

***SOME BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF MEN
FROM SOUTH TAWTON PARISH
WHO DIED SERVING THEIR COUNTRY
IN TWO WORLD WARS***

The information given in this paper has been gleaned from the parish magazine published during the period of the First World War and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website and monuments in South Tawton churchyard.

Details of the war cemeteries mentioned and the battles they served are given at the end.

Additional information about any of the individuals recorded would be welcome.

Lorinda Legge, Kingsley, South Zeal, EX20 2JL

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WAR MEMORIALS IN SOUTH TAWTON PARISH CHURCH



Continued.....

**WAR MEMORIALS IN SOUTH TAWTON PARISH CHURCH
(CONTINUED)**



**MEN NOT INCLUDED ON THE WAR MEMORIALS, BUT LISTED
IN THE PARISH MAGAZINE:**

LAKE, George

PALMER, R. Gilbert

FIRST WORLD WAR
1914 – 1918



BARKWELL, Henry John

At the start of the war, Henry was a Corporal, Kitchener's New Army/New Levy, Regular Army – South Wales Borderers. He was connected with South Tawton, but his home was elsewhere.

He was wounded and in hospital at Rouen November/ December, 1915, but appeared to be improving.

He died by a bullet wound in the trenches – the news reached home on 3rd March, 1916. He had been home for a few days only a short time before and was in very good health and spirits. His death came during the first day of his return to the trenches, where he had previously been for some 13 or 14 months. He had only recently been promoted to Sergeant. He left a widow and young family.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has no record of a Henry John Barkwell. It does, however, list a John Barkwell, Sergeant in the South Wales Borderers (Service No. 13819) who died on 24th February 1916, aged 30, and is commemorated on the ARRAS MEMORIAL, Bay 6.

BOX, James

James was the son of John and Mary Jane Box, of Wood Lodge, South Tawton and was one of four brothers serving in France. One of his brothers was wounded, but survived. No record of James' enlistment was given in the magazine.

At the time of his death, James was Company Quartermaster Serjeant, 2nd/4th Bn., Royal Berkshire Regiment (Service No: 200996).

He died on 21st March 1918, aged 23 and is recorded on the POZIERES MEMORIAL, Panel 56 and 57.

BRIMBLECOMBE, John

John was the son of Richard and Jane Brimblecombe of Shelly Ham and was born on 10th April, 1885. He was first enrolled in the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (Service No. 202819) and then served as a Private with the 1st Battalion of the Duke of Edinburgh's (Wiltshire Regiment) – Service Number 203013.

He was reported missing April/May 1918. It was afterwards confirmed that he had been killed in action on 24th March 1918.

His name is commemorated on Bay 7 of the ARRAS MEMORIAL.

CANN, Samuel

Samuel was the son of Robert Cann, of South Tawton and the late Mrs. R. Cann. He volunteered April/ May 1915, but at that time was not accepted by the doctor. There are no details of his enlistment.

At first numbered among the missing, Samuel was officially reported killed in action September/October 1918.

At the time of his death Samuel was serving as a Private, 13th Bn., Royal Sussex Regiment (Service No: G/17156).

He died on 26th September, 1917, aged 19, and his name appears on the TYNE COT MEMORIAL, Panel 86 to 88.

GERALD FOULKES CLARKE

Gerald was born at South Tawton on 20th July, 1890. He was the second son of the Reverend John Foulkes Clarke and his second wife, Mary Grace and was the brother of John Rupert Clark [see previous entry]. At the time of his death was Acting Second Lieutenant in the First (another source says Eighth) Battalion of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

Although the memorial plaque in the parish church states that he fell on 4th October, 1917 while leading his men at Tower Hamlets, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records that he fell in action and died of wounds on 6th October, 1917 and is buried in Grave ref: XXV.C.10, LIJSSENTHOEK, which indicates that he was killed at Ypres. He was 27 years old and had survived his brother by only 13 months.

Gerald's name is recorded on the north face of the base of a granite cross commemorating his parents and infant sister, in the churchyard at South Tawton along with that of his brother, John. The inscription here also records that he died at Ypres.

JOHN RUPERT CLARKE (Baptised and enlisted under name of Rupert John Clarke)

John was born at South Tawton on 18th January, 1887. He was the eldest son of the Reverend John Foulkes Clarke (Rector of South Tawton from 1880 to his death in 1907) and his second wife, Mary Grace (nee Powlesland of South Tawton).

