the actual digging, and also for the lowering of the coffin into the grave; these arrangements they would usually make through the indertaker as their agent or representative.
3. If there is a regular grave digger –sometimes called a sexton – who is prepared to do the work of digging at a reasonable charge, the relatives etc. (as above) are bound to employ him.
4. It is for the Parochial Church Council to fix the ‘reasonable charge.’
5. If there is no regular grave digger the relatives etc. (as above) must provide their own labour for the purpose, there being no legal obligation on either the incumbent or the P.C.C. to do so.

Grave Digging Rules – Parish Magazine August 1943

Families of Wartime Loose



Stoker (1st Class) Norman George Coulter

H.M.Submarine *Talisman*, Royal Navy (C/KK 92557)

Died: Friday 18 September 1942 (aged 23)

Memorial Place: Chatham Naval Memorial (62,1)

Est.d.o.b: 1919

Norman was the son of Albert James & Annie Coulter of Loose, Maidstone. During his service he was serving on the *Talisman*. This submarine was built by Cammell Laird, Birkenhead, and was launched during 1940. She left Gibraltar on 10th September 1942 with stores and spare parts for Malta. It was reported that a U-boat had been spotted off Philippeville (Algeria) on the 15th September but there has never been any confirmation of this. There are two hypothesis on the fate of *HMS Talisman*: she could have been sunk on 17 September by Italian torpedo boats off Marettimo Island (Western Sicily) or she may have collided with a floating mine in the Strait of Sicily around the same date. What is certain, is that the ship was lost with all hands.

Cicely Beeching remembers Norman as “Dear old Ginger”.

Apart from the fact that Albert James & Annie Coulter were his parents we know little of Norman, and the census details we have located throw scant light onto the family:

1881 Census

4 French's Cottages, Union Road, Coxheath

James S Coulter	Head	47	Ag. Lab	Born Watringbury
Ellen Coulter	Wife	39		Born Marden
Harriett Coulter	Dau	12	Scholar	Born Farleigh
George S	Son	7	Scholar	Born East Farleigh
Albert J Coulter	Son	3m		Born Linton

1901 Census

No 2 Malthouse Cottage, Boughton Monchelsea

Ellen Coulter	Head	60	Widow	Born Marden
George H Coulter	Son	28	Stone Quarryman	Born East Farleigh
Albert J Coulter	Son	20	Stone Quarryman	Born Linton
Edith E Coulter	Dau	16	General Serv. Domestic	Born Boughton M
Charles R Startup	Grandson	14	Houseboy Domestic	Born Boughton M
Robert C Startup	Grandson	13	Houseboy Domestic	Born Boughton M
George F Startup	Grandson	11		Born Maidstone
Annie S Startup	Granddau	9		Born Hunton
Lewis H	Grandson	8		Born Hunton

Stoker (1st Class) Norman George Coulter

We can see from these census extracts that Norman's Grandfather was James S Coulter who was born about 1834 in Wateringbury, and that grandmother Ellen, was born in Marden about 1842. They were living in Coxheath at the time of the 1881 census. By 1901 the family had moved and were living in Malthouse Cottages and Ellen was now a widow.

Albert J Coulter, the father of Norman, was born in 1881 at Linton. By 1901, at the age of 20, he was working in the quarries. He must have married Annie Flisher some time between 1901 and 1919 – the year when Norman was born. In 1934 he married Daisy Styance and they lived in Prospect Row. Daisy died in 1939

Norman's aunt Harriett obviously married into the Startup family, but we haven't yet been able to establish her husband's name.

Families of Wartime Loose



Corporal William Edward Coulter

1st/5th Battalion Suffolk Regiment (290358)

Died: Thursday 16th October 1919 (aged 38)
Resting Place: Loose (All Saints') Churchyard Extension (close to gate, left of main path)
Est.d.o.b: 1881

William (named William Edward on the CWGC site, but Edward William on census returns) was the son of Edward James and Mercy Coulter, and the husband of Hilda Coulter of *Forge Cottage, Loose*. According to the obituary of his brother Arthur, they had six children in August 1916 – the youngest being seven weeks old. He was born in Loose, and was a malster at midway Brewery. William was an uncle of Roy Hood (Church House, Loose). His grave is on the left of the path at the entrance of the Churchyard Extension.

For a fuller profile of his family and his mother Mercy see the profile of **Arthur James Coulter**.

William did, in fact, return from the war but died of consumption (TB) – as did so many who had been in the damp and muddy trenches.



Hilda (holding baby) outside the Chequers

William Edward Coulter (continued)

William is one of three 'Coulter's' named on the Memorial – one, a brother and the other a cousin? Census details do establish that William and his family did at one time, live in *The Chequers Inn*, and this is confirmed by Rita & Roy Hood. However, when they married, he and Hilda lived in Forge Cottage in the village. They had a large family and all the rooms in the house were used as bedrooms, apart from the one in the front which was kept as the parlour for when visitors called, and for use on high days and holidays. All meals were eaten in a tin shed at the top of the garden.



Forge Cottage in early 20c. It was one of five forges within the village.
The group of children on the right are almost certainly those of Hilda & William.



Two views of Forge Cottage 24 Feb. 2003



William Edward Coulter

1881 Census

35 St Peter Street, Maidstone

James Coulter	Head	24	Maltman at Brewery	Born Maidstone
Mercy Coulter	Wife	22		Born Loose
Ellen Coulter	Dau	2		Born Maidstone
Lilly Coulter	Dau	1		Born Maidstone

1901 Census

Chequers Inn, Loose

Edward James Coulter	Head	44	Gardner Domestic	Born Maidstone
Mercy Coulter	Wife	43		Born Loose
Lily Coulter	Dau	21		Born Maidstone
Edward W Coulter	Son	18	(?) Labourer	Born Loose
George Coulter	Son	15	Blacksmith	Born Loose
Ada D Coulter	Dau	10		Born Loose
James A Coulter	Son	9		Born Loose
Beatrice K Coulter	Dau	4		Born Loose



In the garden at The Chequers
(Back row): William, Bert & George (Centre row): Edward, Mercy & Lilian
(Front row): Ada Dolly, Beatrice & Arthur

Sources: CWGC, Census 1881 & 1901, Roy & Rita Hood, LAA & Chapman photos, Kent Messenger 1916



Chief Writer Vallance Cruttenden

H.M.S.Raglan, Royal Navy (347357)

Died: Sunday 20 January 1918, aged 31
Resting Place: Lancashire Landing Cemetery, Turkey (L.70)
Est. d.o.b. 1887

Vallance was the son of Edgar and Jessie Cruttenden of *Ivy House, Tovil*. His wife was Elsie Maud Staples of 17 Frensham Road, Southsea Portsmouth. In 1917, (according to the Kelly Directory) Edgar was living at *West Lawn*. This must have been soon after the Antrum family moved out.

Vallance lost his life whilst doing his duty on board H.M.S.Raglan; he remained in his chief's cabin to decode a wireless signal for Commander Viscount Broome.

He had entered Maidstone Grammar School with a scholarship, and after having followed a successful career, was later employed for a short while, as assistant cashier in the office of Messrs. Lovatt, at Tidworth, until joining the Royal Navy as a writer.

He served successively in the Commander-in-Chief's office in the R.N., Portsmouth on board *H.M.S. Spartiate* – at the time of King Edward's visit to Cherbourg; and on the Admirals Yacht *H.M.S. Alacrity* in the China Seas, during which time his services as an interpreter were much in demand and appreciated.

On his return from China he married Miss Elsie Staples, daughter of Mr Staples of Queen Alexandra's Yacht, at Milton Church, Southsea, on 24 May 1913. Their son was only four years old when Vallance died.

After a period of some six months at Shotley Barracks, he joined *H.M.S. St. George*, under Captain Raikes, and from the outbreak of war spent a year in the North Sea, being ultimately transferred to *H.M.S.Raglan*. Here he came into close relationship with Viscount Broome, with whom he used to read for hours.

When Vallance died, Viscount Broome made a personal visit to his parents and spoke of his high character; his thorough trustworthiness in his position of Chief Writer and Confidential Clerk to himself; his high example to his fellows, and his coolness and bravery under fire.

Edgar and Jessie said that he was a splendid son, husband and brother; sincere and earnest in life – one who sought to make the best of his opportunities and who nobly sacrificed his life in voluntarily undertaking a duty which the exigencies of the moment demanded from him, and for which he had been mentioned in Despatches.

H.M.S.Raglan was built by Harland and Wolff, at Belfast and laid down on 1 December 1914; launched 29 April 1915 and completed in June 1915. It went straight to the Dardanelles (in company with the cruiser H.M.S.Diana) to carry out bombardment duties and became part of the 1st division between September 1915 to January 1916.

After the evacuation from the Dardanelles, H.M.S.Raglan served in the Aegean. At Port Said she was involved in operations against the Turks in Southern Palestine, returning to Imbros in January 1917. Along with H.M.S.Abercrombie, her duty was to guard against possible breakout of the German ships Breslau and Goeben, forming the 2nd Detached

Vallance Cruttenden (continued)

Squadron, along with some smaller monitors. On the morning of 20 January 1918 Raglan was being shelled by accurate fire from the Breslau, followed by shots from the Goeben. She quickly became engulfed in fire, and sank in shallow water, losing a total of 127. Later, guns and other valuable equipment was salvaged.



Lancashire Landing & Harbour



HMS Raglan



Lancashire Landing Cemetery, Turkey



Flight Lt. Alfred Charles Culver, DFM
(AKA Ginger)

269 Sqdn., Royal Air Force (43198)

Died: Wednesday 2 September 1942, aged 25

Memorial Place: Runnymede Memorial, Surrey (panel 65)

D.o.b: 12 January 1917

Alfred (or ‘Ginger’ as he was known) was the son of Marsh Terry & Mary Elizabeth Culver and the husband of Olive Mary Tomlinson, whose parents, by 1941, were living at 5 *Pickering Street*.

Alfred was always known as ‘Ginger’ on account of the colour of his hair. He was a regular R.A.F. Coastal Command pilot and from the beginning of the war was on operational flying—frequently engaged in action with enemy planes.

Ginger was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal whilst still a Sergeant Pilot, and promoted shortly afterwards. He was subsequently mentioned in Despatches.

Whilst stationed in Iceland patrolling the Atlantic and guarding the convoys on 2nd September 1942 his aircraft failed to return and nothing was ever heard of him again. His only child, a daughter, had just been born and he and his friends had ‘wet the baby’s head’ only a few nights previously. Although he never met Carol, he did receive a photograph of her.

Having no permanent home at the time, Olive was living with her parents in *Pickering Street* until the baby was born, after which she was hoping to join Alfred in married quarters. But this was not to be.

When a serving man went missing, months often passed before he was presumed dead—as was the case with Alfred. Olive had to wait 9 long months before she received the official notification of his death in writing. But on 6 September 1942 she received a hand-written letter from Alfred’s Commanding Officer:

“Dear Mrs Culver

It is with very great sorrow that I have to write and tell you about the death of your husband, official intimation of which you will already have received. First of all let me express my own deep regret, not only as his commanding officer but as a friend, and that of the squadron as a whole.

We all regarded Ginger as the very best, as an officer, a pilot and a man. He was easily the most popular man in the squadron and was loved by all who came into contact with him. He was thoroughly reliable in all that he did in his work, and the best of companions in the mess. I regarded him as my most valuable officer, and he would certainly have gone far.

You will want to know how it happened, but unfortunately I cannot tell you much, as we don’t know ourselves with any certainty. Early in the morning of September 2nd Ginger and his crew, together with two other crews, were detailed to carry out a search over the sea, southwest from here for another aircraft of the squadron which was missing.

Flight Lt. Alfred Charles Culver, DFM

The weather was fine, and the other two aircraft duly returned after an uneventful trip. Ginger did not

come back, and nothing was heard from his aircraft. We have been carrying out the most intensive searches ever since, but have found no trace, so I am afraid that hope must be abandoned. I cannot understand what went wrong, as there was no wireless message and no survivors have been found. It must have happened very suddenly, and they must all have been killed at once. Needless to say if anything further is found you will be informed immediately, but I am afraid it is most unlikely. I cannot tell you how sorry we all are. Please accept our very deepest sympathy for yourself and your little daughter, who, though she will not know her father, will learn that he was one of the finest men.

Yours sincerely G G Harris W/C O.C.269

Olive had not received the official notification mentioned in the letter from the Commanding officer, but on 10 September 1942 a more formal letter came from the Air Council:

“Madam

I am commanded by the Air Council to confirm the telegram in which you were notified that your husband, Flight Lieutenant Alfred Charles Culver, D.F.M., Royal Air Force, is missing as the result of air operations on 2nd September 1942.

Your husband was captain of Hudson aircraft which set out from a base in Iceland for an air/sea patrol and failed to return. This does not necessarily mean that he is killed or wounded, and if he is a prisoner of war he should be able to communicate with you in due course. Meanwhile, enquiries will be made through the International Red Cross Committee and as soon as any definite news is received, you will be at once informed.

If any information regarding your husband is received by you from any source you are requested to be kind enough to communicate it immediately to the Air Ministry.

The Air Council desire me to express their sincere sympathy with you in your present anxiety.

I am, Madam, Your obedient Servant D.S.Richards.”

How Olive must have hoped and prayed that news *would* come from Ginger. But where was the telegram mentioned in the letter from the Air Ministry? Olive must have been at her wits end, and on 10 October she wrote to the War Office for possible news. On 13 October she received the following reply from the War Office:

“MP/KM RAF/C.4205 7 Belgrade Square, London SW1

Dear Mrs Culver

We have received your letter of October 10th in which you make an enquiry for your husband, Flight/Lieutenant Alfred Charles Culver, No.43198, Royal Air Force.

We are sorry to tell you that up to the present we have no news of him, but we are making all possible enquiries, and you will be notified without delay if we succeed in obtaining any information.

Yours sincerely, Margaret Amphill pp Chairman”

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

And then on 22 December 1942 there came another letter from the Air Ministry:

(Same ref as their previous letter)

“Madam

I am directed to refer to a letter from the department dated 10 September 1942, and to inform you with regret that no news has been received of your husband ... since he was reported missing on 2 September, 1942.

The detailed report from his squadron states that his aircraft set out on that day to search for a missing aircraft, and no communication was subsequently received from it. When it became overdue, attempts were made to contact it by Wireless, but no reply was received. Extensive searches were made, but no trace could be found of the aircraft of (sic) any of it's occupants. No information has since become available from any other source.

I am to express the Department's deep sympathy with you in your great anxiety and to assure you that should any news be received later it will be immediately passed to you.

I am, Madam, Your obedient Servant, R.S.Keene for Director of Personal Services”

Four months later, on 23 April 1943, another (crushing) letter arrives from the Air Ministry:

“Madam

With reference to the letter from this Department dated 22nd December 1942, I am directed to inform you, with deep regret, that all efforts to trace your husband ... have proved unavailing, and it is feared that, in view of the time that has elapsed since he was reported missing, there can be little hope of his having survived.

It is accordingly proposed to take action to presume his death, and for this purpose I am to ask that you will be good enough formally to confirm that you have received no further news or evidence regarding him.

A further communication on this matter will be sent to you at a later date, but I am to assure you that this presumption action is taken for official purposes only, and that enquiry will continue to be made from every available source.

I am to extend to you the sincere sympathy of the department in this time of your great anxiety.

I am, madam, Your obedient Servant, M. Gray – for Director of Personal Services”

The final, and official notification of Ginger's death is dated 16 June 1943:

“I am commanded by the Air Council to state that in view of the lapse of time and the absence of any further news regarding your husband ... since the date in which he was reported missing, they must regretfully conclude that he has lost his life, and his death has now been presumed, for official purposes, to have occurred on 2nd September, 1942.

The council desire me to express again their sympathy with you in the anxiety which you have suffered, and in your bereavement.

I am, Madam, Your obedient Servant, Charles Evans.”

=====

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

In 1989 the Loose Area History Society staged a very successful Exhibition “*When the Lights Went Out*”. This exhibition was devoted to the war years, and for this, Olive Culver provided all the previous information regarding her husband and manned a table showing many mementoes of him. She also wrote down some of her thoughts and memories of the war years.



Olive at the exhibition with her mementoes of Ginger

Olive wrote:

One Sunny Afternoon in 1944

“ . . . I was pushing my daughter in her pram along the Loose Road when a doodlebug came over, hotly pursued by a Spitfire. I and the pram huddled into a doorway as the deadly duo hurtled overhead. Suddenly, the doodlebug lurched and the engine stopped. After a few seconds the sound of an explosion on the other side of the valley proclaimed the destruction of yet another enemy weapon. When I shakily resumed my walk, there, across the roadway—in a neat line like sewing machine stitches, was a line of bullet holes from the Spitfire’s machine gun. I could have been zapped from my own side!!”

Olive also wrote:

My Heart Stood Still—September 1944

“It was a beautiful sunny morning [and] my mother & I were drying dishes in the kitchen when a distant roar began approaching through the sky. [An] only too familiar [sound of] bombers! But the time was unfamiliar— it was wrong. The sound began to fill the air and we

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

ran into the garden and that is when my heart stood still. Above us was an incredible sight. First a roaring wave of bombers, then following—no, being towed, [was] a wave of huge gliders; silent, save for a sort of swishing, sighing sound. And [then] another roaring and sighing wave—and another and another, on and on and on; a vast armada filling the sky. Coming [from] where? Going whence? When we saw they were ‘ours’ we regained our senses and rushed up and down waving our tea towels. So low were the gliders [that] we could see tiny arms waving back to us. I found myself screaming ‘Good Luck, Good Luck’ and after a while they ceased to pass and the weird sounds faded away and we stood and looked at one another. It was awesome and I remember I whispered ‘God bless them, O God bless them’. And death was in the air and all day we speculated in a hushed and unbelieving way, like people who had seen a ghost, and we couldn’t think of an answer. In the morning the radio and newspapers gave it to us . . . ARNHEIM.”

The Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede commemorates by name, over 20,000 airmen who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known graves. They came from all parts of the Commonwealth and some were from countries in continental Europe which had been over-run but whose airmen continued to fight in the ranks of the Royal Air Force. The memorial, designed by Sir Edward Maufe, is in the form of a cloister with the names of the dead, grouped by year, inscribed on the Hardene stone reveals and mullions of the narrow windows. On the cloister ceilings are emblazoned the arms of the Commonwealth countries. The cloisters have curved wings, terminating in two lookouts, one facing towards Windsor Castle and the other towards Heathrow airport. The structure is in Portland stone with roofs of Westmorland green slate. Opened by the Queen in 1953. Carol, Ginger’s daughter, was present at this ceremony together with Olive and Ginger’s parents.

Olive and Ginger were married at Maidstone Register Office on 28 December 1938.



Olive 1938
‘not quite a year married’

Ginger had been born in India – (his father being a bombardier in the Army), but was living with his parents and sister during his courting days.

Olive’s parents owned what is now the Scuba Diving shop near the entrance to Mote Park. They had had it built as an Off-Licence and General store.

Ginger and Olive met when one day, Ginger went into the store where Olive was serving behind the counter. His pet name for her became “Face” – and one can see why when looking at the photograph of her striking countenance.



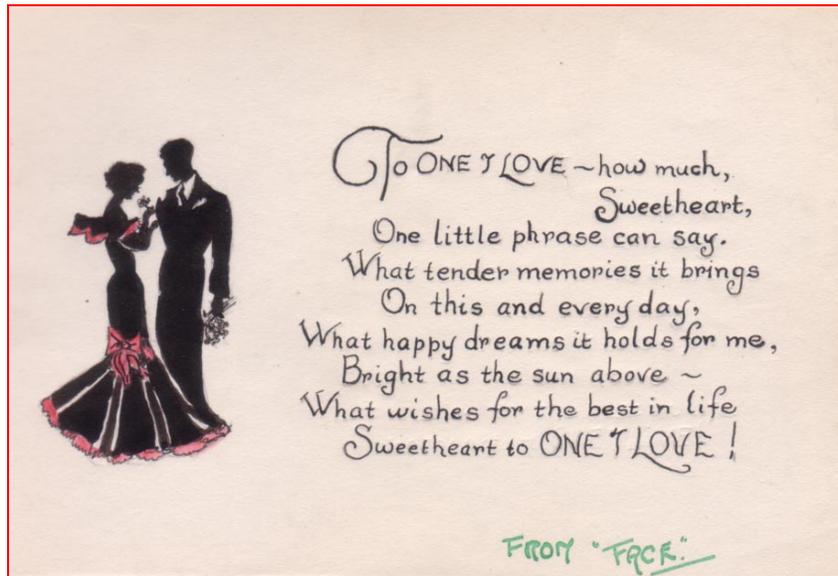
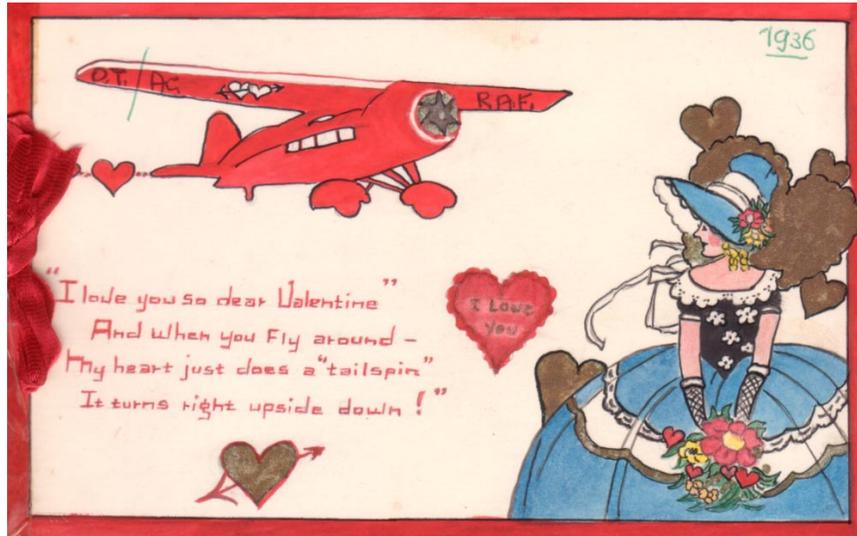
Olive with Carol - wearing a dress which she had smocked.

After finishing his education, Ginger’s first employment was with Anstey’s in Lower Stone street, and his wage was five shillings (25p) per week! But by the time he and Olive met he was already in the Air Force.

After they were married the couple lived in R.A.F. quarters in various places, including Bircham Newton & Thornaby and then Olive went to live with her parents at 5 Pickering Street when she was about eight months pregnant. Mr and Mrs Tomlinson also owned no. 10 Pickering Street – a larger house, which they had let to another military family. Before long, and after the birth of Carol, it became obvious that the two families would need more room, and so in 1943, after Olive had been widowed for about twelve weeks, they took up residence in No. 10 – where Carol and her husband still live.

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

Ginger and Olive were a devoted couple, as can be seen from their letters to each other – which have been preserved and are now in the possession of Carol. Olive’s letters to Ginger were later sent back to her, from Iceland – together with his log book. They were too, both accomplished artists.



Olive made this delightful card for Ginger in 1936

Ginger writes after the birth of Carol: “.....several ‘do’s’ ... terrific parties... cigars ... having most of the fun darling.”

On another occasion he writes: ...”whilst flying over the island I saw a really wizard waterfall. It started from a hole in the face of a high cliff and tumbled down over 500 feet in a sheer drop, it looked really grand. I also flew over the largest gannet colony in the world. It’s a huge rock 15 to 20 miles out to sea and it was simply covered with them”

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

Writing after the birth of Carol: “...*She obviously has my good points, but I wouldn't let it worry you unduly [as] later on she will probably take after you – snatching unwary men and probably proposing! ...However, if she finds someone to love her half as much as I love you my sweet, I shall welcome the lucky man with open arms.*”

Carol and her husband Derek have been married for 44 years. [as in 2005]

Olive would write and tell Ginger about Carol and on one occasion she wrote very many pages on the art of bathing her.

So what led up to the disappearance of Ginger?

In 1937 the administration of the Fleet Air Arm was removed from Coastal Command and was placed under the Admiralty for all purposes. The effect of this change was to cause the principal task of the Command to be the provision of trained shore-based squadrons for the defence of trade and for co-operation with the Royal Navy in home waters.

The stated task of Coastal Command, in which the Royal Navy co-operated with the Royal Air Force, became: “***Find the enemy; Strike the enemy; Protect our ships***”. Steady progress was made and general reconnaissance squadrons were formed and trained. Modern flying boats, such as the Sunderland, were slowly forthcoming for their equipment, and the Anson, that most useful and dependable of aircraft, came into service in increasing numbers. Later on, American-built Hudsons began to make their appearance.

Ginger had begun his training on **26 August 1935** at the Civil Flying School, RAF Hatfield. He began flying immediately, carrying out various set tasks (1 – 11), and less than a week later he made his first solo flight on **6 September 1935** - for the duration of 5 minutes and fulfilling tasks 6, 7 and 14 satisfactorily. The sequence of Air Force Instruction for “Ab Initio” pupils was clearly set out – with instructions for pupils to enter the relevant number in their log books beside each flight.

Twenty eight disciplines had to be learnt as follows:

1. Passenger flying
2. Taxying and handling of engines
3. Effect of controls with/without engine (including aileron Drag)
4. Straight and level flying
5. Stalling, climbing and gliding
6. Taking off into the wind
7. Landing and judging distances
8. Medium turns
9. Gliding turns
10. Steep turns, with/without engine
11. Spinning
12. Elementary forced landings
13. Low flying (with instructor only)
14. Solo
15. Climbing turns
16. Sideslipping
17. Action in the event of fire
18. Taking off and landing across wind
19. Advanced forced landings



At Training School 1935

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

- 20. Aerobatics
- 21. Front seat flying
- 22. Air pilotage
- 23. Forced landing test
- 24. Height test
- 25. Cross country test
- 26. Rough weather flying
- 27. Cloud and instrument flying
- 28. Passenger test.

By 18 October 1935 Ginger had completed 50 hours of flying and his proficiency was assessed as above average.

His next course was at RAF Uxbridge where the training and tests continued, until in **November 1935** he went on to No 11 Flight Training School at RAF Wittering.

On 25 January 1936 he had clocked up 89 hours and 35 minutes of flying time, and was again assessed at above average proficiency. He was now authorised to wear his flying badge.



← Ginger's actual badge
And him proudly wearing it in 1936



In May 1936 Ginger transferred to the School of Air Navigation at Manston, where he flew Saunders Roe Clouds (monoplane flying boats) and Avro Ansons and then, in **October 1936** was posted to 220 Squadron at RAF Bincham Newton where he flew only Ansons. By now he had become Sergeant Culver.



“Anson is as Anson does”⁴
These aircraft were Coastal Command’s main standby in the earliest days of the war. Reliability and powers of manoeuvre particularly adapted them for convoy protection.

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

We can take up Ginger's Story from this point, from his log book and from contemporary accounts of some of the exploits of 220 Squadron. The Squadron had come into being at the end of the First World War, but was re-formed on 17 August 1936 at Bircham Newton as a general reconnaissance squadron. During the years leading up to the outbreak of war, life for the servicemen at Bircham Newton, in the Norfolk countryside, was very agreeable. The atmosphere was relatively relaxed, and although flying and training naturally occupied 220 squadron for most of the time, there were plenty of opportunities for relaxation. Ginger would often go on a shooting party with his friends, on Norfolk farms.

In August 1939, on the eve of the outbreak of war, 220 squadron moved from Bircham Newton to their War Station at Thornaby-on-Tees. The officers and sergeants flew up to Thornaby in their Ansons. Sergeant Ken "Scotty" Scotney (a very good friend of Ginger) had the privilege of accompanying the commanding officer, Squadron leader Smythies, although he was not asked to pilot the Anson on that occasion. Ordinary aircraftmen went by train, after packing up all of the squadron's supplies and equipment. Ginger, being a sergeant, would have flown there, with his crew.

220 Squadron had been flying Avro Ansons, but with the move to Thornaby it began re-equipping with the Lockheed Hudson Mk 1. This aircraft was a complete contrast to the Anson, known affectionately as "Faithful Annie" to many pilots and aircrew. In its day the Anson had been seen as an advanced aircraft, a monoplane with a retractable undercarriage (although this had to be wound up by hand) and a spacious cabin with excellent visibility through the large window area. But at the start of war something more potent was needed, and this was to arrive at Thornaby by early September in the shape of the Hudson from across the Atlantic.

For several weeks after delivery of the first Hudsons there were only three serviceable aircraft (A, G and H), although nine more were awaiting installation of their gun turrets. Among these was Hudson N 7294, which had arrived at Thornaby in the first week of September 1939, (and which was to come to grief in February 1940), a standard Mk 1 with Wright Cyclone engines numbered 132598 and 132599. It was coded NR-E (NR being the code for 220 Squadron) but probably did not go into service until January 1940

Ginger had his first flight in Hudson N7293 on **7 September 1939**, and on 9 September his first solo flight in the type.

With the shortage of serviceable Hudsons, many patrols continued to be carried out in the old Avro Ansons. Indeed the first wartime action of 220 Squadron was on **13 September 1939** when an Anson sighted a U-boat on the surface and dropped two anti-submarine bombs.

In the next month, on **16 October 1939**, the first Hudson operation by 220 Squadron took place, with Ginger as pilot and Scotty as his co-pilot in NR-A. The other crew members are un-named. It was a patrol and search mission.

Much of the time during the early months of the war was spent in uneventful flights over miles of grey North Sea, the so-called "kipper patrols". The term was possibly derived from London cab drivers' slang. "Kipper Season" referred to the slack times after Christmas & Easter, when cabbies could only afford to eat kippers.

And yet there were compensations. The pilots and crews flying over the desolate seas became well known to the lighthouse keepers on the many islands off the coasts. It was a strange but firm friendship. Neither could meet nor speak to the other save by signs. The crews dropped newspapers and magazines. The light house keepers expressed their gratitude by waving their arms, and one of them was wont to display a large sheet with "*Thank you*" written on it. There was also a dog who was given bones from the air, and soon showed great skill in marking the spot where they would fall and snatching them before they could roll into the hungry sea.⁴

Protection from the air against the attacks of U-boats and of enemy aircraft given to the ships of the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy, whether alone or in convoy, was not the only form of aid in the power of the Coastal Command to bestow. There was also assistance to be rendered to a vessel in danger or distress, and to her company if the worst had happened and she had been sunk by the enemy. Since they were able, as a general rule,

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

to see a far greater distance than is possible from the deck or mast-head of a ship, the pilots and crews of Coastal Command were often in a position to give warning should a vessel be running into peril. Being about their business over large areas of ocean almost every day, they were usually at the scene of a disaster more quickly than anyone else. They could also go to the rescue of airmen adrift in dingies after a forced landing on the sea.

Ginger was often involved in this sort of action, as, for instance, on **27 November 1939** when the British submarine "*Triad*" reported that she was in difficulties off the Norwegian coast. She was found by three Hudsons sent out for that purpose, and although lost in vile weather, was picked up again by more Hudsons which gave protection to two destroyers and another submarine, the "*Triumph*" which had gone to her assistance. The "*Triumph*" herself needed help a month later when she struck a floating mine in the North Sea. On both occasions Hudsons drove off enemy aircraft seeking to bomb the submarines, which reached port in safety. About that time, too, air protection was given to HMS "*Barham*" while at sea in a damaged condition. Ginger wrote in his log for 27 November "*Escort to HMS Triad [sic]*". And on 28 November "*Fractured Hydroplane*" – which could be a reference to "*Barham*".⁴

On 6 December 1939 Ginger was involved in an incident with Scotty and crew, in which they were in a fight with a Dornier, suffering considerable damage, including a smashed brake bottle. We know that Norman, the wireless operator, managed to get some extra leave after this incident, from a letter he wrote home¹, but whether Ginger got leave also, is not so clear – probably not, since his log book records flights from 10 December.

On Friday 9 February 1940 there had been reports of enemy minesweepers operating in the Heligoland Bight, off the southern Danish coast. Two days later, in the early hours of Sunday morning, three Hudsons were detailed for a special patrol to the German coast in search of these vessels. Their instructions were to reach Horns Reef by earliest daylight in formation, and then to sweep southwards into Heligoland Bight to attack the enemy minesweepers by low-level bombing. They were also to report on any salvage operations observed. The early take-off time of 0410 hours was unusual, but necessary if they were to reach the enemy coast at daybreak.¹

Flying Officer Parker, with Sergeant Bleksley (navigator), Corporal Drury (wireless operator) and Leading Aircraftman Barker (air Gunner), took off at 0410. With a new moon only three days before, there was little moonlight, but goose-neck flares marked every 100 yards of the main Thornaby runway. FO Parker was closely followed by Ginger (pilot), Scotty (navigator), Aircraftman Walker (wireless operator) and LA Creegan (air gunner) at 0411, and then PO Petrie (pilot), PO Carey (navigator), Corporal Hugill (wireless operator) and LA Wilson (air gunner), at 0412. "*Battle Flight*", Ginger wrote in his log book.

All three crews assembled in the Ops Room at around 0230 hours for the flight briefing. They were given mission details, take-off times and other information. As part of this briefing they collected equipment such as parachutes, bombsights (which were too fragile to have been left on the aircraft), rations and two homing pigeons in a wicker basket.

Coastal Command aircraft always carried two homing pigeons, the idea being that they could be released with a message should the aircraft run into difficulties or the radio fail.

Finally, the twelve men walked out into the freezing night air where their driver would be waiting with the truck to take them to their aircraft. The cockpit of the Hudson was comfortable and well equipped, and besides this, other much appreciated features were "George", the automatic pilot, a good heating and ventilating system including a heater by the pilot's feet, and the provision of an Elsan toilet and a bed in the roomy cabin.

Ginger and Petrie both lost touch with their formation leader shortly after setting course from base. Thornaby records state that they were seen to circle back in an attempt to join the first aircraft, implying some level of visibility in the night sky. There was no radio contact between the three aircraft, and it is unlikely that they would have communicated with Thornaby, anyway; security regulations being what that they were during these days of war.

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

At 0556 hours Ginger sent a signal to Thornaby saying that his aircraft was returning to base as visibility was deteriorating to the east ahead of them, and he landed safely at 0821 hours. He had managed to fly 240 miles but the extremely bad conditions necessitated returning to base. He said that he had lost Tommy Parker's Hudson soon after take-off and had later parted with Pilot Officer Petrie in cloud. This latter part of the message is significant because it tends to confirm that there was sufficient visibility soon after take-off for the aircraft to see each other. Pilot Officer Petrie landed back at base at 0912, but at 0730 a message had been received at Thornaby that an aircraft had crashed in the Cleveland Hills behind Great Ayton. The Air Gunner, Atholl Barker, was the only one to survive this crash.

Local people remember that the entire winter of 1939-40 was extremely cold, and Thornaby Aerodrome had been closed for a period at the end of January due to heavy snow. Local press reports say that the temperature never rose above freezing during January, and that when the thaw came early in February there were thousands of burst water pipes across Teesside.

Although the crash was after this general thaw, the night in question was bitterly cold, and by the morning a light layer of snow had fallen. There would have been virtually no moonlight since a new moon appeared on 8 February in 1940, only three nights before the accident. Although the de-briefing reports from Ginger and Pilot Officer Petrie imply that there was sufficient visibility to see other aircraft, it was certainly not easy to see what lay ahead of the illuminated cockpit instrument panels. It has since been established that the cause of the crash was icing on the wings.

The history of this crash, has recently been researched by the Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project, and a book ¹ written (including eight references to Ginger) and published in 2003.

Norman Drury, the wireless operator who died, used regularly to fly with Tom Parker (the lost pilot), but on occasions he found himself with different pilots, as for example, at the end of **January 1940** when he was with Ginger in Hudson D/220. On this occasion they were attacked by a Messerschmitt 110 midway between the River Tyne and the Danish coast. Ginger brought the aircraft safely back to Thornaby, where it was found to have been hit ten times. This incident is now famous because one of the bullets had knocked the top off the navigator's pencil! Norman was aged 23 when he died, and is buried at North Walsham in Norfolk.

Given the restrictions on reporting during times of war, it is perhaps not surprising that the local newspaper did not mention the crash and the three fatalities. But ten days after the crash there was a report of medals being awarded to Flight Lieutenant Sheahan (DFC), and Sergeants Scotney and Culver (DFM).

The most famous action of 220 Squadron during their time at Thornaby was undoubtedly the sighting of the *Altmark*, only five days after the Great Ayton crash. *Altmark* was a secret supply ship attached to the pocket battleship *Graf Spee*, which was operating in the Atlantic. *Graf Spee* had attacked and sunk nine allied ships, capturing 299 seamen. When it became impractical to keep them on board, they were crammed into the *Altmark*. With the scuttling of the *Graf Spee* in the River Plate, *Altmark* was on her own. She started the long voyage to Germany, adopting a series of disguises involving different names and paint schemes. She was almost home when Naval Intelligence was alerted to a ship sailing close to the Norwegian coast. There were Royal Navy ships in the area, but the exact location of the *Altmark* was unknown.

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)



220 Squadron flight of Lockheed Hudsons setting off from Thornaby in search of the German ship *Altmark*. The picture captures the early morning light of 16 February 1940

On 16 February 1940, three Hudsons were despatched from Thornaby to Locate the vessel. She was sighted after two hours and a radio message passed to the navy’s ships below and in the ensuing action, *Altmark* ran aground in Jösing Fjord, and was boarded by a search party from HMS Cossack.

A week later Hudsons were again over Norway (among them was Ginger) looking for the *Altmark* – this time to attack her if she attempted to leave Jösing Fjord, as it was thought she might. Even then she was to be attacked only outside territorial waters. But the *Altmark* was derelict. She was aground at the far end of the fjord and a Norwegian gun-boat was near by. The *Altmark* was there to stay – until the Nazis invaded Norway. Ginger wrote in his log book: “Special Search Scaggerak”.



The prison Ship Skulking in a dark corner of Jösing Fjord

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

On 15 April 1940 Ginger was presented with his DFM.

The **Distinguished Flying medal** was instituted in 1918 and awarded to non-commissioned officers and men of the Air Force for displaying courage and devotion to duty whilst flying on active operations.

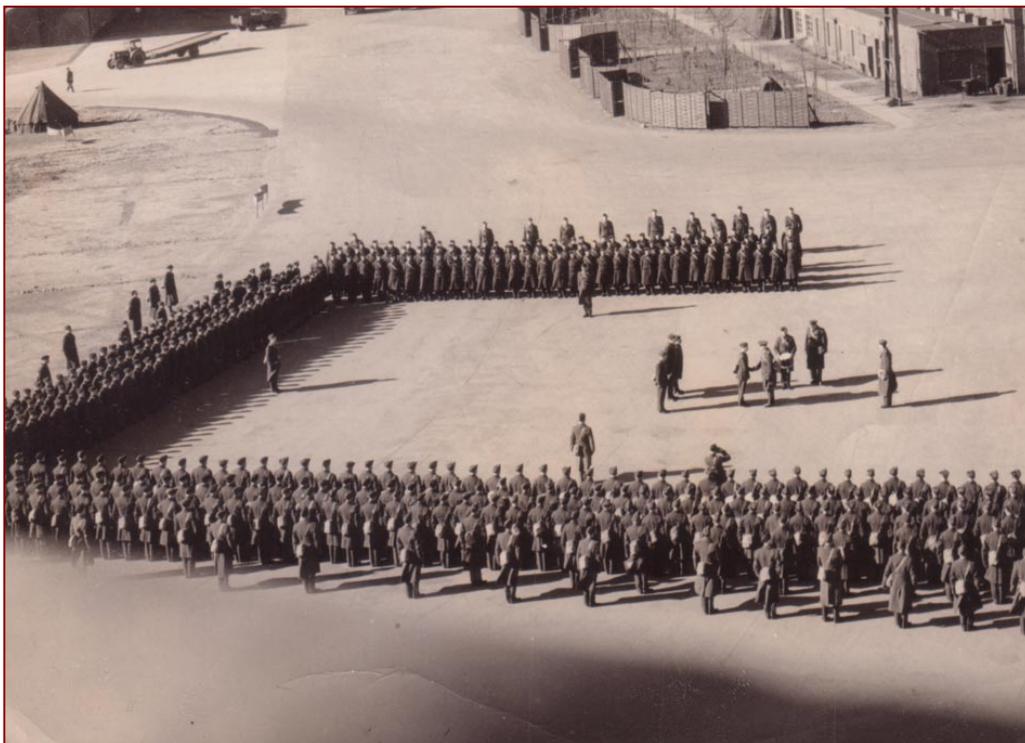
During the Second World War its coverage was extended to Army and Fleet Air Arms personnel engaged in similar operations, until in 1993 it was replaced in the UK by the DFC for all ranks.



Obverse



Reverse



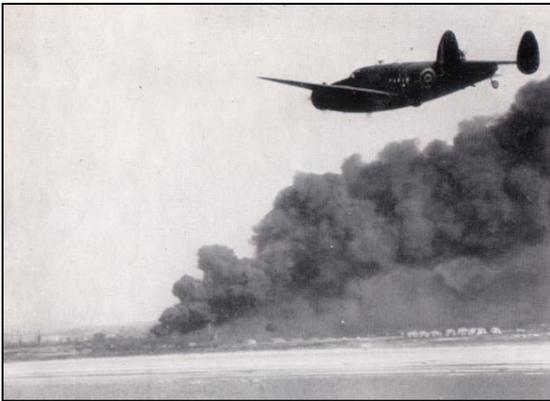
Presentation of DFM by Air Vice Marshal Breeze to Ginger. 15 April 1940

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

On 10/11 May 1940 the destroyer “*Kelly*” was torpedoed in the North Sea during an engagement with enemy E-boats. She was part of a force proceeding to Terchelling to engage in operations off the Dutch coast. HMS “*Bulldog*”, which had rammed and sunk one of the E-boats, took her in tow. Air protection was requested and Hudsons found the disabled destroyer. By 6am the “*Kelly*” had listed so badly that her starboard decks were awash. Nevertheless, she was not abandoned by her crew. All that day Hudsons kept guard of the skies above her, leaving only when darkness fell. On the next day a Sunderland arrived at dawn and carried out an anti-submarine patrol. Admiralty tugs came and took over the task of towing “*Kelly*”, and Hudsons once more gave protection throughout the day. Twice, Heinkels tried to bomb the destroyer and the Hudsons failed to prevent them from dropping their bombs, but their presence forced the Heinkels to attack in a hurried, almost furtive manner and no bomb fell near their target. Throughout that day and half the next, the air cover was maintained until “*Kelly*” entered port – little more than her upper works being visible. The Royal Navy had saved their ship and the Royal Air Force had helped them to do so. Ginger wrote in his log book: “*B/F escort. Drove Heinkels off*”.

On 30 May 1940 the evacuation of the British Army and the French Northern Army from Dunkirk was begun. In this operation it was the part of Coastal Command to cover the area of the Narrow Seas while Fighter Command provided closer protection. Coastal Command gave to its orders the widest interpretation. Not only were German bombers and their escorts attacked, but also, where possible, German troops. The fighting was fast and furious.

On 31 May twelve Messerschmitts turned upon three Hudsons on patrol. The Hudsons closed up into tight formation and went down low over the sea. There they fought out the battle, driving off their far swifter opponents and shooting down one of them with no loss to themselves. And so it went on, day after day.



Another Hudson circles –
Over part of the nondescript fleet – destroyers, tramp steamers, pleasure steamers, even rowing boats – which brought the soldiers out of Dunkirk.³



The armada of little ships that evacuated our army from Dunkirk. The Hudson flying above them was one of the Coastal Command aircraft which made 327 sorties over this area in four days⁴

On this last day of May and the first three days of June, when the evacuation operations were at their height, one Group of the Command made 327 sorties over or near Dunkirk. Ginger was constantly flying throughout this time. On May 29 – 30 he records “Margate to Dunkirk patrol evacuation of B.E.F. from Dunkirk”, and throughout **June of 1940** he was involved in special searches, Dunkirk patrols, endless patrol searches and reconnaissance.

