

**BERGH APTON
ROLL OF HONOUR
AND
BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE**



The men of Bergh Apton
who died in two World Wars

1914 to 1918
and
1939 to 1945

*Dedicated
at the Remembrance Day Service
in the parish church of St Peter & St Paul,
Sunday 14th November, 2010*

THE MEMORIAL: ITS DESIGN, RESTORATION & ADDITIONS

War memorials erected after the First World War could be a contentious issue. The Eastern Daily Press (EDP) of the time carries many reports of disagreements as to style, form and even decisions taken to do nothing at all. Controversy took many forms. The EDP of 15th March 1920 reported, for example, that the proposal to erect a memorial at Brisley met opposition because it might arouse resentment outside the parish!

There is no record of opposition in Bergh Apton. The request for a Faculty (church planning permission) to erect the memorial was submitted by the Rector and Churchwardens on 4th December 1919 following unanimous agreement by the Vestry on a design submitted by Southampton architect W G Houseman.

There is a hint of controversy, however, after the Second World War in the fact that there was a twenty year delay in adding the names of five Bergh Apton men killed in that conflict. The matter was not settled until 1965 when the Churchwardens' Minute Book recorded the success of the late Miss Betty Denny-Cooke, clearly in the face of some procrastination by others, in her insistence that the work be done.

Norfolk Record Office has an original drawing of the war memorial proposed in 1919. If one compares the drawing with the memorial itself one sees that the real thing differs little from Houseman's proposal. It has been restored twice in its lifetime. The first occasion coincided with the addition of the World War Two names 1965. The second was in 2007 when major restoration work was carried out with financial support from English Heritage via the War Memorials Trust together with a fundraising campaign in the village and some very generous donations from well-wishers far and wide.

The 2007 work was carried out by stonemason Matthew Beesley of Fairhaven of Anglesey Abbey. He repaired cracks and stabilized metal corrosion, cleaned the stone, re-carved the dedication and the names of the existing men and then protected the memorial against erosion and fungal attack. At the same time, with the approval of the Parish Council and the PCC, the names of sixteen men were added.

The completion of these works was marked on 25th May 2007 by a re-dedication service led by the Bishop of Thetford. It was attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Norfolk, members of the men's families, Standard Bearers and representatives of many Regiments and Services with whom they had served and by residents of Bergh Apton. The congregation numbered in excess of two hundred people.

Since then the names of more men with appropriate village *bone fides* (principally birth, baptism, education, livelihood or residence greater than one year) have been added.

BERGH APTON'S WAR DEAD

Only five months after the Great War ended Bergh Apton's Vestry considered ideas for a village war memorial. A design for a simple war memorial was agreed on 4th December that year and received Diocesan planning approval on 21st February 1920. When it was dedicated on 28th May 1920 it carried the names of twenty men who died in that war. In 1965 five more were added for the Second World War.

Research begun in 1999 revealed that other men whose lives had begun in or had been shaped by the village of Bergh Apton had died in war but their deaths were not recorded on the memorial. A key reason lay in the peripatetic nature of life on the land; by the time that the call went out in 1919 for names to be put forward for the memorial many of the agricultural labouring families who had lost sons whilst living in Bergh Apton had moved away to work on farms in other villages.

In 2007 the Parish Council and PCC agreed that Bergh Apton birth, baptism, education, or employment would entitle a man killed in either World War to be added to the memorial. Residential qualification was added in 2009. On this basis the names of thirteen more men from the First World War and seven from the Second were added between 2007 and 2009 to make a total of forty six men. Two more candidates are being considered as this is written.

We are grateful to the many people who have given us help, advice and materials that have enabled us to set down these accounts of lives lost in war. The most important source was the families of the men themselves. Invaluable help came from the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum and the Norfolk Records Office; from the National Archives at Kew; and from the official military records of the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia.

Many of our sources, such as battalion war diaries, record the sweep of battle not the actions of individual men. In these cases we have surmised, at the time of his death, what a man might have been doing rather than what he is known to have been doing. Where we have done this we have tried to make it clear in the text.

An invaluable source for information about our County Regiment's men has been "The History of the Norfolk Regiment, August 1914 – December 1918" by F Lorraine Petre OBE. It covers in great detail the battles in which the men in our County regiment were killed or wounded.

Finally, we cannot over-emphasise the value of the World Wide Web without which we could not have achieved this record. Key helpers via this medium have been friends such as Dan Breen and Barb Hogan in Canada, Phyllis Barnes in Western Australia, Jan Sim in Adelaide, Moominpappa06 on Flickr.com and innumerable other contacts, websites and Internet discussion groups.

ROLL OF HONOUR

IN ALPABETICAL ORDER

*APPENDICES AT THE BACK ALSO GIVE THIS INFORMATION
IN DATE OR IN YEAR ORDER*

ALEXANDER, Walter Ernest	5 July	1916	Page 21
ANNIS, Arthur William	24 July	1916	26
BARNES, Eric Benjamin ⁽¹⁾	21 July	1940	24
BARNES, Maurice Charles ⁽¹⁾	9 September	1940	38
BEAUMONT, Robert George	4 October	1917	46
BLIGH, Alfred ⁽¹⁾	19 November	1916	52
BOGGIS MM, Alfred John	8 October	1918	47
BRACEY, Walter Wilfred	2 September	1914	37
CAIN, Leonard Walter George	8 August	1944	33
CARR, Leonard Edward ⁽⁵⁾	7 June	1917	20
CUBITT, Alfred Alec Arnold ⁽¹⁾	26 September	1915	43
DAVEY, Edward William ⁽¹⁾	26 December	1915	56
ETHERIDGE, Horace Charles ⁽³⁾	22 April	1917	15
EVERETT, Leonard George ⁽⁶⁾	3 April	1917	11
GIDNEY, Robert Kitchener ⁽¹⁾	18 November	1941	51
GILLINGWATER, Victor George	17 February	1917	8
GREENACRE, Charles William	22 April	1916	14
GREENACRE, Henry George Valentine	27 March	1916	10
HALE, Harry Charles ⁽⁴⁾	2 June	1944	18
HALLETT, Stephen Cyril Garnier ⁽⁴⁾	21 November	1944	53
HARBER, Freeman ⁽¹⁾	14 September	1914	39
HARVEY, Albert Edward ⁽¹⁾	13 August	1915	35
HOOD, Henry John ⁽¹⁾	26 July	1944	28
HUNT, Ernest James ⁽¹⁾	27 July	1916	29
KEELER, Sidney George	25 July	1918	27
KEDGE, Sidney Richard	8 July	1916	22
KING, Alfred George ⁽⁵⁾	28 November	1915	54
LEEDER, Ernest Albert	16 April	1917	13
LINCOLN, Clifford ⁽⁵⁾	31 July	1944	31
LOVEWELL, Jack Edmond	16 August	1943	36
MACE, Albert George ⁽³⁾	19 July	1915	23
MARKS, Sidney Herbert	8 October	1917	48
MAYES, Archie Russel	19 February	1941	9
MAYES, Harry Samuel	1 October	1915	44
MAYES, Jack Arthur	23 October	1941	50
MITCHELL, Reginald James ⁽²⁾	2 October	1917	45
PARKER, Albert William	9 February	1917	7
PODD, Herbert Charles George	28 June	1942	20
PRESTON DCM, John Henry ⁽¹⁾	9 January	1920	6
ROPE, Alfred Hubert	5 May	1917	16
ROPE, Leonard Godfrey	7 April	1916	12
STARMAN, Albert Edward Hamilton ⁽¹⁾	21 September	1944	42
STARMAN MM, William Edward ⁽¹⁾	16 September	1918	41
STONE, Aubrey Samuel	15 September	1916	40
STONE, Thomas ⁽⁶⁾	9 May	1915	17
THROWER, Herbert Charles ⁽¹⁾	27 July	1916	30
THROWER, Walter Albert ⁽¹⁾	8 August	1916	32
TOLVER, William Leonard ⁽¹⁾	23 July	1944	25
WALL, Clement Sidney	11 August	1917	34
WEDDUP, Charles Daniel	17 October	1915	49
WRIGHT, James Robert	17 December	1918	55

⁽¹⁾ Added for re-dedication (25 May 2007)

⁽²⁾ Added for Remembrance Day 2007

⁽³⁾ Added for Remembrance Day 2008

⁽⁴⁾ Added for Remembrance Day 2009

⁽⁵⁾ Added for Remembrance Day 2011

⁽⁶⁾ Not yet on Memorial

9th January



JOHN HENRY PRESTON DCM

7609, Sergeant

2nd Battalion, Norfolk Regiment and Bombay City Police

Who died aged 29 on 9th January 1920

Buried in Sewri Cemetery in Bombay, India

John Preston was the son of Fred & Sarah Honor Preston of the Hellington Bell and was baptised in Bergh Apton church on 30th March 1890. Of all Bergh Apton's war dead he is one of the most intriguing in that he does not appear in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission database of men who died.

This was, as our research showed, because he died more than a year after cessation of hostilities in November 1918. His name was added to his village war memorial on the grounds that his death was directly linked to his war service in Mesopotamia.

We learned of him by chance when we found a reference to his memorial service in the margin of the church service register for 12th March 1920. It took two years of research and a few strokes of luck to track down his death in Bombay. There, on 9th January 1920, he died of pneumonia while serving with the Bombay City Police, and is buried in the city's Sewri cemetery.

John Preston was a professional soldier who received the Distinguished Conduct Medal, the second-highest decoration for bravery after the Victoria Cross, in 1915 for his bravery in the Battle of Barjiseyah Wood to the south of Basra.

Following that battle his service record shows that he was saddled with long-term illness and hospitalisation that led to his discharge from the Army in 1919 followed by his continued service to the Crown in the Bombay Police with the rank of Sergeant.

Preston married Agatha Gabriella da Rosario, of Portuguese descent, in Bombay on 19th May 1919 while still serving in the 2nd Norfolks. His widow and his son Leyton, who died when still a young man, were frequent visitors to John's parents who, by that time, had moved to Star Lane, off the road from Hellington to Rockland St Mary.

9th February



ALBERT WILLIAM PARKER

220779, Pioneer

392nd Road Construction Company Royal Engineers

Who died aged 44 on 9th February 1917

Buried in St Pol Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais, France

Albert Parker died of cerebro-spinal fever in the military hospital at St Pol sur Ternoise, Pas de Calais, on Friday, 9th February 1917 and is buried in St Pol Communal Cemetery Extension.

When he volunteered for service on 2nd January 1917 he gave his occupation as Roadman and his age as 43 years. He was too old for warfare but had skills needed to maintain the roads to and on France's battlefields. Arriving in France on 16th January he was to survive for only three weeks before dying of fever.

He and his wife Rosa Sophia (née Medler) lived at Hellington Corner in Bergh Apton. During our research we learned that she had been married before and that, from her previous marriage, she was the mother of Charles Daniel Weddup (q.v.) who had died on 17th October 1915 near Loos. Thus we had found yet another (the sixth) household in this village struck by double-tragedy during the First World War.

There is an interesting footnote to Albert Parker's story concerning the chapel at St Pol cemetery. It was there in 1920 that the body of an unknown soldier was taken from a war cemetery in Aisne, Arras, Somme and Ypres. One of the four, chosen at random, was taken to Westminster Abbey where, as The Unknown Warrior, he was buried with full military honours on Remembrance Day, 11th November, to represent all British war dead.

