

Gravesend Ifield



The Great War village tribute at Ifield, Kent is located in the parish churchyard of St. Mary of Antioch. For such a small parish, Ifield as can be ascertained below has a remarkably diverse mix of casualties commemorated, including a recipient of the Victoria Cross, and also a long serving British army Lieutenant General. Arguably the most unusual feature about the memorial is the fact that unlike the vast majority of forms of war remembrance in the county of Kent, it would appear that all of the Great War casualties of the parish are named thereupon.

The Great War

1914 -1919

BOUCHER, WILLIAM MOORE. Lieutenant. (Acting Captain).
6th (Service) Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Died 20 November 1917.
Born Rochester, Kent.
Son of William and Elizabeth Boucher (nee Payne).
Buried Fifteen Ravine British Cemetery, Villers-Plouich, Nord, France.
Grave Ref: III. B. 13.
Also commemorated on the Cobham, Gravesend, Kent civic war memorial.

BROADWOOD, MAXIMILIAN FRANCIS. Second Lieutenant.
"B" Company, 1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Died 24 August 1914. Aged 21.
Born Steyning, Sussex.
Son of Francis and Mary Sylvestre Charlotte Broadwood (nee Dalison) of Hever Court, Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent.
Buried Hautrage Military Cemetery, Saint-Ghislain, Hainaut, Belgium.
Grave Ref: I. E. 18.

BROADWOOD, ROBERT GEORGE. C.B. Lieutenant-General.

General Staff Officer.

Died of wounds 21 June 1917. Aged 55.

Born Chelsea 14 March 1862.

Third son of Thomas Broadwood and Mary Athlea Broadwood (Matthews).

Buried Anzac Cemetery, Sailly-sur-la-Lys, Pas de Calais, France.

Grave Ref: II. I. 6.

Formerly 12th (Prince of Wales's Royal) Lancers.

Educated at Charterhouse School, Godalming, Surrey which Robert left in 1878.

Having enlisted in the 12th (Prince of Wales's Royal) Lancers in 1881, Robert was appointed A.D.C to the G.O.C. Belfast District in 1892. Between 1893 and 1896 Robert was seconded to the Egyptian army which was allied with Great Britain. Robert had participated with distinction in several campaigns prior to the Great War. He then took part in the Dongola Expeditionary Force and Egyptian Campaign in 1896. As a Lieutenant Colonel, Robert served under Sir (later Lord) Horatio Kitchener during the Battle of Omdurman on 2 September 1898, at which time he was given command of the contingent of Egyptian cavalry fighting alongside British Empire troops. By the time Robert was a Brigadier General he commanded British Empire troops at Korn Spruit during the Second Boer War. Following Second Boer War, Robert again served in South Africa as the Commander of Troops in Natal from 1903 to 1904, and Orange River District 1904 to 1906. He later served in South China in 1906, it being the same year that he was promoted to the rank of Major-General. At the time of his death Robert was the Commander of the 57th Division, and has the sad distinction of being amongst the highest ranked British officers to lose their lives during the years of the Great War.





COLYER-FERGUSSON, THOMAS RIVERSDALE. V.C. Captain.

2nd Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment.

Died 31 July 1917. Aged 21.

Born 13, Lower Berkley Street, Portman Square, London 18 February 1896.

Son of Thomas Colyer Colyer-Fergusson and the late Beatrice Stanley Colyer-Fergusson (nee Müller) of Ightham Mote, Sevenoaks, Kent, and of Wombwell Hall, Northfleet, Kent.

Buried Menin Road South Military Cemetery, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

Grave Ref: II. E. 1.

Also commemorated on the Ightham, Sevenoaks, Kent civic war memorial.

Thomas's original wooden grave marker cross is in the chapel at Ightham Mote. His brother Max died during the Second World War, and is at rest in St. Mary of Antioch Churchyard, Ifield.

An extract from "The London Gazette," No. 30272, dated 4 September 1917 states the following:-

For most conspicuous bravery, skilful leading and determination in attack. The tactical situation having developed contrary to expectation, it was not possible for his company to adhere to the original plan of deployments, and owing to the difficulties of the ground and to enemy wire, Captain Colyer Fergusson found himself with a Serjeant and five men only. He carried out the attack nevertheless, and succeeded in capturing the enemy trench and disposing of the garrison. His party was then threatened by a heavy counter-attack from the left front, but this attack he successfully resisted. During this operation, assisted by his Orderly only, he attacked and captured an enemy machine gun and turned it on the assailants, many of whom were killed and a large number driven into the hands of an adjoining British unit. Later, assisted only by his Serjeant, he again attacked and captured a second enemy machine gun, by which time he had been joined by other portions of his company, and was enabled to consolidate his position. The conduct of this officer throughout forms an amazing record of dash, gallantry and skill, for which no reward can be too great, having regard to the importance of the position won. This gallant officer was shortly afterwards killed by a sniper."

COTTERILL, HENRY. Private, G/3740.

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

Died 25 September 1915.

Born Otford, Sevenoaks, Kent. Enlisted Gravesend, Kent. Resided Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent.

Commemorated on the Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Panel 13.

Formerly Private, 4463, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).

ELDRIDGE, ALBERT. Private, L/9701.

2nd Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment).

Died 7 November 1914.

Born Hollington, Hastings, Sussex. Enlisted Chatham, Kent. Resided Gravesend, Kent.