20 August 1940 became known as “**The Day a Hudson Lost its Nose**”. Ginger and his crew were making a dive-bombing attack on two enemy destroyers near Denmark. The navigator, who had been down in the nose

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

setting bombs for release, went back to his seat by the pilot (Ginger), as the Hudson started to dive. Away went the bombs, but the aircraft was hit as it was pulling out of the dive. An anti-aircraft shell burst immediately in front of it, taking off the nose and all the Perspex in the cabin as neatly as knocking the neck off a bottle. The air rushed in with a force like a solid thing. It blew the navigator off his seat and back against the door leading from the pilot's cabin into the centre of the aircraft. Ginger appeared to have been killed. He was lying back, with his head half out of the hole where the window had been. The aircraft was diving again, and through the open nose the sea was coming steadily nearer. The navigator tried to pull back the stick and failed; he decided to bail out, and tried to go aft to get his parachute, but the door against which he had been thrown had jammed. A shell splinter had taken off the handle, and the navigator could not wrench it open. He went back to Ginger, who was still alive, but helpless. The first blast of wind through the cockpit had caught beneath his helmet and pulled his head out of the window. His head was held by his helmet strap, and he was nearly choked, but with the navigator's help, he broke it clear, and together they pulled on the controls. Their united strength succeeded, and the Hudson pulled out, dangerously close to the water. They set course for home with both engines going perfectly and the flying trim only a little out of true.

The crew's biggest problem was the cold. With no shelter at all from the wind, they caught its full effect. They ran into a rain storm, and the drops streaked in like a horizontal barrage of frozen peas, cutting and stinging them. They took it in turns to do the piloting while the others sheltered behind the bulkhead to get out of the blast. They got home at last. When they were in the Operations Room giving their report, the Ginger began rubbing his legs to try and restore circulation. He found a small piece of shrapnel embedded in his thigh above his knee, and as he was so cold, managed to pull it out quite cleanly without feeling a thing! His daughter, Carol, still has that piece of shrapnel, which came from the nose of the Hudson.

Ginger recorded in his log book that evening: "Attacked [by] two Dorniers. Nose of A/C blown away. Shrapnel in leg." He didn't name his crew, just briefly noting himself as pilot with P/O Negus and crew. The two aircraft involved were the Dornier 17, a high-speed lightweight Bomber – known as "The Flying Pencil", because of the slenderness of its design and the Dornier 26 "Seeadler" (*Sea Eagle*), a Transport & Reconnaissance Flying Boat. It is not clear whether the Dorniers were the attackers or the attacked, but whatever, Ginger didn't fly again until 4 September.



Dornier 17 "The Flying Pencil"



Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)



Dornier 26 "Seeadler" – (Sea Eagle)



Ginger was posted to Kaldadarnes in Reykjavik on **1 February 1942**. The primary business of Coastal Command in Iceland was, of course, to protect the shipping routes from America to Britain, across which vast quantities of supplies were soon travelling. Much of the work of the aircraft was long, tedious flights over the Atlantic convoys – but relieved by numerous attacks on U-boats. The wind too, in Iceland, was a tangible force – a factor which had to be considered in all outdoor activity. It blew almost continuously and on **15 January 1942** (two weeks before Ginger arrived there) it reached hurricane strength, reaching a velocity of 133 miles per hour. The aerodrome staff had a Herculean job in keeping the aircraft from being damaged. Whitleys and Hudsons were tethered to the ground and held down by gangs of men, but as the wind increased the aircraft began to lift from the ground. Nissen huts soared through the air and all the guard huts at the entrances to the aerodrome were blown away, either whole or in pieces. One wonders what was the state of affairs upon Ginger's arrival. He had left behind 220 Squadron and was now in 269 Squadron.

Conditions in the North of this far flung battle line, which touches the Arctic Circle, differed appreciably from those in the south where it touched the Equator. At one station in Iceland the average temperature in December was 30 degrees Fahrenheit, falling sometimes to as low as minus 6 degrees. But despite the hostility of the climate the average number of hours spent each month in flying had been high. To ease the strain the time of patrols was reduced when possible.

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

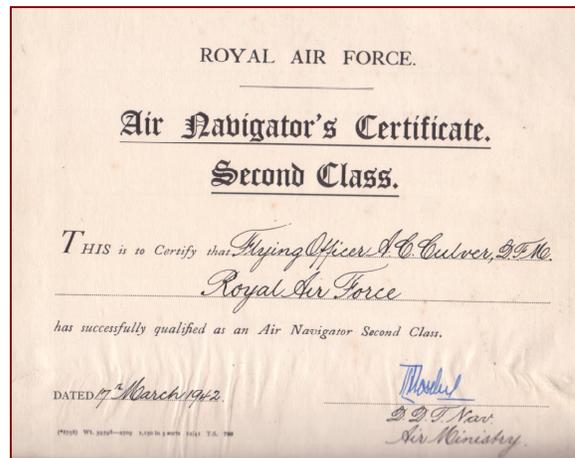
Other difficulties included the behaviour of compasses, which varied often by as much as eleven degrees. Wireless installations frequently faded out entirely. It was also difficult to divert aircraft if their bases were obscured by fog or cloud, for landing grounds were few and far between. Once, a Hudson was diverted to an emergency ground near the shore and it was ten days before it could take off again.

In addition to convoy and anti-submarine patrols and sweeps there was also the ice patrol over the Denmark Strait as far as Greenland and back. This was flown at frequent intervals in order to find out the extent and movement of the pack-ice. Fog was often troublesome and more than one pilot saw an iceberg loom suddenly up on his port or starboard bow.



Coastal Command in the Far North. Hudsons flying over the stark and inscrutable face of Iceland.

On 17 March 1942 Ginger was presented with his certificate qualifying him as an Air Navigator Second Class.



Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

And then on midsummer day 1942, when on an Ice Patrol, he crossed the equator and became a Bluenose!



Ginger's log book spans seven years, and if one could only read between the lines of the brief entries for each day, what tales there would be to tell! Some examples include:

- 09 October 1935 "Lost Way – landed at Broxbourne" (This was a test on Air Pilotage!)
- 3 January 1938 "Pilots window blown away"
- 03 May 1938 "H.L.M. 6,000 Ft. No bombs dropped. Ship in danger area"
- 04 May 1938 "L.L.B. [low level bombing] moving target. Boat wouldn't play!"
- 02 June 1941 "Formation for Films" [intriguing!]
- 20 February 1942 "Escort Hekla"
- 07 April 1942 "Taking injured man to Reykjavik"
- 25 April 1942 "Search for lost American. Found"
- 03 August 1942 "Kalda – Reyk." Sir Philip Joubert, Ginger's passenger this day, was at that time, Air Officer Commander in Chief of Coastal Command – i.e. the Head Man! This shows the high esteem in which Ginger was held. Kaldarne was presumably a purely military airfield – its location, as yet, untraced.
- 02 September 1942 "Search for M/269" (This final entry, is written in another hand which also names others in the crew who were lost with Ginger)

Ginger's log has several references to Leuchars, near Dundee, which had puzzled me until I realised that this was where, once a year, the squadron left the comforts of Bircham Newton for a month's Practice Camp, sleeping in tents and generally simulating what were thought might be wartime conditions. To compensate for the rough living, there were opportunities for training in new skills. One such reference shows that Ginger was there in

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)

April 1938 practising his bombing skills – both high and low level, as well as dive-bombing. Leuchars was, too, a fully operational RAF station under Coastal Command – near St. Andrews, on the opposite side to Dundee. Carol's (*Ginger's daughter*) uncle Tony was there for the year of 1940, arming Hudsons.

Ginger also makes references to Bawdsey. Some pre-war flights from Bircham Newton were connected with Bawdsey and these must have been in connection with the RADAR chain being set up around the South and East coasts – top secret at that time, which explains why Ginger could make no specific references in his log book.

Following the First World War, protecting the UK from attack was discussed at great length. But it was not until 1934, when an air-defence exercise to test the defence was carried out that things really started to get going.

Although the targets and routes of the exercise were well known, more than half the bombers managed to get through to their targets. This led to the Air Ministry looking at the idea of “death rays” which would eliminate or disable pilots and their aircraft. The Scots physicist Robert Watson-Watt, supervisor of a national radio research laboratory and descendant of James Watt, inventor of the first practical steam engine, was contacted and asked for his views. This led to a chain of stations being built along the coast, and before long, the Bawdsey Radar Station on the Suffolk coast was in operation. It was used as an RAF base right up until the mid 1980s.

When Sir Philip Joubert finally let the public into the secret he gave no technical details, but he did say it was a system of rays “*which are unaffected by fog or darkness and any aircraft or ship in the path of this ray immediately sends back a signal to the detecting stations*”.

Ginger also mentions flights to Terschelling and Borkum. The map (*below*) shows these to be islands – Terschelling just off the North Coast of Holland (*mid left*), and Borkum nearby (*top right*), but off the German Coast.



The bulk of names in official records under “Killed in Action” were those of Coastal Command crews. And nearly all of them, like Ginger, had just flown away and disappeared, as their colleagues described it, “without a squeak”. In Ginger’s Hudson, on that fateful day, were:

- F/S George Neville Barnes (aged 25) from Essex
 - F/S William Henry Robert Day (aged 23) from Barnehurst, Kent
- The other two names cannot be found on the CWGC website, but are:
- P/O G. Smith
 - Cpt. Revilliers

Alfred Charles Culver, DFM (continued)



Ken “Scotty” Scotney, with whom Ginger often flew, was a special friend as well as a comrade. He married a girl named Molly (introduced to Scotty by Olive Culver), who was to become the godmother of Ginger’s daughter Carol. Carol was still in touch with Scotty, who lived in the British Legion Home at Cromer in Norfolk, right up until he passed away in 2005. His was the face featured on the Christmas Appeal letter of 2004.

LIST OF AERODROMES AT WHICH LANDED.

HATFIELD	KENLEY	ABBOTSINCH	HÖFN
BROXBORNE	HARWELL	HUCKNELL	
HALTON	HAWKHINGE	GRANTHAM	
WITTERING	HENDON	WORTHY DOWN	
WITLEY ABBEY	WARMWELL	EXETER	
CATFOSS	FARNBOROUGH	ROCHESTER	
SKIPSEA	MARTLESHAM	MONTROSE	
MANSTON	PENRHOS	FORD	
CAASHOT	BIGGIN HILL	THORNY ISLAND	
BIRCHAM NEWTON	PETERBOROUGH	EASTCHURCH	
MOUSEHOLD	DUXFORD	HOOTON PARK	
NORTHWEALD	SUTTON BRIDGE	COSFORD	
LEE-ON-SOLENT	MARNHAM	ST.ATHANS	
USWORTH	NORTHOLT	SQUIRES GATE.	
THORNABY	TERNHILL	SILLOTH.	
UPPER HEYFORD	SHAWBURY	RATCLIFFE	
BISESTER	CRANWELL	YORK	
SEALAND	DETLING	CATTERICK	
ABINGDON	MAYSTONE	COLERN	
NETHER AVON	TANGMERE	HULLAVINGTON.	
BOSCOMBE DOWN	LEUCHARS	KIRKBRIDE	
WOODFORD	WEST FRAUGH	REYKJAVIK	
CHRIST CHURCH	ALDER GROVE	KALDADARNES	

Pasted on to the back cover of Ginger’s log book is the chart of all the Aerodromes at which he landed.

Sources: CWGC, LAHS archives, Olive Culver, daughter Carol Lockwood, His own log book, internet sites. **Books:** “Lost on Easby Moor”¹ – Ian Pearce; “Task for Coastal Command”² - Hector Bolitho; “Coastal Command at War”³ - Squadron Leader Tom Dudley Gordon; “Coastal Command”⁴ – HMSO, The Air Ministry account of the part played by Coastal Command 1939-1942

Private Christopher Dadson

1st Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment
(G4983)



Died: Thursday 4 October, 1917 (aged 25)

Memorial Place: Tyne Cot Memorial, Zonnebeke -
West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, (Panel 106 to 108)

Est. d.o.b: 1892

Enlisted: November 1914

Christopher Dadson's family lived at *Forge House, Loose*. Christopher had landed in France in April, 1915, where he took part in his first battle - that of Hill 60, on April 18th. He also fought on the Somme, and in the Arras Vimy Ridge "Hoppy Wood" and other battles. He had been home on leave only 3 months before his death. The last card received by his mother was dated October 2nd. On the 18th, Mrs Dadson received some photographs belonging to her son, which had been found on the battlefield by a soldier of the 1st. Bedfordshire Regiment. Mrs Hobden, Christopher's sister, wrote on behalf of her mother, to an officer of the Royal West Kent Regiment, and below is the reply:

"25/10/17

Dear Mrs Hobden, - I am in receipt of your letter dated 19th inst. It is indeed with deep regret I have to inform you that your brother, No. 4983 was killed in action on October 4th. I have known your brother as one of my platoon for many months. He was a splendid fellow-I always felt a great personal liking for him-and a very good soldier. Moreover, as a Company 'runner' he had on several occasions, done excellent work. Unhappily, it was while doing his duty in this latter capacity on the 4th that he was killed by an enemy sniper. I personally, share your great sorrow, and send my sincere sympathy to both you and Mrs Dadson."

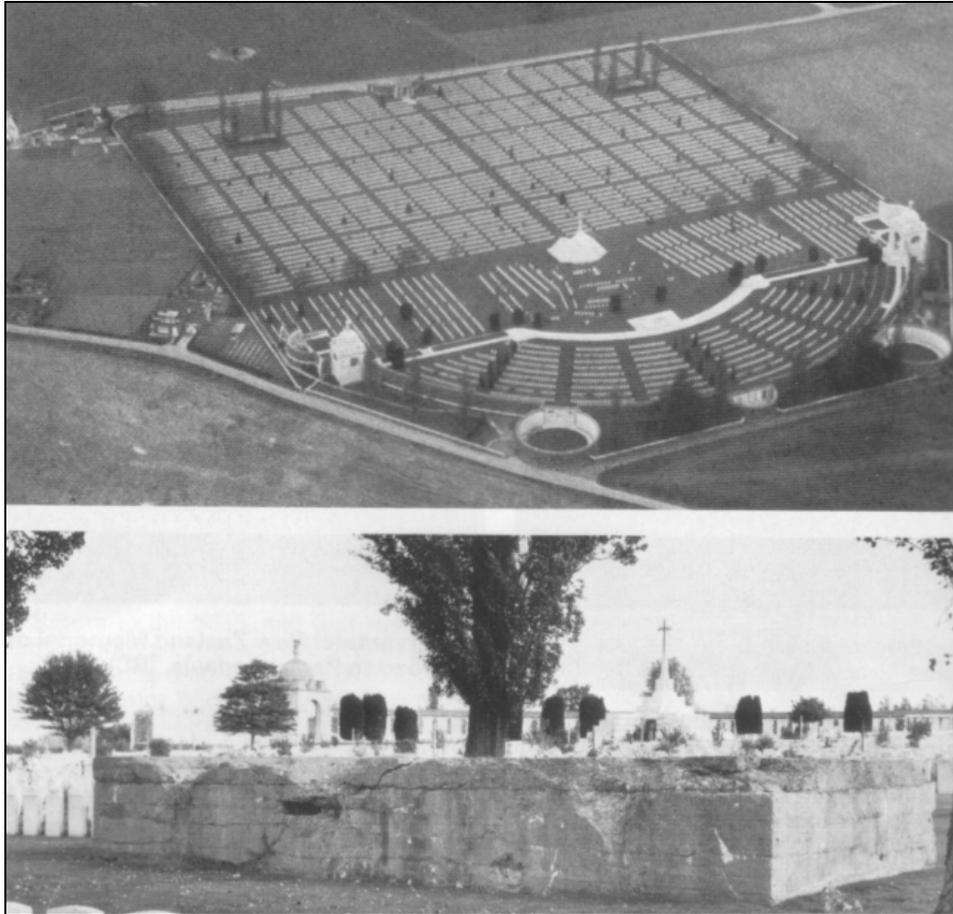
1901 Census

Beresford Cottage, Church Road, Boughton Monchelsea

William Dadson	Head	57	Bricklayers Labourer	Born Boughton Monchelsea
Maria (Marcia?)	Wife	46		Born Boughton Monchelsea
Henry Dadson	Son	21	(?) Labourer	Born Boughton Monchelsea
William Dadson	Son	15	Farm House (?)	Born Boughton Monchelsea
Carrie Dadson	Dau	13		Born Boughton Monchelsea
Clayton Dadson	Son	11		Born Boughton Monchelsea
Christopher Dadson	Son	9		Born Boughton Monchelsea
Emily Dadson	Dau	6		Born Boughton Monchelsea

Christopher Dadson (continued)

From details of the 1901 census (above) we can see that the family had moved to Forge House (or perhaps Forge Cottage?) at some time between 1901 and 1917 when Christopher died. Two sisters are listed, but it is not yet known whether it was Carrie or Emily who had married Mr Hobden, and had received the letter mentioned above



One of the original bunkers which have been retained within Tyne Cot Cemetery

Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger, 1901 census, "Before Endeavours Fade" – Rose E.B.Coombs, MB

Private Frederick William Debenham

Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment

(Not named on the Loose Memorial)

Est.d.o.b: 1913



Frederick was reported missing in December 1943 whilst serving with the Middle East Forces. (*Kent Messenger*). His mother was Mrs D Fryer of *Little Ivy Cottage, Loose Valley*. In the KM report she states that her son (who was aged 30, and was single) had returned home from India in 1939 and was then recalled to the army at the outbreak of war. He was, at one time, in Malta but had been in the Middle East for eight months. He had been employed by the Southern Railway before enlistment.

No mention of Private Debenham is to be found on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission site, which could mean that he was eventually to return home to Loose. He may well have been a prisoner of War.

Note: The original KM report stated that Private Debenham's mother was Mrs D. Debenham. This was later corrected to read that his mother was, in fact, Mrs D.Fryer)

Sources: Kent Messenger, 12/1943

Sergeant Frank Doughty

107th Battalion, 24th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery (31218)

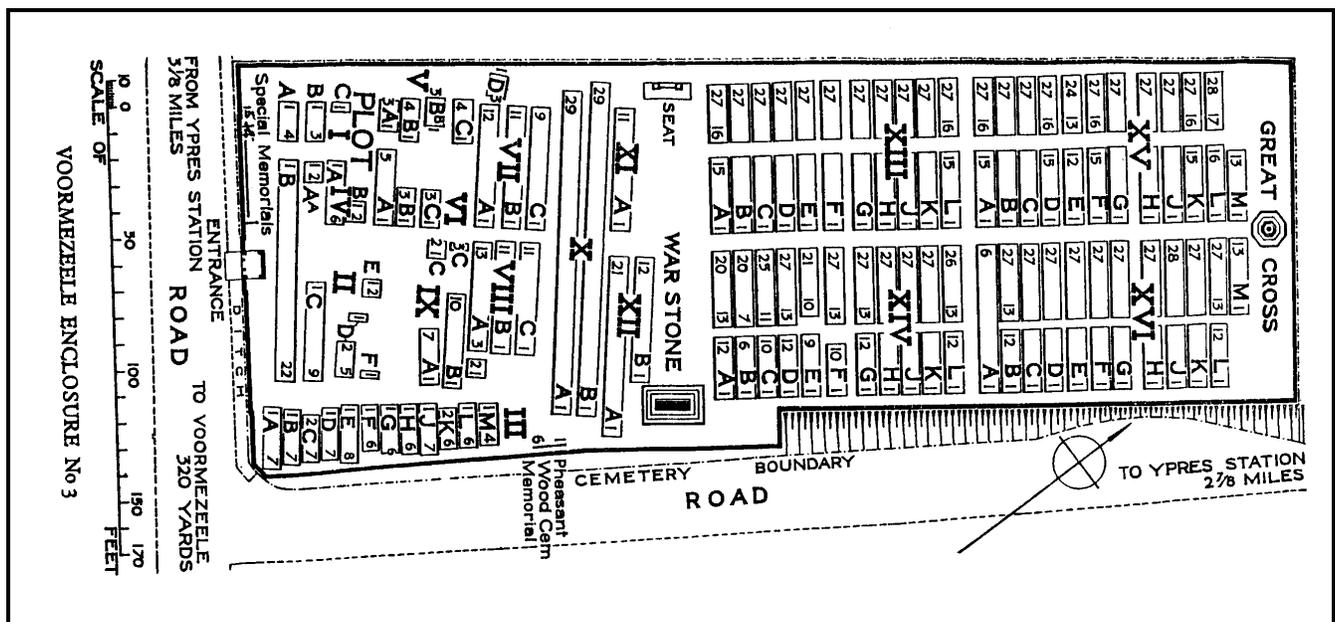


Killed in Action: Sunday 8th August 1915 (aged 39)

Resting Place: Voormezele Enclosure No. 3, leper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium (XIV.A.20)

Est. d.o.b: 1876

Frank was the son of Mr. W.H. and Elizabeth Doughty of Kingston-on-Thames. He had completed his full service just 12 days prior to his death, having served 17 of his 21 years in India. He went to France early in August 1914 and was in the retreat from Mons. He remained at the Front until February 1915, when he obtained leave and came home to marry Harriett Emily, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clement Taylor Russell of *Ashdown Cottage, Loose*. He returned to the Front and was killed by shrapnel on August 8th.



Frank Doughty (Continued)

It seems that there was another native of Loose named Frank Doughty.

All scouts who were conscripted for National Service were given a special leather bracelet to show that they were part of the movement. In Loose it was the policy of the group to write to scouts in the Forces to keep them in touch. This second Frank was one of those lucky enough to actually receive such a letter. He had been a scout ASM before the war, and wrote from India, of how he was helping with a local troop. Frank had a workshop in **Church Street**, next to the entrance to the church—formerly used as a stable with the Parish Room upstairs.

In the log book for 1944, Jack Barcham Green wrote:

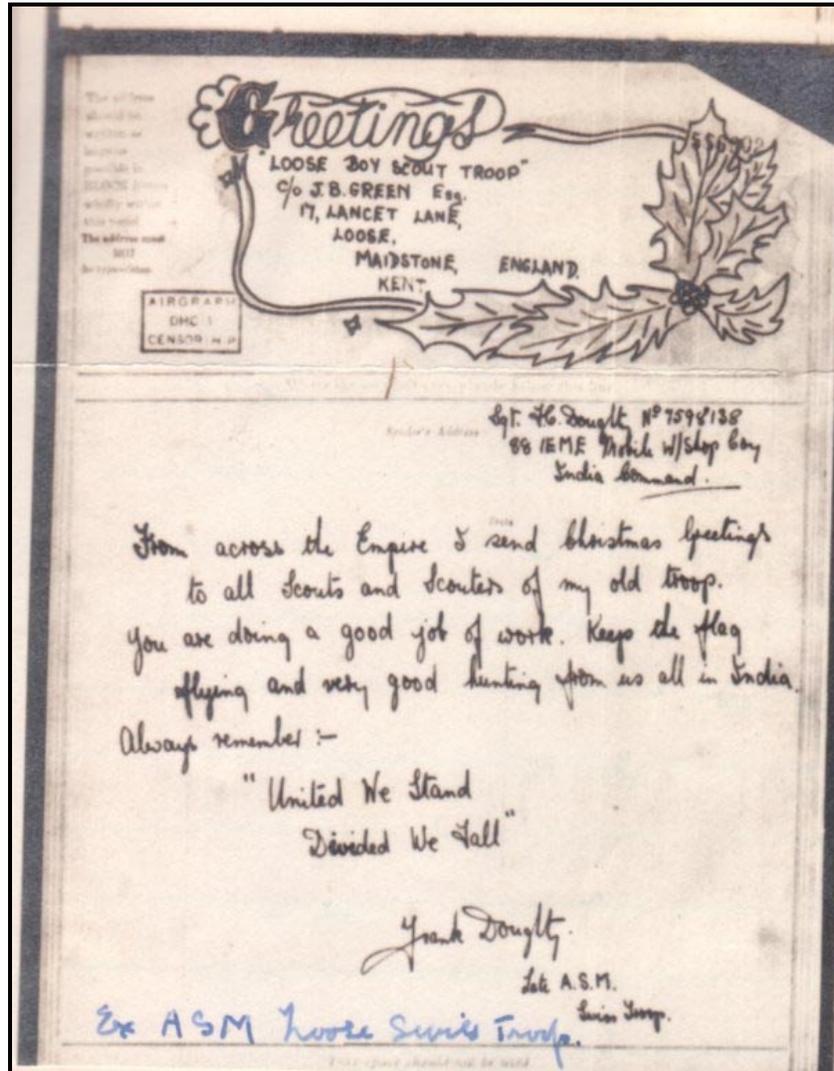
“Frank was A.S.M. to the Loose Swiss before the war. Who will drop him a postcard? He wants news S.O.S. Frank Doughty’s address is Sgt: F.C. Doughty No. 7598138, The Arsenal, Kirkee, near Poona, India.”



This photograph appears in the Loose Swiss 1944 log book.
“Frank Doughty and his all Indian Troop of Scouts 1943

Frank Doughty (Continued)

This Frank also sent a Christmas card to the troop in 1944:



And so although both were named Frank and both were Sergeants, and both in India, we cannot, (however tempting it might be) surmise that they were one and the same man, because if Frank No.1 was killed in 1915 he couldn't have been around in the forties to form his Indian Scout Troop. Maybe they were father & son, but no evidence of this has been established.



Una Marguerite Duncanson

Voluntary Aid Detachman

Died: 31 December 1917, aged 25
Resting Place: Alexandria (Hadra) War Memorial Cem.
Est.d.o.b: 1892

Second Lt. Ian Ferguson Duncanson

8th Battalion, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Died: Friday 12 October 1917, aged 21
Memorial Place: Poelcapelle British Cemetery, Belgium (111.D.1)
Est;d.o.b: 1896/7

Second Lt. Roy Duncanson

3rd Battalion attd. 9th Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)

Died: Friday 7 July 1916, aged 25
Memorial Place: Thiepval Memorial, Somme
Est. dob: 1891

Neither **Una's** name – nor the names of her two brothers, **Ian** and **Roy** appear on the Loose Memorial, but they lived at *Pimps Court* and were the offspring of James Duncanson & Annie Ferguson. Una, and two of her sisters, were all engaged in V.A.D. work, and her brothers being in the army.

At the age of six Una was brought from Glasgow to Kent when her parents took up residence at Langley Park. She attended Maidstone Grammar School for girls where she was held in high esteem. Since leaving school she had kept in touch with King Street Church and was engaged in various activities there, taking her share in the work of the soldiers recreation room after the outbreak of war. She later became attached to the Howard de Walden Institute and was at the York Military Hospital when she received her appointment to go abroad.

Una left Maidstone together with another young V.A.D.—Doris Carpenter. They were nearing Alexandria when their ship was torpedoed. It was reported that the majority of the crew were saved (including Doris), but Una was among those drowned—her body was one of the four which were later recovered. Angela Newman (a local resident) recalls that the ship which was torpedoed was the *Aragon*. Angela's mother, who was on another ship in the vicinity, used to talk about the fact that Una was trying to save a patient and had safely left the sinking vessel but was killed by another explosion.

Annie Ferguson married James M Duncanson, (a butcher in Glasgow) in 1888.

By the time of the 1901 census they were living with their family at Langley Park Farm. James was 39, and a farmer, and Annie was 33 years old. Their first five children had all been born in Scotland:

Families of Wartime Loose

Una Marguerite Duncanson (continued)

- Fergus born c.1890
- Roy born c.1891
- Una born c.1893
- Margerie born c.1895
- Ian born c.1897
- Betty born c.1899, born at Langley (later to marry John Day on 31 July 1919.)

There were two live-in domestic servants: Ethel aged 17 and Lillian aged 19.

In 1913 James and Annie bought Pimps Court from Herbert Busbridge. Little were they to know that within four years they would lose three of their children to war: Roy in July 1916, Ian in October 1917 and Una in December 1917.

None of their names are inscribed on the Loose Memorial – possibly because Pimps Court was then deemed to be in East Farleigh or Tovil. However, there is a memorial to them in the church at East Farleigh.

Families of Wartime Loose



Captain David Ezra

192nd Siege Battalion, Royal Garrison Artillery

Died: Tuesday 6th August 1918 (aged 33)

Resting Place: Beacon Cemetery, Sailly-Laurette, Somme, France (I.G.7)

Est. d.o.b: 1885

David was the husband of Marie (Ezra) of Christ Church, Oxford. From the 1901 Census sheet it appears that David's mother was Indian, but no other information about him has yet been discovered except that he owned Woodlawn at one time and was a student at Oxford. He certainly lived at Woodlawn between 1901 and 1917. When he died he left a young wife named Annie. This name is most likely a corruption of Marie (who is thus named on the CWGC site)

1901 Census

10 Budeley Terrace (?), Brighton

Habella Ezra	Head	44	Widow	Living on own means	Born Bombay, India
Frederick Ezra	Son	20		Mineral Water Manuf. Clerk	Born Brighton
Florence Ezra	Dau	17			Born Brighton
David Ezra	Son	8			Born Brighton
Albert Ezra	Son	13			Born Brighton

Sources> CWGC, 1901 Census, 1917 Kelly's Directory



Second Lieutenant John Greville Fulkes

“D” Company, 3rd Battalion (attached to 13th) Essex Regiment

Died: Monday 13th November 1916, aged 30
Memorial Place: Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France (pier & face 10D)
Born: July 26th 1887
Enlisted: 15 September 1914 (U.P. S. Corps)

John was the son of Edward .J.A. & Eva Fulkes, who, in 1901, lived in Streatham at 18 Cheriton Square. Edward was a surveyor of fire insurance and was aged 45 – having been born in St Georges Hannover Square. Ava was 37 and had been born in Weymouth, Dorset. Living with them at that time were:

- John Greville, aged 13 and born in Lewisham
- Muriel E, aged 12 and born in Greenwich

They also had a ‘ladies help’ and a general domestic servant in residence.

When John came to Loose is unknown, but between 1910 and 1930 – (possibly for longer), Edward was living in **The Limes** on Old Loose Hill and this is where John lived during the years he was involved with the Loose Swiss Scouts, whose archives have thrown light onto his life and character in the most entertaining way!

The photograph to the right shows John on the left. It was taken at a camp in Rye, in June 1914 – three months before he enlisted. The man in the centre is Jack Barcham Green



John Greville Fulkes (continued)

John was a very active member, and assistant scout master of Loose Swiss Scouts. It was he who instigated and edited the wartime log books which each scout was encouraged to write in each week or month. The log book was sent to John at the Front from where he wrote his editorial each month - never failing to give encouragement and set assignments for the boys. His accounts were always informative and amusing and he described life in the army - illuminating the horrors with humour and exquisite sketches. The best way to describe some of his experiences is to let John speak for himself through his letters which have survived via the scout log books. He actually enlisted on 15 September 1914 but the log entries regarding his war service begin the next year:

*March 1915
2 Ivy Terrace
South Street
Epsom*

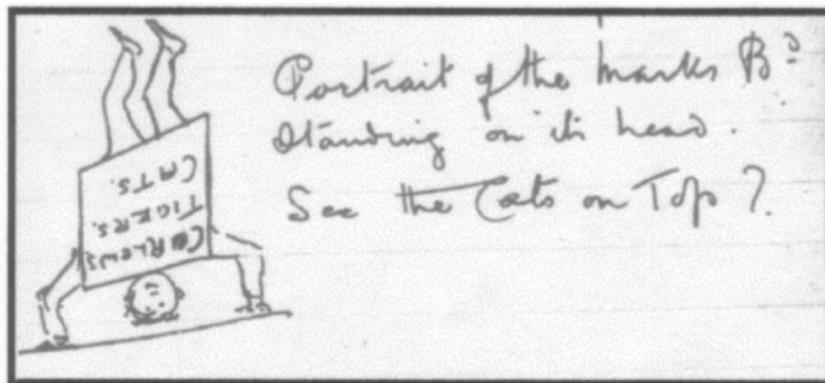
Good Old 11 CK

I have just got back from 30 hours of what is called "Guard Duty" and was delighted to find the Swiss Troop Magazine awaiting me. So after a feed, shave and - I must admit a short snooze, for Guard Duty is tiring work.

)

I will try and write something in it for the first time for about six months.

I must first compliment everybody concerned on the new volume. It is very good and makes me feel a bit jealous to see how it has improved since I was its editor. One thing I notice particularly is the regular contributions by the P.Ls [Pack Leaders] - especially good is that of the Chief Cat [Billy Antrum]. If all the Cats are as keen as their long whiskered Chief we should soon see that marks board standing on its head. I see that all other scouts who have had the mag have written in it, which is good.



Yesterday when I was up with 27 other soldiers on Sentry Duty at the new camp that is now nearly finished, one of the buildings caught fire; the camp consists of about 150 wooden buildings, each to hold 50 men and the one that caught alight was the Officers Quarters. We were all called out of the Guardroom in a great hurry but all we could do was to look on and wait for the Epsom fire brigade which came when it was all over. Fortunately the wind was

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

blowing away from the other huts, or we might have lost nearly all our camp. The bugler was rushing about blowing the Fire Call but it didn't seem to put it out a bit.

Last time I wrote to you I think I promised to give you a rough idea of what trenches for fighting in are like. Of course you all know that trenches are dug so that soldiers can keep their bodies covered up except when they just put their heads up to fire. The sketch [below] shows a line of British Trenches attacking a line of German Trenches in the distance across a ploughed field. The front trench is called the "Fire Trench" and is made zig-zag so that if the enemy manage to get round to one side (called flanking) they would not be able to fire right along the trench and kill all our men. (See eight soldiers firing and a machine gun in left hand corner). The rear trench is wider and deeper (at least 6 ft deep) and is called a Communicating trench, connected to the fire trench by little ones called "traverses". In the front of the traverse is a mound of earth to shield it from the enemy's bullets. A bullet from a rifle at a few hundred yards range will go through 4 or 5 feet of earth and kill a man, so the mound must be thick. The rear, or communicating trench is used for getting supplies of food and ammunition to the fire trench and it is also made wide enough to take a stretcher along for removal of the wounded.

*I have shown 2 men carrying a stretcher [in my sketch] and also 2 having a smoke waiting for their turn to relieve their comrades in the fire trench. Sometimes barbed wire entanglements are made in front of the fire trench to make it difficult for the enemy to take it with a charge**

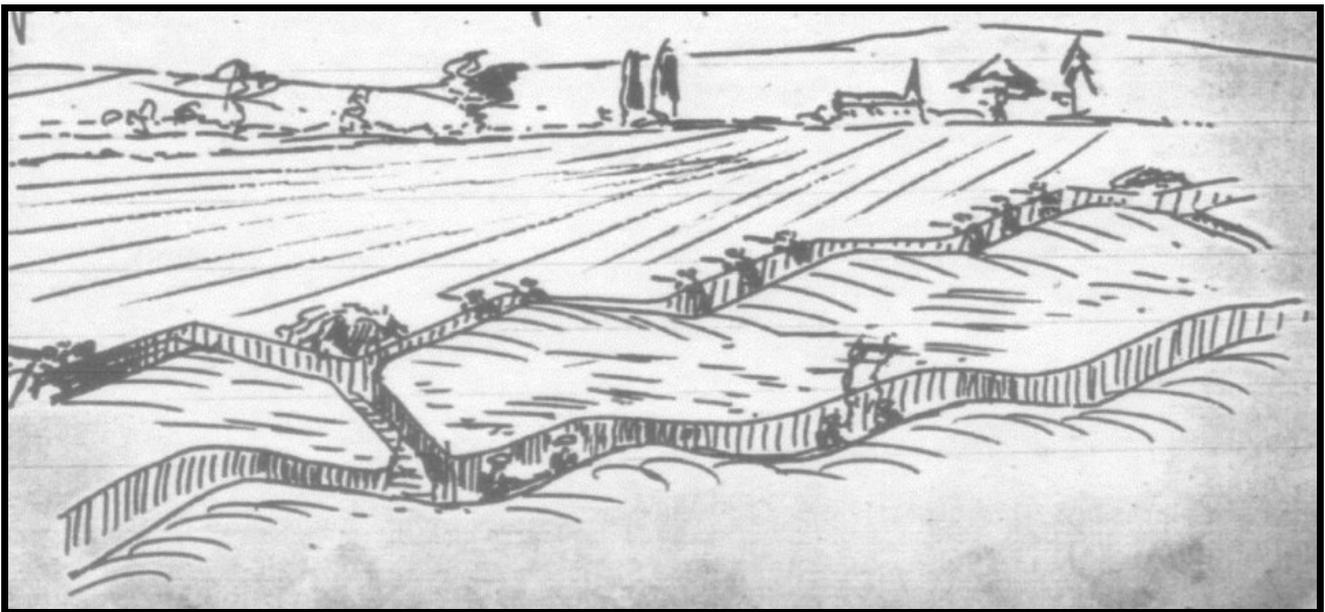
Well I shall use up all your Mag if I go on any more. Perhaps you will send it me again next month.

Cheery oh! And best of luck to everybody.

A.S.M. [Asst. Scout Master]

"A" Coy. 19th Batt. Royal Fusiliers.

*PS. * We have one of these at Dover"*



John's sketch of the trenches.
Note the two men carrying a stretcher and two others having a smoke!
(which John refers to in his note above)

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

The reference to Dover relates to the War work which the scouts were involved in at Dover & Birchington. The day after war was declared on 4th August 1914, Jack Barcham Green, under orders from the Superintendent of Police, mobilised some of the scouts to proceed to Dover. Among them was John Fulkes. They were to patrol certain areas, in pairs, and watch that telephone wires were not tapped or tampered with. Should anything untoward be detected one scout should remain behind to keep the person under observation whilst the other went to find a constable. They also tracked ships and aeroplanes and set up a camp. Scouts volunteered for periods of duty, for which they received a small payment and by all accounts, they took this work very seriously indeed. It must have all been very good training for things to come.

In March 1915 John writes as follows:

29 March 1915 from Epsom

*"The time has come" the Walrus said -
"To talk of many things",
"Of shoes and ships & sealing wax,
And cabbages and Kings".*

"In fact there are many things to talk about these exciting times that one hardly knows where to begin. I wonder - by the way, if any scout can tell me where the above rhyme comes from. It's out of a book that I'm sure some of you have read. I was very pleased to see the good news about the "War Badges" of the scouts who are down at Birchington, it is splendid and I think the Troop ought to be very proud of its record of work during the war. I know that piece of coastline and must congratulate the map drawer on having given a very good idea of it. Ability to be able to describe a place you have seen by means of a rough sketch might be most valuable in times of war and make all the difference between defeat or victory in a battle. I have seen grown up men here on manoeuvres who have been sent to reconnoitre a position, come back with the most hopeless description which was not the slightest use to the officer who wanted it and I thought 'by Jove if he'd only got one or two Swiss Troop Scouts to do the job.'

Last Friday General Sir Archibald Murray, chief of the General Staff came down to inspect us. He is no end of a big pot so we all had to turn out very smart. I spent two hours the previous evening cleaning all my buttons and badges, also every buckle on my equipment. There are 27 buckles so it is some job. You scouts can thank your lucky stars you don't have any brass-work on your uniforms to keep bright. The General said he was very pleased with all he saw and said that the Company I am in was the smartest in the four battalions, which was very kind of him.

You were quite right Beechnuts, I was a Lance Corporal when that photo [see beginning of this profile] was taken, but I have lately been made a Corporal and wear two stripes. Of course I wear other things as well, as the weather is still rather cold. So Roger and I are both Corporals now. Talking of cold, I saw a troop of scouts out with a trek cart on Saturday and they were all wearing kid gloves. Bless their little hearts.

Who is the SM [scout master] getting at over that Diary business? I have an idea but I won't give the game away. I think that wheel track mystery ought to be cleared up once and for all. Look here now; if a wheel is going round on a muddy road like this:

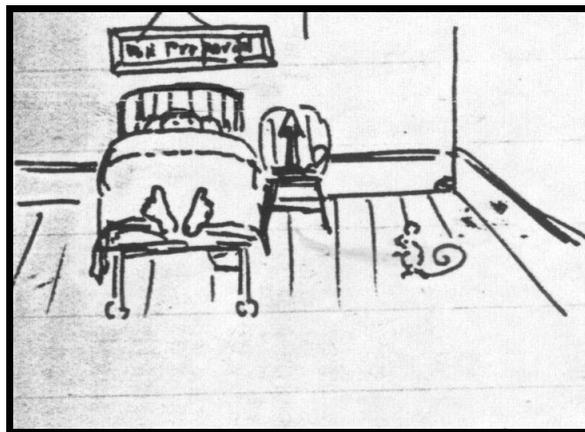


John Greville Fulkes (continued)

...

.Some mud would stick to the tyre and would be slung off into the mudguards by what is known as centrifugal force, and some would be squelched out sideways and backwards Or forwards. Which? It is most important to know, if you are going to be successful trackers, - especially as I hear Bruiser Bill intends to buy a new motor car. Now who is going to settle the question and have his name written up in his country's roll of honour?

*It's bedtime, so I'll have to leave it at that.
Cheerio-oh every body. A. S.M. "*



The next letter is dated 25 June 1915:

Dear Scouts

I am trying to write this in an express train on the Midland Railway on my way to Loose where I hope to arrive about 3am tomorrow morning. My Word! You folk at Birchington seem to be combining pleasure with business. I'd give one of my stripes to be with you. I see it is just 3 - (it's no good, the train is going too fast for me to write - I'll continue at the next stop.)

Three months since I last wrote in the mag. Since then I have been in two different camps and am now right up in Nottinghamshire in a very large camp which has been built on a part of the old Sherwood Forest. I expect most of you know that Sherwood Forest was the haunt of Robin Hood and his merry troupe of scouts clad in Lincoln Green There is one very old hollow oak in the middle of the forest, with its branches all propped up which is called 'Robin Hood's Larder' where he used to store his surplus food. He was a wonderful shot with a bow and arrow and one of his favourite tricks was to catch a wild pigeon and tie it to a stake in the ground. Then he would take three arrows and with the first, hit the stake. With the second, cut the string tethering the bird, which at once flew away, and with the third - kill the bird.

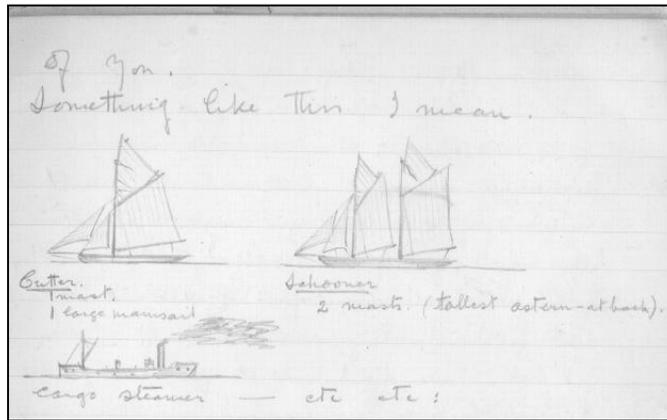
What is this I see about a new Swift Patrol? Apparently the chief Tiger has exchanged two of his legs for a pair of wings. Who is the new chief Tiger?

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

I have just had a splendid new rifle served out to me. It will fire a bullet nearly two miles and it has a bayonet long enough to go through two Germans at once. I only hope I get the chance some time soon.

I am glad see that the Birchington Bloodworms are learning something about the different kinds of ships. With a little practice you can learn to tell the difference between different rigs of sailing ships and yachts, and whether a steamer is a cargo ship or a liner etc.

How is this for a competition. Prize value something between £200 and 2d for the best set of 6 sketches of different kinds of steam or sailing ships, correctly named and neatly drawn. I don't suppose the younger ones will be able [to take part] -I don't see why they shouldn't though. Have a try anyway. Open to Bobs and all the rest of you. Something like this I mean:



Good luck to acting ASM Langley. Mind all you scouts at Loose back him up all you know, and remember it's up to you to keep the nest warm and everything in going order for the time when we all come home again

The next letter is dated 30 July 1915:

*The Guard Room
19th Royal Fusiliers*

Tis the witching hour of midnight and I am just wondering which of you is out on duty watching the same great yellow three-quarter moon climbing out of the sea that I have just been looking at. I am 'Sergeant of the Guard' (a most important person) and remain on duty for 24 hours, but it won't be my fault if I don't wangle a couple of hours sleep presently. A fortnight ago I had a spell of 70 hours without going to sleep. I was on guard one night, and the next we had some night manoeuvres. Part of them consists of the whole Brigade - 4 battalions - marching through a dense wood with bracken and stuff almost as high as yourself, no moon and only a radium compass to march by. Of course it is impossible for 4000 men all to march in Column of [?] as they would straggle out too much and the end ones get lost so it is done by battalions marching one behind the other in 'Lines of Companies in Fours' (Mr Green will explain what that means) with 'Connecting files' in between to see that the various units

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

keep their proper distance and direction. Even then it is very easy to suddenly barge into another Company and have to stop and sort oneself out.