17th February



VICTOR GEORGE GILLINGWATER

CH/1473(S) Private

1st Battalion, Royal Marines Light Infantry

Who died aged 20 on 17th February 1917

Buried in the Queen's Cemetery, Buquoy, France

Victor was born in Mundham and was a woodman. He was the son of George & Mary Gillingwater who lived at Bussey Bridge in Bergh Apton at the time of his death and are buried together in Bergh Apton's churchyard.

He went to London in February 1916 to volunteer for the Royal Marines. RM records show that Victor's neighbour Alfred Hubert Rope (q.v.) enlisted at the same place and time and, because they have consecutive regimental numbers, it seems clear that they did so together.

They trained together and even got into hot water together on one occasion. But they died apart within weeks of each other while on active service in two famous RMLI battles.

Victor was killed in the battle of Miraumont on 17th February 1917 when his battalion set out from River Trench to attack a sunken road near Baillescourt Farm on the north bank of the River Ancre close to the village of Grandcourt. The scene of this action, in which he was probably killed during German shelling of River Trench, can be precisely identified, even today.

He was initially buried in a small cemetery near the scene of his death but its graves were later moved to Queen's Cemetery at Bucquoy, a little to the north of Miraumont.

Having established contact with Victor's family again in 2008 we came into possession of photos of him and his parents and of other family memorabilia. His medals are in the possession of Chris Johnson of Jays Cottage at Bussey Bridge, next door to May Cottage where Victor and his parents lived.

19th February



ARCHIE RUSSEL MAYES

C/J/12120, Leading Seaman

HMS Warspite, Royal Navy

Who died aged 31 on 19th Feb 1941

Buried in Ramleh War Cemetery, Israel

Archie Russel (sic) was one of three brothers on Bergh Apton war memorial. He died on Wednesday, 19th Feb 1941 while serving in Admiral Cunningham's flagship HMS Warspite in the Mediterranean.

His death came in a comparatively quiet time for the ship and we found no record of its cause until military records were released in 2016. It was then that we learned that he had died of Pulmonary Thrombosis (TB) in 62nd General Hospital in Jerusalem.

He is buried in Ramleh War Cemetery in Palestine near Tel Aviv. Happily for us this is not the Palestinian town where so much destruction has been wreaked through Arab-Israeli fighting.

His brother Harry (q.v.) was killed in WW1 and Jack (q.v.) in October of the same year Archie was killed. These were cruel blows to their parents Thomas and Agnes who lived at Alma Cottage on Prospect Place, Bergh Apton.

27th March



HENRY GEORGE VALENTINE GREENACRE

15008, Private

1st Battalion, Coldstream Guards

Who died aged 24 on 27th March 1916

Buried in the Menin Road South Cemetery, Ypres, Belgium

Henry was killed aged 24 on Monday, 27th March 1916 when the Coldstream Guards' trenches opposite Y Wood and Railway Wood, in the vicinity of Witte Poort Farm, were shelled for over two hours by German artillery in a barrage that inflicted 22 casualties.

The bombardment occurred on the first full day of the Coldstreams' occupation of these trenches. It was, perhaps, an example of a familiar "welcome routine" used by both sides to test a unit that their intelligence has identified as having recently arrived in the Front Line.

Henry is buried in the Menin Road South Cemetery at Ypres. We have recently established that Lance Sergeant Bullimore of Sidestrand, who lies alongside Henry, was another Norfolk man in the Coldstreams who was killed on the same day and thus, in all probability, in the same action.

Henry was born in Bergh Apton and baptised in this church on 13th March 1890. His father William was a gamekeeper on the Brooke House estate and his mother Hannah Louisa (or Louise) was a Bergh Apton girl. Henry was their only child to be born here with his siblings including Charles (q.v.) having been born in their father's village of Westwick, a little to the south of North Walsham where the family was recorded living at the time of the 1901 census.

His death and that of his younger brother Charles (q.v.) less than a month later, were a double tragedy for their parents who lived at 4 Sunnyside. It must have been equally tragic for his young wife Louisa (née Whitwood) and for his daughter Mary Louise who was not yet a year old when he died.

In 1932 Henry's widowed mother Hannah (née Lord or Loyd) married Jack Stone the widowed father of Aubrey Stone (q.v.), yet another of Bergh Apton's lost sons. Hannah left Sunnyside to live with her second husband in the cottage now called Cosy Nook in Mill Loke off Threadneedle Street.

In 1935 his only daughter Mary Louise married Ted Keeler, licensee of the Hellington Bell public house on Hellington Corner. Louisa, Henry's widow, is recorded on the Electoral Roll of 1939 living at the pub with them. The family also lost Sidney Keeler (q.v.) in the Ypres Salient in July 1918.

3rd April



LEONARD GEORGE EVERETT

33099, Lance Corporal

10th Bn, Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own
(Yorkshire Regiment)

Who died aged 25 on 3rd April 1917

Remembered on the Arras Memorial, Arras (Bay 5)

Leonard Everett was born in Bergh Apton on 15th April 1891, the youngest of seven children of William and Elizabeth Everett who were from Seething and Kirstead respectively and who baptised five of their children, including Leonard, together with one of their grandchildren, in Bergh Apton parish church.

In 1881 his family lived at Bussey Bridge and in 1891 on Sunnyside (then called Barnes Hill) but by the time of the 1901 Census they had moved back to Hardley from where they had come.

Leonard's army records indicate that he first joined the Norfolk Regiment (Regt'l No 3721), transferred to the Northumberland Fusiliers (Regt'l No 9160) and then to the Yorkshire Regiment (the Green Howards).

The battalion, a Kitchener's Army unit of volunteers, was part of 21st Division's 62nd Brigade that advanced in April 1917 to fill the vacuum left by the German Army as it fell back to the recently-completed Hindenburg Line. In a well thought-out and well executed retreat that eliminated a dangerous bulge in its Front Line.

The Germans contested every village as they withdrew, to slow up and to damage the advancing British. The 10th Green Howards' war diary for 3rd April records that they "*pushed on to Croiselles (sic) and captured village, joining 7th Division on their right (Ed: to the south) and consolidated*". They halted, with the Hindenburg Line only a mile or so to the East, in front of the village of Bullecourt.

Leonard Everett died at some point in this day's fighting and his body was lost.

7th April



LEONARD GODFREY ROPE

80227, Private

31st Battalion Canadian Infantry (Alberta Regiment)

Who died aged 27 on 7th April 1916

Remembered on the Menin Gate, Ypres, Belgium

Leonard Rope, fighting with B Company of the Alberta Regiment, died at St Eloi near Voormezele to the south of Ypres. He was killed a little over three miles from where Henry Greenacre (see above) had died just ten days earlier.

Leonard 's body was never recovered and he is remembered on the south-facing wall of the Menin Gate in Ypres.

He was baptised Leonard Godfrey on 24th June 1888 November 1893 and was the sixth of the eleven children of Aaron and Ellen Alice Rope to be baptised in this church. He left his family home at Holly Farm Bergh Apton in 1909, sailing for Canada on the SS Canada from Liverpool on 22nd April with an onward ticket on Canadian Pacific Railroad to Calgary in Alberta.

The Canadian Census of 1911 shows him farming on a "dryland" homestead of 320 acres in Connorsville School District No 2882 near Finnegan, ninety seven miles north-west of Medicine Hat. It was a long way from and on very different land to that farmed in Bergh Apton by his parents Aaron and Ellen Alice.

His homestead was still registered in his name (L G Rope Estate) on the Alberta Homestead map of 1918 but it was returned to the Province at some time thereafter and is, today, part of a very large ranch owned by the Peake family.

Leonard enlisted in Calgary as a volunteer in the 31st Battalion, Canadian Infantry (The Alberta Regiment) on 8th April 1915. His unit arrived in England on 29th May 1915 to train for war at Shorncliffe in Essex, and crossed the channel to France on 17th September.

His death, on the eve of his twenty eighth birthday, is recorded in the war diary of his Battalion that relates in stark detail the confusion and appalling conditions on this southern limit of the Ypres Salient.

16th April



ERNEST ALBERT LEEDER

5133, Private

11th Battalion, Australian Infantry

Who died aged 29 on 16th April 1917

Remembered on the Australian Memorial, Villers Bretonneux

The date recorded for Ernest Leeder's death is Monday, 16th April 1917 but he probably died the previous day (see below). He is remembered on the impressive Australian memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, near Amiens.

His parents Edmund and Sophia Leeder farmed at Valley Farm on Welbeck Road, his elder brother Palmer was organist in this church and his elder brother George was tenant farmer at Town Farm.

Ernest emigrated to Australia in 1912, arriving in Freemantle on the liner "Orontes" on 16th April. He went to live and work in the small settlement of Yabberup in Western Australia where, as he records on his enlistment papers, he worked as a roadman.

He volunteered on 24th January 1916. Having been trained at Blackboy Hill he embarked for France on 31st March and reached the Western Front on 29th July where he joined "C" Company of 11th AIF (Australian Infantry Force). Nine months later he was killed in action.

His death is recorded as 16th April but the Battalion war diary indicates that he died on 15th July when the Australians repelled a determined German attack on its position near Louverval in Artois. It was in this action that Lt Charles Pope won a posthumous VC during hand-to-hand fighting after his "A" Company advance piquet ran out of ammunition.

Ernest Leeder is recorded in the War Diary amongst 176 men who died in this battle but whose bodies were never found. His name is on two war memorials in Donnybrook – Yabberup's nearest town. The one in the town's park lists fifty seven men who died in World War One. The other in the Soldiers Memorial Hall records the one hundred and ninety-four men from the area who served with the Australian forces during the First World War.

22nd April

(1)



CHARLES WILLIAM GREENACRE

16520, Private

2nd Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 23 on 22nd April 1916

Remembered on the Basrah Memorial, Nasiriyah, Iraq

Charles Greenacre joined 2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment after receiving a gunshot wound to the ankle on 19th October 1915 whilst serving with another Norfolk Regiment battalion in France.

He was killed in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) on 22nd April 1916 at the age of 23. He was with the "Norsets", a temporary amalgamation of troops sent to reinforce either the Norfolk or the Dorset Regiments, both of which had become trapped in Kut al Amara when the Turks besieged the town.

He died at the Battle of Sannaiyat, in the marshes of the river Tigris, as the British attempted to relieve the Kut garrison. The battle was a disaster. The 7th Division attack got bogged down in the marshes and the Norsets suffered two hundred and three casualties of whom twenty two, including Charles Greenacre, were missing presumed killed. This attempted relief of the garrison at Kut having failed, the city surrendered to the Turks on 29th April.

Charles is remembered on the Basra Memorial that was relocated to Nasiriyah in 1997 on the orders of Saddam Hussein. It was badly damaged in the Gulf War of 2003 but subsequently restored.

He was a bachelor, the son of William and Hannah Greenacre of Sunnyside, Bergh Apton and a brother to Henry Greenacre (q.v. on p10) whose record includes details of the family.

22nd April

(2)



HORACE CHARLES ETHERIDGE

242455, Private

1st/5th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 21 on 22nd April 1917

Buried in the Kantara War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt

Horace Etheridge, the son of James and Martha (née Mace), was born in Thurton in 2nd Quarter 1895. Both his parents came from long-established Bergh Apton families and he is related to both Albert George Mace and Walter Bracey (q.v.).

At the time of the 1901 Census the family was living in Bergh Apton on White Heath Road (named as Thurton Road in the Census return). They later moved to Caistor St Edmund and then to Rackheath where he and his half-brother Albert George Mace are recorded on that community's war memorial as well.

Horace and Albert were baptised together in Bergh Apton parish church on 28th July 1895.

