

Robert Charles ELSTON of Teynham
Lance Corporal, 832337, 2/4th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Killed in action 28 February 1943, aged 25

Son of Joseph John and Harriett (née Gates) Elston, Robert was born in Lewisham on 27 April 1917. In early 1938, Robert married Joan Ethel Bray and by the time of the 1939 Register they were living at 10 Poulton House, Lewisham along with their infant son. Robert was working as a general labourer for Lewisham Borough Council.



Robert served in the 2/4th Hants Regiment that formed part of the 128th 'Hampshire' Brigade, part of the 43rd (Wessex) Division. In January 1943, the Brigade left the 43rd Division and joined the 46th (West Riding) Division and the Brigade left Britain with the rest of the 46th Infantry Division, for North Africa, as part of Operation Torch.

The Brigade arrived at Algiers in January, moving to Bone, where it remained until the end of January, when the Brigade moved to Hunt's Gap. In February, despite the men of the 2/4th still training its new recruits, they moved into the line alongside 1/4th Battalion. The Brigade was supported by plenty of artillery and the Churchill tanks of the North Irish Horse. Extensive minefields and heavy dive bombing kept the German tanks at bay.

On 28 February, a pre-dawn attack penetrated the 2/4th battalion's 'B' Company positions, but heroic resistance and the tanks of the North Irish Horse, kept the Germans at bay until dusk, when 'B' Company was overrun. 'C' Company was overrun by German infantry.

On 1 March, the Germans attacked again, and 'D' Company was overrun, but 2/4th Battalion hung on to their remaining positions. On 2 March, the Germans withdrew, and on 5 March the 2/4th Battalion was relieved by the 8th Battalion, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of 36th Brigade of the 78th Battleaxe Division. The 2/4th Battalion had suffered 243 men killed or missing.

Tunis eventually fell and the North African Campaign was over in May 1943.

On 30 March 1943 it was reported that Robert had been reported missing on 28 February 1943. It was not until 22 August 1944 that it was confirmed he was killed in action on 28 February 1943.

Robert is remembered on the Medjez-El-Bab Memorial, situated near Majaz al Bab, Tunisia.

In 1952, Joan married Norman Boorman of 2 Triggs Row, in 1952. Norman's brother, Leslie, was killed in action in 1945.

The Society is indebted to Robert's son, also called Robert, for his kind permission to allow us to reproduce the portrait photograph.



Soldiers from 2/4th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment scale an obstacle during 'toughening up' training in wintry conditions at Watlington in Kent, 20 January 1943.

George Ivan DRURY of Teynham
Leading Aircraftman, 1265610, 601 Squadron,
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Killed in action on 31 March 1943, aged 20

George was the son of Sidney James and Edith May (née Harris) Drury, both farm workers of 17 Orchard View, Teynham. They later lived at 3 Donald Moor Avenue, Teynham.

At the time of George's death, 601 Squadron were at a landing field at El Hamma, Tunisia, which had been liberated by the Allies just 2 days before. Suitable only for use by fighter aircraft it was literally just a landing strip next to an oasis. It had been built by the French in 1941 and designated for emergency use only. It had previously served mainly as a landing ground for Italian fighter units.

George is remembered on the Malta Memorial. This was unveiled in 1954 by HM The Queen to commemorate almost 2,300 airmen who lost their lives during the Second World War whilst serving with the Commonwealth Air Forces flying from bases in Austria, Italy, Sicily, islands of the Adriatic and Mediterranean, Malta, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, West Africa, Yugoslavia and Gibraltar, and who have no known grave

Extract from "The War Years 1939 - 1945 in Faversham and District"

April 1943

The villages of Doddington and Newnham raised, by special efforts, £215 for Mrs Churchill's Aid to Russia Fund.

Extract from "The War Years 1939 - 1945 in Faversham and District"

May 1943

In a book drive in the Swale Rural District, children of the schools collected 63 cwts, 44lbs of books for salvage, 3,914 books for H.M. Forces and 45 for libraries. Prizes offered by Swale Council were won by, Bapchild, Luddenham and Lynsted Schools.

On May 17th, a large bomb fell at Doddington damaging telegraph wires and houses. A bomb on Sharsted Estate on the same night did not cause any damage.

Extract from "The War Years 1939 - 1945 in Faversham and District"

June 1943

Pte Albert J Page, a Teynham man, had the distinction of waiting upon the King when His Majesty visited the Divisional Headquarters during a tour in North Africa following the conclusion of the Tunisian campaign.

Frank Robert HORSNAIL of Conyer
Private 5503064, 5th Battalion, The Buffs
(Royal East Kent Regiment)

Killed in action on 9 August 1943, aged 26

Born on 9 December 1916, Frank was the son of George Frederick, a river lighterman, and Alice Maude (née Smith) Horsnail of Conyer. We also commemorate Frank's younger brother, Jack. The 1939 Register records the family living at 1 Coastguards Cottages, Conyer, where Frank was working in the brickfields.

Frank married Alberta Agnes (née Knell) in April 1942.

Frank's war was served in hard action. During 1942 the 5th Buffs were in the newly raised 78th Division and took part in Operation Torch, the Allied landings in North Africa. During the campaign in Tunisia, where the 78th Division, as part of the British First Army, distinguished itself during the crucial capture of Longstop Hill. The division then fought in the Sicilian Campaign, as part of the British 8th Army.



In Frank's last weeks, he took part in the Allied invasion of Sicily. Codenamed Operation Husky, it began on the night of 9–10 July 1943, and ended on 17 August. During this time the Allies took the island of Sicily from the Axis powers (Italy and Germany), beginning in a large amphibious and airborne operation, followed by a six-week land campaign.

The 5th Buffs took part in the capture of Centuripe, finally achieved on 4 August. In the next few days, they crossed the Simeto and Salso rivers and captured Adrano and Bronte. Next came the advance to Randazzo.

On the day that Frank was killed, they started towards Maletto with two companies where they encountered considerable defensive resolve. An evening patrol was sent out by the Buffs who ran into accurate artillery fire. Ten men were lost either killed or wounded.

On 13 September 1943, it was confirmed that Frank was killed in action on 9 August 1943.

Frank is buried in Catania War Cemetery, Sicily.

John Darryl JEFFREYS of Doddington
Lieutenant, 95277, King's Own Scottish Borderers

No2 Commandos

Killed in action on 16 August 1943, age 23

Son of Captain Robin Edmund Jeffreys RN and Marjorie Ellenwood (née Hobbs) Jeffreys of Great Chesterford, Essex. John was the older brother of Edmund Henry who we also commemorate.

A career soldier, John's service in the Sicily campaign had been fairly quiet until 15 August when, during "Operation Husky" they landed in advance of the British 8th Army at Scaletta, about 15 miles south of Messina. Here they engaged the German rear-guard. On 16 August they were involved in house to house fighting in Scaletta itself.

It was on this day that John was killed in action and this was confirmed on 6 September 1943.

John is buried in Catania War Cemetery, Sicily and is commemorated along with his brother, mother and father on a plaque in Doddington Church.



Cuthbert William Prideaux SELBY of Lynsted and Teynham

Squadron Leader, 80697, Royal Air Force Voluntary Reserve

Lost at sea on sinking of HMS Egret 27 August 1943, aged 45

The youngest of the 4 children of Dr Prideaux George Selby OBE, MRCS, originally from New Zealand, and Elizabeth Mary Alice Selby MBE (née Eastley). Cuthbert (known as John) was born on 11 February 1898 at Brusons' in Greenstreet. The family later moved to Beaugill (now known as Bogle) in Lynsted Lane. His older siblings were Gerard Prideaux Selby, who was killed in the First World War in 1916, Roger Prideaux Selby and Joan Prideaux Selby. Cuthbert was christened in Teynham Church on 3 March 1898.



Cuthbert married his first wife, Mary, on 30 July 1924 in South Cerney, Gloucestershire. They had 2 sons, Patrick Gerard Prideaux in 1926 and Brian Prideaux in 1927. Mary never remarried and died in 1994. Outliving one of her sons.

Cuthbert married his second wife, Joan, on 21 August 1940. After Cuthbert's death, Joan married Arthur P Pennington in 1946. Joan died in 1981.

His short but astonishing life is well documented by Winchester College, where he is commemorated in their War Cloister and in their Roll of Honour:

"John Selby was the third and youngest son of Dr Prideaux George Selby OBE, MRCS, of 'Brusons', Teynham, Kent, and later of Beaugill, Lynsted, Kent. His mother, Elizabeth Mary Alice Selby MBE, was the daughter of the Reverend Joseph Henry Eastley, of Worcester College, Oxford. He was the brother of Gerard Prideaux Selby (G1904-08) who was killed in 1916 in action on the Somme.

He entered the Reverend G.M.A. Hewett's House, from The Grange, Folkestone, in Short Half 1911. He stroked the winning crew in Hewett Cup in 1913 and in the following year rowed '2' in the school IV, and earned his Flannels for cricket. He left Winchester early to enter RMC Sandhurst in April 1915, and passed out with a commission in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. He was soon seconded to the RFC and at the age of seventeen went to the front in France as an observer. In April 1916 he was badly injured in a crash. His left arm was amputated and both his legs were broken. After eight months as a prisoner of war in Germany he was invalided to Switzerland and in 1917 was repatriated. In 1918 he was appointed Assistant Military Attaché at Berne, and after holding the same post at Brussels in 1919 and 1920 he was awarded the Belgian Croix de Guerre. In 1920 he returned to England and took up political work, as a publicist and Conservative agent, as well as acting as director of the re-building appeal for St. George's Hospital.

On July 31st 1924 he married Mary Catherine Ann Dames, daughter of Charles Richard Dames, of South Cerney, and had two sons.

When war again broke out in 1939 he was determined to go back on active service. In 1940, in spite of his physical handicap, he re-joined the RAF as an intelligence officer, first at RAF St. Eval and then at the Air Ministry.

On August 21st 1940 he re-married, his new wife being Joan (daughter of Douglas Howard Sutherland). In 1942 he was promoted to the rank of Squadron Leader and served on the staff of Coastal Command, with responsibility for anti-submarine work. He was twice mentioned in despatches.

By late August 1943 Selby was on special duty on board the sloop HMS Egret.

On August 27th HMS Egret was part of a group searching out U-boats off the Portuguese coast and came under air attack by the Germans, with eighteen Dornier Do217s carrying Henschel glider bombs. Egret then gained the unwelcome distinction of being the first ship in history to be sunk by a guided missile. One of the aircraft launched an Hs293 against Egret, which hit the ship and exploded. 194 of Egret's crew were killed in the attack. After this loss the U-boat hunt was called off.

Aged forty-five, Selby was reported missing at sea when Egret sank, his death being presumed in September. He is commemorated in panel 119 of the Runnymede Memorial."

There were just 35 survivors of the Egret's sinking. Cuthbert was one of the 4 RAF electronics specialists on board dealing with Enigma intercepts. All 4 died in the attack.

On 3 September 1943, a notice in The Times reported that Cuthbert was missing:

SELBY - Missing from operations whilst on duty in one of H.M. ships, Squadron Leader C. W. P. (John) Selby, R.A.F.V.R., dearly loved youngest son of Prideaux George and Mrs Selby of Beaugill, Lynsted, Kent, and beloved husband of Joan.

Although not yet officially confirmed, his death was reported in the Faversham News on 10 September 1943:

Dr & Mrs Prideaux Selby of Beaugill, Lynsted, have received the sad news of the death in active service of their youngest son, Squadron Leader C. W. P. Selby of the R.A.F.V.R. while serving on special duty on one of His Majesty's ships.

Squadron Leader Selby was born in 1898 and educated at Folkestone and Winchester. On leaving Winchester in 1915 he went to Sandhurst and obtained a commission in the Royal West Kent Regiment and was then seconded to the Royal Flying Corps. In 1940 he re-joined the Royal Air Force as an Intelligence Officer.

On 11 September 1943, The Times announced Cuthbert's death:

SELBY - Previously reported missing, now presumed to have lost his life in Aug. 1943. Squadron Leader C. W. P. (John) Selby, R.A.F.V.R., dearly loved youngest son of Prideaux George and Mrs Selby of Beaugill, Lynsted, Kent, and beloved husband of Joan.

Cuthbert is commemorated with a plaque in Teynham Church.

A report in the Faversham News of 24 November 1944 reported better news about Cuthbert's brother, Roger:

The Distinguished Service Order has been awarded to Captain Roger Prideaux Selby, the only surviving son of Dr & Mrs George Prideaux Selby of Beaugill, Lynsted, for gallantry, skill, determination and undaunted devotion to duty during the landing of Allied Forces in Normandy. His brother, Squadron Leader Cuthbert Selby lost his life on duty on one of her Majesty's ships in September 1943.

Extract from "The War Years 1939—1945 in Faversham and District"

September 1943

A very successful result was achieved in a notable war-time effort by farmers owning or occupying marsh lands at Faversham, Oare, Teynham, Luddenham and Graveney. Responding to the demand for increased food production, they had ploughed up a total of about 1,000 acres on their marshes and had harvested (in 1943) an average of about four quarters of wheat per acre - the yield varying from three to seven quarters. The result was equivalent to 1,176,000 2lb loaves of bread. The farmers concerned were Mr Lewis H Finn, Mr L Doubleday, Mr Seymour Stevens, Messrs S and R Dixon, Mr S Foster, Messrs T J Bones and Son, Mr D Moor, Messrs T J Burbridge and Sons. Mr T M Scutt and the Exors of W Ledger.