John was farming in Canada at the start of the war. He enlisted as a Private in the 63rd Canadian Infantry and Medicine Hat on 3rd July 1915. A copy of John's enlistment attestation paper for the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force is held in South Zeal and District Local History Society Archive.

John fell in action at Courcelette on 19th September, 1916, aged 29. At the time of his death he was a Private in the 7th Battalion of the Canadian Infantry, Service No: 466247. He is buried in Contay British Cemetery, Grave Ref: II.C.11.

John's name is recorded on the north face of the base of a granite cross commemorating his parents and infant sister, in the churchyard at South Tawton, along with that of his brother, Gerald [see below]. The brothers are also commemorated on a brass plaque in South Tawton Parish Church.

ENDACOTT, William

William was born on 5th June 1886 in Okehampton, Devon. He was in Canada at the outbreak of the war, working as a labourer, and enlisted with the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force at Vernon Camp on 17th August 1915, giving his next of kin as William Endacott of South Zeal. His regiment number was 942376. At the time of his enlistment he was unmarried. A copy of William's attestation paper is held in South Zeal and District Local History Society Archive.

He was killed by a stray shell in a rest billet October/November, 1918. He left a wife and widowed mother.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has a Corporal W. Endacott, listed as serving with the 7th Bn., Canadian Infantry (British Columbia Regiment) - Service No: 442376, who died on 6th October, 1918 and is buried in Grave no: VII. H. 32. QUEANT ROAD CEMETERY, BUISSY, France.

HUGGINS, Archibald Roger

Archibald was in Lydford and was the son of Roger and May Ann Cory Huggins, of Lydford. He married Lily Huggins, of South Zeal and they lived in Tavistock. He enlisted in Okehampton with the Royal North Devon Hussars Yeomanry in 1914 after war was declared. His Service Number was 617.

At his death, Archibald was listed as Sergeant, 1st Royal North Devon Hussars - Service No: 167. He left Lily a young widow, to whom he had been married only about 18 months.

Archibald was well known in South Tawton, having for many years played both against and for the parish at football, in which he was an exceptionally useful member of a team. The Rector commented that "His hearty, manly and buoyant character will long be remembered amongst us".

He died from dysentery at Alexandria on 26th October, 1915 [the War Graves Commission gives the date as 29th October] and is buried in Grave No: D. 20, ALEXANDRIA (CHATBY) MILITARY AND WAR MEMORIAL CEMETERY, Egypt.

A memorial service was held for Archibald on 21st November 1915 in South Tawton Parish Church.

Archibald was the second listed casualty [from the parish] of the war.

KENNETT, Percy William Bishop

Percy was born in Hampstead, Middlesex and was the son of George Bishop Kennett, and Ada Kennett, who later moved to Townsend, South Zeal. He one of the first men from the parish to enlist after Lord Kitchener's appeal for men in 1914. He enlisted at Okehampton with the Coldstream Guards and trained at Caterham and Windsor. At the time of his death, he was a Private, 1st Bn. Coldstream Guards - Service No. 12009.

Percy left this country for the front on 10th January, 1915 and was in action more than once, besides fighting in the trenches. In one action he had his bayonet broken by a fragment of shell.

The Rector wrote that prior to enlisting, Percy had given much time, interest and energy to work in the Sunday School at South Tawton Parish Church, where the children were very fond of him. He continued in the regiment in the service of his God, helping the Chaplain, attending the Bible Classes and gathering other young men, even in the trenches, to read to them portions of the Holy Scriptures at nightfall.

On 8th March, 1915 news was received that Percy had died on 4th March in a field ambulance hospital in Belgium from wounds received in action – the parish's first recorded casualty of the war. He was 21 years old and is buried in Grave no: IV. A. 36 in BETHUNE TOWN CEMETERY.

Percy was an only son and was survived by his parents and sister.

LAKE, George

George was the son of George and Anne Lake, of Shelley, South Zeal, and the husband of Annie Lake, with whom he lived in Exeter. He had enlisted in Okehampton with the A.S.C. by October/November, 1915 (Service No: 143939).

George died of wounds on 13th April 1918.

