

# *IN MEMORIAM*



*Upholland Grammar School*

*1914-1919*

*1939-1945*

☆☆☆



## INTRODUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

By the time the First World War broke out in August 1914, Upholland Grammar School had re-located from its original site at School Lane in Upholland to the Ox House Heyes Estate. The existing house which became the School had, since the 1700's, been the home of the Gaskell family of Upholland. Upholland High School was later built on the same site - only a remnant of the original grammar school buildings remains.

The school magazines of the Great War period record 130 Old Boys who had enrolled in various branches of the Services. Within the Assembly Hall were photographs of "many of our soldier lads". At the end of the War, the School sought to honour the fallen Old Boys and to this end a Roll of Honour plaque was commissioned. The plaque was of polished brass, mounted upon an oak base and had inscribed upon it the names of 22 former pupils who had perished in the War.

In the early 1950's, educational reform brought forth yet another change of location to Winstanley Road into a modern building which itself evolved into the present Winstanley College. The site was generously given by the Bankes family of Winstanley Hall. Whilst the war memorial plaque was removed from Ox House Heyes, it was never displayed in the new school. The Second World War, 1939 - 1945, had resulted in the further loss of 11 Old Boys and, in January 1954, clocks were installed and a new memorial tablet commissioned, dedicated to the memory of Old Pupils who had given their lives in the two World Wars. The unveiling was performed by Mr. George H. Scrivener, believed to be the oldest Old Pupil, and received into the keeping of the School by Mr. Maggs, Headmaster. Mr. Scrivener had lost a son, also an Old Pupil of the School, in the First World War. Sadly, the clocks were subsequently damaged beyond repair and the memorial tablet removed many years ago, its fate unknown. In 1995, to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, a War Memorial Global Clock, dedicated to the memory of the fallen former pupils of both wars, was funded by donations from Winstanley College students and was displayed in the entrance foyer.

In 2001, and due to the generosity of Winstanley College, the original First World War plaque was restored. In view of the former close and historic links between Upholland Grammar School and the parish church of St. Thomas the Martyr in Upholland, a decision was reached to offer the plaque for display within the church. It was re-dedicated on Remembrance Sunday 2001 by the Venerable Peter Bradley, Rector of Upholland. A wreath was laid in memory of the Old Boys.

In October 2002, since there remained no tribute to those Old Boys of the school who gave their lives in the Second World War, the College generously funded the commissioning of a replacement plaque to their memory. It is of polished brass, mounted on oak - there are 11 names inscribed upon it. This plaque was also offered to and accepted for display in the church of St. Thomas the Martyr, Upholland and was dedicated by the Venerable Peter Bradley on Saturday, 9th November 2002 at 11.0 a.m.

For this work recognition is due to :-

Kevin Watson, Principal of Winstanley College (until 2005)  
for his commitment to the projects and generosity in providing funding  
for both the restoration of the First World War plaque  
and the provision of a new Second World War plaque.

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Jon Dickinson of Winstanley College  
who generously gave of his time and skills in restoring the First World War plaque.

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David W. Atherton of Winstanley College  
who, having discovered the First World War plaque in storage,  
had been its guardian over the years.

~~~

Carol Littler who had carried out a great deal of research into the fallen of the two  
wars and who gave much support to the project.

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Grateful thanks go to the Ven. Peter Bradley, Rector of Upholland, and  
the Church Council for giving sanctuary to the plaques.

In 2013, it was decided that a new war memorial plaque be commissioned in  
memory of the former pupils who had died in the First World War and the Second  
World War to coincide with the centenary of the commencement of the Great War  
in 2014. Additionally, a Roll of Honour book would be compiled in order that all  
those who fell would become “more than just a name” and both tributes would be  
displayed at the College for all to see.

Thanks to generosity of the current Principal of Winstanley College, Jo Bailey, this  
will be funded by the College.

The information presented here has been provided by :-

David W. Atherton  
gleaned from Upholland Grammar School Admission Registers  
and the school magazines of the period.

~~~

Roy Pennington of Southport  
who allowed use of photographs of his brother, Harold Pennington.

~~~

Keith Hall of Wigan  
who has permitted the use of his extensive research  
on the Second World War fallen.

~~~

Frank Rimmer of Rainford  
who has researched the boys with Rainford connections  
and has provided the photographs of Walter Bradley & John Kerfoot.

~~~

Harry Roughley of Billinge  
who has allowed use of his research on, and lent a photograph of, Henry Heyes.

~~~

Lancashire County Council  
for permission to reproduce the photograph of Parliament Street.

~~~

Carol Littler  
who researched details from  
'Soldiers Died in the Great War',  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records,  
Regimental Histories & Battalion War Diaries  
and other archival resources.

~~~

Dr. Allan Miller of Orrell,  
formerly a pupil and later teacher at Upholland Grammar School  
who lent photographs of Ox House Heyes and school magazines.

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Special thanks to J. Ken Ackers of Orrell , former pupil of  
Upholland Grammar School,  
for his original drawing of Ox House Heyes School  
which adorns the cover.

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We have included in this record only those whose names were inscribed on the war memorials displayed within the School. We are aware that there may be some former pupils of the School whose death in the Wars was unknown at the time. Inevitably, more information has been gained about the lives and deaths of some former pupils than others; that is not to say that their efforts and sacrifice were unequal.

C.L.  
D.W.A.

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**UPHOLLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL**  
**ROLL OF HONOUR**  
**1914 ~ 1919**

ARNOLD BAXTER  
CLIVE BAXTER  
WALTER BRADLEY  
JESSE CARLISLE  
JOHN CHRISTY  
JOSEPH DIGGLE  
CYRIL FAIRCLOUGH  
AUSTIN FORREST  
BERNARD FORREST  
ALBERT FORSHAW  
LESLIE HOWDEN

JOHN KERFOOT  
LANCELOT LAMB  
WILLIAM MARSDEN  
ALLAN MUIR  
RICHARD OWEN  
FRED PIGOT  
WALTER PLACE  
MARMADUKE RENNARD  
JOHN SCRIVENER  
HARRY TAYLOR  
CECIL WHITE

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DEATHS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

ARNOLD BAXTER	25 January, 1915
CLIVE BAXTER	25 January, 1915
JESSE CARLISE	31 July, 1915
RICHARD OWEN	1 July, 1916
CECIL WHITE	27 July, 1916
MARMADUKE RENNARD	8 August, 1916
AUSTIN FORREST	3 September 1916
WALTER BRADLEY	6 September, 1916
BERNARD FORREST	20 May, 1917
LANCELOT LAMB	25 May, 1917
JOHN KERFOOT	4 June, 1917
ALBERT FORSHAW	8 August, 1917
FRED PIGOT	12 September, 1917
LESLIE HOWDEN	22 September, 1917
CYRIL FAIRCLOUGH	9 October, 1917
HARRY TAYLOR	27 November, 1917
WILLIAM MARSDEN	30 November, 1917
JOHN SCRIVENER	2 December, 1917
WALTER PLACE	20 April, 1918
JOSEPH DIGGLE	24 August, 1918
JOHN CHRISTY	10 October, 1918
ALLAN MUIR	15 May, 1919

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**~ ARNOLD BAXTER ~**  
**Lance Corporal 11390**  
**1st Battalion Coldstream Guards**  
**Killed-in-action, 25 January 1915 in France**  
**Commemorated by name on**  
**Le Touret Memorial to the 'Missing', Richebourg-L'Avoué,**  
**Pas de Calais**

Arnold was born on 7 January 1887 to James and Elizabeth Baxter of Upholland. There were twelve children in the family, ten of whom were boys. His father was the proprietor of a Grocery and Drapery business in Parliament Street and the family was well-known in the village.

Having completed his education at Upholland Grammar School, Arnold joined his father in the family business. When war broke out, he was quick to enlist and chose a Guards regiment as he considered that this would enable him to get to the front sooner rather than later. He was 6ft 4ins tall which probably accounted for his being selected, soon after he enlisted, to represent the Regiment at the funeral in London of Field Marshal Earl Roberts.



After the fighting during the early months of the war, the Allied front line in northern France had stabilised somewhat and protected the town of Bethune, a principal railhead and important communication centre situated at the junction of two canals in a rich coal-mining area. In January 1915, the German forces launched a series of strong attacks on the Allied line, culminating in a large-scale offensive on the 25th. It was reported in the local press that Lance Corporal Baxter had been killed instantly by a shot to the head whilst leading a small section out of action. He was 28 years old and had been at the front for just three weeks.

The Baxter family at home received a letter from the Officer Commanding No. 2 Company expressing sympathy and adding that Arnold "was one of the finest men I had".

Arnold has no known grave and thus his name appears on the memorial within the Le Touret Military Cemetery which lies beside cultivated farm land in a village a short drive from Bethune. A memorial service was held for him in February 1915 at the parish church of St. Thomas the Martyr at Upholland where the family worshipped.

~ ~ ~

**The Baxter family of Upholland.**



Top row :- Norman, Maurice, Osmond, Arnold, Stanley, Victor, Clive.

Second row :- Gerald, Mr and Mrs Baxter (seated), Sidney.

Bottom row:- Lily, Leslie, Ellen

(Arnold and Clive were killed, Maurice gassed and Osmond badly wounded.)

**The family grave.**





**~ CLIVE BAXTER ~**  
**Lance Corporal 11438**  
**1st Battalion Coldstream Guards**  
**'Missing', presumed Killed-in-action in France on**  
**25 January 1915**  
**Commemorated by name on**  
**Le Touret Memorial to the 'Missing', Richebourg-L'Avoué, Pas de Calais**

On 6 April 1895, James and Elizabeth Baxter celebrated the birth of their son Clive. He began his education at Edinboro' House School, Wigan and later became a pupil at Upholland Grammar School .