In a Bergh Apton newsletter of 1906 we found him listed amongst those rewarded on School Prize Day, 20th July, for perfect attendance. Other prize-winners that day were Hubert Rope, Aubrey Stone, Albert Harvey and Charles Greenacre – all of whom died in the First World War.

Horace enlisted on 2nd October 1914 in the 6th (Territorial) Battalion the Royal Norfolk Regiment. Between then and February 1917 when he was posted to the 1st/5th Royal Norfolks, with whom he was serving when he died, he also served in both the 1st and 3rd Battalions.

The history of the Norfolk Regiment records the disaster of the Second Battle of Gaza, fought between 17th and 19th April 1917, in some detail. It records that the 1st/5th Battalion suffered 662 casualties when it attacked the Turkish defences of Gaza on the morning of 19th April.

Horace's entry in the Norfolk Regiment's Casualty Book (the "Wounds Book") records that this was when he received his mortal wounds. He was taken to 45th Stationary Hospital at El Arish, 50 miles to the south of Gaza and died there two days later.

He was first buried in the El Arish war cemetery attached to the 45th Stationary Hospital but that was closed soon after the Armistice of 1918 and the dead within it were re-interred in Al Kantara cemetery, on the northern outskirts of the town now called Al Quantara on the Suez Canal.

5th May



ALFRED HUBERT ROPE

CH/1472(S), Private

1st Battalion, Royal Marines Light Infantry

Who died aged 23 on 5th May 1917

Buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

Alfred died of his wounds in No 4 General Hospital at the main British Expeditionary Force depot town of Etaples, fifteen miles south of Boulogne on the French coast. He is buried in the town's vast military cemetery.

He and his brother Leonard (q.v.) were two of the eleven children of Aaron & Ellen Alice Rope of Holly Farm on Loddon Road, Bergh Apton. He was baptised in this church on 26th November 1893 as Alfred Hubert, known in the family as Hubert, but recorded in the 1901 Census as Herbert.

Hubert was mortally wounded on 28th April 1917, the day on which his unit was involved in the Battle of Gavrelle, an infamous date in RMLI history when the Division lost almost 1,000 men in one day of fighting. We are thus confident that it was here that he received the wound that took him back to No4 General Hospital in Etaples where he died on 5th May 1917.

The parishioners of Bergh Apton held a memorial service for him, recorded in the Register of Services for this church on Sunday 8th June 1917. That record also gives his name as Hubert, confirming that this was the name he was known by in his home village.

Hubert and his friend Victor Gillingwater (q.v.) died only three months apart after volunteering for the RMLI together, training together and embarking for France together.

His death came almost exactly a year after that of his brother Leonard. These were tragic losses for Bergh Apton's small eastern hamlet of Bussey Bridge.

9th May



THOMAS STONE

3/10271, Private

1st Bn, Northamptonshire Regiment

Who died aged 37 on 9th May 1915

Remembered on Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais. Panel 28-30

Thomas Stone (no relation to Aubrey Stone, KIA 17th September 1916) was born in Worlingham, Suffolk. At the time of the 1881 Census he had moved with his parents William and Elizabeth and his elder brother William, to Bergh Apton.

The Census return tells us that they were living on Barnes Hill (now Sunny-side). From the return it is not easy to determine which house they lived in but it was probably in the terraced dwellings at the bottom of the hill (Nos 4-6).

In the 1911 Census, when he was 33 years old, Thomas was living in the Yorkshire mining village of Askern, living in one of the communal huts assigned to workers building the new Askern Colliery. He registered his occupation as Bricklayer and may have been engaged in lining the new pit shafts.

We don't know when he joined the Army but his battalion arrived at the Battle of Aubers Ridge, and fought near the village of Laventie - not far from Fromelles - as part of the 1st Division's 2nd Brigade.

It is clear, from accounts written of the battle, that it began badly for the British and got worse. The 1st Northants, in the vanguard, attacked at 5.30 but the 100 men who gained ground were cut down by German fire or captured.

The Northamptonshire Regiment lost 560 men on this one day, including Thomas Stone. Whether he was one of the 100, or one of the many more who never made it beyond their trench parapet, we shall probably never know.

2nd June



HARRY CHARLES HALE

5777445, Private

6th Bn, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment

Who died aged 29 on 2nd June 1944

Buried in the Cassino War Cemetery, Italy

Harry Charles Hale came to our notice in 2004 when our attention was drawn to the name H C Hales in the Norwich Cathedral Roll of Honour for Bergh Apton, unknown to all our usual sources of local knowledge.

After five years of research we found him, but without the “s” at the end of his surname, in MOD Records in Glasgow. Thus the error was in the spelling of his name in the Cathedral Roll, rather than entry itself.

MOD Records in Glasgow told us that he was the youngest of the nine children of Samuel Hale and Edith (née Strike) and that his wife Grace Mary (née Gowing) had lived at Bussey Bridge in Bergh Apton with her half-sister Irene (Rena) South - from some time after his enlistment until well after his death.

Hale, known in his family as Charles (or the nickname “Legs” on account of his height) enlisted in the Royal Norfolk Regiment in April 1940 but transferred first to the Sherwood Foresters and then to the 27th Lancers before being posted to the QORWK who were part of the British North African Force (BNAF) that had landed at Syracuse in Italy on 25th July 1943.

He joined the Regiment's 6th Battalion at San Michele near Cassino in March 1944 after it had been badly mauled in the assault on Castle Hill, part of the formidable defences of Monte Cassino.

When Monte Cassino fell on 18th May his unit took part in the drive on Rome, a hard chase of the retreating but still-effective German troops and armour. The British advance took it through Aquino and Frosinone towards Alatri where Charles Hale was killed in action on 2nd June, when his battalion was a little to the south of the town.

Only a few days after he was killed his nephew Bill Whitham, serving in the same area, came to find his uncle only to learn of his death and to be taken to his newly-dug grave in what is now the peaceful British War Cemetery on the eastern outskirts of Cassino.

7th June



LEONARD EDWARD CARR

25999, Lance Corporal

7th Bn, Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's)

Who died aged 38 on 7th June 1917

Buried in the Lagnicourt Hedge Cemetery, France

In Leonard Carr we have found the First World War casualty whose family has the longest association with Bergh Apton. In church records they first appear with the baptism of Mary Carr in July 1790 after which there were six baptisms, five marriages and six burials up to the time of the burial of Leonard Carr's maternal Grandfather James Puxley Crowe in September 1901.

We know that his Rockland-born father, a Master Mariner, had died by the time of the 1881 Census for his mother, as a widow, was living with her parents-in-law in Great Yarmouth. From Bergh Apton church records we know that she died in 1885. Thereafter Leonard lived with his maternal grandparents in Bergh Apton - in 1891 on Sunnyside and in 1901 at Bussey Bridge Farm that was owned by his widowed grandfather James Crowe. Leonard, then aged 22, worked as a Groom and Teamsman (horseman).

In September 1901 his grandfather was buried in Bergh Apton churchyard and this seems to have been the trigger for Leonard Carr to leave Bergh Apton to marry Elizabeth Sophia Fooks (*sic*) who had been a neighbour living on Sunnyside. Their marriage took place in the Wareham (Dorset) registry area in the in Last Qtr of 1901. We have yet to find any record of children.

His military records are not available (probably lost in WW2 bombing) but his Army N^o indicates that he volunteered for service in October/November 1915 and was called up in 1916. The published history of the 7th Bn S.L.I "Forged by Fire" (*Brendan Moorhouse, ISBN 1862271917*) tells us that a draft of 140 men joined the battalion on 13th October of that year and we think he will have been amongst that number.

On 21st May 1917 the battalion was moved to Favreuil, near Bapaume, having been held reserve in Havrincourt Wood, some 10 miles south east of Favreuil. At first they were held back but on 21st May they were sent to the support trenches immediately behind the Front Line and, on 28th May, into the Front Line.

Though things were relatively quiet at that time, on 7th June the battalion lost seven men to either sniper fire (three men) or shelling (four men). Moorhouse's book names all of them, and includes Leonard Edward Carr.

All seven are buried in one row of the small Lagnicourt Hedge Cemetery in Lagnicourt Marcel, only a few miles from where Ernest Leeder of Valley Farm on Welbeck Road died less than two months earlier.

28th June



HERBERT CHARLES GEORGE PODD

1474624, Gunner

65th (Norfolk Yeomanry) Anti-Tank Regiment

attached 74th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery

Who died aged 26 on 28th June 1942

Remembered on Alamein Memorial, El Alamein, Egypt

Herbert Charles, known in his family as Charles, was the son of Herbert and Rose Podd who rented a house on Threadneedle Street, now called Shoemakers Cottage, when they were bombed out of their home in Argyle Street, Norwich.

Charles was killed aged 26 on Sunday 28th June 1942 serving in the Western Desert where his regiment had arrived in February 1941. He died in the fighting of Rommel's victory over the 8th Army at the Battle of Gazala where the British fell back in some disarray from Mersa Matruh to the Alamein Line (just before the First Battle of El Alamein where Auchinleck finally halted Rommel's advance on Cairo).

In 2008 his niece Judy Yallop gave us copies of photographs and a letter he wrote to his mother in the week that he was killed. The letter told us that he served with 258 Battery of the 65th Norfolk Yeomanry, a TA anti-tank Regiment that had already played a part in the retreat to Dunkirk in 1940 and had been stationed at Wingles, near Loos, in May 1940 when the German attack began that led to the evacuation of Dunkirk.

Wingles is not more than five miles from Philosophe where Harry Mayes (q.v.) was killed in WW1 and even closer to the Hohenzollern Redoubt where Daniel Weddup (q.v.) died.

After a rearguard action near Arras, Charles and his surviving comrades were evacuated from Dunkirk on 2nd June 1940 to recover and re-arm in England before being sent to Egypt in February 1941. At the time of his death his Battery was temporarily attached to 74th Field Regiment RA.

He is remembered on the Alamein memorial in Egypt. His name is also on the plaque on the wall of the North aisle in Norwich Cathedral that honours the fallen of 65th (Norfolk Yeomanry) Anti-Tank Regiment.

5th July



WALTER ERNEST ALEXANDER

1504, Lance Corporal

1st Battalion, The Newfoundland Regiment

Who died aged 24 on 5th July 1916

Buried in Beauval Community Cemetery, Somme

Walter was the son of Robert and Annie Alexander. They lived at Veranda Cottage (at the time the two present-day cottages were one dwelling) on Cooke's Road before WW1 but ended their days at Holly Hill on Sunnyside after spending some time in nearby Brooke. Robert worked as an engineman (an early description for a tractor driver) for Lord Canterbury's Brooke House estate.

Walter sailed to Newfoundland to join his twin brother Harry and got a job as a Fireman in the Bowater timber mill in Boswarlos on the west coast. He volunteered for the Newfoundland Regiment on 30th April 1915.

With the help of Canadian military researcher Dan Breen we have Walter's complete military service record. It includes letters from his mother and even the record of a monthly allotment he made to Maude Harvey of Boswarlos. We think she must have been his sweetheart. Her family made another connection with the Alexanders when her cousin Andrew Harvey came to Brooke in July 1919 to marry a girl from Robert Alexander's home village of Syderstone. Walter's mother held the wedding reception for the newly-married couple at her family's cottage nearby.

Walter was one of two hundred and fifty five Newfoundlanders killed or mortally wounded in their first attack at Beaumont Hamel on the Somme on the morning of 1st July 1916.

He died at Beauval Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) near Amiens on 5th July 1916, aged 24 and is buried in the part of Beauval communal cemetery set aside for soldiers who died at the CCS.

