

Ashford



Second World War
1939 – 1945

ADES, ESTHER.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 60.

Wife of H. A. Ades.

Esther died at her home, 15 Hardinge Road, Ashford, Kent, and is one of only nineteen Ashford civilians who are also commemorated on a memorial plaque located in Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery, which was unveiled 11 November 1999 by The Rt. Hon. Countess Mountbatten of Burma C.B.E. We have located at least another seventy five Ashford, Kent civilian deaths attributable to the Second World War, but who are not similarly commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery, unfortunately including several who are not named on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial. Esther was amongst the victims of a German 'hit-and-run' attack on the town of Ashford, Kent which was particularly heavy on 24 May 1943. A number of the civilian casualties who are commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, lost their lives during the raid. Although German documentation accessed shows that the 'prime target' at Ashford, Kent on that date was in fact clearly the railway works and goods yards, but numerous other bombs fell at other locations in the town and surrounding area. Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works in Godington Road, Haywards Garage in New Street and Snashalls Bakery were all hit with resulting loss of life. In addition to these premises numerous private dwellings and the 'prime target' were also bombed. What could easily have been a tragedy of even more magnitude was when the Victoria Road County Junior School, next to the railway station received a direct hit and was virtually totally demolished, despite which thanks to the well practiced evacuation plan having been implemented, not a single death amongst the staff and pupils occurred. The transcriber of these brief commemorations recalls his former Head Master, Mr Thomas (Tom) Gilbert recalling the above raid about ten years after the event at a morning assembly at his Ashford Secondary School. Cleverly, Mr Gilbert had managed to draw parallels about the devastation the raid had caused there in Ashford, and the tragedy of the casualty roll from the raid, and compared it to a biblical story. However the memory which lingers most is when he remembered the exasperation on the part of some of his charges, when they asked him what make and type of aircraft the enemy were strafing the area, in addition to the bombing, and he had replied along the lines that he neither knew nor cared.

ADES, MARY.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 33.

Wife of Harry Leonard Phillip Ades.

Died at 17 Hardinge Road, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

ADES, VICTOR JOHN.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 3.

Son of Harry Leonard Phillip and Mary Ades.

Died at 17 Hardinge Road, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

ALKIN, HORACE VERRIER. Apprentice.
Merchant Navy. Motor Vessel 'Silverpalm' (London).
Died at sea 9 June 1941. Aged 18.

Son of Mrs Alkin of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 97, also commemorated in the Ashford Grammar School, Second World War Book of Remembrance where he had attended between 1933 and 1939.

It is possible that Horace died three days before the 9000 ton cargo ship Silverpalm was sunk by two torpedoes fired from the German submarine U-371, which was commanded by Heinrich Driver at 0326 hours on 12 June 1941 in the North Atlantic. It might be that the date of death recorded for Horace was originally an E.D.D. (Estimated Date of Death) which of necessity was, albeit rarely, sometimes the best method used due to, and resulting from prevailing wartime conditions. All 68 people onboard perished when the ship sunk, consisting of the Master 44 year old Richard Leng Pallett, of Surbiton, Surrey, 53 crewmen, 11 gunners and 3 passengers. M.V. Silverpalm was last positively sighted on 1 June 1941 in the North Atlantic, but was later reported as missing on 15 July 1941. The British trawler 'Cave' spotted a lifeboat with 8 bodies, in the assumed area of the Silverpalm sinking.

ALLCHIN, JAMES (Jimmie) CECIL ALCUIN. Pilot Officer, 106364.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 102 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 8 November 1941. Aged 21.

Son of Alfred Ernest and Violet Ethel Allchin of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial, and the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Panel 31. James Allchin Gardens on the Little Burton Farm Estate, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, is named in his honour and remembrance. James was the co-pilot of Whitley bomber Z9128 DY-? which took off from RAF Topcliff, North Yorkshire at 2207 hours in a mixed bomber force of 169 aircraft on 7 November 1941 on a bombing mission to Berlin, Germany. At 0642 hours the next morning James aircraft was contacted in response to a request for a bearing, at which time it was thought to be about 100 kilometres north of the Island of Borkum in the North Sea and heading for the East Coast of England. The exact fate of the aircraft is still unclear but it is thought to have run out of fuel, possibly resultant of having strayed off course and using up the allocated fuel supply. Within the space of about an hour, two other Whitley's of 102 Squadron that had also been returning from the same mission requested similar assistance, sadly all three aircraft and crews were lost and are presumed to have crashed at different locations in the North Sea, the fifteen airmen lost are all commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Cloud cover over the chosen target area had thwarted the bombers efforts to achieve a concentrated bombing pattern, and they also suffered a mauling by both flak gun batteries and enemy fighters, which resulted in 21 of the aircraft failing to return amounting to about a twelve and a half percent loss rate. "Jimmie" Allchin had been a pupil at Ashford Grammar School between 1931 and 1938 (now the Norton Knatchbull) and is commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance. His sister Avis Allchin who resided in Church Road, Kennington had prior to her retirement been the Principal of Ashford Girls School, East Hill.

ALLEN, WILLIAM.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 65.

Resided at 61 Beaver Lane, South Ashford, Kent.

Son of William Exton Allen and Emma Allen of 209 Folkestone Road, Dover, Kent.

William died at Godinton Road, Ashford, Kent, and he is also commemorated in the Dover, Kent, Second World War, Book of Remembrance, and on a memorial plaque in Ashford, Kent (Bybrook) Cemetery.

William was amongst the victims of a German 'hit-and-run' attack on the town of Ashford, Kent which was particularly heavy, on 24 of May 1943. A number of the civilian casualties commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, lost their lives during the raid on 24 May 1943. German documentation accessed shows that the 'prime target' on that date was in fact clearly the railway works and goods yards adjacent to the road where William died, but numerous other bombs fell at other locations in the town and surrounding area. Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works in Godington Road, Haywards Garage in New Street and Snashalls Bakery were all hit with resulting loss of life. In addition to these premises numerous private dwellings and the 'prime target' were also bombed, but arguably what could easily have been a tragedy of even more magnitude was when the Victoria Road County Junior School, next to the railway station received a direct hit and was virtually totally demolished, despite which thanks to the well practiced evacuation plan having been implemented, not a single death amongst the staff and pupils occurred. The transcriber of these brief commemorations recalls his former Head Master, Mr Thomas (Tom) Gilbert recalling the above raid about ten years after the event at a morning assembly at his Ashford Secondary School. Cleverly, Mr Gilbert had managed to draw parallels about the devastation the raid had caused there, and the tragedy of the casualty roll from the raid, and compared it to a biblical story, but the memory which lingers most is when he told of the exasperation on the part of some of his charges when they asked him about what make and type of aircraft the enemy were strafing the area with in addition to the bombs.

AMES, ARTHUR WILLIAM HERBERT. Ordinary Seaman, P/JX 518558.

H.M.S. Collinwood, Royal Navy.

Killed by enemy action 18 June 1943. Aged 17.

Son of Lionel Herbert and Winifred Grace Ames of Moorstock Lane Sellindge, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated in Sellindge (St. Mary) parish church and on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial.

Buried Sellindge, Ashford, Kent, (St. Mary) churchyard.

Arthur was a pupil of Ashford, Kent, North County Modern (Boys) School between 1938 and 1940 and had enlisted in the Royal Navy on 31 May 1943, it being only 19 days prior to his demise. H.M.S. Collinwood was, and still is a Royal Navy shore based training establishment at Fareham, Hampshire.

AMES, KATHLEEN.

Died 12 December 1940. Aged 51.

Wife of Arthur Edward Ames.

Kathleen died at her home 10 Park Street, Ashford, Kent.

ANDERSEN, RAYMOND CANUTE.
Died 3 February 1943. Aged 15.
Son of Alfred and Nellie Louisa Andersen.
Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

Raymond died at his home 72 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent, his mother sadly died with him, but she is commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial as Nellie Louisa Baxter. A former pupil at the Ashford, Kent, North County Modern (Boys) School from 1939 until his demise, where he is remembered as Raymond Niels Andersen.

ANDREWS, E J. No clear trace, but the apparent best match is shown below, as the CWGC record six men as E. J. Andrews, but non with any obvious Kent connections shown. The following Kent details as shown are from a different data source accessed - **ANDREWS. ERNEST JOHN.** Private 6210069.

1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. (Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment).

Died Poland 2 December 1944. Aged 25.

Born and resided Kent.

Buried Krakow Rakowicki Cemetery, Poland.

Grave Ref 5. B. 5.

Ernest was a prisoner of war when he died having been captured during the France & Belgium Campaign earlier in the war. At the end of the Second World War, the graves service of the British Army of the Rhine gathered together Commonwealth graves from all over Poland into three cemeteries, Rakowicki Cemetery where Ernest is at rest, being the largest. Those buried here died while prisoners of war during the German occupation, most of the graves coming from the cemetery at the large camp at Lamsdorf, Stalag VIII B (after 1943 known as Stalag 344), where there was a hospital of 450 beds used only for Commonwealth prisoners.

ANDREWS, HENRY.
Died 24 March 1943. Aged 54.
Resided 2 Kither Road, Ashford, Kent..
Died at Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

BARBER, GEORGE THOMAS.
Died 24 March 1943. Aged 68.
Resided 50 Francis Road, Ashford.
Son of Robert Barber of 12 Bushey Mill Crescent, Watford, Hertfordshire.
Died at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

BARNES, GEORGE EDWARD.
Died 27 November 1942. Aged 30.
Son of Robert and Mary Edith Barnes of 82 Cudworth Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.
Husband of Ivy Rose Barnes of 20 Curtis Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.
Died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

BARTON, A. J. No clear trace. Three casualties are commemorated by the CWGC, one of whom was a soldier, all data checked points to him having been born and resided in Hertfordshire. Another casualty was a New Zealand serviceman, as such the remaining casualty appears to be the best match who has been briefly commemorated below. Caution is advised however regarding accuracy, should anybody at some future date carry out more detailed research into the war memorial or this casualty in particular - **BARTON**, ANTHONY JAMES. Pilot Officer, 196207. Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 206 Squadron, Royal Air Force. Died 9 April 1945.

Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Panel 268.

Following its disbanding in 1920, in June 1936 No. 206 Squadron, Royal Air Force was reformed and based at R.A.F. Manston, Kent, equipped with Avro Ansons, at which time the squadron was primarily engaged in advanced flying training for newly qualified pilots. A change to Coastal Command, R.A.F. maritime patrols over the North Sea during the early days of the Second World War then followed, during which time an aircraft from the squadron managed to shoot down an attacking Heinkel He 115 seaplane. Another hit a German submarine, which survived the attack, probably due to the ineffectiveness of 100lb anti-submarine bombs. In early 1940, the unit converted to Lockheed Hudsons and moved to St Eval, Cornwall to patrol the south-west approaches. Two years later, Flying Fortress IIs arrived and No 206 moved to the Azores to provide convoy protection over a much greater area than had previously been available. Anthony's squadron returned to the United Kingdom in April 1944 and converted to Lockheed Liberators before taking up patrol duties over the Norwegian coastal areas, a task that the unit continued for the remainder of the War. With the end of the War in Europe, No 206 was tasked with the transport of freight to India and then flying back with returning former prisoners of war from the Far East until disbanded in April 1946.

BARTON, CECIL LESLIE. Driver, 14232247.

259 Field Company, Royal Engineers.

Died 21 July 1943. Aged 20.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of James and Maria Barton of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 68. Grave 12.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

BARTON, GERALD. Despatch Rider.

Home Guard.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 21.

Son of Frank and Amy Barton of 98 The Street, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Gerald was injured at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, and died later the same day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital.

BASTOW, ALAN. Captain 145907.

Royal Artillery. Attached to Intelligence Corps (MI 10).

Died 16 October 1944. Aged 30.

Born Bradford, Yorkshire. Resided Chester, Cheshire.

Son of John Henry and Ruth Mary Bastow.

Husband of Beryl Bastow ((Neé Hughes) of Hoole, Cheshire. MA (Leeds).

Buried Calais Canadian War Cemetery, Leubringhen, Pas de Calais, France.

Grave Ref: 3. B. 11.

Pre war territorial army member of the Royal Artillery who had been a School Master at Ashford Grammar School 1938-1939 where he is commemorated in the school Second World War, Book of Remembrance.

BAYLEY, GEORGE CORBETT. D.F.C. Pilot Officer (Pilot), 113343.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 1651 Conversion Unit, Royal Air Force.

Died 29 July 1942. Aged 23.

Son of Herbert Bell Bayley and Nancy Bayley.

George had been a pupil at Ashford Grammar School 1929-1935 where he is commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance.

Buried Becklingen War Cemetery, Soltau, Niedersachsen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 26. J. 3.

George was the pilot of Stirling bomber N3655 ?-T which took off from R.A.F. Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire at 2330 hours on the night of 28/29 July 1942 on a mission to bomb Hamburg, Germany. 256 aircraft made up of 165 from 3 Group and 91 Operational Training Unit aircraft were dispatched on the raid. A much larger force had been detailed for this raid but bad weather over the bases of 1, 4 and 5 Groups prevented their participation. The force which took off comprised 161 Wellingtons, 71 Stirlings and 24 Whitleys. The weather worsened and the OTU aircraft were recalled, although 3 of them went on to bomb Hamburg. The remaining bomber force became very scattered; many more aircraft turned back and only 68 bombed in the target area. Hamburg suffered 13 people killed and 48 injured with 56 fires, 15 of them large. Bomber casualties on this raid were heavy, 16 Wellingtons and 9 Stirlings were lost from 3 Group, they being over 15 percent of those dispatched by the group. 4 OTU Wellingtons were lost and a Whitley crashed in the sea. George's aircraft crashed in the Oslebhausen district of Bremen, Germany on the west bank of the river Weser, killing all the crew of seven who are all buried in the same cemetery. Six days after their deaths, the London Gazette published details of the award of the Distinguished Flying Medal to 20 year old Flight Sergeant (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner) Edwin C. Glenwright, of Victoria, London. who was one of the bombers crew.

BAXTER, NELLIE LOUISA.

Died February 1943 aged 47.

Wife of Alfred Anderson and mother of Raymond Canute Anderson.

Nellie died at her home 72 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent, and her son Raymond Andersen died with her (please see entry), and is also commemorated on the war memorial. Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

BEARD, EDWARD. Private, 6288340.

5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died 9 April 1943. Aged 21.

Born Oldham, Lancashire. Resided Kent.

Son of James Beard and Mary Eva Beard of Beaver, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Beja War Cemetery, Tunisia. Grave Ref: 2. C. 3.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Edward was probably killed by enemy artillery during his battalions attack on Point 667, which was the highest feature on Gebel Bech Chekaou near Oued Zarga, Tunisia.

BEALE, SEAMAN.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 40.

Husband of Gladys Beale of 191 New Town, Ashford, Kent.

Seaman died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

Seaman probably served during the Great War years in the army as Private, L/11202, 5th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).

BETTS, ELMER. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 642091.

Royal Air Force, 103 Squadron.

Died 4 July 1943. Aged 25.

Son of Maud Mary Betts, and stepson of Leonard Arthur Amos of Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Marjorie Betts.

Buried Florennes Communal Cemetery, Namur, Belgium.

Grave Ref: Row 3. Collective grave 35-38.

Elmer was the Flight Engineer of Lancaster bomber W5012 PM-O, which was flown by 20 year old Flying Officer (Pilot), Lawrence P. Oldham, of Quinton. Birmingham.

The aircraft took off at 2301 hours on 3 July 1943 from R.A.F. Elsham Wolds, Lincolnshire, in a mixed bomber force of 653 aircraft, which was comprised of 293 Lancasters, 182 Halifaxes, 89 Wellingtons, 76 Stirlings, and 13 Mosquitos to take part

in a raid to Köln (Cologne) Germany. The aiming point for this raid was that part of Cologne situated on the east bank of the Rhine, primarily because of the industry

which was located there. Pathfinder ground marking was accurately maintained by both the Mosquito Oboe aircraft and the backers-up, allowing the main force of

following bombers to carry out another heavy attack on Cologne. 30 aircraft, they being 9 Halifaxes, 8 Lancasters, 8 Wellingtons, and 5 Stirlings were lost on the raid.

This night saw the first operations of a new German unit, Jagdgeschwader 300, equipped with single-engined fighters using the Wilde Sau (Wild Boar) technique. In

this, a German pilot used any form of illumination available over a city being bombed, such as searchlights, target indicators, the glow of fires on the ground, to

pick out a bomber for attack. Liaison with the local flak defences was supposed to ensure that the flak was limited to a certain height above which the Wilde Sau fighters

were free to operate. The new German unit claimed 12 bombers shot down over Cologne that night, but had to share the 12 available aircraft found to have crashed

with the local flak, who also claimed 12 successes. Elmer's aircraft was located by enemy radar after which it was then intercepted and shot down by a German night-

fighter Messerschmitt Bf 110 flown by Luftwaffe night-fighter 'ace' (14 kills) Oberleutnant Wilhelm Telge of Nachtjagdwader V./NJG1 (Night Interception

Squadron), and crashed between Gesves and Anssesse about ten miles from Namur,

Belgium. In terms of collateral damage the raid which cost Elmer his life resulted in the deaths of 588 people in Cologne plus an estimated 1,000 injured, 20 industrial premises and about 2,200 homes destroyed and 72,000 made homeless. All seven crew were killed and originally interred by the local inhabitants of the little village of Gesves in their communal cemetery, which is quite near to the crash site. Following the cessation of hostilities they were removed to Florennes, and are amongst the 75 Commonwealth airmen who are at rest in a special plot within the cemetery. Elmer's aircraft was delivered to 103 Squadron, R.A.F. on 18 May 1943, and had also taken part in the major raid against Oberhausen on 14/15 June 1943. At the time of the aircraft's loss it had a total of 64 hours, and was one of two of the squadrons Lancasters that were lost on this operation. On various data and records accessed to help form this brief commemoration to Elmer, some have shown his surname as Amos. Elmer's name was not added to the Ashford civic war memorial until November 2005 being only one of only two later additions, the other being William Charles Sims of the Essex Regiment (please see Commemoration). As can be seen from these Ashford Rolls of Honour the Borough has a staggering number of its citizens who died in both World Wars that have no form of even basic commemoration. It is in fact amongst the worst towns in all the county in this respect, (Dover accepted) which is not a statistic of which Ashford, purporting to be both prosperous and progressive should be proud of. Hopefully in the not too distant future, all of those non-commemorated from both of the two world wars, irrespective of circumstance of demise will similarly be properly honoured and remembered by their inclusion on the town war memorial.

BIGNELL, JACK CYRIL ROBERT. Flight Sergeant, 1399771.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 77 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 14 February 1945.

Buried Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery, Germany.

Grave Ref: Collective grave 5. G. 10-15.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Jack was a crew member of Halifax bomber MZ803 KN-G, which was flown by 22 year old Flight Sergeant (Pilot), Alfred G. Simmons, of East Barnet, Hertfordshire. The aircraft took off at 1845 hours on 13 February 1945 from R.A.F. Full Sutton, Yorkshire, in a mixed bomber force of 368 aircraft of which 326 were Halifax's, in addition to which were 34 Lancasters, and 8 Mosquitos, all were engaged on a mission to Böhlen near Leipzig, Germany to bomb the Braunkohle-Benzin synthetic-oil plant. Due primarily to extremely dense cloud over the target area up to 15,00 feet combined with icing, and the Pathfinder Force aircraft unable to provide accurate marking, the following main force bombs were dropped over a large and scattered area. Jack's was the sole aircraft lost on the raid, the cause of loss and crash-site not established. All the seven crew perished and are interred in the same cemetery. Jack's Halifax was originally on the strength of No.102 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

BINGHAM, DORIS HILDA.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 15.

Daughter of David James and Hilda Bingham of Brisley Cottage, Chart Road, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent.

Doris was injured at the Ashford Underwear Factory, Birling Road, Ashford, Kent, and died later the same day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital. The company that Doris worked for was called Twixwol Underwear; the factory later became 'Energen' and was a major employer in Ashford for many years.

BIRT, ESTHER RUTH MARY.

Died 17 July 1940. Aged 33.

Daughter of Mr and Mrs B. T. Bourne of Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

Wife of R Birt of 63 New Town, Ashford, Kent.

Esther died at her home 63 New Town, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery, Ashford, Kent, but with Esther's surname spelt BURT.

BLAIR, ROBERT.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 51.

Husband of Daisey Elizabeth Blair of 37 Engineers Place, Gravel Walk, Ashford, Kent.

Robert died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

BLAKE, JACK SEYMOUR.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 33.

Husband of Mary Evelyn Blake of 12 Hampden Road, Ashford, Kent.

Jack was injured at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, and succumbed to his injuries later the same day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent.

BLAKE, J. No clear trace.

BROOKS, ROBERT WALTER EDWARD. Ordinary Seaman, P/JX 215518.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Fiji (58).

Died 23 May 1941. Aged 24.

Son of Ernest and Alice Brooks.

Husband of Nellie L Brooks of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial. Panel 50. Column 1.

Robert and those lost with H.M.S. Fiji are commemorated on a memorial plaque which is located inside Portsmouth Cathedral, Hampshire.

Built by John Brown Shipbuilding & Engineering Company Ltd., Clydebank, Scotland, H.M.S. Fiji, a Fiji class light cruiser was commissioned on 5 May 1940.

During the Battle of Crete 1941, Robert's ship, commanded by Captain Peveril B.R.W. William-Powlett, R.N. was in 'Force B' which was comprised of two cruisers and two destroyers, that were under Admiralty orders to carry out sweeps of the west coast of Greece from Cape Matapan to Sapienza, to try and intercept any seaborne enemy forces making for Crete. Throughout 21 May 1941 all the allied naval vessels were subjected to heavy enemy air attacks, with at least twenty six being recorded, and several suffered damage and loss. The following day the aerial attacks became even more intensive, with at least 67 being recorded. 'Force B' as with all other

similar naval formations suffered damage and loss, the light cruiser H.M.S. Gloucester commanded by Captain H.A. Rowley, D.S.O., R.N. was sunk in the Antikythera Channel, about 15 nautical miles west of Antikythera Island, Greece in position by German Ju-88 and Ju-87 bombers at approximately 1600 hours, and Robert's ship at about 1900 hours. H.M.S. Fiji, after having survived some 20 bombing attacks in four hours, was initially hit by a bomb from a single Messerschmitt Me 109 aircraft which flew out of the clouds in a shallow dive and scored a hit very close to the ships port side amidships, when she was approximately 45 nautical miles south-west of Crete. Although badly damaged, H.M.S. Fiji was still able to steam at a reduced speed until half an hour later, when another single enemy aircraft dropped three bombs which scored direct hits on Robert's stricken ship, and she had to be abandoned after developing a heavy list and sank within five hours with the loss of 17 officers and 224 ratings. Two Royal Navy destroyers H.M.S. Kandahar commanded by Commander W.G.A. Robson, D.S.O., R.N., and H.M.S. Kingston commanded by Commander P. Sommerville, D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N. picked up 533 survivors from Robert's ship, of which some later died of their injuries, and as such it would seem likely that Robert was sadly amongst their number. There is also the possibility that Robert died resulting from an injury from the time when his ship was put out of commission for six months following an attack on her by the German submarine U-32 on 1 September 1940, in view of the fact that Robert is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial, the former seems the most plausible. It seems right in this brief tribute to Robert too also briefly make mention of his ships 32 year old Padre, the Reverend Christopher Champain A.M. who gave his life by repeatedly diving into the sea to rescue sailors from certain death, he was an England Rugby player, and not surprisingly the only one of the team to be awarded the Albert Medal. Captain Peveril B.R.W. William-Powlett, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., R.N. (1898-1985) fortunately survived the sinking of H.M.S. Fiji and was the Governor of Southern Rhodesia from 1954 to 1959.

BROTHERS, JOHN AMEDEE. Trooper, 7957276.

Died 19 August 1943. Aged 20.

1st King's Dragoon Guards, Royal Armoured Corps.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Ranger John Brothers and Jeanne Adele Clemence Brothers of Ashford, Kent.

John attended Ashford Grammar School 1934-1939, where is commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance.

Buried Tripoli War Cemetery, Libya. Grave Ref: Grave 7. C. 3.

John died in an armoured car accident in Tripoli, Libya.

John's father had served as a Private in The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) and the Labour Corps during the Great War.

BROWN, DOUGLAS HENRY. Gunner, 14258735.

100 (The Gordon Highlanders), Light Anti-Aircraft/Anti-Tank Regiment, (T.A.)

Royal Artillery.

Died 14 June 1944. Aged 21.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Robert Thomas Brown and Lilian F Brown of Brabourne, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Imphal War Cemetery, Manipur State, India. Grave Ref: Grave 7. K. 1.

Douglas was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1934-1936.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

BROWN, FREDERICK.

Died 25 March 1943. Aged 14.

Son of Frederick and Ethel Brown of 11 Providence Place, Ashford, Kent.

Frederick was injured on 23 March 1943 at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, and died of his injuries two days later whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital.

BROWN, JOHN.

Died 23 March 1943. Aged 54

Resided 5 Marlowe Road, Ashford, Kent.

John died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

BROWN, I. No clear trace.

BURCHETT, WILLIAM HENRY GEORGE.

Died between 1 March 1943 and 31 March 1943. Aged 34.

Husband of Ida Burchett of 19A Bank Street, Ashford, Kent.

William died at Godington Road, Ashford, Kent. Although not unique it is quite unusual for a civilian, or an armed service casualty to be recorded with such a wide date span for a war death which occurred within the United Kingdom. Possibly Williams's demise was attributable to the air raid which damaged Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford on 24 March 1943.

BURKE, R.E. No Clear trace. Five casualties are commemorated by the CWGC, for of whom show home and family details, non of which is relevant to Ashford or indeed the county of Kent. The remaining casualty has been entered below, as he appears to be the best match. Caution is advised however regarding accuracy, should anybody at some future date carry out more detailed research into the war memorial or this casualty in particular - **BURKE, ROBERT EDWARD.** Sailor.

Merchant Navy, S.S. San Gerardo (London).

Died 31 March 1942. Aged 18.

Commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 92.

At 2222 hours on 31 March 1942, the unescorted 12915 ton steam tanker S.S. San Gerardo commanded by 44 year old Master Stanley Foley, was hit by two torpedoes fired from the German submarine U-71 and sank by the stern southeast of New York, U.S.A. The tankers master, 47 crew members, two D.E.M.S. gunners and one passenger were lost. Three crew members and three gunners were picked up by the British tanker Regent Panther and landed at Halifax, Nova Scotia. At the time of her loss the tanker built in 1922 by Palmers Shipbuilding & Iron Co Ltd, of Jarrow and Hebburn-on-Tyne, was owned by the Eagle Oil & Shipping Co Ltd, of London, and was laden with 17000 tons of fuel oil en-route from Curacao for Halifax. In command of the U-71 was 33 year old Kapitänleutnant, Walter Flachsenberg, who was promoted to Korvettenkapitän on 1 July 1942. A native of Mönchen-Gladbach, Germany, Walter Flachsenberg survived the Second World War and died on 3 November 1994, aged 86.

BUTLER, CHARLES RAYMOND. Rifleman, 11007743.
9th Battalion, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).
Died 6 August 1944. Aged 31.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Charles Wood Butler and Edith Elenor Butler of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Brouay War Cemetery, Calvados, France. Grave Ref: V. A. 3.
Originally enlisted in the Royal Artillery, (Coast Defence and Anti-Aircraft Branch).

BUTLER, JOHN ERNEST. Gunner, 1698062.
474 Battery, 76 Searchlight Regiment, Royal Artillery.
Died 14 November 1944. Aged 28.
Born Kent. Resided South West London.
Son of Henry Edgar and Selina Rose Butler of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Ashford (Willesborough) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section O. Grave 152.
Possibly John had been ill or injured for some time prior to his demise, because his unit was disbanded in September 1944, having been engaged in airfield defence as part of the 64 Anti-Aircraft Brigade since July 1940.

BUTTON, GEORGE THOMAS. Private, 6288041.
4th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).
Died at sea 17 June 1940. Aged 20.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of George and Dorothy Eve Button of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Escoublac-la-Baule War Cemetery, Loire-Atlantique, France.
Grave Ref: 1. E. 41.
Also commemorated in Christchurch church South Ashford.
Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).
George died during the loss of the H.M.T. Lancastria off St. Nazaire, France. The evacuation of the British and French troops from France in 1940 did not end with Dunkirk. British and French forces were still being rescued two weeks later when Britain's worst maritime disaster of the Second World War took place. On 17 June 1940 the 16,000 ton Cunard liner which was in use as a troopship, H.M.T. Lancastria lay 5 miles off St Nazaire, in the estuary of the River Loire, and was embarking troops, Royal Air Force personnel, and also civilian refugees, including women and children. All of whom were being evacuated from France, when the country was on the verge of collapse. The exact numbers onboard the ship will almost certainly never be known, but almost certainly exceeded 6000; some estimates have put the casualty number as high as 9000, but that figure is almost certainly wild speculation, The H.M.T. Lancastria was attacked and hit by bombs from German Junkers Ju 88 aircraft which were **probably** of KG 30, which caused her to roll over and sink within twenty minutes. Although it is not known for certain which Luftwaffe formation the bombers belong too, or even for certain exactly what type of aircraft they were, but the general consensus has been that they were Ju 88s. Aircraft of II./ KG 30 who exclusively flew Junkers Ju 88 aircraft, are known to have been attacking shipping in the estuary of the River Loire, at the time of the loss of H.M.T. Lancastria.

BYRNE, DONALD JOSEPH. A.R.P. Messenger.

Died 6 January 1941. Aged 16.

Son of Joseph O and Olive Rose Byrne of Tanganyika, British East Africa.

Resided at 39 Bentley Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Donald was injured on 16 September 1940 at Newtown, Ashford, Kent, and died of his injuries at Ashford Hospital on 6 January 1941. He was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1935-1940, where he is remembered as Donald James Byrne.

BYRNE, ROY MICHAEL. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1262672.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 429 (Royal Canadian Air Force) Squadron.

Died 24 March 1944. Aged 22.

Son of Michael and Ella Byrne of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Kiel War Cemetery, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. Grave Ref: 1. D. 18.