Son of William and Mary Ann Eldridge of Black Cottages, Grange Farm, Boxley, Maidstone, Kent.

Commemorated on the Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

Panel 11 or 13.

At the time of the 1901 census the Eldridge family resided at East Lenham Cottages, Lenham, Kent. Head of the house was Albert's father, a 39 year old native of Battle, Sussex, who was employed as a Farm Bailiff. Albert's Medal Card Index entry shows that he entered the French war theatre on 4 October 1914.

HALL, WILLIAM. Private. Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).

No clear trace.

LONGHURST, GEORGE ARTHUR. Rifleman, 45365.

2nd Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Died 18 September 1918. Aged 18.

Born and resided Gravesend, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent.

Only son of George Arthur and the late Ada Longhurst (nee Williams) of "Braeside," Wrotham Road, Gravesend, Kent.

Commemorated on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Panel 9.

The Christian names of this casualty as shown above are not as accessed from his CWGC commemoration details, as on all other data checked they show the Christian names as being George Arthur or just George. On the Ifield war memorial he is commemorated as George Longhurst with his rank shown as Private as opposed to Rifleman. At the time of the 1901 census the family resided at 9, Havelock Road, Gravesend, Kent. Head of the house was 31 year old soldier George Arthur Longhurst (Senior), a native of Croydon, Surrey he was a serving Sapper in the Royal Engineers. It would seem likely that Ada Longhurst died in the Strood area of Kent in 1912.

MITCHELL, ROBERT. Serjeant, 11732.
176th Tunneling Company, Royal Engineers.
Died 5 June 1915. Aged 37.
Born Castlewilliam, County Down, Ireland. Enlisted Belfast, Ireland. Resided Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent.
Husband of May Still (formerly Mitchell) of 6, Jubilee Cottages, Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent.
Commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, Richebourg-l'Avoue, Pas de Calais, France. Panel 1.

STRANGER, RICHARD HENRY. Lieutenant.
1st Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment).
Died 13 March 1915. Aged 25.
Born North Molton, Devon.
Son of Richard John and Wilhelmina Key Stranger (nee Klingender) of "Winsford," Istead Rise, Gravesend, Kent.
Buried Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Pas de Calais, France.
Grave Ref: II. B. 14.
Richard had served in his battalion as the Adjutant.

TUFF, CECIL THOMAS. Captain.
"D" Company, 3rd (Reserve) Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment), attached to and serving in the 1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Died 18 April 1915. Aged 29.
Born Rochester, Kent.
Son of Charles Tuff, J.P., and Mary Ann Tuff (nee Gill) of Westfield, Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent.
Commemorated on the Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Panel 45.
Cecil was an ex pupil of Malvern College, Worcestershire, and was a brother of the next casualty briefly commemorated. The Tuff family were for many years influential and substantial land owners, and benefactors in the Medway area of Kent. Charles Tuff (1855-1929) was a former Mayor of Rochester Kent, and from 23 September 1903 for a period of three years he had been the (Conservative) Member of Parliament for Rochester. Following his death on 27 January 1929 commentators remarked that he never came to terms with the loss of his sons.

TUFF, FRANK NOEL. Second Lieutenant.
Royal East Kent Yeomanry.
Died 5 November 1915.
Born Rochester, Kent.
Son of Charles Tuff, J.P., and Mary Ann Tuff (nee Gill) of Westfield, Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent.
Buried Pieta Military Cemetery, Malta. Grave Ref: D. II. 1.
Frank was an ex pupil of the Abbey School, Southend Road, Beckenham, Kent.

YOUNG, ALBERT STEWART LOGAN. Private, 79802.
31st Battalion, Canadian Infantry (Alberta Regiment).
Died 11 October 1918. Aged 29.
Born 13 September 1889. Enlisted Calgary, Alberta, Canada 24 November 1914.
Son of Edward and Marie E. E. Young.
Buried Niagara Cemetery, Iwuy, Nord, France. Grave Ref: C. 36.
Albert is also commemorated on page 527 of the Canadian First World War Book of Remembrance.
At the time of his enlistment, Albert stated that he was a Rancher, and named his mother Marie E. E. Young as his Next of Kin, at which time she resided at 23 Star Hill, Rochester, Kent. Albert also said that he had previously served for a period of three years as a Cadet at Rochester, Kent.

The Second World War

1939 – 1945

The sole Second World War casualty thus far traced is buried in the churchyard of St. Mary of Antioch parish church Ifield, Gravesend, Kent.

COLYER-FERGUSON, MAX CHRISTIAN HAMILTON. Lieutenant, 108042.
Royal Army Service Corps.
Died 13 August 1940. Aged 49.
Born London. Resided Kent.
Son of Sir Thomas Colyer Colyer-Fergusson, J.P., M.A., 3rd Baronet, and of the late Lady Beatrice Stanley Colyer-Fergusson (nee Müller) of Ivy Hatch, Sevenoaks, Kent.
Husband of the late Edith Colyer-Fergusson (nee Miller).
A brother of the late Thomas Colyer-Fergusson V.C., who fell in the Great War. Max had served as a Captain in the Royal Army Service Corps during the Great War; and had relinquished his commission on 13 June 1919. Max married Edith Miller in 1913 who was a native of Rothesay, Ontario, Canada, and a talented singer, Edith retired in 1917 following the birth of her only child. She died on 18 June 1936 at Gravesend, Kent.