



## JOHN WILLIAM MARKHAM

251126 Private  
1st/5th Battalion, Essex Regiment

John Markham was born near Woodbridge, Suffolk in 1884, the youngest of five children of James Markham, a bricklayer, and Ellen his wife.

In 1891 John and three siblings are shown on the census as living with his mother's sister and her husband at a grocer's shop in Campsea Ash, Suffolk. Their father had died in 1886.

The 1901 census shows him still living with his aunt and uncle in Campsea Ash and listed as a gardener's apprentice.

He married Annie Emily Tricker in the winter of 1906 in Suffolk. In 1911 John, Annie and their three children were living in Sleaford, Lincolnshire. He is listed on the census as a gardener.

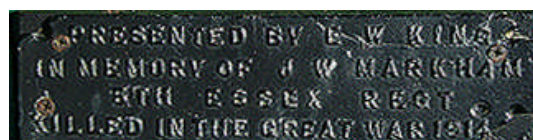
They subsequently moved to Little Coggeshall and he went to work for E.W. King, the seed grower, whose offices were on Grange Hill.

He enlisted into the Essex Regiment (No. 3902) and was later posted to the 1st/5th Battalion. From his medal roll it can be ascertained that he joined his Battalion in the Palestine Theatre in 1916 or 1917.

He sustained wounds in the First Battle of Gaza and died on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1917, age 32.

He is buried at Gaza War Cemetery which contains 3,217 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 781 of them unidentified.

He is also commemorated by a seat half-way up Grange Hill in Coggeshall which was put there by his employer.





## CLIFFORD GORDON MARSH

2811 Private  
13<sup>th</sup> Battalion, County of London Regiment  
(Princess Louisa's Kensington Battalion)

Clifford was born in Western Colville, Cambridgeshire in 1896, the eldest son of Thomas and Lily Marsh. His father was born in Weston Colville where he farmed and his mother originally came from Haverhill in Suffolk.

The 1901 census records Clifford, aged 4, living with his parents and brother Kenneth at 'The Green Farm', in Weston Colville and attending school.

The 1911 census reveals that he was employed as a Drapers Clerk with Messrs Marshall & Snelgrove of 16 Marylebone Lane in Oxford Street, London.

Clifford enlisted at Kensington, date unknown. However, the medal roll shows that he was sent to France in early 1915, possibly as a battle casualty replacement, arriving on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1915.

His battalion had itself arrived in France on 4th November 1914 and was allocated to the 25th Brigade of the newly-formed Regular 8th Division with which the battalion fought its first major action at Neuve Chapelle in March 1915. It is possible that Clifford Marsh was wounded during this action and later evacuated through the medical chain to the United Kingdom.

Clifford died of his wounds on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1915: he was 18 year's old. He was buried at Haverhill Cemetery in Suffolk on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1915 (Grave Reference S13). He is commemorated on the Coggeshall and Hellions Bumpstead War Memorials.





# CHARLES SAMUEL MARSHALL

Second Lieutenant  
1st Garrison Battalion, Suffolk Regiment

Charles was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1885 in Coggeshall, the son of Samuel Marshall, a respected Coggeshall wood carver, and his wife Elizabeth. He was baptised in St Peter's church on Easter Day of that year.

The 1901 census shows him living in the family home in Bridge Street and employed as a teacher at the National School in Stoneham Street, despite being only 16 years of age.

Ten years later, in 1911, he was living in lodgings in Croydon, Surrey and employed as an assistant teacher at an elementary school. He was still single.

He enlisted as a Private in the East Surrey Regiment in 1917 and attended the Garrison Officer Cadet Battalion. He was discharged to Commission and appointed a Temporary 2nd Lieutenant on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1917 in 1st Garrison Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment .

He later saw action in France where he was wounded whilst serving with the Suffolk Regiment and subsequently died of his wounds on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1918, aged 33.

He is buried at Les Baraques Military Cemetery, Sangatte, France. There were 5 military hospitals, providing about 2,500 beds, in this area and it is probable that he would have been treated and later died in one of these.

Les Baraques Military Cemetery is on the western side of Calais just off the road to Sangatte.







## PERCY WILLIAM MEAD

40891 Private  
1st Battalion, Hertfordshire Regiment

Percy was born in 1883 in Hanover Square, Feering, Essex, the eldest son of William Mead, a horse keeper on a farm, and Esther his wife.

The 1901 census shows him as a horse keeper on a farm and living with his parents and siblings at Stock Street, Pattiswick.

In 1911 the census records him living at The Park, Ardleigh, Colchester, obviously a large and affluent household, where he was employed as a domestic coachman.

In the Summer of 1911 he married Ethel Cadman in Stowmarket, Suffolk and it was there that he enlisted.

From the information on the medal roll it can be established that he was mobilised into the Northamptonshire Regiment (No.39355) and was later transferred to the Bedfordshire Regiment and then to the Hertfordshire Regiment.

He died of his wounds on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1917, age 34, and is buried at Voormezeele Enclosures Nos.1 and 2, near Ieper (Ypres).

These enclosures were originally regimental groups of graves, begun very early in the war and gradually increased in size. On 29<sup>th</sup> April 1918 the village and the cemeteries were captured by the Germans after very heavy fighting. No.1 and No.2 enclosures are now treated as a single cemetery. There are 593 Commonwealth servicemen of the Great War buried or commemorated here. 40 of the burials are unidentified and 19 graves that were destroyed by shell fire are represented by special memorials.

Voormezeele Enclosures Nos.1 and 2 are located 4 kilometres south-west of Ieper in the village of Voormezeele.





## FREDERICK JOHN NORTON

Lieutenant  
'D' Battery, 187th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery

Frederick was born in 1880, the son of James and Elizabeth Norton of Peckham, London.

It was found from the Medal Roll that previously he had been a Private with 16th The Queen's Lancers (Army No. 4539) and served in the Boer War. He gained the Queen's South African Medal and 4 Clasps and rose to the rank of Squadron Quarter Master Sergeant.

He married Mabel May Hills in Camberwell in the winter of 1906.

In 1911 he was in Norwich at Cavalry Barracks, and was a sergeant with the Lancers. His wife Mabel and their two sons were living with him. The census states that Mabel was born in Coggeshall.

He was commissioned into the Royal Field Artillery and went to France on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1914. Mabel and their 3 children lived in Hope Cottage, Church Street, Coggeshall.

He was killed in action on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1918, aged 38, and is commemorated at Achiet-Le-Grand Communal Cemetery Extension, Achiet-le-Grand, Pas de Calais, France, Special Memorial 1.