Roy was a crew member of Halifax bomber LW688 AL-J flown by 25 year old Pilot Officer, Edgar A. J. Giles, R.A.A.F. of Arncliffe, New South Wales, Australia, which took off at 1903 hours from R.A.F. Leeming, North Yorkshire on 24 March 1944 on a bombing mission to Berlin, in a mixed bomber force of 811 aircraft comprised of 577 Lancasters, 216 Halifaxes, and 18 Mosquitos. A powerful wind from the north carried the bombers south at every stage of the flight. Not only was this wind not forecast accurately, but it was so strong that the various methods available to warn crews of wind changes during the flight failed to detect the full strength of it. The bomber stream on the raid became very scattered, particularly on the homeward flight and radar-predicted flak batteries at many places were able to score successes. Part of the bomber force even strayed over the Ruhr defences on the return flight. It is believed that approximately 50 of the 72 aircraft lost on the raid were destroyed by flak; most of the remainder were victims of night fighters. Needless to say, the strong winds severely affected the marking with, unusually, markers being carried beyond the target and well out to the south-west of the city. At 2130 hours Roy's aircraft crashed about five miles south-south east of Kappelin, Grumbach, Germany between the two small villages of Sieseby and Thumbby, killing five of the seven crew, the two survivors were both captured and became prisoners of war, their five comrades all lie in the same cemetery. In Bomber Command lore the raid is recalled as "the night of the strong winds," it was also the last large scale attack by RAF bombers on Berlin during the Second World War, two other aircraft from 429 (RCAF) Squadron were also amongst the 72 aircraft lost on the raid, which was the last major R.A.F. raid on Berlin during the Second World War, although the city was subsequently bombed many more times by small forces of Mosquitos.

CANDLER, ALAN FRANCIS. Signaller, 6299850.

1st Air Formation Signals, Royal Corps of Signals.

Died 20 April 1943. Aged 20.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Ernest Francis and Nellie Candler of Ashford, Kent.

Attended Ashford Grammar School 1934-1939 where he is commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance, also commemorated on the Second World War General Post Office memorial plaque located in the Ashford Sorting Office, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Le Petit Lac Cemetery, Algeria. Grave Ref: Plot E. Row E. Grave 38.

Originally enlisted in The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), probably as a Territorial and had been employed by the General Post Office, based at Ashford prior to the Second World War. Possibly Alan served as a despatch rider (Don R) as his death was resultant of a motor cycle accident in Algeria, North Africa.

Addenda. A service was held in the Millennium Chapel of Peace at the National Memorial Arboretum on Sunday 9 May 2004, to complete the dedication of a crescent of nine copper beech trees planted as a tribute to all those who served as Air Formation Signallers. In the congregation were members of the Air Formation Signals Association, 19th Signal Regiment Association and serving members of the Royal Corps of Signals, representing 21st Signal Regiment and the Cyprus Communications Unit.

CANDLER, CECIL GEORGE R. Sergeant, 1264286.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 227 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 14 November 1942. Aged 30.

Son of Cecil George and Annie Eliza Cantler.

Husband of Doris Eileen Cantler of Ashford, Kent.

Cecil was a pupil at Ashford Grammar School 1923-1929 where he is commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance, and is also commemorated on the Malta Memorial. Panel 3. Column 2.

227 Squadron, Royal Air Force was reformed at R.A.F. Luqa, Malta, on 20 August 1942, when No. 235 Squadron equipped with Beaufighters was re-numbered No. 227. Cecil's squadron had long-range fighter role and was mainly employed on offensive sweeps and convoy escort duties in the Mediterranean and Aegean areas.

Brother of the next man commemorated.

CANDLER, PETER THORNE. Flight Lieutenant

(Wireless Operator/Air Gunner) 77270. (Mentioned in Despatches).

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 142 Squadron Royal Air Force.

Died 30 May 1942. Aged 26.

Son of Cecil George and Annie Eliza Candler of Ashford, Kent.

Peter Candler Way on the Little Burton Farm Estate, Kennington, Ashford is named in his honour, he is also commemorated in the Ashford Grammar School Book of Remembrance having been a pupil at the school between 1929 and 1933.

Buried Rheinberg War Cemetery, Kamp Lintfort, Nordrhein-Westfal, Germany.

Grave Ref: 6. C. 18.

Peter was a crew member of Wellington bomber Z1208 QT-S, which was flown by 24 year old Sergeant (Pilot), Noël A. Lowden, of Palmers Green, Middlesex, that took off from R.A.F. Grimsby, Lincolnshire at 2306 hours on 29 May 1942, to take part on the now famous 1000 bomber raid on Köln (Cologne), Germany. Although remembered and named in history as the "1000 Bomber Raid on Cologne," an even greater number of aircraft actually took part, totalling 1,047, with the 602 Wellington's that were engaged on the 30/31 May being the most prolific of the bombers, but of the 41 aircraft lost on the raid 29 were Wellington's. Crews that submitted reports claiming to have bombed the city numbered 898 at which time a staggering 1,455 tons of bombs were dropped, of which two-thirds were incendiaries resulting in about 2,500 separate fires, including 1,700 classified as serious. Nearly 13,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed and almost 500 citizens of the city of Cologne died, just over 5,000 were injured and 45,132 bombed out, although the exact fate of all on the ground is not fully known. Similarly to the city's populace fate

not being clear, the exact fate of Peter's aircraft is also still unclear; all five of the Wellington's crew are buried in the same cemetery.

CAPELING, WILLIAM KEITH. Sub-Lieutenant (A).

H.M.S. Saker, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Died 30 April 1944. Aged 20.

Son of William Frederick and Jessie Alice Capeling of Ashford, Kent.

William is commemorated in the Ashford Grammar School Book of Remembrance where he was a pupil between 1934 and 1939.

Buried Portsmouth Naval Cemetery, New Hampshire, U.S.A. Grave Ref: Lot 162.

At the time of William's demise, H.M.S. Saker was a Fleet Air Arm accounting base in Washington D.C., U.S.A., having been commissioned on 1 October 1941 and remained as such until 1948. William died in an aircraft accident which occurred at Bar Harbour, Maine, U.S.A.

CHAMBERLAIN, ADELINE.

Died 3 February 1943. Aged 39.

Daughter of the late G. and A. Clement of New Cross, London.

Wife of William James Chamberlain of 74 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent, who died in the same incident as did their young daughter Wendy who is commemorated below.

Adeline died at her home 74 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

CHAMBERLAIN, WENDY ANN.

Died 3 February 1943. Aged 3.

Daughter of William James and Adeline Chamberlain of 74 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent, who are commemorated above and below this brief commemoration.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

CHAMBERLAIN, WILLIAM JAMES.

Died 3 February 1943. Aged 34

Son of the late W and B Chamberlain of Sevenoaks, Kent.

Husband of Adeline Chamberlain.

William died at his home 74 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent, with his wife and daughter, (please see last two commemorations above).

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

CHAPMAN, DOUGLAS VERNON. Private, 6210065.

1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. (Duke of Cambridge's Own).

Died 1/2 October 1942. Aged 24.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Mr and Mrs C. Chapman.

Husband of D. V. Chapman of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford and on the Sai Wan Memorial, Hong Kong, China. Column 14.

Douglas died at sea, in number 2 hold aboard the "Lisbon Maru." The tragedy surrounding the sinking of the "Lisbon Maru" which claimed the lives of over 800 men has been very well documented in several countries, and all without exception record the stoic bravery of those who died. On 25 September 1942 prisoners of war who had been captured at the fall of Hong Kong nine months earlier by the Japanese

were moved from Shamshuipo prisoner of war camp and loaded aboard the 7,052 ton "Lisbon Maru." Two days later the ship, commanded by Captain Kyoda Shigaru set sail for Shanghai, shortly after 0700 hours on 1 October the American submarine "The Grouper" fired six torpedoes at the ship, one of which hit the vessel. For twenty six hours the stricken vessel lay motionless with all the prisoners of war still locked in the ships holds, even after the majority of the guards had been rescued by the "Toyukuni Maru." When an escape was eventually attempted by the men from number 2 hold they were machine gunned by the few Japanese who had not fled the stricken ship, but eventually the guards were disposed of. Of the 748 men who initially survived the sinking and later internment, many have subsequently made comments along the lines that they had owed their lives to the Chinese fishermen, who at great personal risk under fire, had plucked many from the sea. Douglas was amongst the 154 members of his regiment who perished on the ship, there is of course a very good chance that he did so when the men of his regiment broke out and attacked the guards, his regiments nickname "The Die Hards" being somewhat apt at the time he and his comrades died.

CHARD, PETER. Captain, 105888.

"C" Troop, No. 2 Battery, 1st Airlanding Light Regiment, Royal Artillery.

1st Airborne Division.

Died 9 October 1944. Aged 24.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Richard Harmer Chard and Mary Annie Rachel Chard of Ashford, Kent.

Attended Ashford Grammar School 1930-1938.

Buried Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery, Gelderland, Netherlands. Grave 24. A. 14.

Officer Commanding, "C" Troop, No. 2 Battery, 1st Airlanding Light Regiment, Royal Artillery. Peter died of wounds during the Western Europe Campaign resulting from "Operation Market Garden," and was Mentioned in Despatches for the action briefly described below. 1st Air Landing Light Regiment, Royal Artillery was in the second lift of aircraft which took off from R.A.F. Manston, Kent on Monday 18 September 1944, and had come under fire on reaching the landing zone near Arnhem, Holland, despite which they successfully evacuated the immediate area, at which time Peter and his Observation Party were attached to the H.Q. of the 4th Parachute Brigade. It was whilst making his way to Brigadier John Hackett's H.Q. after returning from No 2 Battery H.Q., Peter bravely tried to knock out a captured French Renault flame-thrower tank, near the Koude Herberg area of Oosterbeek with a PIAT that unfortunately misfired. Peter then ran round the back of the tank with the view to dropping grenades through the turret, but before able to do so he was hit by the tanks flame-thrower and set alight, he then ran back along the road pleading with somebody to shoot him and end his agony, but instead he was rolled in sand to extinguish the flames. Sadly Peter succumbed to his wounds three weeks later in the nearby Apeldoorn Hospital. The tank that Peter had single headedly attempted to knock out, was eventually put out of action by an anti-tank gun of the 1st (Airborne) Battalion, Border Regiment. Several commentators have made reference to the fact that being Mentioned in Despatches was the only form of recognition, or award at the time which could have been given to Peter posthumously, other than the Victoria Cross. Perhaps in the fullness of time Peter's gallantry might be also recognised if more local (Ashford) roads or places are named after the local fallen. Peter had served in the 122nd Officer Cadet Training Unit, prior being commissioned into the Royal Artillery on 9 December 1939, with regimental seniority from 4 November 1939, he

was promoted to Lieutenant on 4 May 1940, but as a Temporary Captain from 18 December 1940 to 13 May 1943. Commanding the 1st Airlanding Light Regiment, Royal Artillery, during "Operation Market Garden," was Lieutenant Colonel William F.K.T. (Sheriff) Thompson, M.B.E., who after the Second World War became the well respected military correspondent of the Daily Telegraph.

CHITTENDEN, EDWARD ANTHONY GEORGE. Boy 1st Class, C/JX166822.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Naiad (93).
Died 11 March 1942. Aged 17.

Son of Alfred and Lillian Chittenden of Brightside, Sheffield, Yorkshire.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 58. Column 2.

H.M.S. Naiad a 5,450 ton Dido class light cruiser commanded by Captain G Grantham R.N. was torpedoed and sunk between Mersa Matruh and Sollum at 2001 hours by the German submarine U-565, commanded by 23 year old Kapitänleutnant Johann Jebsen. Edward's ship and other vessels were returning to Alexandria, Egypt after a search for an Axis convoy heading for Libya. Although 82 perished, 582 survived the sinking mainly due to the intervention of an American ship. At the time of the sinking H.M.S. Naiad had been the Flagship of Philip Vian, who later became an Admiral of the Fleet Sir Philip Vian G.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O. (1894-1968). Johann Jebsen and his crew had left La Spezia, Italy on 21 January 1942, to undertake an eight week patrol; H.M.S. Naiad was the only ship that the U-565 sunk on the patrol, prior to returning to La Spezia on 17 March 1942. Johann Jebsen, a native of Pellworm, died on 23 September 1944, in the Indian Ocean, off Penang, Strait of Malacca whilst in command of the U-859, which was sunk by the Royal Navy submarine H.M.S. Trenchant (P331).

CLARK, GORDON. Sergeant, 1800014.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 293 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 24 September 1944. Aged 20.

Son of Mr and Mrs A E Clark of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Malta Memorial. Panel 14. Column 2.

At the time of Gordon's demise his squadron were based at Pomigliano, Italy, equipped with Walrus amphibian aircraft engaged in air/sea rescue operations along the coast of Italy.

CLARKE, REGINALD JAMES. Marine, CH/X114216.

No. 45 Commando, Royal Marines.

Died 4 April 1945. Aged 20.

Son of Jack and Monica Mercy Clarke of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch church South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 62. C. 16.

COBB, SUSAN JANE.

Died 3 February 1943. Aged 66.

Widow of Alfred George Cobb.

Resided at 5 St. John's Lane, Ashford, Kent.

COE, CHARLES WILLIAM CYRIL. Seaman, C/J 109653.

Royal Navy. H.M.S. Achates.

Died at sea 31 December 1942. Aged 34.

Son of Harriet Coe.

Husband of Kathleen Coe of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, and on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Column 53. Row 2.

Charles was amongst the 113 lost from the crew of 194, his ship which was an "A" class destroyer was lost in the Barents Sea after receiving several direct hits from the German heavy cruiser "Admiral Hipper," whilst laying down a smoke screen to help protect the convoy that H.M.S. Achates was escorting.

COLEMAN, FREDERICK THOMAS WALTER. Lance Corporal, 6288418.

4th Battalion. The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died between 13 and 16 November 1943. Aged 25.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Robert and Emma Jane Coleman of 24 Kennington Road, Willesborough Lees, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Leros War Cemetery, Greece. Grave Ref: 3. A. 5.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Frederick was a pupil at the Ashford, Kent North County Modern (Boys) School 1929-1932. For most of the Second World War, his service had been overseas prior to his death, having served in France 1939-1940, followed by Malta 1940-1943. Later in 1943, Frederick fought and died during the disastrous Dodecanese Expedition on Crete, having left Alexandria, Egypt aboard H.M.S. Petard on 22 October 1943, and no doubt helping in the rescue of some of his comrades, when H.M.S. Eclipse was sunk after hitting a mine. Having arrived safely at Leros, the battalion and everybody else on the island were subjected to a massive increase in enemy air offensives which became heavier from 13 November with enemy sorties then averaging about eighty a day, causing havoc with the infrastructure and a high casualty rate amongst the defenders including to Frederick's battalion. It is likely that Frederick lost his life resultant of the enemy air attacks.

COLLINS, DAVID WILLIAM. Private, 6288233.

5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died 21 May 1940. Aged 24.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of William and Nellie Collins.

Husband of Elsie I Collins of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent, and on the Dunkirk Memorial, Nord, France. Column 38.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

CORKE, CLEMENT.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 43.

Husband of Hilda Corke of 18 Church Road Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Clement, who was as a member of the Home Guard died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

COURT, ELEANOR BARBARA. Firewatcher.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 30.

Resided at 'Woodlands', Bilsington, Ashford, Kent.

Daughter of Barbara Elizabeth West of Church Lane, Brenzett, Romney Marsh, Kent.

Died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

CRAWFORD, WALTER THOMAS. Private, 6288040.

'A' Company, 4th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died 23/24 October 1943. Aged 24.

Born and resided Portsmouth, Hampshire.

Commemorated on the Athens Memorial, Greece. Face 5.

Walter is also commemorated on the Wye, Ashford, Kent Second World War village memorial plaque located in the porch of the parish church of St. Gregory & St. Martin. Walter and his comrades had been granted leave in Alexandria, Egypt, but spent most of their six weeks in North Africa in a transit camp at Sidi Bishr, from where they were earmarked to join the 8th Indian Division. Before that could take place, however, on 23 October 1943, his battalion was rushed to the docks at Alexandria and boarded two destroyers, H.M.S. Eclipse and H.M.S. Petard (of Enigma machine fame) which set off at high speed for an unknown, destination (as usual), to the troops. The battalion was in fact on its way to Leros, it being the last infantry battalion to be sent to bolster the island's defences, with the neighbouring island of Kos having already fallen to the Germans. H.M.S. Eclipse (Pennant HO8) was a 1405 ton E class destroyer, commanded by Lieutenant Commander E Mack D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N. which struck two mines off the Bay of Kalymnos during the ill fated Leros Expedition. At the time of her loss the destroyer was carrying 'A' company and part of the HQ company, of the 4th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), when she detonated a mine under her forward boiler room, setting the fuel tanks ablaze. She immediately took on a heavy list and broke in two, spilling burning fuel into the sea, and sunk within three minutes. 115 members of Walter's battalion died when she went down, as did 135 of the ships crew of 145. It is not clearly remembered in what year Walter had left the Ashford, Kent North County Modern (Boys) School having enrolled in 1933, at which time he resided at Brook Cottages, Coldharbour, Wye, Ashford, Kent. Fortunately however what is clearly recalled is that whilst serving on the island of Malta during the time of the siege, Walter had saved a boy from drowning by diving into the sea and dragging him to safety. Prior to serving on Malta from 1940 to 1943, Walter had been a member of the British Expeditionary Force, and had arrived at Cherbourg, France on 18 November 1939 with his battalion. Pre war Territorial member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

CHRISTIAN, MARY ANN.

Died 12 December 1940. Aged 81.

Widow of Richard Henry Christian.

Mary died at her home 10 Park Street, Ashford, Kent.

Richard Henry Christian, Mary's late husband had probably served as a Corporal in the Army Ordnance Corps during the Great War.

CRITTENDEN, JAMES ALFRED. Leading Stoker, CK/X80025.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Orion.

Died 29 May 1941.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 47. Column 1.

James ship was a Leander class light cruiser which at the time of his death undertook a costly but significant role in the evacuation of Crete which resulted in the loss of lives of 112 of the ships company, in addition to 150 of the soldiers onboard her. H.M.S. Orion was hit several times by shells, but most deaths were attributed to Stuka dive bombers. In addition to those lost about another 300 men were also wounded. Despite playing a significant but costly part in the above evacuations, arguably the ships main claim was reputedly to have fired the first shot in the D-Day landings on 6 June 1944, by accident.

CRITTENDEN, SAMUEL.

Died Thursday 21 October 1943. Aged 42.

Resided at Chandlers Farm, Chilham, Kent, where Samuel was injured, and died later the same day whilst a patient at Willesborough Hospital, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Chilham, Kent civic war memorial.

CROUCH, EILEEN GRACE.

Died 26 July 1944. Aged 21.

Resided at 36 Park Road, Ashford, Kent.

Daughter of the late Mr and Mrs Thomas Albert Crouch.

Eileen was a Hospital Nurse, and died at the Lewisham Hospital, South East London. At about 0500 hours, Eileen was washing tea cups prior to going on the wards, her friend and colleague Kathleen asked her if she needed help with the washing, to which she replied "no thank you." As Eileen spoke to Kathleen a flying bomb hit the hospital killing Eileen instantly, and injuring seventy members of staff and patients. The 'Doodlebug' also demolished Wards D and E, the Registrars office and the hospital library. In 1977 a memorial plaque was erected in the Lewisham shopping centre to commemorate all those who died resulting from the devastation of enemy actions on the Borough during 1944. On Thursday 17 November 2005 a memorial and thanksgiving service was held at Lewisham Hospital, to remember the contribution made by the hospital staff in both world wars. It was also used as an opportunity to reflect on and commemorate Eileen, and three of the patients who sadly later died of their injuries. Amongst the invited guests and local dignitaries was Mrs Kathleen Hallett from Essex, who was the Nurse that had asked if Eileen had needed help, and was of course the very last person to speak to her or see her alive. Poignantly and tellingly, Mrs Hallett reflected at the service that "Eileen died and I have had a further 61 years of life."

CROUCH, ROBERT HENRY. Private, 6347194.

7th Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

Died 21 May 1940. Aged 21.

Born and resided Kent.

Commemorated in Ashford Grammar School Book of Remembrance where Robert had been a pupil between 1930 and 1935.

Buried Ville-Sur-Ancre Communal Cemetery, Somme, France.

Grave Ref: Row A. Collective grave 1-4.

Only four casualties of the Second World War are interred in the small cemetery all of whom are buried in the same collective grave, sadly one of whom is unidentified, the other three including Robert all belonged to the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. Robert's battalion had fought in and around the town of Albert on the Somme on the day he died. Albert of course being mainly more remembered for the events in and around the town during the Great War, but the Brigade to which Robert's battalion belonged had losses that equated to those of the earlier years of conflict. Almost 1,000 men of the 6th and 7th Battalions of Robert's regiment were killed or captured in the fighting at Albert and Doullens, including both the respective battalion's Commanding Officers.

CRUST, HILLYAR ROBERT. Flight Sergeant, 1253122.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.160 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 26 October 1943. Aged 21.

Son of Thomas and Isabel Crust of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Singapore Memorial. Column 425.

Hillyar had been amongst the crew of eight aboard a Liberator IIIA, FL926 "J," which took off from its Ceylon airbase at 0544 hours on 26 October 1943, engaged on a long range photographic reconnaissance flight over Car, Nicobar Islands. Estimated Time over the assigned area was set at about 1100 hours, only nine minutes after the E.T. the aircraft's call sign transmission was picked up, from which it was deduced that the Liberator's position was 'spot on' over the right area of Nicobar Island. Despite a series of repeated attempts to contact the aircraft, the initial transmission was the only contact that was made. With the loss of Hillyar's aircraft it was then accepted that there was probably a Japanese fighter aircraft presence in the area, as 160 Squadron, Royal Air Force had lost another aircraft in the same area only three days previously. Later investigations revealed that there were Japanese fighter formations in the area where the Liberators had been lost, including aircraft which were based at Car aerodrome. Hillyar was initially posted as missing in action after taking part in an action off the Nicobar Islands, but later was accepted as died. Between 1932 and 1938 Hillyar had been a pupil at Ashford Grammar School where he is commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance.

CUTHBERT, ALFRED WILLIAM ERNEST. Leading Seaman, C/JX 157097.

Royal Navy, H.M. Submarine Sickie.

Died 18 June 1944.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 76. Column 3.

Alfred's submarine left to patrol the Northern Aegean on 31 May 1944, during the patrol she was known to have fired on enemy shipping in Mitylene Harbour, Lesbos, Greece, at which time she had been engaged by a pair of patrol vessels. On 12 June H.M.S/M. Sickie signalled to report that she had spotted a convoy in the Steno Pass and was later known to have been subjected to a depth charge attack, during which she was thought to have escaped damage. On 14 June, Alfred's submarine was ordered to return from her patrol but was not heard of again. Although the cause for the submarine's loss is still 'officially' not known, she is believed to have struck a mine in the Kythera Channel on Sunday 18 June 1944. H.M.S/M. Sickie was built by Cammell Laird of Birkenhead, and commissioned on 17 August 1942, she had a complement of 48. 26 year old Lieutenant James Ralph Drummond, D.S.O., D.S.C., of Stornoway, Isle of Lewis was in command of H.M.S/M. Sickie when she was lost, as he had been on 11 January 1943 during the submarine's 1st Patrol off north Norway,

whilst covering convoy JW52. In April 1943 she arrived at Gibraltar, and on 18 April 1943 started her 2nd Patrol, during which H.M.S/M. Sickle attacked the Italian ship 'Mauro Croce' north of Valencia, Spain. On 15 May 1943 the submarine torpedoed and sunk the tanker 'Heroux,' in addition to the torpedo which hit the ship, another exploded against the cliff below the Casino at Monte Carlo. An enemy U-boat on exercise off the coast of on Toulon was seen on 19 May 1943 but was unable to attack. On 21 May 1943 Alfred's submarine sunk the German submarine U-303 which was southbound from Toulon. Commanded by 28 year old Kapitänleutnant, Karl-Franz Heine the U-303 had 20 dead and 28 survivors as the result of her loss, Karl-Franz Heine being amongst the latter, he lost his life in the Atlantic on 18 August 1943 whilst in command of the U-403 which was lost with all 49 hands. On 18 July 1943 H.M.S/M. Sickle sunk the 100 ton Italian tug A.P.M. Constante Neri, and the following day boarded the schooner Angiola Marie C off La Spezia whose crew had abandoned ship after spotting the submarines periscope. After removing various valuable items from the vessel, she was then sunk with charges. On 21 July 1943 the submarine damaged an Italian A.M.C. and destroyer escort off Elbe. After a lull in her activities, the 3150 ship Giovanni Boccacio was sunk on 19 November 1943 by Alfred's submarine. An attack on Mitylene Harbour, Lesbos was undertaken on 4 June 1944 by the submarine, which was counter-attacked by two enemy patrol craft. A member of the crew of H.M.S/M. Sickle, Able Bodied Seaman Blake was lost overboard, but fortunately was later rescued by the enemy and taken prisoner. Unfortunately Able Seaman, D/JX 304833, David J. Mackay was injured and taken below, but later died of his injuries. The German M.V. 'Reamur' was sunk on 6 June 1944, in the Doro Channel, Greece, between the islands of Euboea and Andros, with two torpedoes fired from H.M.S/M. Sickle.

DAY, PETER JOHN. Flying Officer (Navigator),
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 15 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 9 February 1945. Aged 21.

Son of John H Day and Marion Day of Sidcup, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent, and in the Book of Remembrance at Ashford Grammar School where Peter had been a pupil between 1934 and 1937.

Buried Brussels Town Cemetery, Belgium. Grave Ref: Grave X. 28. 17.

Peter was one of the (enlarged) crew of nine which had included two pilots and three air gunners, aboard Lancaster bomber HK620 LS-W, which was flown by 22 year old Flight Lieutenant (Pilot), James H. Cowie, of New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada, that took off from R.A.F. Mildenhall, Suffolk at 0313 hours on the morning of the 9 February 1945. The aircraft was in a bomber force comprised of 151 Lancaster's of Number 3 Group, and Peter's aircraft was on a mission to bomb Krefeld near Düsseldorf, Germany, with the primarily objective being to attack the Hohenbudberg railway yards. Following the raid, photographic reconnaissance showed no obvious extra damage had been caused during the Lancaster's bombing which had resulted in the loss of two aircraft, the other Lancaster being of 186 Squadron, R.A.F. Despite making the usual lines of enquiry, the exact fate of Peter's aircraft is still unclear, but all nine onboard the aircraft died, 23 year old Sergeant Alan T Dobson from Southall, Middlesex is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, but the other eight crew who died are all interred in the same cemetery as Peter. Peter's Lancaster had been on his squadron's strength since being delivered

new from the manufactures on 31 August 1944, during which time had taken part in several major bombing raids.

DIMON, DONALD WILLIAM. Aircraftman 1st Class, 1285998.

Royal Airforce Volunteer Reserve. 243 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 14 February 1942. Aged 21.

Son of Arthur Vivian Dimon and Dorothy Eva Dimon (née Briggs) of Ashford, Kent.

Born 5 William Road, Ashford, Kent, 2 October 1921.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, and on the Singapore Memorial. Column 417.

Donald died the day before the fall and surrender of Singapore, his squadron had been temporarily disbanded on 20 January 1942 after their Buffalo aircraft had been decimated by the superior machines flown by the Japanese. Donald's father was a native of the nearby village of Aldington, and was born on 24 September 1879 where the Dimon family had resided for many generations.

DIXON, JAMES BERNARD. Lance Sergeant, 6290364.

5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died 28 November 1942. Aged 26.

Born Sunderland. Resided Kent.

Son of James E and Bertha Maud Dixon of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, and on the Medjez-el-Bab Memorial, Tunisia. Face 15.

DOWLE, PERCY GEORGE. Stoker 2nd Class, C/KX2238.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Neptune.

Died 19 December 1941. Aged 26.

Son of Charles James and Hilda May Dowle.

Husband of Nancy May Dowle of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 48. Column 1.

Percy was a victim of the tragic maritime disaster that occurred off Tripoli, Libya when his cruiser and several other ships went into an uncharted minefield which resulted in the loss of 764 of the crew. Only Able Seaman John Norman Walton eventually survived the sinking of H.M.S. Neptune, after which he then spent five days adrift in the Mediterranean, before being rescued by an Italian torpedo boat of the Regina Marina on Christmas Eve. Following his rescue he then spent eighteen months as a prisoner of war in Italy. Percy served onboard with George Mabb who is also commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial. At the time of the loss of H.M.S. Neptune there was considerable effort concentrated on disrupting enemy supply lines from Italy to North Africa. In the months leading up to December 1941, approximately three quarters of ships sailing from Italy to Tripoli, Libya, were sunk. H.M.S. Neptune joined Admiral Cunningham's Malta based 'Force K.' On 17 December 1941 every available ship was deployed in an effort to ensure that the oiler H.M.S. Breconshire arrived safely at Malta. The threat came not only from enemy aircraft but also from two Italian battleships of the Regina Marina, whose presence was a clear indication of the Italians impending intention to sail a convoy to Tripoli, and 'Force K' sailed on 18 December 1941 in an attempt to intercept it. It was blowing hard from the south-west with a heavy sea running, at 0100 hours when the ships of 'Force K' were approximately twenty miles from Tripoli, when H.M.S. Neptune triggered a mine with one of her paravanes. Directly behind her, H.M.S.

Aurora also triggered a mine. Whilst going full astern, H.M.S. Neptune triggered two more mines that damaged her propellers and steering gear. 'Force K' was in a deep-water minefield. During the following three hours there were many attempts to assist both H.M.S. Neptune and the destroyer H.M.S. Kandahar, which was also badly damaged. However H.M.S. Neptune struck another mine at 0400 hours and quickly sank within a few minutes. Just sixteen men survived the ordeal and managed to climb aboard a raft, but during the next five days they died one after another, and only John Norman Walton survived.

DRAKE, ALBERT HENRY WILLIAM. Supply Assistant, C/MX56335.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Phoebe.

Died 26 August 1942. Aged 23.

Son of William Francis and Elizabeth Frances Drake of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on the H.M.S. Phoebe Association Memorial, Bournemouth, Dorset, which was erected in 2003, and in the Book of Remembrance at Ashford Grammar School where Albert had been a pupil between 1930 and 1937, also commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 64. Column 1.

Albert was last seen alive on deck aboard the 5450 ton Dido class cruiser just before midnight on 26 August 1942, but could not be located the next morning, despite an extensive search having been made for him sadly he was never found. Initially posted as 'Missing at Sea,' but later accepted that Albert had died 26 August 1942. Prior to joining H.M.S. Phoebe on 13 May 1942, Albert had served aboard H.M.S. St. Mary's and H.M.S. Holdeness.

DRAY, WILLIAM EDWARD PERCY.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 56.

Resided at 52 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent.

William died whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

DRURY, HENRY GEORGE FINLAY.

Died 17 September 1940. Aged 54.

Resided at 193 New Town, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Mabel Annie Drury.

Injured 16 September 1940, Henry succumbed to his injuries the following day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

DUNCAN, R. As commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, is probably the following civilian casualty:-

DUNCAN, RAYMOND GEORGE.

Died 22 April 1943. Aged 36.

Husband of Margaret Duncan of 44, Station Approach Road, Ramsgate, Isle of Thanet, Kent.