If by any chance this page should smell of Paraffin, it's because the lamp has just gone out and I have had to refill it in the dark and P.L. Jones knows what that means.

Next week we leave here to go to Salisbury Plain, the whole Division with artillery, engineers and all the rest of them are going. I don't know whether it will be tents or not yet but I hear rumours of barracks which should be very comfortable if I don't have to use 'Keatings' on the last mans blankets.

One thing that is rather trying in the army is that they will insist on everything being just exactly the same everywhere. One's beds and blankets must all be folded and put up exactly the same and the toes of ones boots all level with the same crack in the floor. I have to see [that] the men do it, but I'd much rather form them into Patrols and say 'now everything neat and tidy please, but please yourselves how you do it.', and then if one patrol wanted to put their razors in their boots and hang their socks out of [a] window to air, they would be at perfect liberty to do so. That's where army discipline is different from Scout discipline. A soldier is told that that he has jolly well got to do this or that with no more reason than that it always has been done, and a scout is told to think out the best way for himself and he generally finds it, if he does make a few mistakes first.

PS 2nd August 1915

I am very busy getting ready to move to Salisbury Plain early tomorrow [so] I will have to cut these notes short. What a different Bank Holiday to the last one we spent down at the huts, when Winkle and Boney made a tent and lost themselves in it. We have been striking camp and cleaning up all day and it has rained nearly the whole time, so I am wet and so is my beastly kit bag which has been out on the parade ground all afternoon.

We will leave the competition over for a month and see if we can't get a few more entries.

Many happy returns to scouts Beeching and Thorney, also [?] Winkle who all have birthdays this month.

A.S.M."

15 Sept. 1915

*"Chief Editorial Offices
Loose
(I enlisted a year ago today)*

I feel a very proud editor, as I start to write in the 3rd volume of the Swiss Troop magazine, and I think the whole troop should be very proud of it too, for it contains as good a record of work and keenness as any troop in England could show and I can imagine with what interest we shall look through the back numbers when Peace is signed and we are all seated round the same camp fire again. There will be no lack of yarns then will there?

I am home on 4 days 'final furlough' which means that all being well we shall be going to France very soon, so

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

perhaps I shall have to head my next 'Pow Wow' - 'Somewhere in Europe'. I have seen Boney who is also home on leave and if the rest of you at Birchington have grown like he has, I shouldn't advise any Germans to try any landing parties near the beat of the Swift Patrol. By the way before I forget it, don't you think the drawings at each end of this new volume are just top-hole, and we must thank W Green and Mr 'Sportsman' Barry very much for doing them.

I'm going to tell you a little story. It is true and happened to the Swiss Troop. I will tell it without putting in the names and dates, I wonder if anyone will be able to fill them in correctly?

It was the first night in camp (May - 19-) and the bell in the old church over the marshes had just struck 9 o'clock. All was quiet except for S.M. . . . having a final rustle down into his famous paper lined blanket, when I heard a small voice outside my tent:

"Please sir are you there?"

"Hullo" I said "Who's that?"

"....sir" came the reply, "can you come here a minute",.

I "went there a minute" and found..... with bare feet wrapped in his blanket.

"What's up?" I said.

"Please sir" replied..... "there's something the matter with, I think he wants to be sick".

So I went to the tent of the Patrol and opened the flap.

"...." I said, "I hear you want to be sick, is that right?"

"...." gulped and said "yes sir".

"So you shall be" I said "put on your boots and come along with me."

We went together for about 50 yards behind the mess tent and I leant.....over my arm and told him to tickle the back of his throat with his finger.

"Do you feel better now?"

"Yes, I think that's all thank you sir".

So we walked back to the tents and went to bed again, and all was quiet until the morning.

Looking through last months notes I see that I was just moving to Salisbury Plain then. We are there still and in real army barracks. We had a very trying time for the first night or two, as the soldiers who had just left had evidently never been scouts, and had left the place in a dirty condition that simply boggles description. Funny little things with long whiskers and curly tails came out of all the chinks of the iron beds and walls etc. and gnashed their teeth at us as much as to say, "you dare disturb us, we were here first."

However, we did disturb them, and by scrubbing everything with strong disinfectant water, and whitewashing all the walls and ceilings we soon got the place in a habitable condition. And that was all because men had never learnt how to wash themselves and their clothes properly, and although I know every scout does wash himself properly, you might just remember this when the weather gets chilly and you feel tempted to skip the 'feet and neck' part of the morning scrub.

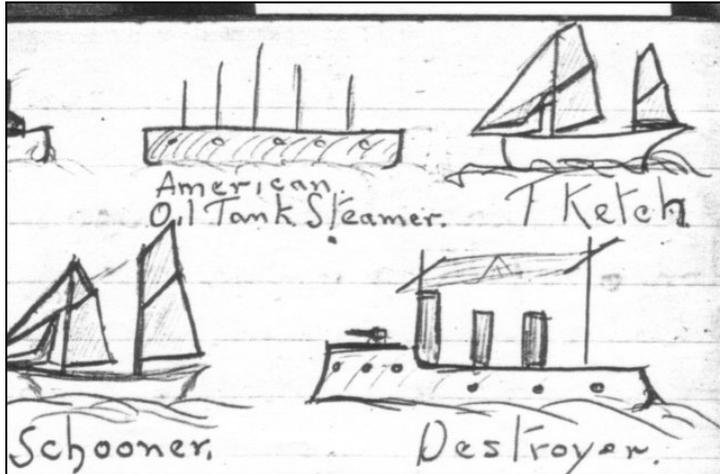
I award the prize in the 'ship' competition to Corpl. W. Antrum and will take or send it down to him tomorrow. I have just heard that scout Cyril Elmore is fit and getting on well in New Zealand. He will be 18 next month. Best of luck to him.

What did I tell you about the 'Cats' - they are nearly there.

See March 1915

A.S.M.

John Greville Fulkes (continued)



30 October 1915

*"Temporary Editorial Office
Fellalabad Barracks
Tidworth*

NOVEMBER

I feel an awful old fraud having to give an address in England again, especially following on Lieut. Green's letter, who has been out and got himself badly wounded for the sake of this old Country of ours already. That we all wish him a speedy and complete recovery goes without saying - how jolly good of him to have written so much, all with his left hand. It isn't easy, have you ever tried it?

I must be very short this time as I'm awfully busy, and get a lot of work to do in the evenings now.

*When you fellows are out on some of the lovely days we've been having lately, do you ever think what a topping fine time we could all have if the war was all over and **Peace** signed, and how we should all appreciate the blue sky and the brown Autumn woods with lots of dry sticks in them to make in a good fire, and all the everyday blessings of life which we took just as a matter of course before? I do. But it is no good wishing yet. The only thing we can do is for each one of us to give up all idea of our own pleasure for the present and just buck into whatever particular war job we've taken up (and you needn't necessarily be learning to fight or guarding the coast to be doing a 'war job'.)* with all our might. If every loyal subject of **King George** did that, this war wouldn't last long. **The King has fallen from** his horse while reviewing his soldiers on the Battlefield in Flanders. We don't know yet how badly he is hurt. **GOD SAVE THE KING A.S.M.**
(*someone has to carry on at home Alf & Billy)*

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

In France at last!

*"19th Btn R.F.
FRANCE*

December 1915 & January 1916

*At last after many moons, I can write **France** on the top of my editorial. I have been out nearly a month now, and have had three spells in the trenches. The last time we were in for 6 days and had a pretty arduous time. All the ground around here is clay and very low so perhaps you can guess what it is like. One simply wallows in it, and wades about waist deep in stuff very much like pea soup. In some of the trenches there are nice little dugouts where one can make a fire in an old tin with holes knocked in it, if you're lucky enough to get any fuel. The rain has made them dangerous though, and we have had more than one man killed by them falling in with the extra weight.*

Most of the fighting now is being done by the artillery and shells of all sizes and kinds, coal boxes (high explosives with very black smoke) Whiz-bangs (very nasty if you get one in the neck) shrapnel and others come whizzing by. We are much better than the Germans now at this game, and send over 4 shots for every one of theirs.

Rifles can only be fired through loop holes, because by day it is very dangerous to put ones head over the parapet, as the German snipers are hot stuff. I saw one man have the top of his head taken off this way, and all his brains laid out on the side of the trench. At night one gets out on the top and in front to repair and make good the sandbagging etc. and when a 'Starlight' goes up (a sort of firework to light up the surroundings to see what's going on) one has to crouch down and keep quite still, and then the Bosches [sic] don't spot you. If they do they generally miss you at night because they cannot see the sights on their rifles.

Just at present I am about a mile behind the firing line in Reserve, living in a shell-ruined farm with the rain dripping through the roof. We do quite well for grub and I am as fit as a fiddle and eat as much as ever I can get hold of. I am smoking your pipe J.B. and have just had a wash with the soap you sent so you see I am making use of the parcel.

I had a copy of the Kent Messenger sent out to me and I saw the notice about Cpl Reginald Jones. I'm very sorry Boney, for you and your people, I expect it will be a hard knock for them. Still, if one has to die, there is no better way of dying, is there, than on the Battlefield?

*I must stop now and assume an attitude of work.
Best of luck and a jolly Christmas*

A.S.M. (See the label on the paper wrapping? All the way out [to France] and back again eh!)"

*(*Boney was scout Allan Jones, aged about 15 at this time, and brother of Reginald)*

*Temporary Editorial Office
B.E.F. France*

February 1916

It is 2.20 Pip-Emma, and just 15 minutes ago I got a parcel from home containing sossidges, duck & green peas in a tin, some apples out of the garden at Loose and The loose Swiss Troupe Magazine. Thank you very much

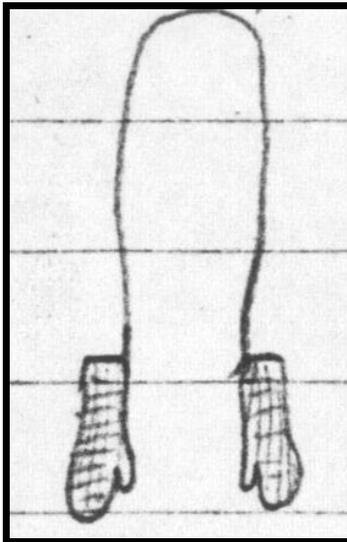
John Greville Fulkes (continued)

indeed for sending it out, I have read all the January notes with great delight. There is nothing that gives a chap out here more pleasure than to hear from the folks at home. I'll take this opportunity to thank all the sportsmen scouts who have written to me. If any of you are short of a good turn to do just sit down and write a note to a friend at the front. He'll appreciate it.

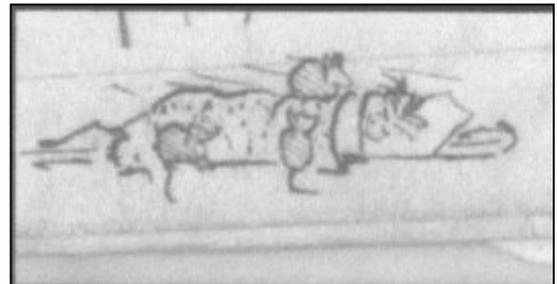
Now, as there is no time like the present, and we are in billets again and I have a free afternoon - till some job turns up - I will see if I can rake anything interesting up to tell you. There are lots of things I should like to say, but Mr Censor is a particular man, and they must be reserved for our Peace Camp Fire. I am keeping a notebook to remind me of some of the more interesting things that happen.

I expect most of you have seen rats. I'll warrant you haven't seen any like the breed we keep in the trenches. They are as big as omnibuses with appetites like Winkle at his best. In fact I'm not at all sure that rats will not be the final factor in this war, by eating up all the rations. My last dugout swarmed with them and at night, when I slept I had to cover myself right over, because they would come and sit on my face and wash themselves.

One night I went in and heard a tremendous rustling and shimozzling going on, so I lit a candle, and there was a huge rat dragging a piece of paper along a beam in the roof I got hold of the paper and after a tug of war lasting half an hour, I won, and found the paper was my last letter from home, going to make a nest, I suppose. I had a pair of woolly gloves, joined together by a long cord. I found one on the floor and the other about two feet up a rat hole, with the thumb eaten off. I hope it gave him appendicitis.



You sometimes see cats in the trenches at night too. You can always tell them because they are so much smaller than the rats. Remind me sometime, to tell you the yarn of the rat that 'stood to'.



That glove tip is a good one. A pair of woolly gloves with no fingers, joined together with a piece of cord long enough to go round the neck and over the shoulders. Then when you want to take glove off to blow your nose, the glove just hangs down and doesn't get lost.

Also, to keep your feet warm, grease your boots. And a little grease on your feet too won't do any harm.

We have to be very careful which way the wind blows and for that reason we make little weathercocks to stick up on the trench. Can you guess the reason? When the wind is blowing from us to the Germans, all's well, but when it blows the other way - danger. It is then that the Germans can discharge the poisonous gas which if you get 2 or 3 lungfuls, [sic] will eventually kill you. To guard against it we all carry gas helmets in a little satchel worn over the shoulder, and you have to be able to get them out and over your head in 20 seconds. The gas cannot get through them and although they are very stuffy, they are quite safe if you get them on in time.

One day, a German gas shell burst just at the entrance to one of our mines (an underground tunnel, leading to under the German trucks, plugged with Dynamite at the end, to blow up the blighters). The gas is heavier than air, and presently up came four miners, coughing and spitting, with the news that there was one man still down there. So two of our men went down with their gas helmets on, to find him. There was no man there, ````

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

but what they did find was a lot of rats hopping along, dragging their heads along the ground, badly gassed.

Now I'll tell you a piece of news. I'm down for LEAVE to come home to Blighty and hope to be home some time about the beginning of next month. Now J.B., you gotta get home some time during my 7 days, unless I can borrow a motor bike and bust over to Birchington. Do you remember a letter you write to me about a month ago [when] you spoke of your regret at missing the great adventure. Thereby hangs a little story.

Sargt. [sic] Gordon comes from Madras and is the best fellow that ever lived - or one of them. On Jan 2nd he was mixed up in a Boch mine explosion and a fellow he was very fond of was killed. After that, he seemed to crack up, lost his nerve and got very moody and morose. So I showed him that part of your letter by way of bucking him up and showing him things in a different light. He read it and said 'I wish I could look at things like that'. Two days later he said 'show me your friend's letter again, will you?' and after reading, asked me to thank you for 'putting some stuffing into a moody crock' next time I wrote. He is much more himself again now. Thanks awfully for having the H.Q.G. sent out to me.

Now I'll wind up for this trip. Best of luck to you all and hoping to see some of you soon.

Yours ever A.S.M."

Oxford
April 1916

We may be poor, but we do see life. Here I am back in dear old England again, attending lectures and poking my nose into books, to learn to be an officer in the King's Army. It's good to be back. You know the feeling - [those of you] who have come home to Loose on leave after 3 months on Coast Patrol, I expect.

I paid a surprise visit to H.Q. on Tuesday evening and found a full house, all busy flag waving. After that, we did a little tongue wagging, and finished up with three cheers for the Swiss Troupe all over the world, which it is - don't you forget it. There's Boney, [this refers to scout Allan Jones, whose elder brother Reginald had been in the Dragoon Guards and was killed in action in December 1914] the next one to be off, and as someone said to me a few days back - "the last five years of the war will be the worst". So it may be your turn next. Not that I think the war will last for five years. I don't, but from the little bit of the Western Front that I have seen, I should say that the Germans are a long way from beat yet, things are just about as bad as they can be. So that means that everyone, man and woman, little and big, must do their very best in whatever way they can, to give us just that little bit of extra reach and heavier punch which is necessary to lay Germany down and out. We don't want to win on points.

*(LOOSE) I've brought the mag. home, hoping to have time to draw something for the competition, but I've put it off, and now there's no time. There's an object lesson for you.
A.S.M."*

"Notes for May 1916

I have just looked up on the calendar and it is May right enough, but it might be March the way it's raining. However, if it was fine, perhaps I should be out of doors instead of doing my editorial duty. I see you have found it necessary, after a meeting of the Court of Honour, to rearrange the patrols, and I must congratulate those

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

scouts who have earned promotion and got it and I hope they will all put their backs into it to make their patrol the best. Of course they can't all be the best, but each one can be the best in something. And you know, a patrol is very largely what its patrol leader makes it. I'll give you an instance of what I mean.

You all know, of course, that a Company of Infantry is about N.C.Os and 250 men, divided into 4 Platoons. I was in 'A' Company, 19th R.F. and our Platoons were numbered 1,2,3 & 4. While we were in England, there wasn't much to choose between them, though perhaps one would be a bit smarter at drill, another march better, and another the best at field work and so on. When we got into the trenches it was quite a different story. I won't tell you which was the worst, as you never know how these things get around, and I might get hurt, but I do know part of the reason and that is that the Platoon sergeant was a chap who would collar the best dugout, make himself a good fire if he could get a bucket of some fuel, and let other people do the work.

The best was No 4. They [were] easily the most cheerful - and cheerfulness means a tremendous lot in the trenches - as of course, it does everywhere. They were the best sentries, and on a dark night it was never necessary to tell them to keep their heads up and keep a good look out, and coming out, on the march back to billets, dog tired and sleepy, they were generally the first to start singing "Oh you beautiful doll" or "The Marseillaise" or something. Why? Because the patrol leader - or platoon sergeant - was a sportsman of the right sort. He never grumbled in the trenches (he used to grumble when he was too long out). The worse the weather, or the German shells, the more he would apparently enjoy himself and crack jokes with his scouts, who all thought him a wonderful fellow. I've often known him sit up all night with a brazier and Dixie's of hot water, so that each man as he came off sentry could have a hot drink of tea before he turned in for an hour or two of sleep. So that just shows you that it's no good just sitting down and hoping for the best. It's up to you P.L & Seconds to be real Leaders. That's what you're there for.

I was going to tell you the yarn of the man who found a soldier's hat in the mud on the La Basséc Road, but it will have to wait over I'm afraid.

Competition for this month

Each scout to go out for a walk, either under patrol arrangements or by himself, in seaside, town or country, by day or by night according to his inclinations and opportunities. He must be in uniform and he must keep his eyes skinned. He must also have a notebook in his pocket. The first thing he sees which strikes him as unusual or of more than just passing interest, he must make a note of, in his PB, also noting the time at which he saw it. If - which is very unlikely - he doesn't find anything worth noting the first time, he can go again. It needn't be any thrilling adventure of murder or sudden death, but just some incident or freak of nature which a scout sees, and probably a civilian doesn't.

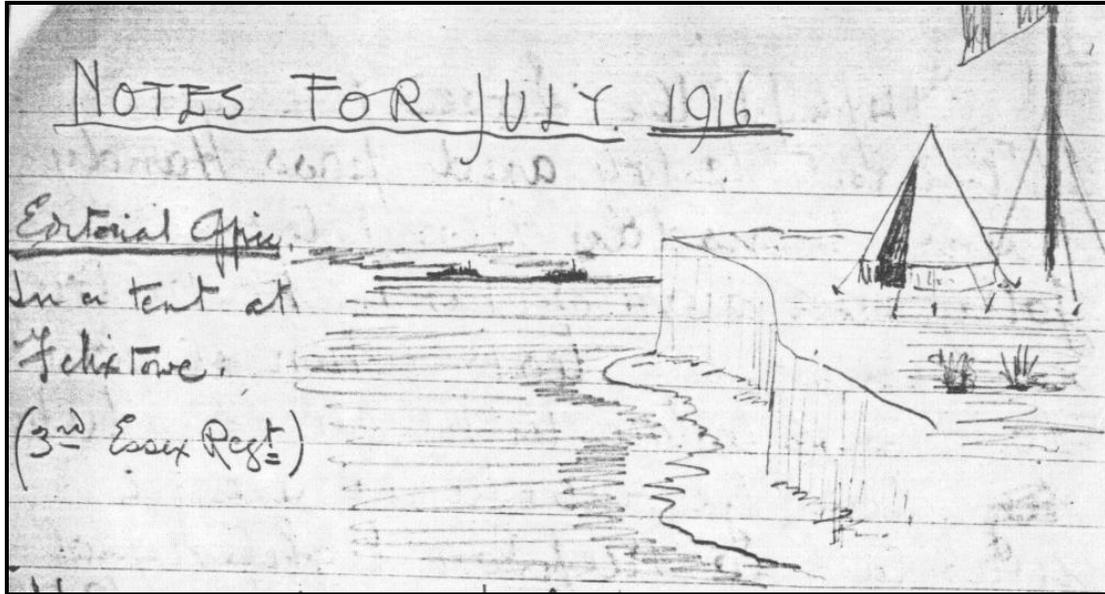
Then I want him to report it briefly in the magazine - in this order: -

- 1 Begin with the place you are writing*
- 2 The date you are writing*
- 3 Who to - (To the readers of the Swiss Troop Magazine)*
- 4 The report-Give the date of your walk, where you walked to, what you saw, what you did (if anything) at the time you saw it.*
- 5 Signature, rank and patrol. Everyone can do this. No excuses*

A.S.M.

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

Notes for July 1916



I'm afraid these July notes are very late. I received the magazine from S.M.Green some time ago, when I was awfully busy and it got packed up with some of my things for moving down here and I forgot all about it. Now, that is an explanation and not an excuse. If anyone wants to "tick me off" I shall humbly admit that they are quite justified.

Well! Cheery-oh my hearties, whether you're land lubbing in khaki like me, or boys in blue by the briny. Things are looking up over in Europe (there's a war on there, you know) don't you think? Of course, the time for [waving] flags and shouting hasn't come yet, but the allies are all fighting splendidly and the Boches don't seem to be very happy about it. We can't all be out in France helping to take the Trones Wood and places like that, but when it's all over it will be good to look back and think we did the job which came to hand to the best of our ability.

Which brings me to something I want to say to you. It chiefly concerns the coast patrols. You are doing splendidly useful work now and I think you are quite right to be where you are. But you must never forget that presently it will be all over, so you must look ahead a bit. If two boys both apply for the same job, the one that looks cleanest and smartest, and can write and spell the best, will get it. Now all Swiss Troop Scouts are equally clean and smart (or most of them anyway), but what about the writing and spelling? You must not get slack about that because you don't happen to be at school just now. One has only to look through this book to see what I mean. Most are pretty good but some are pretty mouldy. When you write letters, or write in this book, try your hardest to write neatly, and if you don't know how to spell a word, ask someone who does and remember it next time. And always read through what you have written to see how many mistakes, or words you have left out.

For next month I offer a prize for the best written and spelt contribution, open to all Swiss Scouts under 16 (so put your age under your name). I am disappointed about the last competition. Perhaps you didn't quite understand the scheme. Well then, read the S.Ms report and see how to do it. Here is a report of an incident I saw on Sunday:

John Greville Fulkes (continued)

"Felixtowe 18 July 1916

1. *To – Swiss Troop, all ranks*
2. *Walking along Felixtowe Front N.E. At 4pm I saw a British Destroyer & Submarine coming in from the North Sea, followed by a low and small warship about the size of a destroyer but unlike any British type I had ever seen. Probably a captured German Destroyer with a prize crew on board.*
3. *I watched it out of sight (going south) with my glasses – there was nothing else to do.*
4. *Did any Birchington scouts see I, perhaps going to Sheerness or Chatham?*

A.S.M.

The above was the last letter recorded in the log book. Four months later John was killed in action.

In 1922, when enough money became available, the scouts erected a Memorial to both John Fulkes and Alfred Langley (who had taken over as ASM after John had enlisted.) at Crisbrook, near Hayle Mill. It was dedicated by the Bishop of Dover on 22nd January 1922:

LOOSE BOY SCOUTS
ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTER J. FULKES
PATROL LEADER A.V.LANGLEY
DIED IN FRANCE FOR GOD AND COUNTRY
LEST WE FORGET
1914-1918

(see report on Alfred Langley for fuller details of scout memorial)



The Limes – March 2004



Corporal Frederick Golden

Hertfordshire Regiment (265537)

Died: Tuesday 31st July 1917 (aged 24)

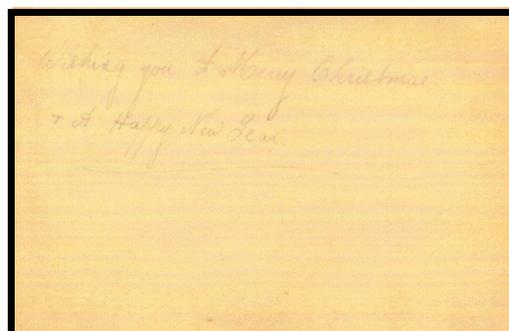
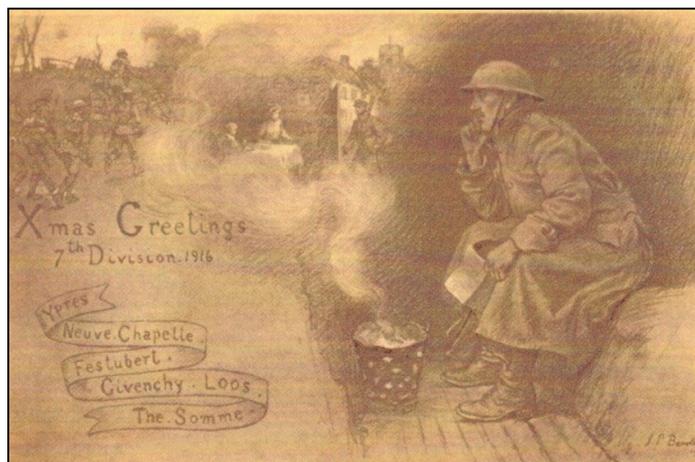
Memorial: Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial (Panel 54 and 56)

Born: 1893, Loose. (**Bap.** June 18, 1893)

Enlisted: Hertford

Frederick was the brother of James Golden (see profile of James Golden for family details). He was involved in action in France/Flanders, where he died in action. According to family remembrances, his cause of death was of being caught in barbed wire.

Christmas Greetings—7th Division 1916



This unsigned postcard was found in the family collection. Could it have been sent home by Frederick?

Sources: CWGC; NMP, Golden family

Leading Stoker James Golden

H.M.S. *Princess Irene*, Royal Navy (K/4177)



Died: Thursday 27th May 1915, aged 28

Memorial: Chatham Naval Memorial (11)

Born: 11 December 1887

James (or Jim, as he was known) was the son of Thomas and Caroline Golden of *Hawthorne Cottage, Loose*. He was part of a large family of 14 children (7 girls and 7 boys) - his brother Fred (*see previous profile*) also lost his life later in the Great War.

James was born 11 December 1887 and was baptised the following year. Prior to signing on he had been a member of the Loyal Invicta Lodge of Oddfellows (of which his father had been the popular secretary for over 30 years), and was the first member of the lodge to die for his country during the First World War. His parents, Thomas and Caroline Golden were living in *Hawthorne Cottage*, having moved from *Well Street* some time after the census of 1881. Thomas ran a shop from these premises - then known as *Loose Hill* - (but later becoming known as *Hawthorne Cottage*), and in later years expanded into running a coal business and also obtaining a license to sell stamps.

James lost his life through an explosion on the *Princess Irene*. He had been in the Navy for about six years and had been home on leave for a few weeks before the explosion, whilst his own ship *H.M.S. Forward* was undergoing repairs. He was probably one of the working party from Chatham, who were sent to Sheerness, and was on the launch which was stationed nearby the *Princess Irene* when she blew up. So although he is commemorated along with all those who lost their lives on the *Princess Irene*, and is recorded as having served on her, he wasn't actually on board when the ship went down. His connection with it was only a transitory one. He was formerly on *H.M.S. Bulwark*, which was blown up at almost the same place as the *Princess Irene* on 26 November 1914 with a loss of some 600 lives.

One contemporary report says, of the explosion on *Princess Irene*:

"The county of Kent seemed, on Thursday 27 May 1915, the day on which the Princess Irene blew up, to be shaken almost to its foundations. A few minutes after 11 am a violent noise was heard, like that of a tremendous explosion. Property over an area of many miles was shaken, windows were broken and people were painfully agitated."

James Golden (Continued)

There had been an air raid at Southend in the small hours of the morning and it was feared in many quarters, that the Germans had resumed their bombardment from the air. In other quarters it was considered that another battleship had been blown up in the Medway, or that one of the gunpowder factories - either at Cliffe or at Faversham, had exploded.

No confirmation, for a long time, could be obtained in the county generally, of any one of these suppositions.

Meanwhile the *Kent Messenger* received stories from reliable witnesses that, from the neighbourhood of Maidstone, they had seen a huge column of smoke rise up from behind Detling Hills, while from Sittingbourne and elsewhere, came accounts of the damage caused by the concussion. Meanwhile too, some of the districts around Maidstone had become strewn with charred memoranda sheets, evidently meant for use in the Navy.

Eventually it became known that an explosion had occurred on the *Princess Irene* in Sheerness Dockyard. The nature of the service upon which the *Irene* was engaged had not transpired, but the Admiralty account issued in the evening was as follows:

“H.M. auxiliary ship Princess Irene was accidentally blown up in Sheerness harbour this morning.....she was a new liner of 6,000 tons, launched for the Canadian-pacific Railway Company at Dumbarion last year, and was taken over by the Admiralty. At 11.10 on Thursday people on shore saw the liner disappear in a vast sheet of flame, which shot upwards with a deafening roar - the resultant smoke rising in a column hundreds of feet high. The town of Sheerness itself was not affected by the shock so much as might have been expected, but Minster suffered severely. The workhouse on the top of the hill was shaken to its foundationsHilda Johnson, aged 9, was killed on the Isle of Grain as the result of being struck on the head by a piece of iron from the ship, and George Bradley (47) a labourer, dropped dead in a field in Grain - from shock....”

The *Princess Irene*, which was a mine-layer, had a compliment of 225 officers and men, three of whom were ashore that morning as the mines were being primed on the ship's two mine decks. Also on board were a party of 80 or so Petty Officers from Chatham in addition to 76 Sheerness Dockyard workers who were completing tasks prior to the ship's planned departure to lay her mines on 29 May. Without warning, the ship was blown to pieces and her remains, and the remains of those on board, were scattered over a wide area of the surrounding river and countryside. Those bodies which were located were buried in Woodlands Cemetery in Gillingham. A memorial to those lost in both this and the ***Bulwark*** disaster is situated opposite Sheerness Railway Station.



The *Princess Irene* was launched on 20 October 1914. She had been ordered by the Canadian Pacific Company in May 1913 and built in the Leven Shipyard of William Denny & Brothers as a sister ship to the *Princess Margaret*. The launch of the *Princess Irene* was a modest affair, since with the War having broken out only two months previously, not many people wished to travel over from Canada at that particular time.

Realising that for mine laying purposes high speed ships would be desirable in order that they could reach the chosen areas, lay mines and depart before daylight, both the ships were requisitioned by the British Admiralty – *Princess Margaret* on 20 December 1914, and *Princess Irene* on 26 January 1915, who, after conversion, sailed for Sheerness, her new base, on 18 March 1915.

Princess Irene ‘blew up’ at 11.14 am on 27 May. She had been loading mines after which the mines would be armed. This latter was a dangerous operation with the type of firing devise which was then in use (but was in the process of being revised). Had she not blown up this would have been her third mine laying operation.

The Memorial at Sheerness

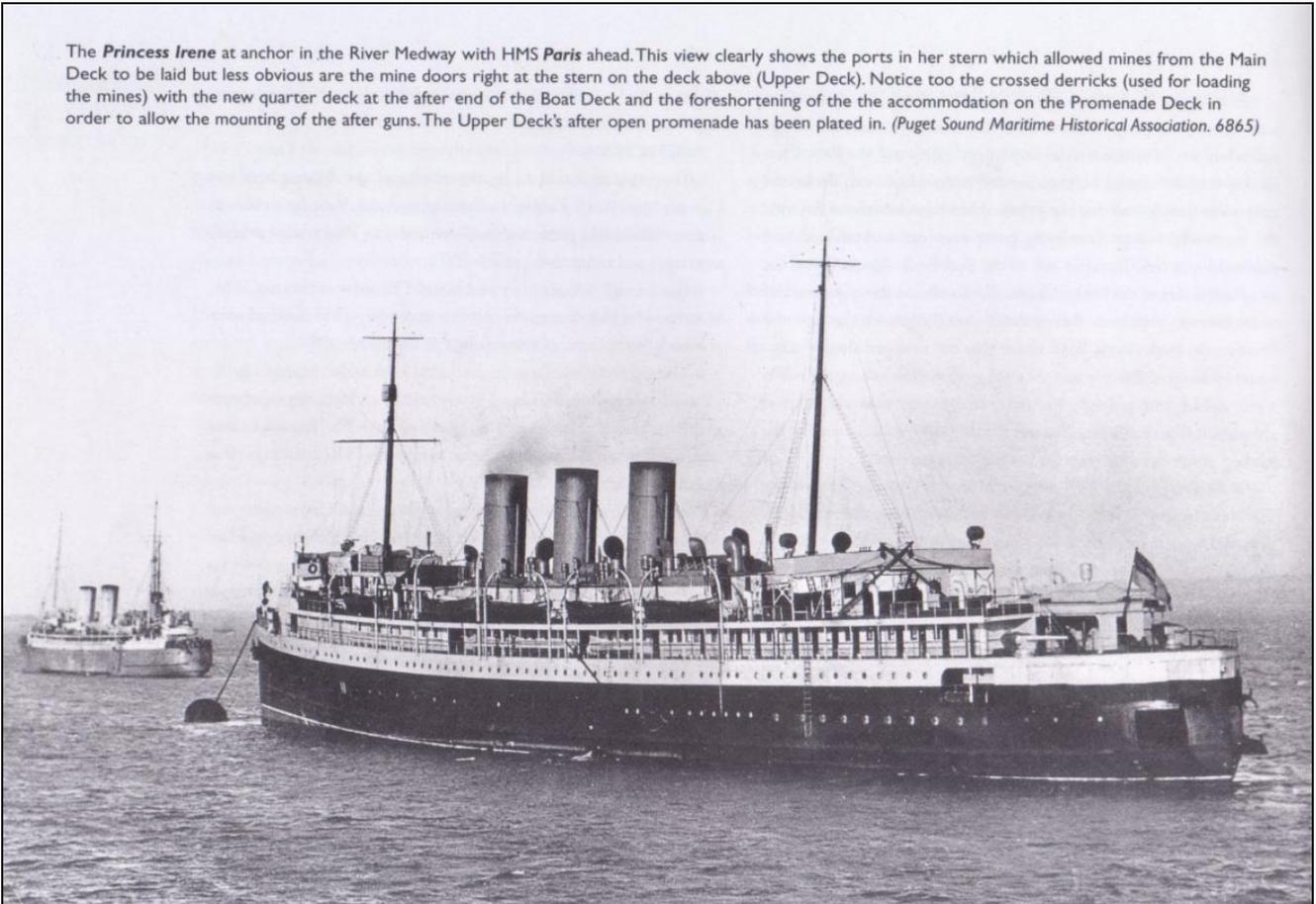
James Golden (Continued)

Following the explosion there were two Admiralty enquiries, at the first of which the routine for priming of the mines on *H.M.S. Angora* was explained, and the whole business of procedure was thoroughly examined.

After the second enquiry it was concluded that the prime cause of the disaster was down to a faulty piston – even though one senior officer disagreed, believing that carelessness in seeing the piston to be properly cocked before placing it in a mine, was the prime cause of the accident.

Today, the lower decks and keel of the ship remain more or less intact and have caused a degree of navigational problems to the large ships now using the eastern end of nearby Thamesport. At present there are no plans to raise her remains.

The *Princess Irene* at anchor in the River Medway with HMS *Paris* ahead. This view clearly shows the ports in her stern which allowed mines from the Main Deck to be laid but less obvious are the mine doors right at the stern on the deck above (Upper Deck). Notice too the crossed derricks (used for loading the mines) with the new quarter deck at the after end of the Boat Deck and the foreshortening of the accommodation on the Promenade Deck in order to allow the mounting of the after guns. The Upper Deck's after open promenade has been plated in. (Puget Sound Maritime Historical Association. 6865)



James Golden (continued)



H.M.S. Bulwark: blown up in Sheerness Dockyard
26 November 1914

James' own ship, *HMS Forward* was a light cruiser built in 1904. At 2,850 tons she was smaller than a modern frigate and was designed to 'scout' ahead of heavier forces. She served throughout the First World War in the North Sea, the Mediterranean and the Aegean before being sold on 27 July 1921. Today, HMS Forward is a Royal Naval Reserve Training Reserve Centre in Birmingham.



This picture of HMS Forward is an illustration from a First Day Cover of 17 April 1999.

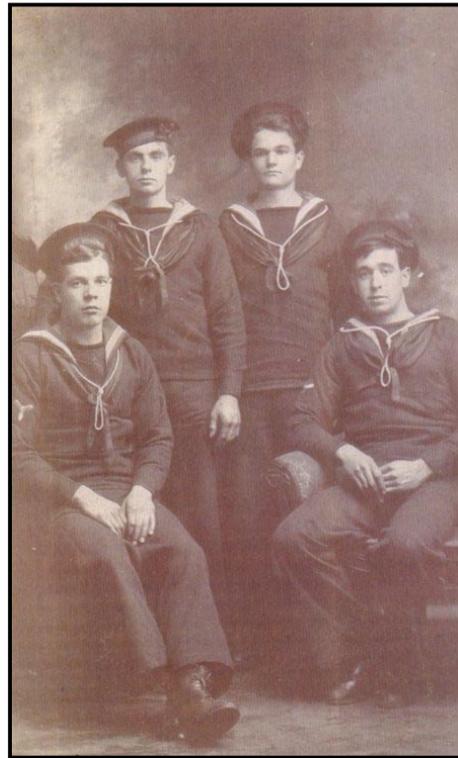
We haven't yet been able to ascertain the nature of the repairs being carried out when James was sent to Sheerness, but most likely they were as a result of the heavy action in which *Forward* was involved on 16 December 1914 at Hartlepool when she was shelled by a German cruiser. James was almost certainly involved in this action.

In the St. George's Centre, Chatham Maritime, Gillingham is a Brass Plate, in the North Aisle, commemorating both *HMS Bulwark* and *HMS Princess Irene*.

James Golden (Continued)



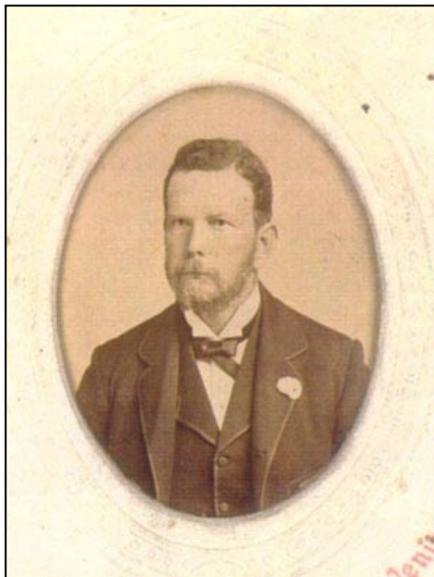
James in 1915



James (L) with shipmates

The Golden Family

As for James' family, we are very fortunate to be in touch with both a grandniece (Georgina Peters – born and bred in Canada), and a nephew, Peter Martin who lives in Bexhill-On-Sea. Both have provided many photographs and details which has enabled us to gain a good insight into the family.



Thomas Golden (James' father) was born in Maidstone in 1851. He ran a coal business and general shop at *Hawthorne Cottage, Loose*.

Caroline Wilkins (*James' mother*), born in Loose in 1853, was the daughter of Samuel (born 1826) & Ann (born 1829), who lived in *Antrums Cottage, Loose Road*. Samuel was a bricklayer.

When Thomas married Caroline Wilkins on 25 March 1871 they set up home in Well Street and began to raise their large family. They moved to Hawthorne cottage some time between 1881 & 1891. Thomas died in 1936 and was buried 28 May of that year, in Loose Churchyard.

Thomas Golden

James Golden (Continued)

In 1913 a very successful smoking concert was held at the Odd-fellows Club in the Papermakers Arms at Loose, in honour of Thomas' thirty years as secretary of the Loyal Invicta Lodge. The following report was sent from Canada – probably a Kent Messenger Report, although we cannot be sure of this. Whatever – it indicates a measure of the high esteem in which Thomas was held:

“Probably the most successful smoking concert ever held in connection with the Loyal Invicta Lodge of Oddfellows (M.U.) was that which took place on Saturday evening, at the Papermakers' Arms, Loose, when the spacious Lodge room was packed with brothers assembled to do honour to Bro. T. Golden, who for 30 years has filled the office of Permanent Secretary to the Lodge. The chair was occupied by Bro. Arthur Tucker (trustee) and supporting him on the right were Bro. George Marsham, J.P. and... [there follows a long list of names and positions held].

Mr George Marsham was asked to perform the ceremony of the evening. He was not fond of speaking, he said, nor was he a good speaker, but if the one thing necessary in making a speech was to be sincere in what one said, then on that occasion he felt he was the equal of a Gladstone or an Asquith or a Balfour or a Bonar-Law. They were met, he went on, to do honour to one who had lived in their midst for over 40 years, and whose uppermost thoughts were for the prosperity and welfare of the good old parish of Loose (hear hear). There could be no greater compliment paid to any man than to be honoured by those among whom he had resided for so many years. They were the people who, no doubt, had the right to criticise one's public life, and who often assumed the right to criticise one's private life (laughter), and if, after 40 years, one came out of that ordeal with flying colours, then that individual, whoever he was, might indeed consider himself a happy and fortunate man (hear, hear).

As to Bro. Golden's services to the Loyal Invicta Lodge as Secretary, from the very commencement of that time there had been a regular increase of membership and of funds year by year – an increase in members from 40 to 440 and in funds from £34 19s 1½d to £6,363 8s 4½d (loud applause). Perhaps more satisfactory still, and even more creditable to Bro. Golden, was the fact that during all these years the auditors had invariably reported that the “books were in admirable order and correct in every detail” (renewed applause).

“If that were all, it would be a great and satisfactory record for anyone, and one well deserving of recognition, but he could not help thinking that Bro. Golden's greatest, and he was sure hardest, work in connection with that Lodge was brought about by the Insurance Act. Not only had this work taken up practically the whole of his time but he (Mr Marsham) had been informed that Bro. Golden had studied the Act until he understood it (if anyone could understand it) almost as well as Mr Lloyd George himself (hear, hear). They were, indeed, fortunate in being able to secure the continued services of such a secretary.

Then, besides his services to Oddfellows, there was the fact that Bro. Golden had lived among them an upright and conscientious life, that he had proved himself a good husband, a good father, and a kind friend, and had moreover, spent his leisure hours in endeavouring to benefit his fellow men. In fact, he had tried to do, and had succeeded in doing, his duty in that state of life in which God had placed him (loud applause

“Mr Marsham then made the presentation, consisting of an illuminated address, an album containing the subscribers' names, and a cheque for £12, with the heartfelt wish of the subscribers that he would be spared for many years to come to enjoy the best of health and happiness and the regard and esteem of those among whom he lived (loud applause).

The address, beautifully framed and illuminated with symbols of the Order, read as follows:

“Loyal Invicta Lodge, No. 6545 (I.O.O.F., M.U.), Papermakers' Arms, Loose.

