Sissinghurst
Whilst all of the war memorial transcriptions etcetera on this website should for obvious reasons be viewed with an element of caution, despite all reasonable care being taken when carrying out the researches prior to posting. Clearly (please see photographs), the rememberance of those who lost their lives in the Second World War that are commemorated on the Sissinghurst, Kent civic war memorial have proved to be a real ‘challenge’ to transcribe, for their sacrifices to be remembered here. Irrespective of which war memorial, or other form of rememberance is researched, the stark contrast in the amount of United Kingdom data and records etcetera that is available for both world wars, makes the Second World War casualties far harder to research. Thankfully very few Kent war memorials have been allowed to degenerate to the awful extent of that of the Second World War panel at Sissinghurst, Kent. Very basic but acceptable cleaning of the panel (with virtually nil costs involved), would take approximately an hour to carry out. We had to restrain from so doing the cleaning ourselves, but having had unfortunate experiences in the past when cleaning others, we left well alone. The army casualties of the Great War who are commemorated on the war memorial are set out in groups by regiments and corps and as such instead of sorting out and posting below in alphabetical order as we would ordinarily do, it seemed right to record them here, as they have been commemorated on the Sissinghurst civic war memorial, which is within the curtilage of the Trinity parish church, The Street, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook.

Welcome News
Since we first posted the Sissinghurst civic war memorial photographs and transcriptions on this website, including the comments above, in November 2010, Scarlet Jones of the Kent and Sussex Courier included an article based on our comments. Susan F. has since visited the memorial, and photographed the now cleaned Second World War commemoration panel for us. As always we are of course very grateful to Susan for her continued support with her photographic contributions to this website, but we would also like to place on record here, our sincere thanks to who it was that was responsible for cleaning the Second World War panel, well done!

In addition to now adding the Second World War casualties below, which prior to the cleaning of the panel it had been quite literally impossible to access some of their names, the majority of all of the other casualties who died in both world wars, have now had additional information added to their brief commemorations. As a simple way of illustrating what can be achieved on other external forms of remembrance of the victims of various wars, which is regrettably and needlessly also the sad situation at several locations in the county of Kent, and elsewhere within the country, we have now added what are effectively ‘before and after’ photographs of the Sissinghurst civic war memorial Second World War commemoration panel.
LING, PERCY JOHN. Fleet Paymaster.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Formidable.
Died Friday 1 January 1915.
Born London 1871.
Son of Sarah A. Burrage (Formerly Ling) and step-son of Henry R. Burrage.
Husband of Gwladis Kathleen Ling (née Erskine).
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 9, as shown above.
Percy’s birth was recorded in the Strand, London Registration District during the second quarter of 1871. On Friday 16 May 1902 it was announced in The London Gazette, that Percy was to be promoted from an Assistant Fleet Paymaster to a Fleet Paymaster, effective from Saturday 19 April 1902. His marriage to Miss Gladys Kathleen Erskine took place on Wednesday 15 April 1903, and was recorded in the Isle of Wight Registration District during the second quarter of 1903. Percy’s only son David Erskine Ling was born on Saturday 5 September 1908.

