



History Society

The Lost Sons of Harlaxton 1914-18

*An account of men associated with Harlaxton
who lost their lives in the Great War*



***“At the going down of the Sun and in The Morning,
We will remember them”***

Harlaxton Men Killed on Active Service 1914-18

There are 18 names of men associated with Harlaxton who died on active service on the marble memorial tablet to the right of the main altar in SS Peter and Mary.

There are also four Commonwealth War Graves in the churchyard from World War I, one of whom is also listed on the memorial plaque.

The information below has been drawn from a variety of online sources such as the LincsToThepast web site, The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, online Census material, military history sites and online Regimental War Diaries. These have been cross referenced wherever possible to confirm the information presented is correct, but there are still gaps which will require deeper, first hand research from original sources to clarify.

Some of the entries are still being researched and when this has thrown up anomalies or confused records these have been included to illustrate the challenge of historically examining records from the Great War with it's 886,000 dead.

Men associated with Harlaxton listed on the memorial plaque.

The white marble memorial plaque with a thick black frame is inscribed in black with a wreath at the top centre. It lists 18 names in two columns.

1914 1919

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THOSE CONNECTED WITH THIS PARISH WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR HOME AND COUNTRY IN THE GREAT WAR.

(Left Column) DANN WILLIAM. J/ DRINKWATER ARTHUR/ FOSTER TOM/ GOOCH JAMES/ HALL JAMES/ HARBY RICHARD/ HARRIS CECIL/ HARRIS FRANK/ JEUDWINE SPENCER H/

(Right Column) KETTLE PERCY/ LANE ALBERT/ LANE AUBREY/ LANE SYDNEY/ MOORE FRED/ ROBINSON ROBERT/ SARGENT HERBERT/ WALTON WILLIAM/ WOODWARD ROBERT

In addition, it is also known that that Stanley Ben Farrow, who was born in Harlaxton in 1899 was also a First World war casualty. Son of Christopher and Sarah Ann Farrow, his family moved to Salmon Arm in British Columbia in Canada and he joined the 47 bn Canadian Infantry. He served as Pte 688284 and was killed in France on 21 August, 1917 aged 18, and is commemorated on the Canadian memorial at Vimy.



The Lost Sons of Harlaxton

William J Dann

William served with the Royal Navy and was killed on 31 May 1915 at the Battle of Jutland. His service number was M/889. William was a Cook's Mate on HMS Black Prince.

The ship participated in the Battle of Jutland, where she was sunk at night with the loss of her entire crew of 857. The circumstances under which she sank were mysterious for some years after. As the British had lost contact in the darkness and did not see the ship destroyed, they were unsure as to whether a submarine or surface ship was responsible. Recent historians, however, hold to the German account of the ship's sinking. Up to five German ships, fired at her from between 700 and 1,350m — effectively point-blank range for contemporary naval gunnery. The ship was hit by at least twelve heavy shells and several smaller ones, sinking within 15 minutes.

William's connection with Harlaxton was that he was the son of the village school Headmaster (also called William James Dann), though he had been born at Wimbledon in 1888. Shortly before sailing to war William had married Florence who is recorded as living in Portsmouth where he is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

Private Ernest Arthur Drinkwater

Ernest served with the 2nd Bn. Lincolnshire Regiment with the Service Number: 12730. Like so many, he enlisted early, joining the Lincolnshire regiment in Grantham in September 1914.

He was killed on 9 May 1915 aged 22 and, as he has no known grave, is commemorated on Panel 3 of the Ploegsteert Memorial Hainaut in Belgium.

This part of the Western Front was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting of the first year of the war, known as The Battle of Aubers (Battle of Aubers Ridge) part of a British offensive on the Western Front.

The battle was part of the British contribution to the Second Battle of Artois, a Franco-British offensive intended to exploit the German diversion of troops to the Eastern Front. The French Tenth Army was to attack the German 6th Army north of Arras and capture Vimy Ridge, preparatory to an advance on Cambrai and Douai. The British First Army, on the left (northern) flank of the Tenth Army, was to attack on the same day and widen the gap in the German defences expected to be made by the Tenth Army and to fix German troops north of La Bassée Canal.

The attack was an unmitigated disaster. No ground was gained, no tactical advantage was gained, and the Battalions involved suffered more than ten times the number of casualties as the Germans.

Born at Timperley in Cheshire, Ernest was the son of Walter and Florence Drinkwater. The Census of 1901 shows Ernest age 7 years with his Father Walter, 31, a coachman (domestic) living in Sugar Lane Timperley. His Mother, Florence Annie Drinkwater, was originally from Clayworth in Nottinghamshire which may point to a family link with Harlaxton, as prior to enlistment Ernest had moved East across the country to take a job in the stables at Harlaxton Manor. His younger brother Herbert also served as a driver in the war.

There is a touching article on Page 3 of the Grantham Journal, from November 27, 1915 which read *"The parents of Pte. Ernest Arthur Drinkwater, No. 12730, G Company, 2nd Batt., Lincoln Regiment, who reside at 21, Lugar Lane, [sic], Timperley, near Altrincham, would be pleased to receive any information about their son, who has been posted as wounded and missing since May 9th. Pte. Drinkwater enlisted in September 1914, in the 2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment, and was sent out in due course. Before enlistment, Pte. Drinkwater was employed in the stables at Harlaxton Manor, and was very popular among his fellow workmen."*

Private Tom (Thomas) Foster

Thomas Foster is something of an enigma. Clearly, as his name sits with others from the village, he must have had a connection with Harlaxton, but it is not at all clear.

Furthermore his service records and burial throw up more questions than answers.

Tom Foster served with the 4th Reserve Regiment Dragoons with the Service number [116168](#) however he is also listed as having previously served with the Leicestershire Yeomanry with the service number 2713. This in itself is not unusual, men transferred between military units and, certainly in the early years of the war, numbers were issued at a Regimental level rather than centrally.

However, his cause of death is simply listed as "Died at home" in Northborough, Northants, where he is buried in St. Andrew's Churchyard

Records show he was the son of Thomas Charles Foster and Martha Foster who seem to have moved around the East of England. Tom Foster himself was born on 20 June 1897 in Peterborough. His Mother was from Peterborough, but his Father, Thomas Charles Foster, was originally from Wisbech.

The 1901 Census records Tom at 4 years old living with his parents on the High Street, Maxey, between Peterborough and Stamford, with his father Thomas Charles aged 23 recorded as working on the land. The 1911 Census shows Tom at 14 working as a telegraph messenger, whilst his father Thomas C. Foster 33 a "groom domestic".

Online records show that at the age of 37 years 254 days his father, Thomas Charles Foster was given notice to enlist and joined the 55-remount squadron. The Army Service Corps Remounts Service was responsible for the provisioning of horses and mules to all other army units and given his peacetime occupation of "Domestic Groom" it makes sense that someone nearly 38 years old would be posted to the Remount service as they were generally older, experienced soldiers.