This Testimonial, together with a cheque and album, was presented to Bro. Thomas Golden, January 1913, by the members of the above Lodge, as a slight recognition of his 30 years' Secretaryship during the whole of which period he has won the esteem and affection of all by the conscientious and thoroughly capable manner in which he has carried out his duties. Always ready to give advice, he has proved himself to be one on whom all brothers have felt they could depend to further the best interests of the Lodge. This gift is made with the earnest hope that Bro. Golden may long be spared to merit the mutual trust and confidence of both present and future members of the Loyal Invicta Lodge. Signed on behalf of the members by the following Committee

[a long list of names follows]”. (Peter Martin (Thomas' grandson), has this address which is written on thick card, but is not framed)

James Golden (Continued)

“The album, bound in vellum, had the initials, T.G. in gold on the front, and an inscription on the front page, whilst the subscribers’ names had been excellently written in by Bro. Larkin. (This album, unfortunately, has disappeared).

Amidst loud and continued applause, Thomas rose to return thanks. He said he hardly knew what to say in return for their kindness and for the extremely kind words spoken of him by Mr Marsham. During his years as secretary he had tried to be just to every member, and to deal with them as man to man (hear, hear). He said it was most gratifying to him to know that his services had been appreciated, and that he should in the future, endeavour to conduct the affairs of the Lodge in the same way as he had done in the past, (hear, hear). He said he would not weary them with figures for the reason that he had had no time to look them up. Practically all his time was taken up in finding out the intricacies of the Insurance Act. He supposed that in time he would get to the bottom of it, and he trusted it would prove a success. If not, he hoped it would be dropped.

With regard to the Lodge, he had had a good deal to do with its formation. His most difficult task was the finding of a suitable secretary, and when he mentioned this fact to Bro. Knowles, the reply he got was “Well, you can manage that all right.” At the time, he did not think that he was capable of doing it, but he was elected, however, to the office. He expected the Lodge to run for twelve months, but instead it had gone on for 30 years, and was now one of the finest in the Maidstone district (hear, hear). He did not feel he could say any more that night, except to again thank them very much for the present, which he should always value (applause).”

Thomas lived, in fact, for a further 23 years.

The family of James and Caroline were:

- Olive (1873 –1954)
- Anne (Annie) (1874 – 1941)
- Bertha (1876 – 1927)
- Thomas (1878 – 1887)
- Henry (1880 – (1888)
- Mark (1882 – May 1950)
- Eleanor (1883/4 – 5 Sept. 1933)
- Caroline (Carrie) (1885 – 1954)
- James (1887 – 1915)
- Frederick (1893 – 1917)
- Sarah (Sally) (1891 – 1958)
- George (1892 – c.1975)
- William (Bill) (1894 –1969)
- Esther (Bant) (1897 – 3 Apr. 1978)

James Golden (Continued)



**Thomas in later life with grandsons
Brian & Jim Coakley.
Sons of Annie
Nephews of James**



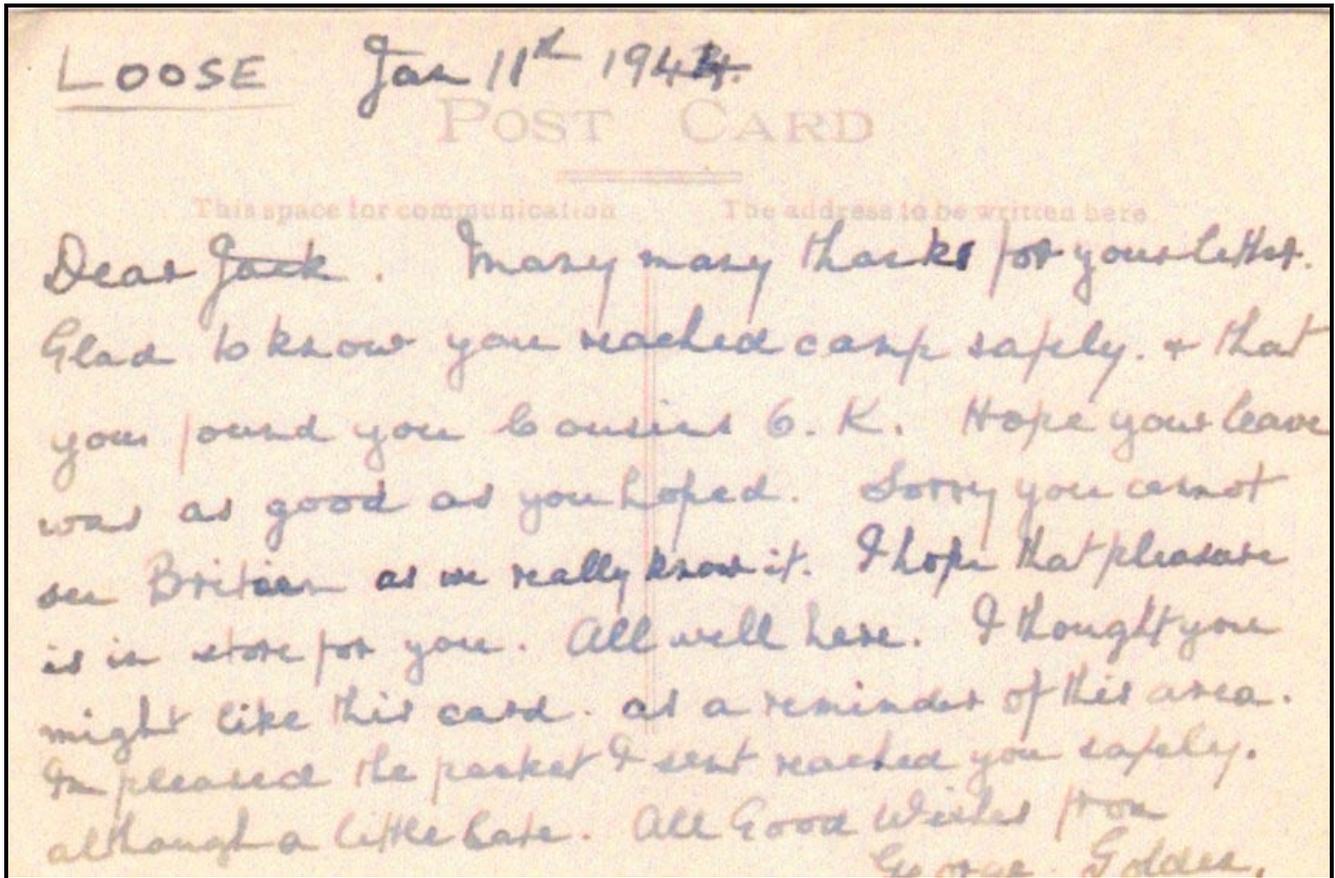
**Jim Coakley with his wife
Winnie several years later.**

James' sister **Bertha** and his brother **George**, never married. George worked for Maidstone Gas Company and his was a familiar face around Loose. He lived in Hawthorne Cottage with his father, and then with his sister Caroline and her husband George Kennett, until later (mid to late 1950s) moving out and going to live with his brother Bill, in Pickering Street. The photographs below show Bertha at Christmas 1915, and two images of George – both undated but probably at about the same time as that of Bertha.



James Golden (Continued)

On 11 January 1944 George sent a postcard of Loose to Jack Bigrigg in Canada – the spouse of his niece, Mabel. Jack had recently visited the Golden's in England when he had had some leave:



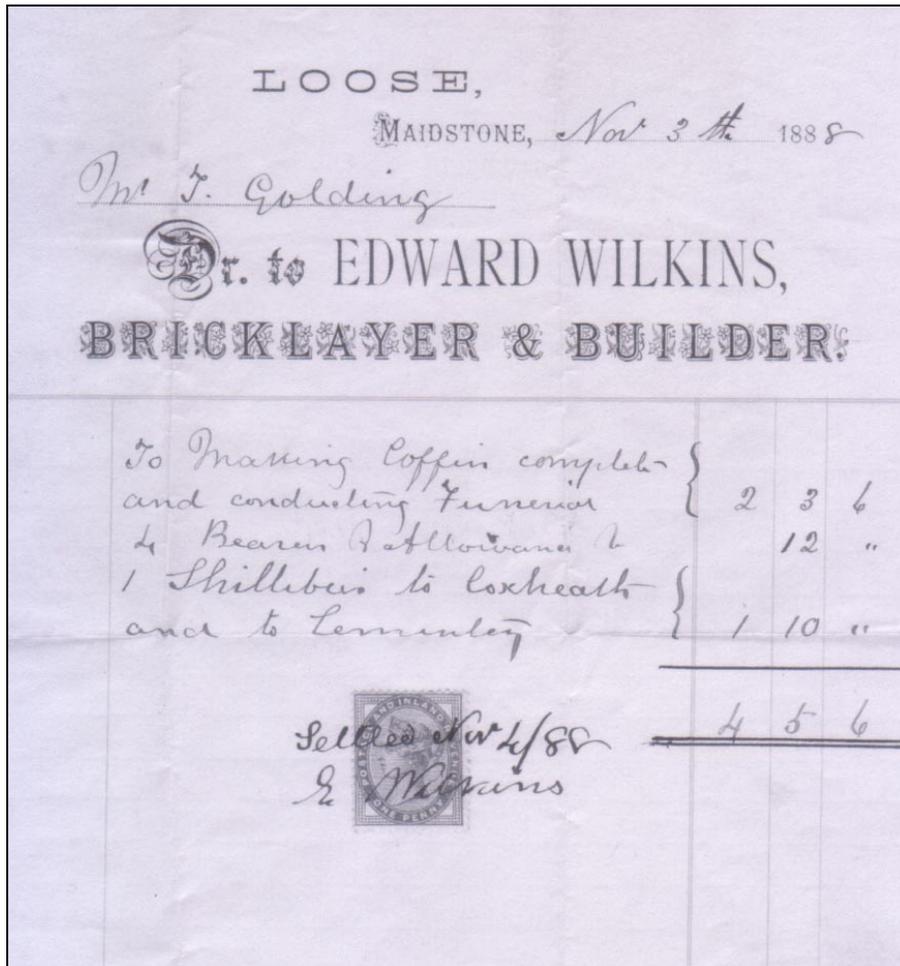
Another postcard was sent to the family in Canada at about this time, referring to the memorial window in All Saints' church in commemoration of Gordon Scull, who was also killed in the war (*see his profile*). The message reads:

"All Saints' Church and valley where the beautiful stained glass window is, where the modern boy is among Christ's flock in "Suffer the Little Children to come Unto me". Auntie Flo, Mrs King and Lena should remember it".

James' sister **Olive Golden** married Frederick Jupp and had three sons. Olive and Fred had, for a time, lived in Canada and would have stayed there had they known that her brother Mark would emigrate to that country in 1907. Instead, they returned to Britain and later emigrated to New Zealand where their descendants are now settled.

James Golden (Continued)

Not much is known about James' brothers **Thomas** and **Henry**. We do know that **Thomas** was born in Loose in 1878 and that on census night in 1881 he was staying, together with his sister Olive, at their grand parents' house in *Antrums Cottage* Loose Road. He was buried 7 February 1887, aged 9. **Henry** was born in 1880 and buried 10 November 1888 aged just 8 years.



Peter Martin is in possession of this funeral receipt, which shows that Henry was taken first to Coxheath and then back to Loose Cemetery. Quite why the service was held at Coxheath is not clear.

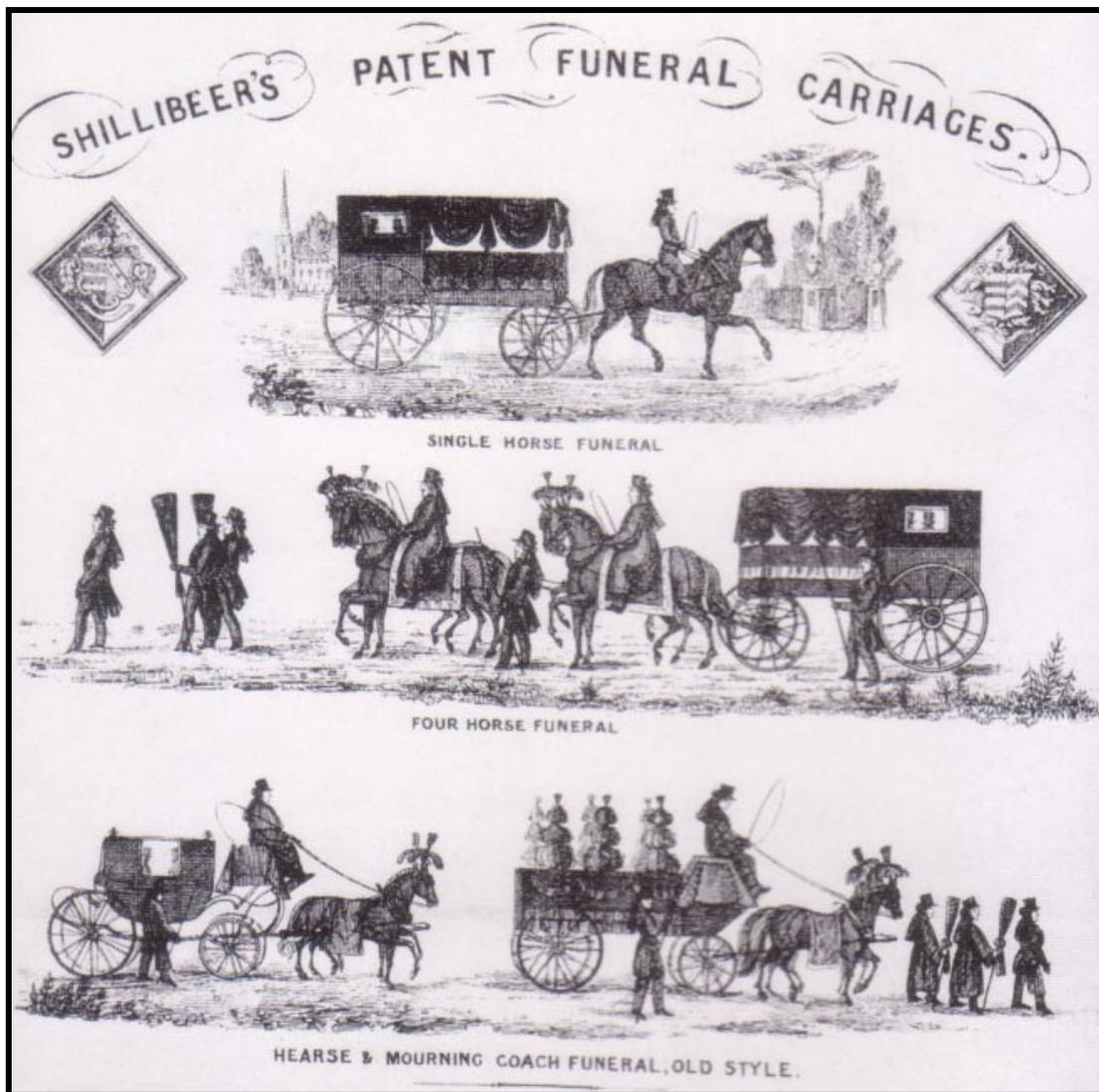
From the funeral receipt it would seem that a two-horse Shillibeer was hired for the occasion. It is worth quoting what J.C.Loudon, in his book *On the Laying Out, Planting and Management of Cemeteries and on the Improvement of Churchyards* (London, 1843) has to say about this form of funeral conveyance:

“Arguably the most curious conveyance for the dead ... was Shillibeer’s Funeral Omnibus. It was not terribly popular with either the clergy or the trade”

However, Mr J.C.Loudon was rather fond of Shillibeer’s 1841 Patent, and writing in 1843 he says:

James Golden (continued)

“The expense of funerals has last year been considerably lessened about the metropolis by the introduction of one-horse hearses, which convey the coffin and six mourners to the place of interment. These appear to have been first suggested in 1837 ... and the idea has subsequently, in 1842, been improved on and carried into execution by Mr Shillibeer, to whom the British public are indebted for the first introduction of the omnibus. Mr Shillibeer’s funeral carriage embraces in itself a hearse and a mourning coach, is very neat, and takes little from the pomp, and nothing from the decency of the ordinary funeral obsequies, while it greatly reduces the expense: the hire of a hearse with a single horse costing only £1 1s, and with two horses, £1 11s 6d. These carriages have one division for the coffin, and another for six mourners; and when the coffin has been taken out for internment, before the mourners re-enter to return home, the front part of the carriage and the fore wheels are contracted and drawn close up to the hinder or coach part of the carriage by means of a screw, so that the part for containing the coffin disappears, and the whole, when returning from the place of internment, has the appearance of a mourning coach. The invention is ingenious and most useful.”



James Golden (Continued)



A white brushed cotton shroud of the late nineteenth century. These were unisex, and were provided for children as well as adults. No doubt little Henry would have been attired in one similar. (*Castle Museum, York*)

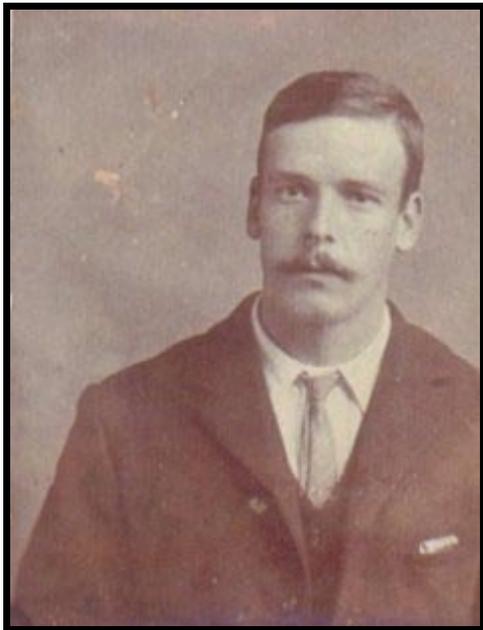
When it comes to James' brother **Mark Golden** there is more of a tale to tell. He was always known as 'Pop' and always referred to as the eldest son, since both Thomas & Henry died before reaching maturity, thus leaving Mark, indeed, as the eldest son.

Mark was born on the first day of spring on 22 March 1882. On his birth certificate his name is miss-spelled as Golding, a mistake often perpetrated with this fairly uncommon family name of Golden. Mark married **Bessie Noakes** on 25 April 1907 at All Saints' Church in Loose, witnessed by George Hood, Ernie Kitchenham (her brother-in-law), and her sisters Caroline & Nell.

Bessie (Noakes) Golden was also of a large family living in the Boughton Quarry area. She was born 25th May 1885 and confirmed 23 February 1906—taking her first communion on 11 March 1906. She worked in Service before she married Mark. She was a travelling housekeeper and worked for the House of Rothschild as well as for the Marquis of Zetland and Lady Sassoon. **Mabel** (her daughter) spoke of how rich Bessie said the Rothschilds were, and how they had offered to feed the whole British army during World War One if only they could have guards posted at their door! This did not happen for political reasons.

Bessie used to visit her sister **Alice (Kitchenham)** who lived just a few houses down from Hawthorne Stores, and it is thought that this is how she came to meet Mark.

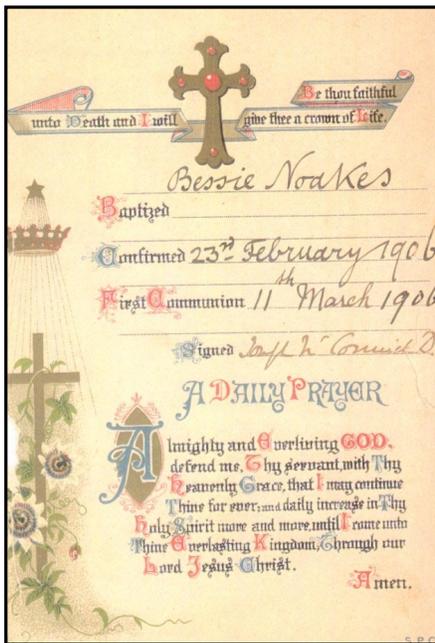
James Golden (continued)



Mark pre 1907



Bessie Noakes c.1905 when she was in Domestic service

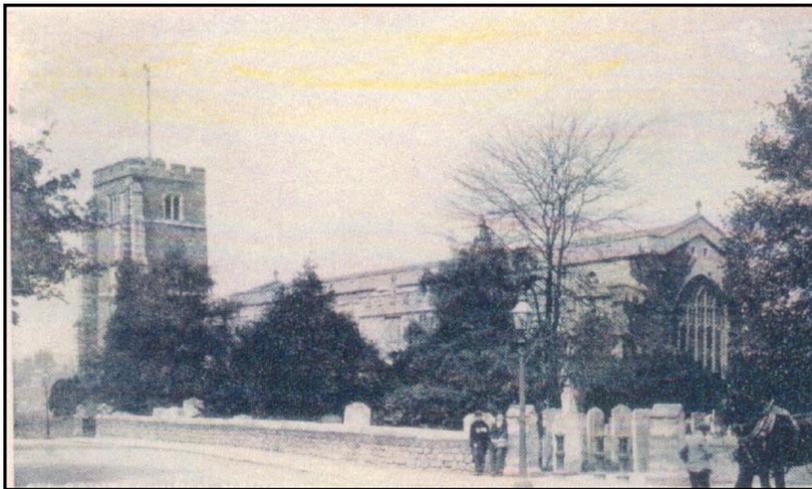


Confirmation & Marriage certificates of Bessie

James Golden (continued)



Postcard of Maidstone High St. sent to Bessie by her brother George and his wife Min. It is addressed to 19 Arlington St, Picadilly and dated 7 September 1905



All Saints' Church, Maidstone. Sent by one of her brothers



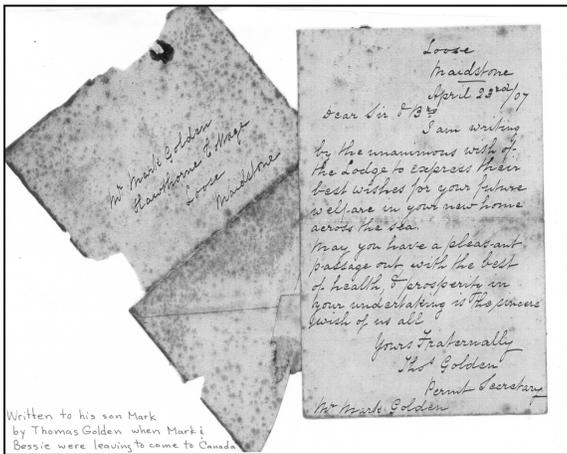
The Lychgate, Boughton Monchelsea, Kent. (36)

Card sent by sister Grace and addressed to 25 Park Lane, London

We can see by the addresses on these cards, that Bessie moved around London during the course of her days in Domestic Service.

James Golden (continued)

In 1899 Bessie was still in Service in a large household, on the occasion of the 80th birthday of Queen Victoria. On the day all the servants were given the day off to mark the great occasion. The photograph below shows Bessie third from the left in the second row. The original photograph is in a sorry state, with the paper peeling off, but Bessie can be seen quite clearly.



Written to his son Mark by Thomas Golden when Mark & Bessie were leaving to come to Canada.

The day after they were married in 1907, Mark and Bessie set sail for Canada on the **S.S. Siberian**. Thomas (the father) wrote a (see left) very formal letter to Mark to mark the occasion:

*“Dear Sir & Bro.
I am writing by the unanimous wish of the lodge to express their best wishes for your future welfare in your new home across the sea. May you have a pleasant passage out with the best of health, & prosperity in your undertaking is the sincere wish of us all.*

Yours Fraternally Thomas Golden (perm.t Secretary)

James Golden (continued)

The three- week voyage to Canada was something of a strain for Bessie, who was seasick from beginning to end. She vowed never to return to England—and she never did. On board the *Siberian* they met up with Alice and Tom Lawson, which must have been something of a comfort to Bessie. She already knew Alice, as they had worked together in Service. They were to become life-long friends.

The first thing to meet their eyes when they arrived in Halifax was a large sign reading “*No Englishmen need apply for jobs*”, which must have been a daunting prospect for the two young people on their way to a new beginning. They continued on to Hamilton, Ontario, where Tom and Alice offered them accommodation until such time as they could find their own living quarters.



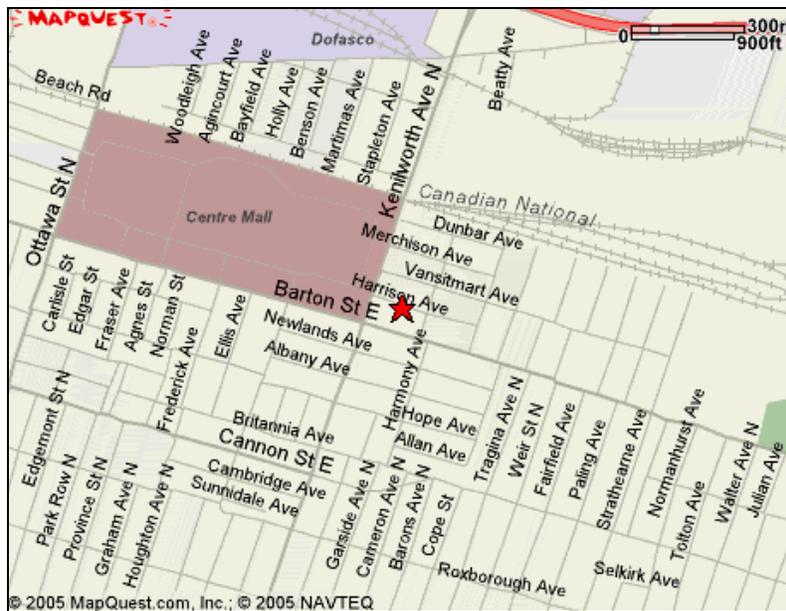
One of the bleak sights which Mark & Bessie would have encountered on their voyage. During the cold winter months, many residents of Hamilton’s Shacktown community would erect ice- fishing huts on this section of the harbour. These spear fishermen would catch salmon, whitefish, bass and pike until local fish stocks and pollution ended the practice by the 1920s

James Golden (continued)



S.S.Siberian on which Mark & Bessie sailed to Canada ↑
Alice Lawson (L) & Bessie (R) c.1905 →

Alice and Tom Lawson were to become godparents to Bessie's daughter **Mabel**—and then later, godparents to granddaughter **Georgina** – (from whom most of this family information was provided).



Contemporary map showing the location of Harrison Avenue - Mark and Bessie's home for so many years. The Canadian National Railway wouldn't have been there when they first arrived, since the service didn't begin until 1931

James Golden (continued)

The house at 34 Harrison Avenue was at the city limits – technically they lived in what was known as Barton Township. Tradespeople (milkman, breadman, iceman etc) made their deliveries and pick-ups with a horse and cart. Gina’s mother lived in the last house of the city limits, where the streetcar and the horses would turn around to go back downtown. Her father would leave a pail near the outdoor tap for watering the horses – thus ensuring a good supply of manure to make his garden grow beautifully!

The east end of Hamilton (or Barton Township as it was then known), was like ‘Little England’. Most of the people had emigrated from England and stuck together. The social life of the community centred around the church and there was not much (if any) association with other denominations, resulting in all these people becoming lifelong friends.

There was also a Kentish Society with quite a large membership.



The house at 34 Harrison Avenue in the 1930s (left) and in the 1960/70s

The lovely big elm tree had to be removed as its roots had grown large and had caused some accidents to residents who had tripped in the street. The house (a two-bedroomed home) had been enlarged by the time of the second photograph, by closing in the front verandah. This enabled Bessie to take in boarders to help stretch the family budget.

Mark’s health was not good so his employment was sporadic, and so Bessie took in boarders to supplement the family income. Many of these boarders also became lifelong friends.

Bessie was a quiet, serene person who never ever gossiped about anyone. Although unspoken, her rule seemed to be — “if you can’t say something nice, don’t say anything at all.”

James Golden (continued)



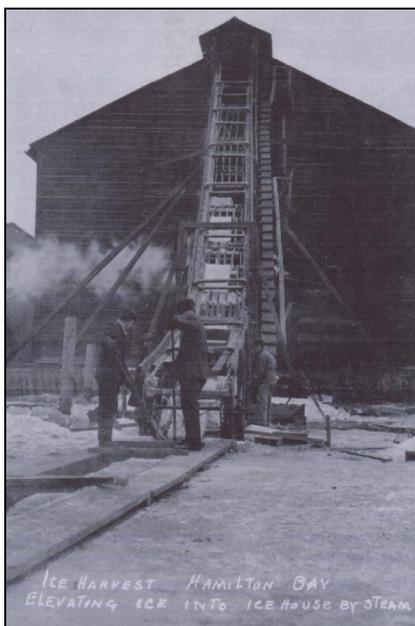
Mabel riding in the buggy with two friends and parishioners of St Albans's Church: Bob beside her and Howard holding the horse. Howard later went on to become an Anglican priest. The big old elm tree in Harrison Avenue can be seen behind Howard.

Work was not easy to come by, as times were tough, and besides this Mark did not enjoy good health. He did, however, do occasional work to help stretch family resources.

James Golden (continued)



**Mark (8 from left) with a work crew paving one of the streets in the 1920s.
The men were given jobs by the day because times were tough and there were no jobs to be had.**



Mark would also work at ice-cutting on the bay. For this he was paid 10 cents a day. Dundum Castle is situated on a rise overlooking the Bay. It's ice supply was also cut from the Bay and stored in a deep pit in the cellar, where it is said, it would last for almost a full year.

**This picture postcards is annotated
“Ice Harvest Hamilton Bay. Elevating ice into icehouse by steam”**

James Golden (continued)

Bessie died 8 February 1978 at Hamilton General Hospital, Canada, of a stroke. She was in her 93rd year. She was buried February 10th in Eastlawn Cemetery, Hamilton, Ontario, beside Mark.

Mark and Bessie had two children:

George Golden (*James' nephew*) born 26 March 1908 & died 3 February 1962. He married Pearl Nicholls on 25 November 1942, and they had two children. A boy who lived for only three days, and Georgina Mary Caroline, who later married Adrian Kenneth Peters. It is this Georgina (*James' grandniece*) with whom we are in touch and who has supplied most of these family details.



Mabel Caroline Golden (*James' niece*) was born 16 September 1910. She died in 2001 at the ripe old age of 91. She had married **John William Bigrigg** (1912—1967) in April 1943 at Owen Sound, Ontario—just as he had been posted overseas. They had no children, but Mabel had several God children.

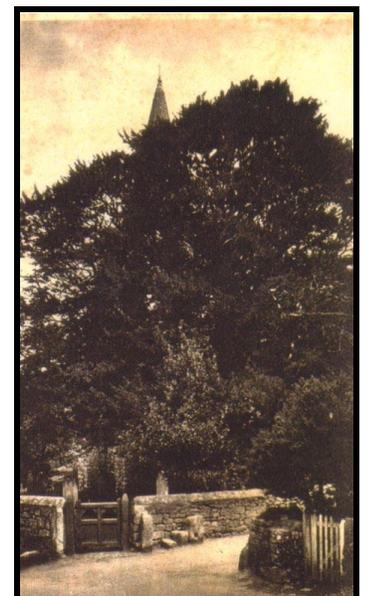
John was always known as Jack, and during the Second World War he travelled to England on more than one occasion. He would send picture postcards home to the family in Canada, who eagerly awaited news from 'home'. On one occasion Jack wrote:

"[This is] the yew tree where you stick a pin in and run around the tree 50 times and look in the church window. You would see the devil washing his hands in blood".

Another message from Jack reads:

"One of these big poplars fell down during a windstorm. They cut the other one down for safety. Mark & Bessie will remember them. They are old landmarks"

The yew tree is still in the churchyard but the two poplars have long since disappeared.



The yew tree (right) and the two poplars ↑— once an important landmark in Loose.

James Golden (continued)



Gina (L) and myself (Margaret Chapman) during her visit to Loose in 2001.

James' sister **Eleanor Golden** married Thomas Dadson and they had one child, also named **Eleanor** who was always known as **Little Nell**. Little Nell married Charles George and they had a daughter named Margaret who married Michael Springett – who still live in Northleigh Close, Loose.

James' sister **Caroline (Carrie) Golden** married George Alfred Kennett, but they had no children. She was a founder member of the Loose Women's Institute. Her ashes are buried in Loose churchyard. George sold the house (Hawthorne Cottage) to Mr Elward at about the time of his second marriage.



Carrie Golden 1914

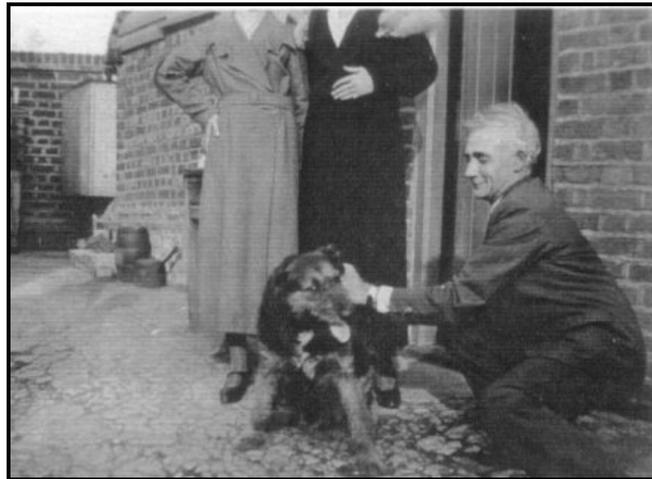


Carrie Golden – date unknown



James Golden (continued)

George Kennett (Brother in law to James) lived, in his latter years, with his second wife, in a bungalow named *Cinderford* which was built behind the present-day lay-by going towards Linton. His ashes are interred alongside those of Caroline and his nephew Brian Coakley, in Loose churchyard.



George in naval uniform and in later life at Hawthorne Cottage

William (Bill) Golden (*brother of James*) was born in Loose on 26 December 1894 and baptised 14 December 1902. He too, served in the First World War but afterwards returned to Loose to resume his work for the Post Office. He continued his postal round in Loose until he retired in 1959 and had been awarded the Imperial Services Medal on 24 May 1955, for his long service in government employ. In 1932 he married Ethel Florence Wood but they had no children. Florence too, worked for the Post Office during the war years.



Bill in his Post Office Uniform 1908 – aged 14



Studio portrait of Bill

James Golden (Continued)

Bill & Florence lived at *5 Kirkdale Cottages* until moving to *30 Pickering Street* in about 1947.



Bill (centre) with mates



Bill in military uniform



Studio portrait of Bill



Back at work as a postman – outside Hawthorne Cottage

James Golden (Continued)



Bill & Florence on their wedding day in 1932

James' sister **Esther** (always known as **Bant**), married George Edward Martin and had a son – Peter. This is the nephew of James with whom we are in touch, and who lives at Bexhill-On-Sea.

Bant wrote to her brother Mark in Canada (undated)

“Dear Mark & Bess, This photograph of our new council schools. They are much nicer than the others – fitted with the latest things. The gardens look very nice. I hope you will be able to judge how big it is. I hope Bessie is better and the children are well. I should like to see them. It is beginning to get cold here, but doesn't look like being a snowy Christmas. Hoping you have a [...] Christmas and New Year, with love from us all – Esther. Kisses for Mabel & Georgie”

James Golden (Continued)



Esther (Bant) Golden 1913



Esther (Bant) Golden 1917



The new Council School which Bant wrote about. (Built 1913)

James Golden (Continued)

The family home – Hawthorne Cottage (now 592 Loose Road), was licensed to sell postage stamps during the wars and before George Kennett sold the house and store to Mr. Elward at the time he re-married. Before this sale, and after the Golden's residence, the post office was run by Miss Kate Wood who was always held in very high esteem. A Mr. Huish took over from Kate Wood until the days of Mr. Elward.



Peter Martin (James' nephew) estimates these photographs to be mid to late 1930s. He remembers the telephone kiosk in the garden, which was not there in late 1941.



Hawthorne Cottage (L) and Gable Cottage.

James Golden (Continued)



Notice the hawthorn tree from which the cottage took its name – the smaller one to the left.

To help with the identification of this large family, a kinship list is shown on the following page.

James Golden (continued)

Kinship List - James (Jim) GOLDEN	
Relative	Relationship
, Ann-889	Grandmother
, Johanna-945	Spouse of nephew
, Paul-957	Great grandnephew
, Pauline-949	Spouse of grandnephew
, Sylvia-944	Spouse of nephew
, Terrence-956	Spouse of grandniece
, Valerie-950	Spouse of grandnephew
, Winnie-946	Spouse of nephew
BELLWORTHY, Ron-971	Spouse of niece
BIGRIGG, John William (Jack)-445	Spouse of niece
COAKLEY, Alan-953	Grandnephew
COAKLEY, Andrea-958	Great grandniece
COAKLEY, Brian-474	Nephew
COAKLEY, Christopher-952	Great grandnephew
COAKLEY, Dennis-849	Nephew
COAKLEY, Derrick-947	Grandnephew
COAKLEY, Jim-475	Nephew
COAKLEY, Keith-955	Grandnephew
COAKLEY, Peter-948	Grandnephew
COAKLEY, Rita-954	Grandniece
COAKLEY, Stephen-951	Great grandnephew
COAKLEY, unknown-473	Spouse of sister
COX, Audrey-969	Niece
COX, Fred-930	Spouse of sister
COX, Jim-966	Nephew
COX, Joan-967	Niece
COX, Kathleen-965	Niece
COX, Lily-968	Niece
COX, Raymond-970	Nephew
DADSON, Eleanor (Little Nell)-959	Niece
DADSON, William Thomas-929	Spouse of sister
EVANS, Joan-972	Spouse of nephew
GEORGE, Charles-960	Spouse of niece
GEORGE, Margaret-961	Grandniece
GOLDEN (B. 1882), Mark ('Pop')-446	Brother
GOLDEN, (there were no children)-926	Nephew/niece
GOLDEN, Ann (Annie)-448	Sister
GOLDEN, Bertha-435	Sister
GOLDEN, Caroline (Carrie)-433	Sister
GOLDEN, Eleanor-459	Sister
GOLDEN, Esther (Bant)-439	Sister
GOLDEN, Frederick-432	Brother
GOLDEN, George (bap. 1893)-486	Brother
GOLDEN, George (Georgie) James-462	Nephew
GOLDEN, Georgina Mary Caroline-442	Grandniece
GOLDEN, Henry-458	Brother
GOLDEN, Mabel Caroline (Goldie)-444	Niece
GOLDEN, Male Child (lived for 3 days)-464	Grandnephew
GOLDEN, Olive-456	Sister
GOLDEN, Sarah (Sally)-460	Sister
GOLDEN, Thomas-33	Father
GOLDEN, Thomas-848	Brother
GOLDEN, William (Bill)-430	Brother
JUPP, (no children)-936	Grandnephew/niece
JUPP, Albert Ernest-933	Nephew
JUPP, David-937	Grandnephew
JUPP, Fred-928	Spouse of sister
JUPP, George Frederick-931	Nephew
JUPP, Valerie-938	Grandniece
JUPP, William Thomas-932	Nephew

Relative	Relationship
KENNETT, George Alfred-434	Spouse of sister
MARTIN, Brian-973	Grandnephew
MARTIN, George Edward-440	Spouse of sister
MARTIN, Peter-455	Nephew
MCKENZIE, Ian-939	Spouse of grandniece
MCKENZIE, Janet Valerie-940	Great grandniece
MCKENZIE, Murray James-941	Great grandnephew
MCKENZIE, Raewyn Joy-942	Great grandniece
NICHOLLS, Pearl Mary Lauraine-463	Spouse of nephew
NOAKES, Bessie-447	Spouse of brother
PETERS, Adrian Kenneth-443	Spouse of grandniece
PETERS, Avonwy Lerryn-859	Great grandniece
PETERS, Caralei Elizabeth-861	Great grandniece
PETERS, David Richard Drewe-860	Great grandnephew
SPRINGETT, Andrew-963	Great grandnephew
SPRINGETT, Karen-964	Great grandniece
SPRINGETT, Michael-962	Spouse of grandniece
SUTHERLAND, Ina-934	Spouse of nephew
TREMAIN, Mavis-935	Spouse of nephew
TURNER, Andrew-943	Spouse of great grandniece
WILKINS, Caroline-437	Mother
WILKINS, Samuel-888	Grandfather
WOOD, Ethel Florence-431	Spouse of brother

We can't leave James' family without taking a look at his sister-in-law Bessie Noakes' family. Gina (grandniece) wrote about how she discovered a cache of photographs and documents relating to the family.

In 1985, seven years after Bessie Noakes (Golden) died, her daughter Mabel (Golden) Bigrigg moved into a senior citizen's residence in Canada—where she was born and lived her entire life. The task of cleaning out the house in preparation for this move fell to Georgina (Golden) Peters (grandniece of James & Frederick) and her mother Pearl. It had been the family home for at least 63 years so there was a great accumulation of 'stuff'.

James Golden (continued)

They came across photographs in many different places such as drawers, cupboards and photo albums. So they gathered them all together and put them all into a box labelled 'PHOTOS', so that they would, at least, be all together in one place.

Several things happened with regard to these photographs. Mabel had documented names, places and dates on the backs of them and Gina and her mother went through them and talked to Mabel about them during her last days and she was able to tell them some interesting facts about the family.

The family had always been close. Mabel and her husband Jack had lived with Bessie and Mark—not very far away from where Gina lived with her parents Pearl and George. She (Gina) remembers having spent many happy hours with her Grandma Bessie and her aunt Mabel and uncle Jack. She doesn't ever remember having had a baby sitter who was not a family member. It was always a big event when letters or parcels came from relatives in England, and she remembers some of the talk around the dining room table on these occasions.

The Impetus to try and pull all of these photographs together came from Peter Martin (a cousin of Mabel & George Golden), who sent Gina a copy of Loose Threads No.4 in which she noticed the article about the Loose War Memorial with references to the Golden family. The names of places in and around Loose sounded familiar too. So she looked at the photographs again and realised that she had photographs of those very places—but from an earlier era. The result was that Gina was eventually put in touch with me via the Loose Area History Society.

Gina was always told that the Noakes' lived at The Quarries and that they were very, very poor. She remembers asking Bessie how many there were in her family, and feels sure that Bessie said there were 11. She would have been about 80 years old at that time and could not remember all the names of her brothers and sisters

During the "*Echoes From the Past*" exhibition which was staged in All Saints' Church in July 2002 we made contact with unknown cousins of Georgina - Gordon & Hazel Kitchenham. Gordon was able to identify members of his family in the photographs displayed at the exhibition, including some of his father, and so we have been able to expand the Noakes side of the family details with the inclusion of the **Kitchenham** and the **Bray** links – details of which are noted in the profile of Kenneth Bray, who died during one of the wars.

Bessie's grandfather, **John Noakes**, was born in 1828 in Rotherfield, Sussex (according to the 1881 census) He was an agricultural labourer and lived in Cock Street, Boughton Monchelsea at this time. He married a girl named **Amelia** who was born in 1834 in either Rotherfield, Sussex, or in Crowborough (1891 census). There seems to have been some confusion as in the 1891 census Rotherfield was crossed out and Crowborough substituted. John and Amelia had eight children:

- James born in 1854 in Crowborough (father of Bessie)
- Elizabeth born in 1860 in Staplehurst
- Alice born in 1867 in Marden
- Alfred born in 1869 in Marden
- Patience born in 1871 in Marden
- Eli born in 1873 in Marden
- Ada born in 1875 in Boughton Monchelsea
- Frederick born in 1878 in Boughton Monchelsea

All these children lived with John and Amelia at Cock Street, Boughton Monchelsea in 1881—except James (*Bessie's father*) who had left home and was living elsewhere—details below).

James Golden (continued)

By 1891 Amelia was a widow and living, with her children, in 5 Pooles Cottages in Boughton Quarries (now 56 The Quarries).

Also living with this household was Elizabeth Noakes. She is listed as both daughter to John and Amelia and General domestic servant, and so has been included on the above list of the children of the marriage, as it was quite normal for unmarried daughters of a household to be enumerated as domestic servants in the early census returns.

James Noakes (*Bessie's father*) was living at *1 Pooles Cottages, Boughton Monchelsea* in 1891. He married **Sarah Bardon** who was born in Boughton Monchelsea in 1859.



James & Sarah Noakes



James and **Sarah** had twelve children:

- Harold Edward Stanton Noakes (later m. Florence Anne Barnett)
- George Noakes (later m. Min)
- Alice Noakes (later m. Ernest John Kitchenham)
- Bessie Noakes (later m. Mark Golden)
- Ada Noakes (later m. B.Black)
- Frederick Noakes (later m. Emily)
- William Noakes (later m. Mary)
- Caroline Noakes
- Emily Noakes
- Grace Noakes
- (plus two unknown, for whom we have dates)

A considerable amount has been discovered about the lives of this family but for reasons of clarity I will limit this narrative to those of whom we have photographs.