The Communal Cemetery contains just four Commonwealth burials of the First World War but the Extension contains 1,424 Commonwealth burials and commemorations. 200 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to eight casualties known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials record the names of ten casualties buried in other cemeteries whose graves could not be found.

Achiet-le-Grand is a village 19 kilometres south of Arras on the main road from Arras to Bapaume.





## FRANCIS PARTRIDGE

M2/097532 Private

605th M.T. Company, Army Service Corps

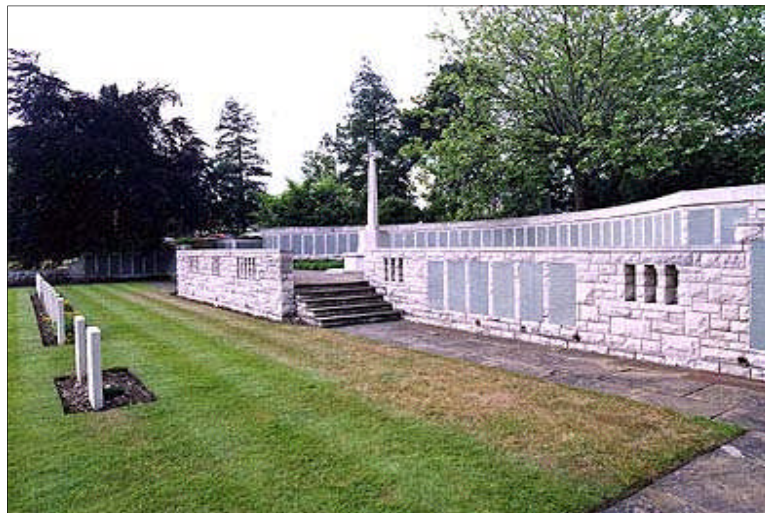
Francis was born in 1875 in Stratford St Mary, Suffolk, the son of Robert Partridge, a prosperous farmer and Emily his wife. He was one of nine children, six of them sons, and he was probably called Frank by the family as this is how he is commemorated on Coggeshall's war memorial.

He married Maud Mattock, also born in Stratford St Mary, in the Spring of 1896 and they moved to Coggeshall.

The 1901 census shows him living in Robins Bridge Road, Coggeshall, with his wife and three young sons and described as a domestic groom and gardener. By 1911 the family had moved to The Gravel, West Street, Coggeshall, and two more sons had been born.

The Coggeshall Almanack lists an F. Partridge as having joined the Army Service Corps in 1914. The Army records state that he enlisted at Colchester, but no date is given or indication of where he went subsequently.

These records list the death of Francis Partridge, born in Stratford St Mary, at sea on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1916. He was on SS 'Citta di Palermo', an Italian ship carrying 143 British troops from Brindisi, heading for Salonika in northern Greece. As the ship left harbour, bound initially for Durazzo in Albania, it hit a mine and sank. An entry in the parish magazine confirms these facts. 57 lives were lost on the troopship and they are commemorated on The Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton which commemorates almost 1,900 servicemen and women of the Commonwealth land and air forces whose graves are not known, many of whom were lost in transports that were torpedoed or mined. It is situated in Southampton Hollybrook Cemetery behind the plot of First World War graves .







## ALBERT CARSEWELL PAYNE

30000, Private  
7th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment

He was born in Feering parish on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1886, the son of James Payne, a farmer, and Helen his wife who lived at Lees Farm House, Colchester Road. He was the only son of seven children.

On the 1901 census he is shown as a monitor, age 14 at the National School in Coggeshall. One of his older sisters was a pupil teacher there and two other sisters are shown as monitoress.

The 1911 census shows him at Culham Training College near Abingdon in Berkshire as a student, training to be an elementary school teacher. He then went as a Senior Assistant Master at Sheringham Council School for three years and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1915 he was appointed as head master at Mileham school, in mid-Norfolk.

He married Elizabeth Jane Ager, also a teacher, in late March 1915 in the Erpingham district of Norfolk. He was called up for active service on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1916 joining the 7th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment which served entirely in France and Flanders from July 1915.

Albert Payne died of wounds on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1917, age 31, sustained in the battle for Glencourse Wood near Ypres, leaving a widow and a daughter.

He is buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Poperinge, West-Vlaanderen in Belgium, which is located 12 kilometres west of Ieper (Ypres) on the road leading to Poperinge. A picture of the original cross marking his grave is shown below.





## WALTER PAYNE

7458 Private  
2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment

He was born on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1884 in Little Coggeshall, the oldest son of Walter Payne, a domestic gardener, and Rachel his wife. He was baptised at the church of St Peter-ad-Vincula on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1886.

On the 1901 census he is listed as a non-domestic groom, living at the family home in Robins Bridge Road. By the time of the 1911 census the family had moved to Grange Hill and Walter was recorded as an Army Reservist.

The Coggeshall Almanack for the events of 1914 contained an obituary picture of Walter stating that he had served 8 years as a regular soldier and 4 years as a reservist, so he had obviously been serving with 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment as a regular in the 10 years between the two census dates.

2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment landed at Le Havre on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1914 and, as he was a trained soldier, Walter would have been re-called to the Colours immediately and most likely would have gone to France at once.

He was killed in action on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1914, aged 30 and it appears that he was one of the first of Coggeshall's young men to perish.

He is now buried at Meteren Military Cemetery, Nord, France. This cemetery was made in 1919 by the French authorities, who brought in Commonwealth, French and German graves from the neighbouring battlefields and from other cemeteries in the area.

Meteren is a village 17 kilometres south-west of Ieper (Ypres) in Belgium and west of Bailleul on the main road to Cassel. The military cemetery is situated to the rear of the civil cemetery.







## **BERTIE LEONARD POTTER**

G/12604 Private

8th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

Bertie was born on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1896 in Coggeshall, one of nine children of Arthur Potter, a seed grower, and Kezia his wife.

He enlisted and was attested 15<sup>th</sup> January 1916 at Witham, Essex, giving details that he lived at Mill House, Tilkey Road, Coggeshall, that his occupation was a small holder and that he was not married.

His Army records state that he was mobilised on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1916 and posted to 3rd Battalion, East Surrey Regiment on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1916. He was transferred to 16th Battalion Royal Fusiliers on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1916.

He embarked for France with the British Expeditionary Force on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1916. He was posted to 9th Battalion Royal Fusiliers on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1916 and then transferred to 8th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1916.