Raymond was injured on 23 March 1943, at the Southern Railway Works, and died whilst a patient at the County Hospital, Farnborough, Kent. Almost certainly the place of injury above is indicative of being the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent, but unfortunately Raymond's CWGC commemoration does not show same.

EARLE, FREDERICK JOSEPH. Sergeant (Air Gunner), 1332585.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 75 (New Zealand) Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 21 April 1943. Aged 22.

Son of Frederick Earle, and the stepson of Edith A Earle of Guildford, Surrey.

Buried Esbjerg (Fourfelt) Cemetery, Denmark.

Grave Ref: Collective grave A. 11. 11-14.

Frederick was a crew member of Stirling bomber BF506 AA-P, that was flown by 21 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Alan G. Tolley, of Wellington City, New Zealand, which took off at 2205 hours on 20 April 1943 from R.A.F. Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, as part of a mixed bomber force of 425 aircraft on a bombing mission to the Baltic ports of Rostock and Stettin on the Oder. Also airborne at the same time was a small diversionary force of 11 Mosquito's to carry out the first ever high level nuisance attack on Berlin undertaken by Mosquito's, they were employed as a diversion for the main force of heavy bombers which had been assigned to attack Rostock and Stettin. Frederick's aircraft was one of 86 Stirling's that were dispatched to attack the Heinkel factory near Rostock, due to an intense smoke screen hiding the factory the bombing pattern was very scattered and with very little physical damage to the designated target inflicted. At 0300 hours on 21 April 1943 Flight Sergeant Cyril Cobb the Wireless Operator (and Air Gunner) transmitted a signal reporting that the aircrafts starboard inner engine was on fire which was the last communication sent. Twenty six minutes after the transmission being sent, the Stirling crashed at Boegballe north of Vejle, Denmark, killing all seven crew and was later reported as having been shot down by an enemy night-fighter. Although unable to find out for certain, but after checking through various relevant data it would seem likely that the Stirling was shot down by Luftwaffe 'ace' night-fighter pilot, Gunter "Fips" Radusch of 11./NJG 3., who by the end of the hostilities had 65 victories credited to him, he survived the war and died 29 July 1988. The Stirling's crew which had included four New Zealanders, are all interred in the same cemetery. In the next grave to Frederick is fellow crew member Gerald 'Jerry' Town, who was a school friend during the time when Frederick attended the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School from 1932 to 1936, at which time the Earle family resided at 14 Gladstone Road, Willesborough, Ashford. Frederick and Gerald had both enlisted in the RAF (VR) in 1941, Gerald is also commemorated on Ashford civic war memorial and has a tribute to him on this Roll of Honour.

EARLL, WILLIAM FRANKLYN SIDNEY.

Died Thursday 26 September 1940. Aged 30.

Resided at 24 Upper Denmark Road, Ashford, Kent.

Son of W B and C S A Earll of Denwood Farm, Crundale, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Vera Earll.

William was killed at the Co-operative Wholesale Society (C.W.S). yard, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

EPPS, SIDNEY CHARLES. Gunner, 899458.

52 (Manchester) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery. (Territorial Army).

Died 9 June 1940. Aged 24.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Sydney Charles and Lilly Annie Epps of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent

Buried Viroflay New Communal Cemetery, Yvelines, France.

Grave Ref: Row B. Grave 3.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

Commemorated by the CWGC as being a member of the 52 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery. Sidney is named on the Roll of Honour of the 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, at some time in his war service Sidney had probably served in both units resulting in the conflicting entries. As the 386 Battery, 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, (Territorial Army) was based at the Drill Hall, Newtown, Ashford, Kent, it would seem likely that Sidney had been a pre war member of the battery.

FINN, JOHN HUBERT. Private, 6288440.

Corps of Military Police.

Died United Kingdom 21 May 1944. Aged 25.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of John Hubert Frederick Finn and Florence Wilmot Finn of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Willesborough) Cemetery, Kent. Grave Ref: Section T. Grave 2189.

Originally enlisted pre war in The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

FLINT, GEORGE ALBERT. Rifleman, 4826508.

12th (2nd Battalion, The Queen's Westminster's) Battalion.

King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Died 19 January 1943.

Commemorated on the Brookwood Memorial. Panel 13. Column 2.

Originally enlisted in the Lincolnshire Regiment.

FOREMAN, N.C. No trace.

FOX, FREDERICK HERBERT.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 59.

Son of Richard and Alice Fox of 22 Mead Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Maude Annie Fox of 66 Cudworth Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Frederick died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

FRIAR, NORMAN WALTER. Leading Seaman (Radar), P/JX 307147.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Penelope.

Died at sea 18 February 1944. Aged 21.

Son of Frederick John and Patience Mary Friar of 53 Hunter Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial. Panel 81. Column 2.

Norman and 416 other members of the 5220 ton Arethusia class light cruisers crew perished when his ship sunk immediately after being struck by two torpedoes from the German submarine U-410 commanded by the U-boat 'ace' Oberleutnant zur See, Horst-Arno Fenski off Anzio, Italy. The first torpedo struck H.M.S. Penelope in the after engine room and was followed, 16 seconds later, by a second one which hit in the after boiler room, causing her immediate sinking.. The remarkable point of the attack by the U-410 is that the cruiser was making 26 knots when she was hit. As far as can be ascertained, this is a unique case in the history of submarine attacks in all of

the Second World War, no other vessel running at such high speed was ever successfully attacked. 415 of the crew of H.M.S. Penelope, including the captain went down with the ship, and there were 206 survivors. Commanding H.M.S. Penelope at the time of her loss was 46 year old Captain George D. Belben, D.S.O., D.S.C., A.M., (Twice Mentioned in Despatches) of Verwood, Dorsetshire. Norman was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School from 1933 to 1936, and had enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1941. Norman had previously served aboard the corvette H.M.S. Kingcup on convoy escort duties, and had been onboard the ship during the bombardments of North Africa, Sicily, Pantellaria and Italy. Norman had been originally posted as missing following the sinking of H.M.S. Penelope. The submarine commander Horst-Arno Fenski survived the Second World War, a native of Königsberg, East Prussia he was only 46 years old when he died in Hamburg, Germany on 10 February 1965.

FULLER, RAYMOND CHARLES EDWARD. Private, 14218221.

1/6th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment.

Died 23 April 1944. Aged 20.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of C A and Lillian B Fuller of Ashford, Kent.

Raymond Fuller Way, on the Little Burton Estate, Kennington, Ashford, Kent is named in Raymond's honour and remembrance, he is also commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance at Ashford Grammar School, where he had been a pupil between 1935 and 1940.

Buried Cassino War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: VIII. G. 12.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

GARNER, WILLIAM JOHN. Lieutenant, 276439.

1st Battalion, The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey).

Died 24 May 1945. Aged 21.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of William Percival and Florence Ellen Garner of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated in the Book of Remembrance at Ashford Grammar School where William had been a pupil between 1934 and 1941.

Buried Rangoon War Cemetery, Myanmar. Grave Ref: 1. C. 18.

GATES, TONY ALAN. Fusilier, 14689168.

6th Battalion, Royal Scots Fusiliers.

Died 11 February 1945. Aged 19.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Ernest William and Caroline Ann Gates of 80 Albemarle Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Tony had been a pupil of the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School from 1936 to 1939.

Buried Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 58. J. 9.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps, and had also served in The Buffs(Royal East Kent Regiment), the East Surrey Regiment and also the Green Howards. Tony served in the United Kingdom 1943-1944, prior to taking part in the D-Day Landings on 6 June 1944, after which he fought in other actions in Normandy and other parts of France, later being in action throughout the North West Europe

Campaign in Belgium and Holland. Tony was moved to the cemetery where he now lies following the cessation of hostilities, as the other two soldiers from his battalion who were killed on the same day are at rest in Jonkerbos War Cemetery, Gelderland, Netherlands, near to where they fell. They being Private John Baker from Middlesbrough and Corporal John McInnis from Aberdeen. Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, was created after the Second World War when burials were brought in from all over western Germany and is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the country.

GILHAM, ERNEST THOMAS. Private, 14559722.

1st Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

Died Italy 28 July 1944.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Thomas Richard D and Lillian Fanny Gilham.

Husband of Rose Man Gilham of Gillingham, Kent.

Buried Florence War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: VI. D. 10.

Ernest had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School from 1929 to 1930.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

Ernest was amongst the 32 men of his battalion who were killed outright or died of wounds during its assault on Monte Sclari south east of Florence, Italy and probably lost his life at point 770. Having been initially carried forward on tanks to point 706 the terrain then became far too steep for tanks, soon after starting to climb on foot Ernest and his comrades were subjected to intense machine gun and mortar fire from well prepared enemy positions, despite their mounting casualties which had also included 79 men wounded, the forward platoons of the battalion got within 400 yards of the mountains summit.

GLOVER, CHARLES HARRISON. Able Seaman, C/219042.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Daedalus.

Died 10 November 1939. Aged 53.

Son of James and Sarah Glover of Ashford.

Husband of Hilda Glover of Ashford.

Buried Ashford Cemetery. Grave Ref: 1206.

H.M.S. Daedalus, at Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire, was the Head Quarters of the Fleet Air Arm during the Second World War, the base having been taken over from the Royal Air Force on 24 May 1939.

GODFREY, FRANK VICTOR CYRIL. Private, 6286959.

5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died 1 July 1940. Aged 19.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Frederick and Rachel Godfrey of Ashford.

Also commemorated in (Christchurch) church South Ashford.

Frank was captured during the France & Belgium Campaign and died a few months later whilst a prisoner of war.

Buried Malbork Commonwealth War Cemetery, Poland. Grave Ref: 1. B. 4.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

The Second World War burials at Malbork are mostly of men who died while prisoners of war in the nearby camps. Stalag XXB was a camp of some size at

Malbork itself, Stalag 1A was situated at Stablack, between Malbork and Gdansk, Stalag 2A at Starogard, a few kilometres south of Stablack, and Stalag XXA, at Torun (Thorn), about 120 kilometres south of Malbork. When hostilities had ceased, the graves service of the British Army of the Rhine moved the graves from the local burial grounds to this war cemetery, together with other Commonwealth graves in outlying places in the area where their permanent maintenance could not be assured.

GOWER, LEONARD FRANK (Len). Chief Petty Officer Cook, C/MX46136.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Curacoa.

Died Friday 2 October 1942. Aged 35.

Son of Violet Una Frances Gower of South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Grandson of Mr L. Gower of South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Kilmory Old Churchyard, Arisaig and Moidart, Invenesshire, Scotland.

Grave Ref: Grave 6.

Len was amongst the 338 lost when the liner Queen Mary sliced through the 4,200 ton 'Ceres' class light cruiser amidships, when the Queen Mary was carrying 10,000 American 29th Division troops off Donegal, Ireland heading for the Clyde, to train in the United Kingdom in preparation for D-Day. While both ships were zigzagging, H.M.S. Curacoa commanded by Captain J. W. Boutwood, D.S.O., R.N, crossed the Queen Mary's bow with insufficient clearance. The Queen Mary sliced into her at a speed of 28 knots, cutting the light cruiser in two. Separated by about 100 yards, she sank instantly. Despite the impact of the collision, the Queen Mary did not falter or slow down for fear of German submarines, despite the fact that she had a 40 foot gash in her bow. Captain Cyril of the Queen Mary was under strict orders to not stop for any reason, but his crew and the American soldiers threw lifebelts to the men in the water, which undoubtedly saved many lives, as 102 were picked up by several other vessels which were escorting the Queen Mary. Amongst those who survived the tragedy was the commander of H.M.S. Curacoa. The ship was launched on 5 May 1917, and commissioned on 18 February 1918, she was rearmed as an Anti-Aircraft cruiser from August 1939 until April 1940.

GOWER, VERNON JAMES. Engine Room Artificer 4th Class, C/MX59333.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Kipling (F91).

Died at sea 11 May 1942. Aged 22.

Son of William Louis Punyer Gower and Hetty Louisa Carew Gower of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 60. Column 2.

H.M.S. Kipling was a "K" class destroyer, which at the time of her loss was commanded by Lieutenant Commander Sir A St Clair-Ford D.S.O., R.N., was bombed by a German JU 88 and sank off Mersa Matruh in the Eastern Mediterranean. For an excellent source of detailed information appertaining to Vernon's ship, please see the dedicated website www.kipling.org.uk by Michael Smith.

GRAY, SARAH MARIA.

Died 22 December 1942. Aged 65

Resided at "Ballalona," Carlisle Road, Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire, Scotland.

Widow of Charles Edward Gray.

Sarah died at 4 Fleet Villas, Grosvenor Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery, and on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial

HADLUM, JOSEPH FRANCIS. Private, 14716122.

7th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment.

Died 25 September 1944. Aged 18.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Francis and Ada Mary Hadlum of 3 Marlow Road, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery Gelderland, Netherlands.

Grave Ref: 9. A. 8.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps on 7 February 1944, and had served overseas for exactly one month prior to his demise. Joseph was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern Boys School 1936-1939. Buried in the grave next to Percy Stover from Ashford, Kent, who also served in the same regiment in a different battalion, and who was also a former pupil of the school. Joseph died in the Western Europe Campaign during "Operation Market Garden."

HALL, DOUGLAS ROBERT WILLIAM. Sergeant (Air Gunner), 1895735.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 9 March 1944. Aged 29.

Son of Robert William and Annie Moore Hall.

Husband of Alice Annie Hall of South Ashford.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 68. Grave 42.

HALL, ELIAS. Private, 2819332.

2nd Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders.

Died 16 December 1940. Aged 27.

Born and resided Durham City, County Durham.

Son of Elias and Margaret Ann Hall.

Husband of Clara Hall of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Malbork Commonwealth War Cemetery, Poland. Grave Ref: L. A. 1.

Pre war member of the Seaforth Highlanders.

Elias died as a prisoner of war having been captured a few months earlier during the France & Belgium Campaign. The Second World War burials at Malbork are mostly of men who died while prisoners of war in the nearby camps. Stalag XXB was a camp of some size at Malbork itself, Stalag 1A was situated at Stablack, between Malbork and Gdansk, Stalag 2A at Starogard, a few kilometres south of Stablack, and Stalag XXA, at Torun (Thorn), about 120 kilometres south of Malbork. When hostilities had ceased, the graves service of the British Army of the Rhine moved the graves from the local burial grounds to this war cemetery, together with other Commonwealth graves in outlying places in the area where their permanent maintenance could not be assured.

HAMILTON, JOHN PAKENHAM. Lieutenant, 287511.

44th Royal Tank Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps.

Died 2 March 1945. Aged 24.

Born Derbyshire. Resided Nottinghamshire.

Son of Edward Pakenham Hamilton and Gladys Hamilton of Oswestry, Shropshire.

John attended Ashford Grammar School 1930-1934, where he is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance.

Buried Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 46. B. 4.

HAMMOND, H. No clear trace.

HANEY, JAMES. Sergeant (Observer/Navigator), 1280935.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 104 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 19 August 1941. Aged 29.

Son of Frederick Joseph and Mary Waterworth Haney.

Husband of Dorothy Violet Haney of "Winslade," Canterbury Road, Kennington, Ashford. Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial.

Buried Kiel War Cemetery, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. Grave Ref: 2. G. 8.

James had been a member of staff at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School from 1934 until just prior to his enlistment in 1940. Ashford, Kent resident Dennis Hayward served in the same squadron (please see his brief commemoration), and who died only ten days after James was recorded as lost. James was a crew member of Wellington bomber W5416 EP-? which was flown by 26 year old Flight Lieutenant, William W. Burton, B.A. (Oxon.), R.A.F.(V.R.) of Retreat, Cape Province, South Africa. The bomber took off at 2240 hours on 19 August 1941 from R.A.F. Driffield, East Yorkshire, on a bombing mission to Kiel, Germany. Although James is recorded as dying on 19 August 1941 by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission this is in fact erroneous albeit by only a few hours, as contact had been made by his aircraft at 0318 hours on the morning of the following day, when a wireless transmission trying to raise R.A.F. Bircham Newton, Norfolk was made by the aircrafts crew. So far (February 2003) no trace of the lost Wellington has ever been found, but it is assumed to have crashed over the North Sea. On 19 September 1941 exactly a month after his aircraft had taken off on its last mission James body was washed ashore at Norderpiep, Germany from where he was laid to rest with military honours at Büsum, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. James family were informed of his death and burial via the International Red Cross, since the war his body has been moved to Kiel War Cemetery, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. All five of the other men who perished with James have no known graves and are therefore commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial.

HARDEN, PERCY JOSEPH. Private, 97003963.

Non Combatant Corps.

Died 6 April 1941. Aged 21.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Joseph and Elsie Margaret Harden of Ashford, Kent.

Percy had attended Ashford Grammar School 1930-1938, where he is commemorated in the Second World War, Book of Remembrance.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 21. Grave 07.

In view of the raft of misconceptions that still abound regarding the Non Combatants Corps of the Second World War, a very brief and abridged explanation seems called for to help (or hinder) researchers and/or relatives of N.C.C. members. During the Second World War the corps consisted of 14 Companies with a total of 6,766 personnel passing through its ranks, of their number 465 volunteered to work in Bomb Disposal Units. After the corps reformation in August 1940, it became an accepted (but unofficial) policy to post men away from their home areas, to ensure that they were deprived the luxury of 'home comforts' in much the same way that those serving

as combatants were. Although consisting of Conscientious Objectors, the corps had men from several religious and non-religious persuasions, as opposed to a long held misconception which still persists to this day, that all were of a particular denomination or faith. Of the 23 members of the corps who died on, or of war related service, all died within the United Kingdom, despite which members of the corps also served abroad, which is counter to yet another of the erroneous 'facts' bandied about by *experts* in that all service was in the United Kingdom. As with their forerunners during the Great War, a lot of the Non Combatants Corps members were subjected to abuse in various forms, but unlike the men of the Great War, they were not labelled as being in the "Non Courage Corps," progress indeed. It has not thus far (February 2003) been possible to ascertain Percy's reason for membership of his corps, which would have involved attending tribunals etcetera but suspect that it was on religious grounds, he died in hospital at Liverpool, Lancashire.

HARDEN, MILDRED BURGESS.

Died 26 September 1940. Aged 28.

Daughter of Mr and Mrs Harden of The Green, Warehorne, Ashford, Kent.

Mildred died at 15 Regents Place, Ashford, Kent.

HARLOW, VICTOR DOUGLAS. Galley Boy.

Merchant Navy, SS Elstree Grange (Liverpool).

Died 3 May 1941. Aged 16.

Commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 37.

Victor joined the Merchant Navy in 1940, and had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1936-1938, at which time his home address was 21 Osbourne Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent. Having just discharged its cargo in Liverpool docks, Victor's ship, commanded by Captain A. G. Ablett received a direct hit amidships by a parachute mine, during a heavy enemy air-raid. SS Elstree Grange was completely wrecked after the vessels ammunition store blew up, seven of the crew lost their lives and many others were wounded. During the attack and sinking, one of Victor's shipmates, Seaman, George Wheeler rescued two badly injured men and for his gallantry was subsequently awarded the George Medal.

HARRIS, ALAN WILLIAM. Trooper, 7947020.

12th Royal Tank Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps.

Died North Africa 27 April 1943. Aged 20.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of William Henry and Harriet Harris of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Alan attended Ashford Grammar School 1933-1939, where he is commemorated in the school Second World War, Book of Remembrance.

Buried Massicault War Cemetery, Tunisia. Grave Ref: II. C. 3.

HAWKINS, WILLIAM FREDERICK.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 49.

Son of the late Mr and Mrs Hawkins of Providence Street, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Mildred Jeannette Hawkins of "Roseleigh," Westenhanger, Hythe, Kent.

William died whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

William had served as a Company Sergeant Major in the Home Guard and had probably served in the East Lancashire Regiment during the Great War.

Also commemorated on Stanford, Hythe, Kent war memorial.

HAYWARD, DENNIS CLAUDE. Sergeant (Air Gunner), 923694.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 104 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 29 August 1941.

Dennis is also commemorated in the Ashford Grammar School Book of Remembrance where he had been a pupil 1930-1937.

Buried Rheinberg War Cemetery, Kamp Lintfort, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.
Grave Ref: 6. B. 19.

The exact fate of Dennis's aircraft, Wellington bomber W5595 EP-E is still unclear, having taken off from R.A.F. Drifffield, East Yorkshire at 2340 hours on 28 August 1941 as part of a mixed bomber force detailed to attack Duisburg, Germany. What is sadly clear however is that all six crew of the aircraft were killed when the aircraft was lost and now are at rest in the same cemetery. Eight other aircraft were also lost during the raid. Dennis served with Kennington, Ashford, Kent resident James Haney (please see commemoration).

HAYWARD, REGINALD SAMUEL JOHN. Private, 7521581.

32 Company, Royal Army Medical Corps.

Died 15 February 1942. Aged 24.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Mrs E Hayward of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Singapore Memorial. Column 105.

Reginald died on the day that Singapore was surrendered to the Japanese.

HEDDLE, DORIS LILLIAN.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 23

Wife of Oliver Heddle of 21A, New Rents, Ashford, Kent.

Doris died at Heddle's Stores, New Rents, Ashford, Kent. Oliver Heddle was serving in H M Forces at the time of his wife's demise.

HEMMINGS, FRANK. Warrant Officer (Pilot), 1334168.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 78 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 12 June 1943. Aged 22.

Son of Frank and Annie Hemmings of Ashford, Kent.

Frank attended Ashford Grammar School 1932-1938, where his death is recorded as being over Düsseldorf, Germany, which was in fact the night's target but not where he in fact died, as can be seen below.

Buried Eindhoven (Woensel) General Cemetery, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands.

Grave Ref: Plot JJB. Collective grave 76-79.

Frank was the pilot of Halifax Bomber W7932 EY-? which took off from R.A.F. Linton-on-Ouse, North Yorkshire at 2223 hours on 11 June 1943, on a bombing mission to Düsseldorf, Germany. 783 aircraft took part on the raid, which was comprised of 326 Lancasters, 202 Halifaxes, 143 Wellingtons, 99 Stirlings, and 13 Mosquitos. The Pathfinder marking plan proceeded excellently until an Oboe Mosquito inadvertently released a load of target indicators 14 miles north-east of the target area. This caused part of the Main Force to waste its bombs on open country. But the main bombing caused extensive damage in the centre of Düsseldorf, where 130 acres were claimed as destroyed, and this proved to be the most damaging raid of the war for this city. 38 aircraft - 14 Lancasters, 12 Halifaxes, 10 Wellingtons, 2 Stirlings were lost on the raid. At approximately 0215 hours, Frank and his crew had

the misfortune to encounter the Luftwaffe “ace” Night-Fighter pilot, Major Werner Streib the Commanding Officer of the elite I/NJG1 based at Venlo, Holland who was flying a Heinkel He-219 for the first time. After a short engagement between the two aircraft, the Halifax crashed on farmland near Sambeek, Holland at 0222 hours killing all seven crew who now lie in the same cemetery. Werner Streib nicknamed the “Father of night-fighters” shot down another four British aircraft on the night of 11/12 June 1943, he then survived both a crash on the runway on his return to Venlo following his “test” flight, and miraculously also survived the Second World War, he died on 15 June 1986 two days after his seventy fifth birthday, and is buried in Munich, Germany.

HEYMAN, JOHN FREDERICK. Sergeant (Pilot), 1358984.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 20 Operational Training Unit, D Flight.

Died 5 August 1942. Aged 26.

Son of William Frederick and Annie Hilda Heyman of Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Christine Heyman of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 4. Grave 57.

John attended Ashford Grammar School 1931-1935, where his death is recorded as being the result of an aircraft accident at Elgin. At 2315 hours on 4 August 1942, John was the pilot of Wellington bomber T2966 -C which took off from R.A.F. Elgin, Scotland to take part on a night exercise. On returning to the airfield at approximately 0230 hours on 5 August, John’s aircraft overshot the airfield and came down in Quarry Wood on the western edge of Elgin. All five injured crew members were taken to Dr. Gray’s Hospital, where John died of his burns. Although the other four crew recovered from the crash, but on his recovery from the crash, and just prior to the completion of his aircrew training, 21 year old Flight Sergeant (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner), Beverly D. Crane, R.C.A.F., of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, lost his life on 29 September 1942. Beverly is at rest in Lossiemouth Burial Ground. Following the loss of John’s Wellington and the investigation into same, it was deduced that the failure of the aircrafts port engine was a contributory factor into the crash. R.A.F. Elgin, was/is often referred to as Bogs O’Mayne, and was situated three miles to the south west of Elgin, it was built as a satellite to R.A.F. Lossiemouth, and was completed in early June 1940. As an early wartime airfield it had no hard runways, but otherwise had all of the facilities and dispersed sites of similar later stations in other parts of the United Kingdom. Twenty circular hard-standings were spaced around the perimeter track, with some connected to it, whilst others were simply circles on the grass. Upon its completion, due to the threat of invasion, the airfield was obstructed by the Royal Engineers to prevent enemy landings taking place. As John’s unit based at R.A.F. Lossiemouth expanded, it was cleared and became available for use on 30 June 1940.

HILLS, BEATRICE DOREEN. Private, W/270394.

Auxiliary Territorial Service.

Died 29 April 1944. Aged 21.

Born and resided Kent.

Daughter of Sidney L Hills and Elsie M Hills of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Beatrice Hills Close, on the Little Burton Farm Estate, Kennington, Ashford, Kent is named in her honour and remembrance.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section Z. Grave 3035.

HILLS, CYRIL WILLIAM. Private, 6300504.
1/6th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment.
Died 6 May 1943. Aged 19.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Cecil James Hills and Ada Harriet Hills of Ashford, Kent.
Grandson of Mrs A L Blackford of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Medjez-el-Bab War Cemetery, Tunisia. Grave Ref: 9. B. 6.
Originally enlisted in The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

HILLS, FREDERICK WILLIAM. Private, 14651035.
1/6th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment.
Died 20 September 1944. Aged 19.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Charles W. F. and Gladys Geraldine Hills of 32 Herbert Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Coriano Ridge War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: VIII. F. 7.
Frederick had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1936-1939. Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps in 1943, and served in the United Kingdom. In 1944 Frederick served in the Italian Campaign, as a member of the East Surrey Regiment.

HILLS, GEORGE. Sergeant, 834688.
97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.
Died 14 November 1942. Aged 29.
Born and resided Kent.
Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent, and on the Alamein Memorial, Egypt. Column 39. George is named on the Roll of Honour of the 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.
Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.
As the 386 Battery, 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, (Territorial Army), was based at the Drill Hall, Newtown, Ashford, Kent, it would seem likely that George had been a pre war member of the battery. George was amongst the 783 people who were lost, when the 1,600 ton Italian ship SS Scillin was sunk. Prior to departure when the ship was still being loaded at the Spanish Quay, Tripoli Harbour, Libya, Captain Gilbert of the Royal Army Medical Corps made several protests regarding the number of men that were being boarded on the ship, due to the comparatively small size of the SS Scillin in relation to the number being boarded. When 814 prisoners of war were onboard the ship, the remaining 195 prisoners were sent along the quay to board another vessel which left Tripoli Harbour later. With the prisoners of war onboard, the SS Scillin was sunk by the Royal Navy submarine H.M.S. Sahib (P212), approximately ten miles north of Cape Milazzo in the Tyrrhenian Sea, when the ship was transporting the allied prisoners of war between North Africa and Italy. After the ship was sunk, John Bromage and his crew rescued twenty six British and one South African prisoners of war, plus the captain of the SS Scillin and forty five Italian crew members, it was then that he heard some of the survivors speaking English, and it was only then did he realize that he had sunk a ship carrying allied prisoners-of-war and some Italian soldiers. The sad truth was, that the British High Command was aware of the ships prisoner of war status, but still gave the go-ahead to sink it, primarily it would seem because of the Enigma Code work at Bletchley Park. At a subsequent enquiry into the sinking, the commander of

H.M.S. Sahib, Lieutenant John Henry Bromage R.N. was cleared of any blame appertaining to the sinking of the SS Scillin, as when he had attacked the ship it was unmarked, and at the time he firmly believed that the ship was only carrying Italian troops. It was not until **1996**, and after a lot of concerted and consistent external pressure, that the British Ministry of Defence finally bowed to pressure, and eventually revealed to relatives of those who perished in the tragedy what had really happened to their loved ones. Until that time the official line had always been to say that they had either been lost at sea, or died in Italian prisoner of war camps, despite the fact that there was fortunately a handful of survivors who knew the truth, some of whom thankfully spoke out. The sinking of the SS Scillin resulted in the largest loss of life to the 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, during the Second World War.

HILLS, P. No clear trace.

HILLS, THOMAS. Able Seaman, C/J48902.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Encounter.

Died 22 April 1945. Aged 44.

Son of Thomas William and Charlotte Hills.

Husband of Daisy Constance Hills of Brook, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ambon War Cemetery, Indonesia. Grave Ref: 31. A. 4.

Built by Hawthorn Leslie & Co. of Hebburn-on-Tyne, H.M.S. Encounter, an E class destroyer was commissioned on 2 November 1934. On 27 February 1942, H.M.S. Encounter took part in the seven hour 'Battle of the Java Sea.' The Dutch 1680 ton Admiral class destroyer H.N.L.M.S. Kortenaer was hit amidships at 1713 hours by a torpedo fired from the 13,300 ton Myōkō class Japanese heavy cruiser Haguro, and broke in two sinking almost immediately, losing 59 from the ships compliment of 171. H.M.S. Encounter rescued 113 from the stricken vessel, but one survivor later died onboard her. 'The Battle of the Java Sea' cost the lives of 6,339 sailors from both sides. H.M.S. Encounter was escorting H.M.S. Exeter to Colombo, Ceylon for repairs when she was scuttled by her crew, after being badly damaged in the Java Sea by the Japanese Heavy Cruisers Myoko and Ashigara on 1 March 1942. It would appear that Thomas died whilst a prisoner of war of the Japanese, as most of the crew were taken prisoner by the Japanese.

HODGES, HAROLD ROY. Private, 14292780.

General Service Corps.

Died 7 October 1942.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Willesborough) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section M. Grave 320.

HOGBEN, JESSIE.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 33.

Wife of Charles Hogben of Repton Cottages, Chart Road, Ashford, Kent.

Jessie died at 11 Hardinge Road, Ashford, Kent, with her young daughter who is the next casualty commemorated below.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery, Ashford, Kent.

HOGBEN, MARY ROSE.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 5

Daughter of Charles and Jessie Hogben of Repton Cottages, Chart Road, Ashford, Kent.

Mary died with her mother as commemorated above.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery, Ashford, Kent.

HOLDSTOCK, CHARLES.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 53.

Husband of Ellen Holdstock of 31 Whitfield Road, South Ashford, Kent.

Charles who served as a member of the Home Guard, was injured at the Southern Railway Works Ashford, Kent, and succumbed to his injuries later the same day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent.

HOLLANDER, ALFRED SIDNEY. Private, 6289500.