8th July



SIDNEY RICHARD KEDGE

G/4148, Private

6th Battalion Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment

Who died aged 21 on 8th July 1916

Remembered on Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France

Sidney, known by his family as Richard or Dickie, was born on 27th December 1894 at Eynsford in Kent, in the lodge of Lower Austin Farm. After his mother died, when he was six months old, he was raised by his mother's sister Hannah Shingles (née Stanford) and her husband William.

At the time of the 1901 Census the Shingles family lived in Suckling Lane Framingham Earl but by the time of the 1911 Census they had moved to Cooke's Road in Bergh Apton. On that Census Richard was recorded as "Labourer on farm".

When he was killed on Saturday 8th July 1916, the eighth day of the first Battle of the Somme, his was the only death listed in his battalion's casualty return for that day. When the battalion's war diary records that they suffered only one casualty that day from German shelling on a trench named as "Rivington Street" we may thus be confident that it was he who died there.

In 2008, when a party from Bergh Apton visited the Somme battlefields, this knowledge made it possible for them to stand on the spot where Richard Kedge died and to remember his sacrifice.

His name is on the huge Thiepval memorial along with those of four other Bergh Apton men; Ernest Hunt, Aubrey Stone and the Thrower brothers, Herbert and Walter.

19th July



ALBERT GEORGE MACE

13111, Private

7th Battalion Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire) Regt

Who died aged 23 on 19th July 1915

Remembered on Hellas Memorial, Dardanelles, Turkey

Albert Mace died soon after his battalion, part of 13th Division of 8th Corps, landed in Gallipoli between 6th and 16th July 1915. At the time of writing we have no details of the circumstances but hope to find out more in due course.

He was born in the Union workhouse in Heckingham during the 3rd Quarter 1892. His mother Martha Matilda Mace, born in Lion Lane, Thurton in December 1870 was not married at that time but married James Etheridge in 1895. That was the year that Albert's half-brother Horace (q.v.) was born.

So this is yet another Bergh Apton family that lost more than one son in the Great War. But in this case there was also a first cousin too, in Walter Bracey (q.v.) whose mother was the sister of Albert's mother.

Albert was baptised in Bergh Apton parish church on 28th July 1895, the same day as his half-brother Horace Etheridge. At the time of the 1901 Census the family was living on Thurton Road in Bergh Apton, known to be present-day White Heath Road.

We are still researching his early life that includes a reference that he volunteered for service in the 7 North Staffs by enlisting in Burton-on-Trent. That may infer that, like many East Anglian farm workers, he had gone there to find late autumn and winter work in its breweries after the harvest had been brought in and Norfolk farm work was hard to find until ploughing began in the Spring.

His name, like that of Albert Harvey (q.v.), is inscribed on the Helles Memorial on the southern tip of the Turkish isthmus of Gallipoli.

21st July



ERIC BENJAMIN BARNES

P/JX 134697, Leading Signaller

HMS Phoenix Royal Navy

Who died aged 25 on 21st July 1940

Remembered on Portsmouth Naval Memorial

Eric Barnes was one of the six children of Eliza and Benjamin Barnes. Only two were boys and both died in the year 1940 in the Submarine service.

When their father was employed by Mr Cooper (who farmed at Holverston) the family lived on the north side of the main A146 at Hellington Corner. By 1940 when these tragedies occurred the family had moved to Welbeck Road on the border of Brooke and Bergh Apton.

Eric was a professional seaman who joined the Royal Navy as a cadet in HMS Ganges and then volunteered for the Submarine service in November 1936. His submarine HMS Phoenix was based on the China Station before the war but returned to serve in the Mediterranean.

Under the command of Lt Cdr Nowell she sailed from Alexandria on 3rd July to take station to the North of Malta. On 21st July 1940 Nowell fired torpedoes at the tanker "Dora C" off Augusta in Sicily but was immediately counter-attacked by the tanker's escort torpedo boat Albatross whose depth charges are believed to have sunk the submarine with the loss of all hands.

This action took place on 16th July 1940 but the official date of the loss is logged as 21st July, the date by which HMS Phoenix had not responded to nor issued signals and was assumed to have been lost.

Eric's name is on the Portsmouth Royal Navy memorial. He and his brother Maurice are also remembered in Hellington church (no longer a commissioned church, but open daily for visits) where a plaque on the north wall of the Chancel records their names.

23rd July



WILLIAM LEONARD TOLVER

5782848, Private

1st Battalion, Suffolk Regiment

Who died aged 20 on 23rd July 1944

Buried in Banneville-la-Campagne War Cemetery, Normandy

William was the son of George and Edith Maria Tolver who lived on Gravel Pit Lane. At some earlier time they had occupied one of the cottages in The Grove where the family of Robert Gidney, who died in 1941, also lived.

William, as were all his brothers and sisters, was baptised in this church and went to Bergh Apton School.

His sister Edith married Henry Lester and lived on Sunnyside in Bergh Apton until her death in 2005. In 2006 her son John told us of the day, shortly before his uncle William left for France in 1944, that they and John's brother younger David went into the Barras Hill woods adjacent to his parents' home where Will Tolver and John carved their names on a young sycamore tree.

In 2007, sixty-three years after those initials WT and JL were carved, we went with John in search of that tree and found it, with the initials still perfectly legible.

William, with the 1st Suffolks, landed on Queen White, part of Sword Beach at 0825 hrs on D-Day. Commanded by Richard Goodwin the battalion captured Hillman—a fearsome beach defence - before moving inland.

In early July, having captured Chateau de la Londe with heavy casualties, the Suffolks took the village of Bannerville in Operation Goodwood, and dug in. On 20th July the weather broke. The area became a sea of mud in which German shellfire and aerial bombardment inflicted many casualties. Eric Lummis's battalion history recounts that "*enemy shelling . . . buried alive some soldiers who had to be dug out at great speed, not always successfully*". William was one of the sixteen battalion fatalities stemming from that situation.

He is buried in Banneville la Campagne war cemetery, to the east of Caen.

24th July



ARTHUR WILLIAM ANNIS

7182, Private

7th Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment.

Who died aged 34 on 24th July 1916

Buried in St Sever Cemetery, Rouen.

Arthur was the son of Rosetta and market gardener Samuel Annis of Bergh Apton and was born in what is now Street Cottage (owned by Ann and Stanley Woods) on The Street. He was the uncle of Peter Annis of our present community. Arthur's brother James, Peter's father, served in the war with the Royal Flying Corps.

In the 1901 Census Arthur, living in Birmingham, was recorded as a Skilled Fitter. By 1911 he had returned to Norfolk where, at the time of the Census, he was an attendant at the Heigham Hall asylum run by Dr John Gordon Gordon-Munn who was Mayor of Norwich (1914/15).

Arthur's unit, 7th Battalion East Yorks Regiment was part of the BEF's 17th (Northern) Division on the Somme. It was badly mauled, with 118 casualties, in its first action at 2.30pm on 1st July when it launched an attack on Fricourt from Becordel on the Somme battlefield.

It was in action again towards Contalmaison on 6th and 7th July with 145 casualties and again on 10th July. In this latter action heavy casualties were inflicted by enemy machine guns firing from Acid Copse (to the east of Contalmaison) on British soldiers advancing in the area of a small copse known as Quadrangle Wood. The Battalion's war diary estimates that it suffered 142 casualties here before it was relieved by the 7th Leicesters.

It was during these four days of action that Arthur Annis was mortally wounded and evacuated back to a Base Hospital in Rouen where he died, aged 34, on 24th July 1916. He is buried in St Sever Cemetery in the bend of the River Seine in the city of Rouen.

His name is inscribed on Bergh Apton's war memorial as Arthur James Annis instead of Arthur William Annis.

25th July



SIDNEY GEORGE KEELER

133964, Private

41st Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

Who died aged 19 on 25th July 1918

Buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Ypres, Belgium

Sidney was one of a large family that was, and still is, widespread in the villages of Bergh Apton and neighbouring Thurton and Chedgrave.

One of the most poignant records in the Parish archive, on permanent loan from Beryl Wilson, is a large photographic portrait of Sidney that shows just how young were the boys who died fighting for their Country.

Sidney Keeler enlisted in Norwich on 3rd August 1915 for service with the 4th (Territorial) Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment, and gave his age as nineteen years and five months. In December that year the Army discovered that he was only sixteen years old! He was discharged on 18th December from the battalion's depot at Walton Park, Tring.

He then re-enlisted at Wroxham when he was of military service age and joined the Machine Gun Corps. He was posted to 41st MG Battalion attached to the British 41st Division in France.

Aged 19, he died on 27th July 1918 in the field hospital at Lijssenthoek just south of Poperinge .

We have no record of the nature of his injuries nor the place he received them but seven days before he died, and only five miles from Lijssenthoek, his unit had been involved in the siege and capture of the village of Meteren. It may have been in that action that he was mortally wounded.

Sidney is buried in the war cemetery at Lijssenthoek.

26th July



HENRY JOHN HOOD

14415798, Private

1st/4th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Who died aged 19 on 26th July 1944

Buried in Arezzo War Cemetery, Italy

Henry Hood was the second child of Mary Elizabeth (née Annis) and Albert Hood. He was born on 17th March 1923 and baptised in Bergh Apton church on 30th September in the same year. He grew up in Lakenham after the family left their home in Kent Cottages off Threadneedle Street in Bergh Apton.

His mother was sister to James Annis who survived the First World War and of Arthur Annis (q.v.) who died.

Henry died, aged 19 years on 26th July 1944, of wounds inflicted as the 1st/4th Battalion the Essex Regiment fought its way north near Arezzo in Italy. One of his comrades of that day contacted his family in 2007 to tell them that he had been with Henry when he died, and that he had died of wounds inflicted by a sniper's bullet.

In the days leading up to Henry's death the 1st/4th Essex advanced from Antria, just north of Arezzo, to Gello in an action that was part of a drive to prevent the German army falling back onto its strong Gothic Line defensive system that ran through Florence to Rimini on the east coast. The country where this ferocious action took place was in steeply forested country crossed by narrow tracks on which both sides used mules rather than motorised transport.

In the course of this advance Henry was one of the 6 killed and 14 wounded before Gello fell to the Essex Regiment on 27th July.

Henry is buried in the British war cemetery on the western outskirts of Arezzo, where his nephews John Claxton and Joe Hood and his niece Janet McKirdy went to pay their respects to him in October 2005.

27th July
(1)



ERNEST JAMES HUNT

3/10403, Private

1st Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 34 on 27th July 1916

Remembered on Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France

Ernest James Hunt one of five Bergh Apton boys commemorated on the memorial at Thiepval – the others being Sidney Kedge, Aubrey Stone and the Thrower brothers Herbert and Walter, all of whom are recorded in the Book of Remembrance.

Ernest died aged 34 on 27th July 1916. On that day the 1st Norfolks sustained two hundred and fifty seven casualties in ferocious hand-to-hand fighting around the village of Longueval and in adjacent Delville Wood. One hundred of them were killed or missing in action. Ernest Hunt and Herbert Thrower (q.v.) were amongst them.

He was born in Bergh Apton on 17th Oct 1881 to Emily Hunt whose husband Arthur is described on Ernest's birth certificate as a Gentleman's Valet, perhaps suggesting that he worked at that time for the Denny-Cookes of The Manor.

In the Spring of 1909 he married Edith Mary Holmes whose address was recorded in his records as Swansea Road in Norwich.