Northborough is the next village to Maxey, but how Tom came to die at home is not clear (normally if it were due to injury on service the phrase "died of wounds" is used when soldiers had been repatriated prior to death) and nor is his connection with Harlaxton known. Did he move here to work before the war, did his father work here? A subject for more research.

Lance Corporal James Gooch

James served with 1/1st Lincolnshire Yeomanry with the service number 1971.

Son of James L. and Alice Gooch he was born in Depwade, Norfolk in 1890. James was the third child of the family with three older sisters Laura, Anne, and Clara and five younger siblings Clarence, Emma, Alice, Ellen and Harry
His connection with Harlaxton comes through work. The 1911 Census shows him living at Lodge Gates, Harlaxton, Grantham, working as a Stable Helper.

Fatally injured during the attack on the ship The Mercian in the Mediterranean Sea off Algeria he died of wounds aged 25 on 3 November 1915 and is buried in Plot E. Row G. Grave 3 of Le Petit Lac Cemetery, Oran, Algeria

In August the 1/1st Lincolnshire Yeomanry had moved under orders of 1st Mounted Division to Norfolk. On 27 October 1915 they embarked the S.S. Mercian at Southampton for Salonica in Greece.

The ship encountered very rough weather in the Bay of Biscay and both men and horses suffered badly from seasickness. The S. S. Mercian briefly put into Gibraltar, but the troops were not permitted to go ashore as there were concerns about security. The S.S. Mercian set sail again on 3rd November under very favourable weather conditions and a calm sea. The soldiers took the opportunity to relax in the sun, clean their equipment and do their washing.

In the afternoon an enemy submarine (U38) attacked the ship in the Mediterranean off Gibraltar. Over 100 men and many of their horses were killed. The S.S. Mercian's Captain took evasive action and the ship eventually survived the attack and headed to Algiers for repairs.

Those lost in the attack were buried at sea with only seven, like James, who were injured but subsequently died, being brought ashore to be buried in Oran. After repairs at Oran in Algeria the S.S. Mercian sailed for Alexandria rather than Salonica.

Private James Henry Hall

Private Hall was an interesting individual to track down and illustrates how difficult it can be, even with access to lots of information.

Initially it seemed straightforward, the Leicestershire War Memorials Project listed him as a soldier in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. Service number G/19992 who was recorded as Missing in Action at Hooze near Ypres 26/10/1917, aged 23 and later buried in Hooze Crater Cemetery Ypres.

This all made sense as further research showed he was born in Harby, the son of William Hall, a journeyman miller from Harlaxton and his wife Eleanor Hall. It seemed his father was the family connection to the village that led to his name appearing on the tablet in the Church as his attestation papers show him as resident in Harby at the outbreak of the war.

However, archival work on village census records found a second James Hall, with a stronger claim to be the man listed on the war memorial.

Our second James Hall was actually born in the Harlaxton in 1886 and in 1903, at 17 years and 11 months, had joined the Regular Army as a Private in the 4th Battalion Lincolnshire regiment with the Service number 4072.

Whilst his initial service under the Colours was fairly short, he later re-joined (or may, as a reservist have been recalled) at the outbreak of war to serve with A Company, the 1st Battalion with whom he fought in France and Flanders.

He was killed relatively early in the war, on 17 October 1914 when II Corps of the British Expeditionary Force moved North from Picardy and took up positions in French Flanders where they were immediately engaged in the series of attacks and counter attacks that would become known as the 'race to the sea'. This part of the Western Front was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting of the first year of the war, including the battle of La Bassée (10 October – 2 November 1914) in which James was lost.

He is commemorated on The Le Touret Memorial alongside more than 13,400 other British soldiers who were killed in this sector of the Western Front from the beginning of October 1914 to the eve of the Battle of Loos in late September 1915 and who have no known grave.

Almost all of the men commemorated on the Memorial served with regular or territorial regiments from across the United Kingdom and were killed in actions that took place along a section of the front line that stretched from Estaires in the north to Grenay in the south.

James left a wife, Maud Mary who it seems remarried after the war to become Mrs. Freeman (formerly Hall) of 97, South Parade, Grantham, Lincs.

That two men should share a name and connection with a village shows how, with the volume of men killed it is easy to make mistakes.

Private Richard Harby

When he was killed on 16 September 1916, aged just 19, Richard Harby was serving with the Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's) with the Service Number 26982. He lost his life during the Battle of the Somme.

It seems he had previously transferred (or was transferred) from his original unit of the 6th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment (his regimental number here was 7/11087) which had been raised at *Lincoln* in August 1914 as part of Kitchener's First New Army. Most likely as not he had enlisted in Grantham during the popular surge of recruitment at the start of the war. Born in Long Clawson, just over the county border in Leicestershire, he was the son of John Harby a labourer who was himself an old soldier, having himself served under the Colours after signing up with the Leicestershire regiment on 19th July 1893 age 19 years 3 months.

The Census of 1901 shows Richard Harby age 5 years living, with his Grandmother Eliza Harby, aged 60, a lace miller on Main Street, Long Clawson. This may possibly be because his father could still have been away on service in the Army.

Richard himself went on to farm work and the 1911 Census lists him aged 15 years as a farm servant living with Sevinia Mantle a widow farming, Cheese maker milk seller, in Hose near Melton Mowbray. From here he worked in Harlaxton prior to the war Richard was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme and has no known grave. He is commemorated on Pier and Face 2 A of The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme. This imposing memorial bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated, like Richard, died between July and November 1916.

An article on page 3 of the Grantham Journal, 18 November, 1916 reveals a wider tragedy for the Harby family. It reads;

"The deepest sympathy of the villages of Long Clawson will be extended to Mrs. John Harby, widow, in the death of her son, Pte. J. H. HARBY, which occurred in action on September 16th"

This week, Mrs. Harby has received official information that another son, Pte. Richard Harby, was posted as missing on the same day as the death of Pte J. H. Harby was reported. Pte. Richard Harby joined the Lincolnshire Regiment, and was later transferred to the Somerset's.

Prior to the war, he was for some time in the employ of Mr. Burton, of Harlaxton, and had several friends in Grantham. Any information concerning him will be most thankfully received by his mother. "

On December 2nd, 1916 the Grantham Journal further reported;

"Official notification has been received by Mrs Harby, of Long Clawson, that her son, who was previously reported missing, is now presumed to be dead."

As well as appearing on the Plaque in Harlaxton Church, Richard Harby is also commemorated on the role of honour St. Remigus Long Clawson.

Private Cecil Harris

Cecil Harris is the only man claimed by the First War to be buried in Harlaxton. He rests in the Churchyard near the North-West corner of the Church tower amongst family members.

Cecil served with 3rd Bn. Lincolnshire Regiment with the Service Number:12978

Born in 1894, son of Andrew and Lizzie Harris, of The Drift, Harlaxton, His father, Andrew, was an estate carter and was a Harlaxton lad whilst Lizzie was from Londonthorpe.

Prior to living on the Drift the Harris family had lived on Main Street. They lie just a few metres away in the churchyard.

Cecil was brother of Walter, who lies in the grave next to him having died aged 20 in 1919.