5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died 23 November 1942. Aged 25.

Born South East London. Resided Kent.

Son of George Samuel Hollander and Polly Emily Jane Hollander of South Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch church South Ashford.

Buried Bone War Cemetery, Annaba, Algeria. Grave Ref: III. B. 17.

HOLNESS, C. Probably the casualty commemorated on Ashford civic war memorial as C HOLNESS is the following civilian casualty, who was possibly known by his second Christian name: **HOLNESS, FREDERICK CHARLES.**

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 23.

Son of Mr and Mrs F T Holness of 8 Council Houses, Smarden, Ashford, Kent.

Frederick died at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, and is also commemorated on Smarden, Kent civic war memorial plaque which is located on an exterior wall of Smarden (St Michaels) parish church.

HOWLAND, WILLIAM JAMES EDWARD. Seaman, LT/JX241622.

H.M.T. Their Merit, Royal Naval Patrol Service.

Died 5 August 1943. Aged 37.

Son of William Richard and Mary Howland.

Husband of Catherine Ada Howland of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Lowestoft Naval Memorial. Panel 11. Column 3.

Leading Seaman, George Robert Coull who served on William's Minesweeper Trawler, was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for courage and skill in a successful mine clearance operation. (Swept QZX 120B). London Gazette entry dated 11 April 1944.

HUGHES, WILLIAM. Gunner, 914145.

5 Maritime Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Died 10 June 1944. Aged 24.

Son of John William and Annie Elizabeth Hughes of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 80. Column 2.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

HUTCHINS, GWENDOLINE.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 16

Adopted daughter of S.J. and E. Burgess of 1 Mead Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Gwendoline died at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

HUXSTEP, PATRICK SOUTHEE. Sergeant 909029.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 55 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 20 April 1941. Aged 22.

Son of Harry Huckstep and Louisa Huxstep of Ramsgate, Isle of Thanet, Kent.

Commemorated on the Alamein Memorial, Egypt. Column 243.

Patrick had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1930-1933. At the time of Patrick's demise, his squadron was equipped with Blenheim IV twin engined bombers, primarily engaged on raids over Libya, and operating from Forward Landing Grounds in the desert.

IRVINE, FREDERICK 'Freddie' DAVID. Flying Officer, 178975.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 17 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 3 June 1945. Aged 22.

Son of John Archibald and Ada Irvine of 45 Linden Road, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Singapore Memorial. Column 447.

Frederick had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1933-1936. Following pilot training in the U.S.A., 'Freddie' flew over 200 operational hours prior to his death. Initially with 136 Squadron, R.A.F. flying Hawker Hurricanes, and later with 17 Squadron, R.A.F. flying Supermarine Spitfires, following his enlistment in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1940. At the time of 'Freddie's' death 17 Squadron were deployed in Burma on escort and ground attack roles equipped with Spitfires, the squadron were engaged on same from November 1944 until June 1945 when it was withdrawn in time for the preparation of the invasion of Malaya. One of the pilots posted to the squadron in November 1944 was James 'Ginger' Lacey D.F.M., who was the top scoring Royal Air Force pilot during the Battle of Britain in 1940. During the battle 'Ginger' Lacey had been shot down or forced to land nine times, including being shot down in a dog-fight over Ashford, Kent on 17 September 1940 and as such serving with 'Freddie' Irvine was not his only link to Ashford! The following is an encounter with the enemy on the Burma front as related by 'Freddie.' "I was patrolling at 3,000 feet over the bridgehead at Myinmu when enemy aircraft were reported as approaching. I went up to 18,000 feet and after two minutes sighted several aircraft 4,000 feet below. I picked up a loose pair and gave one a short burst. Next I went for a wing man and gave him a good squirt, but could not see what happened because another fighter jumped me. Then I selected another. The other Oscar seemed to stop, with black smoke and fuel pouring from the side of the fuselage. I watched it go down in a steady descent until it was near the ground. On the way home I attacked another Oscar, but could not observe the effect." On a previous occasion he had to make a belly landing with his aircraft, when three Japanese Oscar aircraft which he had attacked followed him back to his base and attacked.

JAMES, D. Probably the casualty commemorated on Ashford, Kent civic war memorial as D. JAMES, of whom no matching data has been found to date, is:-
JANES, DONALD. Gunner, 834383.

97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Died 1 July 1942.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Arthur and Agnes Frances Janes of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Alamein Memorial, Egypt. Column 40.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

As the 386 Battery, 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, (Territorial Army), was based at the Drill Hall, Newtown, Ashford, Kent, it would seem likely that Donald had been a pre war member of the battery.

JAMES, FREDERICK ERNEST. Trooper, 6349620.

56th Regiment, Reconnaissance Corps. Royal Armoured Corps.

Died 27 February 1943. Aged 22.

Son of Ernest and Alice Lilian James of Boughton Corner, Bilting, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Wye, Ashford, Kent, Second World War memorial plaque and Godmersham, Ashford, Kent, Second World War memorial plaque, both of which are located in the respective parish churches.

Buried Medjez-El-Bab War Cemetery, Tunisia. Grave Ref: 5. H. 3.

Originally enlisted in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in 1940.

Frederick had taken part in 'Operation Torch,' the amphibious landings in Morocco and Tunisia, North Africa in November 1942, and lost his life as the result of enemy bombing at Tunisia, North Africa. For a year 1933-1934, Frederick had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School. His brother Arthur George James who fortunately survived the Second World War, served in the Royal Navy on Minesweepers and had also been a pupil at 'The North' from 1937 to 1940.

JAMES, JOSEPH EDWARD. Trooper, 7958813.

'C' Squadron, 16/5th Lancers, Royal Armoured Corps.

Died 24 April 1943. Aged 21.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Joseph Henry and Maud Olive James of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Massicault War Cemetery, Tunisia. Grave Ref: VI. D. 8.

Following the amphibious landings in Algeria, from November 1942 until the spring of 1943, the 16th/5th Lancers fought in Tunisia, their objective being the capture of Tunis itself. Early in 1943 the regiment received the new American Sherman tanks, which were a vast improvement on their old Valentines and Matildas, both in terms of increased firepower and protection. It was with these tanks that the 16/5th Lancers fought in the battles of Kasserine, Fondouk, Bordj, Djebel, Kournine and the final battle for Tunis. After their hard-earned victory in North Africa the Brigade to which they belonged was withdrawn to reorganise, re-equip and rest, in preparation for the invasion of Italy.

JEFFERY, HERBERT JACK GUSTAVE. Sergeant (Observer), 1253155.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.148 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 13 November 1941. Aged 20.

Son of John and Edith Maud Jeffery of Ashford.

Buried Benghazi War Cemetery, Libya. Grave Ref: 3. B. 10.

Herbert attended Ashford Grammar School 1932-1938, where he is commemorated in the Second World War, Book of Remembrance.

Resultant of Italy going to war on 10 June 1940 three Royal Air Force bomber detachments from 38, 99 and 115 squadrons were sent to Malta to carry out attacks on North Africa. On 14 December 1940 the detached bombers were formed into 148 Squadron and based at R.A.F. Luqa, Malta from where attacks were launched against various enemy held Mediterranean locations. In March 1941 148 Squadron R.A.F. moved to Kabrit near the Suez Canal, Egypt, from where it played a vital role in support of the British 8th Army, flying Wellington bombers from several desert air strips on raids to attack and harass the Afrika Korps. Flown by 21 year old Sergeant (Pilot), Raymond E. Shears, of Stapenhill, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Wellington bomber Z8340 C, took off from Landing Ground 104 to bomb the harbour and enemy shipping at Benghazi, Libya. The exact fate of the Wellington is unclear, and half of the aircrafts crew are commemorated on the Alamein Memorial, Egypt, the other three including Herbert are at rest in the Benghazi War Cemetery, Libya. Another of 148 Squadron, Royal Air Force, Wellington bombers was lost on the same raid, and was thought to have been shot down over the sea.

JEFFERY, H. No clear trace.

JOHNSON, JOHN AMBROSE.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 37

Son of Harriet Youd (formerly Johnson) of 244 Desborough Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, and of the late George Johnson.

Husband of Mabel Elizabeth Johnson of 8 East Hill, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery, Ashford, Kent.

John served as a member of the Home Guard, and was injured at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, he succumbed to his injuries later the same day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

JONES, CLARA.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 65.

Wife of Charles William Jones of 10 Star Road, Ashford, Kent.

Clara died at her home. Possibly she was the daughter of Ada Laker who also died on the same day, at the same address where they both resided. Ada is also commemorated on the Bybrook Cemetery, Ashford, Kent memorial plaque.

KEYTE, CHARLES THOMAS. Corporal, 531194.

Royal Air Force.

Died 28 May 1940. Aged 26.

Son of Charles Thomas Keyte and Louisa Mary Keyte.

Husband of Doris Esther Keyte of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 22.

KING, JOHN JAMES. Sergeant, 1395486.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 622 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 11 April 1944.

John attended Ashford Grammar School 1925-1929, where he is commemorated in the school Second World War, Book of Remembrance, also commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 232.

John was a crew member of Lancaster bomber ED808 GI-U, flown by 29 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Frank R. Burrows, of Mile End, South Australia, which took off from R.A.F. Mildenhall, Suffolk at 0125 hours as part of a force of 15 Mosquito and 142 Lancaster bombers, to attack the railway infrastructure at Laon, Aisne, France. Of the 157 bombers engaged on the raid John's aircraft was the sole loss when it crashed (cause unknown) about 23 miles north of Le Harve, killing all seven crew, four of whom are at rest in St-Marie Cemetery, Le Harve. Both of the aircrafts Air Gunners are at rest in St-Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France, and only John is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. The wreckage of John's Lancaster appears to have been identified by the German authorities, who reported its destruction in KE8268, a document which eventually fell into Allied hands. Lancaster ED808 was delivered to 1660 Conversion Unit, R.A.F. in April 1943, joining 622 Squadron, R.A.F., which was formerly No.15 Squadron, R.A.F on 10 February 1944. The aircraft was damaged and repaired three times whilst serving with the 1660 Conversion Unit, R.A.F. Wore the IDs GI-R/U but undertook no operations with No.15 Squadron, R.A.F. With No.622 Squadron, R.A.F. as GI-R, and took part in the raids on Leipzig 19/20 February 1944; Schweinfurt 24/25 February 1944; Berlin 24/25 March 1944; As GI-U, to Nuremburg 30/31 March 1944; Laon 10/11 April 1944 when she was lost, by which time the aircraft had amassed a total of 509 flying hours.

KING, LETITIA.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 71.

Wife of Peter King of 13 Hardinge Road, Ashford, Kent.

Letitia died at her home with her husband, who is the next casualty commemorated.

KING, PETER..

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 74.

Husband of Letitia King of 13 Hardinge Road, Ashford, Kent.

Peter died at his home with his wife who is commemorated above.

KIRBY, GEORGE BOWRING. Flight Sergeant, 1333680.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, 106 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 6 October 1944. Aged 22.

Son of Bertie and Evelyn Dorcas Kirby.

Husband of Rose Eileen Violet Kirby of West Norwood, London.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent, and on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Panel 219.

George was a crew member of Lancaster bomber PD214 ZN-? which was flown by 29 year old Flight Lieutenant, Douglas Stewart, of Shrewsbury, Shropshire. The aircraft took off from R.A.F. Metheringham, Lincolnshire at 1745 hours on 6 October 1944, in a bomber force comprised of 246 Lancasters and 7 Mosquitoes, to take part in the last of the thirty two major bombing raids on the German city of Bremen, which were carried out by Bomber Command, R.A.F. during the Second World War.

Resulting from the raid, A.G. Weser shipyard was seriously damaged as was the electrical works of Siemens Schuckurt, plus the two factories of Fokker-Wolf and other important industrial targets, and the transport system was also wrecked. Five Lancaster aircraft were lost on the raid, which caused as much damage as the much publicised 1000 bomber raid of 1942.

KNELL, EDWARD CHARLES EUGENE. Apprentice.

Merchant Navy. SS Empire Impala (London).

Drowned 11 March 1943. Aged 19.

Born 17 March 1924.

Son of Bertie Edward and Hetty Knell of Ashford, Kent.

Edward attended Ashford Grammar School 1935-1940, where he is commemorated in the Book of Remembrance, also commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 42.

Edward's ship which was run by the Sun Shipping Co, was a 6,116 ton steam freighter that was built in 1920 and initially named 'Boshbish,' then renamed 'Clement C Morse', and later the 'Oakman,' and finally in 1941 she was again renamed as the 'SS Empire Impala.' When she was sunk whilst a convoy straggler Edward's ship was commanded by 46 year old Captain Henry Munford, the SS Empire Impala left New York, U.S.A. on 23 February 1943, in convoy SC-121 which was initially comprised of 59 ships with Hull as her final destination, prior to which she was expected to dock at Loch Ewe on 13 March 1943. During the Second World War years SC was indicative of all the convoys that sailed from Halifax (Slow) to the United Kingdom. As the convoy crossed the Atlantic it initially managed to avoid two of the u-boat Wolf pack's, they being 'Burggraf' and 'Wildfang,' but was later spotted by the German submarine, U-405 which was in the seventeen u-boat Wolfpack 'Westmark.' Following the sighting of Edward's ship, nine u-boats, of Wolfpack 'Ostmark' they took up positions to attack the convoy. The 'SS Empire Impala' was torpedoed and sunk in the North Atlantic on 11 March 1943 by the German submarine U-591 of Wolfpack Westmark, the submarine was commanded by 28 year old Kapitänleutnant, Hans-Jurgen Zetsche. At the time of the attack 'SS Empire Impala' had stopped to search for, and pick up survivors from the smaller 2,868 ton vessel Egyptian, that was in the same convoy, and which had also been a straggler. She had been torpedoed and sunk by the U-230 the previous night and was the first of the 15 ships in the convoy to be sunk. Ultimately only three of the Egyptians crew survived both sinkings. The following day Kapitänleutnant Zetsche again attacked the convoy and sank the Yugoslavian ship "Vojvoda Putnik" which was a former British vessel. Hans-Jurgen Zetsche, a native of Annaberg, Erzgebirge, Germany, survived the Second World War, and died on 21 October 1991 aged 76.

LADLEY, ERNEST RICHARD. Private, 1622961.

1/7th Battalion, The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey).

Died 5 September 1944. Aged 31.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of George Albert and Winnie Ladley of Ashford, Kent.

Buried London Cemetery and Extension, Longueval, Somme, France.

Grave Ref: Plot 13. Row G. Grave 8.

Originally enlisted in the Royal Artillery.

LAKER, ADA MARIA.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 88.

Resided at 10 Star Road, Ashford, Kent.

Ada died at her home 10 Star Road, Ashford, Kent. Possibly Ada was a relative (mother)? of Clara Jones, another civilian casualty who also died at the same address (please see commemoration). Also commemorated on the Bybrook Cemetery, Ashford, Kent memorial plaque.

LAKER, BETTY ANN.

Died 26 September 1940. Aged 2.

Daughter of Mr and Mrs A. A. Laker of 11 Rising Road, Ashford, Kent.

Betty died at 15 Regents Place, Ashford, Kent.

LAW, JOHN HENRY. Flight Sergeant (Wireless Op/Air Gunner),1811071.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 640 Squadron Royal Air Force.

Died 4 March 1945. Aged 20.

Son of Henry Frederick and Adeline Law of Ashford, Kent.

John attended the Ashford Grammar School 1935-1941, where he is erroneously commemorated in the school Second World War, Book of Remembrance as being killed in operations over Germany, but his aircraft were actually lost at Suffolk, England.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 42. Grave 78.

Prior to enlisting, John had been the Patrol Leader of 10th Ashford (Kent) Troop, Boy Scouts. John was a crew member of Halifax bomber NP931 C8-J, which was a former aircraft on the strength of 466 Squadron, R.A.F. that was flown by 22 year old Pilot Officer, Paul B. Manton, R.A.A.F. of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Their aircraft took off from R.A.F. Leaconfield, Yorkshire at 1812 hours on 3 March 1945, as part of a mixed bomber force of 234 aircraft of which 204 were Halifax aircraft, on a mission to bomb Kamen near Dortmund, Germany. A significant result of the raid was the damage inflicted on the synthetic oil plant and refinery at Bergkamen, which ceased production there for the remainder of the Second World War. On the return leg of the journey, Paul Manton attempted to land at R.A.F. Woodbridge, Suffolk. At about 0020 hours, the aircraft crashed into a wooded area known locally as 'The Thicks' near the village of Butley, approximately six miles to the east of Woodbridge whilst approaching the runway. Later investigation crash data show that it is thought that the loss of NP931 C8-J was probably the result of intervention by an enemy aircraft. It is perhaps of relevance that the crash occurred when the Luftwaffe mounted the daring Unternehmen Gisela attacks, which involved German night-fighters intermingling with the returning bombers, usually as they crossed the North Sea. Whilst carrying out those intruder missions, a disproportionate number of Luftwaffe aircraft and aircrew were lost. Only one crew member of the Halifax, Sergeant E. J. V. Thompson, who had been injured in the crash survived, six of the crew are interred in their respective home towns and Paul Manton was laid to rest in Cambridge City Cemetery. Sergeant (Air Gunner) James B. Pridding, of Holt, Norfolk, survived the initial crash but sadly succumbed to his injuries two days later and is at rest at Holt cemetery.

LAW, MARGARET ISABEL BELLA.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 17.

Daughter of Mr and Mrs Thomas Law of 2 Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

Margaret died at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent. Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

LAWRENCE, LEONARD EDWARD.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 31.

Son of Mrs E Lawrence of 12 Francis Road, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Queenie Lawrence of 1 Denbigh Place, Torrington Road, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Leonard served as a member of the Home Guard, was killed during an enemy bombing raid when Snashalls Bakery, 85 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent, was destroyed. The destruction of Snashalls Bakery resulted in the deaths of the baker, his wife, son and two of the members of staff.

LEICESTER, WILLIAM JOSEPH.

Died 26 September 1940. Aged 60.

Husband of Fanny Florence Leicester.

It is likely that William, who died at 13 Regents Place, Ashford, Kent, had served in the Durham Light Infantry, Northamptonshire Regiment, and the Labour Corps during the Great War.

LLOYD, CELEY GEORGINA MARY.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 24.

Resided at 133 Lower Queen's Road, Ashford, Kent.

Daughter of R. G. and E. Bourne.

Wife of Signalman Thomas Norman Lloyd, of the Royal Corps of Signals.

Celey died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

LOWER, ALFRED WILLIAM NELSON. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1288402.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 100 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 20 October 1943. Aged 21.

Son of Ada A. Lower of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Eelde War Cemetery, Dranthe, Netherlands. Plot 3. Grave Ref: 1328.

Prior to war service, Alfred was employed as a fitter at the Southern Railway Works Ashford, Kent. He was a member of the choir at Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent, and was an active member of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. Alfred was a crew member of Lancaster Bomber ED555 HW-A, flown by 21 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Theodore L. Simpson, of Tiverton, Devon, which took off from R.A.F. Grimsby, Lincolnshire at 1746 hours on a bombing mission to Leipzig on 20 October 1943. Unlike a lot of raids which were mixed bomber formations, the raid on which Alfred died was comprised of all Lancasters. 16 of the 358 Lancasters engaged on the raid were lost, on what was the first notable attack on Leipzig, Germany. Owing to appalling weather conditions which prevailed over the region of the target area, the bombing pattern was very scattered on and around the city. Although it has not been possible so far to ascertain who actually shot down Alfred's aircraft, although it is recorded as having been destroyed by an enemy night-fighter. The Lancaster crashed 2225 hours at Eelderwolde, Dranthe, Holland, killing all seven crew who are buried

in the same cemetery. When lost, Alfred's aircraft had a total of 243 hours, having been on the strength of 100 Squadron, Royal Air Force since 29 January 1943.

LOWES, LESLIE. Lance Corporal, 2360316.

"M" Corps Signals, Royal Corps of Signals.

Died 16 May 1943. Aged 24.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Sydney Arthur and Ethel Mary Lowes of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Kanchanaburi War Cemetery, Thailand. Grave Ref: 8. J. 16.

Pre war member of the Royal Corps of Signals.

Leslie was a prisoner of war of the Japanese, and would have been one of the thousands of allied prisoners of war, and natives who lost their lives during the construction of the notorious Burma-Siam railway, "The Railway of Death." During its construction, approximately 13,000 prisoners of war died and were buried along the railway. An estimated 80,000 to 100,000 civilians also died in the course of the project, chiefly forced labour brought from Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, or conscripted in Siam (Thailand) and Burma (Myanmar). Two labour forces, one based in Siam and the other in Burma worked from opposite ends of the line towards the centre. The Japanese aimed at completing the railway in 14 months and work began in October 1942. The line, 424 kilometres long, was completed by December 1943. The graves of those who died during the construction and maintenance of the Burma-Siam railway (except for the Americans, whose remains were repatriated) were transferred from camp burial grounds and isolated sites along the railway into three cemeteries at Chungkai and Kanchanaburi in Thailand and Thanbyuzayat in Myanmar. The cemetery where Leslie is at rest is only a short distance from the site of the former Kanburi, the prisoner of war base camp, through which most of the prisoners passed on their way to other camps. It was created by the Army Graves Service who transferred to it all graves along the southern section of railway, from Bangkok to Nieke.

LUNN, JOHN ALFRED.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 49.

Son of Alfred Lunn of 5 Christ Church Road, Folkestone, Kent.

Husband of Kathleen Winifred Lunn of Musgrove, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent.

John was injured at Stanhays Agricultural Engineering Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, and succumbed to his injuries later the same day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

MABB, GEORGE. Stoker 2nd Class, C/KX122257.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Neptune.

Died 19 December 1941. Aged 27.

Husband of Kathleen Doris May Mabb of Northfleet, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 48. Column 2.

George, who is recorded on some data with the additional Christian name of Edwin, was a victim of tragic maritime disaster that occurred off Tripoli, Libya when his cruiser and several other ships went into an uncharted minefield, which resulted in the loss of 764 of his ships crew. Only Able Seaman John Norman Walton eventually survived the sinking of H.M.S. Neptune, after which he then spent five days adrift in the Mediterranean, before being rescued by an Italian torpedo boat of the Regina Marina on Christmas Eve. Following his rescue he then spent eighteen months as a

prisoner of war in Italy. George served with Ashfordian, Percy Dowle who is also commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial. At the time of the loss of H.M.S. Neptune there was considerable effort concentrated on disrupting enemy supply lines from Italy to North Africa. In the months leading up to December 1941, approximately three quarters of ships sailing from Italy to Tripoli, Libya, were sunk. H.M.S. Neptune joined Admiral Cunningham's Malta based 'Force K.' On 17 December 1941 every available ship was deployed in an effort to ensure that the oiler H.M.S. Breconshire arrived safely at Malta. The threat came not only from enemy aircraft but also from two Italian battleships of the Regina Marina, whose presence was a clear indication of the Italians impending intention to sail a convoy to Tripoli, and 'Force K' sailed on 18 December 1941 in an attempt to intercept it. It was blowing hard from the south-west with a heavy sea running, at 0100 hours when the ships of 'Force K' were approximately twenty miles from Tripoli, when H.M.S. Neptune triggered a mine with one of her paravanes. Directly behind her, H.M.S. Aurora also triggered a mine. Whilst going full astern, H.M.S. Neptune triggered two more mines that damaged her propellers and steering gear. 'Force K' was in a deep-water minefield. During the following three hours there were many attempts to assist both H.M.S. Neptune and the destroyer H.M.S. Kandahar, which was also badly damaged. However H.M.S. Neptune struck another mine at 0400 hours and quickly sank within a few minutes. Just sixteen men survived the ordeal and managed to climb aboard a raft, but during the next five days they died one after another, and only John Norman Walton survived.

MACFADDEN. AUBREY. Flight Lieutenant, 42510.

258 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died Saturday 5 April 1942. Aged 42.

Son of Francis and Lucy McFadden.

Aubrey attended Ashford Grammar School 1929-1933 where he is commemorated in the school Second World War, Book of Remembrance, and also on the Singapore Memorial. Column 412.

Based at the Ratmalana and Colombo Racecourses, Ceylon, 258 Squadron, R.A.F. had precious little time in getting their Hawker Hurricanes airborne during the carrier based attack led by Japanese 'Zero' fighters on 5 April 1942, when the first bombs were dropped on the island at 0700 hours. All the squadron's aircraft actually managed to take off, and along with pilots of 30 Squadron R.A.F. gave a good account of themselves, despite being outnumbered about six to one. As on that Easter Sunday morning the Royal Air Force had only about 30 aircraft against that of 125 planes of the enemy, which was comprised of 36 Zero fighters, escorting 53 Kate attack bombers, and 36 Val dive bombers.. Although only three Japanese aircraft were shot down near Colombo, it would appear that about seventy actually failed to rejoin the aircraft carriers of Admiral Nagumo. Some of the enemy aircraft having been damaged by the R.A.F. fighters, and those which were hit by the guns of the Ceylon Garrison Artillery, and of the Royal Artillery. In addition to those losses were others known to have been lost in Colombo harbour during the attacks there, which were hit by ships gunners, but not admitted by the Japanese. Although Ceylon had been ill prepared to deal with an enemy attack, the invaluable information sent by Squadron Leader (later Air Commodore) Leonard Birchall, of 413 Squadron, R.A.F. the day before the attacks, doubtless saved lives. He took off on a reconnaissance mission from Koggala in a Catalina flying boat, when he sighted the Japanese fleet some 350 nautical miles off the land towards the south. No sooner had he radioed the news of

his findings back to Colombo, than his plane was shot down by a Zero fighter from the aircraft carrier Hiryū, and he was taken prisoner by the Japanese.

MAGEE, JOHN H. Radio Officer.

Merchant Navy, SS Port Brisbane (London).

Died 14 November 1942. Aged 54.

Son of Joseph and Anna Magee.

Husband of Margaret Magee of Willesborough Lees, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Becklington War Cemetery, Soltau, Niedersachsen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 17. A. 12.

John was a recipient of Lloyd's War Medal for Bravery at Sea, which had been instituted in December 1940 with the approval of the Admiralty and Ministry of Shipping, to be bestowed on officers and men of the Merchant Navy and fishing fleet in cases of "Exceptional Gallantry at Sea in time of War," it has only ever been sparingly awarded with 530 being given in the Second World War. Some recipients have been also later awarded an addition national honour, such as the George Medal or a grade in the Order of the British Empire etcetera. Built in 1923, the 8,315 ton Port Line, SS Port Brisbane commanded by Master Harry Steele, was sunk by the German surface raider 'Penguin' commanded by Kapitän zur See, Ernest-Felix Krüder on 21 November 1940, in the Indian Ocean. At the time of her loss, John's ship was laden with 5,000 tons of meat, butter, cheese, and 3,000 tons of wool bound for the United Kingdom. Formerly the 7,766 ton Kandelfels, Penguin was second only to the Atlantis as the most successful, it captured or sank more ships than any other raider, her tally of 28 ships, to total 136,551 tons, all achieved in less than a year, from 22 June 1940 to 8 May 1941. Penguin became the first of the German Auxiliary Cruisers to be lost when she was sunk by H.M.S. Cornwall on 8 May 1941.

MAIDSTONE, CECIL. Able Seaman, C/JX148889.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Foxhound (H69),

Died 13 April 1940. Aged 20.

Son of Albert and Daisey Florence Maidstone of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent, and the Chatham Naval Memorial. Column 35. Row 3.

Of particular significance is the date of Cecil's demise, as it was the day of the start of the 'Second Battle of Narvik', Cecil's ship being one in a force of ten Royal Navy ships commanded by Vice Admiral William H Whitworth C.B., D.S.O., that sailed up the Ofotfjord and engaged the remaining enemy ships there that were then under the command of Fregattenkapitän (Commander) Erich Bey, and short of fuel and ammunition. Seven German destroyers in the Ofotfjord, including the Diether von Roeder, Erich Koellner, and Hermann Kunne, were sunk, and aircraft from the aircraft carrier H.M.S. Furious supported the Royal Navy ships, with one aircraft sinking the German submarine U-64. At 1415 hours the Royal Navy destroyer H.M.S. Cossack and the German destroyer Bruno Heineman engage each other, but with Cecil's ship firing the shot that finally sinks the Bruno Heineman. One of the Royal Navy ships was sunk during the battle. Later in the action, landing parties were sent ashore and captured Narvik. It has unfortunately not been possible to ascertain how or when Cecil died during the above engagement. Built by John Brown Shipbuilding & Engineering Company Ltd. Of Clydebank, Scotland, H.M.S. Foxhound was a 1405 ton 'F' class destroyer, and was commissioned on 6 June 1935. She ended her service with the Royal Navy on 8 February 1944, at which time she went to the Royal

Canadian Navy, and became H.M.C.S. Qu'appelle. Decommissioned on 27 May 1946 she was broken up in 1948.

MARSH, VICTOR STEPHEN. Sergeant, 574642.

120 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 12 August 1942. Aged 20.

Son of Stephen Francis and Adelaide Marsh of Ashford, Kent.

Victor attended Ashford grammar School 1933-1938, where he is commemorated in the school Second World War, Book of Remembrance. Also commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 89.

At the time of Victor's demise his squadron were part of 15 Group, Coastal Command based at Ballykelly, Londonderry, Northern Ireland, and equipped with B24 long range Liberators. Whilst engaged on anti-submarine patrols and on convoy protection duties over the Atlantic Ocean the squadron sunk fourteen U-boats, the first being the U-597 which was sunk off south west Iceland on 12 October 1942 with the loss of all 49 hands. When the squadron had its first uboat success it was exactly two months after Victor lost his life over the Atlantic on a convoy protection operation. Ultimately 120 Squadron, Royal Air Force, ended the Second World War with the highest number of U-boat kills, attributed to any of the Coastal Command, Royal Air Force squadrons.

MARSHALL, W. C. No clear trace.

MASON, KENNETH REAVLEY. Flight Lieutenant (Flying Instructor), 66563.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 18 May 1943. Aged 29.

Son of Jackson and Ethel Maud Mason.

Husband of Winnifred L. Mason of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

L.R.A.M. (Eloc) Diploma Eng Lit (Lond).

Buried Elloughton (St. Mary) Churchyard Extension, Yorkshire.

Grave Ref: Row 6. Grave 6.

Purely conjecture as no supporting evidence has been sighted, but in view of where Kenneth is at rest, and considering his job whilst serving in the Royal Air Force, it would seem likely that he was probably based at R.A.F. Brighton, Yorkshire, and lost his life during a instructional training flight.

MASTERS, BERNARD FRANCIS. Bombadier, 837049.

Royal Artillery.

Died 14 March 1941. Aged 23.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of John and Jane Teresa Mathews of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 36. Grave 97.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

MAYHEW, ALEC ALBERT EDWARD. Leading Seaman, C/JX230880.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Saunders.