DAY, ERNEST JOHN. Gunner, 54147.
22nd Reserve Battery, Royal Field Artillery.
Born Egerton, Ashford, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of the late Horace Day and Sarah Day (née Pile) of Ivy Cottage, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Brother of Myrtle Mary Day of Sissinghurst Vicarage, Cranbrook, Kent, and of Francis Mabel Jane Day of 33, Mountfield Road, Church End, Finchley, London.
Ref: Screen Wall Commemoration. 3 "C." A. 107.
At the time of the time of the 1901 census the day family resided at 4, Spring Gate Cottages, Marden, Kent. Ernest enlisted in the army on 20 November 1914 at which time he was aged 20 years and 1 month, and stated that he was employed as a Gardener, residing at Ivy Cottage, Sissinghurst, Kent. After 91 days of army service Ernest died at midnight on 18 February 1915 of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis, whilst a patient at the Royal Herbert Hospital, Shooters Hill, Woolwich, Kent. Regrettably the request submitted by Ernest’s family to have his body returned to Sissinghurst for burial, appears to have been ignored or overlooked by the military authorities. Greenwich Cemetery where Ernest is at rest contains 556 Great War burials. More than half of these graves are scattered throughout the cemetery, but 263 form a large war graves plot known as 'Heroes' Corner'. Here, two curved screen walls bear the names of casualties buried both in the plot, and also in unmarked graves in other parts of the cemetery.
RANxALL, ERNEST. Corporal Wheeler, 30926.
86th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.
Died Saturday 21 April 1917. Aged 36.
Born Tonbridge, Kent. Enlisted Woolwich, Kent.
Son of Frederick and Rosa Randall (née Terry) of Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Ernest was posted to serve with the Royal Field Artillery in the Asiatic war theatre on Wednesday 10 March 1915. During the Great War, the 86th Battery, Royal Field Artillery was in the 12th (Howitzer) Brigade Royal Field Artillery, which was comprised of the 43rd, 86th and 87th (Howitzer) Batteries, each equipped with 4.5 inch howitzers, and was and attached to the 6th Infantry Division. In August 1914 it mobilised, and the following month it was sent to serve with the British Expeditionary Force, where it served with the 6th Infantry Division until broken up. The 86th Battery, Royal Field Artillery was withdrawn in May 1915, and assigned to the 127th (Howitzer) Brigade Royal Field Artillery

DROWLEY, CHARLES STEPHEN. Sapper, 230534.
6th Siege Company, Royal Engineers.
Died Saturday 26 October 1918. Aged 34.
Born Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted Chatham, Kent. Resided Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of Stephen Drowley of Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent, and the late Charlotte Drowley (née Pavey).
Husband of Mary Elizabeth Drowley.
Father of Charles Stephen Drowley, and Ernest Victor Drowley.
Buried Terlincthun British Cemetery, Boulogne, Pas de Calais, France.
Grave Ref: VI. C. 41.
At the time of the 1901 census, the Drowley family resided at Rose Cottage, Cranbrook, Kent. Head of the house was 58 year old Cranbrook, Kent native Stephen Drowley, who was employed as an Agricultural Labourer. Formerly Sapper, 4197, Royal Engineers. Charles married at Holy Trinity, parish church Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent on Saturday 11 May 1907. A recalled army reservist, Charles was temporarily exempted from military service until Sunday 31 December 1916, due to his commitments as a skilled Carpenter with Punnett Brothers, Wheelwrights & Carpenters of Cranbrook, Kent. He enlisted for service at Chatham, Kent on Friday 19 January 1917, at which he stated that he was 32 years and 104 days old, and a Carpenter. From Sunday 9 September 1917 when he was posted overseas, to Wednesday 14 November 1917, Charles served as a member of the 6th (Service) Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment, before returning to serve in the Royal Engineers, having retained his Royal Engineers skilled tradesman rates of pay whilst serving in the East Yorkshire Regiment. Charles then remained in the corps until his death at the 14th General Hospital, Wimereux, Pas de Calais, France due to Bronchia Pneumonia, for which he had been hospitalized there on Monday 21 October 1918.
AUSTEN, FREDERICK. Private, T/205303.
1st Battalion, The Queen’s (Royal West Surrey Regiment).
Died Tuesday 25 September 1917. Aged 27.
Born and resided Biddenden, Ashford, Kent. Enlisted Canterbury, Kent.
Son of Alfred and Mary Ann Austen (née Oliver) of Biddenden, Ashford, Kent.
Husband of Emily Austen (nee Santer) of “Whyborns,” Minster-on-Sea, Sheerness, Isle of Sheppey, Kent.
Also commemorated on the Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial.
At the time of the 1901 census the Austen family resided at “Austens,” Rats Castle, Castleton Oak, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Kent.