The 1911 Census shows Cecil, aged 17, working as a domestic gardener in Harlaxton before he enlisted for war service at Sleaford at the start of the war.



An article from the Grantham Journal dated 1 June 1918 tells the story of Cecil's death aged just 24;

"The death has occurred, under sad circumstances of Pte. Cecil Harris, oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Harris. He joined the Lincolnshire regiment in September 1914, and went to France in July 1915.

He was wounded in August 1916, by a shrapnel bullet, which shattered the thigh bone and he was sent to a hospital on the South coast from where he was eventually discharged fit for light duty. However, in consequence of the healed wound giving him trouble, he was admitted to Lincoln General Hospital, but tuberculosis developed in a rapid form. His parents were sent for on May 17th, and he was brought back home by them that day in a motor ambulance, his death occurring on May 23rd.

The funeral was on Tuesday, with military ceremonial, an officer and N.C.O 'S of the M.G.C. Attending. The coffin was conveyed from his home to the church on a gun-carriage, covered by the Union Jack, and preceded by the firing party, followed his parents and the immediate members of his family, the service was impressively conducted by the rector, and many parishioners assembled in the church to pay a last tribute to one they had known and respected many years.

The Brest-plate on the coffin bore the inscription "Cecil Harris, died May 23rd, 1918 aged 24".

A beautiful wreath from his Father, Mother, Brothers and sister was laid on the grave, other floral tokens were from his uncle, aunt and cousins at Harlaxton. His uncle and aunt at Harston, Uncle Matt, Albert, and

Mary. Miss Tremire and J. Holt, Harston. The sympathy of everyone will go out to Mr. and Mrs Harris in their irreparable loss"

The following additional information has been kindly supplied by family descendent Michael Harris.

Cecil Harris also had two brothers who served throughout the war; Robert Shaw Harris reached the rank of Sgt in 1916, he was awarded Military Medal and shortly afterwards recommended for a commission. No sooner had he been made Second Lieutenant in the Leicestershire Regiment he was wounded and returned home in 1917.

His other brother Edward Nelson Harris served in Royal Engineers and survived war.

Sergeant Frank Harris

Frank Harris served with the 8th Bn. Lincolnshire Regiment (Service Number 17938) having enlisted in Grantham in June 1915. (Pic courtesy of Michael Harris).



When he was killed on 14 March 1918 the British Army was dug into the mud of Flanders clinging onto a shell holed morass around the Belgian town of Ypres.

He is buried in Grave 14. J. 9. In Hooze Crater Cemetery West-Vlaanderen a few Km East of the town. The area was one of the most bitterly contested of the War and one where the low lying wet fields were turned into the sea of mud so many associate with the horrors of trench warfare.

Son of Alfred W. Harris and Urania Harris, Frank Harris was born in 1891 in Harlaxton. His Father was also born in Harlaxton (in 1861) whilst his mother came from Holbroke in Derbyshire. The Census records Frank Harris at 6 weeks old with Father Alfred aged 30 a garden labourer, living at 10 Main St., Harlaxton.

At the next Census in 1901 Frank was aged 9 years with his father still a gardener domestic/cottager. Frank had two brothers, Albert and Alfred, who are also on the role of service for the village.

Frank Harris was clearly an educated man as the 1911 Census shows him aged 20 as a school teacher boarder, living with Henry Surrel a baker at 70 Arch Street, Rugeley (Litchfield).

He married Emma Marr, on 22 July 1915, also from the village in 1915 shortly after he joined up. The couple had a daughter Gwendoline A. Harris who was born in 1916.

As the photograph of their wedding (right) shows, Frank had already been promoted to Lance Corporal a matter of weeks after enlisting, evidence of the speedy rise through the ranks mentioned in the Newspaper article and the rapid growth of the British army at this time. Sadly Emma did not live long after the war, dying in 1922. (Pic courtesy of Michael Harris).



The Grantham Journal, dated March 30, 1918, tells the story of his death.

"We regret to report this week the death of Sergt. Harris eldest son of Mr. and Mrs Harris of Harlaxton. The sad news was conveyed in a letter to his wife, written by an officer of the Battalion, who stated that the cause was the bursting of a shell on a dugout where Sergt. Harris was engaged in his regimental duties on March 14th. He was well known and generally respected by everyone in the village. Educated at the local school he gained a scholarship at the Sedgebrook Grammar school and studied there for the usual course before going to the Prince of Wales school at Rugeley Staffs. As assistant master. From there he went to Spittlegate School and was subsequently transferred to the National school, Grantham. He enlisted in the Lincolnshire Regiment in June 1915. After doing his preliminary training at Grimsby he went to Hull where he was speedily promoted to the rank of sergeant and made gymnastic instructor eventually going to Aldershot and Ireland before proceeding to France four months ago. He married in July 1915 to Miss E. Marr of Harlaxton who is left with a baby girl not quite two years old to mourn his lose. We know that the sympathy of everyone will go out to her and his parents in their sad loss."

The following additional information was kindly provided by Michael Harris. Frank Harris was Michael's great uncle, being a brother to his grandfather Albert Harris.

In total there were 3 brothers from each of the two sides of the Harris family serving. Two died, two were seriously wounded, one returned with life changing health problems and only one, Nelson appears to have returned unharmed. Frank Harris had two brothers serving, Albert and Alfred. Albert was wounded and subsequently disabled. He was honourably discharged April 1918.

Alfred returned to Harlaxton at the end of the War having served for the duration in Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, but he suffered from bad health and spent two years in Bourne Sanatorium prior to his death in 1945.

The picture left below shows Frank just after his enlistment in 1915 as a private and below right his grave in Hooge Crater Cemetery near Ypres in Belgium.

(Pics courtesy of Michael Harris)



Captain Spencer Henry Jeurwine



Spencer Jeurwine was born in Grantham, Lincolnshire on 22nd October 1895. He was the son of Rev George Wynne Jeurwine, the Rector of Harlaxton, Lincolnshire, and his wife Harriet (nee Phelps).

He was the youngest of 11 children, including 7 sons (three of whom went on to take holy orders). After education at home by a governess he entered Brighton College aged 11. He was apparently a bookish pupil, being commended for the effort he put into the library and coming second in his form in 1909. In that year he left the school and completed his education at Malvern College where he also excelled, winning a number of Science prizes and a place at Caius College Cambridge.

However when the war broke out in Summer 1914 instead of going up to Cambridge Jeurwine was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the Lincolnshire Regiment in August 1914.

While serving with the 2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment, part of 8th Division, he was promoted to Lieutenant in February 1915, received a minor wound in May 1915 and was promoted again to Captain in March 1916.

Excerpts from letters sent by Jeurwine from the front are very revealing both of his character and the life of a junior officer in the trenches. One reveals that he had to rely on private parcels from home for vital trench equipment like periscopes and that even in a quiet sector of the front line he could only expect 2 hours sleep in every 24. A further letter reveals that army candles were both expensive and very smelly and in a context where they were using up three or four a night they needed 'home-grown' to supplement army supplies.