Clive attended the grammar school from 7 December 1910, passing examinations for both the Junior Oxford, in 1911, and the Prof. College of Preceptors, in March 1913. He left on 10 April 1913 to study for dentistry at Liverpool University.

When war broke out, he quickly followed his elder brother into the Guards Regiment and since he was 6ft 2ins tall, was also selected to join Arnold in representing the Regiment at the funeral of Field Marshal Earl Roberts.



The boys served together in France and Clive was involved in the same action of the 25 January 1915 in which Arnold was killed. Clive was listed amongst the 'missing' following the roll-call afterwards and it had been thought he may have been taken prisoner. Unfortunately, this proved not to be the case and he was later presumed to have been killed. Sadly, his body was never recovered and identified and his name appears immediately below that of his brother's on Le Touret Memorial. Clive was 19 years old.

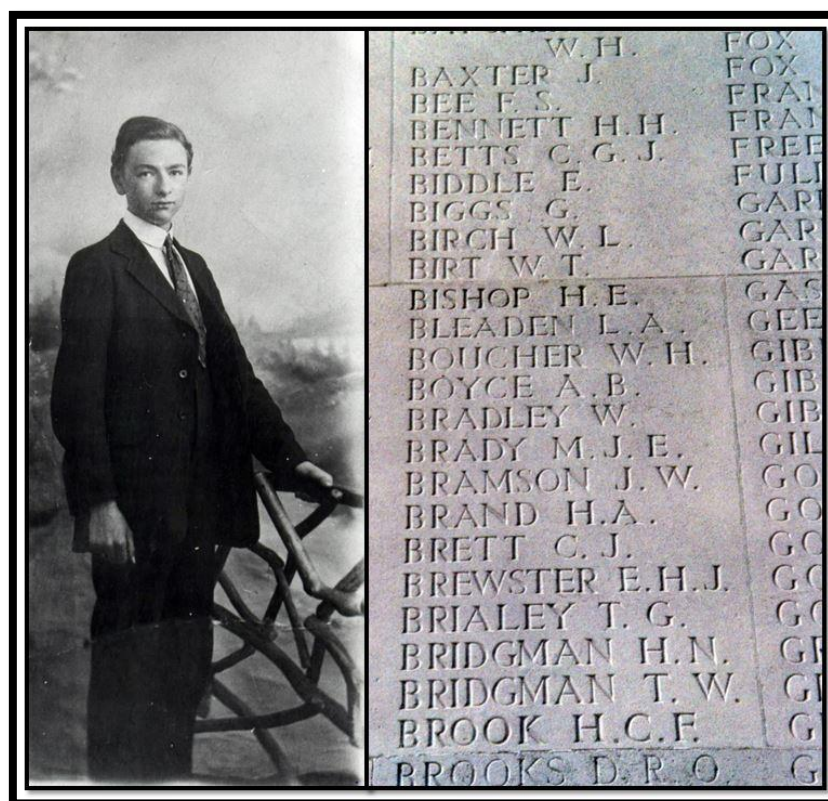
Both the brothers' names are commemorated also on the family grave in the churchyard at St. Thomas the Martyr at Upholland.

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~ WALTER BRADLEY ~  
 Rifleman 304108  
 5th (City of London) Battalion (London Rifle Brigade)  
 formerly 3045 7th Middlesex Regiment  
 Killed-in-action, 6 September 1916 in France  
 Commemorated by name on Thiepval Memorial to the 'Missing', Somme  
 Pier & Face 9D

Walter was born on 7 January 1896, the son of Robert Bradley, a Collier and his wife Alice of 74, Church Road, Rainford. He received his elementary education at Rainford School but was admitted as a pupil at Upholland Grammar School on January 19th, 1909, after having been awarded an exhibition by Lyon's Charity, Rainford, for a period of two years. He passed his Junior Oxford with 3rd class honours in July 1911 and left on 18 July to take up a post as boy clerk in the Civil Service in London, working for the Local Government Board.

Lord Kitchener's appeal for volunteers resulted in Walter enlisting into the Rifle Brigade and the School Magazine for October 1915 reports that a letter has been received from him from Egypt. Within the letter, Walter comments on the 'climatic peculiarities' of the country and also requests a copy of the School Song. (It will no doubt bring to the minds of generations of former pupils their long-past gusty renderings of "Vitae Lampada" ["The Torch of Life"] during assemblies!)



Walter was killed, aged 21 years, during the continuing fighting on the Somme. He had written to his parents in August but they were later notified that he had been seen to have suffered wounds on 6 September, subsequently being reported 'Missing'. Although his death was not confirmed until August 1917, Rainford Council had sent a condolence letter in April 1917.

Yet another of the Old Boys' names would be added to the Thiepval Memorial to the 'Missing' of the Somme, for Walter Bradley's remains were never found and identified for known and honoured burial.

Between 1 July and 18 November 1916, the Somme campaign had claimed countless lives, a great many of them to remain unidentified. Some of them would be found and identified when battlefield clearance took place after the end of the War and thus enable them to receive a soldier's burial in a named grave. It is estimated that 125,000 men serving with the British Empire Forces perished on the Somme during those four months. The battles had claimed the lives of five of the old boys.

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~ JESSE CARLISLE ~  
 Rifleman B/915  
 9th Battalion Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own)  
 Died of wounds, 31 July 1915  
 Buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Poperinge, Belgian Flanders  
 Plot I. Row D. Grave number 16.

Jesse was born on 30 May 1895 and was the fourth of five surviving children of William and Isabella Carlisle. His father was employed as a Railway Signaller and the family home was at Crank. After beginning his education at Crank Elementary School, he won a scholarship awarded by Rainford Old Grammar School Charity which enabled him to attend Upholland Grammar School for a period of two years. He was enrolled on 18 January 1909 but left on 24 March 1910, his school record noting that this was due to ill health. On the 1911 Census he is recorded as being aged 15 and employed as a shop assistant at Wood's Stores, St. Helens.



When war broke out, Jesse and his three brothers quickly volunteered to serve - one of the brothers had returned from Canada in order to enlist. Jesse was the first of them, and in August 1914 chose to join the same regiment in which his father had served as a regular soldier - the Rifle Brigade.

Jesse was amongst the many thousands of men who served in the infamous Ypres Salient which, although never taken by the Germans throughout the war, suffered heavily as it could be shelled by the enemy from three sides. The first battle of Ypres had taken place in April and May 1915 but it was under constant attack from the enemy guns.

On 31 July 1915, Jesse died in hospital from wounds received when he was hit by shell fragments the previous day during the fighting around the Salient. He was 20 years old, having celebrated his birthday just a few weeks before his death.

The following items were returned to his family.

1 Form of Prayer	1 pair goggles
1 notebook	2 knives
3 letters	scissors
1 birthday card	1 fountain pen
2 penny stamps	1 disc
9 photos	

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**~ JOHN CHRISTY ~**  
**Signalman Mersey/Z/1749**  
**H.M.S. "Colleen" Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve**  
**Died on active service, 10 October 1918, at sea**  
**Commemorated by name on the Plymouth Naval Memorial**  
**Section 30**

John was born on 7 August 1897, the son of Edward Christy, a Colliery Clerk/Timekeeper, and his wife Jane. His father originated from Hindley, Wigan, but had left to take up lodgings in Rainford as his work was at a local colliery. Following the marriage, Edward and Jane moved to Ormskirk Road where John's birth took place. There were obviously concerns regarding his health as he was baptised privately three days after his birth, but he evidently recovered and grew up fit and well.

He began his education at Bushey Lane Church of England School in Rainford, a diligent pupil, and was admitted to Upholland Grammar School on 14 September 1909 having won a County Scholarship tenable for four or more years. John passed his Junior Oxford examination in 1912 and left school in July 1915 to train as a Teacher.

John's career was curtailed when he joined the R .N.V.R. in July 1916. By October 1918, he was serving in H.M.S. "Colleen" (formerly H.M.S. "Royalist"), a Satellite Class sloop upgraded to corvette and based at Queenstown (now Cork), in the south of Ireland. At this time, Mrs. Christy was taken dangerously ill and John was therefore granted compassionate leave to make the journey home.

The S.S. "Leinster" sailed out of Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) for Holyhead and whilst crossing the Irish Sea was sunk by a German submarine on 10 October. John aged 21, was amongst the one-hundred-and-seventy-four souls who drowned. His mother died shortly after this tragedy and thus the family suffered a double bereavement.

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**~ JOSEPH DIGGLE ~**  
**Second Lieutenant**  
**2nd Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers**  
**Killed-in-action, 24 August 1918 in France**  
**Buried in Varennes Military Cemetery, Somme, France**  
**Plot III. Row C. Grave 23.**

Joseph was born on 27 April 1895, son of John Diggle, a Foreman at Bickerstaffe Colliery, and his wife Selina of 112, Crawford Village, Upholland. After first attending Crawford Elementary School, he was admitted to Upholland Grammar School on 27 April 1909, his fourteenth birthday, and remained there for four years until 26 July 1913, having passed both his Junior and Senior Oxford examinations. He was a prefect and had captained both the cricket and football teams and had been awarded the William Berridge Medal for his outstanding academic and sporting achievements. Having matriculated, Joe (as he was known at school) was to proceed to Liverpool University in October 1914. He had already passed the Intermediate Bachelor of Science Degree and the school magazine reports that he had come fourth in Military Subjects at university.