He was killed in action on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1917, age 21, and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, Panel 15 to 19.

It commemorates over 20,000 who fell in the area and have no known grave. The Loos Memorial forms the sides and back of Dud Corner Cemetery.

Loos-en-Gohelle, Pas de Calais, France, is a village 5 kilometres north-west of Lens, and the Cemetery is located 1 kilometre west of the village.





## STANLEY CYRIL POTTER

251224 Private  
5th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Stanley was born on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1896 in Coggeshall, the fourth child of Harry Potter, a farm worker, and Emily Maria, his wife. The family lived at No.3 Tilkey.

Stanley was great friends with Percy Tansley, a slightly older lad who lived just six doors away from him in Tilkey.

The 1911 census records Stanley working as a labourer on a farm.

He enlisted for service in the 5th Battalion, Essex Regiment at Chelmsford and it is almost certain that his great pal Percy Tansley was at his side as their regimental numbers are only three last digits apart.

The Battalion was sent to the Middle East and the 'pals' were both to lose their lives on the first day of the very costly defeat that is now called the First Battle of Gaza.

They were killed in action on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1917, side-by-side, when the bridge they were on was shelled by the Turkish forces. Stanley was 21 years of age. They are both commemorated on the Jerusalem Memorial on the same panels, 33 to 39.

The Jerusalem Memorial stands in Jerusalem War Cemetery, 4.5 kilometres north of the walled city and situated on the neck of land at the north end of the Mount of Olives, to the west of Mount Scopus. The Jerusalem Memorial commemorates 3,300 Commonwealth servicemen who died during the First World War in Egypt or Palestine and who have no known grave.





## WILLIAM JOHN PRENTICE

27615, Private  
7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Border Regiment

William was born in Coggeshall on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1897, the second son of Albert William Prentice, a water supply contractor, and Florence his wife.

On the 1911 census he was shown as working in a factory and living with his parents and 6 siblings at the Wolf Inn, Tilkey. By this time his father was listed as a seed grower.

He enlisted at Witham in the Essex Regiment (former no. 6206) and at some time was transferred to the 3rd/5th Border Regiment and subsequently the 7th Battalion, the Border Regiment which went to France in July 1915.

He died of his wounds, probably in one of the military medical units, on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1917, aged 20. He is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France.

The area around Etaples was the scene of immense concentrations of Commonwealth reinforcement camps and hospitals. In 1917 it is estimated that 100,000 troops were camped among the sand dunes, and the hospitals, which included eleven general, one stationary, four Red Cross hospitals and a convalescent depot, could deal with 22,000 wounded or sick.

Etaples is a town about 27 kilometres south of Boulogne. The Military Cemetery, which is the largest Commonwealth War Grave Commission cemetery in France, is to the north of the town, on the road to Boulogne.







## REGINALD ROWLAND

40104 Private  
9th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Reginald was born in 1896 in Coggeshall, the eldest son of Walter Rowland, an ordinary labourer on a farm, and Elizabeth his wife. The family lived in Tilkey. The 1911 census shows Reginald as a scholar, age 14.

He enlisted in 9th (Service) Battalion, Essex Regiment at Chelmsford but the date is not known.

He went to France, almost certainly as a battle casualty replacement, and was killed in action on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1918, age 22. He probably died during the German March Offensive (Operation Michael) during the Battles of the Somme in March and April 1918.

He is buried at Ribemont, Department Somme, Communal Cemetery Extension.

This sector of the front was taken over by the Commonwealth forces in the early summer of 1915, when Mericourt-Ribemont Station, on the railway line from Amiens to Albert, became a railhead. However, it was not until the German advance at the end of March 1918 that the first burials were made at Ribemont, initially in the communal cemetery itself. The extension was begun in May and used until August 1918, when 68 burials were carried out by units engaged in the defence of Amiens. It was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields of 1918 east of Ribemont. In 1929, the burials in the communal cemetery were moved into the extension. The extension contains 498 burials from the First World War.

Ribemont, Department Somme, about 8 kilometres south-west of Albert.





## EPHRAIM WILLIAM SADLER

325054 Sergeant

8th Cyclist Battalion, Essex Regiment, Attached King's African Rifles

Ephraim was born in 1893 at Surrex, Feering, the second child of William Sadler, a farm labourer, and Alice his wife.

On the 1911 census he is shown as a seedsman's clerk and still living in the family home at Surrex.

The Coggeshall Almanack detailing the events of 1914 lists him as serving in 8th Cyclist Battalion, Essex Regiment, having enlisted at Coggeshall.

He was attached to the King's African Rifles and promoted to the rank of Sergeant, but the date of this could not be ascertained.

He was killed in action in German East Africa (now Tanzania) on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1917, aged 24.

He is buried in Dar Es Salaam War Cemetery which was created in 1968 when the 660 First World War graves at Dar Es Salaam Ocean Road Cemetery had to be moved to facilitate the construction of a new road. It now contains 1,764 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 60 of them unidentified, and 41 from the Second World War, 7 of them unidentified.

Dar Es Salaam War Cemetery is located on the Bagamoyo Road which heads north-west along the coast from the centre of Dar-Es-Salaam and the cemetery is about 5 kilometres from the city centre.





## EDMUND HERBERT SEABROOK

1307 Private  
Essex Yeomanry

Edmund was born on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1885 in Little Coggeshall, the only son of Frederick Seabrook, a farmer living at The Grange, and Lizzie his wife. He was baptised at St Peter's church the following year, on 24<sup>th</sup> February.

In 1911 he is shown on the census as a farmer's son who is working on the family farm. From Mrs Gardner's diary it appears that he was known as Ted to his friends.

He enlisted at Colchester as a private in the Essex Yeomanry, a Territorial Force that was mobilized at the outbreak of war. The Coggeshall Almanack records that he was serving in 1914.

The Essex Yeomanry went to France in November 1914 as part of the 8th Cavalry Brigade. He was killed in action on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1915 in the second battle of Ypres, age 29, and is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres on Panel 5.

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. The Menin Gate Memorial now bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known.

Ypres (now Ieper) is a town in the Province of West Flanders. The Memorial is situated at the eastern side of the town on the road to Menin. Each night at 8 pm the traffic is stopped at the Menin Gate while members of the local Fire Brigade sound the Last Post in the roadway under the Memorial's arches.







## **EDWARD HILL SEXTON**

T/15976 Sergeant  
6 Company, Royal Army Service Corps

Edward was born in 1885 in Shorncliffe, Kent, the fourth child of Joseph and Emma Rebecca Sexton. His father was a regular soldier, serving nearly 12 years in the East Indies, and some of the places that Joseph served in the United Kingdom are reflected in the birthplaces of his children, including Edward.