James Golden (continued)



This delightful photograph was found amongst Mabel Golden's possessions. Could it be the family of James and Sarah? Sarah's jowls look very much like Bessie's and James' long straight nose resembles James in the photographs on the previous page. The garden certainly looks right.

Pooles Cottages are today known as simply *The Quarries*. A niece of George Broad (*see his profile*), lives in No.56 (where Amelia Noakes & her family lived in 1891), on the far left of the following 2004 photograph, and remembers a family by the name of *Noakes* living in the house on the far right of the terrace – which was where James & Sarah lived in 1891. Could these children be the Noakes family? The photograph is undated – found in Maidstone Market!



Pooles Cottages (undated)



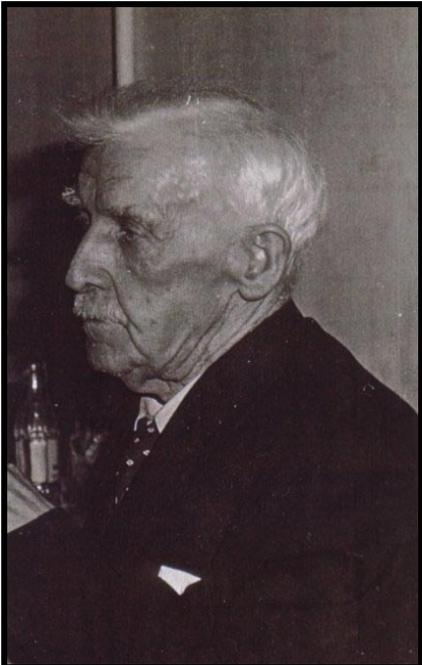
The same cottages in 2004

James Golden (continued)

George Noakes (Bessie's brother) married a girl named **Min**



← George & Min



George in later life →

Alice Noakes (*Bessie's sister*) died on 4 October 1940. A newspaper clipping of her funeral tells us that after she left Boughton Monchelsea, she had lived at **Hill Crest, Loose** (now 610 & 612 Loose road), for about 40 years. She predeceased her husband, Ernest Kitchenham, and left 2 sons and 4 daughters to mourn her death. These were all listed in the obituary notice and have been traced on census records, apart from Ernie who we couldn't find anywhere, and wondered if he had left the country. This turned out to be the case; he had married a South African girl and had gone to live in that country. He turned up at the Golden Wedding celebrations of his brother Leslie and sister-in-law Dolly Bray in 1976. This was quite a meeting, since the brothers had not seen each other for nearly 30 years.



Ernie Kitchenham on the right - with Les & Dolly in 1976

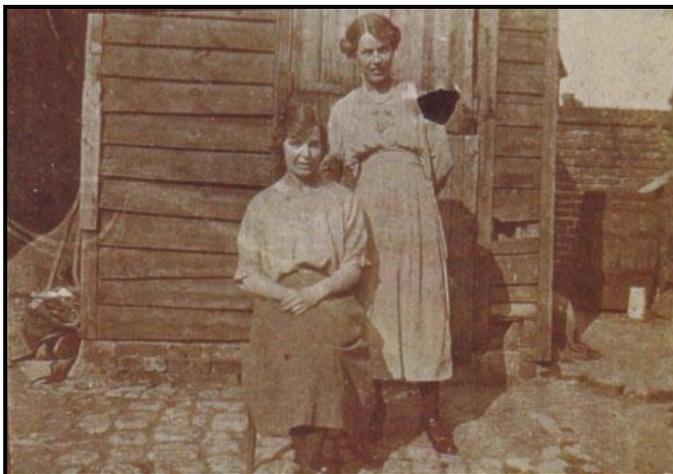


Ernie in South Africa with grandson Jason

James Golden (Continued)



William Noakes (Bessie's brother) on the day he married Mary in 1918 – and a later photograph of the couple



Caroline & Emily Noakes (sisters of Bessie)



An older Emily Noakes

And so we leave the family of James Golden. More details of the Kitchenham family appear in the profile of Kenneth Bray.

Sources: CWGC, Kent Messengers, Parish Mags, Gina Peters, Peter Martin, Census 1881 & 1901, *Isle of Sheppey* by Nina Brigden Reid, Internet



Driver Harry Thomas Golding

Royal Army Service Corps (T/10693742)

Died: 5 September 1944 (aged 21)

Resting Place: Florence War Cemetery (V.A. 14)

Est. dob: 1923

Harry came to our attention when his wife, Bernice Lois Bartlett, wrote to us in 2005, asking if his name might be added to the Loose War Memorial. Harry and Lois were married in 1941 at All Saints' Church in Maidstone. When he was young, Harry lived at *The Old Orchard, Loose*, but when his mother died he was fostered, and later adopted, by Mr and Mrs Thornington of 636 Loose Road. He went to Loose school and was also in the church choir.

Berenice was later re- married and now lives in Littlebourne.



Florence War Cemetery

Sources: CWGC, Mrs Bernice Bartlett (Harry's wife)

Lance Sergeant John Hugh Gould

3rd/4th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (201224)



Died: Sunday 30 December 1917 (aged 21)
Resting Place: Flesquieres Hill British Cemetery, Nord, France (V11.B.2)
Est. d.o.b: March 1896

John Hugh was the son of Isabel Barker and Hugh Tyler Gould. We do not yet know anything about the life of John Hugh, except that he was part of the Barker Family who lived in Loose for many years. His mother was a daughter of Joseph Barker JP, whose brother was Levi Barker – the father of Charles Ivo Barker who also died in the Great War. This means that John Hugh and Charles Ivo were first cousins once removed.



Isabel Barker 1872-1957

Isabel Barker (*John's mother*) was born in Snodland about 1872. She and Hugh Tyler Gould were married in Loose on 16 March 1895, so their son John Hugh could not have been aged above 22 years when he died in the war. Isabel died 23 April 1957 in St. Ives, Huntingdonshire.

The nine children of Isabel and Hugh were:

- **John Hugh Gould**
- Joseph Francis Gould
- Stella Gould
- Eric Tyler Gould
- Isabel Gladys Gould
- Eileen Minnie Gould
- Leonard Gould
- Janet Audrey Barker Gould
- Donald Gould

John and Joseph were twins

Hugh Tyler Gould was born about 1868 in new Cross, Kent and died in Australia in 1945. Although Isabel outlived him, he also had a partner in Australia, named **Mary Fitzgerald**. It is not known whether Hugh and Isabel were divorced and nor do we know when he went to Australia. However, we do know that Isabel was living in Loose at *Hill House* with her father on the occasion of his 89th birthday in about 1931.

John Hugh Gould (continued)

Leonard Gould (*Brother of John Hugh*) was the founder of the small Box factory in **Pickering Street, Loose**. This firm was formed in the late 1920s on its present site. It started out as a general company for general woodworkers and for the repairing of ammunition boxes. At this time the company employed fewer than 20 people.

With the policy of maintaining high quality and reliability, the company soon expanded until in the 1960s it became the first company to introduce triple wall board to the UK market – importing it, at the time, from America.

Packaging applications grew as did the company's expertise and again it led the field in moving away from wood wool moulds for cushion packs to polyurethane moulds as known today.

By 1991 the original company had expanded to a group of companies on one site, quoting the motto:

“A Group of Companies to Serve Every Packaging need”

The group comprised:

- Leonard Gould and Co. Ltd, general woodworker, case manufacturing to MOD standard AQAP1, foam converter, polyurethane moulder and profiler in cushion materials.
- Tri-Corr Containers, manufacturer of composite packaging in heavy duty and conventional corrugated. Specialist in the supply to the computer and electronics industry with JIT deliveries
- BOB Packaging, Design and testing of packaging to MOD standard. Humidity controlled packaging facilities to NATO requirements for small components up to large electronic installations.

The group of companies was (is) contained on one 4.5 acre site, and (in 1991) was employing 160 people and able to design packs to meet certain criteria using a number of materials. The profile article in the Commerce Magazine of December 1991 goes on to say:

“Diversification has assisted the company to open up and exploit new market potential and fight off competition, despite recession.

A growing part of Leonard Gould's business is within the electronics industry and it is establishing itself as a major player in the field of electronic packaging.

With many customers de-stocking, Leonard Gould is able to react quickly with small runs, meeting 'just in time' requirements.

With a large customer base as far afield as Scotland, the company's own marketing and promotion of its products and services covers the entire country. And with 1992 and the SEM approaching, the company intends to further establish a European presence where it already exports with specialist packs.

The Company had a commitment to the area in which it is based and the population in the locality and much of its workforce lives close to the site and many have been with the company for a number of years

It has become a regular event to recognise 25 years service for an employee, confirming the company's efforts to give staff job satisfaction and create a good working environment.

A firm commitment to training is emphasised in the continuing recruitment of trainees for apprenticeship schemes.

John Hugh Gould (continued)

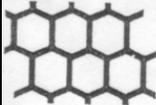
The company is also recognised to be sympathetic to the environment and Green issues, working hard as a group to offer customers environmentally acceptable alternatives.

With EEC legislation in the pipeline, Leonard Gould is already committed to ensuring its customers are aware and ahead of the issue.

New regulations for the carriage of dangerous goods came into focus earlier this year [1991] amid much confusion among shippers.

Following these regulations the company now offers a range of standard sizes that are certified to meet the regulations”.

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John Hugh Gould (continued)



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Leonard Gould actually retired from the company in 1955 and a second director was appointed (the first having been appointed in 1959).

When Leonard died on 22 October 1990, he left his wife, Kathleen and three children: Valerie, Audrey and Robin. His six grandchildren were named Wendy, Carolyn, Christopher, David, Emily and Amy.

The funeral service was held at Trottiscliffe church and the cremation was at Vinters Park.



The Leonard Gould Factory in 1992

John Hugh Gould (continued)



The tree on the forecourt which is always decorated at Christmas



The ragstone wall which always shows up so prominently on O.S. Maps

Sources: CWGC, Jilly Coles, KM obituary notice, LAHS archives, 'Commercial Magazine' 1991, Free BMD

Private John Albert Goulds

1st Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (6347496)



Died: Sunday 20 April 1941 (aged 22)

Resting Place: Marden Cemetery (Sec. 1. Grave 768)

Est. dob: 1919

John was the son of William and Ada Goulds of Linton. We have not been able to discover anything about him but have located his grave in Marden Cemetery.



John's Grave 24 June 2004

Sources: CWGC, Chapman photograph of grave.

Lieutenant Reginald Lionel Graefe

1st Glider Pilot Regiment, A.A.C. (235913)



Died: Saturday 24 March 1945 (aged 24)
Resting Place: Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany (32.B.4)
Est. dob: 1921
Enlisted: 1940

Reginald was the son of Percy E. Graefe who was secretary and commercial manager of Maidstone and District Motor Services Ltd. Both Percy and Mrs Graefe were devastated by the loss of their only son when he was killed in the air-borne operation at the Rhine Crossing.

Reginald was born in London and educated at University School Hastings, and at Roborough in Eastbourne. He passed the Cambridge Junior Examination at the latter school and excelled in sport. At Roborough he was captain of the school soccer team – a game he loved above all others.

When war broke out he had only recently started his business career and was undergoing training at the office of Messrs. Smith Riches & Co. – chartered accountants, Norfolk Street, Strand. Reginald volunteered and was accepted for the Royal Tank Corps in 1940. Later he was transferred to the Royal Artillery (anti tank section) and whilst serving there, was recommended for a commission.

After passing out and serving in that regiment for some months he volunteered for the air-borne section of the anti-tank artillery and again, later, volunteered for the glider pilot regiment.

Reginald was a member of the Royal Empire Society in London. Those who knew him remembered him with the warmest affection – for his sunny and cheerful nature.

Cicely Beeching writes:

“From ‘Loose Threads Number 6’ I note that details are requested about the names on the Loose War Memorial. There seem to be no family details on Reginald Graefe. Perhaps what I know of him may be of some interest.

He was the son, and only child of P.E.R. Graefe whose name appeared on the side of Maidstone and District buses – (Headquarters at Knightrider House and Bus Station in Palace Avenue). The buses were green in the thirties and I think it was a legal requirement for the name of the manager to be displayed – quite small and low down on the driver’s side of the vehicle. (At that time the Maidstone Corporation Transport Manager’s name was Lambert and his name appeared on the trolley buses.)

I met Reggie Graefe in the mid thirties, at Christmas parties at the home of the Collins family, who lived in one of the old houses built on land facing Loose Road, which had belonged to the Church Institute – next to the Bowls Club.

Reginald Lionel Graefe (continued)

Harry Collins was the headmaster of Maidstone Technical School, and his son, Rodney, was at Sutton Valence School, as I believe, was Reggie. I think they (the Graefe's) were near neighbours of the Collins family, but my brother, Peter Redmond, has an idea they lived in Pickering Street. Peter also remembers Reggie as being a Sutton Valence school. His name is also on the Maidstone Grammar School Memorial. (A change of school at The outbreak of war, perhaps?) As to Reggie's age, I think he was a year or two younger than I – I was born in 1920. He was a quiet, very good-looking dark boy."

Enquiries have been made at Sutton Valence School but Reggie's name does not appear on their registers.

The Glider Pilot Regiment – Operation Varsity 24 March 1945



Operation 'Varsity' was the final attempt to winkle out the last segments of German defence and to strike for Berlin. The disaster at Arnhem had taught the Allies several lessons, and they were not about to turn this operation into a repeat performance. Because of the Regiment's great loss at Arnhem, this operation included several hundred R A F pilots who had undergone a conversion course for glider flying. Sixty percent of the Regiment's fatalities on 'Varsity were from this group.

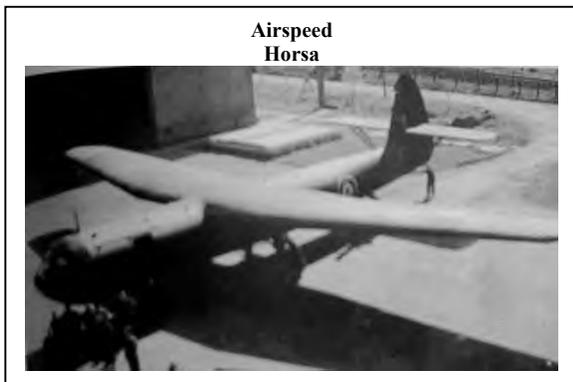


On 24 March 1945, one lift carried 14000 men of the British 6th Airborne and the American 17th across the Rhine. To aid the first shock of the landing new Horsa Mk 11s were used. With a swing nose capability they enabled their loads to roll straight into battle. More use was also made of the giant Hamilcar gliders which could carry a light tank straight to the enemy. Lastly, gliders were to make tactical, rather than mass, landings in an attempt to spread the enemy's defences.

Despite many setbacks, attacks and fatalities, all objectives were captured by 1300 hours.

Writing after this operation, the chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Sir Alan Brooke, wrote:

'My heartiest congratulations on their (the Glider Pilots') wonderful performance in operations connected with the crossing of the Rhine. The skill and bravery displayed by them in this magnificent action of airborne forces will pass down to history as one of the highlights amongst the deeds of valour of this war.'



Reginald Lionel Graefe (continued)

Airspeed Ltd's 28 seater was named Horsa, after the 5th Century German mercenary. The prototype took to the air on 12 September 1941, with the first production model appearing in June 1942. In all, some 3500 were produced during the War.

With a wing-span of 88 feet and a total length of 67 feet, a fully laden Horsa weighed in at 15,250 lbs. It was constructed entirely of 3-ply wood and the pilots sat side by side. Passengers sat facing each other on benches.

Passengers entered the Horsa through two doors (one forward of the port wing and one aft of the starboard wing) which slid up inside the fuselage. The tail section was designed to be removed and ramps were then attached to the fuselage to allow the load to be taken out. Occasionally, a cordtex explosive was used to blow the tail off. The tail section of the later Mk11 swung open to allow loading and unloading of equipment.

The specification for the fourth glider (the Hamilcar) was given the code X.27/40 and called for a glider capable of carrying a light tank. This was not a new idea. As early as 1935, the Russians had slung pallet-borne T-37 tanks under TB-3 bombers. The Air Ministry and the War Office gave the X.27/40 contract to General Aircraft without going to tender. Initially designated GAL.49, the new glider was soon known as the Hamilcar (a famous Carthaginian general and father of Hannibal).

412 Hamilcars were built during the War. Only a foot longer than the Horsa it had a mighty wing-span of 110 feet and, fully laden, weighed in at 36,000 lbs. The pilots sat in tandem some 25 feet above the ground. Passengers were rarely carried, but a total of forty troops could be accommodated in the barn-like cargo area. The glider's main load was the Tetrarch light tank.

Hamilcar



Hamilcar on tow behind a Halifax



Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger, Cecily Beeching, Hazel & Gordon Kitchenham, Internet

Families of Wartime Loose



Private John Gladstone Grey 6th Battalion, Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (G/6866)

Died: Friday 23 November 1917 (aged 18)
Resting Place: Tincourt New British Cemetery (11.F.4.)
Est. dob: 1899
Enlisted: Maidstone

William was the son of William and Emily Grey of *Old Loose Hill*, and brother of William Ewart Gladstone Grey (*see next page*).

1901 Census

Old Loose Hill (next door but one to the Chequers Inn)

William Grey	Head	40	General Labourer	Born Staplehurst
Emily Grey	Wife	39		Born Loose
Harry Reed	Son	21	Seaman	Born Loose
(...) Grey	Son	19	General Labourer	Born Loose
Kathleen Grey	Dau	13		Born Loose
Lilian Grey	Dau	11		Born Loose
William Grey	Son	9		Born Loose
Minnie Grey	Dau	5		Born Loose
Jack Grey	Son	2		Born Loose

The Jack (above) is probably John Gladstone. The date would seem to fit in with CWGC information)

If the William (above) refers to William Ewart (John's brother), then he would have been aged 24 at death and not 22 as stated on the CWGC site.

Harry Reed, the seaman (above) might suggest that the maiden name of Emily could have been Reed.

Families of Wartime Loose

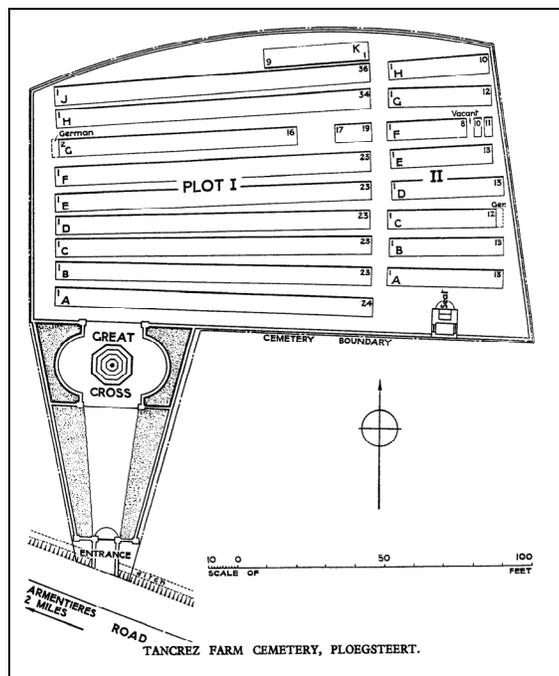


Sergeant William Ewart Gladstone Grey

10th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (G/6535)

Died: Monday 3 July 1916 (aged 24)
Resting Place: Tancrez Farm Cemetery, Ploegsteert (I.H.26)
Est. dob: 1892
Enlisted: Maidstone

William Ewart was one of the two son's of William & Emily Grey of *Old Loose Hill* who died in the First World War. He died four months before his brother John Gladstone.



Sources: CWGC, 1901 census



Private William Charles Gurr

7th Battalion The Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (G/22080)
(formerly 23101, 12th Lancers The Queens Own R.W.Surrey Regt.)

Died: 10 August 1917, aged 23

Memorial Place: Ypes (Menin Gate) Memorial (panel 11-13 & 14)

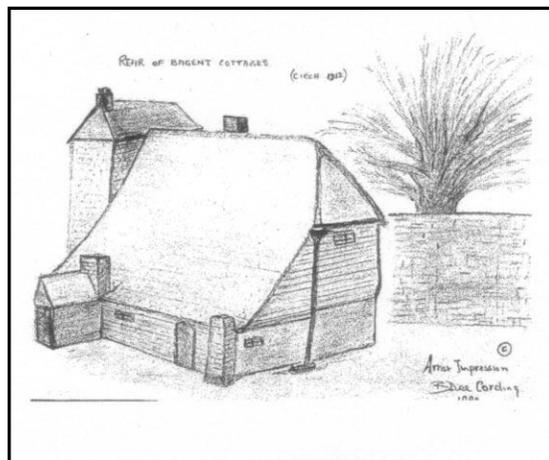
Est.d.o.b: 1894

William was the son of William Charles & Alice Gurr of *Badgents (Bagents) Cottage, Loose*. He was formerly of the 12th Lancers.

Before joining the Army William was employed by the M & D Motor Services Ltd. And was, by all accounts well-known and highly esteemed in and around Loose. A friend at the Front – Private Dennely, wrote to William’s mother thus:

“It is with the deepest regret and sympathy that I have to write these few lines to tell you that your son was killed in the recent heavy fighting in Flanders. He was a great pal of mine. We were in the cavalry together and I liked his honourable ways, as did all my comrades. I am a stretcher-bearer and was with him when he got hit. We were waiting to go over the top on the night of August 10th, at 12 o’clock. It was a fine night. The Germans were shelling and sniping at us and one shell burst just on the parapet. Your son shouted that he was wounded. I searched for the wound, and thought at first he was alright for Blighty, but the next moment I found that he was mortally wounded through the neck. A piece of shrapnel like a razor going right through the neck and cutting a main artery. He had also been badly hit on the left side. I lifted him on my shoulder and took him into a little dugout, and as I was laying him down he died in my arms. I can assure you he died quite peacefully—cool, calm and collected, like a real soldier and a true son of Britain”

Bagent’s Cottage was demolished in about 1956/7 to make way for *Lyncroft & Wynsdale* in Walnut Tree Avenue. The front of the house faced west and the rear overlooked what is now *Northleigh Close*. An article by the late B Dee Cording appears in *Loose Threads No.3* She kindly allowed us to include this, her artist’s impression of what the house *might* have looked like.



Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger, Loose Threads 3 (B Dee Cording), TNMP



Corporal Lee Hadler

Royal Army medical Corps (52103) attd. 15th General Hospital

Died: 28 April 1915

Resting Place: Alexandria (Chatby) Military & War Memorial Cemetery (C.169)

Enlisted: Maidstone

Lee Hadler is included here, since his name was mentioned in a Parish Magazine – in remembrance of his war service. His name does not appear on the Loose War Memorial but he has been traced to Snodland, where his name appears in All Saints' church in Snodland and on the War Memorial in the cemetery there. We have no other information about him or his family. Neither have we discovered his connection with Loose.

The Snodland History Society are looking into the lives of their men who died in the wars, and these details of Lee were found on their web site.

Second Lt. Owen Stewart Hare

1st Special Service Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regt.) (129412)

Died: Monday 6 January 1941, aged 24

Resting Place: All Saints' churchyard, Loose

Est.d.o.b: 1917



Owen was the son of the Reverend Arthur Neville Hare & Gwendoline Lindsey Lee Hare of *Loose Vicarage*

His death was especially tragic as he died alone, near the summit of Ben Nevis. He had been taking part in a training climb under an experienced Everest climber. The accident happened at the start of the journey down at about 4.30pm on Sunday January 5th 1941, when he slipped and fell heavily on the hard and frozen snow—sliding head first to a point 300 feet below, where he came to rest against a rock. His death was considered accidental with no blame attached to anybody.

Owen was educated at St. Edward's school, Oxford and at Selwyn College, Cambridge. Before joining the Royal Fusiliers he was with Messrs. Mason & Son—chartered Accountants at London Bridge, whose main work was with brewery accounts. Owen was a member of the Maidstone Rugby Club and was well known in the town.

At the funeral many tributes were paid and words of Shelley were quoted:

*"He has outsoared the shadow of our night.
From the contagion of the world he is secure."*





Able Seaman Ronald Charles William Heather

H.M.S. Cornwall, Royal Navy

Died: Sunday 5 April 1942 (aged 22)
Memorial Place: Chatham Naval Memorial (54,2)
Est. dob: c.1920

Ronald was the son of Mabel Violet Heather. No other information on the family has yet been discovered.

HMS Cornwall was built at Devonport Dockyard, Plymouth and launched on 11 March 1926 – finally being completed in January 1928. The ship was reconstructed in 1935 and 1939 with a 4½ inch cemented armour belt being increased for 6 feet below the waterline and internal armour added to the fan compartments to the boiler rooms.

Cornwall served in the East Indies during 1939; the South Atlantic during 1940 and 1941 and the East Indies during 1941 – 1942 and with the Eastern Fleet in 1942. She was sunk by Japanese air attack, sustaining nine hits from 250 and 550 lb bombs. She sank in 12 minutes, west of Ceylon (Sri Lanka).



Ronald Charles William Heather (continued)

An article in *Adscene* in June 2004 included an interview with Arthur Woodhams who was part of the crew of HMS Cornwall.

In March 1939 he left Chatham on HMS Cornwall, bound for China on a 2½ year commission. They called at Gibraltar, Colombo and Penang and the ship docked in Hong Kong in May.

The Japanese were at war with China and *Cornwall* sailed first to the island of Amoy and then to Shanghai. The island of Wei Hai Wei was leased to the British Government from Japan on a 99 year lease. It was uninhabited and used for gunnery practice and was a port of call for the *Cornwall*.

After they had sailed to Tsinton on the North China coast they returned to Shanghai, and while they were there, bombs were dropped by the Japanese. They left Hong Kong and arrived in Singapore in September of the same year. All leave had been cancelled and the next day, when in the Malacca Straits, they heard the news that war had been declared.

For six weeks Arthur and his shipmates [and possibly Ronald too], were in the Indian Ocean and then they were sent to Colombo, where they were sent, with rifles, to make their presence known to the people of Ceylon. There was a hunt for German shipping in the Indian Ocean and in December the *Cornwall*, along with *HMS Gloucester* and aircraft carrier *HMS Eagle*, made for Durban. From there they went south west towards the Falklands and returned to Durban before going to Cape Town. Many skirmishes followed.

The end for *HMS Cornwall* came on Easter Sunday 1942 at the hands of Japanese kamikaze pilots.

Chief Petty Officer John Henley

H.M.S. Pembroke, Royal Navy (victualling 340004)



Died: Thursday 14 March 1918 (aged 39)

Resting Place: (Gillingham (Woodlands) Cemetery (Naval 29, 1528)

Est. Dob: 1879

John Henley was a Victualling Chief Petty Officer (Ship Steward) in the Royal Navy. He died at the Royal Naval Hospital, Gillingham to which he was admitted only the day before he died.

John was a native of Loose and the second son of Mrs F M Henley of Boughton Monchelsea. He had served 25 years in the Royal Navy, having commenced his career in the Royal Hospital School at Greenwich at the age of 11 years. He took part in the battle of the Falkland Islands, and also in the operations in the Dardanelles whilst serving on *H.M.S. Inflexible*.

He left a widow and three sons to mourn his death. There was a large assembly of his associates at the cemetery, with whom he had always been very popular

1901 Census

Kirkdale, Loos

Frances Henley	Widow	53	Shirt Seamstress	Born Boughton
John Henley	Son	22	Royal Navy	Born Loose
Grace Henley	Dau	21	Parlour maid Domestic	Born Chatham
Thomas Henley	Son	17	Grocer's Assistant	Born Loose
Henry Henley	Son	14	Shop Boy Ironmonger	Born Loose
Archibald Westcott	Boarder	14	House Boy Domestic	Born Lewisham



Private George Hodge

2nd/4th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (201290)

Died: Thursday 19 April 1917, aged 24
Resting Place: Gaza War Cemetery, Israel (XXX.D2)
Est.d.o.b: 1893
Enlisted: February 1916

George was the eldest son of Robert & Susanna Hodge of Loose. Before joining up under the Derby Voluntary Scheme in February 1916 he was on the staff of the London Guarantee Insurance Company—Maidstone Branch, for five years.

George was killed in action during the attack on the Turkish position. He had stopped on top of a ridge to help his officer who was wounded and thus exposed himself to a severe enfilading fire [*a fire that rakes a line or position from end to end*]. His death was instantaneous. Susanna received letters from Captain & Corporal:

“Dear Mrs Hodge, - It is with very great regret that I have to inform you that your son was killed in action on April 19th, and died at once. He was greatly respected and loved by all who knew him, and he is a great loss to my company and the regiment.”

And rather more comforting:

“Dear Mrs Hodge, - I am writing to express my deepest sympathy to you in the severe bereavement you have sustained in the loss of your son George, who was killed in action during the attack on the Turkish position on April 19th. I can honestly say that I have lost a good chum, and also I think that I voice the sentiments of the whole platoon when I say that George is missed by all his comrades, especially those of his section. He was a good pal and always willing to help anyone. It will be very pleasing to you to know that he met his death unflinchingly as a true soldier and man, not shirking his duty, but facing terrible odds and a perfect rain of bullets. He stopped on top of a ridge to help his officer, who was wounded, and thus exposed himself to a severe enfilading fire, and his death was instantaneous.”

Battle(s) of Gaza – Gaza was bombarded by French warships in April 1915. At the end of March 1917, it was attacked and surrounded (the First Battle of Gaza) by the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, but the attack was broken off when Turkish reinforcements appeared. The Second Battle of Gaza, on 17 – 19 April, left the Turks in possession and the Third Battle of Gaza, begun on 27 October, ended with the capture of the ruined and deserted city on 7 November



Aircraftman 2nd Class Albert Jenner

Kingsnorth Air Station, Royal Naval Air Service (F/22804)

Died: Tuesday 3 April 1917 (aged 29)
Resting Place: Gillingham (Woodlands) Cemetery (Naval 26.1366)
Est. dob: 1888

Albert was the son of Thomas and Emma Jenner of *Bramble Cottage, Well Street, Loose*. and was the brother of Arthur who was also killed in the Great War in 1916. (*See next page*).

Kingsnorth was a R.N. airship construction depot , which was opened in 1916 but is now extinct.

Gillingham (Woodlands) Cemetery dates from 1902 and there is a large naval section, reserved by the Admiralty, containing war graves of both world wars, as well as burials of the pre-war and inter-war years. The 1914-1918 burials number over 800 and are mainly in the naval reservation. After that war a Cross of Sacrifice and a Stone of Remembrance were erected in this section in honour of all the war casualties who rest in the cemetery. The majority of the 1939-1945 War graves, too, are in this section; but there are burials in a small group north of the naval reservation, while over 90 are scattered in various parts of this large cemetery.

Lance Sergeant Arthur Jenner

“C” Company 6th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment
(G/534)



Died: Monday 3 July 1916, aged 27
Resting Place: Ovillers Military Cemetery, Somme, France (V11.B.10)
Est.d.o.b: 1889
Enlisted: September 1914

Arthur's home was *Bramble Cottage, Well Street* and his parents were Thomas and Emma Jenner. His brother Albert also died nine months later. Another brother – Alfred, married Beatrix Coulter in his later life, thus linking this family to that of the Coulters and Hoods.

Before enlistment Arthur was, at one time, a journeyman gardener at Chipstead Place. There are conflicting reports as to his age: the CWGC site gives his age at death as 27 (which would put his date of birth at c.1889); the report in the KM states that he was only 24 when he died (putting his date of birth at c. 1892), and the 1901 census gives his age as 11 on the day of enumeration – which would put his year of birth at c.1890. And so I have opted to go with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission dates, since his parental details were also given on the site – which means that Mr and Mrs Jenner had obviously completed and returned the official forms at the time of Arthur's death, and presumably got the dates right!

One of Arthur's brothers received a letter from Lieutenant A.K.Hall of the same battalion as Arthur:

“Sergt. Jenner was last seen fighting heroically in the German trenches on July 3rd, when casualties were heavy. It is a source of regret to the remaining officers, his comrades, and every man in the battalion, that your brother should be absent from us now. I realise only too well how difficult it will be to replace a non-commissioned officer having the pluck and soldierly qualities that Sergt. Jenner possessed. On behalf of the entire company I send to his mother, yourself, and all his people, our sincere condolences and hopes that our fears may prove unfounded.”

At this time, Arthur's body had not been recovered, but it was shortly afterwards found and identified. The chaplain to the battalion also wrote to Mrs Jenner:

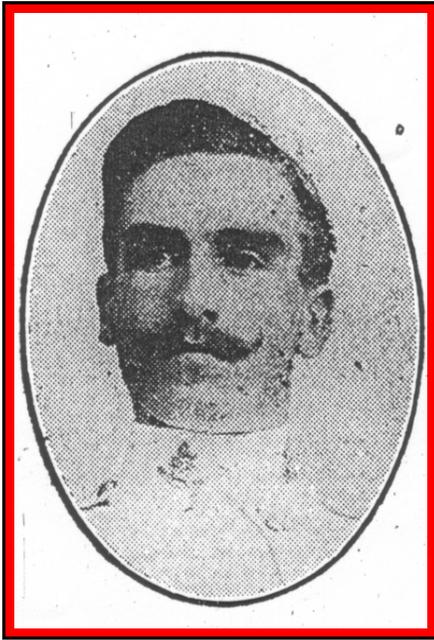
“I have learned greatly to esteem your son, and offer my sincere condolences in the great loss you have sustained. As a Christian layman, Sergt. Jenner was an example to all who knew him, and the memory of his presence with us before going into the trenches for the attack of the 3rd will long live in our minds.”

Arthur Jenner (continued)

1901 Census

Well Street (Bramble Cottage)Loose

Thomas Jenner	Head	49	Scaffolder	Born Hollingbourne
Emma Jenner	Wife	43		Born Leeds
Thomas E Jenner	Son	19	Tailors Hand	Born Hollingbourne
William J Jenner	Son	18	Bricklayers Hand	Born Hollingbourne
Alice L Jenner	Dau	15	Domestic Servant	Born Hollingbourne
Albert Jenner	Son	14	Factory Hand	Born Hollingbourne
Arthur Jenner	Son	11		Born East Sutton
Margaret E Jenner	Dau	8		Born East Farleigh
Alfred H Jenner	Son	5		Born Loose
Esther M Jenner	Dau	3		Born Loose



Corporal Reginald Edward Jones

7th Dragoon Guards (2425)

Died: Monday 21 December 1914, aged 24
Memorial: Le Touret Memorial, Calais (panel 1)
d.o.b: 21 December 21,1890

Reginald was the second son of Reginald & Minnie Jones of *Loose Hill*. The 1881 census lists Reginald (the father) as living in the Public House on Loose Hill, which was probably *The Rising Sun*, which no longer exists. Richard was aged 24 at this time and not yet married to Minnie. By 1901 he was still living on Loose Hill but no public house is mentioned in the census records. He had progressed from being a bricklayers labourer to being an engineer in the paper mills. He now had four children: Thomas aged 18, Daisy aged 15, **Reginald** aged 11 and George aged 5. Scout records reveal that at least one other son was born after the 1901 census – Allan, known as ‘Boney’ in scouting circles, suggesting that he was on the lean side! In a letter in the scout log book dated January 1916, John Fulkes (see his profile) writes:

“I had a copy of the Kent Messenger sent out to me and I saw the notice about Cpl. Reginald Jones. I’m very sorry Boney, for you and your people. I expect it will be a hard knock for them. Still, if one has to die, there is no better way of dying, is there, than on the battlefield?”

Reginald (the son) went to India with his regiment in 1908. They were in Secunderabad, India in August 1914, as part of the Secunderabad Cavalry Brigade. On 13 October 1914 they moved to France, attached to Indian Corps, and so Reginald proceeding to war without getting any leave. He was reported missing on his Birthday—after La Bassee, but his body was not found until 28 August 1915, eight months after he was killed. Two days after he died, the Brigade joined the 2nd Indian Cavalry Division. A comrade found a locket on Reginald’s body which contained two photographs of his sweetheart—a young lady from Brighton.

Before joining the Dragoon Guards Reginald worked in the Loose Post Office. His parents had not seen him since he went to India six years before he died. The following letter, from Corporal A Parminter of the Worcester Regiment, describes the recovery of his body:

“Dear Mrs Jones – I am writing these few lines to let you know that your son, Reginald, is dead, and I as a comrade did my duty to see he was buried respectable (sic), and I will tell you how it happened: while doing our turn of duty in the trenches a party of us were working between our trenches and the Germans’ when I came across two or three bodies, and the one I happened to come across first was the body of your son. I searched him and found a locket which contained two photos of ladies, which I am sending you, hoping you will get the letter and locket safe.”

Reginald Edward Jones (Continued)

The locket arrived safely, somewhat the worse for the exposure to the weather, and the photos – which were those of Reginald's sweetheart, a young lady from Brighton, were both recognisable, although not in the best state of preservation.



Le Touret Memorial, Calais



Le Touret is a village 7 kilometres north-east of Bethune and the Memorial stands in Le Touret Military Cemetery, about 2 kilometres due east of the village on the south side of the road to Richebourg-L'Avoué. The Memorial records the names of 13,479 men killed in the battles of La Bassee, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers Ridge and Festubert.

Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger, Census Records, Internet, scout archives



Corporal T W Jupp
2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers

(Not on Loose memorial – and presumed to have returned to Loose)

Corporal Jupp was a native of Loose and although he belonged to the 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Guards, he was also a signaller on the staff of the 7th Division of the 21st Brigade, (led by General Rawlinson), which was in the famous retreat from Bruges during the first World War.

His battalion left Southampton, 1000 strong, but at the roll call after their historic engagement, there were only 73 men, under a junior officer, left to answer.

Since being taken prisoner,, Corporal Jupp had had the experience of two camps, the Schleswig Camp being an improvement on the first one. His wife and mother wrote regularly to him and sent hin gifts of food and money, some of which never reached him. He was hoping to fare better under the improved transport service through neutral agency.

Private Lewis John Kember

4th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (G/12522)



Died: Friday 13 April 1917 (aged 30)

Memorial Place: Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France (Bay 3)

Est. dob: 1887

Lewis was the son of Jane F Kember who, in 1901, was already a widow. The family home was in *Well Street* at that time, when Lewis was 14 and was already at work as a Paper Board Mill Labourer.

1901 Census

Well Street, East Farleigh(!)

Jane F Kember	Widow	51		Born Marden
Julian F Kember	Son	17	Board Maker at Mill	Born Maidstone
Lewis J Kember	Son	14	Paper Board Mill Labourer	Born Maidstone

Sources: CWGC, 1901 Census

Families of Wartime Loose

Cyril Frederick Lane
Shipwright 2nd Class

H.M.S.Hood, Royal Navy (P/MX 46660)



Died: Saturday 24 May 1941 (aged 29)

Memorial Place: Portsmouth Naval Memorial
(Panel 56, Column 3)

Est. dob: 1912

Herbert F William Lane
Able Seaman

H.M.S.Hood, Royal Navy(P/SR 16563)



Died: Saturday 24 May 1941 (aged 22)

Memorial Place: Portsmouth Naval Memorial
(Panel 48, Column 2)

Est.dob: 1919

Details of Cyril and Herbert Lane are included here, since a man by the name of Lane was mentioned in an edition of the Loose Parish Magazine. The initials of both men differ from the magazine notice, but this may have been just a printing error (or a lapse on the part of the vicar!) There may have been other men by the name of Lane serving on HMS Hood but these are the only two mentioned on the Internet sites which I have visited. We haven't been able to find any definite links to Loose, but both are mentioned here in the hope that somebody might be able to identify either one of them.

Loose Parish Magazine December 1942

"Armistice Day – Sunday November 8th, the nearest Sunday to Armistice Day, was observed as a day of Remembrance. The list of those connected with Loose who gave their lives in the Great War and in this War (to date) were read out, and we remembered them. It may interest readers to have this latter list. It is probably by no means complete:

Edward Smythe, R.A.S.C., Dunkirk

Leonard Scull, R.W.Kent Regt., Dunkirk

Owen Stewart Hare, Royal Fusiliers, killed in an accident while training for Commandos [The vicars own son]

A.B.Lane lost on H.M.S.Hood [perhaps the 'A.B.' was a confusion of 'Able Seaman']

Harry Meakin, lost on H.M.S. Hood

Leonard George Norman, Merchant Navy

A.C.Culver, R.A.F.

John Harold Lucking, R.A.F.

Fred Lavender, R.N.

Ronald Charles William Heather, H.M.S. Cornwall

Enemy action at Maidstone: *Evelyn Grace Crundwell & Albert Robert Fuller"*

C.F. and H.F.W.Lane (continued)

Cyril Frederick was the son of Charles Frederick & Rosa Mary Lane. His wife was Adelaide Lane, of Buckland, Portsmouth. Like Harry Meakin, Cyril went down with *H.M.S. Hood*. He is also memorialised at Hood Chapel, Church of St John the Baptist, Boldre, Hampshire.

Herbert Frederick Willam was the son of Herbert & Lilian Lane. His wife was Constance Mary Lane

Families of Wartime Loose



Private Alfred Vernon Langley
7th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) (TF/ 203992)

Died: Sunday 30th September 1917 (aged 20)

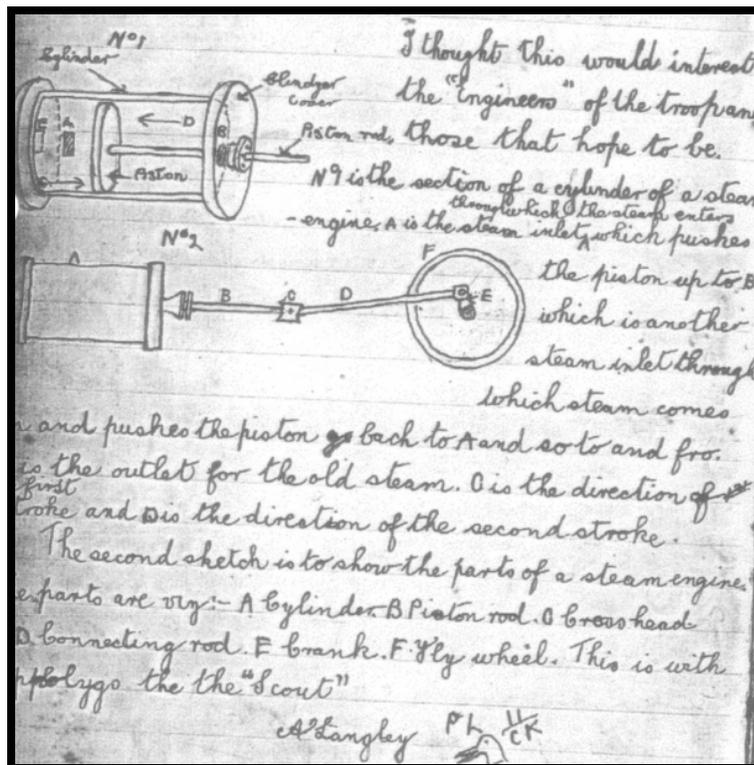
Resting place: Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Westvleteren, Poperinge, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium (V11. F.)

Est d.o.b: 1897

Enlisted: April 1917

Alfred was the son of William & Hannah Langley, and lived at **Upper Crisbrook**. He was one of the gang of boys who first approached Jack Barcham Green in 1908 saying that they had been reading a weekly paper and in it, were bits about a new game called Scouting. They asked if he (JBG) could get them some rope and find them a field so that they could play the game! Alfred went on to become a patrol leader and was made acting ASM (Assistant Scout Master) after John Fulkes had left to join the army.