COLLINS, CHARLES HENRY. Private, G/69464.
6th (Service) Battalion, The Queen’s (Royal West Surrey Regiment).
Died Friday 23 August 1918. Aged 18.
Born and resided Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted Canterbury, Kent.
Son of Charles and Emily Collins (née Reader) of Golford Place, Tenterden Road, Golford, Cranbrook, Kent.
Formerly, Private, 38305, East Surrey Regiment.
At the time of the 1901 census the Collins family resided at Sissinghurst.

BURDEN, V J. No trace as commemorated on the Sissinghurst civic war memorial as a member of The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Purely supposition on the part of the transcriber of these brief commemorations, but possibly the death of the casualty who is commemorated on the war memorial was a Great War related death which occurred post Wednesday 31 August 1921, it being the cut-off date for same. At least one local man with the surname Burden served in The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) during the Great War, and possibly of significance he also had similar initials to the Sissinghurst commemorated casualty, he being:-

BURDEN, WILLIAM JOSEPH. Private, 240325.
“A” Company, 1st/5th Battalion, (Territorial Force) The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
Born Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted Ashford, Kent.
Son of Joseph and Jane Burden (née Burgess).
Formerly Private, 1437, “B” Company, 1st/5th Battalion, (Territorial Force) The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). When William enlisted in the army on Thursday 13 August 1914 he stated that he was aged 18 years and 1 month, and that he was a Farm Labourer. William survived the Great War, but at the time of carrying out these brief commemorations no irrefutable supporting data appertaining to his death has been located by the transcriber. During his time spent in India with his battalion, William had at least two bouts of Malaria in 1917 whilst at Bangalore, India; they occurred during April which necessitated his hospitalisation for 10 days duration, and then for a period of 11 days in September.
CHEESMAN, ARTHUR EDWIN. Captain.
1st/5th Battalion, (Territorial Force) The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
Died Tuesday 26 September 1916. Aged 39.
Born Newbridge, County Kildaire, Ireland.
Son of the late Captain Edwin Thomas Cheesman (Royal Army Veterinary Corps) and Mrs. Ann Cheeseman of Sissinghurst Castle, Cranbrook, Kent.
At the time of the 1881 census the Cheesman family resided at 34, Reginald Terrace, Leeds, Yorkshire, with Veterinary Surgeon Edwin as head of the house.

ELDRIDGE, FREDERICK HARRY. Private, G/3918.
1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
Died Monday 5 August 1918. Aged 27.
Born Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted and resided Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of Edward Eldridge and Esther Eldridge.
Husband of Florence Eva Turner (formerly Eldridge), (née Williams) of Satins Hill, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Buried Sissinghurst Cemetery, Cranbrook, Kent. Grave Ref: Gc. 6.
At the time of the 1901 census, the Eldridge family resided at Satins Hill, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent. Head of the house was 52 year old Sedlescombe, Sussex native Edward Eldridge, who was employed as an Agricultural Labourer.
EVENDEN, VICTOR. Private, T/241618.
5th (Territorial Force) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
Died Monday 26 February 1917. Aged 36.
Born, enlisted and resided Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of Thomas Evenden and Fanny Evenden of Sattins Hill, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Husband of Emily Evenden of Spongs Lane, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Formerly Private, 3973, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). At the time of the 1901 census the Evenden family resided at Sattins Hill, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Head of the house was 49 year old Cranbrook, Kent native Thomas Evenden, who was an Own Account, Thatcher and Hurdle Maker.