27th July
(2)



HERBERT CHARLES THROWER

18978, Private

1st Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 33 on 27th July 1916

Remembered on Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France

Herbert was killed at the age of 33 years on 27th July 1916. He was the eldest of three sons of Samuel & Emily Thrower of Hellington Corner to fight in the Great War. His brother Walter (q.v.) was to die a few days later on the same battlefield in Delville Wood near Longueval.

The Throwers' youngest son Bertie Harry survived the fighting and came home safe.

In a further blow to the community of Bergh Apton Ernest Hunt (q.v.) was killed on the same day as Herbert, fighting in this same action with the Norfolk Regiment.

The loss of three young men, two of whom were brothers, must have been hard to bear when it became known in Bergh Apton.

Herbert married Emily Cooper of Holverston in Sept 1904. She was the daughter of farmer John Cooper. In another sad coincidence of these conflicts it is probable that this was the same Cooper family for whom Ben Barnes was working when, twenty four years later, he lost his two submariner sons Maurice and Eric (q.v.) in the Second World War.

31st July



CLIFFORD LINCOLN MC

145407, Captain

Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry

Attached 5th Battalion Wiltshire Regiment

Who died aged 33 on 31st July 1944

Buried in Hottot-les-Bagues War Cemetery, Normandy

Cliff Lincoln was the son of Hungarian-born Ignatius Timothy Trebitsch-Lincoln. His father's extraordinary career of religious practice, a short-lived career in Parliament as MP for North Darlington, international intrigue, imprisonment for fraud and eventual loss of his British citizenship must have weighed heavily on Cliff who volunteered for service with the Royal Norfolk Regiment's Territorial battalion on 14th December 1939.

Despite his background he was quickly recognised as a soldier of potential and was commissioned in August 1940. Fluent in German Dutch and French he was involved in military intelligence work until July 1944 when he was assigned as a fighting soldier with 5th Battalion the Wiltshire Regiment with whom he served as "B" Company Commander. Near Maltot to the south of Caen, on 22nd July - only a week into his active service - he was awarded the Military Cross for his actions in taking his objective and then attempting to capture three enemy tanks.

He was wounded in action near Livry on 30th July. The following day he died either of his wounds or, possibly, when the field hospital where he had been taken was damaged by enemy artillery fire. He is buried in the war cemetery of Hottot-les-Bagues

On November 30th 1940, while on active service in Northern Ireland, Cliff married Frances Thomas by Licence in Bergh Apton church where her parents worshipped. The marriage was conducted, and the Marriage Certificate was signed, by the Rev'd St John Heard, Rector of this parish and good friend of the Denny-Cookes, whose Manor House was given as Frances's address on the marriage certificate.

Clifford and Frances had two children, a son Timothy born in 1942 and a daughter Bryony who was born in June 1944 and whom he met on a short spell of paternity leave just before he embarked for France.

8th August (1)



WALTER ALBERT THROWER

23150, Private

7th Battalion, The Border Regiment

Who died aged 29 on 8th August 1916

Remembered on Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France

Walter, who was killed on 8th August 1916 aged 29, was Herbert Thrower's younger brother by four years.

They were killed in the same battle, fought in and around Delville Wood, Longueval. Such was the ferocity of the action that when he was killed Walter's battalion lost 9 men killed, 34 wounded and 5 missing in action in a single day.

Today in Delville Wood a single tree from those days has survived, terribly scarred. Near this tree, in September 2008, a group of Bergh Apton people held a short act of Remembrance for Bergh Apton men who died on the Somme battlefields.

Nearby is the impressive South African memorial to the many hundreds of the men it lost.

One of the sad items in Walter Thrower's records is a receipt for his effects, signed by his widow Annie Elizabeth who was living in Palmer's Yard off Timber Hill in Norwich. These personal possessions were returned to her just before Christmas in the year he died.

8th August

(2)



LEONARD WALTER GEORGE CAIN

5773757, Private

7th Battalion, Royal Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 24 on 8th August 1944

Buried in the Bayeux War Cemetery, Normandy

Leonard, known as Len or “Blondie”, was the son of Walter and Clara Cain of Prospect Place, Bergh Apton. He was married to Miriam and the father of Derek, who later took his stepfather’s surname of Cooper.

Len volunteered for service with the Royal Norfolk Regiment in Norwich on 15th December 1939 and joined 7th Battalion in France in early 1940. He was amongst the men who evaded capture when France fell in May/June 1940. He escaped to England and re-joined the battalion when it was re-formed.

The battalion landed in France on 28th June as part of the 59th (Staffordshire) Division and linked up with the Regiment’s 1st Battalion at Epron near Caen where it suffered 200 casualties before being re-deployed for the crossing of the River Orne in August.

Leonard’s “D” Company was at Bunel’s Farm on the southern edge of the village of Grimbosq when it was attacked by German Panzers determined to dislodge the British. Over the next two days the Germans attacked twice and were twice repulsed. On the second day the actions of Captain David Jamieson, “D” Company’s CO, won him the Victoria Cross. It was in this fighting, where 2 DSOs and 6 MMs were also won, that Len Cain was killed.

The battalion’s casualties were two hundred and twenty six men (forty two killed, one hundred and eleven wounded and seventy three missing in action). These losses and those of the Norfolks’ sister battalions were so severe that, soon after Grimbosq, the 59th Division was disbanded and its troops sent to reinforce other Divisions. The survivors of Len Cain’s 7th Royal Norfolks “D” Company went to 1st Royal Norfolks.

Len’s grave in Bayeux Cemetery has been visited often over the years by his younger brother Ron, late of The Street in Bergh Apton who moved to Rothés (on the river Spey) in 2004.

11th August



CLEMENT SIDNEY WALL

14334, Private

8th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 29 on 11th August 1917

Buried in Railway Dugouts Burial Ground, Ypres, Belgium

Clement was the son of Leonard and Anna Maria Wall of Lenwallen in Threadneedle Street loke. He was killed aged 29 on Saturday, 11th August 1917 and is buried in the Railway Dugouts Ground at Zillebeke near Ypres.

The war diary of 8th Battalion Norfolk Regiment gives a precise account of the incident in which Clement died. It records that a number of Officers and Pte Clement Wall were killed instantly when a German mortar bomb made a direct hit on a trench in which they were sheltering at a cross roads named by the Tommies as Clapham Junction (between Hooge and Geluveldt on the Menin Road).

We have a picture of his life in Bergh Apton before the war from his niece Anna Stratton whose account is held in the Village Archive. It tells us that Clement was one of the eight children of market gardener Leonard Wall and his wife Anna Maria who lived at Lenwallen on Mill Loke. He worked for the local building partnership of the Redgrave brothers.

Anna also records his prowess as a long distance runner who, on one occasion, ran to the village of Denton to compete in a race. He won the race and then ran home again - a round trip distance of thirty six miles.

The fact that Clement was with officers in a trench behind the front line, and his known ability as a runner, lead us to the possibility that his duties as a Battalion Runner took him to Clapham Junction where he died, to await orders to be taken back to the front line.

13th August



ALBERT EDWARD HARVEY

20579, Private

1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

Who died aged 20 on 13th August 1915

Remembered on the Helles Memorial, Dardanelles, Turkey

Albert Edward Harvey was the son of Lucy Hannah King who, widowed after her first marriage, married Bergh Apton-born Lambert Harvey. They were living on White Heath Road when Albert died.

He was one of two Bergh Apton fatalities in the ill-fated Dardanelles campaign. He died on 13th Aug 1915 when his troopship was torpedoed on its way to Mudros (now Moudros) on the island of Lemnos, the British Army's base for its support of the British forces at Gallipoli.

Albert was in a draft of Norfolk Regiment soldiers sent to bolster the 1st Battalion of the Essex Regiment when the submarine U14 sank the Canadian-owned passenger ship Royal Edward six miles west of Kandeliusa (now Nisiros) Island in the Aegean. She sank in less than ten minutes taking Albert and 934 of the 1,586 souls on board with her.

His name is on the Helles memorial at the entrance to the Strait of Dardanelles, together with that of Albert Mace (q.v.) whom he probably knew, being a near neighbour in White Heath Road.

16th August



JACK EDMOND LOVEWELL

1333957, Sergeant

75th (New Zealand) Squadron RAF

Who died aged 21 on 16th August 1943

Remembered on the Runnymede RAF Memorial, Windsor

Jack Lovewell died aged 21 on Monday, 16th August 1943 when his Stirling bomber, based at RAF Mepal in Cambridgeshire, was lost off the French coast between St Nazaire and La Rochelle.

He volunteered for service in the Royal Air Force and was sent to Canada to train as an Air Gunner. On his return to England he joined 75 Squadron RAF that flew a fleet of 30 Wellington bombers belonging to the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) originally intended for service at home but loaned to the British government in June 1940 for its war effort in Europe.

Jack was the rear gunner in Aircraft AA-Q whose crew was made up of men from England, Canada and New Zealand. We know that the aircraft was engaged in laying mines at sea but we do not know the cause of its loss in which Jack and New Zealander John Turnbull, the Navigator, were lost at sea. The bodies of the other five members of the crew were recovered and are buried in two French civilian cemeteries near Olonne on the French coast.

Jack was the son of Arthur and Ethel Lovewell who are buried in our churchyard. They ran the village shop on the junction of Mill Road with Threadneedle Street in Bergh Apton that is now called October Cottage. His brother Bryan lives in Sutton Bridge in Lincolnshire.

Jack and his crewmate John Turnbull are remembered on the RAF Memorial at Runnymede.

2nd September



WALTER WILFRED BRACEY

883DA Deckhand

Royal Naval Reserve

Who died aged 19 on 2nd September 1914

Remembered on the Chatham Naval Memorial

Walter (named in error on the memorial as Charles W W Bracey) was Bergh Apton's first casualty of the First World War.

The Eastern Daily Press reported the loss of his ship on 3rd September 1914 and, in a piece on the Bergh Apton Harvest Festival of 1914, includes the fact that the Rector, from the pulpit of the parish church, offered the sympathy of the village to Walter's father Frederick.

Walter, who lodged in Bevan Street in Lowestoft, was a deckhand on the drifter "Eyrie" (LT1121). On 10th August 1914, a week after the start of the war, he enlisted in the Royal Naval Reserve when his ship was requisitioned as a mine-hunter. He died on 2nd September 1914 off the Humber estuary when, in a rather crude early method of mine-clearance that relied on snaring German mines in fishing nets, the stern of Walter's ship was blown off. She sank in three minutes with the loss of six of her crew including the Captain and Walter.

He was born in Brooke in 1894. His mother Eliza (née Mace) died in 1899 when Walter was barely five years old and, at the time of the 1901 Census, he and his father Frederick Frances Bracey (a Sidesman in Bergh Apton church) were living as lodgers in Welbeck Road, Brooke, at the house of Jessie Frost. Frederick married Jessie in 1907 and, at the time of Walter's death, was living in the Chapel House in Claxton.

This is yet another example of a wider family bereaved through war. In our research we found that Walter Bracey's mother Eliza was sister to Martha Mace and he was, thus, first cousin to Albert Mace and Horace Etheridge (q.v.).

Walter Bracey's body was never recovered after his ship sank. His name is recorded on the Royal Navy war memorial on the heights above Chatham in Kent, overlooking the Thames estuary.

9th September



MAURICE CHARLES BARNES

C/JX 137224, Petty Officer

HMS Seal, Royal Navy

Who died aged 24 on 9th September 1940

Buried near Bialystock, Poland

Maurice Barnes was the youngest of the six children of Benjamin and Eliza Barnes, and was the second brother (with Eric q.v.) to join the Submarine service.