At the time of his death, George was a Private, 1st Bn., The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) (Service No. G/61439). He died on 13th April, 1918, aged 34, and is buried Grave No: II. B. 19 in the HARINGHE (BANDAGHEM) MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium.

George is not listed on the war memorial in South Tawton, but his death was recorded in the parish magazine.

MAY, William Henry

William was born in Drewsteignton and lived in South Tawton. He enlisted in Okehampton and served as a Gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery (Service No. 193254)

He died of wounds on 25th March, 1918, leaving a widow and five little children.

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to identify William on the War Graves Commission Website.

PALMER, R. Gilbert

Gilbert was the youngest son of Mr. R.D. Palmer of Poltimore. He was a Canadian National and was born on 17th February, 1892 in Guelph, Ontario and was in Canada at the outbreak of the war, working as an office clerk. Gilbert enlisted on 14th November 1914 with the 36th Rifles of Ontario. A copy of his Attestation Paper is filed in the South Zeal and District Local History Society Archive

Gilbert served as a Private in the 29th Battalion of the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force. His service number was 74115.

News arrived about 17th April, 1916 that Gilbert had been killed by a shell in France on 6th April. He was one of a party of men sent into a crater, where he was killed instantaneously.

His Captain wrote that he had been in his Company since 1st November, 1914 and had been a gallant soldier.

Another officer wrote that “our men went through a terrible artillery fire during the first two days. It is said that the shelling was the heaviest ever seen since the war broke out on such a narrow front. The men who held their ground in this were heroes indeed. Such a heroic charge as that of Balaclava seems small beside the shelling that took place”.

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to identify Gilbert on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website.

Gilbert is not listed on the war memorial in South Tawton, but his death was recorded in the parish magazine.

POWLESLAND, Thomas

Thomas was born in South Tawton and lived at North Wyke. He was the husband of F. A. Powlesland who, at the time of his enlistment was living at Rowden Mills, Sampford Courtenay and later moved to High St., North Tawton.

Thomas was in Canada at the start of the war, working as a farm labourer, and enlisted with the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force at Sewell Camp on 9th August 1915. A copy of his Attestation Paper is filed in the South Zeal and District Local History Society Archive.

At the time of his enlistment, Gilbert belonged to an active militia and had previously served with the 99th Man. [Manitoba?] Rangers. During the war he served as a Private, 45th Bn., Canadian Infantry (Service No: 425215).

Thomas died on 3rd May, 1916 aged 29, and is buried in Grave No. O. 402., SHORNCLIFFE MILITARY CEMETERY.

STANBURY, Richard Allan

Richard was born on 25th June 1890 and was the son of Edwin and Ellen Stanbury of North Wyke. At the outbreak of the war he was a farmer in Canada and immediately offered his services for his country. He enlisted with the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force at Regina on 10th August 1915. His regiment number was 104520. A copy of his Attestation Paper is filed in the South Zeal and District Local History Society Archive

Richard died in France from wounds received in action on 26th April, 1917, aged 26 and is buried in Grave No. I.A. 66, BARLIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION, France.

At the time of his death, Richard was serving as a Private, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (Eastern Ontario Regiment) (Service No: 104520).

VIGERS, Samuel

Samuel was the son of George and Emma Vigers, of Shelly, South Zeal and was one of six brothers serving King and Country, two of whom fell [see also next entry].

He was living in Newport, Monmouthshire at the start of the war and enlisted in 1914 after war was declared. The War Graves Commission lists him as a Private, 5th Bn., South Wales Borderers (Service No: 14693).

Samuel was at the front by January, 1916 and was killed in action May/June, 1918. The War Graves Commission gives the date of his death as 18th April, 1918. He was 26 years old and is commemorated on Panel 65 to 66 of the TYNE COT MEMORIAL.

Samuel is also commemorated on the headstone marking the grave of his brother, Henry (Harry) Vigers in South Tawton Churchyard.

VIGERS, Thomas

Thomas was the brother of Samuel Vigers [see previous entry]. He enlisted on 25th September 1911 with the Royal Marines Light Infantry. During the war he served with the 3rd R.M. Battalion from 1st November 1916 to 9th June 1918, when he was drafted to the 1st RM Battalion BEF from Mudros. He served on HMS Illustrious.

Thomas was reported killed in action October/November, 1918 – the second of the Vigers brothers to be killed.