The 1891 census shows Edward as a scholar, age 7, living at the Chapel Hotel on Market Hill where his father was the landlord. In 1900 he enlisted at Colchester into the Army Service Corps as a boy soldier, age 16.

The 1911 census records him as a 27 year-old corporal instructor at the Army Service Corps Barracks, New Road, Woolwich, and single.

He died on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1915 of multiple wounds received in defending Tanglin Military Hospital, Singapore, from mutineers of the Right Wing (Rajput) of the 5th Madras Light Infantry (Indian Army).

He is buried in Kranji War cemetery, Singapore. There are 64 First World War burials and commemorations.

Kranji War Cemetery is 22 kilometres north of the city of Singapore, on the north side of Singapore Island overlooking the Straits of Johore.





## **FREDERICK JOHN SHARMAN**

16316 Private  
11th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Frederick was born in 1887 in Coggeshall, the son of Samuel Sharman, a fishmonger, and Amelia his wife. It appears that his brother William was his twin.

His father died in 1892 and on the 1901 census he is shown to be living in Tilkey, age 14, with his widowed mother and his brother William. The lads are described on the census as 'house boys' – their mother had 3 lodgers living in the house, so perhaps they were helping her in the family home.

He married Ellen Alice Cook from Stowupland, Suffolk, in the summer of 1909.

On the 1911 census he was shown as living in Tilkey with his wife Ellen (on the census as Helen) and their one year-old daughter, Violet. He was a farm labourer.

He enlisted in the Essex Regiment in Colchester and went to France on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1915.

He was killed in action on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1916, age 29, and is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, Pier and face 10D.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20<sup>th</sup> March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.

The Thiepval Memorial will be found next to the village of Thiepval, France, off the main Bapaume to Albert road. Each year a major ceremony is held at the memorial on 1<sup>st</sup> July.





## STANLEY GORDON SHAVE

1178 Sergeant,  
9th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force

Stanley was born on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1885 in Coggeshall, the second son of William Shave, a cabinet maker and undertaker, and Alice Ruth, his wife.

In 1891 the family are shown on the census as living in West Street. On the 1901 census Stanley and his brother Robert are listed as apprentice wood joiners, almost certainly in the family firm.

The 1911 census shows that Stanley had become a constable in the Metropolitan Police Force and was stationed at the Strand police station in London. He served 5 years in the police before emigrating to Australia late in 1911 at the age of 26. He went to Taringa, Brisbane, Queensland.

He enlisted in 9th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force in September 1914 and set sail from Melbourne in December 1914.

The battalion was heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the ANZAC beachhead at Gallipoli, landing on 25th April 1915. It served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December 1915.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt. In March 1916 the battalion sailed for France and the Western Front. He rose steadily through the ranks and was promoted to Sergeant in March 1917.

Stanley was wounded 3 times in all. His records show that he had leave in England from May to July 1917 as he had suffered wounds to the chest, throat and shoulder. It is hoped that he saw his parents and family during the few weeks in England.

He returned to his battalion in France on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1917. The Battalion were involved in the assault and capture, as part of the Third Battle of Ypres, of the high ground around the village of Broodseinde which allowed the Allied occupation of the entire ridge south of the Paschendaele sector.

Stanley was killed in action on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1917, age 32.

He is commemorated on The Menin Gate Memorial, panel 17, at Ypres in Belgium and on the Australian National Memorial in Canberra, as well as on his parents' grave in Coggeshall cemetery.



*National Memorial, Canberra, Australia*





## **JAMES ROBERTSON SHAW**

8804, Private  
1st Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)

James was born on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1900 in Glasgow, the younger son of William Blair Shaw and Christina his wife. On the 1901 census William's occupation is given as a seeds salesman. William, Christina and their two sons, William and James, were living at 29, Oakbank Terrace in the parish of St George in the Fields, Glasgow.

At some time between 1903 and 1906 the Shaw family moved south, and in 1911 they are shown on the census as living on Grange Hill, Coggeshall, and William is shown as still being involved in the seed buying business. The family now have three more sons, John, who was born in Glasgow, and Frederick and Alfred who were born in Coggeshall.

James enlisted at Colchester in May 1915 only two months after his fifteenth birthday. He volunteered for active service and went to France in June. He had been in the front line trenches for some time when his correct age was discovered. Arrangements were being made to send him home, when he was killed by aircraft bombs on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1916, aged 16.

He is buried at Albert Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France. Albert was held by French forces against the German advance in September 1914. It passed into British hands in the summer of 1915; and the first fighting in July 1916, is known as the Battle of Albert, 1916. The Extension was used by fighting units and Field Ambulances from August 1915 to November 1916.

Albert is a town 28 kms north-east of Amiens. The Communal Cemetery is on the south-east side of Albert at the junction of the roads to Peronne and Bray sur Somme. There are 862 First World War dead commemorated in this site.

James is also commemorated on Alyth Parish Church War Memorial and in the 'Golden Book' - City & County of Perth Roll of Honour.



*Mark Duffy of Blairgowrie sent us the details about James Shaw's military service and we extend our thanks to him.*



## **HARRY FILMER SMITH**

61191 Private  
24th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Harry was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1886, the son of Filmer W. Smith, a carpenter and builder, and Charlotte his wife. On 11<sup>th</sup> March 1886 Harry was baptised at St. Peter's church. The family lived in Stoneham Street.

On the 1901 census Harry is listed as a woodcarver and still living in the family home.

He married Lily May Burton in the parish church of St. Peter-ad-Vincula, in Coggeshall on Christmas Day 1911.

He enlisted at Witham in the Middlesex Regiment (No. G/29733) and was later posted to 24th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment).

The medal roll indicates that he did not go to France straight away with the Fusiliers as they arrived at Boulogne in November 1915, but was sent at a later date, probably as a battle casualty replacement.

He died of his wounds on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1918, age 32, and is buried in Bagneux British Cemetery, Gezaincourt.

By the end of March 1918, the 3rd, 29th and 56th Casualty Clearing Stations had arrived in Gezaincourt and it is very likely that he was a patient in one of these when he died.

The cemetery was begun in April 1918 after the close of the German offensive in Picardy. There are 1,374 servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery.

Gezaincourt is a village is situated 2 kilometres to the south-west of the town of Doullens, Somme, France.