On 6 December 1915, Joe attested for military service, by which he had agreed to



serve when called upon - he had attempted to join the Chemists' Battalion of the Royal Engineers but, after being sent to London by the Wigan authorities, he had to return as the battalion had been filled. He enlisted in the Lancashire Fortress Royal Engineers on 3 March 1916 on AA defences in Liverpool, but then went overseas on 19 January 1917 as Private 37027, 10th Battalion, South Wales Borderers. By June 1917, Joe had been sent to the UK as candidate for commission and joined No. 17 Officer Cadet battalion at Rhyl on 5 July 1917. He was discharged to commission on 30 October 1917 in the Welch Regiment and returned to France on 8 January 1918.

By February 1918, the 2nd Battalion had become part of the 115th Brigade, 38th (Welch) Division and was serving on the Somme. In August the same year, the allied forces had launched offensives against the Germans to regain ground lost to the enemy in March. Advances eastwards across the old Somme battlefields were rapid as the enemy was driven out and the ridge of Thiepval was captured on 24 August - Joe was killed-in-action on this day. He was 23 years old. A report in the Wigan Observer stated that 'Lt. Diggle had been killed crossing a river whilst in command of a company' - his Captain had written to the parents '“regretting the loss of so valiant and promising an officer”.'

W2395-R1706 20,000 5/17 HWV/P571(2) G17/385  
6072-R2058 40,000 7/17

The number below should  
be quoted on any further  
communication on this subject.

*S.L/S/2274*

The Director of Graves Registration and Enquiries,  
**WAR OFFICE,**  
Winchester House,  
St. James's Square,  
LONDON, S.W.1.

460.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that a report has been received  
which states that the late **Second Lieutenant J. Diggle,**  
**2nd Bn. R.W. Fusiliers,** is buried **Varennes**  
**British Cemetery, North West of Albert.**

The grave has been registered in this office, and is marked  
by a durable wooden cross with an inscription bearing full  
particulars.

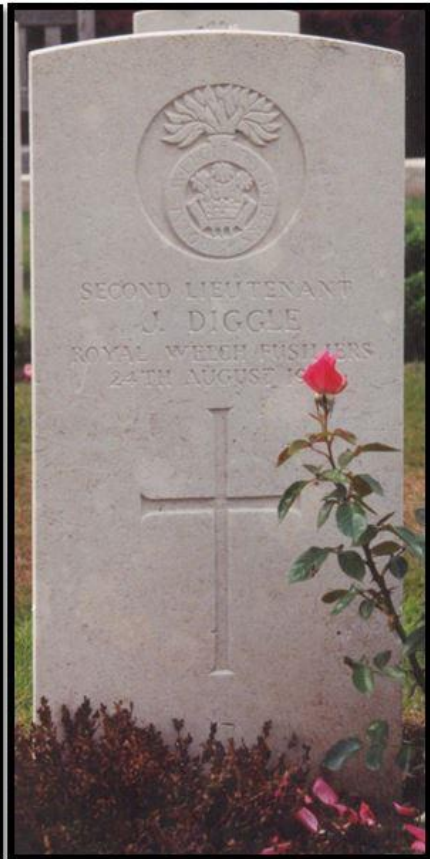
I am,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

**J. Diggle Esq.,**  
**84, Crawford Village,**  
**Upholland,**  
**Near Wigan.**

**'Sgd) Stopford.**

Captain,  
Staff-Captain for Brigadier-General,  
Director, Graves Registration and Enquiries.



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**~ CYRIL FAIRCLOUGH ~**  
**Lance Corporal 242260**  
**2nd Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers**  
**Killed-in-action, 9 October 1917 in Belgian Flanders**  
**Commemorated by name on Tyne Cot Memorial, Zonnebeke, Belgium**  
**Panels 54-60 and 163A (alphabetical order by regiment)**

Cyril was born on 15 October 1897, the second son of Robert and Elizabeth Fairclough of School House, Rainford Junction. His father was a Schoolmaster at Bushey Lane Church of England School, Rainford - he later became headmaster and held the post for thirty years. Naturally, Cyril entered Bushey Lane School for his early years of education and eventually became a pupil at Upholland Grammar School in September 1909. In July 1912, Cyril passed his Junior Oxford examination but remained in the sixth form until he left to take up a position with the Pilkington Glass Works, St. Helens, in December 1914.

Immediately he became eighteen, Cyril volunteered and enlisted at St. Helens into the 2nd Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers. After receiving training, his unit was sent out to France in April 1917. The salient around the town of Ypres (now Ieper), in West Flanders had been held by the Allies since the beginning of the war but suffered almost total devastation since it could be shelled from three sides by the enemy. In both 1914 and 1915 there had been offensives to break out of this perilous position which had not succeeded. Between June and November 1917, a series of attacks took place which are known as the Third Battles of Ypres, again with the aim of pushing back the enemy.

The 2nd Batt. Lancashire Fusiliers, assigned to 12th Brigade under the command of Brigadier-General A. Carton de Wiart, V.C. took part in the Battle of Poelkapelle on the 9 October 1917. The regimental volume of 'Soldiers Died in the Great War' records that Cyril was killed in action on that date, aged 19 years, just a few days before what would have been his 20th birthday. The School Magazine\* reported that he had been shot in the spine and was being helped by his comrades until they were ordered forward. He was never seen again. [ \*1917: Term III ]

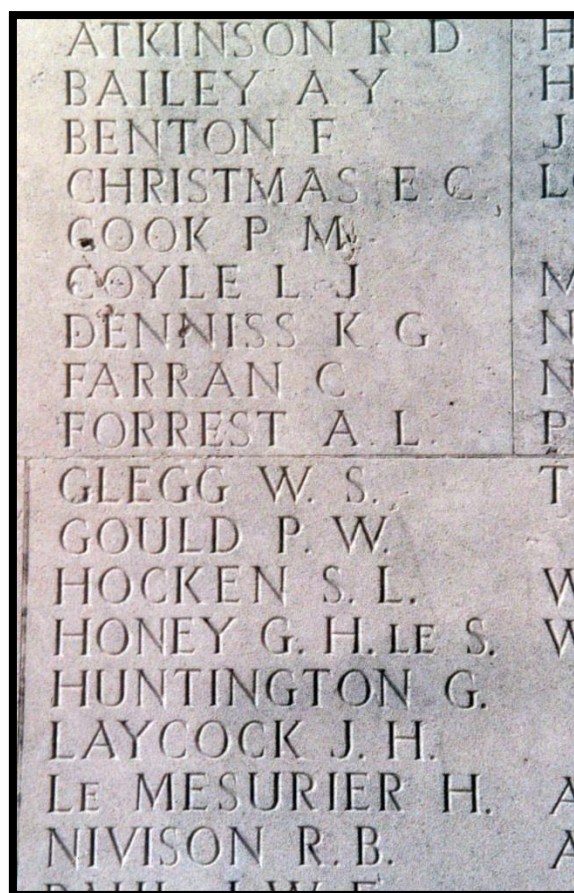
Since Cyril's body was never identified for known and honoured burial, his name is recorded on a memorial which bears the names of all those lost in Flanders from 15 August 1917 to the end of the war. There are 34,888 of them.

~\*~\*~



~ AUSTIN FORREST ~  
 Second Lieutenant  
 11th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps  
 Killed-in-action, 3 September 1916 in France  
 Commemorated by name on Thiepval Memorial to the 'Missing', Somme  
 Pier & Face 13A and 13B

Austin Lancelot was born in 1893, one of three sons of the Rev. Canon E. F. Forrest, Vicar of St. John's Church, Pemberton. Whilst Austin's school admission record is not available, that of his younger brother, Bernard, shows that he had received private tuition prior to entering the school - it is not unreasonable to assume that Austin had been similarly educated. He was later to become a student of Keble College, Oxford.



Austin became one of the untold thousands who perished on the Somme and were denied a known and honoured burial - his name on the memorial to the 'Missing' is testimony to his presence amidst those fields of death. He was 23 years old.

~ ~ ~

**~ BERNARD FORREST ~**  
**Second Lieutenant**  
**16th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps**  
**Killed-in-action, 20 May 1917 in France**  
**Commemorated by name on the Arras Memorial to the 'Missing', Pas de Calais**

Bernard Lawrence Forrest was born 3 February 1898, younger son of the Rev. Canon E. F. Forrest and, like his older brother Austin, had been educated by private tuition before going to study at the grammar school. He was admitted on 6 March 1908 and in June 1909 passed the College of Preceptors (Lower Forms) examination. He left the school on 21 March 1910 having been awarded a scholarship for clergymen's sons for £20 per annum to study at Denstone College, Staffordshire.

In April and May 1917, the battles of Arras took place as part of the offensive to break the German fronts. Subsequently, notable successes were achieved both at Vimy and on the Scarpe.

The official end of the battle was 15 May 1917 but evidently Bernard was killed during later fighting in that sector. He was 19 years of age. Within a period of eight months, Rev. and Mrs. Forrest had lost two sons to the war. The Arras Memorial lies within the Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery on the western edge of the city and commemorates 35,928 'Missing' who fell in the Battles of Arras, Vimy Ridge, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battles of the Scarpe, Battles of Arleux, Bullecourt and Hill 70 in 1917. It is also the site of commemoration for all the 'Missing' of the R.F.C. and R.A.F. who fell on the Western Front.