Died 4 February 1943. Aged 34.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Fayid War Cemetery, Egypt. Grave Ref: 5. A. 3.

At the time when Alec died, H.M.S. Saunders was a Royal Naval Air Station at Kabrit, Egypt located near the Suez Canal.

MELLOR, RUPERT EDWARD. Flying Officer (Navigator), 181354.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 151 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 1 October 1945. Aged 30.

Son of Fred and Ellora Pamela Mellor.

Husband of Margaret Esme Mellor of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 2. Grave 93.

Rupert's squadron, having played prominent role during the 'Battle of Britain, it was decided in November 1940 to transfer the squadron to a night fighting role, and it was moved to R.A.F. Bramcote, Warwickshire, where it also received Boulton and Paul Defiant aircraft. Night operations were commenced in February 1941 from its base at R.A.F. Wittering and a detachment at R.A.F. Coltishall. In April 1942, Mosquitos began to arrive and the squadrons remaining Hurricanes were immediately retired although it was July before the Defiant's left, leaving the squadron solely equipped with the Mosquito. From April 1943, as a result of the declining night interceptions being made, the squadron moved to R.A.F. Colerne, from where it began intruder operations. In October 1944, a move to R.A.F. Castle Camps led to it adopting the bomber support role, and these were continued from East Anglia until the end of the war. A few days later the squadron moved back to the West Country, disbanding at Weston Zoyland, Somerset on 10 October 1946.

MERCER, D. I.

Probably a civilian casualty commemorated on Ashford civic war memorial as D. I. Mercer, and on the Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial as Daisy Mercer. Recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as under:- **MERCER**, DAISEY IRIS.

Died 6 November 1940. Aged 38.

Daughter of F M Mercer of "The Knoll," Kennington, Ashford, Kent and the late Arthur Mercer.

On 24 September 1940, the Woolston factory at Southampton which was producing Spitfires was bombed, killing 100 workers, though not damaging the factory. Two days later, the factory was heavily damaged by bombing, and another thirty more workers died. Although the first heavy raid by enemy bombers on Southampton, did not take place until 23 November 1940, and which was a prelude to what is still remembered in Southampton as the "Blitz week-end" of 31 November and 1 December 1940. Many other less intensive, but devastating raids were carried out on the city prior to these, which although primarily aimed at the naval installations and docks area, many of the bombs dropped missed the target areas, which resulted in a lot of structural damage within the city and sadly loss of life. But of the fifty seven air raids on the city, arguably the one which still evokes the saddest memories is the incident when Miss Mercer, a School Teacher, she being one of six adults who were killed when direct hits on the Civic Centre School of Art, Southampton resulted in the deaths of over 30 people. A bomb which entered through the roof of the building

exploded in the basement Air Raid Shelter. Tragically most of those who lost their lives were local 13 and 14 year old girls, sadly only one of the girls survived the carnage to relate to rescuers what had happened. Her school friends were killed when the 500lb bomb landing on the Arts Block in the Civic Centre, Southampton, where children were having a lesson at 1445 hours on 6 November 1940. Twelve bombs fell on Southampton during the raid, Not all the children had gone to the air raid shelter, but in the end this probably made very little difference to the outcome. The bomb tore right through the roof and floors and exploded inside the basement where children were hiding. Fourteen children including Kent girl, Norah Edson of 15 Heathfield Avenue, Dover, Kent died inside the shelter, unable to get out or raise help.

MILLEN, HAROLD LESLIE. Petty Officer, C/J106312.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Goodall. (K479).

Died 29 April 1945. Aged 39.

Son of George and Jane Elizabeth Millen.

Husband of Anna Christina Millen of Battersea, London.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 80. Column 2.

Harold's ship which was a 1430 ton 'Captain' class frigate, which built at the Boston Navy Yard, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A. She had been sent to Britain as a 'Lend Lease' vessel from the U.S.A. in October 1943, and was originally intended to be named for U.S. Navy service as the Reybold (DE-275). As part of convoy RA-66 which was the last convoy to be attacked in the war, H.M.S. Goodall, commanded by Lieutenant-Commander James Vaudalle Fulton R.N.V.R., of Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland, left the Kola Peninsular in north west Russia bound for Loch Ewe, Scotland. At 2200 hours 29 April 1945 when the ship was at the entrance to the Kola Inlet in the Barents Sea, seven miles to the north of Murmansk, Russia, her magazine was struck by a torpedo fired from the type VIIC German submarine U-286, which was commanded by 35 year old Oberleutnant zur See, Willi Dietrich, that cost the lives of 140 of the ships crew. All those on board having been spared only an hour previously when a torpedo from U-968 missed H.M.S. Goodall. Shortly after the sinking of H.M.S. Goodall, the 51 German submariners aboard the U-286 also perished, as the result of a depth charge attack by the Royal Navy frigates H.M.S. Cotton, H.M.S. Loch Insh and H.M.S. Anquilla. H.M.S. Anquilla fired her guns the following day, but not in anger, as her crew had the odious duty of firing a coup-de-grace, sinking the severely damaged H.M.S. Goodall.

MILTON, ALBERT STANLEY.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 21.

Son of Albert Samuel and Nellie Milton of 21 Dane Road, Ramsgate, Isle of Thanet, Kent.

Albert died at Stanhays Agricultural Engineering Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

MIRES, ARTHUR DOUGLAS. Able Seaman, C/JX149734.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Kelly.

Died at sea 9 May 1940. Aged 19.

Son of Frederick Bernard and Ada Amelia Mires of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 35. Column 3.

Built by Hawthorn Leslie & Co. of Hebburn-on-Tyne, H.M.S. Kelly, a was a 1690 ton K class destroyer with a ships compliment of 183, she was commissioned on 23

August 1939. At the time of her loss she was commanded by Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten K.G., D.S.O., R.N., and which was sunk by German Stuka dive bombers south of Crete on the day that Arthur died. Prior to her loss, H.M.S. Kelly had sustained damage to her by an enemy mine off the estuary of the river Tyne on 14 December 1939, when she was providing escort to rescue tugs that had gone to the assistance of the stricken tanker 'Atheltemplar' which had earlier it an enemy mine. Arthur's ship was also badly damaged after being attacked by the German Motor Torpedo Boat (Schnellboot) S-31, commanded by Oberleutnant zur See, Herman Opdenhoff on 9 May 1940. Although the attack left H.M.S. Kelly severely damaged she was taken under tow by the rescue tug 'Great Emperor,' and during a hazardous journey of four days duration, both vessels were subjected to several attacks by Schnellboots and German bombers as she struggled back to port. The fictitious ship H.M.S. Torrin, in the 1942 film "In Which We Serve" starring Noël Coward, was based on the wartime events of H.M.S. Kelly. In the film Noël Coward, who was a friend of Lord Louis Mountbatten, played the part of the ships Captain.

MITCHELL, ALFRED THOMAS. Craftsman 7617496.

813 Armoured Troops Workshop, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Died 3 January 1946. Aged 28.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Charles Francis Mitchell and Annie Mitchell of South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Hanover War Cemetery, Hannover, Niedersachsen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 14. A. 19.

Originally enlisted in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Alfred had probably been a prisoner of war who had been captured during the Western Europe Campaign, as most of those at rest in the cemetery fall into that category. Adjacent to the cemetery where Alfred lies, is the Hanover Military Cemetery which contains 3028 post war casualties.

MORRIS, CLARE ELIZABETH.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 19.

Daughter of Major Stuart Morris and Florence Emily Morris of 12 Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

Clare died at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

MORRIS, ERNEST JOHN.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 18.

Son of Mr and Mrs Morris of 69 Francis Road, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Ernest was a member of the Home Guard, and died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

MURRELL, BERNARD WILLIAM. Gunner, 852835.

97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Died 12 June 1940. Aged 25.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Harold and Ellen Murrell of Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Alice Murrell of Ashford, Kent.

Buried St Valery-En-Caux Franco British Cemetery, Seine-Maritime, France.

Grave Ref: C. 15.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery. Bernard was probably a member of 385 Battery, 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, which was based at the Drill Hall, Newtown Road, Ashford, Kent, pre Second World War. The Evacuation of part of the British Expeditionary Forces from 30 May 1940 to 4 June 1940 at Dunkirk, France has been well known and documented over the years, and the statement issued at the time by the Prime Minister has probably added to the myth that France was at that time then standing alone. In truth there was at the time of his morale boosting statement, approximately 200,000 British officers and other ranks still fighting a rear guard action in France. On the night of 11 June 1940, 385 Battery was at St. Valéry-en-Caux, Seine-Maritime, France, and was acting as part of the inner circle of defence, under orders to keep the enemy at bay at all costs, whilst the 51st (Highland) Division commanded by Major-General V M Fortune were evacuated from France. The division had been tasked with recapturing the 'Abbeville Bridgehead' on the Somme. Unfortunately the plan suffered from poor co-ordination between Allied artillery, tanks and infantry, and the attack on 4 June resulted in heavy casualties. The enemy launched a counter attack the following day, outflanking the Allies, and trapping the 51st (Highland) Division and elements of the French 9th Army Corps, who withdrew to the coastal town of St Valéry-en-Caux which 385 Battery, 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, was stoically defending. Major-General Fortune requested to be evacuated on 11 June, but the Germans were determined to avoid a reparation of Dunkirk, and resulting from same, four divisions were put into attack to prevent an evacuation. Despite fierce Allied defence, the 7th Panzers soon held cliff-top ground overlooking the harbour, making an evacuation dangerous and virtually impossible. The 51st (Highland) Division conducting an heroic but desperate defence against the advancing Germans while trying, but unfortunately without success, to eject the 7th Panzers from their positions. Having destroyed their guns as ordered, 385 Battery, personnel marched down into the harbour area of Valéry-en-Caux, only to find that there were no ships waiting to evacuate them. Major Mullens the Battery Commander, later led his men back into woods located above the town and waited there until nightfall. That same night of 11 June was Major-General Fortune's division's last chance to evacuate, but he remained unable to contact the ships that he hoped would rescue him and his men. During the night Major-General Fortune was still hoping for evacuation, and elements of his 51st (Highland) Division were still mounting counter attacks, when the French surrendered, and Major-General Fortune realised that his position was hopeless and also surrendered, on the same day that Bernard Murrell died. It is possible that Bernard lost his life due to 'friendly fire,' as having spoken to a number of veterans who survived the events at Valéry-en-Caux in June 1940, they have made mention of the shelling by Royal Navy ships of the German positions, and that some shells causing several British deaths, primarily it would seem amongst those who had become prisoners of war.

NEWBLE, ERNEST SYDNEY ROBERT. Aircraftman 1st Class, 1287519.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died Far East 4 June 1943. Aged 32.

Son of William Ernest and Marguerite Daisey Newble of Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Vera Berthina Eunice Newble of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ambon War Cemetery, Indonesia. Grave Ref: 4. D. 14.

The town of Ambon, situated on the Laitimor Peninsula on the southern shore of Ambon Bay, it was severely damaged during the Second World War, first by the Japanese who bombed it heavily in January 1942, and later by the Allied forces who attacked it in 1943 and 1944. The War cemetery was constructed on the site of a former camp for Australian, British and Dutch prisoners of war, some of whom had been transferred from Java in 1943, and many of those buried in it died in captivity.

NEWINGTON, JOHN.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 14.

Son of Percy Edward and L. A. Newington of 135 Faversham Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and John Newington Close on Little Burton Farm Estate, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, is named in his honour and remembrance. He was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1939-1942. John was injured at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, and died later the same day of his injuries whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent. It would appear that his father had served as a Private, in both The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) and the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) during the years of the Great War.

NICHOLLS, THOMAS MUSGROVE. Squadron Leader (Pilot), 111973.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 625 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 31 March 1944. Aged 22.

Son of Herbert H. Nicholls and E. Isabel Nichols of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, the Folkestone civic war memorial, and on the Second World War memorial plaque at the Harvey Grammar School, Folkestone, Kent where Thomas had been a pupil.

Buried Rheinberg War Cemetery, Kamp Lintfort, Nordrhein-Westfal, Germany.

Grave Ref: Collective grave 17. D. 12-18.

Thomas was the pilot of Lancaster bomber W5009 CF-Z which took off from R.A.F. Kelstern, Lincolnshire. at 2144 hours on 31 March 1944as part of a mixed bomber force of 795 aircraft, 572 of which were Lancasters. Nürnberg (Nuremberg) Bavaria, Germany, being the assigned target. History now remembers the raid because of a solitary and sad statistic, it being the most costly in terms of lost crews and aircraft to Royal Air Force, Bomber Command in the Second World War. 95 aircraft were lost on the raid, 82 of them on the outward flight, one of which was Thomas's aircraft, it was shot down by a German night-fighter, and crashed near Udenbreth, Nordrhein-Westphalia, Germany, killing all seven crew. The first enemy night-fighters appeared just before the bombers reached the Belgian border, and a fierce battle in the moonlight lasted for an hour. Immediately after the crash of Thomas's Lancaster, the crew were laid to rest in Udenbreth, since which time they have all been reinterred in Rheinberg War Cemetery. Thomas's Lancaster was delivered to 101 Squadron, R.A.F. on 17 May 1943, and joined 625 Squadron, R.A.F. on 2 October 1943, by the

time that it was lost, Lancaster bomber W5009 had completed 458 hours of flying. There is a memorial to commemorate all those who served in 625 Squadron R.A.F. at Kelstern, Lincolnshire during the Second World War, it was unveiled on 25 October 1964, and has the simple but very apt inscription "WE AVENGE," it being the motto of the Thomas's squadron, which was also formed there on 1 October 1943 equipped with Lancasters.

NICHOLS, LESLIE WILLIAM. Sergeant (Observer), 902486.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 9 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 22 December 1940. Aged 32.

Son of John James William and Ellen Emma Nichols.

Husband of Marjorie Nichols of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Willesborough) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section T. Grave 2330.

Leslie was one of the crew of Wellington bomber L7799 WS-D which was flown by Sergeant (Pilot), Robert N. Harrison, that took off from R.A.F. Honington, Suffolk on an operation to bomb the aluminium and chemical plants at Porto Marghera, Venice, Italy. All six crew were killed when their aircraft crashed at the hamlet of Lullington Court near Alfriston, Eastbourne, Sussex. Shortly after the crash the bodies of the crew were carried to their respective home towns for burial. Leslie's Wellington was the only aircraft lost on the Venice raid, but it has not been possible to ascertain if the Wellington was on its outward or return flight when it crashed.

OWEN, ARHUR STANHOPE. Squadron Leader, 76117. (Mentioned in Despatches).

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 12 December 1944. Aged 37.

Son of Ernest and Cicely Gertrude Owen.

Husband of Christina Baird Owen of Ashford, Kent. M.A., F.C.A.

Buried Sevington, Ashford, (St. Mary) Churchyard, Kent.

OXSPRING, EDWARD WILLIAM. Apprentice.

Merchant Navy. SS Domala (Glasgow).

Died Saturday 2 March 1940. Aged 18.

Son of Major George Ernest Oxspring, Royal Army Veterinary Corps and Mabel Bernice Oxspring.

Nephew of Mrs J Atchley of Hampstead, London.

Commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 35.

Launched in 1921, Edward's ship was built by Barclay, Curle & Co, as a 8441 ton passenger and cargo vessel, and named the SS Magnava. Renamed the SS Domala, and owned by the British Indian Steam Navigation Company and was en-route from London to Calcutta via Antwerp on Saturday 2 March 1940. At Antwerp 143 British Indian subjects that had been repatriated by Germany joined the ship. 108 people died from the total of 295 onboard, when a Heinkel bomber flew in low and scored four direct hits on the ship, after which for good measure, despite the vessel being ablaze the aircraft sprayed the ship with machine gun fire. Of the 100 people lost as the result of the attack, 36 were crew including 54 year old Captain William Fitt from Ilford, Essex who was the ships Master. Eventually the ship was successfully beached in the Solent, off the Isle of Wight. She was later rebuilt, and re-named Empire Attendant. On 15 July 1942 the ship and all the crew of 59 perished when she was part of Convoy OS-33, she was sunk by the German submarine U-582 commanded by 29 year old, Kapitanleutnant, Werner Schulte, who entered the sinking in his log with the

name Domala. U-582 was sunk with the loss of all its crew of 46 off Iceland, on 5 October 1942. The loss of Edward's ship on Saturday 2 March 1940 is often referred to by Naval Historians and the like, as being the first Second World War naval action to take place in the English Channel.

PAINE, ERIC JOHN. Lance Corporal, 6291041.
5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).
Died 7 November 1944. Aged 25.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Walter and Alice Paine of 67 Bently Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Faenza War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: VI. C.

From 1933 to 1937 Eric was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School. Eric enlisted in The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) in 1940 initially serving in the 70th Battalion guarding military installations in Kent. He remained in the United Kingdom until 1943, he then served in the 5th Battalion of the regiment in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. During the fighting in Sicily Eric was wounded in the right thigh and evacuated from the battle front and returned to North Africa where he was hospitalised. By the time Eric was fit for duty again, his battalion had reached the Italian mainland where he rejoined them on the front line, but he was again wounded during the fighting at Monte Cassino, on that occasion he was hit in his left arm. After being again hospitalised he rejoined his unit on discharge from hospital, but was killed in the city of Florence.

PATON, CYRIL. Sergeant (Air Gunner), 904673.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 214 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 9 May 1941. Aged 22.

Son of Thomas and Edith Maude Paton of South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on the General Post Office, Ashford, Kent memorial plaque at the Sorting Office, Tannery Lane, Ashford, having been employed by the General Post Office prior to his wartime service.

Buried Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands.

Grave Ref: Collective grave 32. C. 2.

Cyril was a crew member of Wellington bomber R1226 BU-L which was flown by 30 year old Squadron Leader (Pilot), Frank L. H. Eddison, D.F.C. The aircraft took off at 2210 hours from R.A.F. Stradishall, Suffolk on 8 May 1941 as part of a mixed bomber force flying to Hamburg, Germany. The aircraft crashed at Anna Paulowna near Den Helder, Noord, Holland, killing all the Wellingtons six crew who are interred together at Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery. Squadron Leader Eddison was due to be posted to another Squadron as a Flight Commander on completion of this sortie. Stradishall was the home between 1938 and 1970, to several R.A.F. squadrons, and there is now an impressive memorial to those lost who served at R.A.F. Stradishall, the memorial was dedicated and unveiled in May 1994 at the former airfield, which is now H. M. Prison, Highpoint.

PEPPER, PERCIVAL. Trooper, 7889203.
7th Royal Tank Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps.
Died 17 May 1943. Aged 24.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Ethel May Pepper.
Husband of Hilda Agnes Pepper of Bethersden, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 68. Grave 91.
Pre war member of the Royal Armoured Corps.

PERRY, SIDNEY. Master.
Merchant Navy. M.V. San Victorio (London).
Died Saturday 16 May 1942. Aged 46.
Son of William George and Rose Perry.
Husband of Marguerite F A Perry of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.
Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 92.
Built by Blythswood Shipbuilding Co Ltd, of Scotstoun, Glasgow, Scotland, Sidney's 8,136 ton tanker was launched on 20 January 1942, by Mrs W. L. Nelson, and was delivered to the Eagle Oil & Shipping Co, on 16 April 1942. There was only one survivor of the sinking of the M.V. San Victorio, he being Anthony Ryan a D.E.M.S. gunner, from the 45 crew members that were aboard the tanker which Sidney commanded. Anthony was picked up sixteen hours later by the American patrol yacht U.S.S. Turquoise (PY 18) and landed at Trinidad. M.V. San Victorio (London) was torpedoed twice in the Caribbean Sea, and sunk by the type IXC German submarine U-155, which was commanded by 31 year old Kapitänleutnant, Adolf Piening, at 0217 hours, west of Granada. At the time of her loss, the M V San Victorio was sailing unescorted en-route from Aruba to the United Kingdom loaded with oil. When Adolf Piening sunk the M.V. San Victorio, it was actually his second attempt to do so, as the heavily laden tanker had been spotted at 0033 hours, and was missed by the first torpedo which was fired at 0114 hours. The U-boat had to crash dive ten minutes after the successful hits on the tanker because a flying boat was sighted. It should be noted that the commander of the U-155 is the same man who invented the Piening-Route, which during part of the Second World War probably saved countless U-boats and their crews, allowing them to escape allied aviation in the Bay of Biscay. Adolf Piening survived the Second World War, and the former U-boat 'ace' who was a native of Süderende, Tondern, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, died in Kiel, Germany on 15 May 1984, aged 73.

POSSEE, WILLIAM FRANK. D.F.C. Flying Officer (Flight Engineer), 53824.
227 Squadron Royal Air Force.
Died Wednesday 14 March 1945. Aged 21.
Son of Frank and Annie Elizabeth Possee of The Green, Hinxhill, Ashford, Kent.
From 1935 to 1939 William was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School.
Buried Durnbach War Cemetery, Bad Tolz, Germany.
Grave Ref: Joint grave 2. C. 27-28.
William was the Flight Engineer of Lancaster Bomber RA546 9J-J which took off at 1703 hours from R.A.F. Balderton, Nottinghamshire on 14 March 1945 on a mission to Lutzkendorf to bomb the Wintershall synthetic oil plant. As an all 5 Group bomber

force the raid was comprised of 244 Lancasters and 11 Mosquitoes, of which William's aircraft was one of 18 Lancasters lost on the raid. The aircraft is thought to have crashed in the Bad Windsheim area near Illesheim. William and 26 year old Warrant Officer Class I (Pilot), William A. Johnson R.C.A.F. from Lashburn, Saskatchewan, Canada were killed in the crash and are interred together. Maurice Hunt from New Zealand, and Robert Nesbit from Northumberland were injured and sadly died on 18 March and 8 April respectively and are at rest in graves 25 and 26 next to the two Williams, the other four crew members became prisoners of war. Due to his extensive injuries Flight Sergeant S.H.H. Jobson were confined in a Hospital in Holland until the cessation of hostilities and the liberation. William enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1940 and had completed 36 operational flights over enemy territory including Italy and Germany prior to his demise. Whilst serving as a Sergeant he had been granted a commission on 25 November 1943, and had also served with 9 Squadron, R.A.F. from June 1944. Lancaster Bomber RA546 was delivered to William's squadron on 5 March 1945 was lost on its first operation, with a total of only 5 recorded hours. The name Lutzkendorf which was in the former East Germany, no longer exists on maps of Germany, as the area is now known as Krumpa. The site for Durnbach War Cemetery was chosen, shortly after the cessation of hostilities, by officers of the British Army and Air Force, in conjunction with officers of the American Occupation Forces in whose zone Durnbach lay. The great majority of those buried here are airmen shot down over Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Austria, Hessen and Thuringia, brought from their scattered graves by the Army Graves Service.

POTTEN, FREDERICK FRANK. Sergeant, R/735050.

Royal Army Service Corps.

Died 20 May 1945. Aged 41.

Son of Charlotte Potten.

Husband of Dorothea Potten of Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

Commemorated Cheltenham Crematorium, Gloucestershire. Panel 1.

POWELL, ERNEST.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 54.

Husband of Edith Kate Powell of 'Oakcrest', Charing Heath, Ashford, Kent.

Ernest died at Haywards Garage, New Street, Ashford, Kent.

PULLINGER, CHARLES ARTHUR. Able Seaman, C/SSX 18280.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Juno (F46).

Died Saturday 21 May 1941. Aged 21.

Son of William Henry and Lucy Beatrice Pullinger of South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Brother of William Charles Pullinger, who also died and is the next casualty briefly commemorated below.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 43. Column 2.

Built by Fairfield Shipbuilding & Engineering Co. of Govan, Scotland, H.M.S. Juno was a 1690 ton J class destroyer, that was commissioned on 24 August 1939. She took part in the Battle of Calabria in July 1940, and in the Battle of Cape Matapan in March 1941. In May 1941, H.M.S. Juno, was commanded by Commander St. J.R.J. Tyrwhitt, R.N., and was in Force C commanded by Rear-Admiral (Destroyers), Rear-Admiral Glennie. His force was to deal with the expected enemy landing at

Heraklion, with Force C assigned to undertake patrols to the north of Heraklion. During the passage through the Kaso Strait the force fought off an attack by Italian torpedo bombers, and later an attack by Italian motor torpedo boats. Following the night time patrols north of the island, Force C then withdrew again through the Kaso Strait. The force then came under renewed attacks from both German Luftwaffe, and Italian Regina Aeronautica airforce squadrons. The attack on Force C lasted from 0950 hours to 1350 hours on 21 May, and during which, at approximately 1300 hours H.M.S. Juno was struck by three bombs and sank in two minutes, when she was about 80 miles south of the Kaso Strait, and sunk approximately 30 nautical miles south-east of Crete. Prior to her loss she had endured and survived some three hours of enemy bombing. Of the three bombs that hit her, two hit her after boiler room and the engine room, flooding her. The third detonated the after magazine, and the resulting explosion from the last bomb broke the destroyer in half. Whilst there appears to be no contradictions regarding the position of the ships sinking (34° 30'N 26° 30'E), there is however masses of conflicting reports regarding what aircraft actually sunk H.M.S. Juno. Some data shows her loss was due to a Stuka dive bomber from the Stukagruppen III/StG 2 which was commanded by Hauptmann, Heinrich Brucker, and was based on the island of Scarpanto, which is situated to the east of the Kaso Strait east of Crete. Other data states that H.M.S. Juno was sunk by an Italian Cant Z.1007 high altitude bomber, which was flown by Lieutenant Morassuti of 50 Gruppo, also based on the island of Scarpanto. A Board of the Admiralty communiqué concerning naval losses in support of the Battle of Crete, that was issued on Tuesday 27 May 1941, names H.M.S. Juno amongst the ships. Other contemporary Admiralty documentation noted, records H.M.S. Juno and others that were either sunk or damaged by enemy bombers, as being attributable to aircraft of the Luftwaffe, as opposed to any due to Regina Aeronautica aircraft, and in the case of Charles's ship it states that Stuka's attacked and sank her. Five officers and 113 ratings were killed in the sinking, and 6 officers and 98 ratings from H.M.S. Juno are recorded as being survivors on the Admiralty documentation. One of whom was her commander who later became Rear-Admiral Sir St. J.R.J. Tyrwhitt. On October 2 1956, India's First Admiral, Rear-Admiral Ramdass Katari, took over as the Flag Officer (Flotilla), Indian Fleet, from Rear-Admiral Sir St. J.R.J. Tyrwhitt, he being the last of the British Royal Navy officers to hold the appointment as the Flag Officer of the Flotilla.

PULLINGER, WILLIAM CHARLES. Able Seaman, C/JX126978.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Partridge (G 30).

Died 10 October 1942. Aged 31.

Son of William and Lizia Pullinger.

Husband of Gladys Maria Pullinger of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent, and on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 55. Column 3.

Built by the Fairfield Shipbuilding & Engineering Co Ltd, of Glasgow, Scotland, in 1942, H.M.S. Partridge was a 1,540 ton a P class destroyer. H.M.S. Partridge was sunk west of Oran, Algeria by the German U-boat U-565 commanded by Kapitänleutnant, Wilhelm Franken on 18 December 1942. At the time of the sinking H.M.S. Partridge was engaged on an anti-submarine hunt, it being two months after William had died.

RAFFE, FRANCIS WILLIAM.

Died 16 September 1940. Aged 65.

Francis died with his wife Mary at their home, 95 Newtown, Ashford, Kent.

RAFFE, MARY JANE.

Died 16 September 1940. Aged 64.

Mary died with her husband as commemorated above.

RANDALL, ERNEST WILLIAM. Private, 6297200.

6th Battalion, Gordon Highlanders.

Died 4 February 1944. Aged 21.

Born Edinburgh. Resided Kent.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Randall of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Cassino Memorial, Italy. Panel 11.

Originally enlisted in The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

RANDALL, SIDNEY JAMES ARTHUR. Private, 6286591.

4th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)

Died 12 August 1944. Aged 24.

Born Bedfordshire. Resided Kent.

Son of James E W Randall and Cissie M Randall of Ashford, Kent.

Sidney was captured during the France & Belgium Campaign and died whilst a prisoner of war in Poland.

Buried Malbork Commonwealth War Cemetery, Poland. Grave 2. B. 11.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Malbork (formerly Marienburg) is a town on the River Nogat, located in the north of Poland and to the south-east of the city of Gdansk (Danzig). The Second World War burials at Malbork are mostly of men who died while prisoners of war in the nearby camps. Stalag XXB was a camp of some size at Malbork itself, Stalag 1A was situated at Stablack, between Malbork and Gdansk, Stalag 2A at Starogard, a few kilometres south of Stablack, and Stalag XXA, at Torun (Thorn), about 120 kilometres south of Malbork. When hostilities had ceased, the graves service of the British Army of the Rhine moved the graves from the local burial grounds to this war cemetery, together with other Commonwealth graves in outlying places in the area where their permanent maintenance could not be assured.

RANSON, MORRISON WILLIAM JOSEPH. Aircraftman 2nd Class, 621890.

98 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died Monday 17 June 1940.

Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 27.

For about the first nine months of the Second World War No. 98 Squadron, Royal Air Force served as a reserve squadron, and during the period April/June 1940, was based in France, equipped with Fairy Battles. On the 8 June 1940 orders were given for the squadron to return to the United Kingdom, and during the following week all the remaining Fairy Battle aircraft departed to R.A.F. Lossiemouth and then on to R.A.F. Gatwick. During the departure from France, each of the Fairy Battles squeezed a member of the squadrons ground crews on them, which as events turned out probably saved a number of their lives. Several Bombay and Ensign aircraft were used to ferry out stores, documents and some other personnel etcetera, and the squadrons Commanding Officer departed from Château Bougon, Nantes, in the very last aircraft

on 15 June. The following day the remainder of Morrison's squadron, which was comprised of 14 officers and 240 airmen moved off in convoy at 0203 hours, from the Château Bougon airfield, heading for St. Nazaire, which they reached exactly three hours later. With no transport for their evacuation at the port, the squadron then spent the rest of the day waiting at a nearby partially completed airport. Whilst ensconced at the airport, the senior officer of Morrison's squadron was informed by the Movement Control Officer that a troopship would be off the port early on the morning of Monday 17 June. To meet the agreed movement schedules, 98 Squadron personnel marched off at 0225 hours, arriving at the docks at St. Nazaire at 0430 hours, with about 63 members of No. 67 Wing, R.A.F. attached to their party. Via tenders, Morrison and his comrades started heading out to the waiting troopship, H.M.T. Lancastria, having taken some four hours to board all of the squadrons personnel, all were on the ship by midday. Morrison died during the loss of the H.M.T. Lancastria off St. Nazaire, France, he was numbered amongst seventy-five airmen of his squadron that were officially reported lost, and in addition to which, another fifteen others are believed to have perished. The evacuation of the British and French troops from France in 1940 did not end with Dunkirk. British and French forces were still being rescued two weeks later, when Britain's worst maritime disaster of the Second World War took place. On 17 June 1940 the 16,000 ton Cunard liner which was in use as a troopship, H.M.T. Lancastria lay 5 miles off St. Nazaire, in the estuary of the River Loire, and was embarking troops, Royal Air Force personnel, and also civilian refugees, including women and children. All of whom were being evacuated from France, when the country was on the verge of collapse. The exact numbers onboard the ship will almost certainly never be known, but almost certainly exceeded 6000; some estimates have put the casualty number as high as 9000, but that figure is almost certainly wild speculation, The H.M.T. Lancastria was attacked and hit by bombs from German Junkers Ju 88 aircraft which were probably of KG 30, which caused her to roll over and sink within twenty minutes. Although it is not known for certain which Luftwaffe formation the bombers belong too, or even for certain exactly what type of aircraft they were, but the general consensus has been that they were Ju 88s. Aircraft of II./ KG 30 who exclusively flew Junkers Ju 88 aircraft, are known to have been attacking shipping in the estuary of the River Loire, at the time of the loss of H.M.T. Lancastria.