## **WALTER ISAAC TRACEY**

A/22684 Private

8th Battalion Canadian Infantry (Manitoba Regiment)

Walter was born in 1881 at Curd Hall, Little Coggeshall, the youngest of eight children of Samuel Tracey, a farm bailiff, and Martha his wife.

On the 1891 census he is shown as still living at Curd Hall. He was on the census as a scholar and now had two younger sisters.

His father died in 1894, followed by his mother in 1895 and the family split up, some staying very locally whilst others went further afield.

The 1901 census shows him living at 9, St Pauls Church Yard, St Gregory by St Paul, as a servant. It is a large establishment and his occupation is shown as a Drapery Porter.

There is no sign of Walter on the 1911 census although the rest of his brothers and sisters were still living in Essex. It is probable that he had decided to try his luck in Canada.

When the Great War came he joined 8th Battalion Canadian Infantry (Manitoba Regiment). Great Britain accepted Canada's offer to send an infantry division on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1914, and it comprised of some 60,000 members of the Canadian militia.

The First Contingent of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, which sailed on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1914, included the 90th Winnipeg Rifles, known as the Black Devils, and one can only surmise that Walter was with them.

He died on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1916, age 35, and is buried at Berks Cemetery Extension, just south of Ieper (Ypres), Belgium.

Berks Cemetery Extension is located 12.5 kilometres south of Ieper on the road leading to Mesen, Ploegsteert and Armentieres.







## GEORGE WILLIAM STRINGER

9295 Rifleman  
4th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps

George was born in 1890 in Battersea, the son of Charles Stringer, a railway labourer, and Emily his wife.

The 1901 census shows the family living at 13, Pitcairn Street in Clapham.

On the 1911 census he was shown as serving as a rifleman with 4th Battalion The King's Royal Rifle Corps in Chakrat, India. His Army records state that he enlisted at Woolwich.

He married Braintree-born Lily Kate Warren in Islington, London, late in 1914, probably just weeks before going to France on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1914.

He was killed in action on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1915 on the Western Front and is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres on Panel 51 and 53.

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. The Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial now bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known.

Ypres (Ieper) is a town in the Province of West Flanders. The Memorial is situated at the eastern side of the town on the road to Menin.

Each night at 8 pm the traffic is stopped at the Menin Gate while members of the local Fire Brigade sound the Last Post in the roadway under the Memorial's arches.





## **PERCY EDWARD TANSLEY**

251227 Private  
5th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Percy was born on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1890 in Broad Green, Great Tey parish, the son of Alfred Tansley, a horseman on a farm, and Laura his wife. He was baptised at St Peter's church, Coggeshall on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1892 and the family are noted as living in Tilkey.

On the 1901 census Percy was living in Tilkey, just six doors away from a slightly younger lad, Stanley Potter, with whom he became a life-long friend .

The 1911 census records Percy working as a nursery man.

Percy was a Territorial In the Essex Regiment (No.4052). He enlisted for service in the 5th Battalion, Essex Regiment, at Chelmsford and it is almost certain that his great pal Stanley Potter was at his side as their regimental numbers are only 3 digits apart.

The Battalion was sent to the Middle East and the 'pals' were both to lose their lives on the first day of the very costly defeat that is now called the First Battle of Gaza. They were killed in action on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1917, side-by-side, when the bridge they were on was shelled by the Turkish forces. Percy was 25 years of age. They are both commemorated on the same panels 33 to 39 on the Jerusalem Memorial.

The Jerusalem Memorial stands in Jerusalem War Cemetery, 4.5 kilometres north of the walled city and situated on the neck of land at the north end of the Mount of Olives, to the west of Mount Scopus. The Jerusalem Memorial commemorates 3,300 Commonwealth servicemen who died during the First World War in Egypt or Palestine and who have no known grave.





## **FREDERICK W. TURNER**

393017 Rifleman

1st/9th Battalion, London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles)

Frederick was born 31<sup>st</sup> May 1898 in Kelvedon, the fourth son of Albert Turner, a bricklayer's labourer, and Ann his wife who was Coggeshall-born.

The 1901 census shows him living with his 5 siblings in Rowley Lane, off the High Street in Kelvedon.

In 1911 the family were living in Chapel Row, Kelvedon, and Frederick is shown on the census as at school.

He was living in Coggeshall, in Mill Lane, Robins Bridge Road when he enlisted in 5th Battalion, Essex Regiment (Army No. 3263)

He was posted to 1st/9th Battalion, London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles), probably as a replacement for battle casualties and given a new Army number (6752). In March 1917 he was given yet another new number, a six-digit one, as part of the effort to standardize the numbering system.

He was killed in action on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1917, age 19 and is buried at Divisional Collecting Post Cemetery and Extension near Ypres, Belgium.

Divisional Collecting Post Cemetery was begun by the Field Ambulance units in August 1917. In all, 88 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War are now buried or commemorated in the cemetery. The Extension contains a total of 676 Commonwealth burials, 511 unidentified.

The cemetery is located to the north-east of the town of Ieper (Ypres).







## GEORGE WILLIAM TURNER

29429, Corporal  
51st Company, Royal Garrison Artillery

George was born in 1890 in Braintree, the oldest son of Albert Turner, a bricklayer's labourer, and Ann his wife who was Coggeshall-born.

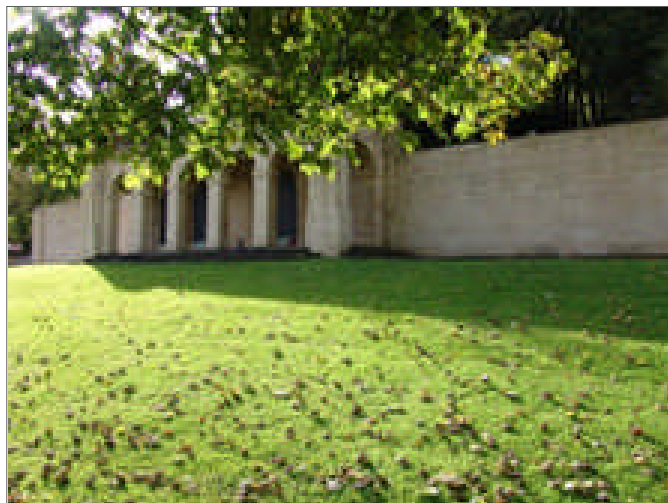
The 1901 census shows him living with his 6 siblings in Rowley Lane, off the High Street in Kelvedon and working as a labourer on a farm aged 11.

On the 1911 census he is shown as 'overseas military', a 21year-old gunner serving with 81st (S) Company, Royal Garrison Artillery, at Roorkee in northern India, close to the foothills of the Himalayas.