Edwin Dennis KITE of Doddington
Sergeant Air Gunner, 1150992, 207 Sqdn, Royal Air Force
Volunteer Reserve, Bomber Command

Killed in action on 22 September 1943, aged 23

Born in Hollingbourne on 19 April 1920, Edwin was the son of Dennis Oscar (who predeceased Edwin) and Lily (née Croucher) Kite. At the time of the 1939 Register Dennis was living with his now widowed mother at Frangbury Farm, Doddington. He was working as a fencer and woodsman.

Edwin was based at RAF Langar in Nottinghamshire. The first flying unit arrived there in September 1942 when No. 207 Squadron arrived with Lancaster bombers from RAF Bottesford. 207 Squadron was a major RAF Bomber Command unit and participated in major raids on occupied Europe. It also became a major repair and maintenance base for Lancaster bombers.

On Wednesday, 22 September 1943, Edwin was on board "Avro Lancaster (type III, with serial ED442 and code EM-W)". At 18.37hrs they took off for a mission to Hanover. It did not return and the Lancaster and the entire crew were lost. Edwin died alongside Pilot Officer Geoffrey Lewis Coxon, Air Gunner Sergeant Henry Alfred Freeman, Sergeant Hugh Fulton (navigator), Air Bomber Sergeant John Lockwood Holding, Sergeant Albert William Marsh (flight engineer), Sergeant Kenneth Savill (wireless operator) and Sergeant Frederick Cyril Shergold (navigator).

All are buried in Hanover War Cemetery.

Donald Leonard Seagar SMITH of Doddington

Trooper 7911612, Royal Armoured Corps

Died as a result of an accident on

28 September 1943, aged 28



Son of Leonard Alfred, an auctioneer's clerk, and Hilda Smith of Doddington. At the time of the 1939 Register Donald and his now widowed mother, lived at Gloucester House, Doddington and he was working as a brewer's clerk.

In 1941 Donald married Marjorie J Purcell, a paper sorter, from Sittingbourne.

At the time of Donald's accidental death he was with 54 Training Regiment at its camp in Barnard Castle in what was then Westmorland.

Donald is buried in Doddington churchyard.

Marjorie remarried in 1944.

Herbert Bertie PARRISH of Teynham
Chief Stoker, 153621, Royal Navy, HMS Tenby

Died of wounds after falling from ship on

21 October 1943, aged 22

Born on 14 June 1921, Herbert was the son of Percy William and Jessie Margaret (née Back). At the time of the 1939 Register, Herbert (nicknamed "Nibby") was living with his family at 5 Coastguard Cottages, Conyer. He was working in the brickfields.

HMS Tenby was in dock at Portsmouth dockyard when Herbert died as a result of an accidental fall into the dock. He was buried in Teynham Churchyard on 27 October 1943.

The Society is indebted to Derek Parrish, Herbert's nephew, for his permission to use this portrait photograph.



Extract from "The War Years 1939 - 1945 in Faversham and District"

December 1943

A Christmas prize competition resulted in the raising of £125/14s/0d for the Red Cross and St John Fund, and a Christmas sale at Doddington raised £74 for the same Fund.

The Progress of the War

January	22	Allied troops landed at Anzio
June	4	Rome captured
	6	Allies land in Normandy
	13	Flying bomb (V1) attack on Britain started
		Defeat of Japanese invasion of India
August	25	Parish liberated
September	3	Brussels liberated
	8	The first rocket bomb (V2) fell on England
	17-26	The Battle of Arnhem
October	20	The Americans re-landed in the Philippines

Extract from "The War Years 1939—1945 in Faversham and District"

January 1944

During an air raid on the night of Friday, January 21st, William Oxford, of Lynsted, a fire guard, suffered burns in dealing with an incendiary bomb.

Albert ANDREWS of Doddington

Sapper 2126253, 254 Field Park Company, Royal Engineers, 34th Brick Mechanical Equipment Detachment

Killed in action on 1 February 1944, aged 33

Albert was born in 1910 in Ashford and married Francis Elizabeth Mary Holdsworth in 1933. At the time of Albert's death, Francis was living in Doddington with three young children.

Albert's detachment was serving in Italy in the troop landing zones. The Allies had realised the need for the landing zone for an amphibious assault to be organised for the efficient passage of follow-on forces. The British formed such units from all three services – the Royal Navy (Commandos), British Army and the Royal Air Force, with the Army component comprising Infantry, Engineers, Ordnance, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Medical and Service Corps.

The 34th Brick Mechanical Equipment Detachment, in which Albert was serving, was formed on 1 June 1943 at Kabrit Egypt around the 1st Battalion, Welch Regiment, they supported the 50th (Northumbrian) Infantry Division during the Sicily Landings at Avola. For the landings at Calabria, they supported the 3rd Canadian Infantry Brigade on Fox beach north of Reggio de Calabria. They supported the Anzio landings with D Company of 18th Durham Light Infantry as the infantry component. Denis Healey was a Beach Master for this operation.

Their job was to:

- Arrange and control the movement of all personnel and vehicles from the landing craft to inland assembly areas.

- Move stores from ships' holds and craft to dumps in the beach maintenance areas.
- Develop and organise the beaches and beach maintenance area in regard to defence, movement and administration, including the evacuation of all casualties and recovery of vehicles.
- Provide the beach signal organisation.
- The removal to the UK of casualties, prisoners of war and salvaged equipment.
- The creation of dumps to hold petrol, ammunition and rations that were being landed.
- Assembly areas for the arriving personnel and their vehicles.

The infantry component was intended to be a fighting force if any pockets of resistance remained on the beach immediately after the landings. After the beach had been secured, the battalion was to provide manpower for any other tasks. The Royal Engineers were tasked with keeping the beaches clear of disabled vehicles, including the removal of stranded landing craft. Repairable vehicles were repaired in place or at a vehicle park.

Albert was killed in action on 1 February 1944. He was interred at Minturno War Cemetery, Lazio, Italy, to which many soldiers' bodies were brought in from isolated burial spots.

Albert is also commemorated on the Leeds and Broomfield War Memorial.

Frances remarried in 1952.

James William ALLEN of Teynham

Lance Sergeant 824033,

2 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery

Presumed killed in action on 4 February 1944, aged 29

One of two sons of William and Eliza Allen, James was born in Teynham in 1914. He married Maud May Tumber of Sandown Cottages, Teynham, in 1939. At the time of the 1939 Register, Maud was living with her parents in 1 Bridge Cottages, Barrow Green, Teynham.

During WW2 the 2nd Field Regiment Royal Artillery initially were in support of the 1st Armoured Division. From 1942 it saw service in the Middle East, Greece and Italy with both 1st & 2nd Armoured Divisions.

On the day James died, we know that the 2nd Field Regiment was in the Allied lines at the Anzio Beachhead. On that day troops penetrated the line.

On 7 March 1944, James was reported "Missing believed Prisoner of War". A year and a half later on 11 September 1945, his status changed to "Presumed Killed in Action on 4 February 1944".

James has no known grave and is remembered on the Cassino Memorial in Italy.

His wife Maud never remarried and died on 12 November 1946.

Winifred Mary Clarace GAMBELL of Lynsted

455482, Aircraftwoman 2nd Class,

Women's Auxiliary Air Force

Died of illness 14 March 1944, age 22

The second child of Sidney Clarence William and Louisa Stella Gambell (née Neaves), Winifred was born on 25 June 1921. At the time of the 1939 Register, Winifred was living at 8 Batteries Terrace, Lynsted.

Winifred had lost both of her fraternal uncles in the First World War. Her father served in and survived both world wars.

Sadly Winifred died at home from illness on 14 March 1944.

She is buried in Lynsted Churchyard extension Kent, Row H. Grave A.

Winifred was remembered by her family in the East Kent Gazette on Saturday 16 March 1946

IN MEMORIAM

GAMBELL - In loving memory of a dear Daughter and Sister, Winnifred Gambell, who fell asleep March 14th, 1944.

A daughter and sister in a million,
Her heart was purer than gold;
Nothing in this world could be sweeter
Than her memory that will never grow old.



Extract from "The War Years 1939—1945 in Faversham and District"

May 1944

Sports and other events at Doddington on Whit Monday (organised by the Keep Fit Class) raised £75 to form the nucleus of a Fund for the benefit of Service Men and Women of Doddington and Newnham.

Edric Albert HUTTON of Lynsted

1281666, Warrant Officer (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner) 524 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Killed in action 8 June 1944, aged 32

Edric (known as Eddie) was born on 29 August 1912, son of Edric Albert Sr and Bessie, née Collins. He was christened on 18 September 1912 in the parish church of St Alphage, Southwark, London.

At the time of 1939 Register census, Edric was living at "Elgar" in Oak Road, Hollingbourne, along with his wife of 2 years, Brenda Emily, née Breeden, and his son, Gordon. Edric was working as a plumber and serving in the Headcorn Fire Brigade.

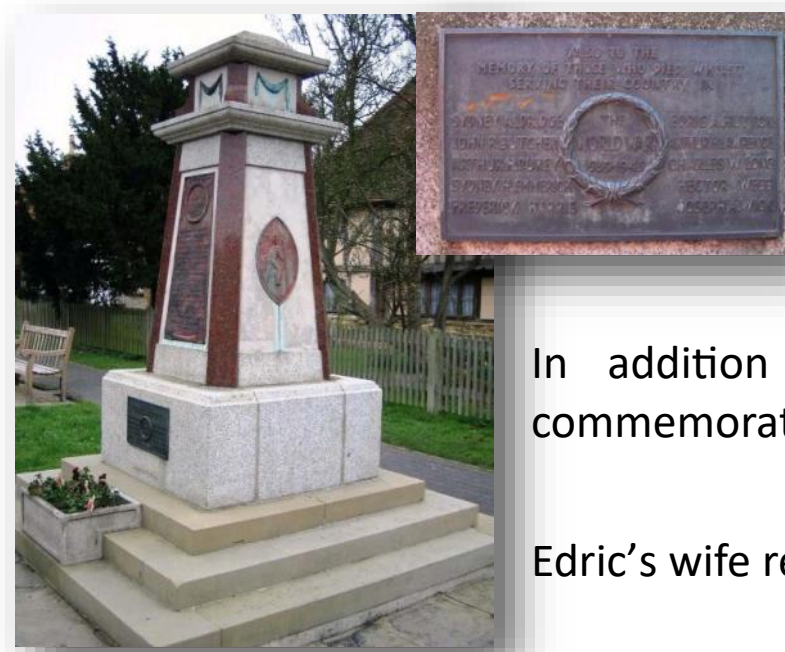
Edric was part of the six man crew of Wellington bomber MF616 7R-A flown by 29 year old Flying Officer (Pilot), Thomas David. They had been detailed to carry out an anti E-Boat patrol over the English Channel at dawn on Thursday 8 June 1944. On returning from the mission, the pilot was instructed to divert to R.A.F. Chivenor, Barnstaple, Devon, due to ground mist. Against orders, the pilot attempted to land the Wellington back at its home station of R.A.F. Davidstow Moor, Camelford, Cornwall, where the squadron had been re-formed in R.A.F. Coastal Command on 7 April 1944. The aircraft struck a bank in a field approximately 500 yards from the touch down point and crashed, killing the entire crew. A crash tender was sent to the scene and began to fight the fire. A reserve tender had then arrived and began to run out the hoses. An explosion occurred in the aircraft 14 minutes after the fire started, and the crash tender was still at the scene fighting the fire. As a result of the explosion, eight persons on the ground were injured.

A Court of Enquiry into the accident came to the conclusion that the pilot, by disobeying the orders of Flight Control was to blame for the crash. It also decided that "Cpl Lambert was over

zealous in fighting the fire longer than four minutes, and Sgt Phillips on arrival should have ordered everyone to safety. Both did not comply with Station Fire Orders, and because of their disobedience, are held responsible for injuries to those on the ground."

At the time of Edric's death, his wife and son were living at Foxhunters, Erriotwood.

Edric is buried in Lynsted Churchyard extension. Grave Ref: Row J. Grave A.



In addition to the Lynsted War Memorial, Edric is also commemorated on the Headcorn War Memorial.

Edric's wife remarried in 1950. She died in 1988.

Edmond Henry JEFFREYS DFC of Doddington

Flight Lieutenant 116717, 248 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Killed in action on 10 June 1944, aged 23

Edmond was the younger of the two sons of Captain Robin Edmund Jeffreys RN and Marjorie Ellenwood Jeffreys of Great Chesterford, Essex.

Edmond worked at the British Power Boat Company and had wanted to join the Navy. He was bitterly disappointed to be turned down.

He enlisted in the RAFVR in Oxford in November 1940 and was commissioned as a Flying Officer in 1942. His actions in January 1943 while on a successful reconnaissance, was rewarded with a Distinguished Flying Cross. Rising to the rank of Flight Lieutenant, he transferred to a Mosquito squadron in the Anti-shipping unit of Coastal Command.



On Saturday 10 June 1944, Edmond was piloting Mosquito FBVI, HR117 from his base at RAF Portreath, on a U-Boat Patrol.

Off the coast of the island of Ushant off Northern France, he and three other Mosquitoes attacked U-821 causing enough damage for the crew to abandon ship. The U-boat was later sunk by Liberator V. A motor-launch picked up the survivors of U-821 and the crew fired on

Edmond's plane causing it to crash into the water. The motor launch was then destroyed by another Mosquito killing all but one of the 51 German submariners on board.