At the time of his death, Thomas was a Private, 1st R.M. Bn. R.N. Div., Royal Marine Light Infantry - Service No: PLY/15466. He was killed in action on 27th September 1918, aged 24 and is buried in Grave No. III. C. 1. in HERMIES HILL BRITISH CEMETERY, France.

Thomas is also commemorated on the headstone marking the grave of his brother, Henry (Harry) Vigers in South Tawton Churchyard.

Letter from King George V to Mr. George Vigers, 31st March 1915:

Sir, I have the honour to inform you that the King has heard with much interest that you have at the present moment six sons serving in the Army & Navy. I am commanded to express to you the King's

congratulations and to assure you that His Majesty much appreciates the spirit of patriotism which prompted this example, in one family, of loyalty & devotion to their Sovereign and Empire. I have the honour to be, Sir, Your obedient Servant F W Ponsonby (Keeper of the Privy Purse)

WESTAWAY, Samuel

Samuel was from South Zeal and was the son of Elizabeth and Samuel Westaway. Samuel was brought up in the village. According to the magazine his parents were still living there during the war, but according to their headstone in South Tawton Churchyard, they died at the turn of the century.

Samuel had been an apprentice for three years at Howard & Co in Cardiff until 1897. While in Wales he had joined the 3rd Welsh Regiment (Volunteers) from which he was discharge in 190[9?]. He went to London some years before the war where he held a “good place” as a draper’s assistant. At the age of 34, he enlisted in the Rifle Brigade at the outbreak of war on 3d September 1914. A copy of his Attestation is filed in the South Zeal and District Local History Society Archive.

Samuel was at the front by January, 1916 and news arrived on 27th April, 1916 that he was killed in action.

At the time of his death he was serving as Lance Corporal, 11th Bn., Rifle Brigade (Service No: S/2993). He died on 8th April 1916 and is buried in Grave II. H. 14., ESSEX FARM CEMETERY, Boezinge, Belgium.

Samuel is also commemorated on the tombstone of his parents in South Tawton churchyard.

WOOLLAND, Frederick William

Frederick was born in Drewsteignton, Devon. He lived in Whiddon Down and Exeter.

No record of Frederick's enlistment is given in the parish magazine. He served at a Sergeant in the 3rd Battalion, Devonshire Regiment (Service No. 9080).

Frederick was "Called to his rest" on Sunday, 10th June, 1917 after a long illness contracted while on active service.

His body was brought to Whiddon Down and buried there with military honours.

SECOND WORLD WAR

1939 - 1945



CHAPPLE, Phillip George

Phillip was the son of George J. and Ethel A. Chapple, of Chagford, Devon. Served as a Marine with Unit H.Q. 5th R.M. A.A. Bde. of the Royal Marines – Service No: PO/X 107134.

He died on 3rd February, 1945, aged 22 and is buried in Grave No. IV. A. 1., SCHOONSELHOF CEMETERY

COTTLE, James (Thomas James Cottle)

James was the son of William John Cottle, a Builder, and his wife, Rosalin May. They used to live at Taw Mill and later moved to Sampford Courtenay.

Tom Endacott, formerly of Throwleigh and living in Okehampton (2011) knew James as “Jim” Cottle and recalls that he was in the Territorial Army working as a despatch rider and was killed in a motor cycle accident on 23rd October, 1940.

James is buried in Grave no: BS 9 in South Tawton Parish Church graveyard. His parents and brother, William John, are buried together in Grave no: BN 58.

FORD, Geoffrey

**Geoffrey served as a Private in 277 Coy of the Pioneer Corps –
Service No: 14543307.**

**He died on 20th November, 1944, aged 34 and is buried in Grave No.
23. E. 7. in the JONKERBOS WAR CEMETERY**

LETHBRIDGE, Richard

The only man of this name recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was the son of George and Emily Lethbridge and husband of Greta Cordelia Lethbridge, of Radley, Berkshire. Served as Sergeant (Air Gnr.), 102 Sqdn., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve – Service No: 1257765.

Richard's mother rented Glenelvin in South Zeal from Mrs. Keener and later moved to a Council house in the village.

Richard died on 28th May, 1944, aged 22 and is buried in Grave No. IVa. E. 6. in SCHOONSELHOF CEMETERY.