He was serving in the mine-laying submarine HMS Seal that snagged a mine on the seabed of the Baltic on 4th May 1940. She extricated herself and surfaced the following day only to find herself without power to manoeuvre and surrounded by German warships and seaplanes. Her surrender and its aftermath are recounted in the book “Will we not fear” by Warren & Benson (*pub. George Harrap 1961*).

Maurice and other members of HMS Seal’s crew arrived at Stalag XXa, a PoW camp at Thorun in Poland on 5th May. On 29th July Maurice escaped in the company of Sgt Major George Briggs of 15/19 King’s Royal Hussars. Helped by Polish people they travelled to Warsaw and then on to Malkinia near the Russo-German Pact border.

As they attempted to cross the border on the night of 9th September 1940 Maurice was shot by Russian border guards (Russia, at that time, being an ally of Germany under the Ribbentrop Pact) and was taken prisoner. It is assumed (but as yet we have no documentary evidence to confirm it) that he died the following day and was buried by Russians somewhere near the border.

George Briggs was imprisoned in Russia but repatriated on 11th August 1941. On his return he came to Bergh Apton to tell the family of Maurice Barnes’ tragic end. Maurice’s nephew the late Peter Scarfe of Bradford in Yorkshire was there and recounted the event for us in 2005.

In the same year we obtained the Stalag XXa records of Maurice Barnes with the help of the International Red Cross. In 2008 we also found, with the help of Maurice’s niece Brenda Horsely, a copy of George Briggs’ 18 page account of his adventures from his capture near Dunkirk until his return to England. It deals in detail with the events surrounding Maurice Barnes’ wounding and capture on the Russo-German border.

At the time of writing we don’t know where Maurice is buried but we hope to find out one day. His name also is recorded on the Submariners’ wall of Chatham Naval Memorial and in Hellington church.

14th September



FREEMAN HARBER

7138, Private

1st Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 32 on 15th September 1914

Remembered on La Ferte-sous-Jouarre Memorial, France

Freeman Harber was a professional soldier who, at the time of the 1911 Census, was in India as a bandsman with 2nd Battalion the Norfolk Regiment on a 7 year enlistment with 5 years to follow on Reserve. When he married in April 1914 (see below) he gave his occupation as Farm Labourer, indicating that he had completed his Colours service and was by then a Reservist.

He was the second Bergh Apton man killed in the war after Walter Bracey (q.v.). His battalion's Casualty Book lists him as one of the 34 men of C Company missing in action on 14th September as the battalion attacked the German-held Fort Condé positions on a spur of hills to the north of the river Aisne at Missy-sur-Aisne. When, on the following day, his body was not found on the battlefield he was listed as "missing presumed killed". His name is on the war memorial at La Ferte-sous-Jouarre, Seine-et-Marne some 35 miles to the south of Missy.

His age, according to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Military Census of 1911 sets his birth year as 1882/3 but his Marriage Certificate gives his age as 30 (birth year 1884). To add more confusion his parents gave his age in the 1901 Census as 22 (birth year of 1879). The cause of the latter uncertainty may be because he was one of eleven children born to his parents between 1868 and 1889!

At the 1901 Census he was living with his parents Horace and Lucy and three of his brothers in Swardeston. By the time of the 1911 Census the family home had moved to Hellington Corner in Bergh Apton. Both his parents (Lucy in 1921 and Horace in 1929) are buried in our churchyard.

Freeman married Harriet Bowtell of Bergh Apton at Loddon Registry Office on 9th April 1914. His time with his wife was tragically cut short by the declaration of war. As a Reservist, he was immediately called up on General Mobilisation and posted to 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment (in Belfast) that moved to France at the outbreak of war. He survived a little over a month.

His widow Harriet lived in Rockland St Mary where she put his name on the war memorial in the churchyard.

15th September



AUBREY SAMUEL STONE

14304, Lance Corporal

9th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 22 on Friday 15th September 1916

Remembered on Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France

Aubrey volunteered for service on 8th September 1914 and was killed just over two years later on Friday, 15th September 1916. The date marks the first day of an attack on a German defensive redoubt known as The Quadrilateral, to the east of Ginchy, in which the 9th Norfolks suffered 431 casualties amongst its ORs (Other Ranks) including Aubrey, whose body was never recovered.

It was also a significant event in military history, being the first battle in which tanks were used (apart from an earlier experimental outing in the Ypres Salient).

Aubrey was the son of Jack and Mary Stone of Threadneedle Street lode. He was part of a large family that now lives in places as far apart as South Wales, Gloucestershire, Yorkshire, West Norfolk and in the nearby town of Loddon. We are in touch with many of them.

In 1932 Aubrey's widower father married Hannah Greenacre, the widowed mother of Henry and Charles Greenacre (q.v.). There is also a strong possibility that Aubrey enlisted with his immediate neighbour in Threadneedle Street, Clement Wall (q.v.) because their army numbers are only 30 apart.

The Register of Services for this church record that a Memorial Service was held for Aubrey a little over a month after his death on 22nd October 1917. He is one of five Bergh Apton boys whose names are on Thiepval memorial.

16th September



WILLIAM EDWARD STARMAN MM

7000, Company Sergeant Major

1st Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 32 on 16th September 1918

Buried in St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, France

William Starman was a regular soldier who had enlisted in the Army at the age of 18 years on 10th December 1904 for a period of 9 years service that took him to such postings as Pietermaritzberg in South Africa and Gibraltar.

He was the son of Bergh Apton girl Charlotte Elizabeth (née Annis) and her husband William Thomas Starman who had himself seen service in the Boer War as a regular soldier of the King's Royal Rifles before retiring to Bergh Apton's Hellington Corner in 1891.

William Edward Starman's service ended in March 1913 but he re-enlisted on the outbreak of war (4th August 1914) and went immediately to France with 1st Norfolks to take part in the first battles of the war, at Mons and Le Cateau.

On 27th October 1916 the London Gazette recorded his award of the Military Medal for his actions but with no details about the action, its location or the date.

He was wounded during an attack on the Arras-Albert railway line at Achiet-le-Petit, north-east of Amiens on 23rd August 1918. The Norfolk Regiment's "Wounds Book" tells us that he received a gunshot wound to his left leg and that he was evacuated to the 11th Stationary Hospital in Rouen where the leg was amputated. Perhaps as a result of gangrene, he died on 16th September 1918 and is buried in St Sever cemetery in Rouen, close to Arthur Annis (q.v.) who was William's relative through his mother Charlotte.

He had been promoted from Lance Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class II on 14th August 1918, just a month before he was killed.

When he died his wife Maria (née Ward) and their daughter Doris Joan were living at Nichols Corner on the borders of Alington and Bergh Apton, his family's home village. Correspondence in the possession of Colin Baldwin indicates that Maria went to the Norfolk Regiment's HQ at Britannia Barracks on Mousehold Heath on 9th January 1919 to receive her late husband's Military Medal.

21st September



ALBERT EDWARD HAMILTON STARMAN

5773302, Private

4th Battalion, Royal Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 25 on 21st September 1944

Remembered on Singapore Memorial, Woodlands, Kranji

Albert, known in his family as Eddie, was the son of Frank Starman of Hellington Corner and his wife Daisy. His father, who had served in the First World War, was the younger brother of William Starman MM (q.v.).

Eddie was born on 7th Jan 1919 when the family lived on Seething Fen and was baptised in Bergh Apton church on 7th September of the same year.

Three days after the beginning of the Second World War, aged twenty and already in uniform, Eddie married Wilma Bachelor in Norwich.

He embarked on the troopship HMT Andes on 29th October 1941 with the 4th (TA) Battalion, Royal Norfolk Regiment bound, with a three-week stop in India, for Singapore where they landed on 29th January 1942. That was just two weeks before the colony surrendered to the Japanese.

As part of the British 54th Brigade the battalion went to defend the north eastern sector of the island but was sent soon afterwards to reinforce the defences on the north west perimeter of Singapore itself, at Bukit Timah where it met the advancing Japanese and fell back to Adam Road where it was on 15th February 1942 when General Percival ordered the surrender.

After more than two years in captivity, latterly at the PoW camp at Tamuang, he and many other British and Dutch POWs were embarked on the prison ship *Toyofuku Maru* on 4th July 1944, bound for Japan. Off Luzon (Manila) the ship was attacked and sunk on 21st September 1944 by US carrier-based aircraft from the battle group TG38. Of the 1,288 POWs on board 1,047 died, including Eddie Starman.

Eddie Starman is also remembered on the war memorial at Chedgrave, the home of his wife Wilma and his son Ted.

26th September



ALFRED ALEC ARNOLD CUBITT

15534, Lance Sergeant
9th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment
Who died aged 25 on 26th September 1915
Remembered on the Loos Memorial, France

Baptised in Bergh Apton parish church on 10th April 1890, Alfred was the son of Helen Jessie Cubitt and her husband Arthur who, based on the Census return for 1911, was probably Coachman/Groom at the Manor.

Alfred's battalion, mostly untried troops, had been in the Front Line for only one day on 26th September 1915 when, as part of a battle known as "The Big Push" it joined in an attack on quarries, to the north west of Hulluch, held by the Germans.

The 9th Norfolks' objective was the village of Vendin le Vieil but the German fire on the advancing Norfolks was so severe that these relatively untried troops could make no progress.

Petre's "History of the Norfolk Regiment 1914-1918" describes this attack that began at 5.30 am. It was repulsed by heavy German fire that drove the attackers back to the shelter of old German trenches that offered little cover so they had to retreat further to British trenches where, nearly 12 hours after the attack began, they were relieved, by the Grenadier Guards.

Alfred and 73 of his Norfolk Regiment comrades were either killed or missing in this failed venture, with another 122 wounded.

His name is on the memorial wall of the cemetery at Dud Corner, Loos along with those of Bergh Apton boys Harry Mayes and Charles Weddup. It is also on the memorial at Syderstone in north Norfolk where his parents were living at the time of his death.

1st October



HARRY SAMUEL MAYES

13004, Private

7th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 20 on 1st October 1915

Remembered on Loos Memorial, France

Harry was the eldest of the nine children born to Thomas and Agnes Mayes of Bergh Apton. He was 21 years old when he was killed on 1st October 1915, only three months after his Battalion, one of the "Kitchener's Second Army" battalions raised from volunteers in the early days of the war, joined the BEF in France.

In that time his battalion had been in the Front Line at Ploegsteert in Belgium and had been ordered to march from there the Battle of Loos to support the attack that began on 25th September.

He died as a result of heavy German shelling of Gun Trench near the Hulluch Quarries where the 7th Norfolks had arrived on the evening before he was killed.

Harry's body was never recovered. His name is remembered on the Loos Memorial in Dud Corner Cemetery nearby, with those of Alfred Cubitt and Charles Daniel Weddup (q.v.) of Bergh Apton. All of them were killed in the same three-week period of 1915 in the British Expeditionary Force's first set-piece battle of the war⁵.

Two of Harry Mayes' younger brothers, Archie and Jack, died in World War Two within a few months of each other while serving in the Royal Navy, causing further grief twenty six years later to his parents Thomas and Agnes who lived at Prospect Place in Bergh Apton.

2nd October



REGINALD JAMES MITCHELL

40020, Private

9th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 20 on 2nd October 1917

Buried in Maroc British Cemetery, Grenay, France

Reg was baptized in Bergh Apton church on 26th April 1898. His father James's occupation recorded on the birth certificate is "Coachman" so he may have been employed at The Manor, probably the only house in the village to have such a man at that time.

The family moved frequently in the early years of the twentieth century, probably on account of James Mitchell's occupation. With his his wife Harriet Eleanor and their children he had moved to Guestwick by 1901 and, by the time of the 1911 Census, to the Hartismere District in Suffolk. By the time they received Reginald's war medals, after the war, they were living in Pulham Market.