Edmond was lost along with his navigator, Flying Officer Dudley Burden..

A report in The Times announcing his death included:

"The last months of his life were clouded by the death in action of his elder brother, for love of family ranked with him even higher than love of nature. That cloud has been lifted from him; and England lacks another gallant fighter pilot."

Edmond's body was not recovered and he is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial and on a memorial plaque in Doddington church.

Richard Robert HODGES of Norton and Teynham

Corporal 6296100, 141st (7th Battalion, The Buffs [Royal East Kent Regiment] Regiment), Royal Armoured Corps

Presumed killed in action on 26 June 1944, aged 33

Born on 26 April 1911 Robert was the son of William and Elizabeth Hodges. In 1937 he married Edith May Holdstock of Teynham. At the time of the 1939 Register they were living at 30 Arthur Road, Gillingham, where Robert was working as an Omnibus Cleaner.

The 7th Battalion, The Buffs, was converted to the 141st Royal Armoured Corps to train for and take part in the D-Day landings. They won a fine reputation during the advance into Germany. The regiment landed on the beaches of Normandy in June 1944 and fought as part of the 79th Armoured Division throughout the Battle of Normandy and the subsequent campaign in Northwest Europe until the end of the war in Europe in May 1945.

It is hard to trace Robert's service as the 79th Armoured Brigade did not operate as a single division. Their armoured vehicles were distributed as small units across the divisions as required. The units of the 79th were distributed as short term assets to a particular operation or battle and once complete returned to the 79th; the liaison officers of the 79th having the power to recall the vehicles. It is recorded that they did encounter difficulties in persuading infantry commanders to use their specialised vehicles to best effect.

On 6 June 1944, "Operation Overlord", the codename for the Battle of Normandy, saw the

79th Armoured Division land on Gold, Juno and Sword beaches.

After this day we know that during June the Allies faced a stalemate because of the difficulty of the landscape of dense hedgerows and flat land (the bocage). Efforts to break out were frustrated by fierce German resistance and counterattacks, particularly around Caen. A British armoured thrust at Villers-Bocage was defeated on June 13. A large-scale infantry offensive west of Caen, called Operation Epsom, was also defeated on June 25–29.

On 28 July 1944, Robert was posted as "Missing, believed Prisoner of War on 26 June 1944". Over a year later on 15 October 1945, he was presumed "killed in action on 26 June 1944".

Robert has no known grave and is remembered on the Bayeux Memorial that bears the names of more than 1,800 men of the Commonwealth land forces who died during the landings in Normandy; during the intense fighting in Normandy itself; and during the advance to the River Seine.

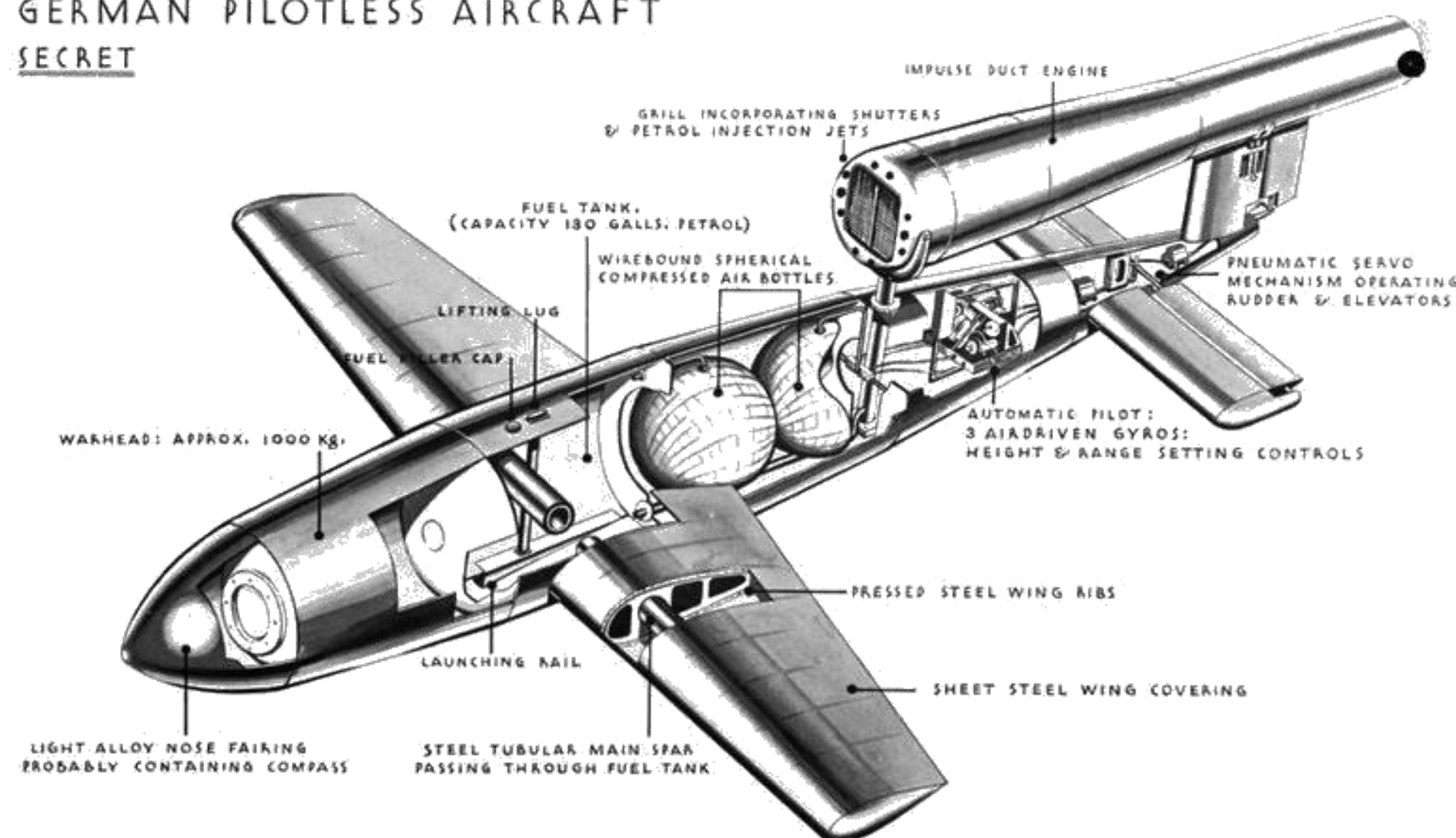
Edith was left widowed with their two young children. She never remarried.

Doodlebugs: June 1944 - March 1945

Following the D-Day landings on 6 June 1944 and the fight with the Russians in the east, Germany was now fighting a war on two fronts. The Nazi regime hit back!

The "Vergeltungswaffe 1" (Revenge Weapon) or V1, nicknamed the Doodlebug or Buzz Bomb was in essence a pilotless plane. Its structure was of sheet steel and plywood. Driven by a basic jet engine it flew at around 2,000 to 3,000 feet and carried 1,000 lbs of high explosive. Its guidance system was by compass and it was able to fly level by gyroscopes with a range of 300 miles. To start with, this put London in easy reach as long as the Germans could fire the missiles from occupied France.

GERMAN PILOTLESS AIRCRAFT
SECRET



DRAWING BASED ON INFORMATION TO DATE. ISSUED WITH A.I.2. REPORT No. 2243/16-6-44 IWM

How our villages were affected

The following extracts from "The War Years 1939 - 1945 in Faversham and District" describes the affect of the Doodlebugs on the people of Lynsted and our surrounding villages.

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WHERE THE FLYING BOMBS FELL

In the 80 days of the flying-bomb attacks on Southern England, beginning the second week in June (1844) 2,400 of the bombs fell on Kent - 100 more than fell on London.

The Faversham and Swale Rural District had its share of them and residents in some of the parishes had remarkable escapes. Much damage was caused. As was evident in all parts of the County where, as in the earlier Battle of Britain, the menace from the air was largely combated, the villagers stood up to the ordeal bravely and carried on their normal work, took part in open-air social events, and found relief in discussing their "doodlebug" experiences.

The First flying-bombs came over in the early hours of Tuesday, June 13th and coincided with the shelling of Maidstone. Very few people realised what actually had happened, in fact, on the following day loud-speaker vans were touring streets warning the residents as to what precautions were to be taken in the event of shelling. Nobody thought of flying-bombs then.....

..... When the sirens wailed, many sleepy-eyed people, clad in dressing gowns, rushed into their gardens as they heard a plane roaring overhead. To them it seemed in trouble because flames were shooting from its tail. Excitedly, they shouted that another enemy plane had been "shot-up" by our defences.

But on Thursday—two nights later—the people thought otherwise. The planes with the burning tails came over too frequently to be enemy bombers. It was quickly realised that the Nazis were using their much vaunted V1 weapon.

Above the sinister roar of the "doodlebugs" could be heard the noise of gunfire and machine-gunning. The flying-bomb attacks had started in real earnest and the fight was on! In the summer nights and days that followed the countryside was disturbed by the sounds of flying-bombs, the staccato burst of machine-gun fire from our fighters and heavy explosions as the bombs crashed to earth. In strategic areas balloon barrages sprang up like mushrooms. The main target, of course, was London and the order to defences was "stop them at any costs". And once again Kent was the "happy dumping ground".....

Doddington

..... Doddington had three uncomfortable experiences. On the afternoon of July 26th, a bomb fell near Frangbury Farm where buildings and cottages were blasted. A wheat field was set on fire and agricultural workers had narrow escapes. They helped the N.F.S. personnel to extinguish the fire. One person was slightly cut by glass in one of the cottages.

In the early hours of August 16th a bomb fell in Well Wood near the residences of Mr Snoxall and Mr Shuttleworth. Only slight damage was caused. Several houses were blasted on August 23rd when a bomb exploded in Oaken Pole Wood. Three persons were slightly injured when cottages at Frinsted, near Doddington were damaged by a flying-bomb on August 28th.....

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Luddenham

.....At Luddenham a bomb fell near the school on July 29th, very little damage was caused, but on August 16th, when a fighter plane sent a bomb hurtling to the ground near the "Mounted Rifle", many cottages were damaged by the blast and one person was injured

Lynsted

..... A number of incidents occurred in the Western Parishes of the Swale District. On Sunday evening, July 9th. At about nine o'clock, a bomb crashed in an orchard near the "Black Lion", Lynsted, causing fifteen casualties - none serious - and widespread damage. The public house in which most of the casualties occurred was badly damaged. The Church, which was extensively damaged during the 1940 Blitz, was again blasted, and the holding of services there had again been suspended. The Vicarage was damaged and the Vicar, Rev. L. E. H. Ehrmann, received multiple cuts to his face, in spite of which he carried out his duties as Head Warden of the parish. Most of the casualties were due to flying glass. Cottages nearby were affected and windows were smashed in London Road. Dr Jardine rendered valuable assistance in treating the injured.....

Teynham

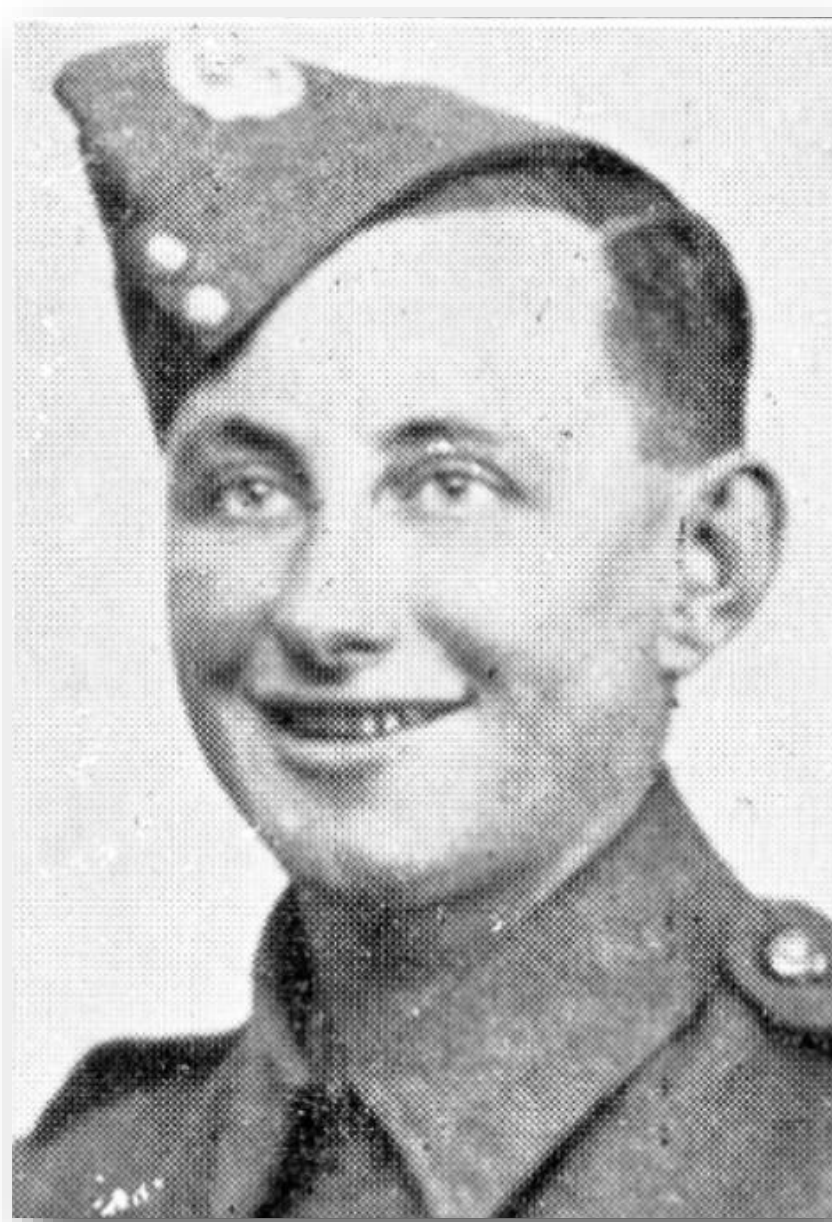
..... On August 16th a bomb fell in a hop garden at Teynham causing further damage to the Parish Church (which had also suffered badly during the Blitz in the early part of the war) and cottages in the vicinity. According to eye-witnesses the pilot of a fighter plane in pursuit managed to tip the wing and so kept it wide of the more populous part of the village.