His soldier details show that he enlisted in Colchester but the date is not shown. His medal index card shows the award of the British War medal as all men who served in the main theatres of war qualified for this medal, as did those who left their native shore for service in, for example, India.

His final unit was 51st Company Royal Garrison Artillery which it appears to have spent the war in India on internal security duties as part of the Presidency Brigade, Calcutta, who were part of the 8th Lucknow Division. This appears to tie in with the award of the British War medal only, as the Victory medal was awarded to all those who entered a theatre of war. One can only presume that he was either sent home because he had contracted a tropical illness, or was coming home (perhaps on leave) and landed at Avonmouth and was admitted to one of the military hospitals at Bristol where he died on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1917, aged 28.

Bristol (Arnos Vale) cemetery contains burials of both wars. Most of the 356 First World War burials were of men who died at the local hospitals, particularly the 2nd Southern General and the Beaufort, many of whom were landed at Avonmouth from hospital ships. Their graves can be found in the 'Soldiers Corner', a plot near the main entrance. The rest of the graves are scattered throughout the cemetery. Those whose graves are not marked by headstones are named on a Screen Wall Memorial. George Turner is commemorated on Screen Wall. 2. 675





## **JOHN TURNER, MC, CROIX DE GUERRE**

Acting Captain

8th Battalion, attached 10th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment

John was born in Coggeshall on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1882 the eldest child of John Rootsey Turner, a solicitor's clerk and Emma his wife. He was baptised at St Peter's, Coggeshall, on 11<sup>th</sup> May of the same year.

In 1900 he became a pupil teacher at the National School in Stoneham Street and is shown on the 1901 census as living in the family home in Queen Street.

The 1911 census records him as an elementary school teacher at the National School. He was a talented painter of watercolours and his pictures reflect his love of the countryside around Coggeshall.

He left the school on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1914 and was commissioned into the 1st/8th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment and the medal roll shows that he arrived in France with them on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1915 and was almost certainly at the battle of the Somme.

It is not known when he was attached to 10th Battalion. He was awarded the Military Cross in the early months of 1917. The Croix de Guerre (France) was awarded in 1918, just before his death.

He was killed in action on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1918, age 36, and is buried at St. Aubert British Cemetery, Nord, France.

The cemetery was begun by the 24th Division on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1918, just after the capture of the village. Other units continued to use it until 23<sup>rd</sup> October, by which time it contained 57 graves. After the Armistice others were brought in for burial from around the area and the cemetery now contains 435 burials and commemorations of the First World War. 41 burials are unidentified.

St. Aubert is a village approximately 13 kilometres east of Cambrai.





## LEONARD WILLIAM TURNEY

Major

6th Battalion, attached 8th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Leonard was born in Tulse Hill, Surrey on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1884, the son of James Neave Turney and his wife, Sophia Elizabeth. His father was a manufacturer and the household was a fairly affluent one.

The 1901 census shows him living at home with his widowed mother.

He was educated at Lancing College and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the 7th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (Militia) on 26 February 1902. He was promoted to Captain in 1906 and in June 1908 he transferred to the Special Reserve of Officers. In 1910 he was transferred to 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers.

He married Emma Christine Jourgensen at the Church of the Messiah, Brooklyn, New York on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1908.

Following the outbreak of war he rejoined the army and was promoted Major on 2nd December 1915.

The Turneys moved to Scrips in Little Coggeshall. The Coggeshall Almanack records that in September 1916 a bi-plane landed at Scrips and the two passengers had lunch with Major Turney before departing — it caused quite a stir locally!

He went to France with his Battalion and was attached to 8th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers and was killed on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917 during the battle for Arras, age 32.

The British offensive started on 9<sup>th</sup> April and continued over the following weeks. The attack on 3<sup>rd</sup> May was designated as the Third Battle of the River Scarpe. The 8th Fusiliers attacked at dawn south of the river. There were numerous casualties caused by German machine-gun fire near the village of Roeux but they captured their objective. However, there was little time to consolidate the gains before the Germans counter-attacked with a barrage of grenades and rifle fire, forcing the Fusiliers to give up their ground and retreat back to the British lines. 282 officers and men of the 8th Battalion were dead, wounded or missing.

He is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, Bay 3, which commemorates 35,000 servicemen who died in the Arras sector and have no known grave.







## BRYAN JOSEPH WADE

52565 Private  
1st Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)

Bryan was born on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1887, the second son of Philip Wade, a gardener, and Emma his wife, of Stoneham Street and was baptised at St Peter's church on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1887.

On the 1901 census he was shown working as a shop assistant at age 14 .

In 1911 the census shows him as a postman, still single and living in the family home.

His Army records show that he first enlisted in the Middlesex Regiment, former Army number F/2918.

He was killed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1918, aged 31, and his obituary entry from the Coggeshall Almanack is shown below.

WADE—Killed in action in France, on March 27th, Bryan Joseph Wade, 1st Royal Fusiliers, and formerly Auxiliary Postman, Coggeshall, second son of Philip Wade, Stoneham Street, Coggeshall, aged 31 years.

He is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial, panel 19 to 21.

The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom and 300 of the South African Forces who died on the Somme from 21<sup>st</sup> March to 7<sup>th</sup> August 1918 and who have no known grave.

Pozieres is a village 6 kilometres north-east of the town of Albert, France. The Memorial encloses Pozieres British Cemetery which is on the main road from Albert to Pozieres.





## ARTHUR JOHN WADE

G/14740 Private  
7th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment

Arthur was born on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1899 in Coggeshall and was the third son of Alfred Wade, a bricklayer, and Jane his wife who lived at Windmill Fields, Tilkey, in Great Coggeshall.

He was baptised at the church of St. Peter-ad-Vincula on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1899.

On the 1911 census he was shown as being at school.

He enlisted in 7th Battalion Royal Sussex at Chelmsford and the Battalion had several short postings in England before arriving in France on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1915 with the British Expeditionary Force and it is believed that Arthur joined them there not long after his enlistment.

He was killed in action on 5th April 1918, aged 19, and is buried in Bouzincourt Ridge Cemetery, France.

The cemetery contains 709 burials and commemorations of the First World War. 313 of the burials are unidentified

Bouzincourt is a village 3 kilometres north-west of Albert on the road to Doullens. The Cemetery is to the east of the village.





## **PERCY ALBERT WADE**

21899 Private

10th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Percy was born in Coggeshall on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1890 to Emily Wade and baptised at St Peter's church in November the same year.