HATCHER, F.W. As commemorated on the Sissinghurst, Kent civic war memorial appears to be the following casualty. On all of the data which has been accessed by the transcriber, he is recorded as below devoid of a second initial:-

HATCHER, FRANK. Private, L/7046.
1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
Died Monday 23 September 1918.
Born and resided Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent.
Son of John Hatcher and Harriett Hatcher (née Grounds) of “Bates Cottage,” Cranbrook, Kent.
Husband of Charlotte Hatcher of Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Buried St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France.
A brother of James Hatcher who is also commemorated on the Sissinghurst, civic war memorial. At the time of the 1901 census the Hatcher family resided at Sissinghurst. Head of the house was 38 year old Cranbrook, Kent native John Hatcher, who was employed as an Agricultural Labourer. Frank was a former army reservist who re-enlisted in the army on Tuesday 24 November 1914. He had originally enlisted in the East Kent Militia on Monday 17 July 1899 at Canterbury, Kent, and had taken part in the Second Boer War serving in The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) as Private, 5600. For the time he spent on active service in South Africa, Frank was awarded the Queens South Africa Medal with the Cape Colony and Orange Free State clasps, and the Kings Medal with the clasp ‘1901.’ On Monday 24 November 1902, Frank enlisted as a regular soldier in The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), and initially served in the 3rd Battalion of the regiment at Dover, Kent. From Wednesday 10 November 1915 to Tuesday 16 November 1915, Frank was a patient at the Shorncliffe, Kent Military Hospital suffering with Influenza. At the termination of Frank’s army discharge on Thursday 11 August 1910, he resided at Brandon Cottages, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent. Because Frank is recorded as having died of wounds, at one of the many medical establishments that were at Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France, during the Great War years, regrettably it has not been possible to add at this brief commemoration, where, when or how he was wounded.
LUCK, HARRY. Private, G/6260.
2nd Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment).
Died Tuesday 28 September 1915. Aged 22.
Born Beckley, Rye, Sussex. Enlisted and resided Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of Thomas John Luck and Elizabeth Luck (née Dennis) of Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.
Commemorated on the Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Panel 15.

At the time of the 1901 census the Luck family resided at Sissinghurst. Head of the house was Beckley, Rye, Sussex native Thomas John Luck, who was employed as a Domestic Gardener. Harry was posted to France with The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) on Tuesday 31 August 1915. Having already suffered heavy casualties during the Second Battle of Ypres, commanded by 41 year old Boer War veteran, Lieutenant Colonel Claude A. Worthington, the 2nd Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) travelled from Bailleul to the devastated village of Vermelles, where it arrived at 1300 hours on 27 September 1915, as part of the 28th Division to take part in the Battle of Loos 1915 (25 September-19 October 1915). With the benefit of hindsight many regrettably costly errors can be seen appertaining to the Battle of Loos. When compared to the actions that had been fought by the British army during the spring of the same year, Loos was a much larger undertaking, which was carried out by six divisions, and as such was justifiably referred to as “The Big Push.” The battle was fought over ground that was not the choice of the British, and at a time prior to the required stocks of ammunition and heavy artillery being available in sufficient quantities for the undertaking. Having rallied international sympathy, following the German’s use of poison gas for the first time in April 1915, the opening of the battle was noteworthy as being the first occasion that poison gas was used by the British Army. General Douglas Haig had issued orders for the release of the gas, and an artillery bombardment, at 0550 hours on 25 September 1915 with the main infantry attack timed to commence forty minutes later. Despite incurring heavy casualties, there was considerable success on the first day, in breaking into the deep enemy positions near Loos and Hulluch. Unfortunately the infantry reserves had been held to far back from the battle front, to be able to exploit the costly successes that had been achieved, which resulted in the succeeding days being bogged down into attritional warfare for comparitively only minor gains. At a stage and location which during the battle was described by the Commander-in-Chief as being “distinctly precarious,” Major (later Lieutenant Colonel D.S.O.) Miles Beevor, was ordered to lead "A" and "D" Companies to relieve parties to the north of a location named ‘Fosse 8’ which was a coal mine with a huge slag dump, and located to the south of the village of Auchy-les-Mines. The German defenses at ‘Fosse 8’ had included the formidable Hohenzollern Redoubt. On reaching the allotted position, the officers and other ranks of "A" and "D" Companies were probably surprised to find that it had been already abandoned. Commanding the 85th Brigade, 28th Division to which the 2nd Battalion belonged, was former Brigade of Guards officer, Brigadier-General C.E. Pereira, (later Major-General Sir C.E. Pereira, K.C.B., C.M.G.), who had accompanied them, and he ordered Major Beevor’s companies to establish themselves in the
Hohenzollern Redoubt. Due to the congestion which prevailed at that time in the communication trench, the decision was taken to cross above ground, to comply with the Brigadier-General’s fresh orders, and attempt to reach their fresh location and assault the enemy at the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Several casualties occurred during the hazardous overland route as the soldiers were subjected to heavy enemy artillery shelling. Included amongst those wounded was Brigadier-General C.E. Pereira, and his Brigade-Major, who was Captain Flower, and Lieutenant Geoffrey Cory-Wright commanding "D" Company, who later served in the Royal Flying Corps and R.A.F. Once at the enemy position, a platoon of "D" Company charged the Germans and killed about twenty of their number. Throughout the night the soldiers of "A" and "D" Companies remained at the new position, during which time bombing parties were particularly active, and the evacuation of the wounded was carried out under difficult circumstances, due to the heavy rain, conditions underfoot and the distance they had to be carried by tired men. The remainder of the 85th Brigade also came up under the cover of darkness, and "B" and "C" Companies of the 2nd Battalion moved into positions located to the rear of "A" and "D" Companies. Following his death, Harry was initially posted as ‘Missing,’ but the Army Council later made the decision, that for official purposes it was to be assumed that he had died on or after Tuesday 28 September 1915.