RAYNER, GEORGE EDWARD. Leading Aircraftman, 121784.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
Died 3 July 1943. Aged 37.
Son of George Edward and Sarah Francis Rayner.
Husband of Freda Mavis Rayner of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Campbeltown (Kilkerran) Cemetery, Argyllshire, Scotland.
Grave Ref: Division 4. Grave 627.

RELF, CHARLES TILDEN. Gunner, 894010.
97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.
Died 6 June 1940. Aged 19.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Charles William and Margaret Ellen Relf of Ashford, Kent.
Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent, and on the Dunkirk Memorial, Nord, France. Column 17.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery. Charles was probably a member of 385 Battery, 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, which was based at the Drill Hall, Newtown Road, Ashford, Kent, pre Second World War. Having been assigned an area near the village of Huppy, to the south of the city of Abbeville, Somme, France in an attempt to stem the Germans. The regiment had been moved to make way for the guns of the 31st French Divisional Artillery. The 'Battle of Abbeville 1940,' was in fact really three separate battles, but overall was amongst the most intense of the 1940 campaign, and was of ten days duration. On 20 May 1940 as part of the German Blitzkrieg, the German forces, notably the 2nd Panzer Division aided by the Luftwaffe completely destroyed the city of Abbeville, which had been declared an "open city" but which at that time had not included any legitimate military targets, with the exception of a few retreating troops that were on the move. The city had already been destroyed like that of several others in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and the Blitzkrieg advance in and around Abbeville had left literally thousands of civilian casualties, either injured or killed. On 21 May, the river Somme was crossed in Abbeville, by the enemy forces, after which a German bridgehead was very quickly established. The bridgehead once in place had a radius of about 22 miles, and it leaned against the river Somme and the actual city of Abbeville. With well rehearsed skills, the Germans fortified the area both very well and quickly with trenches, barbed wire entanglements and numerous minefields. A prominent hill, the Mont de Caubert, controlled all access to the city with a large open ground and an extensive field of fire in front of it. Around the city there are many swamps, which made the area not very well suited for a counter attack by tanks or similar. On the night of 2 June the regiment had their guns in position which was in the open at the top of a bank, with the Command Post and Battery headquarters established approximately in front of the gun-line. On 4 June 1940 an attempt was made by the 51st (Highland) Division, in conjunction with French forces, to break the German bridgehead established in and around Abbeville, commencing at 0330 hours, at which time the battery was charged with the task of laying down a smokescreen to the east of Abbeville, during the screening which was in place until midday 1,600 were fired. Despite the contribution made by all the allied troops at Abbeville on 4 June, their heroic undertaking was not rewarded by a successful outcome. With ammunition of all types running short, on the night of 5 June, 385 Battery was in action at the village of Doudelainville to where it had been withdrawn, which is situated to the south of Huppy, at Doudelainville the position occupied provided more cover, despite which throughout the day the gunners efforts were hampered by the constant attention that was received from enemy aircraft. It was intended to withdraw from Doudelainville during the following day, but orders were received to move to Rambures, where the guns were soon in action. The stay at Rambures was of only of a short duration, as at 0200 hours on 6 June 1940 the guns were moved into the Forest of Eu and to await further orders. During the afternoon another move was made, whilst undertaking the perilous move the battery was bombed, which resulted in three deaths and seventeen woundings, as such it would seem likely that Charles was one of those killed by the German bombers.

ROMER, SIDNEY CECIL. Flight Lieutenant (Pilot), 40752.
Royal Air Force, 202 Squadron, Coastal Command.
Died 21 January 1942. Aged 25.

Son of Cecil Aubrey and Ruby Romer.

Husband of Beatrice Maud Romer of Greyshott, Hampshire.

Buried Gibraltar (North Front) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Plot 2. Row B. Joint grave 1.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, 202 Squadron, R.A.F. moved to Gibraltar to patrol the approaches to the Mediterranean. In September 1940 Swordfish float-planes were added for local patrol duties, but in 1941 saw the arrival of the Catalina and Sunderland flying boats, but the squadron still retained a few Swordfish float-planes on loan from the Fleet Air Arm. The Squadron then moved to Northern Ireland in September 1944, operating from Castle Archdale on Lough Erne, for U-boat patrols off the west coast, prior to disbanding on 12 June 1945.

SALES, RONALD THOMAS. Private, 7346218.
166 Light Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps.
Died 12 June 1943. Aged 23.

Born and resided Cornwall

Buried Sidon War Cemetery, Lebanese Republic. Grave Ref: 1. B. 10.

Pre war member of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

SALTMARSH, ALLAN JOHN. Ordinary Seaman, D/JX287389.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Drake

Died 11 April 1945. Aged 23.

Son of John Charles and Daisy Mahala Saltmarsh of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford Cemetery. Grave Ref: 3422.

Brother of the next casualty commemorated.

During the Second World War H.M.S. Drake was a shore based Royal Navy establishment at Devonport.

SALTMARSH, PETER RAYMOND. Private, 14779113.

1st Battalion, Gordon Highlanders.

Died 20 February 1945. Aged 18.

Born Kent. Resided Sussex.

Son of John Charles and Daisy Mahala Saltmarsh of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Rheinberg War Cemetery, Kamp Lintfort, Nordrhein-Westfal, Germany.

Grave Ref: 12. B. 16.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

SHILLING, FRANCIS CLARK. Corporal, 6283331.

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

Francis probably at Courtrai, Belgium 23 May 1940. Aged 32.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Alfred Harold and Agnes Harriet Shilling.

Husband of Anne Shilling of Ashford, Kent.

Buried White House Cemetery, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Grave Ref: 1. L. 3.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial with Francis initials reversed.

SHORTER, EDWARD ARTHUR. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1726836.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 156 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 30 January 1944. Aged 21.

Son of Mr and Mrs E H Shorter of Slough, Buckinghamshire.

Buried Vollenhove (Stad-Vollenhove) General Cemetery, Overijssel, Netherlands.

Grave Ref: Plot 3. Row 4. Grave 623.

Edward was the Flight Engineer on Lancaster bomber JA702 GT-Z which was flown by 28 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), John E. Rule, R.N.Z.A.F. of Auckland City, New Zealand. The aircraft took off from R.A.F. Warboys, Cambridgeshire at 1708 hours on 30 January 1944, and was amongst a mixed bomber force of 534 aircraft, which was comprised of 440 Lancasters, 82 Halifaxes, and 12 Mosquitos to take part in a raid on Berlin, Germany. There were no preliminary diversions on this night and the attempt by the German controllers to intercept the bomber stream over the sea failed. The bombers were, therefore, well on the way to Berlin before meeting any fighters but the Germans were then able to follow the bomber stream until well into the return flight, resulting in a total of 33 aircraft being lost, they being 32 Lancasters and 1 Halifax. Edward's bomber crashed in the area of the IJsselmeer which is now reclaimed land, known as the Noord-oost- Polder (Flevoland), and which is where the village of Marknesse now stands. The five crew members who lost their lives in the crash were buried on 10 February 1944 in the Vollenhove (Stad-Vollenhove) General Cemetery. Amongst the crew was another 'Kent' casualty, he being 30 year old Flight Sergeant (Navigator), Kenneth R. Ball, of Gravesend, Kent. Sergeant W.W. Cottam who fortunately survived, initially evaded the Germans until being captured in Antwerp on 7 August 1944, and was interned in Camp L7, and given the prisoner of war number 564, with Sergeant P. Coyne, the other survivor of the crash given the prisoner of war number 566. Debris from the Lancasters crash site was found during March 1973. At the time she was lost, the aircraft which was a former 32 M.U. aircraft had completed 95 hours, and had served with Edward's squadron from 21 July 1943.

SIMMONDS, EDWIN HARVEY. Second Officer.

Merchant Navy. SS Empire Oil (Middlesbrough).

Died 13 September 1942. Aged 24.

Commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 44.

Kapitänleutnant, Joachim Deecke commanding the u-boat U-584 first sighted the 32 ship convoy ON-127 (Codename "Rapture") on 9 September 1942, including Edwin's ship whilst the submarine was in the 12 u-boat Wolfpack 'Vorwärts.' Convoy ON-127 consisting of vessels of several nations left Liverpool, Lancashire on 4 September 1942, and those ships which were not lost during the crossing of the Atlantic arrived in New York, U.S.A. sixteen days later. During the war years the letters ON was indicative of the convoys which sailed from Liverpool to New York. On the following day the German submarine U-659 commanded by Kapitänleutnant, Hans Stock attacked and damaged the SS Empire Oil leaving her particularly vulnerable to further submarine attacks. On 11 September Edwin's ship was eventually sunk by Kapitänleutnant, Joachim Deecke in the U-584, who on the same day, he also sunk the 4885 ton Norwegian ship M/V 'Hindanger,' thankfully only one of her crew, Georg Monson was lost. As Edwin was one of the 18 members of the ship's crew of 53 who died, but as he lost his life two days after his ship was sunk it is assumed that he died of injuries inflicted during one of the u-boat attacks. Hans Stock and his crew were lost on 4 May 1943, after his craft collided with the U-439 in the North Atlantic.

Joachim Deecke also went down with his u-boat and crew in the north Atlantic on 31 October 1943, when the submarine was sunk by a Fido homing torpedo from one of three VC-9 Avenger aircraft, from the escort carrier U.S.S. Card, which in turn was sunk by enemy frogmen in Saigon Harbour 2 May 1964 during the Vietnam war.

SIMS, CHARLES WILLIAM. Corporal, 852839.

1st Battalion, Essex Regiment.

Died 7 November 1940. Aged 22.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Thomas and Minnie Sims of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Keren War Cemetery, Eritrea, East Africa. Grave Ref: 5. G. 12.

Pre war member of the Essex Regiment.

SINDEN, THOMAS WILFRED. Private, 14370115.

6th Battalion, Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

Died 5 October 1943. Aged 32.

Born Hastings, Sussex. Resided Kent.

Son of Robert and Rosa Ann Sinden.

Husband of Edith Sybella Sinden of Maidstone, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Sangro River War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref II. E. 29.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

The action fought by Thomas's battalion on the day of his demise was described as the Battle of Termoli, which ended in an allied victory on the night of 6 October 1943; eleven other men of his battalion lost their lives on the day that Thomas died.

SKINNER, GEORGE ALBERT. Able Seaman, P/JX394541.

Royal Navy, HMS President III,

Died 8 May 1943.

Husband of Betty E Skinner of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Hull Northern Cemetery. Grave Ref: Compartment 201. Grave 18.

SMITH, EDWIN, Gunner, 915929.

97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Died 6 June 1940.

Born and resided Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Grandcourt War Cemetery, Seine-Maritime, France. Grave Ref: B. 5.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

Edwin was probably a member of 385 Battery, 97 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, which was based at the Drill Hall, Newtown Road, Ashford, Kent, pre Second World War. The Evacuation of part of the British Expeditionary Forces from 30 May 1940 to 4 June 1940 at Dunkirk, France has been well known and documented over the years, and the statement issued at the time by the Prime Minister has probably added to the myth that France was at that time then standing alone. In truth there was at the time of his morale boosting statement, approximately 200,000 British officers and other ranks still fighting a rear guard action in France. Having been assigned an area near the village of Huppy, to the south of the city of Abbeville, Somme, France in an attempt to stem the Germans. The regiment had been moved to make way for the guns of the 31st French Divisional

Artillery. The 'Battle of Abbeville 1940,' was in fact really three separate battles, but overall was amongst the most intense of the 1940 campaign, and was of ten days duration. On 20 May 1940 as part of the German Blitzkrieg, the German forces, notably the 2nd Panzer Division aided by the Luftwaffe completely destroyed the city of Abbeville, which had been declared an "open city" but which at that time had not included any legitimate military targets, with the exception of a few retreating troops that were on the move. The city had already been destroyed like that of several others in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and the Blitzkrieg advance in and around Abbeville had left literally thousands of civilian casualties, either injured or killed. On 21 May, the river Somme was crossed in Abbeville, by the enemy forces, after which a German bridgehead was very quickly established. The bridgehead once in place had a radius of about 22 miles, and it leant against the river Somme and the actual city of Abbeville. With well rehearsed skills, the Germans fortified the area both very well and quickly with trenches, barbed wire entanglements and numerous minefields. A prominent hill, the Mont de Caubert, controlled all access to the city with a large open ground and an extensive field of fire in front of it. Around the city there are many swamps, which made the area not very well suited for a counter attack by tanks or similar. On the night of 2 June the regiment had their guns in position which was in the open at the top of a bank, with the Command Post and Battery headquarters established approximately in front of the gun-line. On 4 June 1940 an attempt was made by the 51st (Highland) Division, in conjunction with French forces, to break the German bridgehead established in and around Abbeville, commencing at 0330 hours, at which time the battery was charged with the task of laying down a smokescreen to the east of Abbeville, during the screening which was in place until midday 1,600 were fired. Despite the contribution made by all the allied troops at Abbeville on 4 June, their heroic undertaking was not rewarded by a successful outcome. With ammunition of all types running short, on the night of 5 June, 385 Battery was in action at the village of Doudelainville to where it had been withdrawn, which is situated to the south of Huppy, at Doudelainville the position occupied provided more cover, despite which throughout the day the gunners efforts were hampered by the constant attention that was received from enemy aircraft. It was intended to withdraw from Doudelainville during the following day, but orders were received to move to Rambures, where the guns were soon in action. The stay at Rambures was of only of a short duration, as at 0200 hours on 6 June 1940 the guns were moved into the Forest of Eu and to await further orders. During the afternoon another move was made, whilst undertaking the perilous move the battery was bombed, which resulted in three deaths and seventeen woundings, as such it would seem likely that Edwin was one of those killed by the German bombers.

SPENS, ROBERT RICHARD PATRICK. M.C. Lieutenant 92060.

65 (The Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry) Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery. (T.A.)
Died at sea between 13 and 15 February 1942.

Born India. Resided Norfolk.

Son of Sir Patrick Spens K.B.E., Q.C., M.P. and Lady Spens of Temple, London.

Husband of Elisabeth Clare Spens of West Kensington, London.

Also commemorated on Lyminge, Kent civic war memorial, and on the Wye Agricultural College, Second World War Memorial Plaque, plus the Alamein Memorial, Egypt. Column 39.

At the time of his demise Robert's father was the Member of Parliament for Ashford, Kent, and from 1931 until 1943 Sir Patrick was also a Commissioner of the (then)

Imperial War Graves Commission and again from 1949 until 1965. As a Captain he had served with distinction during the Great War in The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment), being thrice Mentioned in Despatches and awarded the O.B.E. (Military). Sir Patrick was formerly the Chief Justice of India. It was in India that Robert Spens first started to pursue his hobby as a Falconer, and at times prior to his death had contributed to various publications in respect of same, which had including the Falconer Magazine.

STAPLES, CHARLES WILLIAM JAMES. Leading Seaman, C/JX150887.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Grove (L77).

Died 12 June 1942. Aged 21.

Son of William James and Harriett Elizabeth Staples of 12 Grosvenor Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington war memorial and the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 52. Column 2.

Charles enlisted in the Royal Navy as a Boy in 1936, a year after leaving the Ashford North County Modern Boys School, which he had attended from 1932. Following his initial training at H.M.S. Ganges in Suffolk, Charles served on several ships prior to his demise, they being H.M.S. Ramillies, H.M.S. Southampton, H.M.S. Firedrake, H.M.S. Heather, and eventually the 1050 ton, Hunt (Type II) escort destroyer H.M.S. Grove on which he died. Built by Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson Ltd. of Wallsend-on-Tyne, H.M.S. Grove was commissioned on 5 February 1942, and as such was virtually a new ship when she was lost on 12 June 1942. Having been an escort ship in convoy AT-49 to Tobruk, Charles's ship had only one of its screws working when she ran aground near Raz Azzaz. After being refloated she was reduced to a speed of only 8 knots which obviously left the vessel vulnerable to attack. At 0537 hours on the morning of the 12 June 1942, off the coast of Sollum, Egypt, H.M.S. Grove was sunk by two torpedoes fired from the German submarine U-77 commanded by 31 year old Kapitänleutnant, Heinrich Schonder, whilst the destroyer deployed as part of the escort force of convoy MW-11, which was an eastern supply convoy going to Malta, under Rear-Admiral P.J. Vian during 'Operation Vigorous.' Two officers and 108 ratings perished when H.M.S. Grove was sunk, but thankfully at least 60 of the ships compliment survived, although different books and data etcetera checked show a slight variance in figures regarding survivors. Having been promoted to Korvettenkapitän on 1 June 1943, Heinrich Schonder, a native of Erfurt, was lost with the rest of his crew when on his first patrol in the Type IX-D2 submarine U-200, on 24 June 1943 southwest of Iceland, by an R.A.F. Liberator aircraft of Coastal Command, just over a year after the sinking H.M.S. Grove.

STAPLEY, ROY STUART. Sergeant (Air Gunner), 1896761.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 101 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 4 November 1944. Aged 19.

Son of Stuart and Dorothy Annie Stapley of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 28. B. 6.

Roy had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1936-1937. He was an Air Gunner on Lancaster bomber NF936 SR-F which was flown by 23 year old Flying Officer (Pilot), Thomas J. Edwards, of Abertridwr, Glamorgan, Wales. The aircraft took off from R.A.F. Ludford Magna, Lincolnshire at 1709 hours on 4 November 1944, engaged on a mixed bomber raid to Bochum, Essen, Germany.

Taking part on the raid were 749 aircraft, and was comprised of 384 Halifaxes, 336 Lancasters, and 29 Mosquitos, of No's 1, 4, 6 and 8 Groups. 23 Halifaxes and 5 Lancasters were lost on the mission. Luftwaffe night fighters caused most of the casualties amongst the bombers. No 346 (Free French) Squadron, based at R.A.F. Elvington, Yorkshire, lost 5 out of its 16 Halifaxes on the raid. This was a particularly successful attack based upon standard Pathfinder marking techniques. Severe damage was caused to the centre of Bochum, with in excess of 4000 buildings either destroyed or severely damaged as the result of the raid, several industrial plants and works were wrecked including the important steel works. A lot of the credit for the raids success being attributed to the work carried out by the Pathfinder Force aircraft. Due to the amount of collateral damage inflicted on the night of 4/5 November 1944, it was destined to be the last major raid on Bochum undertaken by Bomber Command during the Second World War. 23 Halifax and 5 Lancasters were lost on the raid, and the exact cause of Roy's aircraft loss is still unclear, all eight onboard the bomber were killed and are buried in the same cemetery. No.101 Squadron R.A.F. were unique in having the addition task of operating the A.B.C. radio jamming device in addition to its bombing operations resulting in an extra specialist German speaking crew member being carried. In the case of Roy's Lancaster the specialist operator was 20 year old Flying Officer Bernard Zimring R.C.A.F. from Montreal, Canada, also amongst the crew was 19 year old Sergeant (Navigator) Claud Terriere from Mauritius who has the sad distinction of being one of the youngest Bomber Command Navigators to die on operations in 1944. Roy's Lancaster was delivered to his squadron, ABC equipped on 16 August 1944, and prior to its loss had been amongst the 771 aircraft that had taken part in the key operation to Essen, Germany on 25 October 1944. When lost, the aircraft had a total of 142 hours flying, and was one of two 101 Squadron, R.A.F. Lancasters which were lost on this operation.

STEALEY, W. T. As commemorated on the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial is:-
STEALEY, DAVID WALTER THOMAS. Flight Lieutenant, 66552.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

613 (City of Manchester) Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadron.

Died 22 February 1945. Aged 22.

Son of Isaac Richard Jones Stealey and Edith Maria Stealey.

Husband of Doris May Stealey of Edmonton, Middlesex.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial (but as a soldier,) and on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 266.

Formed at Manchester, Ringway as part of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force on 1 March 1939, the 613 (City of Manchester) Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadron is commemorated on a memorial at the busy airport. On the memorial is recorded the types of aircraft that the squadron used during the Second World War, and later, it lists them as HIND, HECTOR, LYSANDER, TOMAHAWK, MUSTANG, MOSQUITO, SPITFIRE and VAMPIRE. Initially equipped with Hinds, by the end of the 1939, the squadron had received Hectors which it flew until April 1940 when it received Lysanders. Remaining in the United Kingdom, on the outbreak of war it operated over France on light bombing and supply dropping missions before assuming coastal patrol and air-sea rescue duties. However, it started training in the tactical reconnaissance role from 1 August 1941 when it received its first Tomahawk aircraft. It began to re-equip in April 1942 with the Mustang, which it retained until October 1943. The squadron then received Mosquito VIs from November 1943 and joined No 2 Group, beginning operations in December. Arguably the squadron's

finest hour was when six of its Mosquito's led by 32 year old Wing Commander, Robert Norman Bateson, of Sussex, flew across Holland at incredibly low altitudes, to successfully bomb the Gestapo HQ in the Hague on Tuesday 11 April 1944, at the request of the Dutch Underground. The target building somewhat ironically was located just across the Scheveningsche Weg, from the Peace Palace, where the World Court once sat. In three waves of two aircraft, the former Art Gallery known at the time as the 'Central Population Registry Building' was attacked, at which time it housed a vast amount of Nazi documentation all of which was lost, thankfully none of the aircraft were, and incredibly only one sustained minor damage. There was inevitable loss of life amongst the Dutch and German staff, but there were few civilian casualties in the nearby streets, as the aircraft dropped the bombs from a height of only fifty feet. From May 1944 it took on the role of night intruder and continued in this role until 7 August 1945 when it was re-numbered No 69 Squadron. For his gallant leadership on 11 April 1944, Wing Commander, Bateson, was awarded a bar to his Distinguished Service Order. He later became an Air-Vice Marshall, C.B., D.S.O., D.F.C., he retired on 1 August 1967 and died on 6 March 1986, aged 73.

STEELE, P. L. No clear trace.

STEWART, ERIC PETER. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1722688.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 17 June 1943. Aged 19.

Son of John and Elsie Stewart of Charing, Ashford, Kent.

Eric was a pupil at Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1935-1937.

Buried Charing, Ashford, Kent, Cemetery. Grave Ref: 9A.

STROVER, PERCY ELVY. Private, 5504437.

1st Battalion, Hampshire Regiment.

Died 10 October 1944. Aged 25.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of William and Elizabeth Strover.

Husband of Betty R Strover of Coulsden, Surrey.

Also commemorated on Westwell, Ashford (Kent) civic war memorial plaque.

Buried Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery, Gelderland, Netherlands.

Grave Ref: 9. A. 9.

Percy is at rest in the grave next to Joseph Hadlum from Ashford, Kent, who also served in the Hampshire Regiment but in a different battalion. Joseph was also a former pupil of the Ashford North County Modern Boys School, where Percy is remembered as Percy Elvey Strover. Percy attended the school from 1929 to 1933 at which time he resided at Buck Street, Challock, Ashford, Kent. Following his enlistment in 1940, Percy first fought in Burma before being sent to the European war theatre. His younger brother Bert Elvey Strover who thankfully survived the Second World War, was also an ex pupil of 'The North' (1934-1937), and he served in the R.E.M.E. as a Driver from 1941, and saw action in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany, during the Western Europe Campaign.

TAYLOR, D. No clear trace.

THOMAS, BERNARD. Able Seaman, C/JX145277.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Barham.

Died 25 November 1941. Aged 21.

Son of William John and Ada Maud Thomas.

Husband of Daisy May Thomas of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 43. Column 3.

Built by John Brown Shipbuilding & Engineering Company Ltd. of Clydebank, Scotland, H.M.S. Barham was a 31,100 ton Queen Elizabeth class battleship. Commissioned on 19 August 1915, at the time of her loss on 25 November 1941 she was commanded by 41 year old Captain, Geoffrey C. Cooke, R.N. Bernard and his Captain were amongst the 862 officers and ratings who died when the battleship H.M.S. Barham exploded and sunk. She was struck by three torpedoes fired from the German submarine U-331, which was commanded by Oberleutnant zur See, Hans-Diedrich Freiherr von Tiesenhausen, north of Sidi Barrani, Egypt. Whilst executing their escape after the sinking the battleship, the crew of the U-331 had a miraculous escape, when the submarine plunged to a depth of 820 feet, it being far below its safe depth of 330 feet. The commander of the U-331 survived the Second World War and died in Vancouver, Canada on 17 August 2000, aged 87.

THOMPSON, ALBERT THOMAS. Petty Officer Stoker, C/KX75826.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Gallant (H59).

Died 10 January 1941. Aged 33.

Son of Charles Henry and Emily Thompson.

Husband of Kathleen Margaret Thompson of South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 46. Column 3.

Built by A. Stephen & Sons Ltd. of Glasgow, Scotland, Albert's ship, a 1350 ton G class destroyer was commissioned on 25 February 1936. She was mined and badly damaged on the day that Albert died at 0834 hours on 10 January 1941, when she was some 25 miles south-west of Pantellaria in the Strait of Sicily. The destroyer lost her bow in the explosion, and was taken in tow to Malta by the 1,883 ton Tribal class destroyer, H.M.S. Mohawk. At Malta she was beached in Grand Harbour below Floriana. H.M.S. Gallant was destroyed there during an air raid on 5 April 1942 and declared a constructive total loss. She was finally sunk as a block ship at St. Paul's Bay in September 1943.

THUNDER, ALLAN HENRY. Leading Seaman, C/JX 137686.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Sultan.

Died 6 April 1945. Aged 29.

Son of William John and Bertha E. Thunder of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 83.

During the Second World War, H.M.S. Sultan was a Royal Navy shore based establishment at Singapore, which was destroyed on the surrender to the Japanese in 1942, on the reoccupation of Singapore in 1945 it was re-commissioned AS A Royal Navy base. Probably Allen died whilst a prisoner of war of the Japanese.

TOWN, GERALD 'Jerry' ALBERT RAYMOND.

Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1217965.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 75 (New Zealand) Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 21 April 1943. Aged 22.

Buried Esbjerg (Fourfelt) Cemetery, Denmark.

Grave Ref: Collective grave A. 11. 11-15.

Gerald was a crew member of Stirling bomber BF506 AA-P, that was flown by 21 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Alan G. Tolley, of Wellington City, New Zealand, which took off at 2205 hours on 20 April 1943 from R.A.F. Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, as part of a mixed bomber force of 425 aircraft on a bombing mission to the Baltic ports of Rostock and Stettin on the Oder. Also airborne at the same time was a small diversionary force of 11 Mosquito's to carry out the first ever high level nuisance attack on Berlin undertaken by Mosquito's, they were employed as a diversion for the main force of heavy bombers which had been assigned to attack Rostock and Stettin. Gerald's aircraft was one of 86 Stirling's that were dispatched to attack the Heinkel factory near Rostock, due to an intense smoke screen hiding the factory the bombing pattern was very scattered and with very little physical damage to the designated target inflicted. At 0300 hours on 21 April 1943 Flight Sergeant Cyril Cobb the Wireless Operator (and Air Gunner) transmitted a signal reporting that the aircraft's starboard inner engine was on fire which was the last communication sent. Twenty six minutes after the transmission being sent, the Stirling crashed at Boegballe north of Vejle, Denmark, killing all seven crew and was later reported as having been shot down by an enemy night-fighter. Although unable to find out for certain, but after checking through various relevant data it would seem likely that the Stirling was shot down by Luftwaffe 'ace' night-fighter pilot, Gunter "Fips" Radusch of 11./NJG 3., who by the end of the hostilities had 65 victories credited to him, he survived the war and died 29 July 1988. The Stirling's crew which had included four New Zealanders, are all interred in the same cemetery. By a strange twist of fate (or scheming), another of the Stirling's crew was Frederick Earle who was a school friend of 'Jerry' at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School when he was a pupil at the school 1933-1938. At time when Gerald was a pupil he had resided at Sandpit Cottage, Sandyhurst Lane, Ashford. Now the former school friends and comrades lie in adjacent graves, both had enlisted in the R.A.F.(V.R.) in 1941. Frederick is also commemorated on Ashford civic war memorial and has a tribute to him on this Roll of Honour.

TRINDER, ALFRED REGINALD. Private, 6287440.

4th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died Middle East between 13 November 1943 and 16 November 1943. Aged 29.

Born Croydon, Surrey. Resided Kent.

Son of Mr and Mrs William Hughes of Chiswick, Middlesex.

Buried Leros War Cemetery, Greece. Grave Ref: 1. D. 7.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

TUTT, BERNARD FRANCIS. Sergeant, 1384140.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 97 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 26 November 1943. Aged 29.

Son of George Earl Tutt and Agnes Tutt.

Husband of Hilda Joan Tutt of Tenterden, Kent.

Also commemorated on the Second World War memorial plaque located in Tenterden (St. Mildred's) parish church, and on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 167.

Bernard was a crew member of Lancaster bomber JB221 OF-W which took off from R.A.F. Bourn, Cambridgeshire, at 0030 hours to take part on a bombing mission to Frankfurt, Germany. Of the 262 aircraft which took part in the raid, only 26 were Lancasters the remaining 236 being Halifaxes. All the bombers were despatched on a direct route to their target. Mannheim or Frankfurt? that was the question faced by the German interception controller, who suspected one of the two locations was the bombers destination. Unfortunately for the bomber force crews the controller had guessed correctly and chose Frankfurt, which in turn meant that the flak guns were already prepared as the bombers made their approach runs overhead. 12 bombers were lost on the raid, of which Bernard's was the sole Lancaster. It crashed at Brandau near Reinheim, cause unknown. Although commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Panel 167, as are four others of the crew, it would appear that they and another man are in fact interred at Brandau, and the remainder at Durnbach. Of those interred at Brandau, is the Lancasters pilot, 28 year old American, Carlos Manuel Brown, R.C.A.F. who had been awarded the Croix de Guerre by France. Bernard's father was a native of the village of Aldington near Ashford, Kent where the Tutt family had resided for many generations.

TUTT, NORMAN PERCY. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 812184.

Royal Air Force (Auxiliary). 9 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 10 April 1943. Aged 22.