The 1911 census shows him living with his grandparents in West Street and his occupation is given as a bottler in a brewery.

He married Emily Eliza Philips of London on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1912.

He enlisted at Warley in 10th Battalion Essex Regiment. The medal roll indicates that he went to France in 1916 or 1917, probably as a battle casualty replacement.

He died of his wounds on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1918, age 27, almost certainly in one of the 15 military hospitals stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen which had been there from the start of the war.

He is buried in St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, France.

The great majority of those who died in the hospitals were taken to the city cemetery of St. Sever. In 1916, it was found necessary to begin an extension, where the last burial took place in April 1920. The cemetery extension contains 8,346 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, ten of them unidentified.

St. Sever Cemetery and St. Sever Cemetery Extension are located within a large communal cemetery situated on the eastern edge of the southern Rouen suburbs of Le Grand Quevilly and Le Petit Quevilly.







## **ALBERT DOUGLAS WIGMORE**

65834 Sapper  
129th Field Company, Royal Engineers

Albert was born in 1894 in Watford, Hertfordshire, the third child of Henry George Wigmore, an engineer's fitter, and Ellen his wife.

In 1911 he appears on the census as an apprentice, living in East Street, Coggeshall with the rest of the Wigmore family.

He enlisted at Colchester on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1915 and on his attestation papers he was stated to be an efficient carpenter and cabinet maker.

His Army records state that he arrived in France on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1915.

On 15<sup>th</sup> February 1916 he was admitted to the military hospital with gunshot wounds to the arms, legs and chest. His parents were later informed by telegram that he was dangerously ill, and, on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1916, he died of his wounds in 13 General Hospital.

He was buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, aged 22.

From October 1914 Boulogne and Wimereux formed one of the chief hospital areas. There are 5,577 Great War burials in the cemetery.

Boulogne Eastern Cemetery is a large civil cemetery, split in two by the Rue de Dringhen, just south of the main road to St Omer. The Commonwealth War Graves plot is located down the western edge of the southern section of the cemetery, with an entrance in the Rue de Dringhen. Unusually, the headstones are laid flat in this cemetery. This is due to the sandy soil.





## **WILLIAM WILLIS**

20483 Corporal  
1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

William was born in the spring of 1883 at Rayne, Essex, the third son of Charles Willis, an agricultural labourer, and Mary his wife.

By the time of the 1901 census the family were living in Little Coggeshall and William was working as a stockman.

He married Alice Anderton, who was born in Guilford, Surrey, in the spring of 1903.

On the 1911 census William was shown as living in Queen Street, with his wife and 1 year-old son, Charles. His occupation was a domestic groom.

The Army records show that he enlisted at Colchester. The 1st Battalion, Essex Regiment left England in late March 1915 and landed at Gallipoli on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1915.

He was killed in action on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1915, aged 32, during the Gallipoli offensive in the Helles area.

He is commemorated at Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery in the Helles area, about 1 kilometre south-west of the village of Krithia, Turkey.

There are 3,360 First World War servicemen buried or commemorated in the cemetery. 2,226 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate many casualties known or believed to be buried among them, including 142 officers and men of the 1st Essex who died on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1915.





## EPHRAIM WILLsher

251232 Private  
1st/5th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Ephraim was born on 11<sup>th</sup> January 1888 in Coggeshall, the fourth son of Humphrey Willsher, a farm carter, and Phyllis his wife living at Crosslands Farm, Great Coggeshall. He was baptised at the age of 5 in St Peter's church on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1893.

The 1911 census shows him to be a farm labourer, single, and still living in the family home in Tilkey.

He enlisted in the Essex Regiment, probably as a Territorial, but it is not known at what date. We do know that his old Army number 4059, was replaced in March 1917 by his 6-digit number.

The Battalion were in Egypt at this time protecting the Suez Canal from Turkish attack, but it is not known when Ephraim joined them.

He died on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1918, and as the record states 'died' and not 'died of wounds' it is probable that he succumbed to a tropical disease and died in one of the military hospitals, aged 30.

In the early part of the First World War, Kantara was an important point in the defence of Suez against Turkish attacks. The area developed into a major base and hospital centre and the cemetery was begun in February 1916 for burials from the various hospitals, continuing in use until late 1920.

Kantara War Memorial Cemetery contains 1,562 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and is situated at Kantara East, on the eastern side of the Suez Canal, 160 kilometres north-east of Cairo and 50 kilometres south of Port Said.







## LEONARD WILLsher

47 Private

IX Corps Cyclist Battalion, Army Cyclist Corps

Leonard was born on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1894 in Coggeshall, the fourth child of William Willsher, a general labourer, and Annie his wife, living at Beards Terrace. He was baptised on 7<sup>th</sup> November that year at St Peter's church.

On the 1911 census he is shown as a grocer's assistant, still living at home with his parents and eight siblings.

From his war service record it is known that he was attested on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1911, for 4 years Service with 8<sup>th</sup> Cyclist Battalion, Essex Regiment – a territorial unit. He was discharged on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1914 for the purpose of enlisting in the Regular Army and was attested next day and was posted to the Army Cyclist Corps. The records state that he was single, weighed 114 lbs and stood 5 ft 3 inches tall, with a scar on his forehead.

He arrived in France on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1914 at Le Havre and joined 3rd Division Cycle Corps in the battlefield on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1914.

He had leave in the UK in January 1917. Later in France he was admitted to 112 Field Hospital on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1917, rejoining his unit on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1917. Early in 1918 he had a month's leave in England during which he spent 12 days in the Military Hospital at Bethnal Green. He returned to his unit on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1918 and was killed in action on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1918, age 23.

In his records is a copy of a letter from the Officer-in-charge to Mrs Willsher enclosing the following personal effects: an unopened letter, photos, cards, a L Gun Badge, a cigarette case, a clasp knife, 2 medal ribbons, a mirror in case, a hair brush, a clothes brush, a matchbox cover, 3 blue & red service chevrons and a purse with 2 farthings.

He was buried at Ribemont, Department Somme, initially in the communal cemetery. In 1929, the burials in the communal cemetery were moved into the extension which contains 498 First World War burials.





## GEORGE NEWTON WRIGHT

27534 Private  
7th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment

George was born in 1894 in Southall, Middlesex, the son of George Albert Wright, a jobbing gardener, and Emily Jane his wife.

On the 1911 census he was shown as living in Tilkey in the family home with his parents and 6 younger siblings and working as a baker.