Bertram Charles HEATHFIELD of Teynham
Private 5504230, 2/4th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment
Killed in action on 21 July 1944, aged 25

Born in 1917, Bertram was the oldest of the five children of Charles and Elizabeth Mary (née Ralph) Heathfield of 9 Froggnal Lane, Teynham.

Bertram's war was a hard fought one. The 2/4th Battalion invaded Sicily as part of Operation Husky in July 1943. On 12 July they moved inland, behind the advancing infantry. It was at this point on 14 July, Bertram was reported wounded. The extent of his injury is not known, nor is the length of time he was incapacitated.

In February 1944, the Battalion was back in the line in Italy, near Garigliano, as part of 28th Infantry Brigade, in 4th Infantry Division. In May 1944, the Battalion assisted in the crossing of the River Rapido as part of the assault on Monte Cassino. Under intense enemy fire, swimmers from 2/4th had to cross with lines because of the intensity of the flow. Once across they were pinned down by machine gun fire. Being unable to get back to their battalions, they came under command of 12th Infantry Brigade and crossed



via a bridge on 13 May. With the 17th/21st Lancers's Sherman tanks, the 2/4th Battalion attacked along the river, taking 200 prisoners. They then attempted to cross the River Pioppeta. The tank bridge sank in the mud, and the battalion took 100 casualties in two minutes. The 2/4th waded the river and, in spite of heavy casualties and fierce resistance, the advance continued. During this advance, Captain Richard Wakeford was awarded the Victoria Cross. By 6.30pm, all objectives had been captured and on 16 May, the battalion was relieved. Two days later, Cassino was captured.

During June, Bertram's battalion was involved in more intense fighting as they advanced towards Rome. An attack on a ridge being held by the German 1st Parachute Division was launched. Although a foothold was established, that night a fierce German counter-attack was made and they overran the company headquarters. Fighting was close and confused, and ammunition was running low. They were forced to retreat only to attack again the following day (26 June), recapturing its previous positions.

The 2/4th Battalion came into action again on 21 July. Supported by the North Irish Horse, a steady advance was made. Following this advance, during which Bertram lost his life, the 2/4th Battalion was then taken out of the line. Some platoons were down to ten men each with no officer.

On 18 August 1984, Bertram was confirmed as killed in action on 21 July 1944.

Having originally been buried elsewhere, on 25 April 1945, Bertram was interred at Arezzo War Cemetery, Italy.

Jack Victor HORSNAIL of Conyer
6095958, Private, 2/5th Battalion, The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey)
Killed in action on 2 September 1944, aged 24

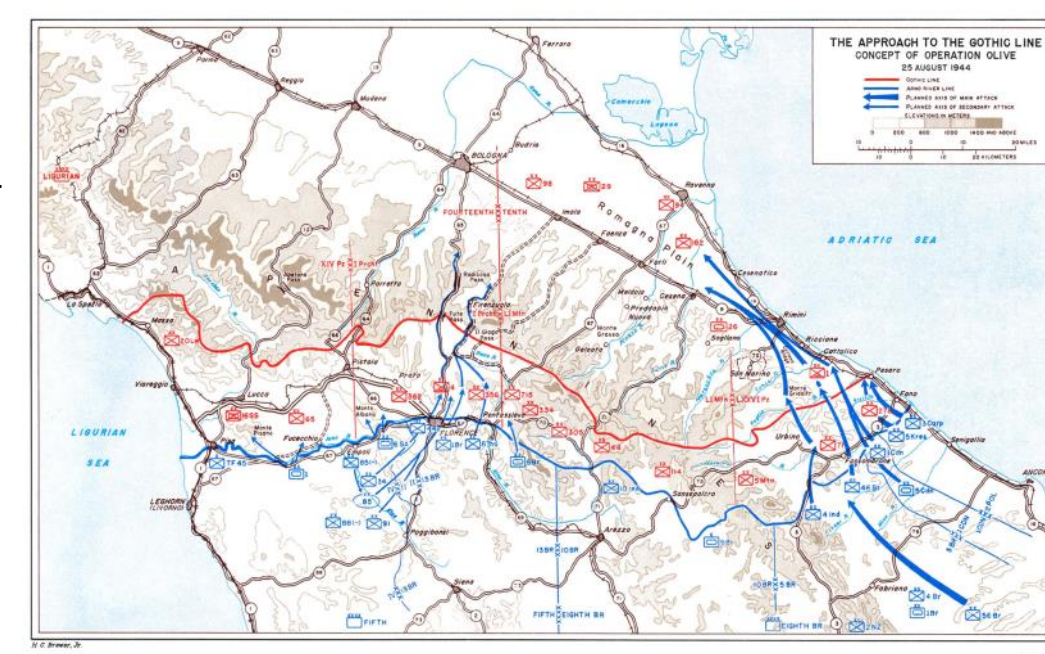
Born in 1920, Jack was the son of George Frederick, a river lighterman, and Alice Maude (née Smith) of Conyer. Younger brother of Frank who was killed earlier and is also commemorated. The 1939 Register finds the family living at 1 Coastguards Cottages, Conyer.

Originally in the Royal West Kent Regiment from 20 July 1940, we know that Jack transferred to 2/5th Battalion, The Queen's Own Royal Regiment (West Surrey) on 1 May 1944. We know this battalion was in Vis (Yugoslavia) and Egypt from 1 April - 17 July 1944. After this time they returned to Italy for operations on the "Gothic Line" in "Operation Olive" Operation Olive (25 August-October 1944) was the first Allied attack on the German Gothic Line in the northern Apennines. Although most of the fortifications of the Gothic Line were captured early in the offensive, the Germans managed to hold on to new lines further back, and the Allied offensive



eventually ran out of steam late in 1944, tantalisingly close to the Po plains.

Gothic Line August 1944: The concept of Operation Olive



On 19 September 1944 it was reported that Jack had been killed in action on 2 September 1944

Jack is buried in Gradara War Cemetery, Italy. The site cemetery contains the graves of casualties incurred during the advance from Ancona to Rimini, which broke the German's heavily defended Gothic Line, and in the heavy fighting around Rimini, which was taken by the Allies on 21 September 1944.

Ernest Harry BRANCH of Lynsted
5386529, Trooper, 61st Regiment, Reconnaissance Corp, Royal Armoured Corp
Killed in action 6 September 1944, age 29

Born on 20 September 1914, Ernest was the son of Ernest Arthur Branch, who became the licensee of The Lion, Lynsted (now known as The Black Lion), and Ada née Mitchell. Ernest had an older sister, Ivy M.

Ernest's mother, Ada, died in June 1937 and in March 1938 his father married widow and mother of two (Harold and William) Olive Sutton (a Carr by birth).

Ernest married Gwendoline Ellen Rainer in January 1939 and at the time of the 1939 Register census they were living at 52 Ruins Barn Road, Sittingbourne. Ernest was employed as dryer's hand.

They had two children, Robert Ernest George, and Hazel D. They were respectively just 5 and 2 when their father was killed.

Ernest served in the Reconnaissance Corps (known as the Recce Corps) whose units provided the mobile spearhead of infantry divisions. It was formed from Infantry Brigade Reconnaissance Groups on 14 January 1941 and became part of the Royal Armoured Corps in 1944. The Training Centre was established at Winchester in February 1941, until the home of the Corps moved to Catterick in Yorkshire. Although the Corps was raised from various regular army units, it did not follow that all men would be retained. Potential reconnoiterers were required to take an IQ and other tests before being accepted. Many failed and were sent to normal infantry battalions, but those who succeeded enjoyed the kudos of belonging to an elite unit and they were determined to prove their own worth. Before beginning training with his unit, each man undertook a five week course with technical units, which determined his role as a driver, wireless operator or mechanic. Most recce men became efficient in two of these roles e.g. Driver/Operator. During training with a reconnaissance unit, emphasis was placed on both aggressiveness and initiative, as these were the characteristics expected of the men selected for such units, and, as a result, a proud offensive spirit was created, similar to other newly founded units such as The Parachute Regiment. Reconnaissance Regiments were organised into a headquarters squadron (including anti-tank,

signals and mortar troops) and three reconnaissance squadrons. Each squadron comprised three scout troops and an assault troop. Scout troops were equipped with Light Reconnaissance Cars (LRCs) such as the Humber Light Reconnaissance Car and with Bren Gun Carriers. The assault troop comprised lorried infantry and were called up when enemy resistance needed to be overcome. Later in the war more efficient and well-armed armoured cars such as the Humber Armoured Car, Daimler Armoured Car, Staghound and Greyhound augmented the LRCs in scout troops.

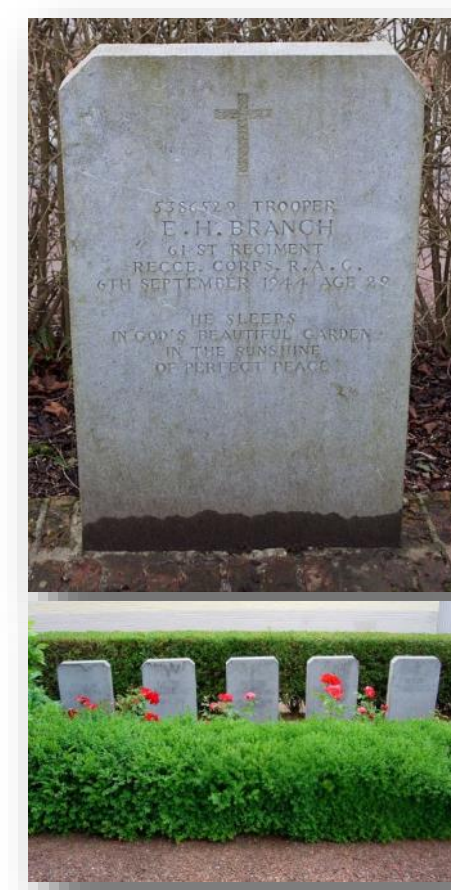
Ernest was killed in action on 6 September 1944 and is buried in Kruishoutem Communal Cemetery, Belgium, Grave 3. His grave is one of only 5 commonwealth war graves in the cemetery. The inscription reads:

He sleeps in God's beautiful garden
in the sunshine of perfect peace.



Gwendoline did not remarry and died in 1997. A plaque on Gwendoline's grave in Lynsted Churchyard Extension reads:

Sacred to the memory of
Tpr E H Branch Killed in Action
Aged 29 years



Kenneth Whigham STEVENS of Newnham

876797 Sergeant, Royal Artillery, previously Staff Sergeant, Indian Army Corps of Clerks

Killed in action while a prisoner of war on 21 September 1944, aged 24

Kenneth was born on 31 January 1920 in India. He was one of the six children of John William (born in Argentina, later resident in India), a retired locomotive engineer for North West Indian Railways, and Dorothy Charlotte Maud Margaret (née Whigham, born in India,) Stevens of 91 The Street, Newnham, Kent.

At or around the outbreak of WW2, Kenneth, a Sergeant/Catering Assistant, was serving in the Indian Corps of Clerks, part of the new III (Indian) Corps. This was formed by the Indian Army during World War II for service in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately while serving in Singapore, Kenneth was captured on 15 February 1942 when Singapore fell to the Imperial Japanese Army.

Along with thousands of others, Kenneth was placed in the Malai 1 Prisoner of War Camp (known to us as Changi Camp). This camp was established after Singapore's fall and was the main camp for around 50,000 captured British and Commonwealth forces. Changi was one of the comparatively less brutal of the Japanese camps, but from here the prisoners were sent to various projects on Sumatra, Burma, Thailand and other Japanese occupied territories.

On 4 November 1942, Kenneth was entrained for the long train journey to Thailand No 2 Prisoner of War Camp at Chongkai. *[See note right]* Here he would have been sent to work on the infamous Burma to Thailand Railway.

After 18 months and on the completion of the railway in about June 1944, he returned to Singapore in a train consisting of steel trucks. On arrival he was housed in a Transit Camp for around 2 weeks.

Along with around 1,000 British and 200 Dutch prisoners of war, he was marched to Singapore Harbour. Once there they boarded one of the Japanese "Hell Ships" *[see note right]* named the Hofuka Maru. They set sail in convoy of six ships for Korea via Borneo and Manilla. The only ship in the convoy transporting POWs, the Japanese refused to have the marking displaying the fact they were carrying POWs.