HATCHER, JAMES. Lance Corporal, 22951.
7th (Service) Battalion, East Surrey Regiment.
Died Friday 10 November 1916.
Born Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted Canterbury, Kent.
Son of John and Harriett Hatcher of Bates Cottage, Cranbrook, Kent.
Buried Humbercamps Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais, France.
James was a brother of Frank Hatcher who is also commemorated on the Sissinghurst, civic war memorial.

ELDRIDGE, PERCY EDWARD. Lance Corporal, L/7267.
1st Battalion, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Died Tuesday 27 October 1914. Aged 30.
Born Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted Canterbury, Kent.
Son of Edward and Esther Eldridge.
Commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Panel 30.
Percy had been Mentioned in Despatches during the Great War. At the time of the 1901 census the Eldridge family resided at Sattins Hill, Cranbrook, Kent. Head of the house was 42 year old Farm Labourer Edward Eldridge, who was a native of Battle, Sussex.

HONESS, FRANK. Private, G/15515.
6th (Service) Battalion, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Died Saturday 24 November 1917.
Born and resided Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of John and Emily Honess (née Parks).
Buried Fifteen Ravine British Cemetery, Villers-Plouich, Nord, France.
Grave Ref: III. B. 15.

VOUSDEN, RICHARD. Private, L/10654.
6th (Service) Battalion, Queen’s Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).
Born Paddock Wood, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent. Resided Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of Richard Vousden of 22, Hadrian Street, Greenwich, London.
Commemorated on the Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Panel 97.
A regular soldier, Richard was posted to France on Saturday 5 June 1915.

SANTER, WILLIAM. Private, PW/6109.
Died Saturday 28 April 1917. Aged 31.
Born and enlisted Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of Owen and Jamia Santer of Golford, Cranbrook, Kent.
Husband of Edith Annie Santer of The Bridge, Cranbrook, Kent.
Commemorated on the Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Bay 7.
**GURR, BENJAMIN.** Rifleman, 45926.  
5th (Reserve) Battalion, Rifle Brigade.  
Died Sunday 10 November 1918.  
Son of Arthur William Gurr and Selah Gurr (née Hope).  
Buried Sissinghurst Cemetery, Cranbrook, Kent. Grave Ref: Dd. 16.  
Benjamin was a brother of William Gurr who is also commemorated on the Sissinghurst, civic war memorial.