Some of the letters and sketches that Alfred wrote and drew in the Scout Log book survive. In September 1913, when he was aged 16 and when no thoughts of war had even entered his head, he wrote about steam engines, for those who were interested.:



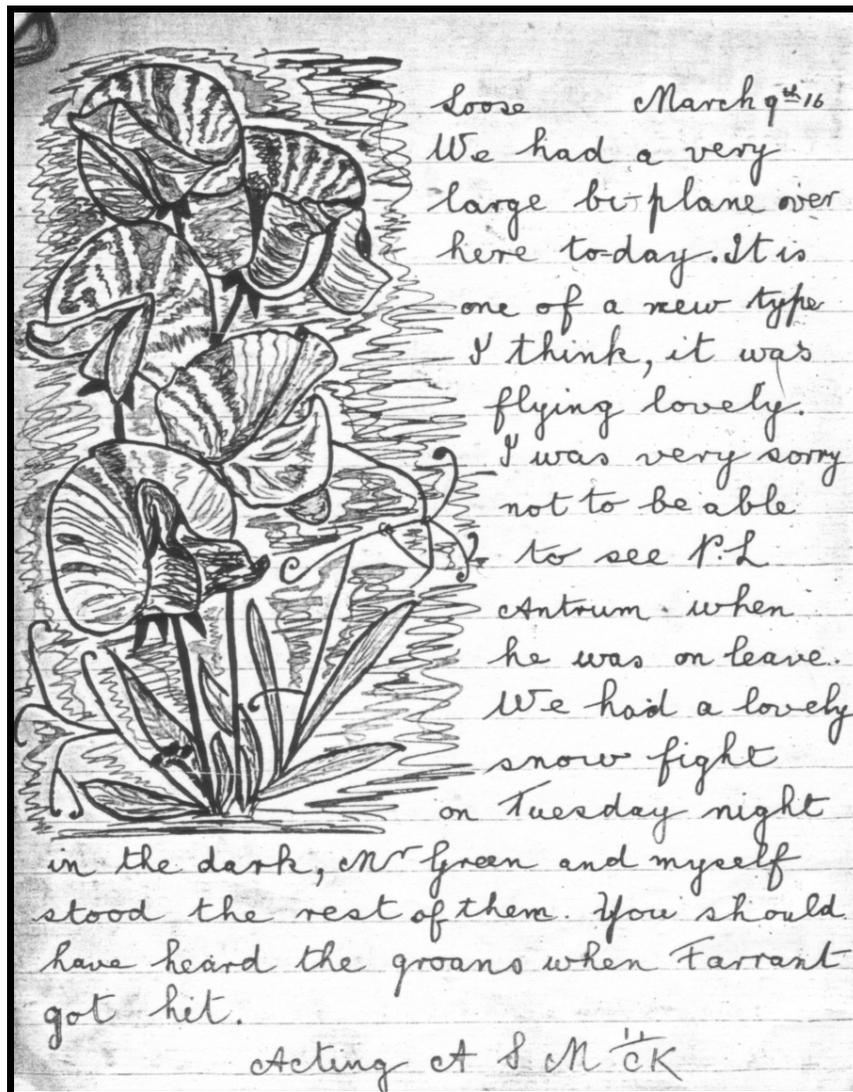
Alfred Vernon Langley (continued)

After John Fulkes had joined up Alfred became Acting ASM and on December 27th 1915 he wrote the following:

“Well I don't think I can say anything fresh about the meetings. Only perhaps that they have been a little more orderly than they had been. I hope all of you away from home had a pleasant Christmas and I hope you will all have a successful year in 1916. Perhaps it would be interesting to some of you, to know that I have been attested for the Army under Lord Derby's scheme and it is now in their hands as to whether I am to remain at my work and be of service to the nation in that way, or whether I am to join in the ranks of the Big (or little as the Kaiser said) Army, by the side of the rest of you. I can assure you whichever way is found to be necessary I shall go that way cheerfully and like a true scout.

Acting ASM II/CK”

On March 9th 1916 Alfred drew this delightful sketch and wrote about the aeroplane he had seen:



Alfred Vernon Langley (continued)

A year later, on March 5th 19 17 he makes reference to John Fulkes in the following letter:

"I have just received a letter from our S.M. and he thinks that our last copy of the mag has gone for good and so he asked me to start another.

I cannot write this without saying how much I miss the usual breezy editorial by our old A.S.M. and I know it is the wish of us all that he, one day may turn up to continue his scouting amongst us, as he was one of the very BEST. If he does not turn up we must still carry on, and every one of us try to make use of the splendid example he always set us. But let us pray that the One above Who watches over us is watching over him and has him in His keeping. That if we do not meet our old A.S.M. on this earth, we may meet him when we come to the end of long trail at the last great Rally, where all true scouts will be found.

I am also pleased to say that Billy Antrum was quite alright the last time I saw him.

I have also been asked to start a waste paper collection in Loose and I hope that by the next time I have this book I shall be able to tell you how it is working. At present I have to work at night so of course it does not give me much time for scouting, but I have Bruce to help me so I think we shall keep the thing floating.

Hoping you will all do your best to write a page on something.

ALangleyASM II/CK

(Since writing this I find I may have another kind of tale to tell next time I write in here.)"

On April 29th 1917 we hear that Alfred is about to join up:

"I daresay a lot of you looked at that footnote in my last writing with interest. Well I have a different tale to tell, I am going to join up tomorrow. I hope you boys will not forget me and that you will write to me and I will try to answer them.

I wish to thank all of you boys at home for helping me to keep things together, of course we have had our little upsets but we have always been pals. I want to thank our SM for what he has done for me during the past eight years since I first joined the scouts under him, he has been more than a pal to me.

So I ask you who are left at home to stick to Bruce and help him and when we come home again we will have a real beano.

A V Langley ASM II/CK

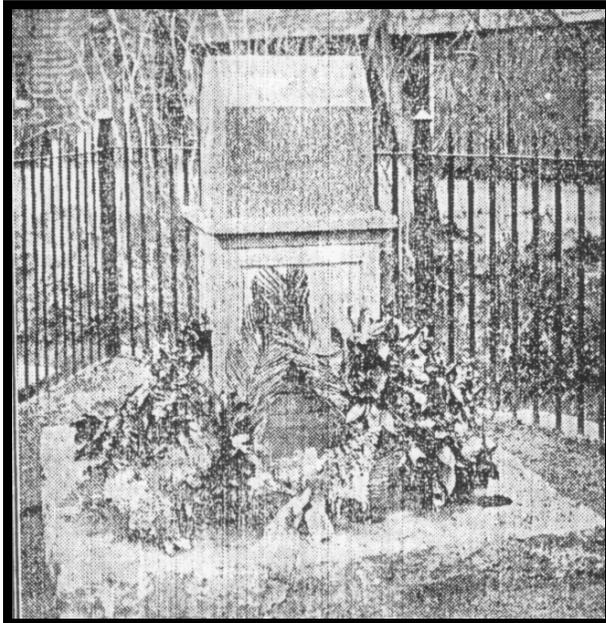
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Alfred was to give his life five months later.

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In 1922, when funds had accumulated, the scouts erected a Memorial at Crisbrook in honour of Alfred Langley & John Fulkes. The following newspaper report gives complete details of this moving event:

Alfred Vernon Langley (continued)



LOOSE BOY SCOUTS' WAR MEMORIAL

“Amid the peaceful surroundings of Crisbrook Bridge, Loose Valley, near Maidstone, a spot which has a dual advantage, geographically, being within the civil parish of Loose and the ecclesiastical area of Tovil, a war memorial was on Monday afternoon unveiled to the memory of two Loose Boy Scouts, who laid down their lives in France.

Notwithstanding the wintry conditions, a representative gathering witnessed the ceremony, and several troops of Scouts from the district took part in the solemn service. Brigadier-General C. Wingfield Stratford. C.B., C.M.G. (District Scout Commissioner for the Maidstone Area) unveiled the memorial, and the dedication was performed by the Lord Bishop of Dover.

Standing some 5 foot high, with a protective railing, on land belonging to Messrs. J Barcham Green & Son (who lent every support to the project), the memorial has a stone base with a Granite head-piece on which appears the inscription:-

***“Loose Boy Scouts - Assistant Scoutmaster J.Fulkes, Patrol Leader A.V.Langley
Died in France for God and Country.
'Lest we forget,' 1914-1918”***



Alfred Vernon Langley (continued)

The newspaper report continues:

“The late Patrol Leader Langley was the youngest son of Mr W.F. Langley, J.P. The work of the memorial has been neatly executed by Messrs. G. Witcombe and Son, monumental masons, of Maidstone. When the “Swiss” troop of Loose Scouts ceased to exist some eighteen months ago it was appropriately decided to apply their funds towards a suitable memorial, and the proposal met with general approval.

Among the Scout detachments represented at the service was the “Robin Hood” troop and Wolf Cubs which Miss L.M.Jones has now started at Loose, and other troops were:

1st Tovil, under Scoutmaster T.G.Bincham

Marden, under D.S.M. H.Bennett

Wateringbury Troop and Wolf Cubs, Scoutmaster E.A.Clarke Smith and Mrs. Clarke Smith respectively

1st Linton, under Miss Cornwallis.

The Bishop arrived by car with Mr George Marsham, J.P., and there were also present: The Rural Dean (the Rev. T.G.L.Lushington), Canon E.H.Hardcastle, the Revs. W.Gardner-Waterman (Loose), C.P.Johnson (Tovil), A.M.Haire (Linton), G.Walker, and Mr J.B.Green. Under the direction of Mr. H.J.Clarke (choirmaster), the Loose Church choir ably led the singing, and after the opening hymn “Brief Life is here our portion”, Brig. General Wingfield Stratford, in unveiling the Memorial, said he was proud to have been asked to unveil that beautiful and lasting memorial to the heroes whose names were inscribed thereon. There was a feeling of pride in the heroism of those who had fallen, of sorrow that those lives should have been taken so early, and also of sympathy with the relatives of the fallen.

There were, it seemed to him, two lessons which they could learn from their gallantry and what they had done - their devotion to duty and their endurance. They all knew that our soldiers and sailors faced death in all parts of the world because it was their duty to do so, and to illustrate his point the General described a typical scene on the Flanders Battlefields prior to an advance. It was wonderful how the men stuck it for four years, but he could assure them that they did their duty cheerfully and without any grouching and grumbling, until final victory was won.

The two essential points in the training of the Scouts were devotion to duty and cheerful endurance, and if they only took to heart the lesson that they had learnt from the gallant men who fell in the war then their lives would not have been spent in vain. The wish in the training of Scouts was to make them good citizens. The good citizen was a good soldier and a good sailor when the time of need came and they might all thank God that the gallant men were available at the time when they were so much wanted as in the late war.

The vicar of Loose, in exhorting the company to “remember with thankfulness and honour those who gave their lives,” read the names of the fallen Scouts, and also mentioned two former members of the troop, the late R.Murphy and A.Coulter, who died as the indirect result of war service.

Prayers for the comfort of the bereaved having been offered by the Vicar of Tovil, the Bishop then dedicated the memorial.

In the course of an address the Bishop remarked that in addition to other lessons the war taught us what our religion meant. Our religion was not just receiving blessings, but was a call to service - service for God and our fellow men. Therefore let that memorial remind them of that. As it spoke to them of the way the fallen gave all for the service of their country and the freedom of the world, let it be a call to them to take their part, also for their country’s good, in the service of the King of Kings in working to help Him make this country better.

The concluding hymn was “Oh God our help in ages past”, after which the National Anthem was sung and the Benediction pronounced by the Bishop, the sounding of the “Last Post” by two buglers of the Royal West Kent Regiment bringing the service to a close.”

Alfred Vernon Langley (continued)



Scoutmaster J Barcham Green

Alfred Vernon Langley (continued0



The Crisbrook Memorial

1901 Census

Upper Crisbrook, Loose

William F Langley	Head	45	Paper Maker	Born Little Chart
Hannah Langley	Wife	43		Born Farleigh
Walter E Langley	Son	21	Paper Maker	Born Maidstone
Lionel Langley	Son	19	Gas Fitter	Born Maidstone
Roland Langley	Son	17	Paper Maker	Born Maidstone
Alan Langley	Son	15	Paper Maker	Born Loose
Morley Langley	Son	13		Born Loose
(....) Langley	Son	10		Born Loose
Dorothy Langley	Dau	7		Born Loose
Alfred V Langley	Son	3	3	Born Loose
Ada Kemp	Sister in law	29	Paper Paster (at Mill)	Born Farleigh

Sources: CWGC, Scout Archives, 1901 Census, Kent Messenger

Air Mechanic Harold Larkin

9th Squadron, Royal Air Force (29151)



Died: Saturday 19 October 1918 (aged 25)
Resting Place: St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France (S.11.0.5)
Est. dob: 1893

Harold was the son of George & Clara Larkin of *The Papermakers Arms, Loose*. Nothing has yet come to light about his life and family except that Cicely Beeching thinks that the family had the sweet shop next door to the Walnut Tree.

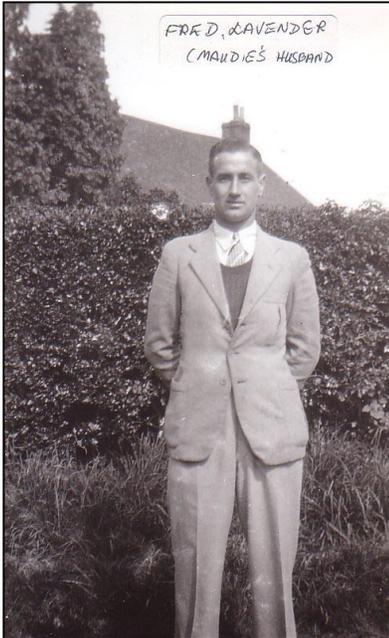
9 Squadron RAC After its initial formation at St. Omer, France on 8 December 1914 by renaming the Wireless Flight of the RFC Headquarters, No. 9 Squadron was disbanded in March 1915 when its various elements were absorbed into other RFC Squadrons. Reformed a month later at Brooklands, the Squadron then joined the effort in France with its BE2Cs on reconnaissance and bombing tasks and subsequently with RE8s. Like many other Squadrons, it disbanded in 1919 after a brief period in occupied Germany.



1901 Census

Loose Road (presumably the Papermakers Arms)

George R Larkin	Head	33	Manager Wines & Spt Stores	Born Loose
Clara Larkin	Wife	30		Born Loose
George W Larkin	Son	14	Shop Asst, Ironmongery	Born Loose
Harold Larkin	Son	8		Born Loose



Stoker 1st Class Fred Lavender

H.M.Submarine Tempest, Royal Navy (C/KX 82135)

Died: Monday 23 February 1942, aged 29

Memorial Place: Chatham Naval Memorial (62,2)

Est. dob: .1913

A paragraph in the Parish Magazine of August 1942 tells us that Fred was married:

“It is now known that Fred Lavender, stoker, did not survive the loss of H.M.S. Tempest, though it was hoped at first that he was one of the survivors taken prisoner in Italy. Our sympathies are with his wife, who lives with her parents at Heath Cottage, Linton.”

This was all we knew about Fred until quite recently (August 2006), we made contact with relatives – Mr and Mrs Thatcher, who are still living at Heath Cottage and who have kindly supplied us with some photographs and background information.

Fred was aged 29 when he married Gladys Maud Thatcher, at the Parish Church in Marden on 16 April 1938. His father, William Henry, was a blacksmith in Marden. The photograph below shows Fred and Gladys on their wedding day outside the family home in Marden



Stoker 1st Class Fred Lavender (continued)

Gladys's father was Moses Thatcher (b.1680), a general dealer in Greenwich. She worked at the Fire Training Centre which was situated on the site of the present Hanson Drive.

When the couple married they lived in Heath Cottage (opposite Hanson Drive) where her uncle still lives. This had been part of the Linton Park Estate – one of the establishments which had been sold off in 1938.

HMS Tempest was a T-class British submarine built by Cammell Laird Shipyard in Birkenhead during 1940 and launched during 1941. On 13 February 1942, she spotted a cargo ship in the Gulf of Taranto (Ionian Sea): the latter showed her neutral markings as she carried supplies for the Red Cross. HMS Tempest didn't attack the cargo, but a second British submarine, the *HMS Una*, torpedoed the supply ship, that exploded and sank.

The Italian torpedo boat *Circe* counterattacked, depth charging the submarine. *Tempest* was damaged and forced to the surface whereupon the torpedo boat gunfired and hit her. The crew abandoned the *Tempest*, and was rescued by the *Circe*. But the submarine (*Tempest*) was still floating, as the demolition charges set by the crew failed, and the Italians boarded her to take her on tow. At the same time, suddenly, the stern of *Tempest* sank and the Italian sailors had just time to jump into the sea. *HMS Tempest* sank vertically in the Gulf of Taranto



Fred (*left*) with two of his shipmates.

Stoker 1st Class Fred Lavender (continued)

This photograph from on board The Tempest (below) was taken from an internet site:



Sources: CWGC, Parish Magazine August 1942, internet, family photographs and marriage certificate



Private Fred Ernest Longley

“D” coy. 10th Royal East Kent & West Kent Yeomanry
Battalion least, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)
(G/21762)

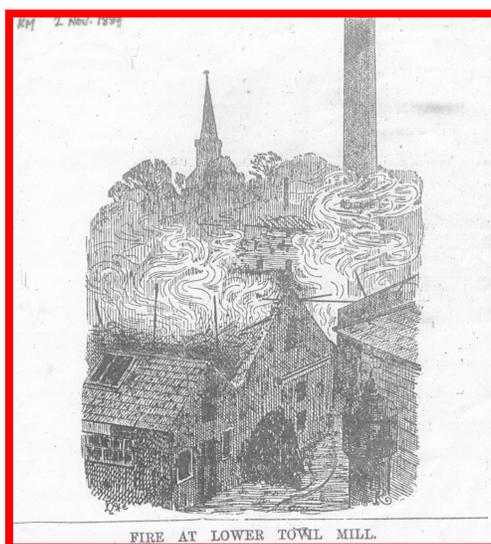
Died: Saturday 21 September 1918, aged 26

Resting Place: Ste. Emilie Valley Cemetery, Villers-Faucon, Somme,
France (1V.B.7.)

Est. d.o.b: 1892

Fred was the second son of Henry James & Mary Kenny Longley of *4 Hayle Mill Cottages, Tovil*. He was serving with the Kent Yeomanry (The Buffs) when he was killed in action. He had joined up at the outset of war and had been on nearly all the Fronts.

Previous to the War, Fred was employed by Mr Green at Tovil paper mill. His elder brother was in Egypt at the time Fred died and he also had a younger brother in India.



Sergeant John Harold Lucking

142 Squadron Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (1254971)



Died: Sunday 30 November 1941 (aged 21)

Resting Place: Kiel War Cemetery, Germany (2.A.13)

Est. dob: 1920

John was the son of Harold George & Edith Lucking of Loose. Nothing yet, has been discovered about him or his family.

142 Squadron was formed at Ismailia in 1918, then disbanded whilst in Egypt and Palestine, where it was renumbered 55 Squadron in 1920. Later still it reverted to 142 Squadron at Netheravon in 1935 during the Abyssinian crisis. It returned to the UK in 1936 and was re-equipped with Hinds in 1937, and just over a year later with Battles.

The Squadron was earmarked as part of the Advanced Air Striking Force and moved to France in 1939. Following the German invasion, it undertook attacks against enemy columns and lines of communication, until being evacuated to Britain in mid June. Operations continued from Binbrook and then Eastchurch, but in November the squadron began to convert to Wellingtons, a process completed by January 1941.

The squadron was now a night bombing unit and commenced operations in April 1941.



Second Lieutenant Norman William Elliott Manning

10th Battalion, 19th Hyderabad Regiment



Died: Friday 18 December 1942 (aged 20)

Resting Place: Delhi War Cemetery, India (5.J.8)

Est. dob: 1922

Norman was the son of William & Edith Rose Manning of Maidstone.

Nothing has been discovered about the life of Norman except that he died of some unspecified illness in India (*Julia Page*).



Lance Corporal Charles Martin



8th Battalion Welsh Regiment (12182)
(Not on Loose Memorial)

Died: Sunday 8 August 1915 (aged 28)
Memorial: Helles Memorial, Turkey (Panel 140 to 144)
Est. dob: 1887
Enlisted: 20 August 1914

Charles was a native of Maidstone, although he had been working in Wales for the three years prior to his death. He had been reported missing in the Dardanelles since August 1915 and his parents, who lived at *51 Loose Road*, made an appeal in the Kent Messenger in October 1915 asking for news of Charles from anyone who may have seen or been with him before he was reported missing.

Charles joined up in August 1914 while employed at the Mond Nickel Works, Clydach, Swansea Valley, where he had been for three years. Previous to this he had been employed at Reed's Mills in Tovil, and before that he had worked for six years at the Post Office in Maidstone.

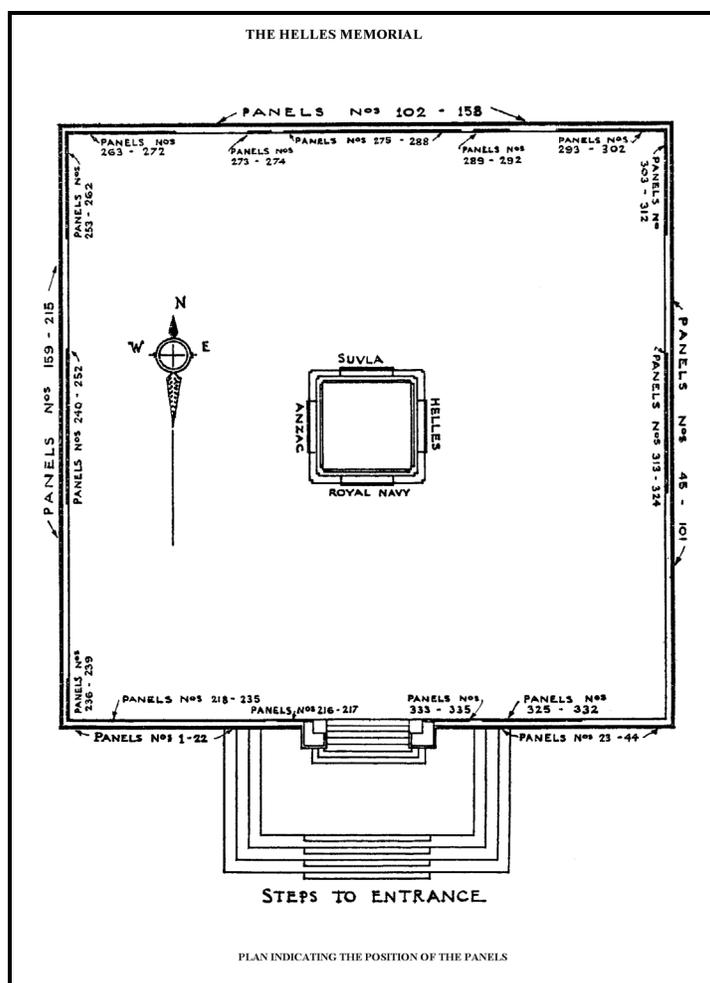
His parents were Charles & Julia Martin and his wife was Ellen Morse of 1, Adelaide Place, East Farleigh.

The Division of the Welsh Regiment in which Charles served came into existence by way of Army order no.324, issued in August 1914, authorising the formation of six new Divisions. It was formed of volunteers, under the care of the War Office. Initially without equipment or arms of any kind, the recruits were judged to be ready by May 1915. In June the Battalion moved to Egypt and then in July 1915 landed at Gallipoli.

This eight month campaign in Gallipoli was fought by Commonwealth and French forces in an attempt to force Turkey out of the war, to relieve the deadlock of the Western Front in France and Belgium, and to open a supply route to Russia through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea.

The Helles Memorial stands on the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula. It takes the form of an obelisk over 30 metres high that can be seen by ships passing through the Dardanelles.

Charles Martin (Continued)



Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger 1915, Internet sites



Lance Sergeant George Frederick Martin

1st Battalion The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) (6292525)

Died: Thursday 29 October 1942 (aged 29)
Memorial Place: Alamein Memorial (Column 55)
Est. dob: 1913

Very many men by the name of George Martin are listed on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission site, and although listed on the Loose Memorial as George E Martin, the **George F** (details above) is our man. He was the son of Frederick and Annie Martin of Maidstone (as indicated in the CWGC site), and extra weight can be added to this choice of George Frederick by taking note of a paragraph in the Parish Magazine of April 1943:

“Honourable mention would have been made in these columns before, but only recently has it come to my notice of two men in the Parish who have given their lives for our country:

George Frederick Martin, L.Sgt. of The Buffs of 499 Loose Road, who died of wounds in the Middle East on October 29th, 1942, and Harry Quested killed in action in Algeria in November last, of Pear Tree Cottages.”

Some details of the family have been supplied by Megan Agate, a friend of the family, who still visits elderly relatives of George (September 2003). She tells us that George had several siblings:

- Lucy, who lives at 627 Loose Road, who was born c.1912
- Mary
- Alfred
- Twins Annie & Olive

Mary's son lives at Lenham, and a son of Alfred lives in Middlesburgh and comes south periodically – sometimes visiting the war memorial with his uncle's name on it.

Megan tells us that the family, as children, lived in one of the four cottages north of the Papermakers Arms, and this is confirmed by an entry in the Parish Magazine of April 1943 which gives the address as 499 Loose Road.

Private Victor Masters

2nd Battalion Middlesex Regiment (G/41441)



Died: Monday 25 March 1918 (aged 26)

Memorial Place: Pozieres Memorial, Somme, France (panel 60 & 61)

Est. dob: 1892

Victor was the son of Henry & Emily Masters. In 1901 the family lived in one of the passages off **Bank Street, Maidstone**. Victor's father, Henry, was a cripple and unable to work, and his mother, Emily, was a sack-maker. Sister Olive, was a jelly maker - so quite a colourful family! It is not yet known if or when the family moved nearer to Loose – possibly Victor worked in one of the mills.

1901 Census

(...) Passage, Bank Street

Henry Masters	Head	69	Crippled & unable to work	Born Maidstone
Emily Masters	Wife	51	Sack Maker	Born Goudhurst
Olive Masters	Dau	15	Jelly Maker at Factory	Born Maidstone
Kate Masters	Dau	13	Scholar	Born Maidstone
Nelly Masters	Dau	11	Scholar	Born Maidstone
Victor Masters	Son	9	Scholar	Born Maidstone
William Masters	Son	6	Scholar	Born Maidstone

Families of Wartime Loose



Corporal Frank Meakin

1st Battalion Middlesex Regiment (6207916)

Died: Thursday 24 December 1942, aged 27
Resting Place: Yokohama War Cemetery, Japan (Sec. H.D.16)
Est.d.o.b: 1915

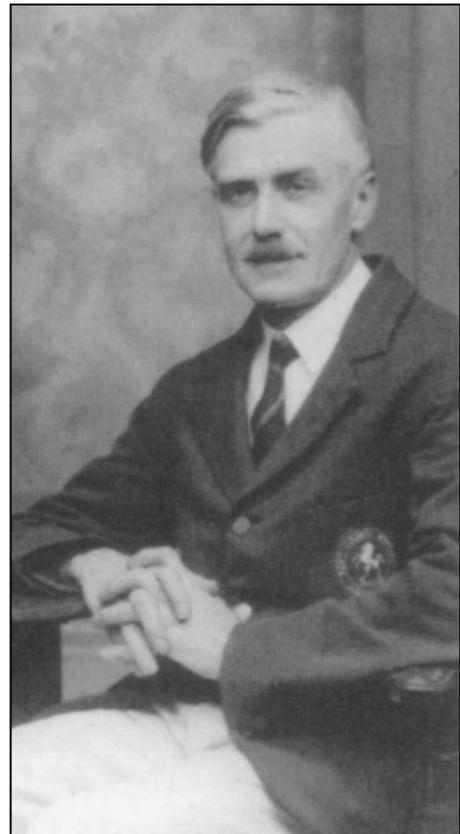
Frank (whose brother Harry also died in the war) were the sons of Fred & Nellie Meakin of *48 Boughton Lane, Loose*. Frank was the husband of Nora of *50 Plains Avenue*. It was sad news indeed, when the family received the news of the loss of their second son, Frank, who died of dysentery whilst a prisoner of war in Japanese hands.

He was born in Maidstone and educated at the Grammar School and was, before enlistment, on the hospital clerical staff of London County Council. He joined the Territorials in 1939 and was called up at the outbreak of war. He was taken prisoner in 1941 at the fall of Hong Kong and it was many months before his wife and parents received news that he was safe.

He and Nora were married in December 1939 and Nora had not seen her husband since he went abroad that same month.

Fred and Nellie had two other sons, Harry who died when the *Hood* went down - leaving a widow and a 3½ year old son, and Edward, a leading wireless mechanic serving in the Royal Navy and who was on a Fighting French Corvette.

Fred (*the father of Frank*) was on the staff of the Health Department at County Hall and was well-known as the hon. Secretary of Loose Bowls Club.



Fred Meakin (father of Frank & Harry)

Frank Meakin (continued)



In this cemetery stands the Yokohama Cremation Memorial. This is a beautifully designed shrine which houses an urn containing the ashes of 335 soldiers, sailors and airmen of the British Commonwealth, the United States of America and the Kingdom of the Netherlands who died as prisoners of war in Japan. Their names (save for 51 who were not identified) are inscribed on the walls of the shrine, and the names of the British Commonwealth dead are given in the Yokohama Cremation memorial Register.



Ordinary Seaman Harry Meakin

H.M.S.Hood, Royal Navy (P/JX 261781)

Died: Saturday 24 May 1941, aged 28

Memorial Place: Portsmouth Naval Memorial (Panel 51, column 1)

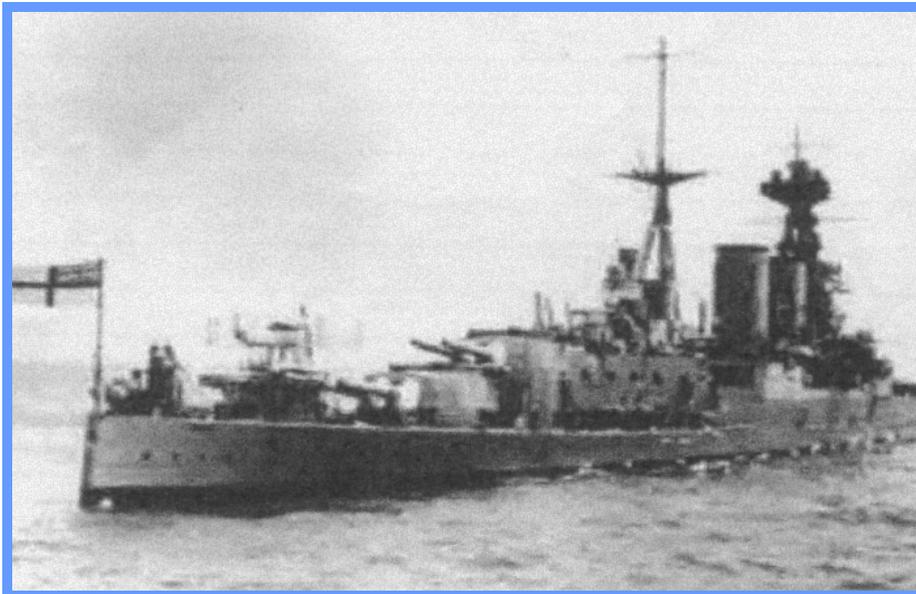
Est.d.o.b: 1913

=====

Harry was the son of Fred & Nellie Meakin of *48 Boughton Lane, Loose*, and husband of May Morris of *East Farleigh*. His brothers were Frank and Edward – Frank was to die later, whilst a prisoner of war in Japan.

Harry was educated at the school in Loose and at Maidstone Grammar School from where he matriculated. He had been employed in the accounts department at County Hall until August 1940 when he went into the Royal Navy. Having completed his training as an ordinary seaman he had been recommended for a commission (Petty Officer) before his ship was sunk. He left a 3½ year old son.

The *Hood* was the largest and most famous ship afloat when she was engaged in that formidable battle with the *Bismark*.



H.M.S.Hood

Harry Meakin (continued)

Eight minutes after the first shells were fired, the *Hood* exploded. She sank in just a few minutes, taking with her more than 1400 men. We can know a little of what happened on that day through the recollections of Ted Briggs (aged 78 in 2002), who was just 18 at the time and was one of only three survivors. Ted could still (in 2002) recall his escape with absolute clarity. He was on the bridge when the final deadly salvo struck. He didn't hear any explosion – all he saw was a wall of flame and the whole crew were thrown off their feet. As the *Hood* lurched and sank, Ted found himself under the icy water, unable to inflate his life jacket which was beneath his waterproof coat. As he struggled for life, he was thrust back to the surface by rising pressure from below. Eventually he found a life raft and linked up with the other two survivors. They were the only three – not another soul in sight. The three men were found several hours later, cold and exhausted, by the destroyer *Electra*.

Launched in August 1918, the battle cruiser *H.M.S.Hood* was a 850ft, 48,360 ton reminder that Britain ruled the waves. Yet from the beginning she had a serious Achilles heel: despite extensive armour protecting her sides and forward deck, the highly armoured aft deck made the ship vulnerable to shells plunging from great height.

In 1941, when Hitler realised that the Blitz had failed to sap Britain's will, he planned to cut the country's supply lines by destroying the convoys from Canada and the United States. On May 19 his navy despatched the *Bismark* into the Atlantic. It was Hitler's newest and most mighty instrument of war, as equally well armed as the *Hood* but much more modern in design.

On May 23 the *Bismark* and her escort cruiser, the *Prinz Eugen* were sighted in the Denmark Strait between Iceland and Greenland. Early the next day the *Hood* and her escort, the *Prince of Wales* sighted the *Bismark* at 17 miles and immediately engaged the Germans.

Because of her vulnerability, *Hood's* captain, Vice Admiral Lancelot Holland, had to move in close to avoid plunging shells. *Hood* opened fire first. Holland attempted to outpace the German ships so that he could turn the *Hood* broadside and bring her full compliment of guns to bear.

Shooting from a rolling, pitching platform was demanding – at sea only one in 100 shells generally hit their target. With only its fifth salvo the *Bismark* hit the *Hood's* vulnerable aft deck. The shell detonated the ammunition magazines below and set off other explosions. Within minutes she had sunk.

Two hours after receiving news of the attack, and stunned by the loss of the *Hood*, Churchill issued his famous command "*Sink the Bismark*". Just over 76 hours later, an aircraft spotted the *Bismark* heading to France for repairs. Swordfish torpedo bombers launched by the *Arc Royal* hit *Bismark* three times, jamming her rudders. After bombardment from the *Norfolk*, *King George V* and *Rodney*, the paralysed *Bismark* remained defiantly afloat. Eventually, boat-launched torpedoes and her crew's attempts to scuttle her sent Hitler's most fearsome ship to the bottom. Only 115 of her 2,246 men survived.

In 2001, 60 years after the event, and with permission from the Ministry of Defence, a mission to find the wrecks was led by deep-sea explorer David Mearns, with a search group and a TV team from ITN Factual. After locating the *Bismark* about 300 miles to the west of Brittany, they turned north to find the *Hood*. There were 600 square miles of sea to search but the *Hood* was discovered lying 10,000 feet down.

Days of filming followed chronicling the great ship and the site. The team even found the ship's bell – but as they had kept to the policy of "*look but don't touch*", the wreck was left undisturbed. As the voyage ended, Ted Briggs went on board the search vessel to lead a service of remembrance and to press a switch releasing a bronze plaque with a roll of honour, down onto the seabed, next to the *Hood's* bow.

For Ted Briggs, a sixty year chapter had closed, but hopes for another had opened; one of remembrance of *H.M.S.Hood* and what she died for.

Harry Meakin (continued)



Sixty years after their battle, *Bismark* survivor Heinz Steeg meets his counterpart from *The Hood*, Ted Briggs (right)
(Photo Radio Times)

Sub-Lieutenant Geoffrey Carl Mercer

H.M.S. Stalker Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve



Died: Saturday 11 September 1943 (aged 20)

Memorial Place: Lee-On-Solent Memorial, Hampshire (Bay 4, Panel 7)

Est. dob: 1923

Geoffrey was the son of Carl Walter & Elsie Alberta Mercer of Maidstone, Kent

HMS Stalker was an attacker class escort carrier, built in the United States of America by Western Pipe & Steel, San Francisco. She was laid down on 6 October 1941 as USS Hamlin AVG-15, launched 5 March 1942 as CVE-15 and transferred on 21 December to the Royal Navy in 1942 and commissioned on 30 December 1942.

The “Attacker” Class were the second batch of escort carriers built in the USA for the Royal Navy, the lead ship – Attacker having originally been intended to be one of the “Avenger” Class. They were also the first escort carriers to be ordered after the USA entered the war; the USN kept the other 10 vessels ordered at the same time, as these the “Bogue” Class. Once the ships were ready for action they soon proved themselves, both as convoy escorts and fighter support ships for amphibious landings.

Stalker's war service included operating in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and East Indies, as an “Assault Carrier” included in supporting the Salerno landings in September 1943, providing effective on the spot air support for assault forces. She also took part in the invasion of South of France in August 1944 and later in the Aegean, and subsequently was involved in operations against Burma in 1945.

After the war, and being involved with the Japanese surrender in the numerous islands where they had been in control, *Stalker* was eventually returned to the USN and finally, in 1975, she was scrapped.

Geoffrey Carl Mercer (continued)



HMS Stalker



Pilot Officer Robert Edward Mercer

431 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (148054)

Died: Wednesday 23 June 1943 (aged 27)
Resting Place: Rheinberg War Cemetery, Germany (3.c.6)
Est dob: 1916

Robert was the son of Ernest & Kate Hannah Mercer of Loose.

The Mercer Family

We have not yet ascertained whether or not Geoffrey Carl and Robert Edward were related. A brief scan of the 1901 Census returns does little to resolve the questions. The two Ernest's and the one Walter highlighted, may or may not be the fathers of Robert and Geoffrey.

1901 Census

16 Cox's(?) Terrace (Tonbridge Road)

Edward Mercer	Head	43	Town Carter	Born Hunton
Edward Mercer	Son	21	Stone Quarry Labourer	Born East Farleigh
Amy Mercer	Dau	16		Born East Farleigh
Leonard Mercer	Son	11		Born East Farleigh
Walter Mercer	Son	9		Born East Farleigh
(....) May Mercer	Dau	6		Born East Farleigh

Kirkdale, Loose

Mary A Mercer	Head	50	Needleworker	Born Loose
Ernest Mercer	Son	15	Solicitors Clerk	Born Loose
Archibald Mercer	Son	12		Born Loose
Margaret Fle.....	Boarder	12		Born London

Robert Edward Mercer (continued)

1901 Census (continued)

Dean Street, Tovil

Joseph Mercer	Head	44	Carpenters Labourer	Born Yalding
Ann Mercer	Wife	43		Born Hunton
William mercer	Son	20	Teamster on Farm	Born East Farleigh
Margaret Mercer	Dau	18		Born East Farleigh
Ernest Mercer	Son	14	Teamster on Farm	Born East Farleigh
Stephen Mercer	Son	13	Scholar	Born East Farleigh
Rose Mercer	Dau	10	Scholar	Born East Farleigh
Florence Mercer	Dau	9	Scholar	Born East Farleigh
Elizabeth Mercer	Dau	7	Scholar	Born East Farleigh
James Mercer	Son	4		Born East Farleigh

East Farleigh

Edward Mercer	Head	44	Labourer in Stone Quarry	Born Horsmonden
Ellen Mercer	Wife	39		Born Burham
George Mercer	Son	19	Farm Labourer	Born Coxheath
Ellen Mercer	Dau	16		Born Coxheath
Edward Mercer	Son	14		Born Coxheath
Willie Mercer	Son	10		Born Loose
Harry Mercer	Son	5		Born Loose
John C Mercer	Son	2		Born Loose
John Mercer	Brother	46	Stone Quarryman	Born Marden

Squadrons numbered in the 400 series were technically units of the RCAF, RAAF and RNZAF (Canada, Australia and New Zealand), but their members were placed under the operational control of the RAF and are usually considered to be part of the RAF's organisational structure.

431 (Iroquois) Squadron was formed at Burn on 11 November 1942 as a bomber unit within No 4 Group but in July 1943 it was transferred to the, then, recently created No 6 (RCAF) Group.

At the same time it moved to Tholthorpe near York and in December to Croft in County Durham, where it remained until the end of the war. Equipped with Wellingtons initially, it received Halifax Vs when it moved to Tholthorpe and these were replaced by Mk 111s in March 1944.

431 squadron crest



Its first operation was flown on the night of 5/6 March 1943, a mining operation to the Frisian Islands. In October 1944, it converted to Canadian built Lancaster Xs and it was with this type that it carried out its last bombing mission in April 1945 against gun emplacements on Wangerooge. It returned to Canada in June 1945 and disbanded in September 1945.

We know that Robert was a bomb aimer (CWGC), but can't be sure of his movements. Most of the men buried in the Rheinberg War cemetery lost their lives during the Battle of Rheinland (1945) – which was after Robert had died. The site of the cemetery was chosen in 1946 by the Army Graves Service for the assembly of British and Commonwealth graves recovered from numerous German cemeteries in the area. The majority were the graves of airmen, mainly from Dusseldorf, Krefeld, Munchen-Gladbach, Essen, Cologne, Aachen and Dortmund. One can only hope that Robert is buried with some of his comrades and not alone amongst all those Germans.

Robert Edward Mercer (continued)





Private Frank Herbert Moon

11th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Surrey Regiment (T/207018)

Died: Saturday 23 March 1918 (aged 36)
Memorial Place: Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France (Bay 2)
Est.d.o.b: 1882
Enlisted: Maidstone, October 1916

Frank was the husband of Alice Moon of *2 Brewery Cottages (now 513 Loose Road)*. Alice heard of Frank's death from an old friend & work mate in the same regiment before receiving the official notification. It had been mutually agreed between the two men, that should anything happen to either, the other would write home as soon as possible.

It appears that Frank was killed by a bursting shell whilst manning a front line trench on March 23rd.

Besides his wife Alice, he had an invalide mother, three brothers & four sisters.

Previous to joining up Frank had worked for Messrs. Style & Winch at the Medway Brewery where he had been for 14 years—and had risen to being head tunman. He was universally liked and respected by his superiors and workmates, as he was by all who knew him. He was totally rejected under the Derby Scheme, but on re-examination was passed as fit, and was called to the colours on 24 October 1916. He was posted to the Suffolk Regiment (290788) and sent to Norfolk where he went through his training, being afterwards transferred to the West Surrey's.

He proceeded to France on 1 June 1917 where he remained until December of that year when he was sent to Italy – spending Christmas there. He was back again in France in early March 1918 and must have been there for only a fortnight before he made the supreme sacrifice.

Frank was an enthusiastic Oddfellow, and a Past Grand of the Loyal Invicta Lodge – having held this office on two occasions. He was also a sick visitor for some years. He was also a prominent member , for a long time, of the Loose football club and was, by all accounts, a first class quoit player. He had joined the Special Constabulary on their formation at the beginning of the war, and did his share of duty until called up.

In a *Kent Messenger* report dated 4 September 1915 we discover that “Bert” Moon was in France. This date doesn't tie in with the dates outlined above, but could possibly be linked to the time he spent with the Special Constabulary. Neither did his wife speak about *Maidstone United* when she talked to the *Kent Messenger* at the time Frank was killed, so possibly this “Bert” who was in France doesn't have any connection with Frank Herbert – maybe “Bert was a brother?”

Maidstone Footballer in France

“Bert” Moon, as many football enthusiasts in Maidstone will remember, had signed on for Maidstone United for the season 1914/15 is now in France. Writing to a friend in Maidstone he says:

“I am now in France & enjoying the change well, but of course the tongue is a little different which makes it rather awkward when shopping. We are in billets here and very comfortable, so with it all we cannot grumble. The sun is very warm and we find it so when we have a runabout. I have had a game of football since I came here but I enjoy a swim now. We are very fortunate, as there is a decent place for a dip a mile or so away, so you can guess we

Frank Herbert Moon (continued)

enjoy bathing parade. The country around is very nice and the crops are plentiful so we don't notice the change so much. I noticed that the Kent AFC have given consent to play matches, so I trust you will have a game or two ... I wish I could help you, but don't worry – I may have the pleasure some day."