Finally the agony of returning to the front after Leave was clearly so great that he deliberately avoided meeting his father on his departure from Victoria Station after what was to be his last home leave.

At the Somme on the 1 July 1916 the 2nd Lincolnshires were instructed to attack the German held village of Ovillers-La-Boiselle. The regimental diary records that between 7.30 am and 7:50 am they succeeded in taking control of 200 yard stretch of the first German line despite intense machine gun and rifle fire, which made an attempt to press on to the second line impossible.

Their flanks were also open to attack, particularly by grenades, from the Germans still holding trenches on either side. As a result they were forced to withdraw from the gains they had made by 9am. The battalion had sustained 450 casualties, including 21 officers. Among the officer casualties reported as 'missing' was Jeurwine.

Spencer Jeurwine has no known grave but is commemorated on Pier 1 Face C of the Thiepval Memorial, France. In addition he is depicted in a large stained glass window in what was his father's church- St Mary and St Peter, Harlaxton, Lincolnshire.

(Source: LEST WE FORGET PROJECT, Brighton College <https://www.brightoncollegeremembers.com/roll-of-honour/1876>)



The stained glass window in Harlaxton Church titled "The Last Judgement", featuring, bottom right, in his Army greatcoat, Spencer Jeurwine.

Private Percy Kettle

The only man of this name in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records from the entire First World War is a Percy William Kettle.

Records show he was born in 1888 in Ipswich and was a professional soldier having originally enlisted in The 2nd Royal West Kent regiment at Woolwich in 1908 with service in India before the war. He was killed in action on 24, July 1915 whilst still serving the same Battalion as part of the Indian Expeditionary Force in Mesopotamia (Iraq). He is buried in Basra War Cemetery in grave number II.R.9.

However.....

The total lack of obvious connection to Harlaxton may point to another answer and whilst the man described above is the only man of this name officially listed as a casualty in WW1, if we accept the name on the plaque in the Church as correct (and the close personal nature of it would suggest it is) it is worth considering another perhaps stronger possibility.

An examination of Commonwealth War Graves information and military sources suggests another man might be the Percy Kettle from Harlaxton. This man is listed in Military records and the CWG as P J *Kittle*, who was killed on 1 July 1917 and has no known grave, but is commemorated on Panel 87 to 89 of the Loos Memorial.

How might such an error happen?

After the outbreak of the First World War, recruiting offices were besieged by volunteers. Public buildings were turned into new offices across the country. Hundreds of administrative and medical staff were quickly found to work in them processing the thousands of men eager to fight.

The attestation forms were completed by a clerk writing in longhand the answers to questions asked of the recruits. With thousands to process and time of the essence it is easy to see how mistakes might be made. Mistakes which might be compounded by low literacy of some recruits.

The reason "P J *Kittle*" appears to be a more likely candidate to match the Percy Kettle listed on the plaque in the church is both geographical and military.

This man served as a Lance corporal, Regt. Number 47901, in the 2nd Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derby Regiment) a local regiment which recruited in the area and which other men from Harlaxton served in.

Online military sources based on his attestation papers state he was born in "*Inglesby*" Lincolnshire and in resident in "*Harbison*" Lincolnshire. Neither place exists.

There is however an *Ingoldsby* in Lincolnshire, less than 20km from Harlaxton, just beyond Boothby Pagnell.

Ingoldsby is pronounced "Inglesby" and when we look at census records for that village they show there *was* a Percy John Kettle born (1893) in the village (father George William Kettle). There is no Kittle family shown for Ingoldsby.

Significantly there is then a war pension record for Percy John *Kettle* with the same service number as Percy Kittle (47901) and this war pension records record also lists George William Kettle as next of kin and Mary Elizabeth Kettle as mother, both living in Ingoldsby.

The records for "Kittle" therefore seem to be for the same man but contain spelling errors.

Just a small transcription error at the point of enlistment could well have changed the "e" in Kettle, to an "l" in Kittle and recorded Ingoldsby as Inglesby. In addition it is not a far stretch to get "Harbison" transcribed from a mis-heard "Harlaxton". This was not unusual and the author's family has an example of a surname being miss spelt from enlistment right through to the CWG records.

Having been killed in 1917 during fighting in the Loos area in France Percy John Kettle (Kittle) is commemorated on the Loos Memorial in France which commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay, from the first day of the Battle of Loos to the end of the war and who's burial site is unknown.

Private Albert Lane

Albert was born in 1888 the son of John William Lane and Alice Lane of The Drift, Harlaxton brother of Aubrey Lane. Albert came from a very local family, with his father having been born in 1861 in Denton and his mother (nee Alice Searson) born in Harlaxton in 1864 . The Census of 1891 shows Albert aged 2 years, his father 28 years old, working as an agricultural labourer, living at no. 6, The Drift Harlaxton. By the 1901 Census with Albert 12 years old his father was working as a boilermaker's labourer, still living on the Drift Harlaxton.

After this Albert moved away as the Census of 1911 shows him aged 23, working as a servant /gardener at the gardens Coolhurst Bothey, Horsham Surrey.

Albert joined up in the early stages of the War and served with the 2Bn.Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) with the Service Number 1546,.

He was killed in action on 25/04/1915 during the Dardanelles Campaign (Gallipoli) in Turkey, aged 27. There is a difference between the date listed officially on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the announcement of his death by the family. The official date is listed as 25 April, yet the family stated he was killed on 14 May. This discrepancy may be down to the time lag between formal notification and the family receiving other news from the front.

The eight month ill fated campaign in Gallipoli was fought by Commonwealth and French forces in an attempt to force Turkey out of the war, to relieve the deadlock of the Western Front in France and Belgium, and to open a supply route to Russia through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea.

The 2nd Royal Fusiliers who Albert served with were in 89th Bde, 29th Division, and went through the whole campaign suffering severely through the awful conditions of heat, flies dust and disease.

Albert must have been killed and lost as he has no known grave. He is commemorated on Panel 38 to 42 of the Helles Memorial in Turkey.

The Helles Memorial serves the dual function of Commonwealth battle memorial for the whole Gallipoli campaign and place of commemoration for many of those Commonwealth servicemen who died there and have no known grave.

Albert's death was announced in Grantham Journal, 12 June 1915 ;

"Mr. and Mrs. Lane, of The Drift, Harlaxton have received the sad news that their son, Pte. Albert Lane, of the 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers, was killed in action on the Gallipoli Peninsular, on May 14th.

Pte. Lane joined the 5th Battalion Royal Fusiliers on September 1st, 1914, and was thus one of the earliest to answer his King and country's call. He joined the Battalion at Hounslow, and was drafted To Dover, then transferring to the 3rd Battalion. From thence, he formed part of a draft for the 2nd Battalion, and proceeded to Stockingford, Warwickshire, where he completed his training.

On March 15th, he proceeded with his regiment to Malta, Egypt, and formed part of the Expeditionary Force to The Dardanelles, where he met a hero's death, and Harlaxton, though mourning his loss, is proud that yet another of her sons has nobly done his duty. Much sympathy is felt for his parents, who are natives of the village."