Conditions on board the Hofuka Maru were horrendous *[see note right]* and worsened for the POWs when it had to remain in port at Manilla for one month for repairs. Many POWs died during this time.

Now repaired, on 20 September, it joined another convoy, again not displaying the sign to say that it was a POW carrier, they departed Manila and anchored in Subic Bay for the night. The following morning at 10.32am on 21 September, in the Bataan Bay, approximately 80 nautical



miles north of Corregidor Island, the convoy was attacked by 100 carrier-based planes of the 2nd wave of the US Task Force 38. All the ships in the convoy were sunk. The Hofuku Maru was struck by three torpedoes and sank in about three minutes. Around 200 POWs swam to the shore, or were rescued by other ships.

Kenneth did not survive and was possibly one of the hundreds of men locked in the ship's holds with no chance of escape.

After the war, on 25 March 1947, Sergeant Major Jotani Kitaichi, the draft commander of the POWs appeared in court on the following charge:

"COMMITTING A WAR CRIME in that he on board the s.s. HOFUKU MARU on a voyage between Singapore and Japan, between the 4th July 1944 and the 21st September 1944, when in charge of a draft of British and Dutch Prisoners of War, was in violation of the laws and usages of war, concerned in the ill treatment of the said P.O.W., resulting in the death of about ninety eight of them and in physical sufferings to many others."

He was tried by Military Court at Changi on 25 March 1947. On 31 March 1947 he was found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. He was executed on 27 May 1947. *[See note below]*

The Society is indebted to Kenneth's nephew, Christopher Goodever-Ballard for permission to use the portrait photograph.

If you are interest in Kenneth's story in particular, or the story of POWs in general, the Society has available to view:

- The Affidavits of the British survivors of the Hofuku Maru detailing the journey during which Kenneth died.
- The full transcript of the War Crimes Trial of Sergeant Major Jotani Kitaichi
- Information on the Japanese "Hell Ships".
- A report by a British officer from Kenneth's Corps of Clerks of the treatment of POWs on the journey from Singapore to the Burma Railway as requested by, but not acted upon, by the Military Police of the Imperial Japanese Army.

Visitors are advised that these papers include explicit material of the impact and consequences of war.



Left to right soldiers from India, East Africa, South Africa, New Zealand, a Canadian airman, an Australian soldier and a Royal Navy sailor

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Doodlebug claims daughter of Lynsted Couple

Lynsted did not emerge totally unscathed by the “Doodlebug Summer”. The daughter of Richard and Emmeline Apps who lived and worked at Lynsted Court, along with her husband were killed by a V1 Bomb:

Edith Caroline BAILEY of Lynsted

Civilian

Killed by a V1 flying bomb on 24 October 1944, aged 47

Edith was born on 27 September 1897 in South Ash. One of thirteen children of Richard, a shepherd and herdsman, and Emmeline Apps. Edith's elder siblings were Bertie Richard, Elizabeth Jane, Walter¹ and younger siblings Kate Amelia, Frederick George, Edward, Sidney Richard, Percy Thomas, George and Leonard John. Two further older siblings, William Thomas and Alice Emmeline died in infancy and predeceased Edith. Leonard would serve in the Lynsted Branch of the Home Guard in WW2.

The 1911 Census finds the family living at Quinton Cottages, Milton Regis. By 1918 they had moved to Banks Farm, Teynham.

Edith married William George Bailey (also known as William John Thomas Bailey) in Stockbury church on 16 August 1924. They had 3 children, William R, Beatrice A and Peter.

Edith was living with her family at Council Houses, Spade Lane, Hartlip. Her parents were then living and working at Lynsted Court.

On 24 October 1944 the lives of the Bailey children were devastated. An article in the East Kent Gazette on 28 October 1944 reports:

PEOPLE KILLED - By Flying Bomb

The use of flying bombs over Southern England flared up early this week, but the casualties reported have been described as “not heavy”. Still there has been loss of life.

Soon after midnight on the 24th inst. a flying bomb came in very low over one District in Southern England, and, still losing height when approaching the outskirts of the village, cut clean through the upper part of a tall elm tree and exploded against two cottages, demolishing both of them.

The nearest house to the tree was occupied by Mr. William Bailey and his wife, Edith, together with their three children. Mr. and Mrs. Bailey were killed instantly, but Betty, aged 14, and Peter, who were under the Morrison table shelter, were brought out of the ruins unhurt.

Upstairs in bed at the time was son, William Bailey, aged 19 years. This lad was blown clear of the house, but strangely enough, was little injured, except that his pyjama suit was torn clean from his body. He picked himself up and, clad only in a vest, went in search of assistance.

Mr. and Mrs. Deverson, who lived in the adjoining house, were also rescued from the ruins of their home suffering only minor injuries.

Those people who saw the incident are of the opinion that had the flying bomb just escaped the tree it would have proceeded another two or three hundred yards before hitting the ground, and in that case little damage would have resulted.

Mr Bailey, who was formerly in the employ of a farmer, has more recently been employed as a roadman by the local Rural District Council.

The following day the children of Hartlip School were told of the incident and informed that Peter, the youngest son, would no longer be attending the school as he would be moving to live with his Aunt in Rainham. Peter's school record states his reason for leaving as “Removed to Rainham CE (Enemy Action)”.

Edith and William were buried in Hartlip Churchyard on 27 October 1944.

On 4 November 1944 the East Kent Gazette reported on an appeal for the Bailey Children:

Last week we reported the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. William Bailey, whose house in a Southern England village was shattered by a flying bomb. A fund has been opened to give aid to the orphaned children, Betty and Peter, and donations may be sent to the Vicar of the Parish.

On 30 December 1944 the East Kent Gazette published another short piece:

BAILEY CHILDREN'S FUND

On Wednesday it was announced that the Bailey Children's Fund, opened to assist in the upbringing of Peter and Betty Bailey, whose parents were killed by a flying bomb, had reached a total of £179/5/0. The fund will be closed on December 31st.

The Trustees of the Fund met on December 20th, and resolved that each child shall be given a fixed amount every half-year until they reach the age of 18 years. The money is being invested in the Post Office Saving Bank.

William Bailey, the oldest child of Edith and William, who still lives in Hartlip, once gave a talk on his experiences. He said that his mother's last words were “it seems to be coming this way”.



Morrison Shelter

¹Walter served in the First World War in the Royal West Kent Regiment. On 17 July 1917, while fighting at Arras, he received a gunshot wound to his face. The bullet entered through the tip of his nose and exited from behind his left eye. This caused several facial fractures, blindness in the left eye and an inability to open his mouth by more than 1 inch. On 5 March 1918 he was medically discharged from the army with what they measured as a 30% disability but fit for civilian work. Three weeks later, on 27 March 1918, Walter died of his wounds. He is buried at Bobbing.



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George Edward AMOS of Teynham

T/14706297 Driver, Royal Army Service Corps

Died on 2 October 1944, aged 30

Born in Milton on 24 April 1914, George was the younger son of Thomas William and Frances Jane (née Holyer) Amos. We also commemorate George's older brother Harry.

At the time of the 1939 Register George was living at Bax Farm, Teynham, where he was employed as a heavy lorry driver. Later in 1939 he married Florence Pope of Milton.

On the 3 November 1944, it was confirmed that George had “died” on 2 October 1944. We have found no information relating to the circumstances of his death.

Originally buried in Amiens, George was reinterred in St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, France, on 27 June 1946.

William Holtum of Newnham

14684069 Lance Corporal, 4th Battalion, Dorsetshire Regiment

Killed in action on 20 November 1944, aged 24

Second of the eleven children of Edward and Son of Alice Elizabeth (née Smith) Holtum, William was born in Hollingbourne in 1920.

William married Gladys Lillian Lippingwell in 1940 and they had two daughters — Jean in 1941 and Joanne Lillian in 1943.

William's battalion formed part of the 43rd Wessex Division. After spending nearly five years of war in the UK, guarding the south coast against invasion. He then training for the invasion of France - the 4th Battalion landed in Normandy seventeen days after D-Day.

Their first major battle was near Maltot on 10 July 1944 when the Division attacked the German positions on and around Hill 112, a feature which dominated the surrounding country and was seen as the key to holding Normandy. In a fierce and costly battle, the Germans defended their positions resolutely, resulting in heavy casualties. At some cost, the 4th Dorsets captured Eterville while the 5th Dorsets and the 7th Hampshires attacked Maltot. In the confusion of battle, the brigade commander thought Maltot had been captured and ordered the 4th to join the battle. As they closed in on the village a hurricane of machine gun and anti-tank gun fire burst upon them. Maltot cost the 4th Dorsets 348 casualties and the 5th also lost heavily. On Hill 112 the sun set on a bloody stalemate. The 43rd Wessex Division and their Wehrmacht and SS opponents had fought each other to a standstill. For the Dorsets and their fellow infantrymen, Hill 112 would remain a yardstick of horror, against which all future battles would be measured.

Having received reinforcements, both battalions joined in the push south beyond Caumont, fighting fierce battles at Cahagnes and Jurques on their way to Ondfontaine towards Mont Pincon which, like Hill 112, dominated a large area of Normandy. By 9 August, the Dorsets were on Mont Pincon, which had fallen to 129 Brigade. Their fighting in the close Normandy bocage country was over and the campaign was won.

Their next battles would be in late August and early September across the Seine. During this time it was reported that William had been wounded on 27 August.

Operation Market Garden took place between 17 and 25 September where the 43rd Wessex Division was moved forwards to support the Guards Armoured Division in its battles beyond the Waal at Nijmegen in the drive up to relieve the Airborne forces at Arnhem. By the time the Dorsets crossed Nijmegen bridge the 2nd Parachute Regiment holding Arnhem bridge had been overwhelmed and German troops and armour were pouring across to block any advance towards the Neder Rijn. Nonetheless the 4th and 5th Dorsets forced their way up to the south bank of the river west of Arnhem near Driel, where plans were made to reinforce the Airborne troops across the river around Oosterbeek. When the operation was abandoned the 4th were ordered to cross the swollen river, under heavy fire, to rescue their Airborne comrades. Of the 315 Dorsets who reached the north bank, only 75 returned. The 4th Battalion's sacrifice was recognised by the award of an Airborne Pennant and they were the only non-airborne unit to win the battle honour "Arnhem". For the second time in ten weeks the 4th Dorsets had effectively been destroyed.



After a short period around Groesbeek in the Reichswald Forest, both the 4th and 5th battalions moved to the south of Holland to the Roer triangle. Here during Operation Queen, an unsuccessful offensive to gain control of the Roer Valley and the Hürtgen Forest, William was killed in action.

William had served in a division that was considered by senior British officers to be one of the best divisions of the British Army during WW2. Montgomery, commanding all British and Canadian troops in the Normandy campaign, would use 43rd (Wessex) along with 15th (Scottish) to spearhead his future assaults.

William is buried in Brunssum War Cemetery. Brunssum had been liberated in September 1944 by US forces and shortly afterwards the British 43rd (Wessex) Division made their headquarters. The first burials in the cemetery were made by an Advanced Dressing Station and a Casualty Clearing Station which were situated at Merkelbeek in November 1944 when the 43rd Division were engaged in clearing a triangle between the Rivers Roer and Maas. Operations in the Geilenkirchen sector accounted for a great part of the over 300 casualties buried in the cemetery. All are from the British Army. Just one unidentified.

William's wife, Gladys, who lived in Newnham, did not remarry and she died in 1964.



4th Dorsets cross 'David', the Class 9 FBE bridge across the Seine at Vernon, 27 August 1944. The numbers 49 and 51 either side of the Wessex Wyvern divisional badge are the identification serials of 204 and 553 Field Companies RE

Harold Lewis WILLIS of Luddenham

C/KX 87760, Stoker 1st Class, HMS Roxburgh

Died of illness on 23 November 1944, aged 31

Born 6 October 1912 in Margate, Harold was the son of Lewis Elei and Ellen Mable (née Kemp) Willis of Bysing Wood Cottages Luddenham.

In 1940, Harold married Marjorie Rosa Burford, whose brother we also commemorate. She lived at Four Oaks, Luddenham.

Harold was a career sailor, enlisting with the Royal Navy in 1935. Service preceding WW2 took Harold to Palestine and to Spain at the time of their civil war. In 1940 he witnessed the evacuation of men from Dunkirk. Serving on the destroyer, HMS Roxborough, he saw service in the convoys of the North Atlantic.

However, in 1943, Harold was invalided out of the service due to illness. He died on 23 November 1944 aged 31. Just four months later his wife Marjorie died aged just 21. They are buried together in Luddenham Churchyard.



A typical child's Christmas stocking during war time

© IWM (EPH 3663)

The Progress of the War		
January	17	Warsaw liberated
March	20	British recapture Mandalay
April	15	Opening of the Conference of United Nations in San Francisco
May	2	German forces in Italy surrendered
	3	Rangoon recaptured
	5	All the German forces in Holland and North West Germany and Denmark surrendered unconditionally
	9	Unconditional surrender of Germany to the allies ratified in Berlin
	10	Australian troops land in Borneo
August	6	First atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima
	8	Russia declared war on Japan
	9	Second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki
	14	The Emperor of Japan broadcasts the unconditional surrender of his country
September	5	British forces re-enter Singapore

Hubert Frank HIGGINS of Doddington

294451 Sergeant, Royal Artillery, Field Regiment

Killed in action between 18 and 19 January 1945, aged 42

Son of Harry and Louisa Emily Priscilla Higgins, Hubert was born in Doddington in 1902 and baptised in the Parish Church on 7 September 1902. One of six children, Hubert's brother Harry was killed in WW1 at the age of 18

In 1926, Hubert he married Francis Annie Gutteridge in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire and lived in Twyford along with their two sons, Harry and Hubert.