By the time that war memorials were being commissioned they may well have moved to the village of Alburgh near Harleston as his name is also recorded on the war memorials of both those communities.

Reg's battalion was the one in which Bergh Apton's Alec Cubitt had died in Hulluch near Loos in September 1915 and with whom Aubrey Stone was killed at Ginchy on the Somme in September 1916.

The battalion returned to the Loos area in October 1916 and, according to Petre (p261-271) spent the next year in and out of the line in the battlefields to the north of Loos.

The Battalion War Diary records that, on 1st October, the Battalion moved to Maroc from Bethune. On the following day a work party, about to move off in the morning to bury telephone cable, was hit by three German shells. Reg Mitchell and seven other men were killed outright and another five died of their wounds.

Reg Mitchell and his seven comrades who died instantly are buried side-by-side in Maroc military cemetery in the adjacent village of Grenay.

4th October



ROBERT GEORGE BEAUMONT

42033, Private

22nd Battalion, Manchester Regiment

Who died aged 29 on 4th October 1917

Remembered on Tyne Cot Memorial, Zonnebeke, Belgium

Robert's parents were recorded on his Commonwealth War Graves Commission record as Robert and Jane but the Census of 1901 gives as his father's name as George. At the time of Robert's death they were living at Pennyhill on Sunnyside in Bergh Apton, the house built by George and his builder brother.

On his enlistment in September 1916 Robert was living at Prospect Place in Thurton with his wife Ellen (née Stonebridge, whom he married in January 1915) and his first child, daughter Ada Ellen. By the time his widow received his medals in 1921 she had moved, with Ada and son Robert - born in September 1917 - to 2 Kimberley St in Norwich.

Robert was killed at the age of 29 on Thursday 4th October 1917. That was the first day of the Battle of Broodseinde in which his battalion of the Manchester Regiment lost 279 men wounded, missing or killed.

Many of these casualties were incurred near a small café called In Der Ster Cabaret (*Café of the Stars*) on the road south from Zonnebeke to Beselare (N303). German machine guns, firing from Joiner's Rest (a slight hillock rising east of the road) caught Robert's battalion in enfilade fire.

He was amongst the missing whose bodies were never recovered and he is remembered on the Tyne Cot Memorial at Zonnebeke in Belgium.

A party from Bergh Apton Local History Group paid respects to Robert and all the men both buried in the Tyne Cot cemetery and recorded on its memorial when they visited the Ypres battlefields in September 2007.

8th October

(1)



SIDNEY HERBERT MARKS

350568, Private

1st Battalion, Essex Regiment

Who died aged 32 on 8th October 1917

Remembered on Tyne Cot Memorial, Zonnebeke, Belgium

Sidney Marks died aged 32 on 8th October 1917 fighting with the 1st Essex at Boesinghe (modern Boezinge) on the Yser canal just to the north of Ypres.

He is, at the time this Roll of Honour is written, still something of a mystery to us because we have yet to find any definable connections with Bergh Apton. Yet, being one of the original men whose names were put on the war memorial of 1920, we can be sure that there was good cause, through family or some other association, for his name being carved with the others.

The Register of Church Services for 2nd December 1917 adds further proof of his death being a matter of some consequence in the village. Reverend Harvey Thursby made a note in the margin of services that day to the effect that one of them (probably the 11.00 morning service) was "*also a memorial service to Private S Marks*".

His father was a journalist from Clapham. He married, in 1913, Rhoda Chittleburgh who was a widow nearly twenty years his senior and who had family connections in nearby Mundham. Perhaps it was she who asked that his name be put on our memorial but of that there is no proof.

There is also a reference in his records to service with Captain Lord Richard Wellesley of the Grenadier Guards. Research in the recently-released Census of 1911 showed this to be true. He was Footman to the then 31 year-old Richard Wellesley who was himself to die serving with the Grenadier Guards on 29th October 1914.

Sidney is remembered on the memorial at Tyne Cot, Belgium.

8th October

(2)



ALFRED JOHN BOGGIS MM

18279, Corporal

9th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 37 on 8th October 1918

Buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery, Gouy, France

Alfred and Sabina Boggis's son Alfred John, by comparison to many soldiers, was a mature man when he died aged 37 on 8th October 1918 leaving his wife Rosa to bring up sons Alfred and Herbert and daughter Ivy.

Alfred was awarded the Military Medal for his actions in heavy fighting near Cite St Laurent (in the area of Hill 70 near Loos) on 28th/29th April 1917 where he led a bombing (grenade-throwing) party into the enemy trenches.

He was killed at Brancourt on 8 October with just a month to go before the war's end. the 9th Norfolks took part in this attack, that began at 5.10 am, with the 118th American Infantry Regiment. They advanced on Brancourt le Grand but were held up at Brancourt railway station, a little to the south of the town on the Fresnoy road, a sunken road in which they found shelter.

At 3.00 pm the Norfolks resumed the advance so as to give support to the Americans as they tried to enter Brancourt. But machine-gun fire from the town on their left and Jonnecourt Farm on their right caused such heavy casualties that the battalion was re-organised into two companies so that they could fall back in some order. They reached their original start-line by 6.20 pm.

Alfred Boggis was one of those who died. He and his comrades were buried at Brancourt but after the war they were taken to Prospect Hill Cemetery, at Gouy near Cambrai.

In the papers passed to Di Webb by Alfred Boggis' son Herbert is a letter from Alfred's Battalion Padre to his wife Sabina following his death. The Padre wrote, *"he was thought very highly of in this Battalion and I am glad to think of him as one of my friends for a very long time"*.

17th October



CHARLES DANIEL WEDDUP

10405, Private

1st Battalion, Coldstream Guards

Who died aged 20 on 17th October 1915

Remembered on Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

Charles Weddup was one of two Bergh Apton men to serve with this famous Guards Regiment, the other being Henry Greenacre.

Known in his family as Daniel, he was related by marriage to Albert Parker (q.v.), his mother Rosa's second husband. His elder brother William Weddup also served in WW1 in the Royal Engineers. Today (2010) William's son Alan lives near Sudbury in Suffolk.

Daniel died on Sunday, 17th October 1915 in an attack on a large German defensive feature called The Hohenzollern Redoubt, on the southern outskirts of Auchy les Mines, a small mining town to the north of Loos. The battle, part of the wider Battle of Loos, was fought in and around features with names such as "Big Wille" and "The Dump". It was a ferocious hand-to-hand affair reported in some detail in 1 Coldstreams' War Diary.

The battalion incurred sixty casualties of which two of those killed are defined as "missing in bombing attack". It is most probable, interpreting the account, that Charles Weddup was one of them. He is remembered on the Loos Memorial that records all those whose bodies were never recovered from this battlefield.

Harry Mayes of 7th Norfolks and Alfred Cubitt of 9th Norfolks are also remembered here.

All three died in a three week period in the Autumn of 1915 during a campaign called "The Big Push" whose objective was to drive the German army off the Loos plain. It was, however, a total failure that resulted in the dismissal of the British Commander-in-Chief Sir John French and his replacement by General Sir Douglas Haig.

23rd October



JACK ARTHUR MAYES

P/M 38591, Petty Officer (Cook)

HMS Cossack, Royal Navy

Who died aged 38 on 23rd October 1941

Remembered on Portsmouth Naval Memorial

Petty Officer Jack Mayes was a career sailor aged 38 serving in the Tribal class Destroyer HMS Cossack, escorting a homeward-bound convoy from Gibraltar, when she was torpedoed by U563 on 23rd October 1941. After sterling but futile efforts by the survivors to keep her afloat she eventually sank on 27th October, four days later.

The loss cost the lives of 159 of the crew of this ship that had gained fame for, amongst other exploits, the rescue of British sailors from the Altmark in Narvik and the sinking of the German battleship Bismark. Jack Mayes was among the many on board whose bodies were never found and who are remembered on the Royal Navy memorial at Portsmouth.

His widow Nellie Dorothy, who died in 1995 aged 84, lived in Elson just across the harbour from Portsmouth's Naval Dockyards.

Jack was fifth of the nine children of Thomas and Agnes Mayes who lived on Prospect Place in a house now called Alma Cottage, where his brother Thomas lived until he moved to sheltered accommodation in the 1980s.

His eldest brother Harry (q.v.) was killed on 1st October 1915 in WW1. Archie, six years his junior (q.v.) died a few months earlier than Jack in February 1941.

18th November



ROBERT KITCHENER GIDNEY

T/204681, Driver

Royal Army Service Corps

Who died aged 25 on 18th November 1941

Buried in the Norwich Cemetery,

Robert Gidney lived in a cottage in The Grove, off Lower Kiln Lane. The house is gone but its foundations may still be seen.

He was married in Bergh Apton parish church on 2nd September 1939. Both he and his wife Violet May record on their Marriage Certificate that they were boot & shoe workers – telling us that they were part of a significant industry in pre-war Norwich.

Robert died in an RTA (road traffic accident) on 18th November 1941 when he was on active service in Northern Ireland. His body was returned to Norfolk and is buried in Norwich cemetery.

19th November



ALFRED BLIGH

472064, Private

46th Battalion (South Saskatchewan) Canadian Infantry Regiment

Who died aged 29 on 19th November 1916

Remembered on the Canadian Memorial, Vimy, France

Bergh Apton-born Alfred was the youngest child of Walter and Emma Bligh who were living at The Red Cottage (now Watermeadows) at Bussey Bridge in 1879 and then at Rose Cottage Farm on Langley Road at the time of the 1881 Census. By 1890 the family had moved to Seething Fen on the south side of the River Chet.

Alfred emigrated to Canada from Liverpool on the liner *Teutonic* in June 1911 and took a land grant in the Province of Saskatchewan near the small community of Paswegin. His brothers Knightly (aka Jack) and Ewing were close neighbours with homesteads of their own. Alfred volunteered for war service in June 1915 by joining his local unit, the 46th Canadian Infantry Regiment, raised in Saskatchewan.

He died on 19th November 1916 in the Battle of the Ancre where the Battalion's war diary records him as a member of its Machine Gun section. He was killed in an attack made in atrocious conditions on German positions to the north of Courcellette. His body was not recovered and he is remembered on the Canadian Memorial on Vimy Ridge.

Alfred's brother Ewing returned to England at some time after WW1 to farm in Framingham Earl where his daughter Ann Cooper still lives (2009). His sister married to become Ethel Bloomfield and to settle in Mill Road in a house she named The Homestead in memory of her brothers' Canadian prairie connections.

Because his family lived at various times in both parishes Alfred's name is on the memorials of both Bergh Apton and Seething. He is also remembered in Saskatchewan on the war memorial in Wadena and in the Honour Roll of Paswegin.

21st November



STEPHEN CYRIL GARNIER HALLETT

100273, Major

2nd Indian Field Regiment, Royal Indian Artillery

Who died on 21st November 1944

Buried in Taukkyan War Cemetery, Rangoon, Myanmar

The name Stephen Hallett included in the Norwich Cathedral Roll of Honour for Bergh Apton puzzled us for some years because, until the summer of 2008, we could find no explanation for its presence there.

Then we met the late Barbara Chapman who, as a child in the 1930s, had spent all her school holidays at Bergh Apton Manor, being too far away from her expatriate parents in Japan to join them for holidays. On a nostalgic return visit to The Manor she mentioned Stephen Hallett, almost by chance, as one of her fellow "Empire Boarders" of those days.