Grantham Journal also carried the same date this obituary;

"LANE Pte Albert Lane, 2nd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, killed in action, in the Gallipoli Peninsula, May 14th, 1915 aged 27 years. His parents wish to thank all friends for their kind sympathy."

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk who led the Turkish forces at Gallipoli and went on to lead the country after the war is reputed to have said the following about the British and Commonwealth troops who were killed during this bloody campaign; *"Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehments to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours ... You, the mothers who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well."*

Private Aubrey Lane

For the Lane family the tragedy of losing one son was to be compounded just days before the War ended with the news that their second son, Aubrey had also been killed.

Aubrey Lane was born in 1896 in Harlaxton, second son to John William Lane and Alice Lane of The Drift and younger brother of Albert Lane. Aubrey went on to work on the land, the 1911 Census showing him as a 15 year old "yard boy" on a farm.

He had initially joined the Lincolnshire Regiment in 1915 with the Service Number 241449 before being transferred to 1st Bn. The Bedfordshire Regiment in 1916 with the new regimental number 43870.

In the spring and summer of 1918, replenished by new divisions transferred hurriedly from the East after the crushing defeat of Russia, the German army launched a bold new campaign on the Western Front. Appearances, however, were deceptive. Imperial Germany, as many army staff officers admitted, was playing its 'last card', and after initial successes, the Ludendorff offensive ran out of steam.

On 18 July, having rebuffed the last major German assault, French forces in the Marne area launched a surprise counter-attack. This marked the beginning of the 'Hundred Days', an Allied counter-offensive that finally broke the military stalemate on the Western Front and brought the First World War to a close.

By October 1918 the Allies were driving the German army eastwards at an astonishing pace. Ironically, whilst many believe the years of static trench warfare of the Somme and Ypres were the most costly, the reality was the open mobile warfare of the 100 Day offensive, which lasted until 11 November and the signing of the Armistice, was perhaps the period with the highest casualty rates.

Aubrey died of wounds received during the fighting around the village of Beaurain, a village in the Department of the Nord 19 kilometres south of Valenciennes and 4 kilometres from Solesmes railway station.

Despite being evacuated through the medical channels that by 1918 were quite efficient, Aubrey succumbed to his wounds at one of the Casualty Clearing Stations, immediately behind the front line. This explains his burial in Grave:17. B. 12. In Grevillers British Cemetery in the Pas de Calais rather than in the cemetery at Beaurain where the battle took place, some 57km away. The village of Grevillers was first occupied by Commonwealth troops on 14 March 1917 and in April and May, the 3rd, 29th and 3rd Australian Casualty Clearing Stations were posted nearby. They began the cemetery and continued to use it until March 1918, when Grevillers was lost to the German during their great advance. On the following 24 August, the New Zealand Division recaptured Grevillers and in September, the 34th, 49th and 56th Casualty Clearing Stations came to the village and used the cemetery again.

Every battalion had a medical officer, assisted by at least 16 stretcher-bearers. The medical officer was tasked with establishing a Regimental Aid Post near the front line. From here, the wounded were evacuated and cared for by men of a Field Ambulance in an Advanced Dressing Station.

A casualty then travelled by motor or horse ambulance to a Casualty Clearing Station like the one at Grevillers. These were basic hospitals and were the closest point to the front where female nurses were allowed to serve. Patients who were well enough were then transferred to a stationary or general hospital at a base for further treatment, but those too injured to be moved further often died at this stage in their evacuation from the front line. A network of ambulance trains and hospital barges provided transport between these facilities, while hospital ships carried casualties evacuated back home to 'Blighty'.

As was often the case the details of a soldier's last days were often relayed in a way to minimise the impact on relatives. The article below from the Grantham Journal states a Nursing Sister having written to the family to say "she did not think he suffered". It also states he was taken to a "base hospital".

The reality might have been different – the casualty clearing station was very much a half way house between the immediate first aid of the field Advanced Field Dressing Station and the larger Base Hospitals on the coast. It was still a very basic form of hospital and an uncomfortable journey on shell holed roads from the front.

The War Diary of the 1st Btn Bedfords states the fighting at Beaurain took place on 22 and 23 October, meaning Aubrey could have suffered for three or four days before passing away – all a couple of weeks before the fighting ended.

The Grantham Journal, from 9 November 1918, carries the following:

"The death has occurred in France of Pte. Aubrey Lane, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. William Lane the Drift Harlaxton. The sad news was conveyed in a letter from the sister in charge of a base hospital, dated 26th October, saying he had been brought in a couple of days previously badly wounded in the hip and arm. She did not think he suffered greatly, and passed away in his sleep.

A few weeks he was home on leave, well and cheerful. He joined the Lincolns in 1915, and was sent to Ireland the following year being eventually transferred to the Bedford's, with whom he went to France.

After returning from leave he was sent to the Gloucestershire regiment. Of a genial quite disposition Pte. Lane was liked and respected by everyone and the sympathy of all will be felt for his parents.

Private Sydney Barker Lane

Sydney was the son of Thomas and Agnes A. Lane, of Harlaxton. Sydney's father was originally from Denton (born 1861) whilst his mother was from Harlaxton (born 1869), suggesting there is a strong possibility that Sydney's father was a brother of John Lane, father of Albert and Aubrey, as he was also born in Denton, meaning Sydney may well have been their cousin, compounding the family loss still further.

Married 1891 Thomas and Agnes had Sydney in 1892. By the 1901 Census Sydney was 8 years old and his father a cottager, living Church Yard Harlaxton.

The Census of 1911 shows him as 18 and a carter's son working as a carter. His father was then 50 working as a contracting carter, machine owner and rural councillor living Harlaxton.

Sydney joined up in 1916 with the Royal Field Artillery Service Number:174253, later transferring to 12th/13th Bn. Northumberland Fusiliers Service Number:47645. He was another casualty of the 100 Day Offensive being listed as killed in action on 23 August 1918, aged 26.

Sydney has no known grave and is commemorated on Panel 3 on The Vis-En-Artois Memorial Pas de Calais in France. This Memorial bears the names of over 9,000 men who fell in the period from 8 August 1918 to the date of the Armistice in the Advance to Victory in Picardy and Artois, between the Somme and Loos, and who have no known grave.

The Grantham Journal of 21 September 1918 carried the following story:

"Mr and Mrs T. Lane, Harlaxton have received from the War Office the sad news that their oldest son was killed on August 23rd. He joined the R.F.A., in August 1916, and was transferred to the Northumberland Fusiliers, in November of the same year. He was wounded in June 1917, and spent nine months in hospital. He was stationed in England until July 19th last, when he proceeded to France. Born in the village, 26 years ago, the deceased was well known to everyone. Of a quite industrious nature he will be greatly missed by his parents, whom he had assisted in their business until his time came to join the army. He was for many years a member of the church choir. There have been numerous expressions of regret and sympathy with his relatives."