Nineteenth row,
no. 6

LETHBRIDGE, Thomas James

In ever loving memory of Thomas James Lethbridge of the R.A.F. son of the late John Lethbridge of Poltimore killed 25th of September 1918 aged 21 years

This inscription is on a headstone to LETHBRIDGE, John, eldest and beloved son of John & Susan Lethbridge who died May 23rd 1897, aged 42 years.

PITCHER, Donald Edward

Donald was the son of Percival John Pitcher and of Ellen Adelaide Pitcher, of South Zeal. He served as a Gunner with 200 Bty., 68 H.A.A. Regt. of the Royal Artillery – Service No: 1466045.

He died on 17th February, 1943, aged 22, and is buried in Grave No. 3. F. 16. in HELIOPOLIS WAR CEMETERY, Egypt.

Donald's brother, Jack Pitcher, was an Agricultural Mechanic – a reserved occupation – at Owlsfoot Garage during the war. Another brother, Cyril, was in one of the services and joined Jack in the garage after the war.

TAYLOR, Alfred John

Alfred was the husband of Doris Annie Taylor, of South Zeal. He served as a Leading Aircraftman with the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve – Service No: 1202541.

He is buried Grave FS 18 in the Additional Burial Ground at St. Andrew's Church.

COMMONWEALTH WAR CEMETERIES & MEMORIALS

FIRST WORLD WAR

ALEXANDRIA (CHATBY) MILITARY CEMETERY AND WAR MEMORIAL, Egypt.

Stands at the eastern end of the Chatby Military and War Memorial Cemetery (originally the Garrison cemetery), which was used for burials until April 1916, when a new cemetery was opened at Hadra. Thereafter, burials at Chatby were infrequent, although some graves were brought into the cemetery after the war from other burial grounds in the area. The CHATBY MEMORIAL commemorates almost 1,000 Commonwealth servicemen who died during the First World War and have no other grave but the sea. Many of them were lost when hospital ships or transports were sunk in the Mediterranean, sailing to or from Alexandria. Others died of wounds or sickness while aboard such vessels and were buried at sea.

There are now 2,259 First World War burials in the cemetery and 503 from the Second World War. The cemetery also contains war graves of other nationalities and many non war and military graves, some of which date from 1882.

ARRAS MEMORIAL. Situated in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery in the Boulevard du General de Gaulle in the western part of the town of Arras, commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7 August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and have no known grave.

The most conspicuous events of this period were the Arras offensive of April-May 1917, and the German attack in the

spring of 1918. Canadian and Australian servicemen killed in these operations are commemorated by memorials at Vimy and Villers-Bretonneux. A separate memorial remembers those killed in the Battle of Cambrai in 1917.

The **ARRAS FLYING SERVICES MEMORIAL** commemorates nearly 1,000 airmen of the Royal Naval Air Service, the Royal Flying Corps, and the Royal Air Force, either by attachment from other arms of the forces of the Commonwealth or by original enlistment, who were killed on the whole Western Front and who have no known grave. Both cemetery and memorial were designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, with sculpture by Sir William Reid Dick. The memorial was unveiled by Lord Trenchard, Marshal of the Royal Air Force on the 31 July 1932 (originally it had been scheduled for 15 May, but due to the sudden death of French President Doumer, as a mark of respect, the ceremony was postponed until July)..

The French handed over Arras to Commonwealth forces in the spring of 1916 and the system of tunnels upon which the town is built was used and developed in preparation for the major offensive planned for April 1917. The Commonwealth section of the **FAUBOURG D'AMIENS CEMETERY** was begun in March 1916, behind the French military cemetery established earlier. It continued to be used by field ambulances and fighting units until November 1918. The cemetery was enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields and from two smaller cemeteries in the vicinity. It contains 2,651 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. In addition, there are 30 war graves of other nationalities, most of them German, and seven Commonwealth burials of the Second World War. The graves in the French military cemetery were removed after the First World War to other burial grounds and the land they had occupied was used for the construction of the Arras Memorial and Arras Flying Services Memorial.

BARLIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION.