**REED, WALTER.** Private, 493141.  
1st/13th (County of London) Kensington Battalion, London Regiment.  
Died Thursday 16 August 1917. Aged 22.  
Born Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent. Enlisted and resided Folkestone, Kent.  
Son of Algernon and Emily Reed (née Moore) of Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.  
Commemorated on the Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Panels 52 to 54.  
Formerly Private, 6477, 7th (Service) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment.  
At the time of the 1901 census, Walter was residing with his father and mother and other family members at the Bull Inn, The Street, Sissinghurst, where his 65 year old grandfather Walter Moore, who was a native of nearby Cranbrook, Kent, was the Licensee. Walter’s father, a native of Tenterden, Kent, was employed by his father-in-law as a Barman at the same establishment.

**CHURCHILL, HARRY CHARLES.** Private, M2/054649.  
52nd Mechanical Transport Coy. (Aldershot), Army Service Corps.  
Died Wednesday 3 November 1915.  
When 43 year old Harry enlisted in the army on 23 March 1915, he stated that he was a widower residing at Leyton House, The Common, Cranbrook, Kent. He named his daughter Ellen Anna Churchill of the same address as his next of kin, she being one of his seven children. He had married Miss Anna Maria Bennett at Lambeth on 6 March 1895. Harry died at the West Ham Auxiliary Hospital.

**MARTIN, ALFRED HENRY.** Private, 3416.  
48th Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Died Wednesday 11 December 1918. Aged 34.  
Born Wittersham, Kent.  
Son of Richard Martin and Sarah Martin of Three Chimneys, Sissinghurst, Cranbrook, Kent.  
Buried Terlincthun British Cemetery, Boulogne, Pas de Calais, France.  
Grave Ref: XII. C. 27.  
Also commemorated on the Australian National War Memorial. Panel 146.  
At the time of the 1901 census, Alfred’s parents and his brother Lewis resided at Redlands Farm, Wittersham, Kent. Head of the house was 48 year old
Wittersham, Kent native Richard Martin, who was employed as the Farm Bailiff. Alfred enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at Adelaide, South Australia on Thursday 3 August 1916, at which time he stated that he was employed as a Labourer, and named his mother as being his next of kin. Alfred carried out his basic training with the 2nd Depot Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, from which he was posted to the 9th Reinforcements, 48th Battalion, Australian Infantry, Australian Imperial Force on Friday 1 December 1916. On 10 February 1917, Alfred departed from Adelaide, South Australia onboard the 5849 ton Australian troopship H.M.A.T Seeang Bee (A48), was owned by the Lim Chin Tsong, of Rangoon, Burma, and leased by the Commonwealth until Saturday 12 May 1917. H.M.A.T Seeang Bee arrived at Devonport on Wednesday 2 May 1917, from where the personnel of the 48th Battalion, Australian Infantry, Australian Imperial Force marched into the 12th Training Battalion at Codford, Warminster, Wiltshire. On Monday 6 August 1917, Alfred sailed to the busy port of Harve, France from Folkestone, Kent, and was posted to his battalion and taken on strength on Saturday 25 August 1917. At the time of Alfred’s death due to Broncho Pneumonia, his parents resided at Cobden Farm, Sissinghurst, Kent. Alfred was a repatriated prisoner of war, and died at the 3rd Canadian General Hospital, Pas de Calais, France, to which he had been admitted on Monday 9 December 1918. Having been posted as ‘Missing’ on Friday 5 April 1918, Alfred had been a prisoner of war at the Güstrow Head Camp, Güstrow, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Germany.