Private Fred (Frederick William) Moore

Frederick William Moore was born in 1897 in Great Ponton. Records show he was baptised on 21 March that year. His father Charles Moore, was born 1864 was a former soldier himself, having joined the Royal Artillery (No. 53613) on 27th February 1886. His mother Sarah Jane was born in 1875 in Oakham.

The Census of 1901 shows [Frederick William](#) Moore aged 4 years, living in Main Street, Harlaxton with his father listed as a 37 year old Garden labourer domestic.

His father was still a garden labourer living in Harlaxton in 1911, but the Census shows Fred, aged 14, living with William Baily at East Lodge Melton Mowbray working as a general servant domestic.

Fred enlisted for war service in Grantham joining the 1st Btn. Lincolnshire Regiment Service Number:201458 He was lost on 4 October 1917 aged 20. Killed in action in the Third Battle of Ypres (otherwise known as Passchendaele). One of the thousands of men with no known grave, Fred is commemorated on Panel 37 of the Tyne Cot Memorial West-Vlaanderen near Ypres in Belgium.

The Tyne Cot Memorial bears the names of almost 35,000 officers and men whose graves are not known. The memorial itself forms the north-eastern boundary of Tyne Cot Cemetery, now the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world in terms of burials.

It was established as a battlefield cemetery around a captured German blockhouse or pill-box used as an advanced dressing station. That original cemetery of 343 graves was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when remains were brought in from the battlefields of Passchendaele and Langemarck, and from a few small burial grounds.

There are now 11,961 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Tyne Cot Cemetery, 8,373 of these are unidentified.

Private Robert Henry Robinson

Robert Robinson was actually from Skillington, son of Thomas O. and Mary J. Robinson, of Top of Green, Skillington where he was born in 1889.

In 1891 he is shown as living with his Grandmother Jane Robinson 52 (born Sproxton) at 9 Village Square Skillington aged 3 years. Aged 13 he was back in the main family home living on Stone Pit Row, Skillington where his father, now 43, worked as a groom/yardman on a farm.

In 1911 he is listed as a wagoner on a farm in South Stoke where, aged 22 he was married to Ellen Meads (born 1890) with whom he had a daughter Marie.

Robert's war service started with the 7th Btn. Lincolnshire Regiment (Service Number:13836) with whom he enlisted early in the war.

He was killed in action on 2 March 1916 aged 28 in the fighting around the Ypres salient. The Ypres Salient is the area around Ypres in Belgium which was the scene of some of the biggest battles in World War I.

In military terms, a salient is a battlefield feature that projects into enemy territory. Therefore, the salient is surrounded by the enemy on three sides, making the troops occupying the salient vulnerable.

The Ypres salient was formed by British, French, Canadian and Belgian defensive efforts against German incursion during the 1914 "Race to the Sea", culminating in the Battle of the Yser and the First Battle of Ypres.

These battles saved the Ypres salient and the corner of Belgium around Veurne from occupation, but also led to the beginning of trench warfare in the salient as both sides "dug in" around the line. The area of the salient is mostly flat, with few rises or hills. Those that did exist became the focus for the 1915 Second Battle of Ypres, which saw the first use of gas and the almost total destruction and evacuation of Ypres, and the 1917 Third Battle of Ypres at Passchendaele.

Bedford House Cemetery where Robert is buried is located 2.5 Km south of Ieper (Ypres) town centre and the neighbourhood bears witness to the fierce fighting in the vicinity from 1914 to 1918 He lies in a marked grave - 4. 7. E. 8 in Bedford House Cemetery West-Vlaanderen Belgium.

Grantham Journal 1 April 1916 carried the following;

"It is with sincere regret we record the death of Robert Henry Robinson, Lincolnshire Regiment aged 28 years, husband of Mrs. Ellen Robinson and third son of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Robinson of Skillington, He was killed in action on March 2nd. The first intimation came in a letter to the deceased soldier's wife from Co. Sergt. Major F. Hullott, who stated that he was close to him when he was killed. He was always happy and such a cheery comrade, and all his comrades mourn his loss. He was buried in a grave behind the line. His death has since been officially confirmed by the war office. He enlisted soon after the outbreak of war and had been at the front eight months. He leaves a widow and three young children for whom the deepest sympathy is felt."

The story above was accompanied the same day in the Grantham Journal, by the following obituary;

"ROBINSON - Killed in action, on March 2nd, Private Robert Henry Robinson, Lincolnshire Regiment. age 28 years, beloved husband of Ellen Robinson, of Skillington. (verse) From his sorrowing Wife and Children."

Leading Stoker Herbert Sargent

Herbert Sargent is an interesting addition to the village roll of Honour as his connection with the village seems to be through his parents. Born in Basingstoke on 17 October 1890 he was the son of Herbert Sargent (born 1862 Andover) and Frances Ellen Sargent (born 1859 Southampton).

The Census of 1891 shows Herbert Frederick Sargent 5 months old, with his father Herbert aged 29 working as a stationary engine driver.

By the time of the 1901 Census Herbert was still living with his family and his father is listed as an electrical engineer, living spring cottages, Shipborne, Kent.

Herbert signed on in the Royal Navy as a regular for 12 years, Service Number K/2056 and the 1911 Census lists him as a 20 year old stoker in the Royal Navy living with his wife, Nora Bertha Sargent (born 1889 Portsmouth) at 81 Clararemount Road, Fratton, Portsmouth.

Meanwhile the same 1911 Census shows his father as an engineer brickyard living at Saxon Cottages Peterborough Road,

Whittlesea Cambs. At some point after this they must have moved to Harlaxton which is why Herbert's name appears on the village memorial.

His Father Herbert Sargent died July 1935, his Mother Frances Ellen Sargent died January 1947 and both lie in the church yard in Harlaxton. Their son was clearly dear to them as he is mentioned on the headstone of his parents as "*Herbert Frederick Sargent age 24 to be with Christ yet is far better*".

The story of Herbert's service and death at 24 is rather different to the other men named on the memorial. His date of death was 26 November 1914 and the cause of death is listed as "accidentally killed" and he is commemorated on Panel 4 of the Portsmouth Naval Memorial as he has no known grave.

The circumstances leading to this were that Herbert died on the battleship HMS Bulwark due to internal explosion of ship. HMS Bulwark was part of the 5th Battle Squadron and at the outbreak of the war was based at Sheerness in order to protect the South East of England from the threat of a German invasion.

On Thursday 26 November 1914, she was moored in the Medway Estuary approximately between East Hoo Creek and Stoke Creek when, at 7.50am a massive explosion ripped through the vessel.

The Times reported "*The band was playing and some of the men were drilling on deck when the explosion occurred. A great sheet of flame and quantities of debris shot upwards, and the huge bulk of the vessel lifted and sank, shattered, torn, and twisted, with officers and men aboard...*"

Boats of all kinds were launched from the nearby ships and shore to pick up survivors and the dead. Work was hampered by the amount of debris which included hammocks, furniture, boxes and hundreds of mutilated bodies. Fragments of personal items showered down in the streets of Sheerness.