The Communal Cemetery and Extension lie to the north of the village of Barlin in France, about 11 Kms south-west of

Bethune . The extension was begun by French troops in October 1914 and when they moved south in March 1916 to be replaced by Commonwealth forces, it was used for burials by the 6th Casualty Clearing Station. In November 1917, Barlin began to be shelled and the hospital was moved back to Ruitz, but the extension was used again in March and April 1918 during the German advance on this front. The extension contains 1,094 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and a number of French and German war graves. Some French civilians killed in a colliery accident in 1917 are also buried in the extension. The extension was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

BETHUNE TOWN CEMETERY. Bethune is a town 29 kilometres north of Arras. For much of the First World War, Bethune was comparatively free from bombardment and remained an important railway and hospital centre, as well as a corps and divisional headquarters. The 33rd Casualty Clearing Station was in the town until December 1917. Early in 1918, Bethune began to suffer from constant shell fire and in April 1918, German forces reached Locon, five kilometres to the north. The bombardment of 21 May did great damage to the town and it was not till October that pressure from the Germans was relaxed. Bethune Town Cemetery contains 3,004 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, including 26 men of the 1/8th Manchester Regiment who were killed by a bomb on 22 December 1917 while marching to rest billets. Second World War burials number 19. There are also 122 French and 87 German war graves. The Commonwealth section of the cemetery was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

CONTAY BRITISH CEMETERY

At the outbreak of war in 1914 the Canadian Militia units were under strength so it was decided to enrol volunteers in 260 new, full-strength battalions consisting of 1000 men each. These battalions were known as the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). When the Canadian Corps moved from the

Ypres Salient to the Somme River region at the beginning of September 1916, its first major action was the Battle of Fleurs-Courcelette. This was a two-army assault launched by Sir Douglas Haig on September 15. The Battle began on 15 September 1916 and lasted for one week. It was the third and last of the large-scale offensives mounted by the British Army during the Battle of the Somme and was notable for the introduction of tanks.

These early tanks proved notoriously unreliable. Weighing approximately 28 tons, they could only move forward at a snail's pace (half a mile per hour). They were impervious to small arms fire, and to a lesser extent machine gun fire (metal chips would fly inside the tank, resulting in the issue of chain-mail visors to the operators, uncomfortable and seldom worn). However shell fire could (and did) easily destroy a tank. Navigation and visibility were poor, with the result that on more than one occasion a tank directed friendly fire from its guns onto its own forces. Radio communication was not available until late in the war: carrier pigeons were used instead.

On 11 September, the British Army's total complement of 49 tanks began to move slowly into position in the line. 17 tanks were unable to make it as far as the front line, and of the 22 that did, a further 7 failed to work at zero hour. The attack, which was preceded by an artillery-bombardment designed to leave unshelled lanes open for the advance of the new mobile weapon, was launched on 15 September across a 12 km front from Rawlinson's Fourth Army salient. Twelve divisions were employed and the 15 remaining tanks rolled slowly into No Man's Land with the start of the attack. Initially the tanks produced devastating effects upon German morale - at least locally, but on a wider front their effectiveness was limited, given their scarcity allied with their inherent unreliability.

Objectives that were taken included High Wood and the Switch Line over which the British had been struggling for two months. On the left flank the 2nd Canadian Division successfully expelled German forces from Courcelette on the opening day of the battle (with the assistance of a tank). In the centre, led by tanks, the villages of Martinpuich and Fleurs were taken. However, a combination of poor weather and

extensive German reinforcements halted the British and Canadian advance on 17 September. The Allies suffered heavy casualties, including Raymond Asquith, the son of the British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, and the attack was called off on 22 September.

Contay is a village on the main road, Amiens to Arras, in France. Contay British Cemetery contains 1,133 First World War burials and was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield and lies on the left (north east) side of the road to Franvillers. The site was chosen in August 1916 for burials from the 49th Casualty Clearing Station, which arrived at Contay at the end of August. It was joined by the 9th CCS in September. All the burials in Plots I to IV and the majority of those in Plots VII and VIII (the plot numbers V and VI were not used) cover the period August 1916 to March 1917. Most of them were made from these two clearing stations.

The German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line in the spring of 1917 brought the medical units further east and it was not until April 1918, when the Germans advanced to Albert, that the 38th and other Divisions used the cemetery again, completing Plots VII and VIII and forming the two rows in Plot IX. The last burial took place in August 1918.