The Great War
1914 -1919
Lost Men

TAMSETT, WILLIAM JOHN. Lance Corporal, 6583.
1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade.
Died Tuesday 22 October 1918.
Son of Louise Tamsett (née French) and the late John Tamsett of The Kennels, Newlands, Charing Heath Road, Charing, Ashford, Kent.
Commemorated on the Charing, Ashford, Kent, Great War parish tribute which is located in the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul.
Formerly Private, S/37643, Royal Army Service Corps. At the time of the 1901 census, the Tamsett family resided at Cook Barn, Frittenden, Cranbrook, Kent. Head of the house was 36 year old Cranbrook, Kent native John Tamsett, who was employed as a Farm Yardman. William’s younger brother Arthur Tamsett, served during the Great War as Private, G/52560, Middlesex Regiment. Arthur enlisted ‘For the Duration of the War;’ on Saturday 15 December 1917. He was wounded in his left leg on Thursday 22 August 1918, but thankfully survived the carnage of the Great War.
WILMSHURST, CECIL ARTHUR. Second Lieutenant.
4th (Territorial Force) Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment, attached to the 5th (Service) Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment.
Died Friday 5 April 1918. Aged 29.
Born and resided Buxton, Sussex.
Son of William and Sarah Jane Wilmshurst (née Eade) of Sissinghurst Castle, Cranbrook, Kent.
Commemorated on the Pozières Memorial, Somme, France. Panel 56.
Formerly Lance Serjeant, 5/225, Royal Sussex Regiment. Cecil’s father who was a wealthy farmer purchased Sissinghurst Castle in 1926, it being only two years prior to his death. On some data accessed, the Christian names of Second Lieutenant Wilmshurst are shown as Arthur Charles. At the time of the 1901 census the Wilmshurst family resided at Tan Yard Farm, Buxted, Uckfield, Sussex. Head of the house was 44 year old Mayfield, Sussex native William Wilmshurst, who was recorded by the census enumerator as being a Farmer, and an employer of labour. His wife Sarah Jane Wilmshurst was aged 40 and was a native of Buxton, Sussex. Following Arthur’s death he was posted as ‘Missing,’ but later the Army Council decided that for official purposes it was to be assumed that he had died on or after 5 April 1918. There is data accessed by the transcriber of these brief commemorations, which would seem to indicate that Cecil died from wounds after being captured.

The Second World War
1939 – 1945
Before reading the following brief transcriptions kindly note the brief additional comments regarding the Sissinghurst civic war memorial Second World War deaths, prior to the commencement of the brief Great War transcriptions above.

BUNCH, WALTER RAYMOND. Petty Officer Steward, C/LX 20445.
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Martin. G44.
Died Tuesday 10 November 1942. Aged 38.
Born Cranbrook, Kent.
Son of Walter Claude Bunch and Isabelle Bunch (née Munday).
Husband of Sarah Bunch (née Earnshaw) of Sheffield, Yorkshire.
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 64. Column 3.
Water’s birth was recorded in the Cranbrook, Kent Registration District during the fourth quarter of 1905. His marriage to Miss Sarah Earnshaw was recorded in the Sheffield, Yorkshire Registration District during the third quarter of 1931. In January 1942 Walter was awarded the Naval Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, at which time he was a Petty Officer Steward serving at the Royal Naval shore establishment, H.M.S. Pembroke at Chatham, Kent. H.M.S. Martin on which Walter was serving at the time of his death, was a 1935 ton M Class destroyer, that was being commanded by Commander Charles R. P. Thomson, D.S.O., R.N. when she was torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine U-431, which was commanded by Kapitänleutnant, Wilhelm Dommes, to the
northeast of Algiers, Algeria. 161 officers and ratings went down with the ship, and there were also 63 survivors. Commander Thomas was numbered amongst those who were lost when his ship was sunk. Born in Buchberg, West Prussia on Tuesday 16 April 1907, Wilhelm Dommes rose to the rank of Fregattenkapitän; he survived the Second World War, and died in Hannover, Germany on Tuesday 23 January 1990, aged 82.