Initially 14 men survived the disaster, but some died later from their injuries. One of the survivors, an able seaman, had a miraculous escape. He said he was on the deck of the Bulwark when the explosion occurred. He was blown into the air, fell clear of the debris and managed to swim to wreckage and keep himself afloat until he was rescued. His injuries were slight. The CWGC database names 788 men from HMS Bulwark as having lost their lives in this explosion. There were only 14 survivors

Private William Walton

William was born in Harlaxton, but beyond this there is little information. By the time of the war he must have moved away as he was married to May Walton and the father of Mabel Walton with the family living at 36, Byron Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

He served with the 10th Bn Sherwood Foresters (Notts & Derby Regiment), Service number 59929.

When he was killed on 13 Feb 1917 he was 35 years old – an age which would have set him apart from the majority of the men serving with him who would have been late teens early to mid twenties.

William was killed fighting with a Battalion that had seen some intense action in some of the most ugly fighting on the Western Front, where he died was part of the Somme front.

He is buried Grave VI A 10 in Sailly-Saillisel British Cemetery. The village of Sailly-Saillisel, stands at the north end of a ridge, and was the objective of French attacks in September and October 1916, finally being captured on 18 October. The village then remained in Allied hands until 24 March 1918 when it was lost during the German advance, only to be recaptured by the 18th and 38th (Welsh) Division on 1 September 1918.

The cemetery was made after the Armistice when graves were brought in isolated positions chiefly south and east of the village and from the following small burial grounds.

Lance Corporal Robert Woodward

Son of Charles and Emma Woodward, of 27, Tyndal Rd., Green Hill, Grantham, Robert's connection with Harlaxton seems to have been that he moved here to work, as the 1911 Census shows him aged 16 working as a Waggoner on farm, living with George Plumtree foreman on a farm at North Lodge, Harlaxton.

Robert was born 1894, son of Charles Woodward (born 1860 Boston) and Emma Woodward (born 1860 Welby). In the 1901 Census he is shown aged 6 living with his parents on farm in Welby village, his father, 41, also working as a Waggoner. Robert initially enlisted in Grantham, joining the 7th Bn. Lincolnshire Regiment but was subsequently transferred to The Norfolk Regiment where his Service Number was 40507.

He was killed in action aged 22 on 28 April 1917 whilst taking part in the Arras offensive, an attempt to break the stalemate of the Western Front. The preliminary bombardment at the Battle of Arras When troops attacked, they were supported by a creeping barrage. Artillery support was more effective at Arras than at the Somme thanks in part to improvements in training and scheduling.

On the first day of the Battle of Arras, the Canadian Corps attacked Vimy Ridge in a battle that holds a special place in Canadian history. It was the first time that all four divisions of the Canadian Corps had fought together and it was an attack that provided a blueprint for future successes on the Western Front.

Far from the perception of "over the top" lines of infantry walking into a hail of machine gun fire the tactics of this battle were far more developed than those used the previous year on the Somme.

The soldiers had rehearsed their roles over and over again, practising working with the creeping barrage. The preliminary bombardment which lasted several weeks saw German positions pulverised by more than 2.5 million shells, about 1 million more than at the Somme the previous year. In addition mines laid in tunnels dug beneath the ridge were detonated just before the attack. By noon, three of the four Canadian divisions had taken their objectives and the British attack south of Vimy Ridge advanced up to 3.5 miles - further than any attack since the end of 1914.

At Bullecourt however, the German defence held firm. German reinforcements then began to arrive in significant numbers and the battle descended into a familiar attritional struggle that was finally called off on 16 May by which time Robert had been lost.

Whilst the Battle of Arras featured some notable early successes beyond the first few days casualty figures began to rise exponentially and the battle ground to a halt. There was no breakthrough and the battle had failed to win any strategic objectives meaning in 1917 the Western Front remained in deadlock.

As he has no known grave Robert Woodward is commemorated on the Arras Memorial Pas de Calais which commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7 August 1918 who have no known grave.

Reporting Robert Woodward's death the Grantham Journal, of 16 June 1917 states;

"The sad intelligence of the death in action of Lance- Corpl Robert Woodward, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Woodward, of 27, Tyndal Road, Grantham, was conveyed to his parents in an official communication last week.

They have also received a sympathetic letter from a Lieutenant of their son's regiment. He writes: -- "Mrs. Woodward, - It is my painful duty to inform you of the death of your son, Lance- Corpl. Woodward, who has been killed in action. On behalf of the officers and men of his regiment, I offer you our most sincere and deepest sympathy in your great bereavement. His platoon officer has been wounded, and I am there-fore writing in his place. I know, whoever that his platoon has lost a gallant soldier, whom it will be difficult to replace".

Lance- Corpl. Woodward enlisted in October 1914, in the Lincolnshire Regiment, and was later transferred to the Norfolk Regiment. He went abroad in July 1915, and had been twice wounded. On August 24th, 1915, he was wounded in the shoulder, and was again injured on March 3rd, 1916, being hit in the thigh. He had only returned to duty a few weeks before his death occurred. Before enlisting, Lance- Corpl. Woodward was engaged in agricultural wok with Mr. Langham of Spoxton.

Mr. and Mrs. Woodward have other sons serving viz, Pte Charles William who been out 21 months and is now home to qualify, for a commission, and Pte. John of the Notts. And Derby regiment, now in training in England."

His obituary in the Grantham Journal, on 16 June 1917, reads ;

"WOODWORD - In loving memory of Lance-Corpl. Robert Woodward, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Woodward, who was killed in action, date and place unknown, aged 22 years - verse - From his loving Dad, Mother, Brothers, & Sisters."

In a coincidence of war, Stanley Ben Farrow, who was also born in Harlaxton, is commemorated on the Canadian memorial at Vimy having been lost in the same area fighting with the 47 bn Canadian Infantry on 21 August, 1917 aged 18. Stanley moved to Salmon Arm in British Columbia in Canada with his family before the war.

The four Commonwealth War Graves in the Churchyard.

1. Cecil HARRIS, priv., 3rd Btn. Lincs Regt., age 24, died 23 May 1918. Son of Andrew and Lizzie HARRIS of Harlaxton who is Commemorated on the village memorial outlined previously.
2. Alick Thomas Bentall CHARLESWORTH, 2nd lieut., RFC, age 24, died 30 May 1917. Husband of Elizabeth Rosina May CHARLESWORTH of Victoria, BC, Canada.
3. Stanley Keith MUIR MC, captain, RFC, age 25, died 12 Sept. 1917. Son of John Franklin MUIR, Victoria, MLB, Australia.
4. Stanley Arthur RUTLEDGE, lieut., 28th Btn. Canadian Inf., age 27, died 16 Nov. 1917. Son of Edward S. and Anna J. RUTLEDGE of Fort William, Ontario.

2nd Lieutenant Alick Thomas Bentall Charlesworth,



Alick Charlesworth died 30 May 1917 while serving with the Royal Flying Corps. He was just 24 when he was killed in a flying accident having travelled from British Columbia in Canada to join the war.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission shows him as "Son of A. L. I. and Gertrude S. Charlesworth; husband of Elizabeth Rosina May Charlesworth, of Bell Apartments, Cook St., Victoria, British Columbia, Canada."