ESSEX FARM CEMETERY. Situated in Boezinge, a village in the province of West Flanders. The land south of Essex Farm was used as a dressing station cemetery from April 1915 to August 1917. The burials were made without definite plan and some of the divisions which occupied this sector may be traced in almost every part of the cemetery, but the 49th (West Riding) Division buried their dead of 1915 in Plot I, and the 38th (Welsh) Division used Plot III in the autumn of 1916. There are 1,200 servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 103 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate 19 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield. It was in Essex Farm Cemetery that Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae of the Canadian Army Medical Corps wrote the poem ' In

Flanders Fields' in May 1915. The 49th Division Memorial is immediately behind the cemetery, on the canal bank.

HARINGHE (BANDAGHEM) MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium. Bandaghem, like Dozinghem and Mendinghem, were the popular names given by the troops to groups of casualty clearing stations posted to this area during the First World War. The cemetery site was chosen in July 1917 for the 62nd and 63rd Casualty Clearing Stations and burials from these and other hospitals (notably the 36th Casualty Clearing Station in 1918) continued until October 1918. The cemetery contains 772 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. There is a separate plot of 39 German war graves, but four plots (X, XI, XII and XIII) of French graves were removed to other burial grounds after the war. There are also five Second World War burials in the cemetery, three of which are unidentified. The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

HERMIES HILL BRITISH CEMETERY. Hermies is a town in the Department of the Pas-de-Calais, approximately 3.5 kilometres south of the road (N30) from Bapaume to Cambrai. Hermies was seized on the morning of the 9th April 1917, by a surprise attack of the 2nd and 3rd Australian Infantry Battalions. It was held against the advancing Germans on the 22nd March 1918, by the 17th Division, but evacuated on the following day; and it was retaken in September 1918. It was later "adopted", with Havrincourt, by the County Borough of Huddersfield.

The cemetery was begun in November 1917, and carried on by fighting units until March 1918, and further graves were added in the following September. These original burials comprise nearly the whole of Plot I; the remaining three Plots were added after the Armistice by the concentration of graves from a wide area round Hermies and from certain small cemeteries, including:-

DEMICOURT GERMAN CEMETERY, BOURSIES, at the North end of the hamlet of Demicourt, which contained about 100

German graves and those of 15 unidentified men of the 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

HAVRINCOURT COTTAGE GARDEN CEMETERY, made by the 47th (London) Division in the Southern part of the village, which contained the graves of 30 soldiers from the United Kingdom and 5 Germans who fell in the winter of 1917-1918.

HAVRINCOURT WOOD BRITISH CEMETERY, about 1 kilometre South-West of Havrincourt village. It contained the graves of 70 soldiers from the United Kingdom who fell on the 20th November, 1917, the first day of the Battle of Cambrai, and all but 5 of whom belonged to the Infantry of the 62nd (West Riding) Division.

HERMIES AUSTRALIAN CEMETERY, on the North-West side of the village, which contained the graves of 1 officer and 20 N.C.O.s and men of the 2nd Australian Infantry Battalion, who fell on the 9th April 1917.

There are now over 1,000, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site. Of these, nearly 300 are unidentified and special memorials are erected to 28 soldiers from the United Kingdom and 3 from Australia, known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials record the names of 6 soldiers from the United Kingdom, buried in two German Cemeteries, whose graves were destroyed by shell fire. The cemetery covers an area of 3,629 square metres and is enclosed

LIJSSENTHOEK MILITARY CEMETERY. During the First World War, the village of Lijssenthoek was situated on the main communication line between the Allied military bases in the rear and the Ypres battlefields. Close to the Front, but out of the extreme range of most German field artillery, it became a natural place to establish casualty clearing stations.

The cemetery was first used by the French 15th Hopital D'Evacuation and in June 1915, it began to be used by casualty clearing stations of the Commonwealth forces. From April to August 1918, the casualty clearing stations fell back before the German advance and field ambulances (including a French ambulance) took their places.