CLARKE, ANDREW BOARD STEPHENSON. D.S.O. Lieutenant Colonel, 36319. King’s Own Scottish Borderers.
Attached to and commanding the 9th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry.
Died Friday 23 July 1943. Aged 37.
Born Haywards Heath, Sussex. Resided Cranbrook, Kent.
Eldest son of Douglas Wellwood Clarke and Mary Louisa Clarke (née Twiss) of Hartridge House, Cranbrook, Kent.
Husband of Betty Clarke (née Knox).
Buried Catania War Cemetery, Sicily. Grave Ref: III. C. 34.
Pre war member of the King’s Own Scottish Borderers.

Died Sunday 1 March 1942. Aged 33.
Son of Douglas Wellwood Clarke and Mary Clarke of Hartridge House, Cranbrook, Kent.
H.M.A.S. Perth was a Leander class cruiser was in action with Japanese cruisers Mogami and Mikuma escorting invasion fleet with destroyers, two of which were sunk. Later the ship was disabled by surface gunfire and three torpedoes. A fourth torpedo struck H.M.A.S. Perth whilst she was being abandoned and she then sank. Over 300 of ships company lost their lives and 307 became prisoners of war, of whom 105 died whilst in Japanese captivity.

DIAMOND, PERCY EDWARD GEORGE. Guardsman, 2613212. 3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards.
Died Friday 6 October 1944. Aged 38.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of John Thomas Diamond and Emily Frances Diamond (née Jacob).
Husband of Annie Irene Diamond (née Friend) of Biddenden, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Santerno Valley War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: II. B. 17.
Also commemorated on the General Post Office, Second World War memorial plaque, located in the Royal Mail Sorting Office, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent. Percy’s birth was recorded in the Strood, Kent registration District during the third quarter of 1907. Prior to enlisting in the army Percy had been employed by the General Post Office, at which time he was based at the Tenterden, Kent, Post Office, and was a pre war member of the Grenadier Guards.
W.A. THOMPSON. No clear trace of this casualty as he or she has been commemorated on the Sissinghurst civic war memorial. When researching any form of remembrance to the victims of war, it is always frustrating for the transcriber of these brief commemorations when a casualty proves to be impossible to positively identify. As has already been mentioned on other occasions, researching the British Second World War casualties is a far harder undertaking than that of those who died in or resultant of the Great War. Of all the victims of war commemorated in Kent and elsewhere who the transcriber has failed to identify, arguably this Sissinghurst casualty has proved to be the most frustrating, due to a number of reasons, including of course the fact that since we had originally photographed the Sissinghurst civic war memorial, the Second World War panel has been cleaned. Needless to say if anybody has any information about W.A. THOMPSON, would you please be kind enough to contact us, preferably via our Guest Book which has recently proved to be the most secure way of reaching us. Many thanks.
TO
THE MEN OF
Sissinghurst
WHO
GAVE THEIR LIVES
FOR
KING & COUNTRY
IN THE
GREAT WAR
1914-1919

[Image of a memorial stone]
R.N.
H.M.S. Formidable
P.T. Ling Fleet Paymaster
R.A.
E.J. Day
E. Randall, Cpl.
R.E.
C.S. Dowley
The Queens
F. Austen
C.H. Collins
'The Buffs'
V. Burden
A.E. Cheesman, Cpt.
E.H. Eldridge
C.S. Evenden
V. Evenden
F. W. Bajticher
H. Luck
A.W. Neve, Cpl.
R. FUS
W. GURR
WORC R.
A UNDERDOWN
E. SURREY R.
I HATCHER, L.Cpl
R. W. KENT R.
P. ELDREDGE, L.Cpl
F. HONISS
R. VOUSDEN
M. E. Y. R.
W. SANTER
R. E. REECE, CITY of LONDON R.
B. GURR
R. A. C.
H. C. CHURCHILL
A. V. R.
A. H. MARTIN
THANKS BE TO GOD WHICH GIVETH US THE VICTORY
SECOND WORLD WAR MEMORIAL 2006
Photograph by Neil R. Clark

SECOND WORLD WAR MEMORIAL 2011
Photograph by Susan F.