Unlike the other three First war casualties, Alick Charlesworth does not have a standard CWG headstone. His is the stone probably placed after his original interment quite probably paid for by subscription by his Squadron. This may have remained after the war at the request of the family.

Their local newspaper, The Cowichan Leader, reported the death of 2nd Lieutenant Alick Thomas Bentall Charlesworth like this; *"Second Lieut. A.T.B. Charlesworth. Many in Cowichan will be grieved to hear of the death of Second Lieut. Alick Thomas Bentall Charlesworth, Royal Flying Corps. He met with an accident in England. Born in Zanzibar 24 years ago, and educated in England, he came to the Island in 1909 and lived with his parents in Westholme. He entered the surveying profession, subsequently enlisted and was quartered in Duncan with No.2 Co. 88th Bn. On arrival in England he was transferred to the Royal Flying Corps. He leaves a wife (formerly Miss Price of Ganges), now in England; his mother is a matron at a hospital in Blandford; his father Mr. A.R.D. Charlesworth, returned last week to Victoria after serving with the A.S.C. in Egypt and Salonica."*

(Source: Cowichan Leader, 14 June 1917, in Cowichan Valley Museum & Archives collections)

Captain Stanley Keith Muir MC



Stanley Keith Muir was born on 6th April, 1892 at Elsternwick, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia to parents John Franklin Muir & Josephine Muir (nee Holmes).

He was a 22 year old, single, Station Overseer from Jolimont, Victoria when he enlisted at Broadmeadows, Victoria on 18th August, 1914 with the 4th Light Horse Regiment (Divisional) "A" Squadron of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 152.

After periods of severe illness acquired on the troop ship from Australia to the middle East and treatment in Hospitals in Egypt, Malta and England he was discharged from the Australian Imperial Force on 17th November, 1915 having been granted a Commission in the 20th King's Royal Rifles Corps. He joined the 20th King's Royal Rifles Corps at once as a temporary Second

Lieutenant but having gained his Royal Aero Club Aviator's Certificate flying a Maurice Farman Biplane on 11th May, 1916 at Military School, Catterick he again transferred to the Royal Flying Corps.

He was posted to No. 1 Squadron at Heliopolis on 27th July, 1916, then temporarily attached to No. 17 Squadron R.F.C. at Kaulara on 19th September, 1916 en-route for Salonika.

He returned to his Unit from Alexandria on 27th September, 1916 but whilst serving with of No. 67 Australian Squadron, was again taken ill and sent to Hospital on 18th October, 1916. He was taken to 26th Casualty Clearing Station & discharged to duty on 19th October, 1916.

Whilst fighting in the Middle East Stanley was awarded the Military Cross for Gallantry & devotion to duty in the field. Promoted to Captain he returned to England and joined No. 68 Squadron R.F.C. at Harlaxton, Lincolnshire, England from Overseas on 18th August, 1917 as an instructor.

He died aged 25 on 12 Sept. 1917 as a result of a flying accident.



Stanley Muir's grave in Harlaxton Churchyard.

The Grantham Journal, Grantham, reported on 15 September, 1917;

"AUSTRALIAN AIRMAN KILLED. In an Eastern Counties Camp, on Thursday, an inquest was held respecting the death of Captain Stanley Keith Muir, aged 25, of the Australian Flying Corps, whose home is in Melbourne.

Deceased was stated to be a skilled and experienced pilot. Second-Lieut. G. C. Wilson, A.F.C., said that on Wednesday he saw Captain Muir turn the machine on its back and glide for a short distance upside down. He was at this time about 1,200 feet up. He pulled the machine out in the ordinary way, and when at about 800 feet up the aeroplane attained its normal flying position.

Directly afterwards the right-hand bottom wing appeared to collapse in the centre, and immediately the top wing crumpled up, causing the machine to spin to the ground. He watched Captain Muir all the time during this particular flight, and he considered there was no unnecessary strain put on the machine, which was practically a new one. The further evidence showed that the machine was in perfect working order when it ascended.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death," and expressed the opinion that accident was caused through some structural defect in the part of the machine which first broke, and that strict investigations should be made possible to ascertain the cause of the accident, and prevent similar accidents in the future."

Extensive records here - https://ww1austburialsuk.weebly.com/uploads/4/9/7/8/4978039/muir__stanley_keith.pdf

Lieutenant Stanley Arthur Rutledge



Stanley Rutledge was the son of Edward S. and Anna J. Rutledge of Fort William, Ontario, Canada.

Born in 1889 Stanley was a published author having written “Pen Pictures from the Trenches” recording his war experiences. Unfortunately he did not live to see his letters published and shared with others, as he suffered a fatal injury while flying at Harlaxton on November 16, 1917.

It was Lieutenant Rutledge’s parents who had his letters printed in book format to share with others. The material is divided into two parts and offers readers a glimpse into life during the Great War.

Growing up in Fort William, Stanley was the son of former mayor Edward S. Rutledge. Shortly after his completion of high school and employment in both the banking and publishing industries, he decided that a career in law would be his chosen profession.

In 1915, as his schooling neared completion, Stanley Rutledge enlisted in the war effort as a Private with the 4th University Company out of Montreal.

After signing up in September of 1915 and receiving training, he crossed the Atlantic Ocean to arrive in England for further training. In March of 1916, Rutledge was sent to the trenches in Ypres. Some months later he transferred to the 28th Battalion in order to join his brother Wilfred, who was already on the front lines. Just short of a year of Stanley Rutledge’s time with the 28th Battalion was spent as a sniper and during this time he began describing his experiences and thoughts from the front in his letters home – the material that would form “Pen Pictures from The Trenches”.

It was after life in the trenches and in military school in England that Rutledge earned the rank of Lieutenant and joined the Royal Flying Corps as a qualified pilot.

It was while the Lieutenant was providing instruction at Harlaxton, that he suffered a fatal aircraft accident when the left underside of the plane he was piloting struck a tree while he was trying to land it.

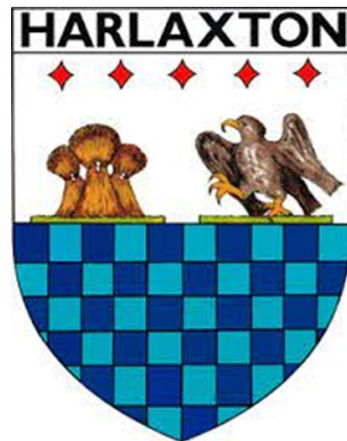


His grave is notable for having two headstones, one the standard CWG stone, the other a stone cross featuring a bi-plane. This latter headstone was probably paid for by subscription by his Squadron as was often the case for officers killed in the war. Post war the CWG must have added their own headstone but left the stone originally marking his grave. This may have been at the request of the family.



“Lest We Forget”

Researched and compiled by Harlaxton History Society
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History Society