On 9 February 1945, Hubert was posted as missing from the Royal Artillery Depot "at sea" on 18/19 January. On 22 February this was amended to him being killed in action on 18/19 January.

Hubert was originally buried at Biggekerke, Holland, on 20 April 1946. His body was later removed and reinterred in Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery.



Extract from "The War Years 1939 - 1945 in Faversham and District"

February 1945

The sweeping successes of the Allies on all fronts gave no doubt as to the result of the war. But the cornered Nazi beast was dangerous until the end, and there was a last ordeal for the people of Southern England and London in the shape of the V2s, which did terrible damage and killed many people. Faversham and the Eastern parishes of the Swale District" did not come under fire as they did with the flying bombs. The only disturbance was the sound of rockets exploding in the distance.

V2 rocket explodes in Lynsted

Launched from the Hook of Holland, V2 rockets were blasted 60 miles into the stratosphere before free-falling at the speed of sound. The principal target of the V2 assaults was London. However, at 8.45am, on 17 February 1945, a V2 narrowly missed Lynsted village and exploded in the side of the Lyn Valley. The noise of the explosion was heard for miles around. Fortunately the only casualties were a few sheep and there was slight damage to the school and Aymers. The crater measured 57 feet wide and 20 feet deep. It was believed to be the second largest crater caused by any rocket that fell in Southern England.

In the spring of 2017, an archaeological dig was conducted by experts, Sean and Colin Welch. The impact site was on the west 'bank' of the Lyn Valley. The topography explains the shape of the crater and the pattern of jettisoned fragments backwards as far as Ten Acre Farm. A rocket fragment has been used as a door stop for the past 70 years at Bumpit Farm!



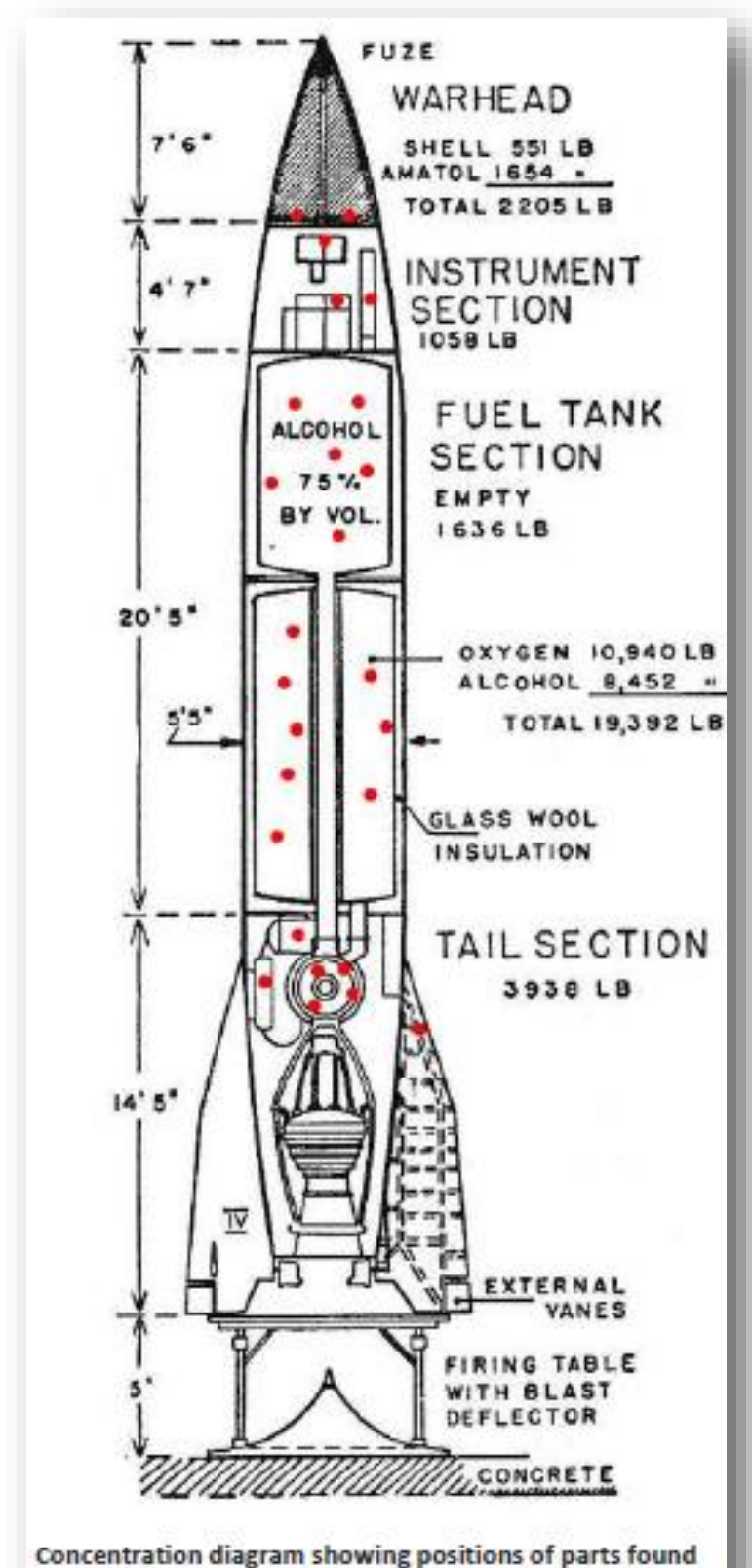
Some of the excavated items

The fragments excavated from the site weighed in at 153.5 kg. The original mass of 12.98 tons was atomised in the explosion.

The origin of the recovered fragments are identified on this diagram:



Excavation of the crater



Concentration diagram showing positions of parts found

Extract from "The War Years 1939 - 1945 in Faversham and District"

April 1945

Teynham Parish Church, which had for the second time been badly damaged by enemy in action in August 1944, had been sufficiently repaired to make it possible to use it again for Easter Sunday, 1st April.

Leslie Frank BOORMAN of Teynham

14512039 Private, 2nd Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)

Killed in action between 1 and 2 February 1945, aged 21

Son of Alfred William, an agricultural labourer, and Louisa (née Whibley) Boorman of 2 Triggs Row, Barrow Green, Teynham, Leslie (nicknamed "Jacko") was born in 1923. Leslie served in the 2nd Bn, The Buffs, who had been moved from India into Burma in 1944. As part of the 36th British Division they crossed the Irrawaddy in January 1945 where they came under the command of the 14th Army.

At the time that Leslie was killed in action, the 36th Division had forced a crossing in assault craft over the Shweli river to Myitson. This had been preceded by the heaviest air and land bombardment in this sector of the Burma front. Crossing the Shweli allowed the 36th Division's advance into central Burma.

Leslie is buried in Taukkyan War Cemetery, Htauk Kyant, Kale District, Sagaing Region, Myanmar. The largest of the three war cemeteries in Burma (now Myanmar), it was begun in 1951 for the reception of graves from four battlefield cemeteries at Akyab, Mandalay, Meiktila and Sahmaw. These were difficult to access and could not be maintained. The graves have been grouped together to preserve the individuality of these battlefield cemeteries. Because of prolonged post-war unrest, considerable delay occurred before the Army Graves Service were able to complete their work.



Men of the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) advancing on Myitson village through the jungle after crossing the Shweli river.

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Alfred Henry Daniel FISHER of Lynsted

6921301 Rifleman, 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade

Died of wounds, 1 April 1945, aged 23

Alfred was born in Bapchild on Christmas Day 1921, the son of Alfred Thomas Fisher, a farm labourer, and Annie Louisa Fisher (née Baker) of Cellar Hill. Alfred had a younger brother Albert E, and two younger sisters, Annie E and Rita M. Alfred attended Bapchild School.

At the time of the 1939 Register census, Alfred junior was living with his family in Cellar Hill, Lynsted, and working in a brewery bottle depot. He was called up for service in 1941 at which time he was recorded as working at Queenborough Glass Works.

Alfred served in the 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade from 1941. The battalion suffered heavy losses the previous year at the defence of Calais, where the brigade slowed the German advance and enabled the Dunkirk evacuation to proceed.



Men of the 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade take cover as a mortar bomb explodes in a stream in the village of Nieuwstadt, north of Sittard, the Netherlands, 3 January 1945.

Re-formed in 1941, the battalion became part of the 2nd Armoured Brigade of the 1st Armoured Division and took part in many battles in the North African Campaign before transferring to the 22nd Armoured Brigade of the 7th Armoured Division in June 1942. The battalion was credited with destroying many tanks from the 21st Panzer Division at the Battle of Alam el Halfa on the 31 August 1942. They subsequently took part in the Second Battle of El Alamein and the Tunisian Campaign until May 1943 when the war in North Africa ended. The battalion then took part in the Allied invasion of Italy, and the early stages of the Italian

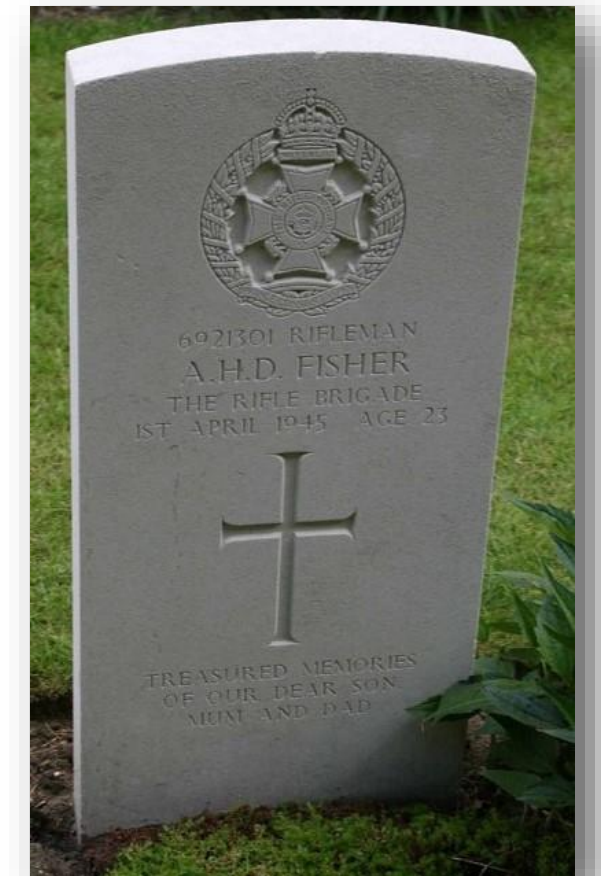
Campaign in September 1943. After a few months in England, they took part in the invasion of Normandy in June 1944, going on to fight throughout the North West Europe Campaign until Victory in Europe Day in May 1945.

Sadly, Albert died of wounds just one month before VE Day and on 4 May his death was announced in an article in the Faversham News:

Mr & Mrs Alfred Fisher of Cellar Hill, Lynsted, have been bereaved by the death on April 1st on the West European Front of the elder son, Rifleman, Alfred Henry Daniel Fishers, Rifle Brigade who died of wounds received in action. Rifleman Fisher, who was 23, was born in Bapchild and attended Bapchild School. He was employed at the Queenborough Glass Works when he was called up for service in 1941. After service in North Africa and Italy he returned to England en route to the Western Front, where he had been ever since.

Alfred is buried in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany. The cemetery was created after the Second World War when burials were brought in from all over western Germany and is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in Germany. Some of those members of the land forces buried there died in the advance through Reichswald Forest in February 1945. Others died crossing the Rhine, among them members of the airborne forces whose bodies were brought from Hamminkeln, where landings were made by the 6th Airborne Division from bases in England. There are 7,594 Commonwealth servicemen of the Second World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery.

Alfred's grave reference is 55. C. 9



Albert PRICE of Teynham

4080613 Private, 2nd Battalion, Monmouthshire Regiment

Died of wounds on 5 April 1945, aged 29

Born on 19 September 1917 in Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorganshire, Albert was the son of Thomas (a colliery underground haulier) and Margaret (née Edwards) Price.

At the time of the 1939 Register the family were living at 4 Alfred Street, Merthyr Tydfil, and Albert was working as a cinema attendant.

In 1944, Albert married Winifred Mary Hawkins, of Teynham.

After intensive training, the 2nd Battalion, Monmouthshire Regiment landed in Normandy on 28 June 1944 when they initially fought in the Caen. Soon after arrival, they took part in Operation Epsom, spending two weeks in trenches between Hill 112 and the River Odon.

Action was then seen in the Battle of the Falaise Gap in August 1944, where the battalion suffered heavy casualties. The battalion later took part in the liberation of Merville and crossing into the Netherlands.

We know that Albert had been wounded on 2 September 1944

By October, the battalion had reached the Nederrijn and took part in the attack on 's-Hertogenbosch. They then fought in the counter offensive against the German advances in the Ardennes forest in December 1944.

Moving into The Netherlands in January 1945 they undertook in a period of training in readiness for Operation Veritable (8 February to 11 Mar 1945). Also known as the Battle of the Reichswald, it was the northern part of an Allied pincer movement during the final stages of the Second World War. The fighting was hard, but once clear of the Reichswald Forest, control was taken of the towns of Kleve and Goch.