1901 Census

Kirkdale

Elizabeth A Moon	Head	60	Laundress	Born Peckham
James R Moon	Son	23	(Feebleminded)	Born Loose
Eliza J Moon	Dau	21		Born Loose
Frank H Moon	Son	18	Farm Labourer	Born Loose



Commander Aubrey Edward Duncombe Moore

Royal Navy

Died: 9 October 1946, aged 66

Resting Place: Loose All Saints' Churchyard Ext. (west of path)

Est.dob: .1880

Commander A E D Moore was brought to our attention in 2004 when men from the CWGC came to Loose to locate his grave in the cemetery. This was not found, and nobody seems to be able throw any light on the mystery.

Aubrey was the son of the Ven. Edward Marsham Moore and Lucy. His wife was Florence Moore of Loose. Aubrey was born in Benefield, Northampton and his address in 1881 (when he was one year old) was the Rectory, Benefield, Northampton. His father was born in Frittenden, Kent in 1844 and he was the rector of Benefield in 1881.

In 1901 Aubrey was a Sub Lieutenant and living on Sark.

The Free BMD web site gives his date of birth as December 1879 and his place of birth as Oundle (vol.3b p.210)

Although there is no trace of Aubrey's grave, that of his parents has been located in the Loose Churchyard – in the top right-hand corner. This tells us that his father was born 17 January 1844 and died 5 September 1921, and that his mother, Lucy, died 31 December 1944 aged 93 – putting her birth at c. 1851.



Sources: CWGC, 1881 & 1901 census (via IGI)



Flight Sergeant Francis Thomas Nolan

625 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (1397479)

Died: Tuesday 11 April 1944 (aged 35)

Resting Place: St. Pierre Cemetery, Amiens, Somme, France (Plot 7, Row B. coll .Grave 11-13)

Est. dob: 1909

Francis was the son of Edward James & Brigid Anne Nolan. His wife was Catherine Martha Nolan of Loose, Kent.

625 Squadron

The Squadron was formed from 'C' Flight of No 100 squadron at Kelstern on 1 October 1943. Operating Lancasters in No 1 Group, it formed part of Bomber Command's Main Force throughout the war. Following its final bombing mission it helped to drop food to the starving Dutch people and repatriated POWs to Britain. It also helped return troops from Italy and finally disbanded on 7 October 1945.





Fourth Engineer Officer Leonard George Norman

S.S.Kayeson (London), Merchant Navy
(Not on Loose Memorial)

Died: Wednesday 2 October 1940 (aged 29)

Memorial Place: Tower Hill Memorial, London (Panel 60)

Est.dob: 1911

Leonard was the son of George F & Eva Ann Norman. His wife was Elsie Norman of Maidstone, Kent. Leonard is included in this study since his name is mentioned in the Parish Magazine of December 1942 as one of those men connected with Loose, who gave his life in the War.

Tower Hill Memorial commemorates the men from the Merchant Navy and fishing fleets who have no known grave and who died during the two World Wars. The Memorial can be found close to the Tower of London on the south side of Trinity Square. The men who died during World War 2 are listed on bronze panels in a sunken garden.

The S.S.Kayeson was sunk in the Atlantic by U-32. After attacking Kayeson, the submerged U-32 collided with the ship & sustained damage to her bow.



Private William Edward Norris

7th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment (G/12738)

Died: Monday 9 April 1917 (aged 34)

Memorial Place: Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France (Bay 6)

Est.dob: 1883

William was the son of William Norris, and husband of Alice Norris of *Prospect Place, Church Street, Boughton Monchelsea*. He was possibly known as Edward, since that is the name given for the 1901 census.

1901 Census

Church Road, Boughton Monchelsea

William Norris	Head	45	Wood Sawyer	Born Deal
Louisa Norris	Wife	45		Born Boughton Monchelsea
Edward Norris	Son	18	House Painter	Born Boughton Monchelsea

Sources: CWGC, 1901 census



Leading Aircraftwoman Gwendoline Peach

105 Squadron Women's Aux. Air Force (2069400)
(Not on Loose Memorial)

Died: 26 February 1944, aged 22

Resting Place: Loose Churchyard Extension (west of path)

Est.dob: 1922



Gwendoline – (although her name is not inscribed on the Loose Memorial) - was a native of Loose. Her parents were Garfield John & Emily Hancock, and her husband was John Kenneth Peach of Loose. Her grave can be seen to the west of the main path in the churchyard extension.

Parish Magazine entries give her address as 1 Cape Cottages, and her burial took place on 2 March 1944.

Cicely Beeching remembers a very handsome Peach who was, possibly, captain of Sutton Valence School. The family, she recalls, lived in Lancel Lane and Cicely remembers that he had a very beautiful sister named Rosemary.

There is also a connection to the Barker family (see profile on Charles Barker) through the marriage of Levi's daughter Dorothy to a Peach. At the occasion of Levi's funeral Mr & Mrs C.W.Peach were among the family mourners, and in his will, Levi made a bequest of one sixth of the residue of his estate to his daughter Dorothy peach.

Whether or not either of the above two paragraphs have any relevance to Gwendoline remains to be seen!



Sources: CWGC, Photograph of grave by Pat Jenner, Parish Magazines March & April 1944, Levi Barker web site, Cicely Beeching

Families of Wartime Loose



Second Lt. C.M. Pearson

Lancashire Fusiliers

(Presumably NOT a casualty of War)

Lt. Pearson of the Lancashire Fusiliers was the youngest son of Mr J and the late Mrs Pearson of *The Nook, Loose*. He was awarded the M.C. for conspicuous bravery in the field. He led two platoons in an attack with the greatest of courage and determination, capturing two machine guns, with two others and 30 other ranks. Later, with his own platoon, which was then only five strong he rushed out to get in touch with his right and succeeded in capturing a machine gun nest. His contempt of danger was deemed a fine example and truly admirable.

The Military Cross was awarded to commissioned and warrant officers for distinguished and meritorious service in battle. In World War One, 2,885 were awarded to British officers.



Sources: Kent Messenger February 1919, Internet

Families of Wartime Loose



Private Frank Benjamin Perriman

1st Labour Company, Northamptonshire Regiment.(32911)
Transferred to (83158) London District Labour Centre, Labour Corps.

Died: Thursday 13 June 1918 (aged 40)
Resting Place: Loose extension Churchyard (west side of main path)
Est.d.o.b: 1878

Frank was the son of Alfred & Mary Ann Perriman of Loose. He appears not to have been at home on census night 1901.

1901 Census

Well Street, Loose

Alfred Perriman	Head	63	Farm Labourer	Born Loose
Mary A Perriman	Wife	60		Born Marden
Anne(?) Perriman	Dau	20		Born Loose
Sidney Perriman	Son	17	Farm Labourer	Born Loose



Sources: CWGC, 1901 Census

Private Hugh Perriman

8th Battalion The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) (G/5139)



Died: Wednesday 5 July 1916 (aged 24)

Resting Place: Pond Farm Cemetery, Belgium (A.15)

Est.d.o.b: 1892

Enlisted: 1914 at Ashford

Hugh was the eldest son of Albert & Mrs Perriman who lived at *Ivy Cottages, Tovil*.

He enlisted in December 1914, went to the Front in October 1915 and was wounded a fortnight later. He returned to his battalion a few days before Christmas and died the following summer.

Before joining up Hugh had worked for Major Pitt of Charing.

Some time after the official notification of his death, his wife who lived at *Footscray*, received a letter saying that Hugh had been shot through the head whilst on guard.

In July 1917 his mother (at a cost of 1d per word) had this message printed in the Kent Messenger:

“In loving memory of Hugh Perriman, who was killed in action in France, July 5th 1916. Greater love hath no man than this that he should give his life with all its promise that other men might live. From his mother”

1901 Census

Ivy Cottages, Loose

Albert Perriman	Head	41	Warehouseman	Born Loose
Mary S Perriman	Wife	39		Born Sevenoaks
Hugh Perriman	Son	9		Born Loose
Ronald A Perriman	Son	7		Born Loose
Kathleen M	Dau	2		Born Loose
Fran Perriman	Dau	1		Born Loose

We do not know whether Frank (d. 13 June 1918) & Hugh were related.

Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger August 1916, July 1917, 1901 Census



Private William Charles Pettitt

9th Battalion East Lancashire Regiment (51685)
(formerly 72353 R.A.M.C.)

Died: Monday 30 September 1918

Resting Place: Mikra British Cemetery, Kalamaria, Greece (473)

Enlisted: Maidstone, Kent

William was born in *Linton* (Naval & Military Press), but nothing else is yet known about him.

Lieutenant Stanley Osbert Pierce

46th Regiment, Reconnaissance Corps, R.A.C. (240096)



Died: Friday 10 September 1943,(aged 21)
Resting Place: Salerno War Cemetery, Italy (IV.E.1)
Est.d.o.b: 1922
Enlisted: June 1940

Stanley was the son of Osbert James & Catherine Mary Pierce, of **Jevington**, Loose Road. He had two brothers named Osbert and Dennis.

He was killed in action whilst serving with the Central Mediterranean Reconnaissance Corps.

Before joining the Royal Engineers in June 1940 he was a pupil at Messrs. Dearle & Henderson—quantity surveyors in the High Street, Maidstone. He joined the Royal Engineers in June 1940 and was commissioned in April 1942.

Stanley was educated at Maidstone Grammar school where he played cricket & Rugby for the first teams.

His father was a building administrator in Sierra Leone, West Africa and also built the houses in Holtwood, Ditton.



Corporal P Pronger

Royal Army Medical Corps

•
(Not on the Loose Memorial and presumed to have returned after the War)

Corporal pronger was awarded the DCM for bravery under shell fire.

He enlisted in August 1914 and went to France less than two weeks after enlistment. His home was in Loose, and before joining the army he was an attendant at the Kent County Asylum.





Corporal Harry Quested

Pioneer Corps (13029593)

(Not on Loose Memorial)

Died: Friday 13 November 1942 (aged 28)

Resting Place: La Reunion War Cemetery, Algeria (4.A.3)

Est.dob: 1914

Harry was the son of George Richard & Bertha Mary Quested. His wife was Betty Dorothy Quested of *Loose, Kent*.

Allied troops made a series of landings on the Algerian coast in early November 1942. From there, they swept east into Tunisia, where the North African campaign came to an end in May 1943. For Harry, Friday 13th was a truly unlucky day.

Had it not been for the mention of his name in the Parish Magazine of April 1943, Harry might never have been included in this study. It is from this magazine mention that we discover that he lived in *Pear Tree Cottages, Pickering Street*.



Pear Tree Cottage C.1920

Private Eric Leslie Richardson

2nd Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment (318559) or (3/8559) = TNMP)



Died: Tuesday 18 May 1915, aged 22

Resting Place: Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner, Cuinchy, Pas de Calais, France (IV.H.10)

Est.dob: 1893

Enlisted: Bedford

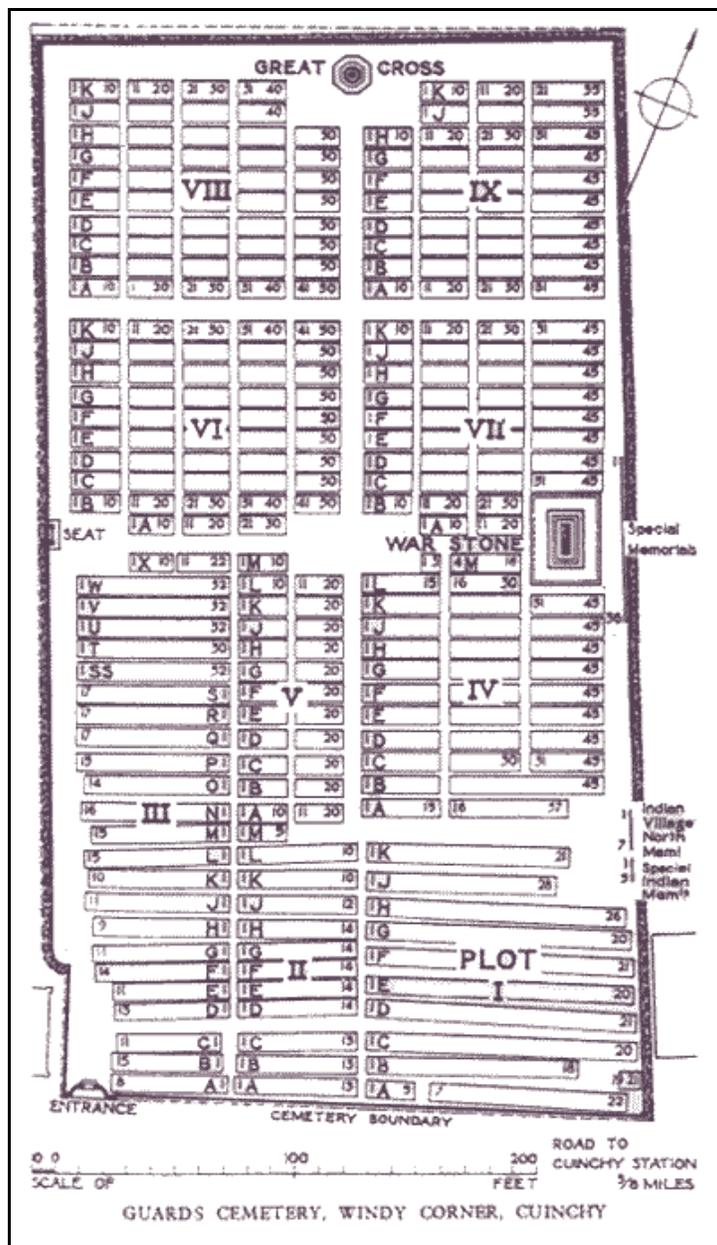
Eric was the son of Joseph & Mary Frances Richardson of *227 Loose Road, Maidstone*. Quite how they came to be living in the Loose area has not yet been established. Eric had been born in Brighouse, Yorkshire and his father was born in France – although he had become a British Subject.

The Second Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment was in Pretoria, South Africa in August 1914 and returned to England in September of that year, landing at Southampton, where it became attached to the 21st Brigade.



The Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner, Cuinchy

Eric Leslie Richardson (Continued)



Plan of the cemetery. Eric is in Plot IV

Sources: CWGC, TN&MP, 1901 Census, Internet

Families of Wartime Loose



Private Gordon Anthony Scull

6th Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (6346460)

Died: Monday 20th May 1940, (aged 19)

Resting Place: Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No.1, Somme, France (Plot 7. Row A. Grave 19)

Est. d.o.b: 1921

Enlisted:

Gordon was the son of Leonard and Daisy Winifred Scull of *Truro Cornwall*.

The photograph of his memorial window in All Saints' Church, Loose, is annotated:

*"To the glory of God & in loving memory of GORDON – killed in action May 1940
and of his mother DAISY SCULL who died in June 1950"*



Leonard Scull

In the Parish Magazine of May 1942 the vicar makes reference, in his column of Remembrance, to Leonard Scull of the R.W.Kent Regiment.

No trace of Leonard can be found on the Commonwealth War Graves site.

Sources: CWGC, photograph by Pat Jenner, Parish Magazine May 1942



Captain Edward Algernon Smythe

Royal Army Service Corps (56070)
(Not on Loose Memorial)

Died: Tuesday 28 May 1940 (aged 31)

Resting Place: Lille Southern Cemetery, Nord, France (Plot R, Row C, Grave 29)

Est dob: 1909

Edward is another of those mentioned in the Parish Magazine of December 1942. He was the son of Bernard Algernon & Enid Mary Smythe and husband of Nancy Elizabeth Smythe of *Winchester*.



Private Frederick Charles Spurgeon

3rd Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps (179)

Died: Tuesday 1 June 1915 (aged 25)
Resting Place: Cairo War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt. (B.273)
Est.d.o.b: 1890
Enlisted: 14 August 1914, Perth, Australia

Frederick was with the Australian Army Medical Corps. Before going to Australia in April 1913 he was under-keeper for six years for Mr. F.S.W.Cornwallis of Linton Park, and after this became under- keeper for the Duke of Northumberland; leaving there on the reduction of hands.

Frederick enlisted on 14 August 1914 in Perth, Australia, and received his training at Blackboy Hill Camp, which was 35 km from Perth.



Blackboy Camp. Frederick is 4th from left in back row

Frederick Charles Spurgeon (continued)

The Australian Imperial Force (the AIF), was raised for service overseas in the war against Germany. Raised by voluntary enlistment, the AIF was to remain the only army on either side throughout the war that did not conscript. Recruiting began on August 10 and was regionally based. This policy of drawing units from particular states, and often from particular regions or districts within a State, was also to be a feature of the AIF throughout the war.

Soldiers came from the full range of social, religious and economic backgrounds represented in the wider Australian population, but the original intention that half the force be drawn from men with militia training and half without does not appear to have been realised even in the early contingents. They were, however, the best paid soldiers of the war. A private in the AIF was paid five shillings a day with an additional shilling 'deferred', to be paid upon discharge. Married men were required to allot two shillings a day to dependents; a separate allowance came later, in 1915.

Diverted to Egypt from its original destination in Britain because of a shortage of suitable accommodation and training areas, the AIF spent some months in Egypt before being committed to its first campaign in Gallipoli against the Turks. They served as part of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force under the command of General Sir Ian Hamilton. In an eight month campaign which failed entirely to achieve its objectives, Australian and New Zealand troops at ANZAC Cove demonstrated extraordinary courage, stamina, initiative and endurance. However, the campaign was marked as well by their inexperience and inadequate training for the conditions which they faced. This was compounded by administrative bungling and incompetence at a number of higher levels

We can relate an accurate, if short, account of Frederick's movements after embarkation, from extracts from the diary of another man (Private John Simpson) who was in the same contingent and who enlisted at the same time as Frederick. We also have a copy of the AIF Nominal Roll, which clearly lists both Frederick and John Simpson.

Frederick embarked from Fremantle on board the 12,032 ton former Oceanic vessel HM.Transport A7 "*Medic*" as part of the 3rd Field Ambulance – "C" section Stretcher Bearers Subdivision. The Australian government had requisitioned this ship to help transport the AIF overseas. The troops aboard *Medic* learned on that day (2 November 1914), that England had declared war on Turkey, before they joined the first contingent of Australian and New Zealand troops who were on board 36 transports. The Convoy, made up of converted passenger and cargo ships, carried 20,758 members of the First AIF and 7,479 horses. It had sailed from King George's Sound on 1 November, escorted by the Australian light cruisers HMAS *Sydney* and HMAS *Melbourne*, an armed merchant cruiser HMS *Orvieto* and a Japanese cruiser.

Five days out they passed the mail steamer *Osterly*, which reported its narrow escape from the German raider, *Emden*.

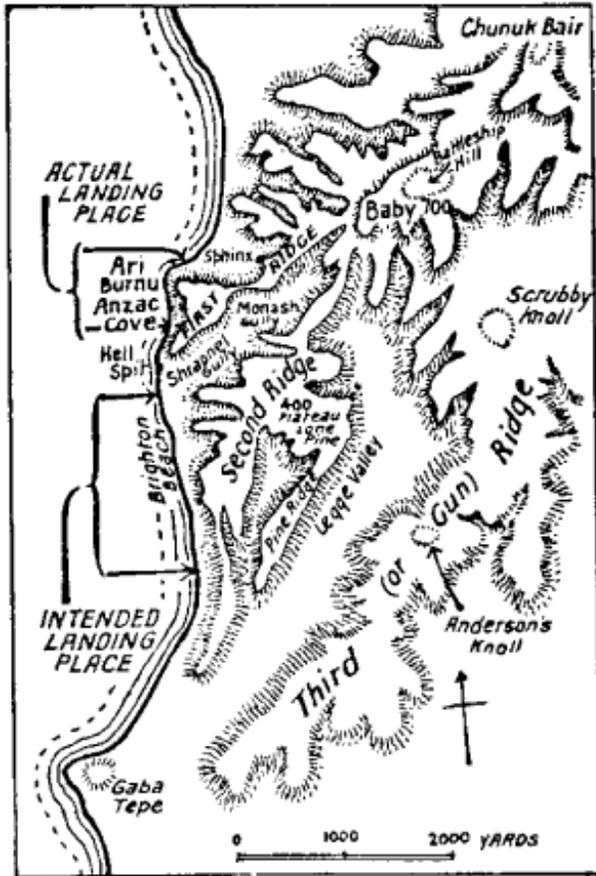
Crossing the equator on November 12, the Convoy arrived at their first port of call, Colombo. Before arriving in Colombo 329 men had been treated by the ship's hospitals - 62 had measles and 55 had influenza.

The *Medic* arrived in Cairo on 12 December 1914 after a 42 day journey, and here Frederick and his ship mates boarded a train for the 20 km journey to Mena, where a training camp had been set up. Mena was a village located in the shadows of the Sphinx and two pyramids. Here they joined with English and Indian troops.

At the end of February the 3rd Field Ambulance Corps left for Lemnos Islands where they trained for seven weeks, and on 15 April boarded a troop ship *Devanha* in preparation for the planned attack on the Dardanelles. In order to get onto the boat to be rowed ashore at Gallipoli the men of the 3rd Field Ambulance first had to remove the dead and wounded that remained in the boat from its previous trip to the beach. Their boat carrying 25 men was towed to within 300 yards of the shore from where they had to be grounded some distance from the beach. Casualties were high during the landing, with the men having to jump into the water to wade ashore. Three stretcher-bearers from the 3rd Field were killed and a further 14 wounded.

Frederick must have soon realised that things had gone terribly wrong, as they had been landed at the spot that had previously been agreed was the landing site *least* likely to succeed. The terrain was the most wild and savage in the entire Gallipoli Peninsula. Two thousand of the men who landed on 25 April (the precise time of landing was 4.30am) were casualties by nightfall. Despite this, by 2am on 26th, due to the efforts of the Field Ambulance Brigades, all the wounded were safely in hospital ships.

Frederick Charles Spurgeon(Continued)



But the stretchers used to transport the wounded to the hospital ships were not being returned, leaving the stretcher bearers not only short in numbers, but without stretchers. Instead of working in teams of six as they been trained they were required to work either with a mate or on their own. And so they started using donkeys as transports, making halters from bandages.

After only 37 days at Gallipoli Frederick died of wounds received during the landing.



Two of the many hospital ships serving the Gallipoli area

The names Gallipoli and Dardanelles tend to be used interchangeably. Gallipoli (or Gilibolu) refers to the town over 30km from the battlefields, which was never an objective and never saw any fighting. The Dardanelles is a strait connecting the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara.

The campaign was a solely military one to capture the peninsula.

The AIF embarkation list gives us some additional information on Frederick. His trade (or calling) is listed as “Horse Driver” and his next of kin is listed as Mrs Waller, his sister. The address given for her is the same as that given for Frederick: “Care of Warner, Hines Hill, Western Australia.” His religion was Church of England and he was single.

Researching further in the Australian archives we came across some particulars which had been called for in order that Frederick could be commemorated on the Roll Honour of Australia in the Memorial War Museum in Canberra. On this form, as well as name and rank, it gives his birthplace as Coxheath, Linton, Kent, England. The name and address of his mother is given as Caroline E. Goad of Coxheath, Linton, Maidstone, Kent, England. Another name is given as a possible informant for Historians (a rather nice touch!) – Rosina Collar of Forge House, Coxheath, Linton, Kent, England. Unfortunately I have been unable to trace either of these ladies.

Frederick Charles Spurgeon (Continued)



First aid was given on the spot by friends, if possible. Later this soldier would have been collected by stretcher-bearers or by mule and taken to a dressing station or first aid post.



**First Aid Post.
Notice the lines of litter carts lined up, and lines of donkeys or mules passing through the camp.**

Frederick Charles Spurgeon (Continued)



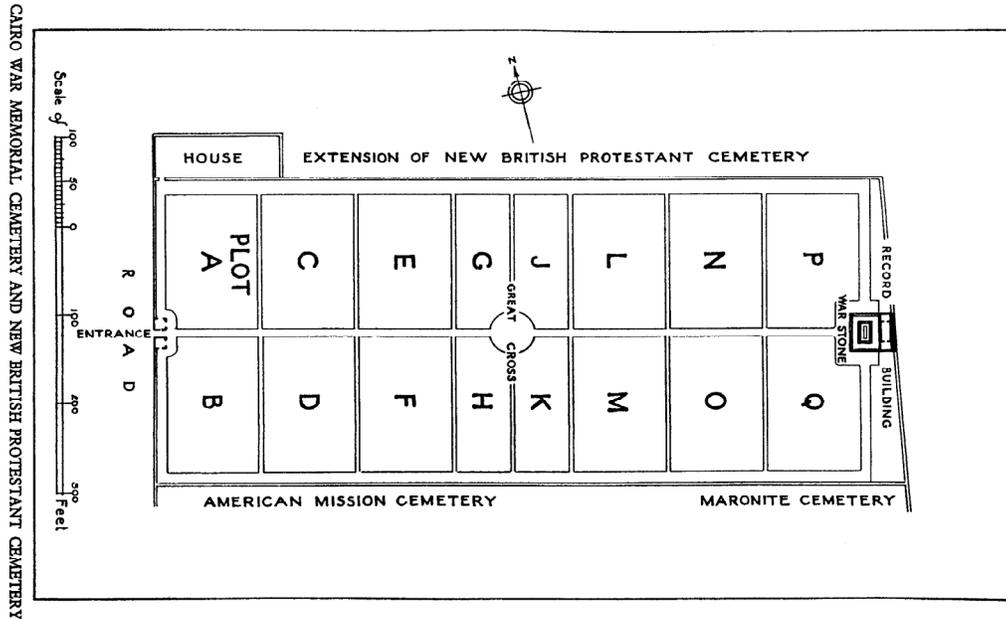
A wounded soldier being carried by a donkey

The Cairo War memorial Cemetery is within the Old Cairo cemetery area, which is situated approximately 5km south east of the centre of Cairo.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Cairo was headquarters to the United Kingdom Garrison in Egypt. With Alexandria, it became the main hospital centre for Gallipoli in 1915 and later dealt with the sick and wounded from operations in Egypt and Palestine.

The War Memorial Cemetery was formerly part of the New British Protestant Cemetery, but plots B,D,F,H,K,M,O,P and Q were ceded to the War Graves Commission in 1920. Some graves were brought into these plots from elsewhere in the protestant cemetery and later, 85 First World War graves were concentrated from Minia War Cemetery.

Frederick Charles Spurgeon (Continued)



An example of the bronze panels

Memorial War Museum, Canberra

Just outside the memorial's Hall of Memory there is a long series of bronze panels recording the names of Australia's war dead. This is known as the Roll of Honour. The names have been replicated in card indexes which contain information transcribed directly from original records produced during or immediately after each conflict. The database has been enhanced with information from further research and other sources. It also includes panel numbers which refer to the bronze panels outside the Hall of Memory. Frederick is number 184.

Frederick Charles Spurgeon (Continued)

NOTED ON H. R. CARD

Particulars Required for the Roll of Honour of Australia in the Memorial War Museum.

1. Name (in full) of Fallen Soldier Frederick Charles Spurgeon

2. Unit and Number (if known) R-A In C 3rd Field Am. B Section

3. With what Town or District in Australia was he chiefly connected (under which his name ought to come on the Memorial)—
 Town (if any) Perth District Hoffman Bush W. A.

4. What was his Birthplace. Coxheath Linton Kent England.

5. Date of Death 1. 6. 15.

6. Place where Killed or Wounded Wounded at Gallipoli died of wounds at Bairo Egypt

Particulars Required for the Nation's Histories.

1. What was his Calling Gamekeeper for the Duke of Northumberland

2. Age at time of Death 25 years

3. What was his School Linton National

4. What was his other Training _____

5. If born in Britain or Abroad, at what age did he come to Australia 2 1/2 years

6. Had he ever served in any Military or Naval Force before Enlisting in the A.I.F. (Please state particulars). No.

7. Any other biographical details likely to be of interest to the Historian of the A.I.F., or of his Regiment—

8. Was he connected with any other Member of the A.I.F. who died or who distinguished himself. (Please state Relationship)—

9. Name and Address of the Parent or other person giving this information—
 Name Caroline F. Goad.
 Relationship to Soldier Mother
 Address Coxheath Linton Maidstone Kent England.

10. Names and Addresses of any other persons to whom reference could be made by the Historian for further information—
 Name (Mrs) Rosina Collas
 Address Lodge House Coxheath Linton Kent England

NOTE—This Folder is Addressed to the Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne. Please fold in four, and stick down gummed flap so that the addressed portion is outside. The information is required urgently.

D. 1289/11.12.—G. 17702.—1-14.

Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger, various regimental & other web sites. Photographs from Australian War Memorial Archives.



Lance Corporal Arthur Lionel Stevenson

9th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment (G/16346)

Died: Wednesday 20 June 1917, (aged 21)
Resting Place: Oxford Rd Cemetery, Ieper, Belgium (1V. F.3)
Est.d.o.b: 1896
Enlisted: Maidstone November 1915

=====

Arthur was the eldest son of Mr & Mrs F Stevenson of **Tristella, Loose Road**.

Before going to France with the Royal Sussex Regiment, Arthur had enlisted with the West Kent Yeomanry. He was transferred to the Royal Sussex Regiment prior to going to France in August 1916. He worked for the Argentine Meat Company before joining up.

The captain of his regiment wrote thus:

“Dear Mr Stevenson, - It is with deep regret that I write to inform you of the death of your son, who was killed in action. His end was instantaneous, so he did not suffer at all. Believe me, I can ill spare such a fine fellow as he was; he was among those whom I could trust anywhere and at any time. I am afraid I can offer very little consolation. Count him among those who have made the great sacrifice, like Him who set the great example.”

1901 Census

104 Upper Fant Road, Maidstone

Frederick J Stevenson	Head	28	Cycle Repairer	Born Willington
Harriet Stevenson	Wife	32		Born Boughton Monchelsea
Beatrice	Dau	2		Born Maidstone
Arthur L Stevenson	Son	5		Born Maidstone
Ellen Stevenson	Sister	26	Domestic Servant	Born Willington
Charlie Jarrett	Boarder	17	Apprentice Ironmonger	Born Mereworth
Horace Bromley	Boarder	28	General Labourer	Born Maidstone

Sources: CWGC, TN&MP, 1901 Census, Kent Messenger August 1917



Arthur – (standing on the left)

Arthur was the son of William Thomas & Ann Styance of **Randall's Row, Loose**.

His sister Rose (pictured above) who had married William Whibley, received the following letter from her vicar:

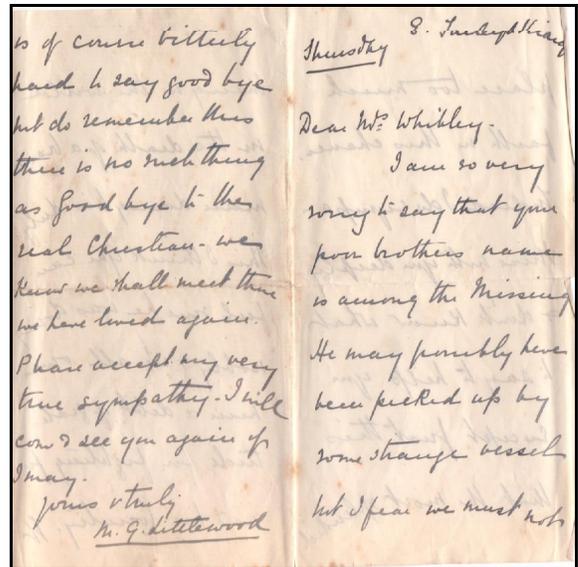
“Dear Mrs Whibley, - I am so very sorry to say that your brother's name is among the missing. He may possibly have been picked up by some strange vessel but I fear we must not place too much faith in this chance.”

“Indeed I do sympathise with you deeply and don't know what to say to help you except just this that the most splendid thing in the world is the death of a brave man doing his duty. This I think you can feel sure he was doing nobly & we all owe him a debt of gratitude for fighting for us & his country. It is of course bitterly hard to say good bye but do remember this, there is no such thing as good bye to the real Christian - we know we shall meet those we have loved again. Please accept my very true sympathy. I will come and see you again if I may. Yours Truly - M.G.Littlewood “

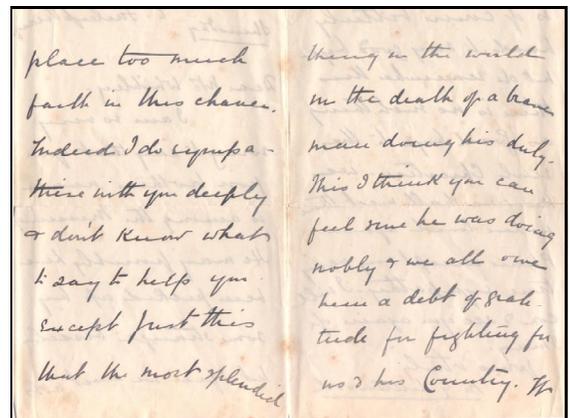
Stoker 1st Class Arthur Styance
(RFH/CH/B/9385)

H.M.S. Cressy, Royal Navy

Died: Tuesday 22 September 1914, aged 26
Memorial: Chatham Naval Memorial (5)
Est.d.o.b: 1888



The letter from Rev M. G. Littlewood



Arthur Styance (continued)



William & Rose Whibley

The fact that it was Rose who received the letter from the vicar might suggest that their parents were deceased by this time.

The original HMS Cressy was named for Crécy, France, where Edward 111 defeated Philip V1 of Valois in 1346, but the 20th century ship Cressy first saw service on the China Station before returning to home waters in 1904.

As part of the Grand Fleet's Third Cruiser Squadron based at the Nore, she was sunk, together with her sister ships Aboukir and Hogue on September 22 at about 7.30am while on patrol against German mine layers and torpedo boats in the Broad Fourteens, off the Netherlands. After being hit by a torpedo fired by the German U-9, Aboukir signalled her consorts to stand by and pick up survivors. The possibility of a submarine torpedo having been the cause of

Aboukir's damage was not fully assessed at the time, and Cressy and Hogue stopped their engines and put out their boats to rescue survivors. The U-9 launched two torpedoes that split Cressy's hull and ruptured her boilers; the ship sank at 7.30 with a loss of 560 crew.

Only 305 survivors were plucked from the waters of the North Sea by trawlers and Dutch patrol boats and landed at Ymuiden.

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The book *Three Before Breakfast*, by Alan Coles, tells the full story.



H.M.S.Cressy

Arthur Styance (continued)

Another young man who lived in Well Street was also serving on one of the three ships that went down that morning, but he had the good fortune of being rescued by a passing trawler. He and Arthur possibly knew each other:

“Aboukir” Survivor Interviewed (Kent Messenger September 1914)

“Able Seaman A.H. Taylor of Well Street, who had been in the employ of Mr Hodge of Loose before joining the Navy, was on board the Aboukir. He said ‘I was in my hammock about 20 past six in the morning when I heard a great noise. We thought it was a boiler explosion and all rushed on deck. Captain Drummond sang out “It’s only a boiler explosion; no excitement, men!” ‘ An order to close watertight doors was executed, but by that time the ship had begun to settle down. We had two wounded men on board who were injured during the rough weather a few days before, and these were at once placed in a boat which was lowered and got away. By now the vessel was almost level with the water but perfect order prevailed. Then the captain gave the order “Every man for himself.” I dived down over the side and after remaining in the water for about an hour was picked up by a Lowestoft trawler and brought into Harwich’.”

Lieutenant Edward Richard Tadman

6th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (90545)



Died: Friday 24 May 1940 (aged 48)

Resting Place: Maidstone Cemetery (Plot R.1. Grave 1345)

Est. d.o.b: 1892

Edward was the son of Francis & Rose and husband of Bessie Kate Tadman of *Tovil*. He was step-brother of Richard B Tadman who lived at *2 Walnut Tree Avenue* and was a member of the Loose parish council for many years.

Edward died in an emergency hospital in Hertfordshire. It appears that he was the victim of ‘wanton brutality’, for he was wounded in France and was on his way home when the hospital ship was bombed by a swarm of German aeroplanes. He died in hospital after an operation.

Edward had been in France for about five weeks with his regiment and had a record of military service since 1908, when he joined the Territorials. At the outbreak of war he was in camp. He went to India and was engaged on the transport of troops between Bombay & Basra. He also saw service in the Afghan War of 1919. Edward served as Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant at the West Kent depot as well as in India. He was commissioned in June 1939.

He was born in Canterbury and received his education at St. Paul’s school, Maidstone and a higher grade school in Gravesend. He became a Freemason whilst in India and was senior warden of the Alexander Lodge, which he joined in 1916. He had also been a member of the Belvedere Lodge in Maidstone. He was a keen hockey player with the Maidstone Church Institute team and was also good at rowing and swimming

Edward was held in high regard by all who knew him and nowhere more than in the army. The O.C. Maidstone depot, in a letter of sympathy to the family, said that Lt. Tadman was held in affection and respect by all ranks of his regiment, who were proud to have served with such a splendid and gallant comrade

His home was at *20 Keddleston Drive, Orpington* where he lived with his wife and two daughters—Jean & Joyce, who were staying with an aunt at *18 Rawdon Road, Maidstone* at the time of his death.

Edward Richard Tadman (continued)

Edward's step brother, Richard (formerly of Walnut Tree Avenue, Loose – but now living in Alfreton, Derbyshire), writes briefly about Edward and also recalls some of his own memories of wartime Loose:

“.....the Tadman on the War Memorial was my Step-brother.....he died of wounds... while embarking on a Destroyer at Boulogne during the evacuation from Dunkirk. I believe the War Memorial was, like most others erected after the 1st World War. The Loose Swiss log books have an old photo of this ceremony.....

Loose Swiss Scout Group was formed in 1908 by 'Skipper' Jack Barcham Green, an incredible man who devoted his spare time from his Hayle Mill paper firm to creating and running the Troop for years. He never really 'gave up' his beloved Troop. I joined in 1942/3 and enjoyed scouting with him....

***The King George V playing field** (facing Walnut Tree Ave) was used, following World War 1 for holding Fetes. These were managed by soldiers who were waiting to be demobbed. The top part of the field was fenced off and left to get overgrown, with several mature cherry trees dotted about. These were grubbed out and the area was ploughed and used by residents for allotments – subsequently being grassed over and incorporated into the playing field.*

During the war years several empty 50 gallon oil drums were situated in the field as a precaution to deter enemy aircraft from landing there. After the air raids the local boys would trawl the playing field, picking up numerous pieces of shrapnel – the result of the anti-aircraft guns sited at Coxheath, and firing at enemy bombers on their way over Maidstone to bomb London. These trophies were taken to school and swapped for other souvenirs, such as spent bullets dug out of the rock face at the quarries in Boughton Woods – now mostly Scout land. The quarries were used as firing ranges by soldiers garrisoned in the area. Many of the local boys would stealthily creep up to vantage points in the woods and watch them fire at empty water and petrol cans – until spotted by the soldiers and chased off.

Due to the ever increasing bomber raids over the towns and villages, steps were taken to provide emergency facilities in the event of major damage to houses and property. One provision that was built in the Playing Field was an emergency brick-built oven, but this was never, fortunately, required to be used.

***Loose Council School during World War 2.....**an underground air raid shelter was constructed in the front area of the school. It is now filled in. Daily air raids meant that, on the alarm being received by the head master (Mr Waldron), the teachers and children had to stay in these shelters until the 'All Clear' was heard. Time was taken up by us having to learn out 'times tables'. It was not made known to us that four of the biggest boys were seated near the entrance to dig us out in the event of a bomb falling near, or on, the shelter.*

We were taught how to dive under our tables when the V1 flying bombs were heard flying over. These small pilotless rocket planes, known as 'Doodlebugs' fell out of the sky and exploded when their rocket motors stopped. One fell on a house in Lancet Lane very near to the school, and although a lot of damage was done to surrounding properties, nobody was injured.

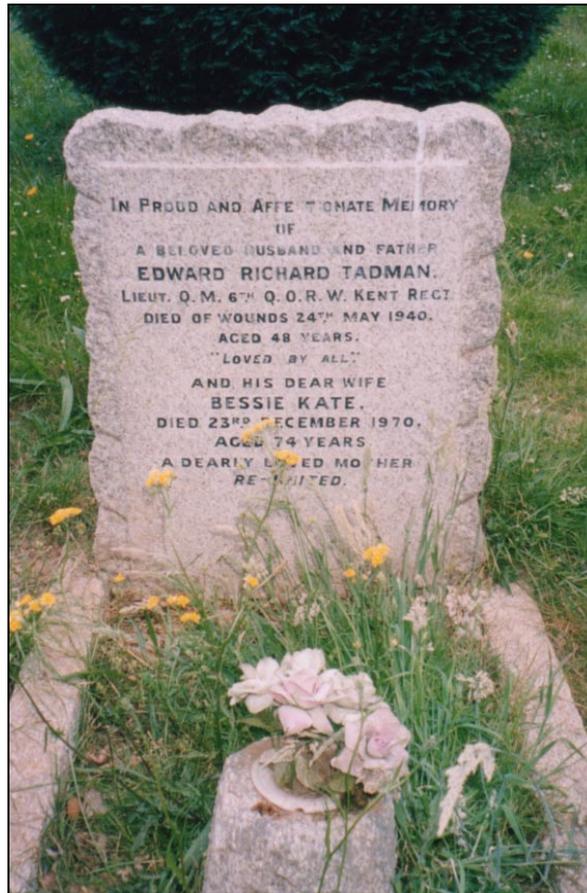
In the evenings the school premises were used for training members of the Home Guard – now humorously called 'Dads Army' by programme makers. Various pieces of their equipment were left and stored in the school; not iceably, wooden rifles....”

Edward Richard Tadman (continued)

1901 Census

18 Westwell (?) Road, Milton, Christchurch, Gravesend

Edward F Tadman	Head	32	District Agent Lower Fridnoly Sodity!!	Born Wrotham
Rose Tadman	Wife	32	(Friendly Society!)	Born East Malling
Edward R Tadman	Son	9		Born Canterbury
Annie Tadman	Dau	7		Born Gravesend
Rose Tadman	Dau	5		Born Chatham
Violet Tadman	Dau	4		Born Gravesend



The grave 25 June 2004

Private Philip Edward Taylor

6th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (6348294)

Died: Sunday 26 March 1944 (aged 27)
Resting Place: Cassino War Cemetery, Italy (V111.F.8)
Est.dob: 1917

Philip was the son of Dr Leonard Herbert & Truda Taylor of *Loose*. Nothing is yet known about Philip, but his father appears on the 1901 census as having been a student at a residential school in Surrey. He was aged 15 at the time of the census, which puts his year of birth at 1886, and he was born at St James', Kensington, London.



Lance Cpl. Stephen Frederick Wickens

10th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment (11618)

Died: Sunday 29 September 1918 (aged 27)
Resting Place: Perth Cemetery (ChinaWall), Zillebeke, Ieper (I.J.22)
Est.d.o.b :1891
Enlisted: 1915

Stephen was born at Linton and his parents, were Mr & Mrs E Wickens. His wife E.P.Wickens lived at **10 Leeds cottages, Hadlow**, with two little daughters at the time of his death.

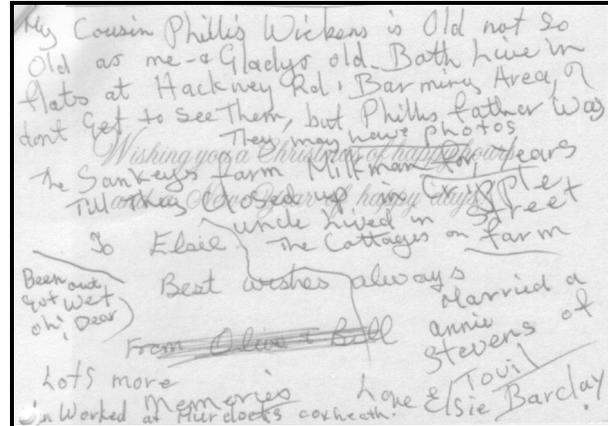
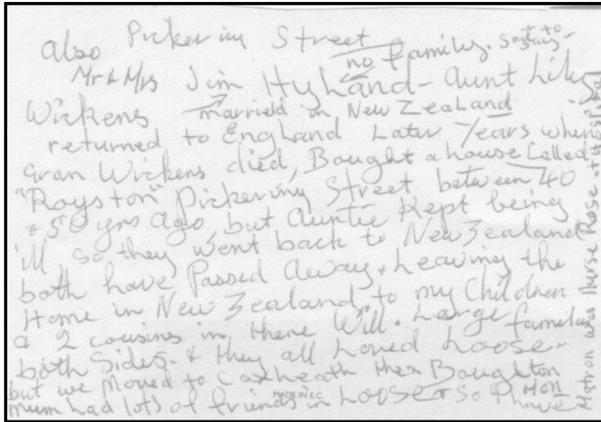
Stephen had joined the Colours on 14 December 1915 and went to France 9 April 1916. He was wounded on 10 June 1917 and returned to France 29 March 1918 – being killed 11 days later.