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**~ ALBERT EDWARD FORSHAW ~**  
**Private 25081**  
**2/5th Battalion (Territorial Force\_**  
**The Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)**  
**formerly 284939 Royal Army Service Corps Motor Transport**  
**Killed-in-action, 8 August 1917 in France**  
**Buried in Quéant Road Cemetery, Buissy, Pas de Calais, France**  
**Plot III. Row H. Grave 12**

Albert Edward Forshaw was born in Upholland on 16 April 1897, the son of Joseph Forshaw, the proprietor of a Retail Grocery & Bakery, and his wife, Mary Ann. The family lived at 44, Roby Mill. After attending Roby Mill Elementary School, Albert was admitted to Upholland Grammar School on 19 January 1909 and remained there until 4 April 1912. He joined the family business as a grocery assistant.

By January 1917, Albert's unit had arrived in France. The village of Buissy lies to the south-east of the city of Arras which had been occupied by the Germans from early September 1914 until they were forced to retire by the French army.

On April 9 1917, the Allies launched an attack to the north and south of Arras on a twelve-mile front. Initially successful, a period then followed in which there were indecisive engagements with no real gains or losses and the line became static again.

Buissy village was very strongly fortified by the Germans and possibly Albert was killed during one of the spasmodic attacks. He was 20 years old.

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~ LESLIE HOWDEN ~  
Private G/23061  
10th Battalion Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment)  
Killed-in-action, 22 September 1917 in France  
Commemorated by name on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the 'Missing'  
Zonnebeke, West Flanders, Belgium  
Panel 14-17, 162-162A

Harry Leslie was born on 7 April 1898, the son of Henry Howden, a Colliery Storekeeper, and his wife Jane Jackson Howden. The family initially lived in Lodge Road, Orrell, then later at The Gables, Newburgh, Parbold. Beginning his education at Holgate Elementary School, Leslie later became a pupil at Upholland Grammar School, being admitted on 24 September 1907, at the age of 9 years and 5 months. He was fortunate to remain there until shortly after his fourteenth birthday and left on 25 July 1912 to take up a position in an engineer's workshop.

Throughout the war, the town of Ypres (Ieper) in West Flanders was held by the Allies, a salient which jutted out into enemy-occupied territory. The German forces held the higher land and were able to fire at will on to Ypres from three sides. In June 1917, the Allies launched a series of offensives in an attempt to push forward and drive back the enemy, known as the Third Battle of Ypres. Its culmination was the Battle of Passchendaele which took place from June to November 1917.



Leslie's battalion was involved in the Battle of the Menin Road, 20 to 22 September 1917 and it would appear that he was killed at this time at the age of 19 years. His remains were never identified for known and honoured burial and thus his name is commemorated on this memorial to the 34,888 'Missing' of the Salient who were lost from 15 August 1917 until the end of the war.

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**~ JOHN KERFOOT ~**  
**Gunner 13674**  
**'D' Battery, 52nd Brigade, Royal Field Artillery**  
**Killed-in-action, 4 June 1917 in Belgian Flanders**  
**Buried at Dickebusch New Military Cemetery Extension**  
**Ieper, Belgium, in Plot III. Row B. Grave 10**

John was the son of Thomas and Phoebe Kerfoot of Kerfoot's Farm, Rainford, and was baptised privately on 4 April 1889 which suggests that his health may have given cause for concern. On Easter Day, 21 April, his parents took him to be "received into the Church" which may indicate that there was no longer cause for anxiety. He was educated at Bushey Lane Church of England School, Rainford, and later at Upholland Grammar School although we do not have his school record. John eventually joined the rest of the family as a farmworker.



When Lord Derby appealed for men to "attest", thereby signifying their willingness to join up when called for, John and his two brothers responded. Young, single men were the first to be sent for and on 1 May 1916 John joined the Royal Field Artillery.

Evidence suggests that John's battery was taking part in a preliminary bombardment prior to a planned infantry assault on the Messines Ridge, an area of high ground which dominated the plain below, and which had been held by the Germans since November 1914. The New Zealand Division successfully captured it on 6 June 1917, two days after John had been killed whilst running to his post. He was 28 years old. He was recorded in the Rainford Church Magazine as having served the church well as a Sidesman and a "good Christian".

John's grave lies in a cemetery created in May 1917 as the space in the New and Old Cemeteries had been filled. Of the 548 men buried here, 260 were from artillery units, demonstrating clearly that whilst their function was to shell the enemy positions, they themselves were constantly on the receiving end of enemy fire.

~ ~ ~

**~ LANCELOT LAMB ~**  
**Lieutenant**  
**2nd Battalion King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment)**  
**Killed-in-action, 25 May 1917 in Greece**  
**Buried in Doiran Military Cemetery, Southern Macedonia, Greece**  
**Plot III. Row C. Grave 26**

Born on 20 November, 1891, the second son of Charles Astley Lamb, Barrister-at-Law, and Mary Susannah Lamb, of 'Fairfield', Upholland, Lancelot Rupert had been baptized at the parish church of All Saints in Wigan on 11 February, 1892. The family's residence was then stated to be Beech Cottage, (off Wigan Lane). He was educated at Upholland Grammar School and, on completion of his schooling, he took up engineering as a profession, commencing his employment with the Bispham Hall Colliery Company. He later took up a post with Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness and then the firm of Armstrong-Whitworth at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Soon after the outbreak of war, Lancelot entered the Inns of Court Officer Training Corps and received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in August 1915. His battalion sailed for Salonika in early December 1916. On 8 May 1917, a new allied offensive opened against the Bulgarians in Macedonia but the strength of the enemy artillery on the high mountain peaks denied success. He is reported to have been killed by a rifle grenade while commanding 'B' Company near Lake Doiran, Salonika. He is buried in a marked grave, unlike many others who were not identified and were thus commemorated by name on the nearby Doiran Memorial. A memorial service was held for him at Upholland Parish Church on 7 June, 1917. In the course of the service it was said of him that, of the local young men, "He was the first officer to pay the great price."

~ ~ ~

**~ WILLIAM MARSDEN D.C.M ~**  
**Corporal 357148**  
**10th Battalion (Liverpool Scottish) King's (Liverpool Regiment)**  
**Killed-in-action, 30 November 1917 in France**  
**Commemorated by name on the Cambrai Memorial, Doignies, Nord, France**  
**Panel 4**

William was born on 1 October 1897, the son of William Marsden, Master Housepainter, of 16 Ellesmere Road, Pemberton, Wigan and his wife Ruth Alice. He began his education at Orrell Council School then was admitted to Upholland Grammar School on 6 September 1910. He remained there for only three terms, leaving on 18 July 1911 to go into an office. Whilst at the grammar school, he had passed the Royal Drawing Society School Examination, Division II, with Honours in June 1911.

In December 1915 William joined the Liverpool Scottish and was sent to France on 10 April 1916. The Battle of Cambrai began in November 1917 and William was killed when the Germans launched a counter-offensive on 30 November. He was 27 years old.

The London Gazette dated 26 January 1918, published the citation for the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal to Private W. Marsden, Number 5959 (357148) from Wigan. It reads: 'For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when in charge of a Lewis gun. He pushed forward in the open and silenced an enemy machine-gun which was holding up his platoon, and afterwards, when a hostile bombing squad was working down a communication trench, he took his gun outside the parapet and by his fire prevented the enemy from passing a gap in the trench. He was the only man left in his team, but kept his gun in action throughout'.