Albert's battalion continued to advance across Germany, forcing a crossing of the River Aller at Rethem on 11 April 1945. This was their last major action of the war.

However Albert had died of wounds on 5 April 1945. Just a month before VE Day.

Edwin John MOODY of Wychling
CH/X 112355 Marine, No 40 Royal Marine Commando, Royal Marines
Killed in action on 11 April 1945, aged 19

Born 22 July 1925 in Witley, Surrey, Edwin (known as Ted) was the son of Albert and Mary (née Urquhart) Moody of Wychling.

Edwin lost his life at the Battle of the Argenta Gap (12–19 April 1945) that formed part of the Allied spring 1945 offensive during the Italian Campaign in the final stages of the Second World War. In fact this was 40 Commando's final action in WW2.

On the night of 10/11 April, the 40th (Royal Marine) Commando advanced along the raised causeway bordering Lake Comacchio. The commandos met stiff resistance and took heavy casualties but were able to take the objective with the assistance of air support.

Edwin is buried at Argenta Gap War Cemetery, Ferrara, Italy.



Men of 40 Royal Marine Commando leave a power plant they destroyed at Lake Comacchio, Italy, 11 April 1945

The end was in sight:

1945 Early April	19 camps (Rheinwieslager or Rhine meadow camps) were created by the US Army to hold surrendered German soldiers. Dwight D Eisenhower, Commander in Chief of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEP), ordered those held in the camps be designated "disarmed enemy forces" not "prisoners of war". This meant the prisoners were not covered by the protection of the Geneva Convention. By the time the camps were closed in September 1945, it is estimated 3,000 to 6,000 men died from starvation, dehydration and exposure to the weather elements - no structures were built inside the prison compounds. On the Western Front the Allies captured 1,500,000 Prisoners of War. 800,000 German soldiers surrendered on the Eastern Front.
5 April – 20 May	Georgian Uprising of Texel was fought between Georgian Nazi-collaborationist army units on Texel against the German occupiers of the Dutch island.
13 April	Vienna fell to Soviet troops who then went on to Berlin.
15 April	The British 11th Armoured Division liberated around 60,000 prisoners at Bergen-Belsen Concentration camp.
19 April	The American 42nd Infantry Division liberated Dachau Concentration Camp.
25 April	Italian partisans liberated Milan and Turin. German forces left Finland and Lapland and made their way into occupied Norway.
27 April	Italian dictator Benito Mussolini was captured by Italian partisans.
28 April	Benito Mussolini was killed by Italian guerrilla fighters followed by the surrender of at least 120,000 German troops in Italy. Mussolini was executed in Giulino.
29 April	32,000 survivors were liberated at Dachau concentration camp. Rodolfo Graziani surrendered all Fascist Italian armed forces at Caserta. German forces in Italy surrender.
30 April	Adolf Hitler committed suicide in his underground bunker in Berlin. He had left instructions that Hermann Göring, his second-in-command and Interior minister, and Heinrich Himmler were to be dismissed. His successors were to be Karl Dönitz as the "President of Germany", and Joseph Goebbels as the new Chancellor. Goebbels committed suicide the following day, leaving Dönitz as the sole leader of Germany.
2 May	German forces in Berlin surrender to the Red Army. The two armies of Army Group Vistula north of Berlin, surrendered to the Western Allies.
4 May	German forces in North West Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands surrendered unconditionally to Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery. German land, sea and air forces involved in this surrender amounted to 1,000,000 men.
5 May:	Dönitz ordered all U-boats to cease offensive operations and return to their bases. At 16:00, the German commander-in-chief in the Netherlands, surrendered to Canadian General Charles Foulkes in the presence of Prince Bernhard. The Czech resistance started the Prague uprising.
6 May	The Soviet Army launched the Prague Offensive. Hermann Göring surrendered to General Carl Spaatz, commander of the operational United States Air Forces in Europe. German forces in Breslau surrender to the Soviet Army. Thirty minutes later Jodl and Keitel surrender all German armed forces unconditionally.
7 May	At 02:41, at SHAEP headquarters in Reims, France, the Chief-of-Staff of the German Armed Forces High Command, General Alfred Jodl, signed an unconditional surrender document for all German forces to the Allies. General Franz Böhme announced the unconditional surrender of German troops in Norway stating " All forces under German control to cease active operations at 2301 hours Central European Time on May 8, 1945 ".
8 May	German forces on Guernsey and Jersey surrendered 10:00hrs.
8 May	VE Day



The news of Germany's surrender did not come as a surprise. It had been anticipated for some time and people across Britain were on standby to start celebrating the end of the war in Europe.

On 7 May 1945, the formal act of military surrender was signed by Germany, ending the war in Europe. The next day, at 3pm, Churchill delivered the message the nation had been waiting for: the war in Europe was over:

"We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing; but let us not forget for a moment the toil and efforts that lie ahead. Japan with all her treachery and greed, remains unsubdued,"

Celebrations broke out all over the world to mark Victory in Europe or VE Day. In Britain, 8 May was declared a public holiday. People held parties, danced and sang in the streets. Huge crowds gathered in London, both on Whitehall to hear Churchill speak and outside Buckingham Palace where King George VI and the Royal Family appeared on the balcony.



View of the crowd in front of the Ministry of Health building in Whitehall, 8 May 1945. The Prime Minister addressed the crowd from the balcony, which, like the roof of the building, is decorated with flags. On the right is the Cenotaph.
© IWM (TR 2876)

Not everyone felt they could celebrate. For those who had lost loved ones in the conflict, it was a time to reflect. For many of the widows and widowers the war had produced, the noise and jubilation was had to bear.

The day was also bittersweet for those still serving overseas, including the Allied servicemen fighting in the Far East and those held as prisoners of war. In some cases it took years for troops to return home and it took much longer to rebuild the country and overcome post-war austerity.

Not everything had stopped in Europe:

9 May	The Second Army on the Heiligenbeil and Danzig beachheads, on the Hel Peninsula in the Vistula delta surrendered. Forces on the Greek islands and the garrisons of most of the last Atlantic pockets in France, in Dunkirk and La Rochelle also surrendered.
10 May	Order JCS 1067 was put into effect by President Truman, setting out the post-war economic plan that advocated how the Allied occupation would include measures to prevent Germany from waging further war. The Atlantic Pocket of Lorient surrendered. Germans occupying Sark surrendered.
11 May	The Atlantic Pocket of Saint-Nazaire surrendered.
12 May	Battle of Slivice, the last battle in Czechoslovakia.
13 May	Red Army halted all offensives in Europe.
14 - 15 May	Battle of Poljana took place in Yugoslavia (today's Slovenia).
16 May	Germans still occupying Alderney surrendered.
23 May	Dönitz and all the members of his Government were arrested and the German government dissolved.
25 May:	Last battle in Europe, Battle of Odžak between Yugoslav Army and Croatian Armed Forces, concludes.
5 June	The "Assumption of Supreme Authority by Allied Powers" was signed by the four Allies. It stated: <i>"The Governments of the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the Provisional Government of the French Republic, hereby assume supreme authority with respect to Germany, including all the powers possessed by the German Government, the High Command and any state, municipal, or local government or authority. The assumption, for the purposes stated above, of the said authority and powers does not affect the annexation of Germany."</i>
4 September	A small group of German soldiers deployed on Svalbard in Operation Haudegen to establish and man a weather station there lost radio contact in May 1945; they surrendered to some Norwegian seal hunters on 4 September, two days after the Surrender of Japan.

The country goes to the polls

On the 23 May 1945, the national government set up by Winston Churchill in 1940 to see Britain through the Second World War came to an end. With the Allied victory in Europe only two weeks old, the Labour Party was anxious to return to "politics as usual" and fight a general election. Churchill was unwilling to dissolve Parliament before the close of the war in the Pacific, but he had little choice when his coalition partners made clear their intentions to go to the country as soon as possible.

A general election was held on 5 July 1945, the first to be held for 10 years. Polling in some constituencies was delayed by several days, while the counting of votes was delayed until 26 July to provide time for overseas votes to be brought to Britain.

The previous decade had seen massive change and during the war a new left-leaning consensus had gradually developed within Britain, with the Beveridge report at its heart. The report, published in December 1942, recommended a comprehensive welfare state and National Health Service. Its proposals enjoyed widespread support throughout the country but received only lukewarm support from Churchill and the Conservative Party. The nation had undergone the horrors of war and expected to enjoy the fruits of victory.

The position of the Labour Party changed dramatically during the war. Churchill had given Labour several key ministries within the national government, including the Ministry of Labour (Ernest Bevin) and the Home Office (Herbert Morrison). Clement Attlee, the Labour leader, was made Churchill's Deputy Prime Minister. The effect was to give Labour a wealth of experience in office which was to prove invaluable when the party went to the country.

Labour won the election and Clement Attlee took up the position of Prime Minister. Winston Churchill would be returned to power in 1951.



Ground crew on a RAF Bomber Command station in Britain return the 'V for Victory' sign to a neighbouring searchlight crew. Silhouetted is the nose of a Lancaster bomber.

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Our villages celebrate and reflect

The people of Swale's mood, along with the that of the rest of the country, was that of relief, but subdued with the knowledge that it was not over yet. Union flags and bunting popped up everywhere and people gathered for impromptu tea parties. All the churches held services of thanksgiving.

For those on the Home Front in our villages, it was time to reflect.

Enemy Action Incidents in Swale villages 1939 - 1945

Alerts	3,804
High explosive bombs:	909
<i>Exploded</i>	538
<i>Unexploded</i>	371
Incendiary bombs	2,479
Phosphorous bombs	11
Anti-personnel bombs	140
Oil bombs	9
Mines	10
Crashed aircraft	18
Anti-aircraft shells	107
Barrage balloons	3
Flying bombs	14
Casualties:	141
<i>Killed</i>	18
<i>Seriously injured</i>	51
<i>Slightly injured</i>	72
Properties damaged:	2,478
<i>Destroyed</i>	16
<i>Damaged</i>	2,462

In total those lost during service in the armed forces were:

Lynsted with Kingsdown	12
Teynham	18
Norton	3
Doddington	8
Newnham	4
Wychling	2
Luddenham	2
Oare	4

Included in these figures are the two servicemen from Oare, and the one from Teynham who lost their lives after VE Day.

It is impossible to know how many more served their country, nor how many more were injured or held as Prisoners of War.

Cecil William POWELL of Oare

14880172, Private, The Parachute Regiment, A.A.C.

Died 4 August 1945 as a result of an accident, aged 19

Cecil was born in 1926 to Cecil Baden Powell and Alice Caroline (née Tester) Powell of 2 Forge Cottages, Oare.

Cecil was still in training at Catterick Camp when he accidentally drowned in The Foss on the River Swale, Richmond, North Yorkshire.

The Faversham News and East Kent Journal 17 August 1945 gave the following report:

Sympathy will go out to Mr and Mrs C Powell of 2 Forge Cottages, Oare, in the loss they suffered in the closing days of the war by the death of their only son, Pte. Cecil William ("Jim") Powell, of the Parachute Regiment.

As briefly stated in our last issue, Pte Powell was drowned while under training in Yorkshire.

Pte Powell, who had almost completed his nineteenth year, was educated t Davington School and was afterwards in the employ of Messrs Shepherd Neame Ltd. as a lorry driver's mate. Joining the Air Training Corps he rose to Flight-Serget and was placed on the deferred list for the R.A.F. IN December last,

however, he was transferred to the Army and volunteered for the Paratroops. The sad news of his death was received by his parents on Saturday, August 4th, and it was the more distressing as he was expected home on leave in a few days on the completion of his training.