Elsie Barclay (nee Wickens) is an elderly lady often seen wandering around Loose, who has many memories of her 90 years in and around the area. Stephen was her uncle. The late Brenda Cording of the Loose Area History Society decided to write to Elsie (who lives in Mangravel) to try and elicit some of Elsie's memories, and here is her response to Brenda's letter – exactly as she wrote it – digging deep into her mind for random memories:

*“26/1/2002 – from Elsie Barclay – was Wickens. I was [in] service for years at Redcroft Loose Near Swan Inn.. Thank you ever so much for your very welcome letter & hope you are keeping well, as I had not forgotten & had hoped when this weather does improve in Spring I intend to get in back bedroom etc where so many memories are stored here & there, & now I'm getting old it takes an effort to go into them cold rooms so I won't forget when I can get round to it I've got it all in memories even if a few cards are to be found; later on, as I'm a hoarder & not very tidy, now I'm nearly 90 years, so of course to tired to Rumage. But I'll try to tell you lots one day, as I know lots especially the lovely old Valley & Bockingford Arms. One of my Dads faverite pubs where the Wickens family often gathered, cousins Wickens & Yorkes on my mother side, when we were kids. The fencing [?] cousin of mine Stanley “Bill” Yorke of Dean Street Farleigh could have something about Loose, my uncle Setphen Wickens name [is] on Memorial in the little Church Yard opposite the Church, died first World War. Mr Hood, Newsagent new all my large family well. Most aunts and uncles long since died, uncle Len worked for Major Thomas farm Boughton Lancet Lane, but long since died. Alan Maynard of Loose near Walnut Tree Inn new uncle Earn Wickens [Stephen's father?], who worked for Sankey's Dairy & lived Cripple Street. Alan may have some photos of Loose. Granny Yorke lives **Fir Tree Cottages** belong to Mr Relf – milkman. Springetts Farm opposite. [I have a picture] Nr Isolation Hospital, where I was born in my pram in the grounds, if I can find it. Jack Laurence Newsagent friends [of] dad. Ambulance Driver Horse & Cart”*

Stephen Frederick Wickens (continued)

Elsie also wrote a postcard to Brenda Cording.



It is not easy to see where the script begins and ends, but a rough translation is as follows:

"My cousin Phillis Wickens is old, not so old as me – & Gladys old. Both live in flats at Hackney Road, Barming Area. I don't get to see them, but Phillis' father was the Sankey's farm Milkman for years till they closed up. They may have photos. Uncle lived in the cottages on Cripple Street Farm. To Elsie. Best wishes always. Married Annie Stevens of Tovil. Lots more memories. I worked at Murdock's Coxheath. Love Elsie Barclay. (Been out Got wet. Oh! Dear)"

"Pickering Street – also Mr & Mrs Jim Hyland – Aunt Lily Wickens married in New Zealand returned to England later, bought house called "Royston" Pickering Street between 40 – 50 years ago, but Auntie kept being ill so they went back to New Zealand. Both have passed away & leaving the home in New Zealand to my children & 2 cousins in there will. Large family both sides & they all loved Loose. But we moved to Coxheath then Boughton. Mum had lots of friends in Loose. So I have no family sad to say. Matron was Nurse Rose. At the hospital."

And so it is clear that this large family needs sorting out by some means or other! I have been unable to trace the family on the 1901 census.



Private Edwin Bert Wightwick

7th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment (G/12992)

Died: Monday 9 April 1917 (aged 39)

Memorial Place: Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France (Bay 6)

Est.d.o.b: 1878

Edwin, (known variously as Eddie or Bert) was the son of Edwin & Emily Wightwick of *Park View, Loose (now 575 Loose Road)* . His wife was Emily Matilda and they too, lived at *Park View, Loose*. For 22 years prior to the war Edwin was employed at the Golden Boot on Gabriel's Hill, which is not surprising since his father was a bootmaker. Edwin was killed during the advance on Arras and was buried on the field by the chaplain.

Emily outlived him by 25 years and was buried at Loose on 7 April 1942

1901 Census

Loose Road

Edwin Wightwick	Head	54	Bootmaker	Born Robertsbridge, Sussex
Emily Wightwick	Wife	55		Born Cranbrook
Emily M Wightwick	Dau	18		Born Staplehurst
Edwin B Wightwick	Son	23	Boot Finisher	Born Maidstone



Captain Charles John Wintour

H.M.S. Tipperary Royal Navy

Died: Thursday 1 June 1916, aged 44
Resting Place: Portsmouth Naval Memorial (10)
Est.d.o.b: 1872

Charles was the fourth son of the Reverend Fitzgerald & Mrs Wintour of *High Hoyland, Barnsley, Yorks.*. His wife was Katherine (Kathleen) Mary Keyes. Her name appears variously spelt, but as, in various letters which have come to hand, she signs herself as Kathleen, this is the name we will use in this profile of the family. Charles and Kathleen lived in *Pickering Cottage, Loose*

Charles was captain of the battleship *SS Tipperary* which was sunk in the North Sea during the battle of Jutland. He had joined the *Britannia* as a cadet in 1885 (aged 14) and in 1904 was appointed First Lt and navigator of the battleship *Swiftsure*. In the following year he took Commander's duty as well and was given the acting rate until his promotion in 1905. He became Captain of Destroyers to the Fourth Flotilla on his promotion to captain in July 1913 and had been with the Grand Fleet in that capacity since the beginning of the war. He was leading the flotilla in the *Tipperary* when she was sunk on May 31st 1916.

The Battle of Jutland in which Charles was to lose his life was regarded by many, as the greatest head-to-head battle ever fought between modern battleships, when over 100,000 sailors manning some 250 fighting ships clashed in the North Sea. To this day, the result is still disputed.

On paper it looked a very one-sided contest: the British with twenty-eight battleships and nine battle cruisers, the Germans with sixteen and five respectively, plus a squadron of pre-dreadnoughts. These numbers do not include the vast fleet of smaller support vessels that made up the entire naval force of both fleets.

A.J.P. Taylor (*Oxford History of England 1914-1945*) sums up the battle very simply:

"In the spring of 1916 the Germans called off unrestricted submarine warfare. As a sort of psychological compensation, their battle fleet began provocative sweeps on the North Sea. The British Grand Fleet responded to the challenge. On 31 May, Beatty [Admiral David Beatty] commanding the British battle cruisers, encountered his German opposites. A running engagement drew him under the guns of the German High Seas Fleet. Beatty swung away and drew the Germans, in their turn, onto the British Grand Fleet, under Jellicoe [John Jellicoe, commander in Chief grand Fleet] which was at sea some fifty miles northwards. At about 6pm there took place the only battle between two great modern fleets ever fought in European waters. It lasted little more than five minutes. The German admiral turned away, discharging torpedoes as he did so. Jellicoe turned away also, to avoid the deadly stream. Half an hour later the German Fleet reappeared. More shots were exchanged. Then the Germans vanished again, this time for good. The Battle of Jutland was over."

Charles John Wintour (Continued)

The greatest battle between modern battleships all over in five minutes? The Germans certainly moved quickly to claim victory and, in terms of ships and men lost, this could not be disputed. Their press was gripped with something approaching euphoria while the Kaiser rushed to the dockside to greet Scheer and Hipper. The British, not quite so sure how to react or what to say, issued a flat communiqué on June 3rd which appeared to confirm defeat. It read (Ian Johnston & Rob McAuley in “*Battleships*”):

“On the afternoon of Wednesday 31 May [1916] a naval engagement took place off the coast of Jutland. The British ships on which the brunt of the fighting fell were the Battle-cruiser Fleet and some cruisers and light cruisers supported by four fast battleships. Among those the losses were heavy. The German fleet, aided by poor visibility, avoided prolonged action with our main forces, and soon after these appeared on the scene the enemy returned to port, though not before receiving severe damage from our battleships. The battle-cruisers Queen Mary, Indefatigable, Invincible and the cruisers Defence and Black Prince were sunk. The Warrior was disabled, and after being towed for some time had to be abandoned by her crew. It is also known that the destroyers Tipperary, Turbulent, Fortune, Sparrowhawk and Ardent were lost and six others are not yet accounted for. No British battleships or light cruisers were sunk. The enemy’s losses were serious. At least one battle-cruiser was destroyed and one severely damaged: one battleship reported sunk by our destroyers during a night attack: two light cruisers were disabled and probably sunk. The exact number of enemy destroyers disposed of during the action cannot be ascertained with any certainty, but it must have been large. – Office Admiralty Communiqué of June 3rd 1916”

A contemporary newspaper reported thus:

“The two most powerful navies in the world were limping home tonight (May 31st) after what sailors are already calling the greatest naval battle in history. Just who won is not clear, with the Royal Navy claiming it has routed the German Fleet and driven it off the seas, while in Berlin they are talking about the destruction of British naval power....”

The gentler words of S R Gibbons & P Morican “*World War One*” offer a peaceful prelude to the battle:

The afternoon of this day (31 May) was warm and sunny. Men and officers basked in the sun on the quarterdecks. As they listened to the water lapping on the hulls the war must have seemed far away. Even when a bugle sounded ‘Action Stations’ there would probably have been no undue worry, as it was quite normal to carry out the drill for action while on a sweep for German submarines and warships. But the great Battle of Jutland was on, and 250 warships were racing into action at high speed....”

Whether “Jutland” was the greatest battle of European waters or the greatest fiasco ever, it was the theatre of war which was to claim the life of one of our men of Loose.



HMS Tipperary

Charles John Wintour (Continued)

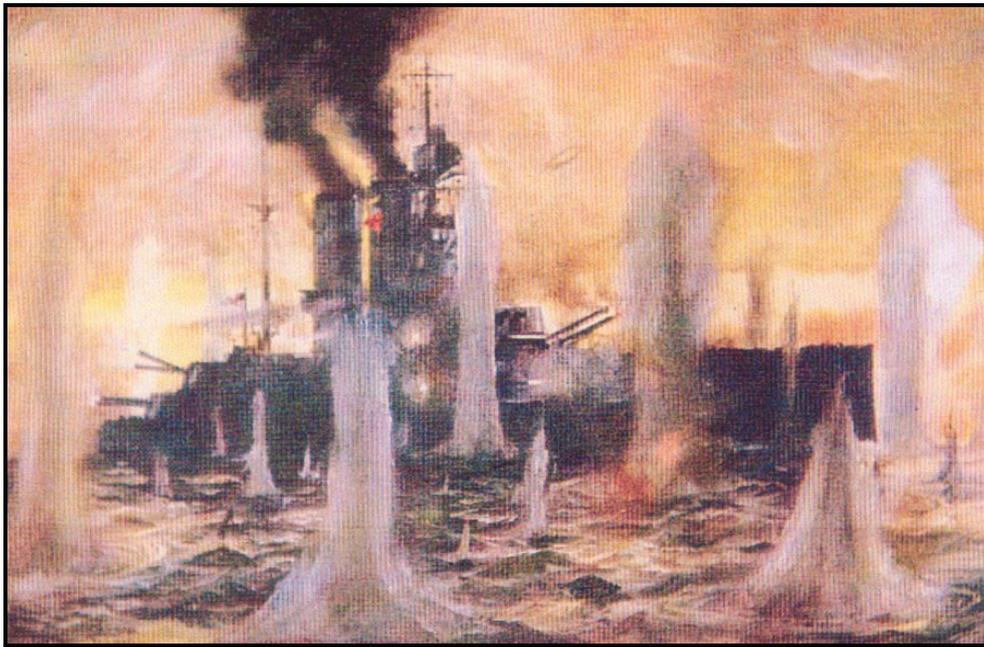


British battle-cruisers on night manoeuvres prior to Battle of Jutland

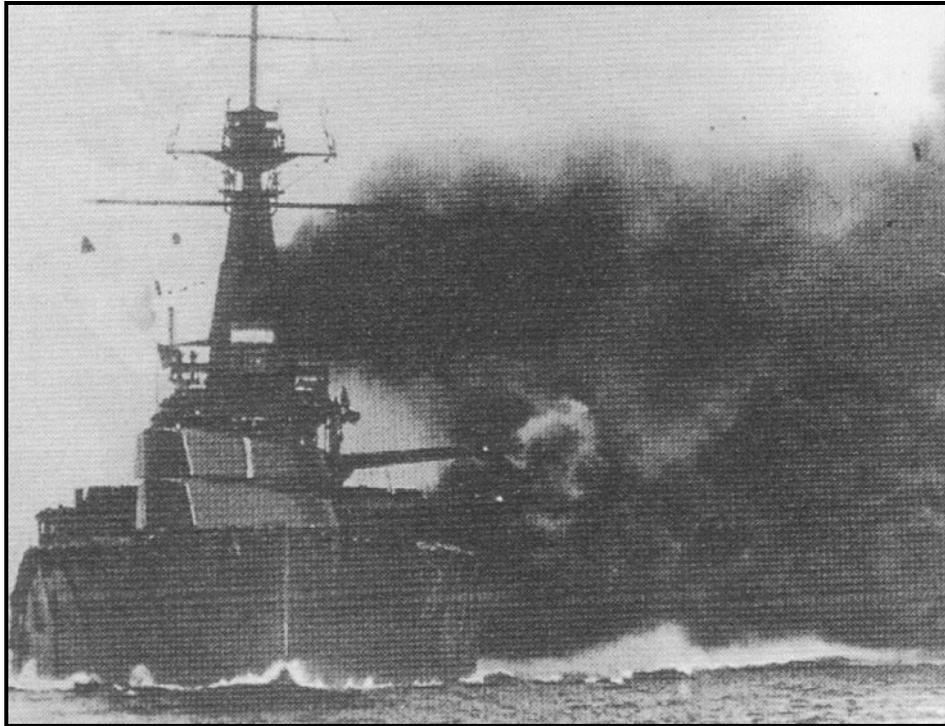


Scene of Battle of Jutland

Charles John Wintour (Continued)



H.M.S. Warspite at Jutland



A Royal Naval warship opens fire during the North Sea Battle

Charles John Wintour (continued)

Kathleen & Charles married in 1900. She was the daughter of General Sir Roger Keyes. During the war she was a part time nurse & masseuse working at Howard de Walden Hospital in Maidstone and at Hayle Place. She bore the cost of all her training and when qualified, gave the benefit of her services entirely without charge.

Kathleen was born in Kensington in December 1878, and at the time of her death in 1956, aged 79, she lived in Goudhurst. Her will mentions a Rosemary Russell of *Drayton Gardens, London SW10*, . . . “*a single woman and lawful daughter*”—one of those entitled to share Kathleen’s estate, but no evidence of this Rosemary has yet come to light.

In the mid thirties Kathleen became heavily involved in a Domestic Training Scheme. Parish Magazines spanning the years between May 1934 to August 1935 carry the following accounts of progress:

(May 1934)

“A Domestic Training Centre . . . is proposed at what was recently a Canning Factory adjoining Pickering Cottage and belonging to Mrs Wintour, to whose generosity, enterprise and inspiration the whole idea of this scheme is due. It is proposed to give expert training in different branches of domestic science to about 10 young men (at a time) who come from Jarrow, one of those dead and derelict places in County Durham—one of the “Town without a future”. The normal period of intensive training will be three months, so that as many as 40 of these young men can be fitted for a career in the course of one year, and employment is guaranteed them at the end of their training. The services of a skilled instructor have been engaged. This Centre will be worked in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, with the Personal Service League, and also with similar organisations in the North of England. At the time of writing, extensive structural operations are in progress, and it is not possible for me at present to announce the date of the formal opening of the Centre, which we hoped at first, would take place about the middle of this month. At any rate, I trust that I have said enough about the scheme to secure your sympathy in what is essentially a practical effort to secure regular employment for a few of the rising generation of Englishmen at present living in one of those stricken areas where, even when things in general are looking brighter elsewhere, as they certainly are now, there is absolutely no hope of work for years to come. Many generous gifts of money for the Centre have already been received and I think I am right in saying that what our own parish will be chiefly asked to provide will be practical things such as bits of furniture, clothes etc. and also, if possible, to give these young men some chance of recreation and, generally, take a kindly interest in them.”

(June 1934)

“Mrs Bury and I have just returned from welcoming our first contingent of young men from Jarrow and Durham, who arrived this evening (May 22nd 1934) , rather weary after travelling since 7am this morning. I am sure we all hope they will be very happy here at the Training Centre, and I do appeal to you to be kind to them, to pay them occasional visits and find out, perhaps, how you may increase their happiness - for instance, by lending or giving them books and papers and games or by supplementing their rather scanty stock of domestic necessaries”

(July 1934)

“I must again draw your attention to the work of our training centre and to Mrs Wintour’s appeal for practical assistance which appears elsewhere. I earnestly trust that many of you will from time to time avail yourself of this simple way of helping on the good cause by giving orders for food and meals from the centre. Those of us who have already done so gladly testify to the excellence of the cooking. I was very pleased to see so many of you present at the official opening on May 31st and I trust that those of you who were unable to be there will have read the high commendations of the scheme uttered on this occasion by Sir Reginald Tyrwhitt, who opened the Centre, and by our member, Mr Bosom, which appeared in the local press”

(August 1934)

“Up to the present ten generous friends have come forward offering to pay 6d a week for one year towards the training of one pupil at the centre. Two of these have paid for the whole year and others for six months. Fifteen more subscribers at 6d per week are still required. Mrs Bury suggests that perhaps a few might like to club together or collect 6d a week”

Charles John Wintour (Continued)

(October 1934)

“Those of you who are interested in the work of our USTC will rejoice to know that all the first batch of Trainees (except one who is staying on for a second course of instruction) have been placed in good positions, and we have received capital accounts of them. This speaks volumes for the excellence of the training they are getting. A second batch of 12 young men are now in residence and funds are very urgently needed if the work is to continue and become permanent. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Mr H J Clarke, the members of the Loose Invicta FC and the Loose Vale FC for so kindly providing these boys with kit and tackle to enable them to play some friendly matches with neighbouring clubs.”

(June 1935)

“I am sorry that owing to the date I shall not be able to give you any account of the proceedings of the first AGM of our USTC at the Town Hall on May 31st when, under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Dover, and before a distinguished company, including 3 MPs, Mrs Wintour will be giving a report of the results up-to-date of her great adventure of Faith. All the trainees who have shown any real aptitude for cooking and other branches of domestic service have been placed in good situations and satisfactory reports have been received of their conduct and ability. The demand for such service still exceeds the supply and so convinced is Mrs Wintour of the importance of the training these young men receive, that at the meeting, the advisability of moving into larger quarters and thereby increasing the number of trainees will be seriously discussed. More financial support is urgently needed.”

(August 1935)

“USTC is Closing during this month to re-open on a much larger scale and in far more advantageous and commodious quarters at the end of September. Negotiations nearing completion for acquiring lease on St Michael’s Grange, Tenterden for a number of years. It is a large house, for many years a prep school and with accommodation for 50 trainees at a time as well the necessary staff and has excellent out buildings and 10 acres of garden, fields and orchards and beautifully situated. Men will be trained in gardening as well”

In the 1940s, Kathleen sold part of her land to the Loose Swiss Scouts for use as their new Headquarters. She wrote to Jack Barcham Green on 2 August 1941, from her address: “Invercreran”, Fasnacloch, By Appin, Argyllshire:

“I am glad you have got the old barns, and that they should be used again for a form of Social Service Centre. I hated having them go to pieces – I think you have a bargain. As it was originally all cow sheds, pig Stys, and stable, I widened, and re-roofed, concreted, and boarded the floors. The gas stove cost £28, and is still perfectly good, you may be able to sell it if you do not require it, - The Jam table cost £68.

There is electric light and power fitted – Hot water boiler, Mills put it in – The pipes split in the frost 18 months ago, you will have to have them done before turning on the water.

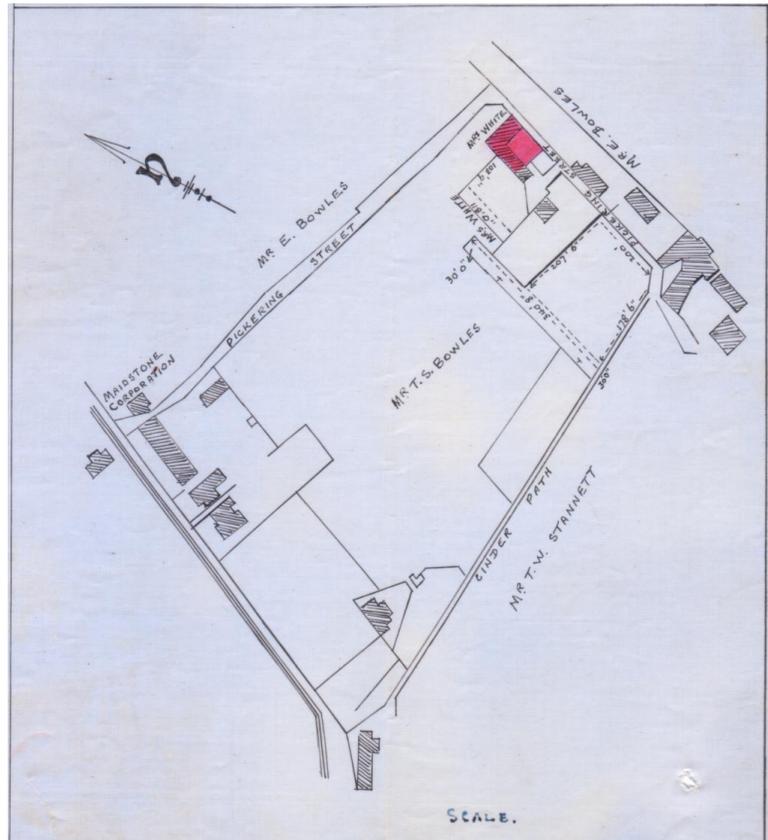
If you really want the dormitory I had for my boys as a drill hall, I have suggested to Mrs Cole she gets the furniture all removed into the small boarded room. If it may stay there till I come down, and get a room at Goudhurst to put it in until I get my house back. I have most of my gardening tools in London for my boys allotments, but the ones there can be used. There is a table, a long one, covered in blue, which you can have, and a square one broken.

I am asking Mrs Cole to pack the fruit bottles in the tea chests. The caps can go in the sack. I would like the Rail to collect the boxes of bottles, if you would kindly let this be done – one is already labelled ready for despatch.

I could dispose of the 2 arm chairs, if a reasonable price was offered – and the bureau, and cupboard – old oak.

Charles John Wintour (continued)

The soak away is 15ft deep. There should be a can of elsan fluid, but contents of the pan have to be buried. I had a pit on Mr Bowles farm. The Geyser is alright as far as I know, as I used to live in the small room prior to 1934”



The area marked in pink on the map (above) indicates the area of the property being sold.

The sale didn't go particularly smoothly and several letters passed between Jack Barcham Green and Kathleen. A postcard from Kathleen – undated and addressed 47 Harrington Gardens, S.W.7 reads thus:

“I am coming to Loose on Monday. I have got a day off. Re the jars, which you say can “only be stored at my risk”, I beg to point [out to] you it is entirely your doing they were not cleared last September – when I thought I was letting the place before you got [it?]. Mrs Cole and I spent a day putting these all in their sizes, varieties, and listing them. I took a sample of each to a firm when I got back from Scotland and they were coming to collect them. When I came to Loose I found they had all been thrown out of the loft [and] a large number broken. So I had to cancel the offer and asked Mrs Cole to sort them again – list and pack them. When I came down to move my things I found this not done because my tea chest and boxes had been taken and Mrs Cole had not got in to do it – so it was impossible to move them – and for a second time entirely due to your method of dealing with property which did not belong to you at that time. I had to lose another sale of them – not exactly carrying out the Scout Motto!! I think – I trust you will arrange to let Mrs Cole pack them on Monday next.”

Charles John Wintour (continued)

Pickering Cottage

Pickering Cottage is thought to be either Georgian or early Victorian – we know very little about it. In 1840, at the time of the tithe apportionments it was owned by Henry Allnutt and occupied by John Wilson – a bachelor of independent means who had two servants. By the time of the 1851 census the house was occupied by the Russell family. We know that in June 1872 the freehold property was up for sale by auction.

At this time, Pickering Street was surrounded by hop and fruit gardens and the population was 1,464. Letters were delivered on foot from Maidstone – at 7am and again at 11.10am. Very precise! Even as late as 1966/7 the area was surrounded by cherry orchards. By 1881 the Masters family was in occupation and by 1905 the house was occupied by Kenneth & Miss McAlpine. In 1912 the property was once again put up for auction and this may well have been the time when Charles & Kathleen Wintour purchased it. They had been married for five years by this time, and Kathleen was certainly living there when Charles died in 1916.



Pickering cottage in 1928

Geoffrey Day, who owned the house from 1934 to 1950 recalled that he purchased the property from Mrs Wintour so we know that she was still in residence in 1934. Mr Day also recalled that the Cottage was then always known as ‘the house next door to the jam factory’, where Katherine made jams to help the needy people during the depression. This ‘jam factory’, as we have seen, is now the HQ of the Loose Swiss Scouts.

Katherine was certainly in residence in 1924 and in 1928 she put it up for sale again.

The sale particulars which were published at this time give an interesting description of the property. It was described as an attractive modernised two-story detached freehold Country Cottage. It also had an excellent Grass Orchard adjoining the

Charles John Wintour (continued)

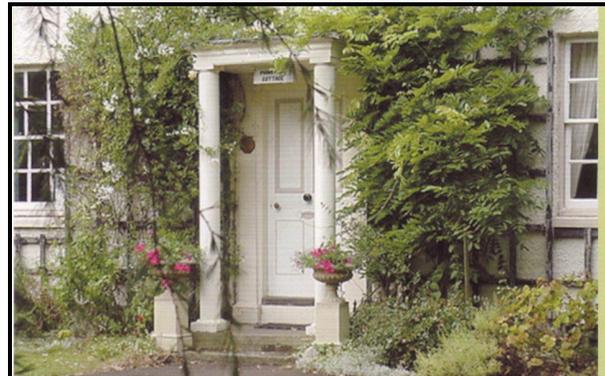
property comprising about one acre, 0 rods and 6 perches, with about 180 feet of building frontage. [The houses in Northleigh Close (which includes my own) are now built upon this orchard.]



Pickering Cottage in the 1980s (photo M.J.Chapman)



October 2002 (photo M.J.Chapman)



Front Door (photo LAA) – date unknown

The Myth

It has always been commonly thought that the Battle of Jutland was planned in the front parlour of Pickering Cottage (and one still hears vague mutterings to this effect today). However, nothing has ever been discovered to substantiate this myth. But there is usually a grain of truth in such tales and legends, and two particular ‘grains’ are, it seems, at play here:

- The fact that Charles lost his life in the Battle of Jutland & lived in Pickering Cottage.
- Admiral Sir Roger Keys was Charles’ father-in-law and must surely have visited on occasion.

Sir Roger had not, however, any hand in the Battle of Jutland, but two years later he was heavily involved in the Zeebrugge Raid at Ostende. It is quite possible, indeed, quite probable, that *this* was the venture discussed in private at Pickering Cottage – if any such conversation ever took place. Whether Zeebrugge was discussed or not, we can be certain that Jutland was *discussed*, especially after Kathleen was widowed. But it certainly wasn’t *planned* in the front parlour

Charles John Wintour (continued)

Mount Wintour

Located in the Kananaskis River Valley east of the north end of Lower Kananaskis Lake, Alberta, Mount Wintour rises to 2700m (8859ft.) It is not a high peak by Canadian Rockies standards but is quite striking. In its immediate area there are some 32 mountains named after WW1 warships and dozens of others named for Battle of Jutland related admirals etc. There are a number of others mountains named after Canadian, British and French generals and other servicemen of lower ranks. This is because the inter-provincial boundary between Alberta and British Columbia was being surveyed and the area mapped during the time that the First World War was being waged.



Mount Wintour from the northwest on highway #40



Mount Wintour from the south on highway #40

This particular mountain, named in 1922 for Captain Charles Wintour, is an interesting mountain, with steep slopes cut by numerous steep drainages which create fascinating snow highlights in the spring. Its picturesque, vertical cliffs are best seen from Highway #40, just south of the junction with the Smith Dorrien Trail. It was first ascended in 1968 by Glen Boles. Opal Ridge, Grizzly Peak, Mount Wintour and Gap Mountain are part of a high ridge that lies to the west of the Opal Range.

Although many of the prominent peaks must have been assigned names by the aboriginal people, few of these remain. Other peaks have been named for explorers, surveyors, scientists and all manner of people. Much of the survey work was done during and immediately following the First World War when patriotism was at its height, and many of the names which were chosen were related to this conflict. More comprehensive details can be found at www.peakfinder.com

Sources: CWGC, Kent Messenger, Loose Threads, Scout Archives, Parish Magazines, Internet, Census Returns, Maidstone Peace Booklet 1919

THE FORCES IN WHICH THEY SERVED

Land Forces

Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

- Duncanson, Second Lt. Ian Ferguson (8th Battalion)

Australian Army Medical Corps

- Spurgeon, Private Frederick Charles (179) (3rd Field Ambulance)

Bedfordshire Regiment

- Richardson, Private Eric Leslie (318559) (2nd Battalion)

Dragoon Guards

- Jones, Corporal Reginald Edward Jones (2425) (7th)

East Kent Regiment (The Buffs)

- Blackmore, Private Bertie Mercer (L/6857) ("A" Coy. 2nd Battalion)
- Langley, Private Alfred Vernon (TF/203992) (7th Battalion)
- Longley, Private Fred Ernest (G/21762) ("D" Coy. 10th Battalion)
- Martin, Lance Sergeant George F (6292525) (1st Battalion)
- Perriman, Private Hugh (G/5139) (8th Battalion)

East Lancashire Regiment

- Pettitt, Private W C (51685) (9th Battalion)

Essex Regiment

- Fulkes, Second Lt. John Greville ("D" Coy. 3rd Battalion attd. 13th)

Hertfordshire Regiment

- Golden, Corporal Frederick (265537)

Hyderabad Regiment (19th)

- Manning, Second Lieut. Norman W Elliott (10th Battalion)

London District Labour Centre

- Perriman, Private Frank Benjamin (83158) (Labour Corps.)

Machine Gun Corps. (Infantry)

- Broad, Private George William (19078)

Middlesex Regiment

- Masters, Private Victor (G/41441) (2nd Battalion)
- Meakin, Corporal Frank (6207916) (1st Battalion)

Northamptonshire Regiment

- Perriman, Private Frank Benjamin (32911) (1st Labour Coy.)

Pioneer Corps

- Quested, Corporal Harry (13029593)

Land Forces (continued)

Reconnaissance Corps, R.A.C.

- Pierce, Lieut. Stanley Osbert (240096) (46th Regiment)

Royal Army medical Corps

- Hadler, Corporal Lee (52103)
- Pronger, Corporal P

Royal Army Service Corps

- Allcorn, Private George Charles (M2/149628)
- Cloke, Lieut. Norman (163188)
- Golding, Driver Harry Thomas (T/10693742)
- Smythe, Captain Edward Algernon (56070)

Royal Artillery

- Collins, Lance Corporal George (84877) (Army Catering Corps)
-

Royal Field Artillery

- Antrum, William Edward
- Doughty, Sergeant Frank (31218) (107th Battalion 24th Bde.)

Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)

- Hare, Second Lieut. Owen Stewart (129412) (1st Srecial Service Corps)
- Kember, Private Lewis John (G/12522) (4th Battalion)

Royal Garrison Artillery

- Ezra, Captain David (192nd Siege Battalion)

Royal Scots Guards

- Jupp, Corporal T W

Royal Sussex Regiment

- Norris, Private William Edward (G/12738) (7th Battalion)
- Stevenson, Lance Corporal Arthur L (G/16346) (9th Battalion)
- Wightwick, Private Edwin Bert (G/12992) (7th Battalion)

Royal Warwickshire Regiment

- Clark, Private Bertie William (697) (2nd Battalion)

Land Forces (continued)

Royal West Kent Regiment (The Queen's Own)

- Apps, Private Montague (266725) (7th Battalion)
- Barker, Second Lt. Charles Ivo (Number not known) (6th Battalion)
- Bonner, Corporal Edward Victor (G/8202) (10th Battalion)
- Dadson, Private Christopher (G/4983) (1st Battalion)
- Gould, Lance Sergeant John Hugh J (201224) (3rd/4th Battalion)
- Goulds, Private John Albert (6347496) (1st Battalion)
- Grey, Private John Gladstone (G/6866) (6th Battalion)
- Grey, Sergeant William Ewart Gladstone (G/6535) (10th Bttn.)
- Gurr, Private William Charles (G/22080) (7th Battalion)
- Hodge, Private George (201290) (2nd/4th Battalion)
- Jenner, Lance Sergeant Arthur (G/534) ("C" Coy. 6th Battalion)
- Scull, Private Gordon Anthony (63464600) (6th Battalion)
- Scull, Leonard
- Tadman, Lieut. Edward Richard (90545) (6th Battalion)
- Taylor, Private Philip Edward (6348294) (6th Battalion)
- Wickens, Lance Corporal Stephen F (11618) (10th Battalion)

Royal West Surrey Regiment (The Queen's)

- Moon, Private Frank Herbert (T/207018) (11th Battalion)

Suffolk Regiment

- Coulter, Corporal William Edward r (290358) (1st/5th Battalion)

Voluntary Aid Detachment

- Duncanson, Una Marguerite

Welsh Regiment

- Martin, Lance Corporal Charles (12182) (8th Battalion)

West Kent Yeomanry (Queen's Own)

- Coulter, Private Arthur James (245346)

West Riding Regiment (Duke of Wellington's)

- Duncanson, Second Lt. Roy (3rd Battalion attd. 9th Battalion)



The British Chain of Command

Establishments changed as the wars went on. Terminology varied between arms; a company-sized body of cavalry was called a squadron, and a similar body of artillery was called a battery. The word 'regiment' had no tactical significance in the infantry, though different battalions of a given regiment might find themselves in the same brigade. Confusingly, artillery batteries were grouped into brigades, although these artillery brigades were designated by roman numerals in an effort to minimise confusion.

The BEF was effectively one army in 1914, becoming five by 1918. A simplified outline is given below:

Army	Commanded by a General and comprised of about four corps, but precise numbers depended on the army's role.
Corps	Commanded by a Lieutenant-General and usually comprised three or four divisions.
Division	Commanded by a Major-General and usually had three brigades.
Brigade	Commanded by a Brigadier-General and had four battalions to winter 1917 and three thereafter.
Battalion	Commanded by a Lieutenant-Colonel and had four companies.
Company	Commanded by a Major or Captain and had four platoons.
Platoon	Commanded by a Subaltern , a Lieutenant or Second-Lieutenant and had four sections.
Section	Commanded by a Corporal with 8-10 men.



Air Forces

9 Squadron R.A.F.

- Larkin, Air Mechanic 1st Class H. (20151)

105 Squadron (Women's Aux)

- Peach, Leading Aircraftwoman Gwendoline (2069400)

142 Squadron Volunteer Reserve

- Lucking, Sergeant John Harold (1254971)

158 Squadron Volunteer Reserve

- Bray, Flight Sergeant Kenneth Arthur (1323878)

269 Squadron

- Culver, Flight Lt. Alfred Charles (43198)

431 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron Volunteer Reserve

- Mercer, Pilot Officer Robert E (148054)

625 Squadron Volunteer Reserve

- Nolan, Flight Sergeant Francis Thomas (1397479)

2923 Squadron Volunteer Reserve

- Back, Leading Aircraftman Vivian John (1267263)

First Glider Pilot Regiment A.A.C.

- Graefe, Lieut. Reginald Lionel (235913)

Kingsnorth Air Station (Royal Naval Air Service)

- Jenner, Aircraftman 2nd Class Albert (F/22804)

Volunteer Reserve (no squadron mentioned)

- Body, Sergeant James Joseph (1467695)

Sea Forces

H.M.S. Cornwall

- Heather, Able Seaman Ronald C.W. (C/SSX 20599)

H.M.S. Cressy

- Styance, Stoker 1st Class Arthur (RFR/CH/B/9385)

H.M.S.Hood

- Meakin, Ordinary Seaman Harry (P/JX 261781)
- Lane, Shipwright 2nd Class Cyril Frederick (P/MX 46660)
- Lane, Able Seaman Herbert F William (P/SR 16563)

S.S. Kayeson

- Norman, 4th Engineer Officer Leonard George (Merchant Navy)

H.M.S.Pembroke

- Henley, Chief Petty Officer John (340004) (Victualling)

H.M.S. Princess Irene

- Golden, Leading Stoker James (K/4177)

H.M.S.Raglan

- Cruttenden, Chief Writer Vallance (347357)

H.M.S. Stalker

- Mercer, Sub Lieut. Geoffrey C (Royal Naval Volunteer)

H.M.S. Talisman

- Coulter, Stoker 1st Class Norman George (C/KX 92557)

H.M.S. Tempest

- Lavender, Stoker 1st Class Fred (C/KX 82135)

H.M.S.Tipperary

- Wintour, Captain Charles John

H.M.S. Vanguard

- Apps, Petty Officer Stoker Albert George (k/16660)

Forces Unknown

Bowes, E
Clifford, E J
Coomber, J
Pearson, C M

The Cemeteries and Memorials

Alamein Memorial, Egypt

- Martin, George Frederick (Column 55)

Alexandria (Chatby) Military & War Memorial Cemetery

- Hadler, Lee (C.169)

Alexandria (Hadra) War Memorial Cemetery

- Duncanson, Una Marguerite (B41)

Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

- Kember, Lewis John (Bay 3)
- Moon, Frank Herbert (Bay 2)
- Norris, William Edward (Bay 6)
- Wightwick, Edwin Bert (Bay 6)

Beacon Cemetery, Saily-Laurette, Somme, France

- Ezra, David (1.G.7)

Bethune Town Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

- Barker, Charles Ivo (111.K.1)

Cairo War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt

- Spurgeon, Frederick Charles (B.273)

Cassino War Cemetery, Italy

- Taylor, Phillip Edward (V111.F.8.)

Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent

- Apps, Albert George (23)
- Coulter, Norman George (62.1)
- Golden, James (11)
- Heather, Ronald Charles William (54.2)
- Lavender, Fred (62.2)
- Styance, Arthur (5)

Delhi War Cemetery, India

- Manning, Norman William Elliott (5.J.8)

Doullens Communal Cemetery Extention No.1, Somme, France

- Scull, Gordon Anthony (Plot 7, Row A, Grave 19)

Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Belgium

- Langley, Alfred Vernon (V11.F.9)

Flesquieres Hill British Cemetery, Nord, France

- Gould, John Hugh (V11.B.2)

Florence War Cemetery, Italy

- Golding, Harry Thomas (V.A.14)

The Cemeteries and Memorials (continued)

Gaza War Cemetery, Israel

- Hodge, George (XXX.D.2)

Gillingham (Woodlands) Cemetery, Kent

- Henley, John (Naval 29, 1528)
- Jenner, Albert (Naval 26, 1366)

Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner, Cunchy, Calais, France

- Richardson, Eric Leslie (1V.H.10)

Helles Memorial, Turkey

- Martin, Charles (Panel 140 to 144)

Johannesburg (West Park) Cemetery, Gauteng, South Africa

- Cloke, Norman (Military Section, Grave 209)

Kiel War Cemetery, Germany

- Lucking, John Harold (2.A.13)

Labuan War Cemetery, Malaysia

- Collins, George H (P.C.9)

Lancashire Landing Cemetery, Turkey

- Cruttenden, Vallance (L.70)

La Reunion War Cemetery, Malaysia

- Qusted, Harry (4.A.3)

Lee On Solent Memorial, Hampshire

- Mercer, Geoffrey Carl (Bay 4, Panel 7)

Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

- Jones, Reginald Edward (Panel 1)

Lille Southern Cemetery, Nord, France

- Smythe, Edward Algernon (Plot R, Row C, Grave 29)

London Rifle Brigade Cem, Ploegsteert, Comines-Warneton, Hainaut, Belgium

- Bonner, Edward Victor (11.D.38)

Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

- Blackmore, Bertie Mercer (Panel 15-19)
- Clark, Bertie William (Panel 22-25)

Loose All Saints' Churchyard, Kent

- Antrum, William (Billy) Edward
- Hare, Owen Stewart (N.E.Section)

The Cemeteries and Memorials (continued)

Loose, All Saints' Extension, Kent

- Coulter, William Edward (Near gate, left of path)
- Moore, Aubrey Edward Dunscombe (West of path)
- Peach, Gwendoline (West of path)
- Perriman, Frank Benjamin (West of main path)

Maidstone Cemetery, Kent

- Allcorn, George Charles (1.T.75)
- Tadman, Edward Richard (Plot R.1, Grave 1345)

Marden Cemetery, Kent

- Goulds, John Albert (Section 1, Grave 768)

Mikra British Cemetery, Kalamaria, Greece

- Pettitt, William Charles (473)

Monchy British Cemetery

- Broad, George William (1.D.21)

Ovillers Military Cemetery, Somme, France

- Jenner, Arthur (V11.B.10)

Oxford Road Cemetery, Ieper, Belgium

- Stevenson, Arthur Lionel (1V.F.3)

Perth Cemetery (China Wall), Zillebeke, Ieper, W-Vlaanderen, Belgium

- Wickens, Stephen Frederick (1.J.22)

Phaleron War Cemetery, Greece

- Back, Vivian John (4.B.10)

Poelcapelle British Cemetery, Belgium

- Duncanson, Ian Ferguson (111.D.1)

Pond Farm Cemetery, Heuvelland, W-Vlaanderen, Belgium

- Perriman, Hugh (A.15)

Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Hampshire

- Lane, Cyril Frederick (Panel 56, Column 3)
- Lane, Herbert F William (Panel 48, Column 2)
- Meakin, Harry (Panel 51, Column 1)
- Wintour, Charles John (10)

Pozieres Memorial, Somme, France

- Masters, Victor (Panel 60 & 61)

Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany

- Graefe, Reginald Lionel (32.B.4)

The Cemeteries and Memorials (continued)

Rheinberg War Cemetery, Germany

- Bray, Kenneth Arthur (10.B.25)
- Mercer, Robert Edward (3.C.6)

Ste. Emile Valley Cemetery, Villers-Faucon, Somme, France

- Longley, Fred Ernest (1V.B.7)

Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

- Body, James Joseph (Panel 225)
- Culver, Alfred Charles (Panel 65)

Salerno War Cemetery, Italy

- Pierce, Stanley Osbert (1V.E.1)

St. Pierre Cemetery, Amiens

- Nolan, Francis Thomas (Plot 7, Row B, Grave 11-13)

St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France

- Larkin, Harold (S.11.O.5)

Tancrez Farm Cemetery, Ploegsteert, Comines-Warneton Hainaut, Belgium

- Grey, William Ewart Gladstone (1.H.26)

Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France

- Coulter, Arthur James (Pier & Face 1A)
- Duncanson, Roy (Pier & Face 6A & 6B)
- Fulkes, John Greville (Pier & Face 10D)

Tincourt New British Cemetery, Somme, France

- Grey, John Gladstone (11.F.4)

Tower Hill Memorial, London

- Norman, Leonard George (Panel 6)

Tyne Cot, Zonnebeke, W-Vlaanderen, Belgium

- Apps, Sidney Montague (Panel 106-108)
- Dadson, Christopher (Panel 106-108)

Voormezele Enclosure No.3, Ieper, W.Vlaanderen, Belgium

- Doughty, Frank (X1V.A.20)

Yokohama War Cemetery, Japan

- Meakin, Frank (Section H.D.16)

Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Ieper, W.Vlaanderen, Belgium

- Golden, Frederick (Panel 54-56)
- Gurr, William Charles (Panel 11-13 & 14)