Son of Percy John and Annie Elizabeth Tutt of 44 Somerset Road, Ashford, Kent.

Norman enlisted in the Royal Air Force (Auxiliary) in 1938, and was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1932-1935.

Buried Oudewater Protestant Cemetery, Zuid, Netherlands.

Grave Ref: Plot 6. Grave 64.

Also commemorated about two miles away from where he and his comrades died. On the opposite side of the road from the cemetery where Norman and his comrades are at rest, which is just outside the Roman Catholic Cemetery, the local inhabitants of Oudewater have erected a small but respected memorial in remembrance and honour of the seven crew of Lancaster bomber ED502 WS-V. The memorial at Oudewater is both well maintained and cared for. A remembrance service is conducted every anniversary of the crash to commemorate the seven who lost their lives, all vehicle movements are stopped, with local diversions put in place whilst the service takes place and is also very well attended every year. Norman and the six airmen who were killed with him are the only Commonwealth casualties at rest in the cemetery, and lie in adjacent graves, which are of course officially maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission; unofficially they are equally well cared for by the Dutch inhabitants of Oudewater. Norman and his comrades lost their lives when the aircraft crashed at Snelrwaard, Utrecht near Oudewater, Holland after being shot down by an enemy night-fighter on the night of 10 April 1943 at 2245 hours. In a bomber force of 104 Lancasters and 5 Mosquitoes, Norman's Lancaster which was flown by 23 year old Warrant Officer (Pilot), Arthur M. White, R.N.Z.A.F. of Hamilton, Waikato,

Auckland, New Zealand. The aircraft had taken off from R.A.F. Waddington, Lincolnshire at 2048 hours 10 April 1943, to attack Duisburg, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany. With thick cloud obscuring the target area the bombers scattered their bombs over a wide area, and 8 of the Lancasters were lost. Lancaster bomber ED502 WS-V, had been on the strength of Norman's squadron since 21 January 1943, and by the time it was shot down had completed a total of 142 hours. It is believed that at the time of his death, Arthur White was flying his thirteenth sortie as captain of his own crew. Oudewater is a village 24 kilometres south-west of Utrecht, 9 kilometres east of Gouda, and 37 kilometres north-east of the city of Rotterdam. The cemetery is on the eastern outskirts of Oudewater, on the northern side of the road to Montfort, and contains only seven Commonwealth war graves, they being the Lancasters crew who are buried in adjacent graves.

RAND, STEPHEN.

Died 25 March 1943. Aged 85.

Husband of Ruth Rand.

Stephen was injured at his home, 4 Station House, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, and succumbed to his injuries the following day whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent.

ROBERTS, LYDIA CHARLOTT.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 41.

Wife of Frederick George Roberts of Aylesford Green, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Lydia died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

ROOTS, J. M. No trace.

ROWE, BLANCHE.

Died 4 February 1943. Aged 51

Wife of Alfred Rowe of 1 Alfred Cottages, Eynsford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

Blanche died at the Ashford, Kent, Hospital

RUSSELL, LEWIS.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 79.

Husband of the late Lydia Harriett Russell.

Private Oscar Russell of the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), one of his two sons who died of disease 24 August 1918, is also commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial. Ashley, the Russell's other son was badly gassed during the Great War, and is thought to have served in the Army Ordnance Corps. He was the transcribers brothers Godfather

Lewis died at his home 10 Hardinge Road, Ashford, Kent.

SALMONS, ROBERT FRANK.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 54.

Son of the late William and Charlotte Sarah Salmons.

Husband of Eleanor Mary Salmons of 263 New Town, Ashford.

Robert died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

SEXTON, CLARISA DAISEY.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 54.

Wife of Horace Henry Sexton of 12 Star Road, Ashford, Kent.

Clarisa died at her home 12 Star Road, Ashford, Kent.

SIMS, CHARLES WILLIAM. Corporal, 852839.

1st Battalion, Essex Regiment.

Died November 1940. Aged 22.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Thomas and Minnie Sims of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Karen War Cemetery, Eritrea. Grave Ref: 5. G. 12.

Pre war member of the Essex Regiment.

Charles is quite rightly commemorated on the war memorial but as a much later addition. Perhaps in the fullness of time all the others who gave their lives, but who are not recorded on the memorial might also be added.

SMITH, EDITH ANNIE.

Died 22 December 1942. Aged 60.

Wife of Arthur James Smith of 35 Grosvenor Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and in Bybrook Cemetery, Ashford, Kent.

Edith died at her home 35 Grosvenor Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

SMITH, JAMES MICHAEL.

Died 24 August 1940. Aged 60.

Husband of Lucy Smith of 51 New Street, Ashford, Kent.

James was injured at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent, on 17 July 1940 and died whilst a patient at the Kent County Ophthalmic Hospital, Maidstone, Kent.

SNASHALL, GEORGE WILLIAM.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 73

George was the owner of Snashalls Bakery, at 85 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent. He died with his wife Mary, son Rowland, and two of his employees. All were killed during a low level attack by enemy bombers whilst working at the Bakery, at which time the premises were destroyed. The bomb which killed them had hit the side of the nearby Public House, it had bounced on the ground, and went under a tin roof, then through a wall, and bounced on the shelter in the grounds behind, and eventually finish up and exploded in Snashalls Bakery. On German records accessed, they reveal that the 'Prime Targets' for the raid on the town of Ashford that day were the Gas Works, and the important town important Railway Infrastructure, including the Southern Railway Works which was hit causing numerous casualties, including fatalities.

SNASHALL, ROWLAND OWEN GEORGE.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 44.

Son of George William and Mary Selina Snashall.

Husband of May Rose Snashall of 9 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent.

Roland served as an Air Raid Warden in Ashford, Kent, and died at his parent's bakery at 85 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent.

SNASHALL, MARY SELINA.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 62.

Mary died at the family bakery 85 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent. Wife of George William Snashall, and mother of Roland Owen Snashall, who also died and are commemorated above.

SOPER, EDWARD CYRIL.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 39

Son of Mrs H. Soper of 136 Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Edwin died at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers premises Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

STEVENS, CHARLES WILLIAM.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 52.

Husband of Caroline Stephens of 2 Forge Lane, Ashford, Kent.

Charles died at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers premises Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

STONE, ANTHONY JOHN.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 18.

Son of Chief Yeoman of Signals Samuel Stone (Royal Navy) and S. E. Stone of Hill View, Brabourne, Ashford, Kent.

Anthony was injured at Haywards Garage, New Street, Ashford, Kent, and died later the same day whilst a patient at Ashford, Kent, Hospital.

SWEETMAN, GEORGE JOHN WILLIAM.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 67.

Husband of Isabella Rebecca Sweetman of 6 Eastern Avenue, Ashford, Kent.

George died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

TERRY, JAMES WILLIAM.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 62.

Husband of Edith E Terry of 43 Curtis Road, South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

James died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

TOLHURST, CECELY ETHEL.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 33.

Daughter of Mrs. F. K. Tolhurst of 42 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent.

Cicely died with her employers and a colleague (Leonard Lawrence), at Snashalls Bakery, 85 Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent.

TURNER, EDWARD JOSEPH.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 47.

Husband of Dorothy Ellen Turner of 38 Norfolk Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

Edward died at Ashford, Kent, Hospital.

TYE, JOSEPH STANLEY.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 18.

Son of Joseph Henry and Winifred Sarah Tye of the Police Station, Lydd, Romney Marsh, Kent.

Also commemorated on the Lydd Romney Marsh, Kent, civic war memorial.

Joseph died at New Street, Ashford, Kent.

VICARY, DENNIS ALEXANDER. Gunner, 895579.

143 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Died 1 November 1943. Aged 22.

Son of William Alexander and Ellen May Vicary of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 5. Grave 25.

Dennis is also commemorated in Ashford Grammar School, Second World War Book of Remembrance where Dennis had attended 1932-1937.

Dennis died of Tuberculosis at the Grosvenor Sanatorium, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, having contracted the disease whilst with his unit when it was based in Iceland. At the time of the 143 (The Kent Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery being posted in Iceland, it was in the 49th Division, as part of 'Alabaster Force' between October 1940 and April 1942. Initially the regiment in Iceland was comprised of 386th Battery, in support of 70th Brigade based near Reykjavik, and 388th Battery based in the North West Sector with B.H.Q. located at Borganes, and with the remaining sections located at Blondos and Reykjaskoli. During the time that the regiment was in Iceland, prior handing over its duties to American troops, two of its members died, both of whom are at rest in Fossvogur Cemetery, Reykjavik.

WALKER, CATHERINE.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 84.

Widow of Lawrence Walker.

Catherine resided at 10 Birling Road, Ashford, Kent, and died at Star Road, Ashford, Kent.

WARD, ARTHUR V.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 41.

Son of Mrs Ward of 20 Providence Street, Ashford, Kent.

Arthur was injured at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent, and succumbed to his injuries later the same day and died whilst a patient at Ashford, Kent, Hospital.

WEBSTER, WILLIAM HENRY. Gunner, 1099804.

137 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Died Malaya 24 April 1942. Aged 30.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Harry and Lucy Webster.

Husband of Alice Ellen Webster of South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Kuala Lumpa (Cheras Road) Civil Cemetery, Malaysia. Grave Ref: 813.

Purely speculation as opposed to having been researched, but in view of the date of William's demise and place of burial it would appear that he was probably a prisoner of war of the Japanese, and when he died was on his way to the Changi Camp, Singapore Island. As the Japanese moved further down the peninsula, a temporary prisoner-of-war camp was established at Pudu Jail, to which United Kingdom and Commonwealth servicemen were taken before being sent to Changi Camp on

Singapore Island. Some of them died, of wounds or sickness, while in this camp and were buried in the Cheras Road Cemetery. William being numbered amongst 137 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War who are buried in the cemetery.

WHITE, JOHN HENRY WILLIAM. Craftsman, 10533545.

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Died 6 October 1944. Aged 29.

Born and resided Kent.

Husband of J M White of Willesborough.

Commemorated on the Singapore Memorial. Column 111.

The Singapore Memorial is known locally as the Kranji Memorial due to it being located in Kranji War Cemetery.

Originally enlisted in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, and was possibly numbered amongst the R.A.O.C. personnel transferred to the R.E.M.E. at the time of the corps formation on 1 October 1942.

WHITEHEAD, FRANK EDWARD. Private, 6283134.

'C' Company, 5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Died 20 May 1940. Aged 19.

Born Canterbury, Kent. Resided Kent.

Son of Edward and Hilda Whitehead of 60 Albemarle Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Le Meillard Communal Cemetery, Somme, France.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) having enlisted in 1939.

From 1932 to 1935 Frank was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern Boys School. Only two war casualties are at rest in the above cemetery, the other being Richard Edwards who came from Islington, London and died in 1916. Frank had left for France with his battalion from Southampton on 19 April and arrived at Le Harve the next morning as a member of the British Expeditionary Force. Frank was killed in action at Le Meillard, to the north of Amiens, Somme, France, during the France and Belgium campaign, whilst trying to affect an escape in a small party, which was fleeing from a massively numerically superior and better equipped enemy force, which his battalion had already engaged the previous day, only a few miles from where he was lost his life. Franks company, commanded by Captain A.D.M. Hilton had been the first in the battalion to sight and engage German tanks with wholly inadequate arms, and also whilst at the same time being hampered by fleeing refugees near Pommera east of Doullens.

WILES, W. No clear trace. Although two casualties are commemorated by the CWGC, neither of which it has been possible to establish a link to Ashford, Kent. This casualty is possibly the following civilian casualty, but commemorated with the wrong initial.

WILES, SYDNEY.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 59.

Husband of M E Wiles of 33 Barden Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

Sydney died at Ashford, Kent, Hospital.

WILLIAMS, R. Not yet traced.

WILLIAMS, D. Not yet traced.

WILLIAMS, FREERICK. Corporal, 6284729.

Army Catering Corps. Attached to the Royal Artillery.

Died 10 August 1944. Aged 33.

Born and resided Kent.

Husband of Lucy Beatrice Williams of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France. Grave Ref: VIII. C. 21.

Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

WRATTEN, JACK. Sergeant, 1264399.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 15 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 26 February 1943. Aged 22.

Son of George and Emily Wratten of Forge House, Brookland, Romney Marsh, Kent.

Jack was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School, 1932 to 1935.

Also commemorated on Second World War memorial plaque at Brookland Cemetery gates, Romney Marsh, Kent, and on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Panel 170.

Jack was on his thirteenth operational sortie over enemy territory when he died having enlisted in the R.A.F.(V.R.) in 1940. He was a crew member of Stirling bomber R9279 LS-J, which was flown by 24 year old Flight Lieutenant, Victor H. Harris, R.C.A.F. of Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. The aircraft took off from R.A.F. Bourn, Lincolnshire at 1918 hours on 26 February 1943, to take part on a bombing mission to Köln (Cologne), Germany, and was in a mixed bomber force of 427 aircraft, which was comprised of 145 Lancasters, 126 Wellingtons, 106 Halifaxes, 46 Stirlings, and 4 Mosquitos. Almost all the bombs dropped on the city, fell within the south western area of Cologne. Of the ten aircraft that were lost on the raid, Jack's was the only Stirling, the actual cause the loss of both the aircraft and eight crew is still unclear, all are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial.

WRATTEN, WILLIAM JAMES. Private, 6353563.

1st Battalion, Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

Died 29 April 1943. Aged 30.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Frederick William and Alice Mary Wratten of Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Christchurch Church, South Ashford, Kent.

Buried Massicault War Cemetery, Tunisia. Grave Ref: II. H. 8.

WOODCOCK, RAYMOND HOWARD.

Died 17 July 1940. Aged 2.

Son of Chief Petty Officer F. H. Woodcock (Royal Navy) and D. Woodcock of 14 Godington Road, Ashford, Kent.

Raymond died at 63 New Town, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery.

WOODGATE, HAROLD.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 43

Harold died at the Southern Railway Works, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Mrs. C. M. Woodgate of 55 Bridge Street, Wye, Ashford, Kent.

LOST MEN

ABRAHAM, FREDERICK CECIL. Able Seaman, C/JX105759.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Goodall (K479).

Died 29 April 1945. Aged 38.

Son of Nathaniel John and Emma Louisa Abraham of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 80. Column 2.

Frederick's ship which was a 1430 ton 'Captain' class frigate, which built at the Boston Navy Yard, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A. She had been sent to Britain as a 'Lend Lease' vessel from the U.S.A. in October 1943, and was originally intended to be named for U.S. Navy service as the Reybold (DE-275). As part of convoy RA-66 which was the last convoy to be attacked in the war, H.M.S. Goodall, commanded by Lieutenant-Commander James Vaudalle Fulton R.N.V.R., of Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland, left the Kola Peninsular in north west Russia bound for Loch Ewe, Scotland. At 2200 hours 29 April 1945 when the ship was at the entrance to the Kola Inlet in the Barents Sea, seven miles to the north of Murmansk, Russia, her magazine was struck by a torpedo fired from the type VIIC German submarine U-286, which was commanded by 35 year old Oberleutnant zur See, Willi Dietrich, that cost the lives of 140 of the ships crew. All those on board having been spared only an hour previously when a torpedo from U-968 missed H.M.S. Goodall. Shortly after the sinking of H.M.S. Goodall, the 51 German submariners aboard the U-286 also perished, as the result of a depth charge attack by the Royal Navy frigates H.M.S. Cotton, H.M.S. Loch Insh and H.M.S. Anquilla. H.M.S. Anquilla fired her guns the following day, but not in anger, as her crew had the odious duty of firing a coup-de-grace, sinking the severely damaged H.M.S. Goodall.

AMMON, ROBERT WILLIAM. Leading Aircraftman, 903870.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died United Kingdom 2 October 1940. Aged 36.

Son of Frederick T Ammon and Kate Ammon of Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Doris Lilian Ammon of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 3. Grave 97.

ANSELL, EDWARD CHARLES. Private, T/10684175.

Royal Army Service Corps.

Died at sea 25 November 1945. Aged 31.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Edward and Emily Ansell.

Stepson of Mrs. K. Smith of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated Brookwood Memorial, Surrey. Panel 17. Column 3.

ATKINS, ARTHUR REDVERS. D.F.M. Flying Officer (Flying Instructor), 65988.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 21 January 1943. Aged 26.

Son of Vernon Cornelius and Gertrude Mary Atkins.

Husband of Molly Winifred Atkins of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Bulawayo (Athlone) Cemetery, Zimbabwe, Africa. Grave Ref: 62.

In view of Arthur's job and location of burial he probably instructed Pilots U/T (Under Training) at the Initial Training Wing, Hillside Camp, Bulawayo, Rhodesia. Arthur was awarded his Distinguished Flying Medal whilst a member of 44 (Rhodesian) Squadron, Bomber Command R.A.F., the relevant London Gazette entry for same is dated 9 May 1941. Arthur then a Sergeant, was commissioned as a Pilot Officer on 24 April 1941, London Gazette entry dated 6 June 1941. Although it has so far not been possible to ascertain for sure why Arthur was awarded his Distinguished Flying Medal, but it was probably the result of when he was returning to his base at R.A.F. Waddington from a raid on Berlin on the night of 20/21 October 1940. Arthur was the pilot of Hampden bomber L4154 KM-? which ran out of fuel, and it was no mean feat when he managed to land the stricken aircraft on Roman Way Camp, Colchester, Essex. Due to his outstanding flying skills all four crew onboard the Hampden survived the unscheduled but spectacular landing. No doubt his outstanding airmanship later led to Arthur's selection as a Flying Instructor.

BADMINTON, SIDNEY WILLIAM. Gunner, 833630.

9 Coast Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Died Far East 17 June 1943. Aged 27.

Born and resided Coventry.

Husband of R. M. Badminton of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Singapore Memorial. Column 12.

The Royal Regiment of Artillery have a substantial number of its casualties commemorated on the Singapore Memorial, on panels 1 to 34 inclusive.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

BALFOUR, Raymonde Derek. Sergeant (Bomb Aimer), 1396828.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 101 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 28 April 1943. Aged 19.

Son of V Balfour and Edith M Balfour of Ashford, Kent.

Nephew of Mrs A. W. Pike of Dover, Kent.

Buried Biarritz (Du Sabaou) Communal Cemetery, Pyrenees-Atlantiques, France.

Grave Ref: Division 9. Collective grave 6730.

Raymonde is also commemorated in the Dover, Kent, Second World War Book of Remembrance, which is currently held in the safe keeping of the Dover Museum, Market Square, Dover, Kent, CT16 1PB.

Raymonde was a crew member of Lancaster bomber ED728 SR-Y, which was flown by 21 year old Sergeant (Pilot), Charles A. Margerum, of Erith, Kent. The aircraft took off at 2145 hours from R.A.F. Holme-on-Spalding Moor, Yorkshire on a 'Gardening' operation (minelaying) in the code named Elderberry region, Bayonne, Pyrénées-Atlantiques, France. With a total of 160 mixed bombers taking part it was at the time the largest minelaying operation undertaken by the Royal Air Force during the war. With 123 reporting as being successful a total of 458 mines were laid by the bombers, which they distributed off the Bay of Biscay and Brittany Ports, whilst others were laid off the Frisian Islands. Only Raymond's bomber was lost on the

operation, the aircraft is thought to have crashed in the target area killing the seven crew who are all interred in the same cemetery. Raymonde aircraft was a Mark.111 Lancaster, and had been delivered to his squadron on 14 March 1942, when it was lost the aircraft had a total of 74 flying hours.

BARNETT, ALAN LLOYD, S.Q.M.S., 2323163.

Royal Corps of Signals.

Died 10 January 1947. Aged 34.

Son of Harry and Celia Barnett.

Husband of Kathleen Barnett of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Peasmarsh (SS Peter and Paul) Churchyard, Rye, Sussex.

BECK, OSWELL. Sergeant (Pilot), 524300.

Royal Air Force. 14 Operational Training Unit.

Died 6 May 1940. Aged 22.

Son of Joseph Hilary Beck and Emily Beck.

Husband of Celia Mary Beck of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Cottesmore (St Nicholas) Churchyard Extension, Rutland.

Grave Ref: Compartment 2. Grave 47.

Oswell was the pilot of Hampden bomber P1274, that took off from R.A.F. Cottesmore, Oakham, Rutland, on a night flying training flight. Following a heavy landing, the aircraft overshot the runway, and whilst attempting to go round again, crashed approximately two miles from R.A.F. Cottesmore, killing the Hampden's four crew. 24 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Kenneth A. Ramsay of Eltham, London is at rest in the next grave to Oswell. Leading Aircraftman (Wireless Operator), Eric O. Backshall, of Ardingly, Sussex is buried in Ardingly (St. Peter) Churchyard Extension, and commemorated on the war memorial at the church. James Foster, Aircraftman 1st Class, (Wireless Operator), aged 18 from Edinburgh is buried in Edinburgh (Rosebank) Cemetery. Cottesmore was an expansion scheme airfield built in 1936-38 on 200 acres, and opened in March 1939. The aerodrome was an operational training school, and No. 14 O.T.U. continued to provide Hampden-trained crews for No. 5 Group squadrons but, from the night of 25 July 1940, periodically undertook leaflet-dropping sorties over the continent of Europe. None of its Hampdens were lost during these operations. When R.A.F. Cottesmore opened, land on the left of the entrance to Cottesmore (St Nicholas) Churchyard Extension, was set aside for burials from the aerodrome. This ground is now the war graves plot and among those buried there are airmen from England, Scotland, Wales, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Eire, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Newfoundland, India, one who was domiciled in Chile, and a citizen of the United States of America, who was serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Apart from those belonging to the air forces of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, these men served in the Royal Air Force. The plot contains 89 Second World War burials, and six non-war service graves from the R.A.F. Station.

BOWEN, PETER DUNCAN. Flight Lieutenant (Pilot), 42481.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 169 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 13 February 1944. Aged 23.
Son of the Reverend Canon Harry Duncan Storer Bowen and Gladys Beale Bowen of Ashford, Kent.
Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 201.
Peter was the pilot of Mosquito DD629 VI-? which took off on a training flight from R.A.F. Little Snoring, Norfolk at 1305 hours on 13 February 1944. Only twenty five minutes after take off, the aircraft crashed into the North Sea off Burnham, Norfolk, killing both the aircrafts crew. Peter's body was never recovered, unlike his Navigator 35 year old Pilot Officer (Navigator), John Latimer Atkinson from Leca da Palmeira, Portugal, who is at rest in Cambridge City Cemetery. Peter's squadron was originally formed at R.A.F. Twinwood Farm, Bedfordshire, as an Army Co-operation squadron. From October 1943 the squadron was equipped with a number of Mosquitos and a Beaufighter fitted with GEE equipment. The squadron arrived at R.A.F. Little Snoring, Norfolk from R.A.F. Ayr, Scotland early in December, and a week later it was joined by No. 515 from R.A.F. Hunsdon. No. 169 Squadron flew its first sorties seeking enemy night fighters during the Bomber Command raid to Berlin on the night of 20/21 January 1944, and remained at R.A.F. Little Snoring, until June 1944.

BOWKETT, THOMAS. Sergeant, 2324319.
Royal Corps of Signals, 6th Airborne Division Signals.
Died 25 March 1945. Aged 30.
Born Bristol, Gloucestershire. Resided Warwickshire.
Son of Jane Bowkett of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.
Grave Ref: 54. E. 2.
Pre war member of the Royal Corps of Signals.

CHRISTIE, JAMES ALEXANDER. Corporal, 2699367.
Royal Army Medical Corps, 214 Field Ambulance.
Died 17 September 1943. Aged 23.
Born Moray, Scotland. Resided Kent.
Son of James and Williamina Christie.
Husband of Kathleen Mary Christie of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Salerno War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: II. F. 34.
Originally enlisted in the Scots Guards.

CLARK, SIDNEY JOHN. Major, 261.
2nd Battalion, Middlesex Regiment.
Died 20 May 1943. Aged 43.
Born and resided Middlesex.
Son of Augustus George and Harriet Clark of Hampton, Middlesex.
Husband of Joyce Barclay Ross Clark of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Chungkai War Cemetery, Thailand. Grave Ref: 12. E. 15.
Sidney was amongst the estimated 13,000 Allied POW's and 70,000 Asians who died during the construction of the Burma-Siam Railway, at least 1691 of whom are interred in Chungkai War Cemetery.

DIAMOND, ROBERT. Signalman, 14417739.
Royal Corps of Signals, VIII Corps Signals.
Died 18 July 1945. Aged 20.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of William Thomas Diamond and Violet Diamond of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Hamburg Cemetery, Germany. Grave Ref: 1A. A. 12.
Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

DUTTON, JOHN EDGAR. A.F.C. Squadron Leader (Pilot), 36071.
Royal Air Force.
Died 1 March 1941. Aged 30.
Son of Edgar and Kitty Dutton of Rotherham, Yorkshire.
Husband of Florence Mary Dutton of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Hooton Roberts (St John the Baptist) Churchyard, Yorkshire.
Grave Ref: North West Part. Row 3. Grave 14.
John was awarded the Air Force Cross whilst a Flight Lieutenant, London Gazette entry dated 31 December 1940.

ELCOCK, WILLIAM. Private, 5504169.
7th Battalion, Hampshire Regiment.
Died 2 August 1944.
Born and resided Berkshire.
Son of Robert Basil and Margaret Louise Elcock.
Husband of Stella Florence Elcock of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Hottot-Les-Bagues War Cemetery, Calvados, France. Grave Ref: VII. C. 8.

ELDRIDGE, RONALD JAMES. Private, 10531809.
Royal Army Ordnance Corps, 4 Ordnance Stores Company.
Died 4 August 1943. Aged 22.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of William Thomas Denward Eldridge and Kate Eldridge of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Chungkai War Cemetery, Thailand. Grave Ref: 7. H. 7.
Robert was amongst the estimated 13,000 Allied POW's and 70,000 Asians who died during the construction of the Burma-Thailand Railway, 1691 of whom are interred in Chungkai War Cemetery.
Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

FIELDER, RONALD ERNEST. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1852280.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 115 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 8 June 1944. Aged 26.
Son of Ernest and Georgina Fielder.
Husband of Elsie Mary Fielder of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Clinchy Northern Cemetery, Hauts-de-Seine, France.
Grave Ref: Plot 16. Row 9. Collective grave 2-3.
Ronald was the Flight Engineer of Lancaster bomber ND760 A4-K which took off at 0031 hours on 8 June 1944 from R.A.F. Witchford, Cambridgeshire. Piloting the aircraft was 28 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Charles H. Quinton, of Longton, Staffordshire. Ronald's Lancaster was in a mixed bomber force of 337 aircraft comprised of 195 Halifaxes, 122 Lancasters, and 20 Mosquitos engaged on Operation

Chevreusse, which attacked railway targets at Achères, Juvisy, Massey Palaiseau and Versailles. Bombing conditions were better than on the previous night, which resulted in all the targets being accurately bombed. Although no details are available, it is thought that fewer civilians were killed during the raid. The targets were mostly more distant from the battle front than those recently attacked and German night fighters had more time to intercept the bomber forces. An accurate attack by Lancasters and Mosquitoes of 1, 5 and 8 Groups that reached the intended target of the raid on which Ronald and his six fellow crewmen died, held up some of the enemy reinforcements (notably tanks) and preventing them from reaching the advancing allied landing force following the D-Day landings. Six roads which converge at Foret De Cerisy equidistant of St Lo and Bayeux were bombed, as was the surrounding wooded area thought to have contained enemy armoured units and fuel dumps. Not all of the 112 Lancasters deployed on the raid made the return trip as 6 were lost, all being of 115 Squadron, R.A.F. Ronald's aircraft was destroyed before reaching the intended target, its bomb load exploded in mid-air over Puteaux in the north west suburbs of Paris when it was shot down by an enemy night-fighter, with much of the debris from the resulting explosion raining down on the Quai Lahonal. All Ronald's aircrafts crew are at rest in the same cemetery. A former aircraft on the strength of 75 Squadron, R.A.F., Lancaster bomber ND760 was delivered to 115 Squadron, R.A.F. in March 1944 and when lost the bomber had completed a total of 125 hours.

GIBBS, FREDERICK GEORGE. Corporal, 5832886.
4th Battalion, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.
Died 6 January 1944. Aged 21.
Born Suffolk. Resided Kent.
Husband of Stella Valerie Gibbs of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Taukkyan War Cemetery, Myanmar. Grave Ref: 3. D. 18.
Originally enlisted in the Suffolk Regiment.

GREENWOOD, JOSEPH THOMAS. Corporal, 1274826.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
Died 7 November 1945.
Husband of D. E. Greenwood of Ashford, Kent.
Charing, Ashford, (Kent County) Crematorium.
During the Second World War 60 servicemen and women were cremated at Charing (Kent County) Crematorium. They are commemorated by name on a Portland stone panel set into a recess on the west pavilion of the crematorium building.

HADLUM, ARTHUR. Aircraftman 2nd Class, 925677.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
923 (West Lancashire) Balloon Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 25 May 1941. Aged 24.
Buried Ashford, Kent Cemetery. Grave Ref: Grave 7467.
At the time of Arthur's demise, his squadron had 4 Flights of 8 Balloons in the Runcorn/Birkenhead area of the Wirral Peninsular.

HILLS, HERBERT CHARLES. Gunner, 14710038.
Royal Artillery.
Died 10 June 1946. Aged 20.
Son of Cecil James Hills and Ada Harriett Hills of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Kirkee War Cemetery, India. Grave Ref: 6. E. 15.
Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

HUNT, GORDON WINGROVE. Corporal, 567614.
Royal Air Force.
Died 17 January 1941. Aged 22.
Son of Fred Gawler Hunt and Elizabeth Hunt of Ashford, Kent.
Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 55.

IGGLESDEN, REGINALD SWATMAN. Captain, 59266.
South Staffordshire Regiment.
Died 11 October 1944. Aged 55.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Sir Charles Igglesden D.L., J.P., F.S.A., F.J.I., and Lady Igglesden (née Swatman).
Husband of Muriel Dorothy Ethel Igglesden of Liverpool, Lancashire.
Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery, Kent. Section 42. Grave Ref: 91.
Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).
Reginald served as a Captain in The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), and in the Labour Corps during the Great War.
Arguably of all the ladies and gentlemen who are not commemorated on the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial, who should be, Reginald is the person that his non-commemoration is for at least three reasons at least, the most difficult to comprehend. Having served in the British Army in both world wars, and when taking into account his age at the time of his demise he had probably been a volunteer for the latter conflict. His father had been a prime mover, and committee member involved in the obtaining of funding etcetera, for the construction of the towns civic war memorial at the cessation of the Great War. As if to compound the oversight of Reginald's non-commemoration and remembrance, unlike the vast majority of the Boroughs fallen who "lie in some foreign field," he is at rest in ASHFORD, KENT. Reginald and **ALL** those who are classified as 'non-commemorations,' should unquestionably have their names added alongside their fellow Ashfordians that paid the ultimate price of sacrifice, and who have quite properly been both honoured and remembered by their inclusion on the memorial. Although the town of Ashford is in fact not the worst in Kent for war memorial omissions appertaining to both world wars, it is something that should be redressed as a matter of urgency.