William has no known grave and is thus commemorated on the above-named memorial to the 'Missing' together with Harry Taylor who was the same age and killed three days earlier.

~~~



~ ALLAN MUIR ~  
Lieutenant  
**10<sup>th</sup> Battalion King's Regiment (Liverpool Scottish) (Territorial)**  
**Killed-in-action 15 May 1919 North Russia**  
**Buried at Maselskaya Burial Ground**  
**but his grave was lost and he is therefore**  
**commemorated on the Archangel Memorial, Russian Federation**

Allan was born in Pemberton in 1883, the son of John Edward Muir and his wife Margaret (nee Curryer). His father was a Coal Agent and the family lived in Ormskirk Road. His parents later moved to live at Mossley Hill, Liverpool.

Details of his education, other than that he was a pupil at Upholland Grammar School, are not known.

Later in life, Allan was employed as an Accident Inspector for an insurance company and, after marrying Beatrice Lucrezia Cole at St. Dunstan's church, Liverpool, they made their home at 21, Streatham Avenue, Greenbank Road, Liverpool. It is therefore unsurprising that Allan joined the King's (Liverpool Regiment) and the Scottish battalion.

Following the Russian revolution in 1917, Russia withdrew from the Entente and thus a crisis occurred in France in 1918. This formed the background to the North Russian Expedition and the Allied intervention in South Russia. In the spring of 1918, the main Russian government, neutral towards Germany and Austria, was surrounded by various hostile regional governments on the fringes of the former Russian Empire. Its western front was open, and German troops had been transferred in very large numbers to France. Finland, independent since December 1917, was torn by the struggle between "White" and "Red" and strong German forces entered the country and, in May 1918, secured the ascendancy of the "White" government. The North Russian ports, through which the Allies had assisted Russia with supplies and munitions, were now open to German occupation. From the late Russian armies, the two Czechoslovak Divisions, formed of ex-Austrian prisoners, were known to be making for Archangel and Vladivostok in order to join the Allies.

Intervention took place taking the form of landings in the north and military and naval missions, armaments and stores in the south and east lasting from 1918 to 1919. By early spring 1919, the "White" Russian commander, Admiral Kolchak, had achieved considerable success but the Allied governments decided on evacuation of troops as war against the Bolshevik government had not been one of their objectives. It would seem that Lieutenant Allan Muir was killed during one of the skirmishes with the Bolsheviks. He was 35 years old.

~ ~ ~

~ RICHARD OWEN ~  
Corporal 18002  
20th Battalion Manchester Regiment  
Killed-in-action, 1 July 1916 in France  
Buried at Dantzig Alley British Cemetery, Mametz, Somme  
Plot V. Row C. Grave number 1.

Richard Gordon Owen was born in Oporto, Portugal, in 1889, the son of Harold and Effie Leigh Owen. A further son, Harold S. was born there on 12 October 1894 and their home was at 149 Rua de San Sebastiao, Pinheiro, Manso, Oporto. Both boys became pupils at the grammar school although only the admission record for Harold survives which states that he was a 'boarder'. The school admitted both 'day' boys and boarders since it attracted pupils from a wide area. Their father was a Mill Manager and it is likely that the family was living in Portugal in connection with his work.



When the Allies launched the 'Big Push' on the Somme on July 1st 1916, many of those who had rushed to the colours as volunteers were to receive a 'baptism of fire' in the ensuing battles. The Manchester Regiment was to be involved in the attacks on the southern flank around Fricourt - it was one of the few successes of the first day amongst a catalogue of failures. The German positions had not been destroyed by the prior seven-day bombardment and men were cut down even as they left their trenches. By the end of the first day, 60,000 men were wounded, killed or 'missing' - an infamous day in the history of the British army.

Richard Gordon Owen, aged 27 years, was killed on the first day of the battle and was buried originally at Aeroplane Cemetery, Fricourt. He was later brought in for re-burial, as one of the 24 NCO's and men of the 20th Manchesters, to Dantzig Alley British Cemetery, named after a German trench. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery records give Richard's parents' address as 1124, Edderton Avenue, Fort Garry, Winnipeg, Canada but it cannot be ascertained as to when they had moved there.

~ FRED PIGOT ~  
Private 303668  
1/8 Battalion Manchester Regiment  
(formerly 58921 King's (Liverpool Regiment))  
Killed-in-action, 12 September 1917 in Belgian Flanders  
Buried in Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, Ieper, Belgium  
Plot I. Row D. Grave 12

Frederick William was the son of Thomas Pigot, Retail Boot Dealer, and his wife Margaret of 'Lyndhurst', Orrell Road, Wigan. He was born on 9 May 1898 and began his education at Lamberhead Green Council School. In September 1910 Fred was admitted to Upholland Grammar School where he continued his studies and passed his Royal Drawing Society School Examination in June 1911. On completion of his schooling, he embarked upon a career in a Leigh bank.

Fred enlisted in Wigan, date unknown, and by September 1917 was a recent arrival at the front to serve in the infamous Ypres Salient. Whilst no specific offensive was taking place in early September, the constant shelling by the enemy remained a constant danger. It was reported in the School Magazine\* that Fred had been wounded by shellfire falling on to the trench - his wounds were being dressed when another shell burst in the Dressing Station and killed him. He was 19 years old and remembered for having 'a strong adherence to his religion'.



The cemetery in which Fred lies buried was used by fighting units and Field Ambulances throughout the war.

[\*1917: Term III. Vol.6. No.2]

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**~ WALTER PLACE ~**  
**Private 57199**  
**1/6th Battalion Manchester Regiment**  
**Killed-in-action, 20 April 1918 in France**  
**Buried at Couin New British Cemetery, Pas de Calais**  
**Row C. Grave 34**

Walter Ashton Place was born on 5 January 1899 in Southport, the son of Mrs. E. F. Bold (formerly Place) and the late Walter Place, Accountant, of 36 Hampton Road, Southport. Later addresses have been recorded as Appley Bridge and 5 Park Crescent, Wigan.



After early schooling at Southport Modern School, Walter was admitted to Upholland Grammar School on 5 May 1908 as a boarder. Due to concerns about his health, Walter left on 19 December 1912 when he was almost fourteen years old.

He later became a pupil at Wigan Grammar School for one year only when, presumably, his mother moved to live at Park Crescent (seemingly having remarried as her surname then was Bold). Prior to joining the army, he was engaged in poultry farming at Lathom.

Enlisting at Ormskirk, Walter's battalion arrived in France and, in April 1918, was in the area of the north-western Somme. On 21 March 1918, the Germans had launched their last large-scale offensive of the war, a lightning and ferocious attack which succeeded in driving the Allied forces back and across the old Somme battlefields, now a devastated land of ruined villages, the legacy of the 1916 carnage.

Walter was killed-in-action, aged 19, the exact circumstances of his death so far unknown. The cemetery in which he lies was used by Field Ambulances from January 1917 until the end of the War.

~ ~ ~

**~ MARMADUKE RENNARD ~**  
**Captain**  
**4th Battalion (Territorial) Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire)**  
**Killed-in-action, 8 August 1916 in France**  
**Commemorated by name on Thiepval Memorial to the 'Missing', Somme**  
**Pier & Face 11A**

The early months of the Battle of the Somme were to claim further casualties amongst the Old Boys of the school before the offensive was discontinued in November 1916.

Edward Marmaduke Rennard , born at Upholland on 21 September 1894, was the son of the Rev. David Smith Rennard of The Vicarage, Heapey, Chorley. His father was a former assistant master at Rossall School but was subsequently appointed as Headmaster of Upholland Grammar School (1890 - 1907). His mother, Anna Philippson had been born in Germany, later becoming a Naturalized British Subject (1901 Census), the daughter of Michaelis Julius Philippson. During her husband's headship, Mrs. Rennard 'taught her native language to any pupil wishing to learn it.' [UPHOLLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL by J.J. Bagley, M.A.].

It was understandable, therefore, that their son should study firstly at Upholland Grammar School before continuing his education at Manchester Grammar School from where he became an undergraduate of the Victoria University in 1914 in the Dentistry department.

Having already been commissioned as Second Lieutenant into 4<sup>th</sup> (Territorial) Battalion (Chorley Company) of the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) in 1912, he was promoted Lieutenant on 1 October 1913. In 1915 Marmaduke was wounded at Festubert and in August 1915 was gazetted Captain when just 20 years of age.

Marmaduke's regiment was to be involved in the continuing battles on the Somme and, following the failure of the first day's offensive, the ensuing weeks would see a series of 'line-straightening' operations take place. The Somme had become reminiscent of a wasteland, devoid of trees and dotted with the remains of villages shelled into rubble - it had become a battle of attrition for both sides.

Marmaduke was killed at Guillemont near Albert during one of the actions which took place in the weeks following the initial offensive. The School Magazine\* reports that he was 'wounded first in the foot but continued to lead his Company - he was afterwards shot through the heart and killed '. He was 21 years old. His brigadier characterized him as a "most gallant, able and popular officer." Since his body was never identified for known and honoured burial, his name appears amongst those many thousands more - the 'Missing' of the Somme. On 4 January 1917, the London Gazette reported that Marmaduke had been mentioned in Despatches by General Sir Douglas Haig for gallant and distinguished service in the field.

(\*November 1916, Vol. 5. No. II]



The officers of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire).



Marmaduke is the second from the left on the back row.