Army records show that he enlisted in 7th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment in Stepney, but the date of enlistment is not shown.

The battalion went to France in September 1915, landing at Boulogne. It appears that he did not go to France at that time but went at a later date, almost certainly as a battle casualty replacement.

He died of his wounds on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1917, age 23, probably in one of the Casualty Clearing Stations.

He is buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, near Ypres, Belgium.

Lijssenthoek was situated on the main communication line between the rear military bases and the Ypres battlefields. Close to the Front, but out of the extreme range of most German field artillery, it became a natural place to establish casualty clearing stations. The cemetery was first used by the French 15th Hopital D'Evacuation and later by casualty clearing stations of the Commonwealth forces. The cemetery contains 9,901 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 24 being unidentified.

Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery is located 12 kilometres west of Ieper town centre, on the road leading from the N308 connecting Ieper to Poperinge.



# ALSO REMEMBERED







## HERBERT ALEXANDER

2351, Corporal  
19th Battalion, London Regiment (St Pancras)

Herbert was born in Kentish Town, London in 1890, the third child of Frederick William Alexander, a railway guard, and Jane, his wife. In 1891 the census shows that the family were living in Highgate Road, Kentish Town.

In 1911 the census lists Herbert as a 'baker of bread' and lodging in one room with another baker at Green Street in Bethnal Green, London.

Herbert enlisted in the 19th Battalion, London Regiment (St Pancras) in Camden Town and from his medal roll we know that he arrived in France on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1915 landing at Le Havre with the rest of his comrades.

He was killed in action on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1916, in the battle of the Somme. He was 26 years old. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Pier and Face 9D.

He is also commemorated as her fiancé on the kerb of the grave of Rosina Galley in Coggeshall cemetery. It is not known where they met. Rosina was the daughter of Charles Galley, a native of Great Tey, Essex, and Alice his wife, who was a brewer's drayman in Coggeshall. Rosina died in the winter of 1918, age 31 years. The kerb also commemorates Albert (Bertie) Galley, her brother, who was killed at the beginning of December 1915.

The Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.

The Thiepval Memorial will be found next to the village of Thiepval, France, off the main Bapaume to Albert road. A major ceremony is held annually at the memorial on 1st July.





## OWEN ALLINGTON

4256 Sergeant  
1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

Owen was born in Rattlesdon, Suffolk in 1877, the eldest son of James William Allington, an agricultural labourer, and Amelia his wife. In 1881 the census shows that the family were living in Wattisham.

The 1891 census reveals that his mother had died and that his father was now living in a cottage near the church at Colne Engaine with his three sons. The two eldest boys are described as agricultural labourers and scholars.

In 1892 his father married Elizabeth Moore of Broughton, Northamptonshire. They had two daughters and lived first at Bradwell and later on Grange Hill.

Owen was attested for military service on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1894 and enlisted into the Essex Regiment on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1894 as a 6-year Militiaman for the County of Essex. He joined the Regiment via the Training Depot at Warley. He was 17 years and 11 months old; stood 5 ft 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins tall and weighed 120 lbs. He had a fresh complexion, blue eyes and brown hair. His occupation was given as labourer.

He took part in the South African War where his battalion, 1st Essex, took part in the relief of Kimberley and engagement at Paardeberg. From 1902 to 1914 the 1st Battalion served in India, Burma and Mauritius, and on the 1911 census he is shown as a corporal serving in the Indian hill station of Naini Tol in the north-west of India.

From the medal roll it appears that he served in the Balkans with the 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment in 1915, entering Theatre on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915.

He returned to the 1st Battalion and was killed in action with them on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, the first day of the battle of the Somme. He was 39 years old.

He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Pier and Face 10 D.

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## ERNEST AMES DOWSETT

423441 Private

10th County of London Battalion (Hackney)

Ernest was born in Coggeshall in 1880, one of nine children of John Ames Dowsett, a labourer at the gelatine factory in West Street, and Emma his wife. The 1891 shows 11 year old Ernest and the family still living in West Street.

In winter 1905 he married Charlotte Fryer (known as Lottie) who was born in Shalford. On the 1901 census she was shown as living in Stoneham Street Coggeshall and was described as an orphan.

By 1911 the couple were shown as living in Manor Park, London, along with baby son Clifford. Ernest was working as a drapery warehouseman.

They were living at Forest Gate when Ernest enlisted at East Ham in the 10th County of London Battalion (Hackney). The Battalion went to France in February 1917 and Ernest probably went with them at that time.

He was killed in action on **5 April 1918, aged 38**. He is buried at Chauny Communal Cemetery British Extension, Aisne.

The cemetery is between Ham & Chauny and was made after the Armistice in 1918 for the burial of remains brought in from the battlefields of the Aisne and smaller cemeteries in the surrounding countryside. There are just over 1,000 casualties from the Great War commemorated in this site, of which 437 have been identified. The majority of them died in 1918; most of the rest died in the month of September 1914.

The memorial on his parents' grave in Coggeshall cemetery bears a commemoration of Ernest.







## **WALTER JOHN PETTIT**

153365, Gunner  
252nd Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

Walter was born in Walthamstow, Essex, in 1883, the son of Robert Walter Pettit, a dairyman, and Sarah his wife. The 1891 census shows that there were 5 children and the family appeared to be making a comfortable living as they employed a domestic servant.

By the time of the 1901 census 18 year-old Walter was employed as an assistant in the family business and in the winter of 1906 he married Coggeshall-born Alice Maud Theedom.

The 1911 census shows the couple living in Walthamstow with daughter Constance and together running a removal business. Walter's parents had by this time moved to Coggeshall Hamlet and were living in Pointwell Mill with their single daughter May.

Walter enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery in Walthamstow being posted to 252<sup>nd</sup> Siege Battery. This unit went to France on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1917.

Siege Batteries RGA were equipped with heavy howitzers, using large calibre high explosive shells. As British artillery tactics developed, the Siege Batteries were most often employed in destroying or neutralising the enemy artillery, as well as putting destructive fire down on strong points, dumps, stores, roads and railways behind enemy lines.

Walter was killed in action on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1918, aged 35, and is buried in Esquelbecq Military Cemetery, France, which is near the Belgian frontier. The cemetery was opened in April 1918 during the early stages of the German offensive in Flanders, when the 2nd Canadian and 3rd Australian Casualty Clearing Stations came to Esquelbecq. There are 578 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in the cemetery.

We have not found Walter commemorated on any of Walthamstow's war memorials, but his name is inscribed on his parents' memorial in Coggeshall cemetery.