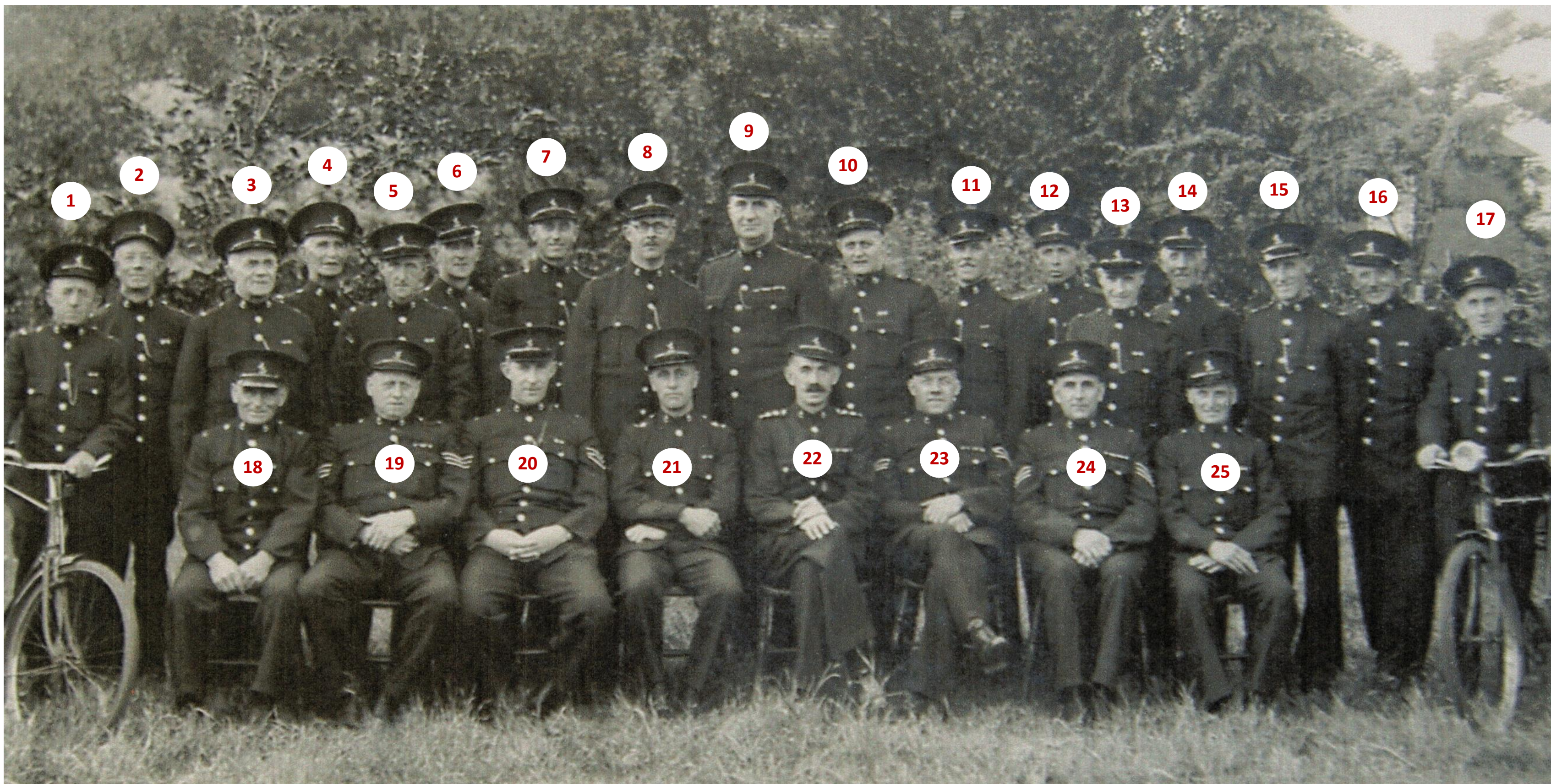
The funeral took place last Saturday at Faversham Cemetery, where the gallant young paratrooper was buried in the Services section. The Rev. J. A. Osborne conducted the service.

Cecil was engaged to be married to Nelly Culver.

Cecil is also commemorated on the Davington School memorial plaque, located in the parish church of St. Mary Magdalene & St. Lawrence, Davington.



The Teynham and Lynsted Special Constables who served us in WW2




June 1945

1 Sp/C H K Allchin	2 Sp/C R L Baker	3 Sp/C H E Ruck	4 Sp/C T J Parrish	5 Sp/C H C Radley	6 Sp/C A G Pilcher	7 Sp/C W J Wood	8 Sp/C R R Dixon	9 Sp/C G A Wiles	10 Sp/C J M Gilbert	11 Sp/C E F Buttle	12 Sp/C W S Clark	13 Sp/C H G Stickels	14 Sp/C F J Champ	15 Sp/C R C J Cooper	16 Sp/C H F Hardy	17 Sp/C R C Taylor
18 Sp/C W R Fagg	19 Sgt T C French	20 Sgt S R Dixon	21 Insp D J Moor	22 HSC P Sykes	23 Sgt L Cheesman	24 Sgt W F Dalton	25 Sp/C G H White									



Walter Stanley Thomas, a farmer living at Mount House, London Road, Lynsted, had been in the Special Constabulary since 1926. In 1940 he was appointed Supervisor of the Swale Division of the Special Constabulary. His deputy was Frank Augustus Datson of Brindle, Teynham.



VICTORY IN JAPAN - 15 AUGUST 1945

The surrender of Imperial Japan was announced by Japanese Emperor Hirohito on August 15 and formally signed on 2 September 1945. World War II at last was at an end.

How it all ended

There has been much discussion in the years since the conclusion of war about the rights and wrongs of how the end came about. The Potsdam Conference had defined the terms for a Japanese Surrender that would require it to be accepted by all Japanese armed forces. On 26 July 1945, United States President Harry S Truman, United Kingdom Prime Minister Elect, Clement Attlee, and Chairman of China Chiang Kai-shek signed the "Potsdam Agreement". The ultimatum stated that, if Japan did not surrender, it would face "prompt and utter destruction". On 28 July 1945 the Allies delivered this to Japan.

黙殺 - Peace offer ignored

The response: "黙殺 Mokusatsu". Translated to mean "ignore", "take no notice of" or "treat with silent contempt". It has been argued that this may not have translated accurately, a problem encountered before in traditional Japanese formal written diplomatic communication. Indeed after WW2 the Japanese did modernise their language. However, the Japanese had publicly stated their intent to fight on to the bitter end.

In the background, Japan's leaders were asking the Soviet Union (who were neutral) to mediate on their behalf for more favourable surrender terms. The Soviets played along. Nevertheless, they were secretly planning an attack on Japanese forces in Manchuria, Korea, South Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands. This had been agreed in secret with the United Kingdom and United States at the Yalta Conferences

Hiroshima

At 8.15am on 6 August 1945, the US detonated an atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Tokyo had already been devastated by fire bombs.

President Truman called again for Japan's surrender, warning them to "expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth."

On 8 August 1945, as promised, but in violation of the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and invaded Manchukuo.

The Japanese government did not believe the US had a second bomb.

Nagasaki

Just hours later, on 9 August, the US dropped a second atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

Emperor Hirohito ordered his "Supreme Council for the Direction of the War" to accept the terms the Allies had set down in the Potsdam Declaration for ending the war.

The Kyūjō incident

Not all agreed to the surrender. As the fine print was discussed, on the night of the 14-15 August, the Staff Office of Japan's Ministry of War and the Imperial Guard, attempted a military coup d'état.

Lieutenant General Takeshi Mori of the First Imperial Guards Division was murdered, an attempt was made to put Emperor Hirohito under house arrest and a counterfeit order revoking the surrender was prepared.

However, the Eastern District Army and the high command of the Imperial Japanese Army refused to take part. With this failure, those who led this attempt committed suicide.

As a result, the communiqué of the intent for a Japanese surrender continued as planned.

The surrender

On 15 August, Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender through a radio address.

On 28 August, the occupation of Japan led by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers began.

The surrender ceremony was held on 2 September, aboard the USS Missouri, at which officials from the Japanese government signed the Japanese Instrument of Surrender, thereby ending the hostilities.

Some Japanese soldiers serving in isolated pockets through Asia and the Pacific refused to surrender. Into the 1970s, some were still being found and refusing to surrender.

The state of war formally ended when the Treaty of San Francisco came into force on 28 April 1952. Four more years passed before Japan and the Soviet Union signed the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956, which formally brought an end to their state of war.

There was much joy and celebration around the world when on 15 August 1945 US President Harry S Truman declared the day as Victory over Japan Day, at a White House press conference. At midnight, the British Prime Minister Clement Attlee confirmed the news in a broadcast saying, "The last of our enemies is laid low."



Crowds dance in Oxford Circus, 10 August 1945

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The Prime Minister expressed gratitude to Britain's allies, in Australia and New Zealand, India, Burma, all countries occupied by Japan and to the USSR. But special thanks went to the United States "without whose prodigious efforts the war in the East would still have many years to run".

The following evening King George VI addressed the nation and the Empire in a broadcast from his study at Buckingham Palace.

"Our hearts are full to overflowing, as are your own. Yet there is not one of us who has experienced this terrible war who does not realise that we shall feel its inevitable consequences long after we have all forgotten our rejoicings today."

Historic buildings all over London were floodlit and people crowded onto the streets of every town and city shouting, singing, dancing, lighting bonfires and letting off fireworks.



Japanese military leaders on board USS Missouri during the surrender ceremony on 2 September 1945

(James) Percy DALE of Oare

6285444 Sergeant, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), 12 Infantry Training Centre

Killed in a firing practice accident 11 October 1945, aged 31

Son of Mr and Mrs Edwin Dale, Percy was born in 1914. A miner by profession, in 1940 he married Bessie Adelaide Butler of Oare where they lived in 2 Pheasant Cottage.

Sadly, Percy was killed whilst working as an instructor for The Buffs, 12th Infantry Training Centre at Canterbury.

The following report of the inquest into his death, was published in the Whitstable Times and Herne Bay Herald on 20 October 1945:

Mortar Bomb Hits N.C.O. in Face.

Oare Sergeant's Death.

The tragic death of Sergeant James Percy Dale, of the Buffs, aged 31, whose home was at 3, Pheasant Cottages, Oare, Faversham, was the subject of an inquest conducted by Mr. A. K. Mowl, Deputy Coroner for East Kent, at the Council Chamber, Herne Bay, on Friday evening.

Sergeant Dale was fatally injured just before noon the previous day at Reculver whilst engaged in instructing recruits in firing two-inch mortar bombs. He belonged to "I" Coy., the Buffs, 12th Infantry Training Centre, The Barracks, Canterbury.

Howard George Heathfield, 18, Russell Place, Oare, labourer on the Southern Railway brother-in-law of deceased, gave evidence of identification. Deceased, he said, was a miner in civil life, and had good health. He was happily married, and witness last saw him alive on Saturday, October 6th, at his home.

Dr. Grace Catherine Evans, practising at Herne Bay, said she saw the body of deceased in a car outside Herne Bay Hospital just before noon, the previous day. He had extensive injuries to the upper part of the face and head. She thought a mortar bomb must have passed right through his head, and death must have been instantaneous.

Lieut. Herbert Stringer, East Surrey Regiment, gave evidence that on the previous day he was in charge of the two-inch mortar range at Reculver, and all the required military precautions had been taken. There were two mortars, witness being in charge of one and deceased of the other, and 30 recruits were present.

There was a crew of three men to each gun, and Pte Cyril Colchin, as No.1 was firing the gun off which deceased was in charge. He would be lying full length on the ground, with his chest on the base plate. No. 2, Pte Letchford, was the man who loaded the gun, and the order to fire would be given by deceased. No. 3, Pte Cushway, would be in front of the mortar,

about 15 yards away, and slightly to one side. His job was to report the striking of the bombs on the target which was approximately 350 yards away.

Witness was standing about 20 yards from deceased's mortar and on being called over he saw deceased had been injured. Witness commandeered a private car, in which deceased was taken to hospital. Deceased was an experienced instructor and a good N.C.O.

Witness thought that the man who was to fire the mortar did not turn the grip sufficiently, and realising this he gave it another turn, and the mortar was fired.

The mortar was produced and witness demonstrated to the Coroner how it was fired.

Pte Cyril Colchin, the Buffs, said he was aged 18 and had been in the Army just over three months. He had fired one bomb, and after Pte Letchford had reloaded the mortar witness heard deceased say: "Put another bomb in." Witness told him there was already one in, and deceased, who was behind witness, then said, "Fire." Witness did not actually see where deceased was, because he was looking down at the sight on the mortar.

At this point the Coroner said he did not propose to call any of the several other witnesses present. It appeared to him that deceased did not know another bomb had been put in, and knowing he was dealing with recruits, he went to inspect the mortar when Colchin told him one had been put in. Colchin, not knowing the position of deceased, because he was looking down at the sight, fired the mortar, causing the instantaneous death of deceased.

Therefore, said the Coroner, he would record a verdict of Death by Misadventure, and would express deep sympathy with the widow and other members of the family, and also with the unit in losing the services of a valuable soldier.

Major Reginald Charles Guy, M.C., on the staff of the 12th Infantry Training Centre, also expressed sympathy with the family on behalf of Colonel Wilson, Commanding Officer of the Training Centre. He said deceased was held in very high esteem and was a very valuable member of the instructional staff.

Inspector Setterfield, on behalf of the police, associated himself with the expressions of sympathy.

Bessie remained in Oare, later living at 35 Church Road. She did not remarry and died aged 64 in 1981. She is buried along with Percy in Oare Churchyard.

1946

Geoffrey Sydney BUTTON of Teynham

166725 Flying Officer Navigator, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Died in a flying accident on 18 January 1946, aged 22

Son of Arthur, a painter and decorator, and Charlotte Ellen Jane (née Bunting) of The Crescent, Barrow Green, Teynham, Sydney (nicknamed "Tiffy") was born in December 1923.

Geoffrey was made a Substantive Flying Officer Navigator on 6 April 1945, just one month before VE Day. He was stationed at 17 Operational Training Unit Royal Air Force, RAF Silverstone, Towcester, Northamptonshire. It was from here that at 9.50am on 18 January 1946, Wellington Bomber LR125 took off with five crew, including Geoffrey as navigator, for a cross-country navigational exercise.

At 10:45am, while flying in cloud, the Wellington crashed at Hendwr, near Corwen, 11 miles North East of Bala, Gwynedd. The plane broke up but did not catch fire. However, all the

crew were lost.

Along with Geoffrey, those lost were Sergeant (Pilot) Norman Charles Brunning, Sergeant (Air Gunner) Alfred Frederick Butler, Sergeant (Wireless Op/Air Gunner) Lawson Terence Crabb and, Flight Sergeant (Navigator/Air Bomber) William Spence Kinnair.

The official Air Ministry board of Inquiry reported that it was likely that the cause of the crash was due to the "pilot's head freezing over, leading to loss of control".

Geoffrey is buried in Sittingbourne Cemetery.