**~ JOHN SCRIVENER ~**  
**Second Lieutenant**  
**8th (Territorial) attached 15th (Service) Battalion**  
**The Lancashire Fusiliers**  
**Killed-in-action, 2 December 1917 in France**  
**Commemorated by name on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the 'Missing'**  
**Zonnebeke, West Flanders, Belgium**  
**Panel 54-60**

John Sydney was born on 7 January 1897, son of George Henry Scrivener, a School Attendance Officer, and Elizabeth (née Thompson), the daughter of James Thompson of Digmoor Hall, Upholland. The family lived at 'Greenfield', Upholland. Mr. Scrivener was also known as Secretary of the Upholland Agricultural Association.

John began his schooling at Upholland Elementary School then proceeded to Upholland Grammar School where he was admitted on 8 January 1907. He remained there until 22 December 1912 during which time he passed examinations for the College of Preceptors in 1909 and Junior Oxford in 1911. He also passed the Royal Drawing Society School Examination in June 1911 with Division III Honours. He began work as a Bank Clerk.

In October 1914, John enlisted into the King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment) then proceeded to undergo training with the Officer Training Corps at Lincoln's Inn and was gazetted 2nd Lieutenant in the Lancashire Fusiliers. From January 1917, his unit was to be involved in the Third Battle of Ypres, culminating in the Battle of Passchendaele which ended on 10 November 1917.



The Regimental History of the Lancashire Fusiliers describes in detail the circumstances under which Lt. Scrivener met his death. The misery of mud in the Ypres Salient had put an end to any thoughts of further offensives against the enemy and the Commander-in-Chief had ordered that ' "only such minor enterprises were (to be) undertaken by the

British forces during the winter months as were essential to keep us informed regarding the dispositions and intentions of the German forces opposed to us" .' Such a strategy was also intended to prevent unnecessary casualties and 'best promote economy in men'.

The 15th battalion found itself one mile east of Passchendaele near Bellevue and was directed to attack northwards towards Westroosebeke (a beke is Flemish for stream/drainage course) in order to improve the position in that area. The sector was found to be a sea of mud, impassable except over duckboard tracks which themselves were inadequate. The assembly area for the assault was in full view of the enemy and thus could be approached only under cover of darkness or at dawn.

The Divisional Commander opted for a night attack and, since the artillery was not sited correctly to carry out a creeping barrage, elected to proceed without this benefit. On the night of 30 November, 2nd Lt. Scrivener marked out the assembly area with wire, checked its position by compass in daylight and then, on the night of 1/2 December, the wire was replaced by tape and luminous boards were erected giving compass bearing and distance to each objective. These careful preparations enabled the platoons to assemble safely with few casualties.

The attack was launched, at 1.55am on December 2nd, with an element of surprise to the enemy who opened up with machine gun fire some seven minutes later and a barrage of artillery at 2.02am. The British artillery returned fire as arranged at 2.03am but could not silence the enemy fire which resulted in many casualties.

2nd Lt. Scrivener and his batman, Pte. R. H. Poole, were reported to have shown "the greatest gallantry; they attacked and captured a pill-box containing a machine gun". Just afterwards, as he neared his objective, John Sydney Scrivener was killed. He was just a few weeks short of his 21st birthday.

In the book 'The Marquis de Ruvigny's Roll of Honour', published in two volumes and containing details of a number of officers and other ranks killed in the Great War, John Scrivener is described as:- ' a straight, upright, fearless character.... brave in action..... he died the death of a gallant officer nobly defending the traditions peculiar to our race.'

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**~ HARRY TAYLOR ~**  
**Rifleman 473947**  
**12th (County of London) Battalion (The Rangers) London Regiment**  
**(formerly 21435 9th S.L.I)**  
**Killed-in-action, 27 November 1917 in France**  
**Commemorated by name on the Cambrai Memorial, Doignies, Nord, France**  
**Panel 11**

Harry Randolph was born in Wigan, the son of Matthew Butterworth Taylor, a Retired Grocer, and his wife Hannah, and they lived at 'Wellsdale', Gathurst Lane, Shevington.

Details of his early education or when he entered Upholland Grammar School are unknown.

The regimental volume of 'Soldiers Died in the Great War' records Harry as living in Bristol where he subsequently enlisted and evidently was sent to France on completion of training.

The Allied offensive, known as the Battle of Cambrai, began on 20 November 1917 and lasted until 3 December. Harry was killed during this battle, aged 27 years.

He has no known grave and is thus commemorated on the above-mentioned memorial to the 7,048 'Missing' of the British Empire forces who fell in the Battle of Cambrai, the Tank Attack, the capture of Bourslon Wood and the German counter-attack. It lies within the Louverval Military Cemetery situated on the Bapaume-Cambrai road.

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~ CECIL WHITE ~

Private PS/3340

**24th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)**

**Killed-in-action, 27 July 1916 in France**

**Commemorated by name on Thiepval Memorial to the 'Missing', Somme**

**Pier & Face 8C, 9A, 16A (alphabetical order by regiment)**

Cecil Dobie Murray White was born in Wigan on 23 March 1896, the son of Arthur Pretymann White, a Mining Engineer and his wife Lucy. The family lived at Ashton Cross, Newton-le-Willows and Cecil had received private tuition prior to his entering the grammar school as a boarder on 28 January 1907. He remained there until 22 July 1909 when he left to take up an exhibition awarded by Giggleswick School, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which was for the sum of £20 for school life to commence in September 1909. On completion of his schooling, he took up a position with the Crewe Works where he began training to become an engineer.



In the regimental volume of 'Soldiers Died in the Great War', Cecil is recorded as living in Hale Cheshire. At the outbreak of war, he enlisted at Epsom, Surrey, into the 21st Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, Public Schools Brigade.

The Battle of the Somme was still raging in July 1916. Cecil was killed by a shell and became one of the thousands killed during the offensive. His body was never identified for known and honoured burial and his name is therefore recorded as amongst the 'Missing'. He was 20 years old.

~ ~ ~

# UPHOLLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## ROLL OF HONOUR

### 1939 ~ 1945

WILFRED BALL

HENRY HEYES

ABEL BARTON

ROY LAWSON

WILLIAM BRADLEY

HAROLD PENNINGTON

ERNEST CHEETHAM

ERIC RIDLEY

JOSEPH ECKERSLEY

DAVID ROBERTS

WILLIAM WHITE

\*\*\*\*\*

#### DEATHS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

WILLIAM WHITE

20 October, 1941

WILFRED BALL

26 November, 1941

JOSEPH ECKERSLEY

26 January, 1942

HAROLD PENNINGTON

28 March, 1942

ERNEST CHEETHAM

29 October, 1942

DAVID ROBERTS

16 December, 1942

HENRY HEYES

8 February, 1943

ERIC RIDLEY

21 March 1943

ROY LAWSON

10 September, 1943

WILLIAM BRADLEY

9 June, 1944

ABEL BARTON

22 February, 1945

\*\*\*\*\*

**~ WILFRED BALL ~**  
**Sergeant 994358**  
**106 Squadron Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**  
**Killed on operations, 26 November 1941, over Germany**  
**Commemorated by name on Runnymede Memorial, Surrey,**  
**Panel 39**

Wilfred Langdon Ball was the son of Tom Langdon Ball, Clerk, and Rachel Ball. He was born on 26 June 1919 and the family lived at 65 St. James's Road, Orrell. Wilfred began his education firstly at Holgate Council School, followed by St. James's Road School, then was admitted to Upholland Grammar School. He was there for one term only as in the autumn of 1930 the family left the district to live in Crumpsall, North Manchester.

Squadron 106 was based at Coningsby, north-west of Boston, Lincolnshire. As a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner in Hampden AE317, Wilfred was engaged on an operation to Emden in Lower Saxony, Germany. Emden was dominated by the North Sea and was an important centre for shipbuilding. It also possessed the third largest harbour on the North Sea and was therefore an obvious target.

The aircraft crashed into the sea off the Frisian Islands and Wilfred, aged 22, was lost with it - only the second Wireless Operator/Air Gunner was recovered from the sea and is buried in Sage War Cemetery, Germany. Wilfred's name is carved upon the Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede - it commemorates over 20,000 airmen who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known graves. They served in Bomber, Fighter, Coastal, Transport, Flying Training and Maintenance Commands and came from all parts of the Commonwealth.

~ ~ ~

~ ABEL BARTON ~  
**Flight Sergeant 995875**  
**No. 9 Maintenance Unit, Maintenance Command**  
**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**  
**Died in service, 22 February 1945**  
**Buried at Skelmersdale (St. Paul) Churchyard**  
**Plot 10. Grave 6-7.**

Abel was born on 23 March, 1920, the youngest son of Abel Barton, Insurance Agent, and his wife Mary. He had two brothers and one sister and the family lived at 'Roselea', Dickett's Lane, Lathom, Ormskirk.

After finishing his education at Upholland Grammar School, Abel became articled to Messrs. R. P. Barker's Brickworks and continued there until joining the R.A.F.V.R. in May 1940. Abel travelled to Rhodesia for training and, for a time, was on operations there, but returned to England, possibly when his father died in October, 1943, and was engaged as a Test Pilot based at Codsall, near Wolverhampton in the West Midlands.



In February 1945, both of Abel's brothers were serving in the Forces and Abel had been granted leave to meet one of them who was on leave from overseas. A short time after returning to his station, Abel was piloting a Tiger Moth NL912 on a Circuits and Landing exercise. During this exercise, 17 minutes into the flight, whilst executing a stall-turn at low altitude the aircraft crashed, and both Abel, aged 24, and his 2nd Pilot, also 24, were both killed.

