

Wye

Second World War 1939 – 1945

ALLARD, WILLIAM STANLEY. Flying Officer, 186359.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 353 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
South East Asia Command.
Died 22 June 1946.

Commemorated on the Singapore Memorial. Column 459.

William was Mentioned in Despatches. 353 Squadron, Royal Air Force was formed on 1 June 1942 at Dum Dum, Calcutta, India, from elements of No. 62 Squadron, R.A.F. and No. 103 (Coast Defence) Flight, of the Indian Air Force. It began patrolling the Bay of Bengal, engaged on general reconnaissance duties using three Hudson aircraft on 13 July, and was engaged on same until 8 August 1943, following which the squadron moved to Palam where it took over the mail flights of No. 194 Squadron, R.A.F. The Hudsons operated a network of services throughout India. Dakotas were added to its inventory in April 1944 to form D Flight, and by October Douglas Dakotas had replaced the squadrons Hudsons completely. Five Avro Ansons arrived in August 1944 to undertake short range communications duties, these being replaced by Expeditors in January 1945. The squadron continued in its duties, becoming fully Dakota equipped by April 1945, of which it had twenty-seven on strength during the latter half of the year. The squadron, surplus to peace time requirements was disbanded on 1 October 1946.

BAKER, J. Not yet traced

CHITTENDEN, JOHN ALBERT. Private, 6288318.
5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).
Died 20 March 1942. Aged 29.
Born and resided Kent.
Son of William and Lucy Chittenden.
Husband of Bessie Emily Chittenden of Wye, Ashford, Kent.
John, who was a pre war member of his regiment, was probably captured during the France & Belgium Campaign, and died whilst a prisoner of war.
Buried Poznan Old Garrison Cemetery, Poland. Grave 4. C. 1A.

COTTRELL, DONALD WILLIAM FOULKES. Sergeant (Air Gunner), 1395257.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 55 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 25 July 1943. Aged 20.
Son of Brigadier Arthur Foulkes Baglietto Cottrell D.S.O., O.B.E., and Mary Barbara Cottrell (née Nicholl) of Boughton Lees, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Catania War Cemetery, Sicily. Grave Ref: Collective grave I. K. 44-45.
Donald's father served as an officer in the Royal Field Artillery during the Great War. At the commencement of the Second World War, 55 Squadron, Royal Air Force was based in Egypt, later moving to Libya. Equipped with Bristol Blenheim's the

squadron flew in shipping patrols and later in the major North African campaigns. After being re-equipped with Baltimore's in 1942, the squadron distinguished itself at the 'Battle of El Alamein,' where it flew 352 operational sorties in the first ten days, it being more than any other Desert Air Force light bomber squadron in the same period. Following the success of the war in North Africa, eventually Donald's squadron moved into Sicily and Italy, and converted to Douglas Boston's during the last few months of the war.

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 Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial.

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 ship's 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).

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 the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial, and on Godmersham, Ashford, Kent, Second World War memorial plaque, located in the parish church of [St Lawrence the Martyr](#).
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.

LUXMOORE, RICHARD CORYDON. Lieutenant, 240124.
12th (Queen's Westminsters) Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps. (T.A.)
Died 9 September 1944. Aged 21.
Born South West London. Resided Kent.
Son of Lieutenant Colonel, Evelyn Hansler Luxmoore and Ella Luxmoore of Wye, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Geel War Cemetery, Antwerpen, Belgium. Grave Ref: IV. C. 6.
Geel was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting encountered by Commonwealth troops since they had left Normandy. The 50th (Northumbrian) Division and the 15th Scottish Division were both involved here in the forcing of crossings of the Albert Canal and the Meuse-Escaut Canal, necessary for the advance into Holland. Some of the casualties they suffered were originally buried in a meadow near the centre of the commune, and some in the St. Dymphna civil cemetery; these graves were later moved into Geel War Cemetery.

VIDLER, SIDNEY ROBERT. Aircraftman, 1st Class 927876.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 247 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 1 July 1941.
Buried (St. Peter) churchyard, Bridge, Canterbury, Kent.

VICKERS, DOUGLAS RYLAND. Flying Officer (Navigator/Bomber), 74622.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 104 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 24 November 1943. Aged 28.
Son of Vincent Rawson Scott Vickers and Gwyneth Howard Vickers of Wye, Ashford, Kent.
Diploma in Estate Management, Wye College A.L.A.S.
Buried Staglieno Cemetery, Genoa, Italy. Grave Ref: Collective grave I. A. 30.
Commemorated on Wye College Second World War Memorial Plaque and Wye village Second World War memorial plaque, also on the Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial (as a soldier). There are 122 Second World War graves at Staglieno Cemetery, most of them garrison burials, others are those of casualties brought in from the surrounding country of Genoa.

WOODGATE, HORACE JOHN. Leading Aircraftman, 3203034.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 10 August 1945. Aged 19.
Son of Horace Woodgate and Harriett F Woodgate of Brockley, London.
Buried Rangoon War Cemetery, Myanmar. Grave Ref: 1. B. 18.

LOST PERSONS

BARNARD, ANDREW NORMAN. Major, 38675.
Royal Irish Fusiliers.
Died 23 April 1940. Aged 34.
Born Oxford. Resided Kent.
Son of Andrew Bigoe Barnard and Florence Anne Barnard (née Worrall).
Husband of May Valentine Barnard of Bilting, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Wye SS Gregory and Martin) churchyard.
Enlisted pre war in the Royal Irish Fusiliers.

HEADECH, MINNIE.
Died 17 September 1940. Aged 71.
Resided at 5 Park Close Carshalton, Surrey, where she died.
Daughter of Frederick Sutton of Wye Court, Wye, Ashford, Kent.
Widow of Ernest Thomas Headech.

KENNEDY, LEWIS ROBERT EDWARD. Lieutenant (E).
Royal Navy, H.M.S. Galatea.
Died Monday 15 December 1941. Aged 25.
Son of Mr. and Mrs. R. C. W. Kennedy.
Husband of Doreen Betty Kennedy of Wye, Ashford, Kent.
Commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial. Panel 44, Column 3, and in the Dover, Kent Second World War Book of Remembrance. Lewis was a pupil at the Dover, Kent Grammar School for Boys from 1924 to 1931, where he is also commemorated in the Second World War, Book of Remembrance.
H.M.S. Galatea was a 5220 ton Arethusa class cruiser built by Scotts of Greenock, Scotland; she was laid down on 2 June 1933, launched on 9 August 1934 and completed on 14 August 1935. On 9 December 1941 the German submarine [U-557](#) commanded by 26 year old Korvettenkapitän, Ottokar Arnold Paulshen, left Messina, Sicily for what was destined to be her last patrol. Six days after starting the patrol she sank H.M.S. Galatea which was commanded by 42 year old Captain Edward W.B. Sim R.N. about 35 nautical miles off the west coast of Alexandria, Egypt. Captain Sim, 22 officers and 447 ratings were killed, but 144 survivors were picked up by the Royal Navy destroyers [H.M.S. Griffin](#) and [H.M.S. Hotspur](#). U-557 was sunk the next day due to an accidental ramming by the Italian Regina Marina torpedo boat 'Orione' with all hands lost.

WOODGATE, HAROLD.

Died 26 October 1942. Aged 43.

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

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