IRONS, CHARLES DOUGLAS. Petty Officer, C/SX 52.

Royal Navy.

Died 12 July 1947. Aged 56.

Born Isle of Sheppy, Kent 16 February 1891

Son of Charles and Louisa Priscilla Irons.

Husband of Edith Winifred Irons of Ashford.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 8. Grave 24.

It would unfortunately take up far too much space if the complete record of movements etcetera were entered at this commemoration to him relating to Charles naval career. Charles enlisted at Chatham on his eighteenth birthday for a 12 year engagement, his original number, rank and posting being 236788 Boy 2nd Class, H.M.S. Ganges. Following his H.M.S. Ganges training Charles went to H.M.S. Impregnable where he was upgraded to Boy 1st Class. He became an Ordinary Signaller whilst onboard H.M.S. Cornwallis, and later a Signaller. Serving onboard H.M.S. Tyne Charles became a Leading Signaller, and whilst aboard H.M.S. Lord Nelson was promoted to Yeoman of Signals. Quite early in his Royal Navy career, Charles passed his Educational requirements for Petty Officer R.N., and was awarded his Education Certificate for same on 3 February 1912. On the day of completion of his initial 12 year engagement (16 February 1921) Charles re-enlisted in the Royal Navy. During his many years of service he was the recipient of several Good Conduct Badges and was also awarded the Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Although a post war death, Charles is recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Although cause of death has not yet been ascertained to find out Charles's cause of death, or if it was war related, it seemed right to briefly commemorate him here.

JACKMAN, PERCY. Signaller, 19128178.

Royal Corps of Signals.

Died 24 March 1947. Aged 19.

Son of C F Jackman and Dorothy Jackman of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford Cemetery. Grave Ref: Consecrated Plot Old Cemetery. Grave 170.

Originally enlisted in the General Service Corps.

Although cause of death has not yet been ascertained to find out Percy's cause of death, or if it was war related, it seemed right to briefly commemorate him here.

JACOBS, NORMAN EDWARDS. Leading Aircraftman, 526265.

48 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 20 May 1940. Aged 22.

Son of Horace John and Poppy Mary Jacobs of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 23.

At the time of Norman's demise his Squadron (Coastal Command) were based at R.A.F. Detling, Kent equipped with Ansons and Beauforts, engaged on anti-submarine and shipping patrols. The squadron also undertook attacks against enemy E-Boats (Schnellboots) during the period of the Dunkirk evacuations in 1940. In company with two other Ansons, K8772 OY-G, flown by 24 year old Flight Lieutenant, Stephen Dodds, of York, Yorkshire, (Mentioned in Despatches) took off from R.A.F. Detling, Kent at 1710 hours. With Norman amongst the Ansons four crew of K8772 OY-G, the three aircraft were detailed to attack a force of nine German E-Boats (Schnellboots) which had been located at position CPOX 2706 (Dutch coast). At 1900 hours when the three Ansons were approximately 22 miles south west of the Friesian island of Texel in the Wadden Sea, the target boats convoy

were sighted and attacked. Norman's aircraft led the attack on the enemy convoy, and his aircraft was hit in the starboard wing by flak from one of the enemy vessels, and Flight Lieutenant, Dodds was forced to ditch the aircraft in the sea. Regretably no further trace was made of the aircraft or the crew, who are all commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. The other two crew members of the Anson who perished were 27 year old Pilot Officer, Bryan Booth, of Twickenham, Middlesex, and 24 year old Leading Aircraftman, Arthur H. Gumbleton, of Poole, Dorsetshire. Had Norman lost his life after the decision to make all Royal Air Force Air Crew other rank personnel non commissioned officers, he would have held the rank of at least a Sergeant.

JONES, HUMPHREY CAMPBELL. Second Lieutenant, 150607.

Royal Artillery.

Died 8 November 1949. Aged 33.

Born London. Resided South West London.

Son of William Campbell Jones and Lilian Campbell Jones of Crondall.

Husband of Barbara Eileen Steward Jones of Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Headley (St Mary) Churchyard, Surrey.

N.B. Parent's place of residence is not to be confused with Crundale in Kent, as Crondall is near Farnham, Surrey. Clearly a post Second World War death, but included here to possibly be of assistance to fellow researchers.

KING, RONALD ERNEST HAROLD. Private, 2188501.

46 Company, Auxiliary Militia, Pioneer Corps.

Died at sea 17 June 1940. Aged 23.

Born Kent. Resided Canterbury.

Son of Sydney George and Mabel Ellen King.

Husband of Ivy King of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Dunkirk Memorial, Nord, France. Column 152.

Originally enlisted in the Royal Engineers.

Ronald died aboard the troopship SS Lancastria when approximately fifty percent of the men of 46 Company Auxiliary Militia, Pioneer Corps commanded by Major A.G.W. Tonkin were lost when the ship was sunk in the Bay of Biscay by German bombers. The evacuation of the British and French troops from France in 1940 did not end with Dunkirk. British and French forces were still being rescued two weeks later when Britain's worst maritime disaster of the Second World War took place. On 17 June 1940 the 16,000 ton Cunard liner which was in use as a troopship, H.M.T. Lancastria lay 5 miles off St Nazaire, in the estuary of the River Loire, and was embarking troops, Royal Air Force personnel, and also civilian refugees, including women and children. All of whom were being evacuated from France, when the country was on the verge of collapse. The exact numbers onboard the ship will almost certainly never be known, but almost certainly exceeded 6000; some estimates have put the casualty number as high as 9000, but that figure is almost certainly wild speculation. The H.M.T. Lancastria was attacked and hit by bombs from German Junkers Ju 88 aircraft which were **probably** of KG 30, which caused her to roll over and sink within twenty minutes. Although it is not known for certain which Luftwaffe formation the bombers belong too, or even for certain exactly what type of aircraft they were, but the general consensus has been that they were Ju 88s. Aircraft of II./KG 30 who exclusively flew Junkers Ju 88 aircraft, are known to have been attacking shipping in the estuary of the River Loire, at the time of the loss of H.M.T. Lancastria.

LAKER, GORDON. Corporal (Pilot U/T), 591897.

Royal Air Force.

Died 12 June 1944. Aged 21.

Son of Mr and Mrs Henry James Laker of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Gweru Cemetery, Zimbabwe, Africa. Grave Ref: Plot 2. Row B. Grave 11.

As a Pilot Under Training, Gordon may well have died resultant of a flying accident, at which time Gweru was called Gwelo, Southern Rhodesia, and is situated in the Central Highlands.

LEE, CHARLES GEOFFREY. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1144562.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 640 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 13 May 1944. Aged 21.

Son of Horace and Gladys Lee.

Husband of Mary Lee of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Schoonselhof Cemetery, Antwerpen, Belgium. Grave Ref: IVa. E. 46.

Charles was a crew member of Lancaster bomber LW499 C8-G, which was flown by 22 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Douglas O. Thomas, of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The aircraft took off at 2210 hours on 12 May 1944 from R.A.F. Leaconfield, Yorkshire, in a bomber force of 111 aircraft. Of the bombers deployed on the raid to Hasselt, Belgium, 100 were Halifax, 7 Lancasters and 4 Mosquitoes. During the raid most of the attacking aircrafts bombs fell into open fields, and only a few bombs hit the railway yards as had been intended. Seven aircraft were lost on the raid, 6 Halifax plus Charles's Lancaster, which was thought to have been shot down by an enemy night-fighter, probably Oberleutnant Tober of III./NGJ2. Despite the fact that Sergeant J S. Scott survived the crash and Oberleutnant Tober submitted a claim, it is still unclear exactly where the Lancaster actually came down, but it was somewhere in the Genk, Limburg region of Belgium. One probable indication of the approximate locality of the crash, is that Charles and his five comrades who lost their lives were apparently initially interred on 15 May at Antwerpen-Deurne, but all are now at rest in the Schoonselhof Cemetery, where Second World War burials account for 1,456 of the 1560 Commonwealth burials.

MALLARD, FREDERICK WILLIAM GEORGE. Private, 5676108.

4th Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry.

Died 10 July 1944. Aged 29.

Born and resided Wiltshire.

Son of Frederick Joseph and Ada Mallard.

Husband of Olive May Mallard of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Banneville-La-Campagne War Cemetery, Calvados, France.

Grave Ref: XII. A. 17.

MARTIN, IAN BUCHANAN. Leading Aircraftman, 924725.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 251 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 9 November 1944. Aged 23.

Son of John Buchanan Martin and Phyllis Lilian G. Martin.
Husband of Mary Patricia Martin of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 242.

On 1 August 1944, No.1407 (Meteorological) Flight, R.A.F. at Reykjavik, Iceland was renumbered 251 Squadron, R.A.F. Coastal Command, for air-sea rescue duties and meteorological flights in the Iceland area. Its Hudson aircraft included two fitted with airborne lifeboats, while a few Ansons were used for local communications flying. In March 1945, conversion to Boeing built B-17Fs (Lend Lease) Fortresses began, but the Hudsons were not replaced until August when Warwick's were received to supplement the Fortresses. The squadron continued to operate from Iceland until disbanded on 30 October 1945.

MORTIMER, WILLIAM EDWARD. Sergeant, 6844463.
443 Battery, 133 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery, (T.A.).
Died 7 May 1943. Aged 29.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of William Edward and Philadelphia Mortimer.

Husband of Elizabeth Anne Mortimer of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Hawkinge Cemetery, Kent. Grave Ref: Plot O. Grave 67.

Pre war member of the Royal Artillery who had originally enlisted in the Kings Royal Rifle Corps. In March 1943 the 89 Searchlight Regiment, Royal Artillery, (T.A.), became the 133 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery, whilst engaged on Home Defences within the United Kingdom. Upon becoming the 133 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, it continued in its H.D. role until June 1944 when it crossed over to the continent to take part in the North Western Europe Campaign.

MOSS, GEORGE. Leading Aircraftman, 1290902.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 20 September 1943. Aged 30.

Son of Alfred George and Kate Moss.

Husband of Lilian Ivy Moss, of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Calcutta (Bhowanipore) Cemetery, India. Grave Ref: Plot L. Grave 85.

NASH, EDWARD FREDERICK JOHN. Petty Officer Cook, P/MX52599.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Victory.

Died 27 March 1943. Aged 26.

Son of Mr and Mrs E F Nash of Ashford, Kent.

Husband of C. Nash.

Buried Haslar Royal Naval Cemetery, Hampshire. Grave Ref: A. 26. 3.

NORMAN, RONALD WALTER. W.O. Class 1 (Sub Conductor), 7646173.

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Attached 25th Indian Divisional Signals Light Aid Detachment, Indian Signal Corps.

Died 1 April 1945. Aged 31.

Born Nottinghamshire. Resided Essex.

Son of Edgar and Ethel Norman of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Taukkyan War Cemetery, Myanmar. Grave Ref: 10. G. 5.

Originally enlisted in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

NORTON, LESLIE GEORGE. Gunner, 1469218.
233 (Kent) Battery, 75 (Cinque Ports) (Home Counties) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery, (T.A.).
Died 5 June 1943. Aged 23.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Harold Nowill Norton and Louisa
Husband of Margaret Norton of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Habbaniya War Cemetery, Iraq. Grave Ref: 2. A. 4.
Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.
At the time of Leslie's demise his regiment had been deployed in Iraq as part of Paiforce since October 1942. Leslie is commemorated in the Dover, Kent, Second World War Book of Remembrance.

OETZMANN, HARDY CLIFT. Sergeant, 1465221.
Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.
Died at sea 16 February 1943. Aged 38.
Born New Zealand. Resided Kent.
Son of George Clift Oetzmann and Winifred Oetzmann.
Husband of Edith Isabel Oetzmann of Ashford, Kent.
Hardy attended Ashford Grammar School 1920-1922, where he is commemorated in the school Second World War Book of Remembrance, also commemorated on the Brookwood Memorial, Surrey. Panel 19. Column 3.
Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

PAY, HARRY WILLIAM. Signalman, C/JX135817.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Diamond (H21).
Died at sea 27 April 1941. Aged 28.
Son of Edith May Pay of Ashford, Kent.
Harry Pay Close on the Little Burton Farm Estate, Kennington, Ashford, Kent is named in honour and remembrance of Harry.
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 45. Column 3.
Built by Vickers Armstrong of Barrow-in-Furness, H.M.S. Diamond was a 1375 ton D class destroyer, and was commissioned on 2 November 1932. Commanded by 36 year old Lieutenant Commander, Phillip A. Cartwright, D.S.O., R.N., of Oswestry, Shropshire. Harry's ship was sunk by German Ju 87 Stuka dive-bombers, when the destroyer was approximately twenty nautical miles east of Cape Maleas, Greece, with the loss of 148 officers and ratings, including her commander, sadly very few survivors were found following the sinking. Whilst in company with another destroyer, H.M.S. Wryneck, the crews of both vessels were attempted to rescue British and New Zealand troops from the former 11,636 ton Dutch passenger liner Slamet, that had been taken over for service as a troop transport, which had been sunk, when both the destroyers were attacked and sunk by the Stuka dive-bombers. H.M.S. Diamond was lost the day after rescuing about 600 troops during the evacuation of Crete, after transports had been sunk by air attack.

PEARSON, CECIL WILLIAM JOHN. Corporal, 6085331.
Royal Army Ordnance Corps, 4 Base Ordnance Depot.
Died 19 October 1940. Aged 30.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of William and Bessie Pearson of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Cairo War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt. Grave Ref: P. 267.
Originally enlisted in The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey).

PEMBLE, ALEC JOHN. Warrant Officer, 321316.
Royal Air Force.
Died 30 January 1947. Aged 47.
Son of Mr and Mrs John Pemble.
Husband of Kathleen Pemble of Ashford, Kent.
Alec Pemble Close on Little Burton Farm Estate, Ashford is named in honour and remembrance of Alec.
Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 15. Grave 1529.
The bulk of the following information regarding Alec, has kindly been furnished by Ashford, Kent Councillor, Norman Ayres, a former R.A.F. Officer, who has taken more than just a mere passing interest in the roads on the Little Burton Farm Estate that are named after armed service and civilian 'Ashfordians' who died in or resultant of war service. Alec was a Warrant Officer (Pilot) in the Royal Flying Corps during the Great War, along with all other R.N.A.S. and R.F.C. personnel he became a member of the R.A.F. on 1 April 1918 when they merged to form the R.A.F. Three days prior to the start of the Second World War, Alec was called up to serve in the R.A.F. again, but throughout same he served as ground crew as opposed to aircrew. A resident of Wye where he was a Publican and a Garage Proprietor. Alec died whilst serving in India, which had he have been a Second World War death would have doubtless necessitated burial in that country, as opposed to being laid to rest in Ashford, Kent. Prior to service with the Royal Flying Corps in the Great War, it is possible that Alec had served as Private, 2885, Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

PENFOLD, ERNEST F. Lance Corporal, 6283707.
2nd Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).
Died between 15 May 1940 and 4 June 1940. Aged 30.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of Ellen Elizabeth Penfold of Ashford, Kent.
Husband of Hetty Irene Penfold of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Esquelmes War Cemetery, Peco, Hainaut, Belgium. Grave Ref: V. B. 60.
Commemorated on Bethersden, Ashford, Kent war memorial.
Pre war member of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

PITT, CHARLES ALFRED. Trooper, 6148036.
141st (8th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps.
Died 8 July 1944. Aged 22.
Born East London. Resided London.
Son of Mr and Mrs William Pitt.
Husband of Gladys Esther Pitt of Ashford, Kent.
Buried La Delivrande War Cemetery, Douvres, Calvados, France.
Grave Ref: IV. H. 7.

Originally enlisted in the East Surrey Regiment.

The burials in La Delivrande War Cemetery mainly date from D-Day, 6 June 1944 and the landings on Sword beach, particularly Oboe and Peter sectors. Others were brought in later from the battlefields between the coast and Caen.

POWELL, ALBERT JOHN. Stoker 1st Class, C/KX90127.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Achates (H12).

Died 31 December 1942. Aged 24.

Son of Albert and Vera Powell.

Husband of Margaret Powell of Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 62. Column 2.

Built by John Brown Shipbuilding & Engineering Company Ltd. of Clydebank, Scotland, H.M.S. Achates was a 1350 ton A class destroyer, and was commissioned on 27 March 1930. On the date that Albert died, his ship which was commanded by Lieutenant Commander Arthur H.T. Johns, D.S.O., R.N. was escorting convoy JW-51B in the Barents Sea, along with a pair of light cruisers and four O class destroyers, when the convoy came under attack, from a German force comprised of the heavy cruisers Lützow, and the Admiral Hipper, plus six Z class destroyers. As the result of the prevailing twilight that exist at those latitudes the naval engagement became rather muddled with H.M.S. Achates being hit by unidentified ships, then, from 1130 hours the Admiral Hipper landed several salvos on her. The superstructure and bridge were wrecked, she lost steam and received several more direct hits, sinking in three minutes, for the loss of 113 officers and ratings. Later, approximately 135 nautical miles east-south-east of Bear Island, 80 survivors were picked up from the freezing water. Captain Robert St Vincent Sherbrooke in H.M.S. Onslow, the senior officer of the escorting destroyers was later awarded the Victoria Cross for the part he played in the action; in 1951 he rose to the rank of Rear Admiral and died in 1972. Following the battle, Adolph Hitler ordered that all of Germany's big ships should be scrapped, which in turn led to the resignation of Admiral Erich Raeder, the Commander in Chief of the Kriegsmarine.

RAWLINGS, SIDNEY GEORGE. Galley Boy.

Merchant Navy, M.V. Empire Light (Liverpool).

Died 7 March 1943. Aged 17.

Born 24 January 1926. Merchant Navy Discharge number: R275725.

Son of George and Amy Agnes Rawlings of South Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on the Great Chart, Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial and the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 43.

Built in 1925 by John Brown & Co Ltd, of Clydebank, Scotland, and named Lumen, the 6537 ton tanker was owned by H.E. Moss & Co, of Liverpool, Lancashire, and she was renamed the Empire Light in 1942, by the Ministry of War Transport (MoWT). Sidney's ship was a straggler from the convoy ON-168 on the day he died, when the tanker was torpedoed at 1820 hours, by the German submarine U-638, which was commanded by Kapitänleutnant, Hinrich-Oscar Bernbeck when the tanker was approximately 400 miles off the coast of Labrador, southwest of Cape Farewell. Initially Kapitänleutnant, Bernbeck thought that he had missed the ship, but the Empire Light commanded by Master Frederick Dolton, was damaged and abandoned. 39 crew members and six D.E.M.S. gunners were ultimately lost, and as if to compound the tragedy, a Royal Navy vessel stood by to try and rescue those who remained on the stricken tanker, but could not get close enough due to the prevailing

weather conditions. In view of the known u-boat activity in the area, it was a commendable undertaking by the Royal Navy to attempt the prolonged rescue. The tankers master, three crew members and one gunner eventually managed to evacuate the ship in life boats, and were picked up by the Royal Navy destroyer H.M.S. Beverley (H 64), which was commanded by Lieutenant Commander A.R. Price, and safely landed at St.Johns, Newfoundland. At 2212 hours on 12 March, the U-468 commanded by Oberleutnant zur See, Klemens Schamong sank the abandoned tanker by two coups de grâce torpedoes.

NB. M.V. Empire Light (Liverpool), is not too be confused with the similar sounding vessel, SS Empire Light (Glasgow) that was sunk by the German Raider "Pinguin" on 25 April 1941.

RICHARDSON, GEORGE RAYMOND. Corporal, 4971700.

2nd Battalion, Green Howards (Alexandra Princess of Wales Own Yorkshire Regiment).

Died 12 February 1947. Aged 35.

Son of Florence Richardson.

Husband of Daisey Henrietta Richardson of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 2. Grave 30.

Originally enlisted in the Sherwood Foresters (Nottingham and Derbyshire Regiment).

SAGE, JOHN THOMAS. Private, 745226.

Army Catering Corps.

Died 3 October 1946. Aged 40.

Son of James Frances Sage of Charing Heath, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Hilda Ethel Sage of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Charing Heath, Ashford, Kent, (Holy Trinity) churchyard.

Originally enlisted in the Royal Artillery.

SLATER, ALBERT (Jimmy) JAMES. Lance Corporal, 2584050.

Royal Corps of Signals, XII Corps Signals,

Died 9 November 1943. Aged 23.

Born and resided South West London.

Son of Frederick and Ethel Frances Slater.

Husband of Vera Slater of Ashford, Kent.

Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 37. Grave 50.

Pre war member of the Royal Corps of Signals.

STONEHAM, ROBERT ALFRED. Private, 6019463.

1st Battalion, Cambridgeshire Regiment.

Died 14 March 1943. Aged 25.

Born North London. Resided Essex.

Son of Alfred Philip and Blanche Stoneham.

Husband of Dorothy Alice Stoneham of South Willesborough, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Chungkai War Cemetery, (Kao Poon), Thailand. Grave Ref: 12. F. 6.

Robert was amongst the estimated 13,000 Allied POW's and 70,000 Asians who died during the construction of the Burma-Siam Railway, 1691 of whom are interred in Chungkai War Cemetery.

Originally enlisted in the Essex Regiment.

STRINGER, BERTIE WILLIAM NORWOOD. Captain, 287641.
Royal Engineers.
Died Germany 22 October 1947. Aged 51.
Husband of Elsie Blanche Stringer of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Munster Heath War Cemetery, Telgte, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.
Grave Ref: 3. C. 14.

UNICUME, WILLIAM. Sergeant.
20th Sussex (Hailsham) Battalion, Home Guard.
Died 13 October 1941. Aged 55.
Son of William and Josephine Unicume.
Husband of Agnes Unicume of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Platt (St Mary) churchyard, Sevenoaks, Kent. Grave 344.
William probably also served in the Great War, as Private, G/39087, Queen's Own
(Royal West Kent Regiment).

VANSON, CYRIL FRANCIS. Able Seaman, P/JX370473.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Lynx.
Died 11 October 1943. Aged 19.
Son of Francis William and Abigail Vanson of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Ashford, Kent, Cemetery. Grave Ref: 3225.
H.M.S. Lynx was a Dover base for mine sweepers and mine disposal, where several
of the officers and ratings deployed there, were decorated for their gallantry and
devotion to duty.

WARWICK, JOHN SCOTT. Corporal, 3780432.
2/6th Battalion, The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey).
Died 27 February 1945. Aged 32.
Born and resided Lancashire, Scotland.
Son of John and Florence Warwick.
Husband of Olive Warwick of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Forli War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: V. B. 12.
Originally enlisted in the King's Regiment (Liverpool).

WATRALL, JAMES. Private, 271713.
Royal Army Ordnance Corps.
Died 6 March 1944. Aged 28.
Born Derbyshire. Resided Sheffield, Yorkshire.
Son of Arthur and Agnes Waterall.
Husband of Mary Ada Nellie Waterall of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 68. Grave 32.
Originally enlisted in the Royal Army Service Corps.

WEAVER, WILLIAM. Sergeant, 391936.
Royal Air Force
Died 14 May 1942.
Husband of Amy Hilda Weaver of South Ashford, Kent.
Buried Ashford (Willesborough) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section Q. Grave 691.

WEBSTER, JOHN GREENLAW. Private, 2886296.
1st Battalion, (The London Scottish) Gordon Highlanders.
Died Sicily 23 July 1943. Aged 23.
Born and resided Banffshire, Scotland.
Husband of Ann Webster of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Catania War Cemetery, Sicily. Grave Ref: IV. C. 11.

WILD, ERNEST. Lance Corporal, 4686573.
1st Battalion, Royal Scots.
Died 27 May 1940. Aged 29.
Born and resided Yorkshire.
Son of Ernest and Elma Wild.
Husband of Lily May Wild of Ashford, Kent.
Buried Longuenesse (St Omer) Souvenir Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France.
Grave Ref: Plot 10. Row B. 19.
Pre war member of the Royal Scots, who had originally enlisted in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.

WILDER, FRANKLYN STERRETT. Trooper, 7899190.
10th Royal Hussars, Royal Armoured Corps.
Died 26 July 1942. Aged 25.
Born Kent. Resided Wiltshire.
Son of Franklyn Sterrett Wilder and Gertrude Ann Wilder of Ashford, Kent.
Commemorated on the Alexandria (Hadra) War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt.
Grave Ref: 3. D. 10.
Pre war member of the 10th Royal Hussars.

WRIGHT, ROBERT. Marine, CH/X104541.
H.B.L., Royal Marine Divisional Signals, Royal Marines.
Died 7 September 1942. Aged 18.
Son of Arthur Robert and Florence Frances Wright of South Ashford, Kent.
Buried Ashford (Bybrook) Cemetery. Grave Ref: Section 32. Grave 47.
H.B.L. as above is the abbreviation for Home Base Ledger.



It is commendable that unlike several other civic war memorials within the county of Kent, Ashford has several Second World War civilian casualties commemorated on it. The following are casualties accessed with strong Ashford, Kent connections, whose families would have had strong claims for their inclusion for commemoration on the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial. Inevitably there are several others who fall into the category below, that unfortunately have not yet been accessed whilst carrying out these commemoration researches.

ANSELL, VERA EMILY MYRTLE.

Died Sunday 17 May 1942. Aged 47

Daughter of the late Jim and Elizabeth Staples of Church Lane, Kennington, Ashford. Wife of James Henry Ansell of 53 Coolinge Road, Folkestone, Kent.

Vera who was the church Verger was injured at Christ Church, Sandgate Road, Folkestone, Kent, on Sunday 17 May 1942, she succumbed to her injuries and died later the same day whilst a patient at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Folkestone, Kent. As part of her duties as Verger, Vera had been preparing for early Matins, about half an hour prior to the commencement of the service, when the church received a direct hit during a 'hit and run' attack by a German bomber. 66 year old Miss Harriett May Thompson of 19 Victoria Grove, Folkestone, Kent was killed in the church. As always Harriett had arrived early at the church as she needed to get a good seat near the front due to her having poor hearing. Had the bomb struck about half an hour later there would have been a substantially higher loss of life, as in addition to the parishioners, a large number of soldiers were attending, some of whom were already waiting and formed up on the Leas. On the evening of the bombing and virtual destruction of the church, where only the church tower still remains, a service of thanksgiving took place in the church hall, to remember the two ladies who lost their lives, and in gratitude for probably masses more who had been spared the carnage.

BOXALL, ARTHUR LAWRENCE. A R P Warden.

Died 2 October 1941. Aged 35.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Boxall of 155 Newtown, Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Jennie Rawson Boxall of 33 Park Crescent Road, Brighton, Sussex.

Arthur was injured at Portslade, Sussex, Railway Station on 1 October 1941, and died the following day whilst a patient at the Hove, Sussex, General Hospital

BROMLEY, NORA ELIZABETH.

Died 23 February 1944. Aged 42.

Daughter of Mrs. A. Drummond of 12 East Hill, Ashford, Kent.

Nora was killed at her home 153 Guinness Buildings, Guinness Estate, West Chelsea, London. Her Husband Edward William Bromley (Fire Guard) aged 46, and their two daughters, 19 year old Elsie, who like her father was also deployed as a Fire Guard, and their 16 year old daughter Eileen. Altogether a total of 86 people died, and 111 were injured as the result of the same raid which cost the Bromley family their lives, it being the heaviest raid on the Royal Borough of Chelsea during the Second World War.

CAMPBELL, KENNETH WILLIAM GEORGE.

Died 19 April 1947. Aged 31.

Son of Daisey Gertrude Campbell of 29 Coleman Crescent, Ramsgate, Isle of Thanet, Kent, and the late William Campbell.

Kenneth was injured at Stanhays Agricultural Engineering Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, on 24 March 1943. He died at his home, 29 Coleman Crescent, Ramsgate, Isle of Thanet, Kent on 19 April 1947. From the above it would appear that Kenneth died resultant of his injuries a full four years after sustaining them during the worst bombing raid of the Second World War on Ashford, Kent. Kenneth is commemorated by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

HOLDSTOCK, ANN NASH.

Died 3 September 1940. Aged 50.

Daughter of the late John and Mary Holdstock of Ashford, Kent.

Ann died at her home, 3 Angus Street, Roath, Cardiff, Wales, during the first large scale air raid on Cardiff of the Second World War, it being on the anniversary of the first year of the war, and was amongst several similar (Anniversary) raids carried out by the Luftwaffe at different United Kingdom locations on that date. At 2130 hours (German source) the first bombs which were a mixture of high explosives and incendiaries were dropped over the city, with the docks as the prime target, but inevitably several streets were hit, including numbers 1 to 9 Angus Street, Roath, all of which were later rebuilt. In 2003 a retired local Cardiff Journalist was putting plans in place to both celebrate the anniversary of the end of the bombing of the city during the Second World War, and to also remember during the course of which, over 350 Cardiff civilians who died, including of course Ashfordian Ann Holdstock. Unfortunately he was prevented from doing so by the local council, in case the event would cause offence to the former Second World War enemies of Great Britain!

MILHAM, CHRISTOPHER JAMES.

Died 6 May 1942. Aged 64.

Son of the late Mr. and Mrs. J. Milham of 27 Francis Road, Ashford, Kent.

Christopher died at his home 'Fairlight', Park Lane, Deal, Kent

Christopher probably had served in the Army Service Corps as a Private during the Great War, and was the brother of the following casualty.

MILHAM, MAY LILIAN MARY.

Died 6 May 1942. Aged 60.

Daughter of the late Mr and Mrs J Milham of 27 Francis Road, Ashford, Kent.

May died at her home 'Fairlight,' Park Lane, Deal, Kent.

WHITE, KATHLEEN GLADYS.

Died 20 February 1944. Aged 41.

Daughter of Walter and Florence Hall of 8 Ham Street, Ashford, Kent.

Wife of George William Augustus White, aged 44 who also died with Kathleen.

Kathleen and her husband died at their home, 96 Goldolphin Road, Hammersmith, London.

N.B. 8 Ham Street, Ashford, Kent, is as recorded by the CWGC and is in need of more research, as it would seem likely that it is a corruption of an address located at the village of Hamstreet near Ashford, Kent.

WOOD, FLORENCE ANNIE.

Died 13 July 1944. Aged 51.

Resided at 205 Southend Lane, Lewisham, London.

Daughter of Henry Wood of 20 Fairfield Terrace, Ashford, Kent.

Florence was injured at Bromley Road on 13 July 1944, and died the later the same day whilst a patient at Lewisham Hospital, London.

N.B. In much the same way as more research is required regarding the parental address of Kathleen White, it would also seem likely that the address of Florence's father is a corruption of the full address, with the added irony that it too may be indicative of being Hamstreet, Ashford, Kent.