The funeral took place at Skelmersdale Parish Church (St. Paul) and was attended by family, friends, employer, and representatives of Abel's unit. His coffin was borne by six senior N.C.O's of the Royal Air Force and buried in the family plot.

~ ~ ~

**~ WILLIAM BRADLEY ~**  
**Bombardier 1078297**  
**3 Airlanding Anti-Tank Battery, Royal Artillery**  
**Died of wounds sustained in action, 9 June 1944 in France**  
**Buried at Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, Normandy, France**  
**Plot 1A. Row F. Grave 14.**

William was born at Pimbo Lane, Up Holland, on 22 December 1913, the son of William Bradley, Coke Ovens worker, and his wife Rachel. The family moved to Rainford, first to Maggot's Nook and later to News Lane where the family had established a coal business.

After attending Rainford Church of England School, a scholarship in 1924 enabled 'Bill' to continue his education at Upholland Grammar School, where he was an outstanding pupil. He gained his School Certificate in 1929 and matriculated in 1930, and had been Head Prefect and Captain of Games before leaving in 1932 - he also played for Orrell R.U.F.C. In addition to his sporting prowess, Bill was a talented artist, had graduated from the Liverpool School of Art (a number of his etchings had been accepted by the Walker Art Gallery) and took up a post as Art Master at Audenshaw Grammar School, Manchester.

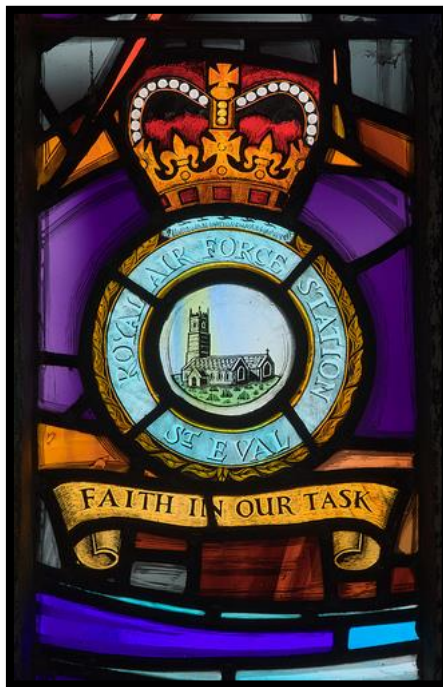


In December 1940, the School Magazine reported that Bill was serving with H.M. Forces and 'is entertaining his comrades with lightning sketches and cartoons'. On 6 June 1944, the D-Day landings on the Normandy beaches took place - Bill was one of 8000 British soldiers of the 6th Airborne Division who were to be involved in a bitter struggle to hold the left flank of the landings. Ranville was the first village to be liberated in the early hours of 6 June - the famous Pegasus Bridge is not far away. Bill sustained wounds in action from which he later died. He was 30 years old.

**~ ERNEST CHEETHAM ~**  
**Sergeant 1138227**  
**10 O.T.U. (Operational Training Unit)**  
**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**  
**Killed on operations, 29 October 1942, France**  
**Buried at Taule Communal Cemetery, Finistère, France**  
**Grave 3.**

Ernest was born on 17 November 1921, the son of Joseph and Florence Cheetham of 78 Bell Lane, Kitt Green, Wigan, educated at Upholland Grammar School and in later years became Secretary of Richmond Hill Congregational Church, Pemberton, (now no longer used for worship).

He joined the R.A.F.V.R. and the R.A.F. decided that the student crews of No. 10 Operational Training Unit would spend the last two weeks of their course as part of Coastal Command which, at that time in the War, was hard pressed for manpower. They were based at St. Eval in Cornwall with No. 19 Group Coastal Command. On 29 October 1942, Ernest was a Navigator/Bomb Aimer flying in Whitley V Z6579 on anti-submarine patrol over the Bay of Biscay. He was killed, aged 21, when the aircraft was lost but his body was recovered and buried in the Parish cemetery at Taule, near Morlaix, Finistère.



In the church of St. Eval, Cornwall, there are plaques to the squadrons which flew from the local airfield during the War, a stained glass window dedicated to RAF Coastal Command, and the St. Eval Book of Remembrance which contains Ernest's name.

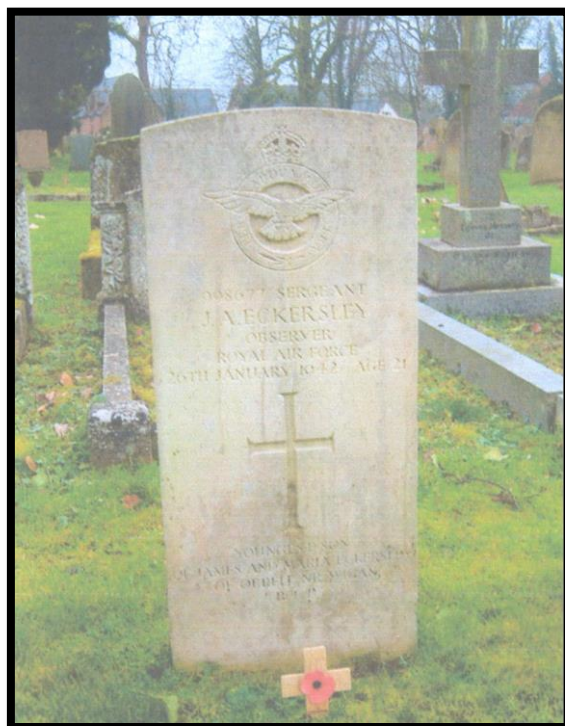
~ ~ ~

**~ JOSEPH ECKERSLEY ~**  
**Sergeant 998677**  
**82 Squadron Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**  
**Killed in training, 26 January 1942 in the United Kingdom**  
**Buried at Watton (St. Mary) Churchyard, Norfolk**  
**Row C. Grave 58.**

Joseph Alban was born on 6 April 1920, the son of Joseph Eckersley, a Clerk of Works, and his wife Maria, of 222 Orrell Road, Orrell, Wigan. After beginning his education at St. James's Roman Catholic School, Orrell, he was admitted as a pupil at Upholland Grammar School on 9 September 1931. On leaving school, he went to work in the Civil Service.

He joined the R.A.F.V.R. and was based at Bodney, Norfolk. On 26 January 1942, Blenheim IV V5769 had just taken off on a training flight - whilst gaining flying speed it flew into some trees on the edge of the airfield. In the darkness, it was unlikely that the pilot saw the trees until the last moment when it was too late.

Joseph, aged 21, and his pilot, 20 year old Alfred Cheadle from Bolton, were both killed - only the Wireless Operator/Air Gunner survived the crash but he was injured.



Joseph and Alfred are buried side-by-side in this churchyard at Watton, a village just a few miles away from the base.

~ ~ ~



**~ HENRY HEYES ~**  
**Lance Corporal T/107863**  
**Royal Army Service Corps**  
**Killed, 8 February 1943, Italy**  
**Buried at Ancona War Cemetery, Italy**  
**Plot II. Row G. Grave 2.**

Henry Heyes was born on 22 December 1919 in Billinge, the son of George Heyes, Colliery Labourer, and his wife Alice of 182 Main Street, Billinge. Known as 'Harry', he started his schooling at St. Aidan's Church of England School in Main Street, then became a pupil at Upholland Grammar School.



Harry ran his own coal delivery business prior to being called up when he joined the R.A.S.C.. He was part of the British Expeditionary Force which went over to France early in the War and was one of the soldiers evacuated from Dunkirk. He was later sent to North Africa and, whilst aboard ship awaiting evacuation from Tobruk, he volunteered to go back to blow up some installations. He was captured and eventually became a prisoner-of-war in Italy.

Whilst a prisoner, Harry escaped but was re-captured - he escaped again and was again re-captured - following the second re-capture, he was shot. He was 23 years of age.

The cemetery was created by the Army in September 1944 and burials were brought in from a wide area round about, as far as 80 kilometres south of, to over 48 kilometres north of Ancona.

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**~ ROY LAWSON ~**  
**Driver T/271508**  
**Royal Army Service Corps**  
**Died in captivity, 10 September 1943 in Burma**  
**Buried at Thanbyuzayat War Cemetery, Burma (modern-day Myanmar)**  
**Plot B1. Row G. Grave 12.**

Robert Oswald Lionel Lawson was born on 21 July 1920, the third of five children of Bertram Lawson, a Clerk in a glassworks, and his wife Maggie. The family lived first at Star Cottage, Mossborough Road, Rainford then later moved to Ormskirk Road. He liked to be known as 'Roy' and began his schooling at Crosspit Lane from where he won a scholarship to Upholland Grammar School. He was a pupil there from 1931 to 1937. Roy left school to train as a Chartered Accountant and worked for West's Piling & Construction Company. In January 1941, he married Edith Hesketh, daughter of a Bickerstaffe farmer, at St. John the Baptist Church, Bridgwater, Somerset. His wife later lived at Sunnymeads, Wraysbury, Buckinghamshire.

Five months after his wedding, Roy enlisted in the embodied Territorial Army of the Royal Army Service Corps and was attached to the 85th Anti-Tank Regiment of the



Royal Artillery. On 11 November 1941, he embarked for Malaya - when Singapore fell on 15 February 1942, Roy was reported 'missing'. Fifteen months passed before his wife received news that he was a prisoner-of-war of the Japanese.

Roy was one of the thousands put to work on the Burma-Siam railway - the notorious 'Railway of Death' where prisoners endured conditions of extreme deprivation, starvation and ill-treatment by their captors. He died, aged 23, in a hospital in Burma on 10 September 1943. He is buried in a cemetery created by the Army Graves Service who transferred to it all graves along the northern section of the railway. There are 3149 Commonwealth and 621 Dutch burials.

During the construction of the railway, it is estimated that approximately 13,000 prisoners-of-war and between 80,000 and 100,000 civilians died in the course of the project. Precise figures are not available since no records were kept by the Japanese.

**~ HAROLD PENNINGTON ~**  
**Captain 130871**  
**Hampshire Regiment & No. 4 Commando**  
**Killed-in-action, 28 March 1942 in France**  
**Buried at Escoublac-la-Baule War Cemetery,**  
**Loire-Atlantique, France**  
**Plot II. Row C. Grave 2.**

Harold Hammond Pennington was born on 8 September 1918 in Ashton-in-Makerfield, the eldest son of Walter Pennington, Head Foreman for W. J. Bickerstaffe & Sons, Builders, of Newtown, Wigan, and his wife Ada. There were later a further five children, but one son died in infancy. In 1927, the family moved to live at 11, Grove Road, Upholland and Harold became a pupil, firstly at the Church of England school there, and later at Lamberhead Green Council School where he passed his scholarship to continue his education at Upholland Grammar School. He proved to be an exceptional student and outstanding sportsman and played on the school teams at both cricket and rugby. He was greatly interested in politics and in the summer of 1937, Harold and a schoolfriend spent their summer holiday on a bicycle tour of Germany, (at this time having undergone great political upheaval as a result of National Socialism). Harold used a Raleigh cycle and travelled 2000 miles without suffering a puncture. He therefore wrote to the Raleigh Company, informing them of this accomplishment in the hope that they might wish to donate new tyres but was himself deflated when they informed him that this was nothing exceptional for their product!

The tour had been a prelude to Harold entering St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, as a student in Michaelmas Term (autumn) 1937 to read Modern History after having been granted a Lancashire County Education Committee Training Department Scholarship of £40 per annum. In January 1938, Harold successfully applied for a Kitchener Scholarship. This prestigious academic achievement, including his membership of the Oxford Debating Society, was later crowned by a sporting honour when, as the only 'Freshman' (first year) at Oxford, he was selected to line-up for the Rugger XV and played in the Varsity Match. The team was presented to the King at Twickenham. He played again in the Varsity Match of 1938 thereby gaining his second 'Blue'. When he returned home, he was naturally wanted as a player by many northern teams and did indeed play for both Orrell R.U.F.C and Wigan Old Boys' R.U.F.C., Waterloo and Blackheath on many occasions. Harold had been made team Vice-Captain for the Varsity Match of 1939/40 but the war intervened in September 1939 - reports state that the whole team was called up immediately.