Stephen Hallett, son of Sir Maurice Hallett, Governor General of the Indian province of Bihar, was a pupil at Winchester College. Thus he spent as much as five years living in Bergh Apton during school holidays with the Denny-Cookes who acted *in locum parentis* for children from all over the far-flung British Empire.

After University Stephen joined the Royal Artillery. In 1944, at the age of 26 and attached to the Indian Army, he was serving with 2nd Indian Field Regiment RIA in Burma as the British. The Unit's war diary tells us that he was wounded near Thapanaing on the night of 20th November and that he died that same night.

He was buried at Hpaungzeik, at a small village 450 miles up country near Kalemmyo (modern sp. Kalaymyo), and later (1954) re-interred in the British War Cemetery at Taukkyan War Cemetery, near Rangoon.

The puzzle about his name on the Cathedral Roll is not yet resolved. We think that it must have been the Denny-Cookes who asked that it be included in memory of one of their holiday boarders of whom, from letters they sent to his parents, they were very fond.

Further research may tell us, in time, if we are right.

28th November



ALFRED GEORGE KING

8540, Private

2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment

Who died aged 23 on 28th November 1915

Buried in Kut War Cemetery, Qut al Amara, Iraq

Alfred was a professional soldier who enlisted with the Norfolk Regiment before the war and was, we think, sent to India to join the 2nd Battalion at an early stage in his service.

He may well have fought in the same action at Barjesiyah Wood as did John Preston (q.v.) on 14th April before the battalion, part of 18 Brigade, advanced to Kut on the River Tigris and then on to Ctesiphon, less than 20 miles from Baghdad.

At the Battle of Ctesiphon (22rd-23rd November 1915) the British and the Turks fought a pitched battle that had no absolute outcome but left the field “bloodstained, strewn everywhere with the dead of both sides” (*Petrie, “History of the Norfolk Regiment” Vol II, p. 86*). Because the British withdrew to Kut immediately after this battle the Turks probably felt they had won what was otherwise an inconclusive encounter.

Alfred died of his wounds on 28th November but we cannot be sure where he received them. It could have been in the battle itself or during the British retreat to Kut under constant harrying by the Turks. On the day of his death the 2nd Norfolks had reached Azizeyah, 50 miles up-river from Kut. The battalion finally reached Kut but, after a siege of 146 days, it was part of the entire garrison surrendered to the Turks by General Townsend on 29th April 1916.

Alfred was the brother of Albert Harvey (q.v.) who had died off Kandeliusa (Nisiros) in the Aegean Sea three months earlier.

In fact they were half-brothers. Their mother Lucy (nee Passon) married her first husband James Frederick King in 1884 who fathered Alfred in 1892. From the evidence of the 1901 Census it is clear that Albert, born in 1895, was the son of Lambert Arthur Harvey (the son of Samuel Harvey of Hellington Corner) who married Lucy King later in that census year.

Both boys killed in the war were born at Spring Hill, Mundham, just south of Bussey Bridge in Bergh Apton. At the time of their death the family was living on White Heath Road where the family occupied one of the White House Farm cottages in which their brother Horace Samuel “Pokey” Harvey lived into the late 1950s.

17th December



JAMES ROBERT WRIGHT

P/7989, Lance Corporal

Mounted Military Police Corps

Who died aged 33 on 17th December 1918

Buried in Cairo War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt

James Wright, aged 33, died of fever over a month after the Armistice, on 17th December 1918, aboard a hospital ship in Alexandria harbour. He is buried in Cairo War Memorial Cemetery.

At the time of writing we don't know the details of his service record that will include the places where he served, that would explain his presence off the Egyptian coast at the time of his death.

His parents, Robert and Elizabeth Wright of Sunnyside Bergh Apton, are buried in our churchyard as is his wife Annie Elizabeth Wright.

During the Second World War James Wright's daughter Frances Vera served with the Ambulance Corps in Egypt. There she met and married her husband. It was some years later, back in England, that she learned that the church where they married was within the grounds of the cemetery in which her father is buried.

26th December



EDWARD WILLIAM DAVEY

4691, Private

6th Dragoons (Inniskillings)

Who died aged 34 on 26th December 1916

Buried in St Riquier British Cemetery, France

Edward Davey specified Bergh Apton as his residence when he enlisted in 1901 although his birthplace was Alington. We have little information on him other than his enlistment papers, and a possibility that he was related to the Davey family recorded on the 1901 Census living at Prospect Place in Bergh Apton.

In his Will, included in his Army records, he nominated Mrs Marion Weeding as his sole heir. Our research shows that, at the time of the 1891 Census, Davey (but spelt as Davy) was living with the Clare family of Alington one of whose children was listed as Marion. She is also very likely to be the Marion Dale Clare who married Frederick Weeding in 1904. Thus we are confident that this was the person to whom Davey left his estate.

The connection to Marion is further strengthened by the fact that Edward Davey, at the time of the 1901 Census, was living in Overstrand with his cousin Wilson Clare whose father Isaac was brother to Marion Clare's father Henry. We think that it is reasonable to conclude, from this and further research, that Edward Davey's mother was sister to Henry and Isaac Clare and, thus, Edward Davey and Marion Weeding were first cousins.

Edward Davey was a long-service Cavalryman who enlisted in the army on 2nd December 1901. He had the interesting distinction of serving in the same cavalry unit as Captain Oates who died in the Antarctic with Captain Falcon Scott in their 1912 attempt to be first to the South Pole.

The Inniskillings' records tell us that Davey died "of burning" without specify the cause. His Army Effects Record confirms this by including the word "accidental" in the cause of death. Furthermore there is no record of fighting at the time of his death, which reinforces the probability that he died as the result of mishap rather than in active warfare.

He is buried in the small British military section of the communal cemetery of St Riquier, to the north of Rouen. There was a Casualty Clearing Station near this village for the 1st Indian Cavalry Division, of which his Unit was a part.

INDEX

IN MONTH ORDER

January - July		
		Page
JANUARY	4 PRESTON DCM, John Henry (1920)	6
FEBRUARY	9 PARKER, Albert William (1917)	7
	17 GILLINGWATER, Victor George (1917)	8
	19 MAYES, Archie Russel (1941)	9
MARCH	27 GREENACRE, Henry George Valentine (1916)	10
APRIL	3 EVERETT, Leonard George (1917)	11
	7 ROPE, Leonard Godfrey (1916)	12
	16 LEEDER, Ernest Albert (1917)	13
	22 GREENACRE, Charles William (1916)	14
	22 ETHERIDGE, Horace Charles (1917)	15
MAY	5 ROPE, Alfred Hubert (1917)	16
	9 STONE, Thomas (1915)	17
JUNE	2 HALE, Harry Charles (1944)	18
	7 CARR, Leonard Edward	19
	28 PODD, Herbert Charles George (1942)	20
JULY	5 ALEXANDER, Walter Ernest (1916)	21
	8 KEDGE, Sidney Richard (1916)	22
	19 MACE, Albert George (1915)	23
	21 BARNES, Eric Benjamin (1940)	24
	23 TOLVER, William Leonard (1944)	25
	24 ANNIS, Arthur William (1916)	26
	25 KEELER, Sidney George (1918)	27
	26 HOOD, Henry John (1944)	28
	27 HUNT, Ernest James (1916)	29
	27 THROWER, Herbert Charles (1916)	30
	31 LINCOLN, Clifford (1944)	31

INDEX

IN MONTH ORDER

August - December

AUGUST	8	THROWER, Walter Albert (1916)	32
	8	CAIN, Leonard Walter George (1944)	33
	11	WALL, Clement Sidney (1917)	34
	13	HARVEY, Albert Edward (1915)	35
	16	LOVEWELL, Jack Edmond (1943)	36
SEPTEMBER	2	BRACEY, Walter Wilfred (1914)	37
	9	BARNES, Maurice Charles (1940)	38
	14	HARBER, Freeman (1914)	39
	15	STONE, Aubrey Samuel (1916)	40
	16	STARMAN MM, William Edward (1918)	41
	21	STARMAN, Albert Edward Hamilton (1944)	42
	26	CUBITT, Alfred Alec Arnold (1915)	43
OCTOBER	1	MAYES, Harry Samuel (1915)	44
	2	MITCHELL, Reginald James (1917)	45
	4	BEAUMONT, Robert George (1917)	46
	8	MARKS, Sidney Herbert (1917)	47
	8	BOGGIS MM, Alfred John (1918)	48
	17	WEDDUP, Charles Daniel (1915)	49
	23	MAYES, Jack Arthur (1941)	50
NOVEMBER	18	GIDNEY, Robert Kitchener (1941)	51
	19	BLIGH, Alfred (1916)	52
	21	HALLETT, Stephen Cyril Garnier (1944)	53
	28	KING, Alfred George (1915)	54
DECEMBER	17	WRIGHT, James Robert (1918)	55
	26	DAVEY, Edward William (1915)	56

INDEX

IN YEAR ORDER

WORLD WAR 1 (1914 – 1918)

1914	2 September	BRACEY, Walter Wilfred	37
	15 September	HARBER, Freeman	39
1915	9 May	STONE, Thomas	17
	19 July	MACE, Albert George	23
	13 August	HARVEY, Albert Edward	35
	26 September	CUBITT, Alfred Alec Arnold	43
	1 October	MAYES, Harry Samuel	44
	17 October	WEDDUP, Charles Daniel	49
	28 November	KING, Alfred George	54
	26 December	DAVEY, Edward William	56
1916	27 March	GREENACRE, Henry George Valentine	10
	7 April	ROPE, Leonard Godfrey	12
	22 April	GREENACRE, Charles William	14
	5 July	ALEXANDER, Walter Ernest	21
	8 July	KEDGE, Sidney Richard	22
	24 July	ANNIS, Arthur William	26
	27 July	HUNT, Ernest James	29
	27 July	THROWER, Herbert Charles	30
	8 August	THROWER, Walter Albert	32
	15 September	STONE, Aubrey Samuel	40
	19 November	BLIGH, Alfred	52
1917	9 February	PARKER, Albert William	7
	17 February	GILLINGWATER, Victor George	8
	3 April	EVERETT, Leonard George	11
	16 April	LEEDER, Ernest Albert	13
	22 April	ETHERIDGE, Horace Charles	15
	5 May	ROPE, Alfred Hubert	16
	7 June	CARR, Leonard Edward	19
	11 August	WALL, Clement Sidney	34
	2 October	MITCHELL, Reginald James	45
1918	4 October	BEAUMONT, Robert George	46
	8 October	MARKS, Sidney Herbert	47
	25 July	KEELER, Sidney George	27
1918	16 September	STARMAN MM, William Edward	48
	8 October	BOGGIS MM, Alfred John	41
	17 December	WRIGHT, James Robert	55
1920	9 January	PRESTON DCM, John Henry	6

INDEX IN YEAR ORDER

WORLD WAR 2 (1939 – 1945)

1940	21 July	BARNES, Eric Benjamin	24
	9 September	BARNES, Maurice Charles	38
1941	19 February	MAYES, Archie Russel	9
	23 October	MAYES, Jack Arthur	50
	18 November	GIDNEY, Robert Kitchener	51
1942	28 June	PODD, Herbert Charles George	20
1943	16 August	LOVEWELL, Jack Edmond	36
1944	2 June	HALE, Harry Charles	18
	26 July	HOOD, Henry John	28
	23 July	TOLVER, William Leonard	25
	8 August	CAIN, Leonard Walter George	33
	31 July	LINCOLN, Clifford	31
	21 September	STARMAN, Albert Edward Hamilton	42
	21 November	HALLETT, Stephen Cyril Garnier	53