In 1941, Harold was awarded his B.A. - in the same year, at Chippenham Parish Church, he married Miss Edna Elizabeth Bedford whom he had met whilst she was serving with the Women's Army Corps. Their happiness was complete when their son was born named Robin Hammond after his father. By 1938, Harold's parents had returned to live in Ashton-in-Makerfield at 227, Wigan Road - a few years later Edna and baby Robin would join the family .

Britain in 1940 was not in a position to launch an invasion across the Channel, nor would she be for some years until forces capable of such an action had been built up. However, it was decided that some kind of offensive had to be undertaken and, as a result, a new inter-Services organisation, known as Combined Operations, had been



formed by 1941, the purpose of which was to train, plan and experiment for the day when Britain and her Allies should be ready to assault Fortress Europe. The Special Service Brigade and its 12 Commando units, had been raised specially from picked volunteers to undertake an 'offensive defence' to harass the enemy. They were, for all intents and purposes, highly-trained 'guerrilla' units - no 'gangs of bandits' but men who came from every corps and regiment in the Army. It was one of these units, No. 2 Commando, that Harold was attached to for a highly secret and technically difficult operation - the famous 'Raid on St. Nazaire'. [A full account of which may be found in 'The Greatest Raid of All' by C. E. Lucas Phillips: Published

by Odhams Press Ltd., 1958. Information from the 1959 edition published for The Companion Book Club, Watford.)

The object of the raid was to sail H.M.S. 'Campbeltown', a specially adapted ship, across the Channel, up the Loire estuary to the Normandie Dock, then ram the vessel on the outer caisson (entrance). A large amount of explosives would be packed on that part of the ship at the point of impact to then blow up the ship by delayed action fuses. Light-draught motor launches, manned by demolition Commando units, backed up by support forces to deal with the German gun positions defending the estuary and dock, would attack and demolish targets in the dock area such as all lock-gates leading into the Submarine Basin. All units would then make their escape and return to ships waiting in the open sea to take them back home. The mission was at the very least risky, at worst, one from which the vast majority were not expected to return - every man taking part had been given the opportunity to withdraw from the operation but no-one did. The dock had been constructed to build the great French transatlantic liner 'Normandie', the largest ship in the world - the British government was thus anxious to deny the Germans a haven on the Biscay seaboard which could be used by their battleships, in particular their new battleship, 'Tirpitz'. The battleship was at that time based on the Baltic but it was imperative that she should not be allowed to transfer to France and then be in a position to menace our merchant shipping in the Atlantic.

At 1.30 a.m. on 28 March 1942, the people of St. Nazaire witnessed the sight of vessels riding up the estuary, at first apparently undetected, but later fired upon by the defenders as a prelude to mayhem breaking loose - shells bursting, machine-gun fire and explosions - their town was being attacked from the sea !



Motor Launch 268 carried Captain Harold Pennington and his demolition team of four other ranks whose objective was to make for the Pont de la Douane (bridge near the old Customs House) and destroy it, thus preventing a counter-attack across it by any German forces. A cluster of guns atop the building protected the area and, should these guns be in action, it would be the additional task of Harold's team to place incendiaries close to the structure to set fire to it. Having completed this work, the team was then to withdraw.

As the Motor Launches proceeded up the estuary, ML 192 was destroyed by fire, thus depriving Harold's team of support force and the lead of MLs gradually worked down to ML268, number four in the column, and the vessel carrying Harold and his team which was making a course towards the entrance. Some way short of Campbeltown's stern, the launch was hit and set ablaze - her petrol tanks ruptured and she blew up shortly thereafter, killing half her crew and almost all of the Commandos she carried - Harold and his team were among those lost. These events were later confirmed by the Red Cross at Geneva who had been informed by one of Harold's fellow-officers, a prisoner-of-war.

Harold's body was recovered and buried in the village cemetery, together with others killed during the raid and casualties buried beforehand, at Escoublac, thirteen kilometres from St. Nazaire . \* Throughout the German occupation, a French lady living in La Baule on the coast dedicated all her time and energy to maintaining the graves. With money collected secretly from the generous local people she provided a cross for every grave and a small monument, had hedges planted and employed a

permanent gardener to tend the cemetery. Her devotion to this work was honoured by the award of the King's Medal for Service in the Cause of Freedom. (Information from Commonwealth War Graves Commission records).

Harold's son, Robin, followed in his father's footsteps and entered St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, graduating to become a Geologist working for prestigious companies all over the world. Sadly, he died in his early 50's - Edna, his mother, never remarried and passed away in 2000 in Cambridgeshire, her home county.

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**~ ERIC RIDLEY ~**  
**Ordnance Artificer 4th Class**  
**P/MX 98438**  
**H.M.S. "Kongoni", Royal Navy**  
**Died in service, 21 March 1943 in South Africa**  
**Buried at Durban (Stellawood) Cemetery, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa**  
**Block F. Grave 336.**

Eric was born on 20 March 1912, the son of Arthur Ridley, Caretaker of Wigan Technical College, and his wife Elizabeth Annie Ridley of 5, Broxton Avenue, Orrell. He was educated firstly at Lamberhead Green Council School, where he won a scholarship to Upholland Grammar School commencing on 12 September 1923. His parents then moved to live at 420, Ormskirk Road, Pemberton, and Eric left the school on 18 December 1924. The scholarship was transferred to Wigan Grammar School which Eric attended from January 1925 until July 1929.

After further studies at Wigan Technical College and Liverpool School of Pharmacy, Eric qualified as a Chemist and Optician. He served his apprenticeship with Messrs. Winstanley & Fairhurst, Chemists, of Market Street, Wigan and prior to volunteering for the Navy in February 1942 was a Branch Manager in the Chemist's department of the Liverpool Co-operative Society, Wavertree. He was a member of both Wigan and Newtown Conservative Clubs and also Dean Wood Golf Club.

Whilst taking a swim, Eric drowned and lies buried in the military plot of the largest municipal cemetery in Durban. He was 31 years old.

~\*~



~ DAVID ROBERTS ~  
Cadet  
**S.S. "Observer" (Liverpool), Merchant Navy**  
**Killed at sea, 16 December 1942, Brazil**  
**Commemorated by name on the Tower Hill Memorial**  
**London, United Kingdom**  
**Panel 75.**



David Douglas Roberts was born on 28 July 1925, the son of George J. Roberts and Alice M. Roberts, originally from 71, Leigh Road, Hindley Green. The family lived at 6, Orrell Gardens, Orrell, Wigan and David became a pupil at Upholland Grammar School. He was a member of the Primitive Methodist Church at Orrell Post.

When only 16 years of age, David joined the Merchant Navy as a Cadet to be trained as a Navigation Officer. He was a member of the crew of The S.S. "Observer", a cargo liner of 5,881 tons, built in 1928 by S. Connell & Co. for the Charente Steam Ship Company, and was en-route from Turkey to the U.S.A.



Approximately 350 miles off Cape San Roque, northern Brazil, the ship was sunk by German U-boat 176. Out of 81 crew members, 66, including the Captain, were lost. David was one of them - he was 17 years old.

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**~ WILLIAM WHITE ~**  
**Sergeant 995408**  
**608 Squadron (Coastal Command) Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**  
**Killed on operations, 20 October 1941, Denmark**  
**Buried at Frederikshavn Cemetery, Denmark**  
**Plot/Grave 12**

William was born on 23 July, 1915, the son of Robert White, a Collier, and his wife Mary, living at 1a, Church Street, Orrell. He was a former pupil of St. James's Road Council School and then of Upholland Grammar School. He was married to Phyllis, formerly of Enfield, Middlesex.

On 20 October 1941, William, aged 26, was a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner in a twin-engine Lockheed "Hudson" AM523 which left base at Thornaby in Yorkshire, together with four others, on a Coastal Command operation to attack targets in Denmark. The target for the crew of AM523, plus two of the other aircraft, was to make an attack on the German sea-plane base at Thisted . \* It was reported that AM523 was last seen by the crew of the other two planes when it was flying low between the buildings at the sea-plane base. Shortly afterwards, a flash of light was seen and it was reported that the aircraft had crashed at Fårtoft, due east of Thisted. Three of the crew died instantly, the fourth shortly afterwards. All four were buried on 24 October 1941 and the people of Fårtoft erected a monument in memory of the crew.

[ There are 1017 Allied pilots and flying personnel buried in 110 Danish churchyards. During the earlier years of German occupation, Allied forces were accorded a dignified funeral by the enemy. Later, when Danish resistance became more active, the Germans began to dispense with the presence of clergy at such funerals. Many Danish clergymen and local inhabitants showed courage and determination in ensuring that Allied servicemen received a Christian burial ].

[ \* Ref: 'Faldne Allierede Flyvere 1939-1945 published by the Veterans of the Danish Fight for Freedom (Odense Universitetsforlag 1995), in Danish, relevant details kindly translated by Mrs. Grethe Taylor of Dalton ].

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*And when the summons  
in our ears was shrill  
Unshaken in our trust we rose,  
and then  
Flung but a backward glance,  
and care-free still  
Went strongly forth to do the  
work of men .*

*(The above verse is taken from "The Call", by W.N. Hodgson.  
He was killed on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 1 July, 1916.)*

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