The cemetery contains 9,901 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 883 war graves of other nationalities, mostly French and German. The only concentration burials are 24 added to Plot XXXI in 1920 from isolated positions near Poperinghe and 17 added to Plot XXXII from St. DENIJS CHURCHYARD in 1981. It is the second largest Commonwealth cemetery in Belgium. There are 8 Special Memorial headstones to men known to be buried in this cemetery, these are located together alongside Plot 32 near the Stone of Remembrance. The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

THE POZIERES MEMORIAL lies in the village of Pozieres, 6 kilometres north-east of the town of Albert. The Memorial encloses Pozieres British Cemetery and relates to the period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme battlefields, and the months that followed before the Advance to Victory, which began on 8 August 1918. The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom and 300 of the South African Forces who have no known grave and who died on the Somme from 21 March to 7 August 1918. The Corps and Regiments most largely represented are The Rifle Brigade with over 600 names, The Durham Light Infantry with approximately 600 names, the Machine Gun Corps with over 500, The Manchester Regiment with approximately 500 and The Royal Horse and Royal Field Artillery with over 400 names.

The memorial encloses POZIERES BRITISH CEMETERY, Plot II of which contains original burials of 1916, 1917 and 1918, carried out by fighting units and field ambulances. The remaining plots were made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields immediately surrounding the cemetery, the majority of them of soldiers who died in the Autumn of 1916 during the latter stages of the Battle of the Somme, but a few represent the fighting in August 1918. There are now 2,755 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 1,375 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 23 casualties known or believed to be buried among them.

The cemetery and memorial were designed by W H Cowlshaw.

QUEANT ROAD CEMETERY, BUISSY. Buissy is a village about 25 kilometres from Arras and was reached by the Third Army on 2 September 1918, after the storming of the Drocourt-Queant line. It was evacuated by the Germans on the following day.

Queant Cemetery was made by the 2nd and 57th Casualty Clearing Stations in October and November 1918. It then consisted of 71 graves (now Plot I, Rows A and B), but was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when 2200 graves were brought in from the battlefields of 1917-1918 between Arras and Bapaume, and from the following smaller burial grounds in the area:-

BARALLE COMMUNAL CEMETERY BRITISH EXTENSION, which was made in September 1918, contained the graves of 25 soldiers from the United Kingdom; and the **GERMAN EXTENSION**, from which two graves were brought.

CAGNICOURT COMMUNAL CEMETERY, contained the grave of one soldier from the United Kingdom who fell in September, 1918. **LAGNICOURT (6th JAEGER REGIMENT) GERMAN CEMETERY**, East of the village, contained 137 German graves and one British.

NOREUIL BRITISH CEMETERIES No.1 and No.2. These were close together, about 400 metres North of Noreuil village. They were made in April-August, 1917, and they contained the graves of 50 soldiers from Australia and 16 from the United Kingdom (some of these were re-buried in H.A.C. Cemetery, Ecoist-St. Mein).

NOREUIL GERMAN CEMETERY No.1, next to Noreuil Australian Cemetery, contained 78 German graves and ten British.

PRONVILLE GERMAN CEMETERY "near the Cave", on the Western outskirts of Pronville, contained 17 British graves.

PRONVILLE GERMAN CEMETERY No.4, South of Pronville on the road to Beaumetz, contained 83 German and 83 British graves (52 of the British being those of soldiers of the Black Watch).

PROVILLE CHURCHYARD, contained two British graves.

There are now 2,377 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 1,441 of the burials are unidentified, but there are special memorials to 56 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials commemorate 26 casualties buried in German cemeteries in the neighbourhood, whose graves could not be found on concentration. The cemetery was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

SHORNCLIFFE MILITARY CEMETERY is close to the military camp at Shorncliffe, 2 miles west of Folkestone in Kent. It belongs to the Ministry of Defence and contains war graves of both World Wars.

During the First World War a number of Canadian military establishments were centred on Shorncliffe. There were camps and a Machine Gun School which were served by the Shorncliffe Military Hospital (later No. 9 Canadian General), the Moore Barracks Military Hospital (later No. 11 Canadian General), and other Canadian hospitals. The Canadian Army Medical Corps Training Depot was at or near Shorncliffe during almost the whole of the war. On three occasions Canadian soldiers were killed during air raids on Shorncliffe. Shorncliffe Military Cemetery contains 471 First World War burials, more than 300 of them Canadian. Second World War burials number 81, including 1 unidentified U.K. soldier and 1 Polish Foreign National. The cemetery also contains a screen wall on which are commemorated 18 Belgians originally buried in a mausoleum, now demolished.

THE TYNE COT MEMORIAL TO THE MISSING

bears the names of almost 35,000 officers and men whose graves are not known. It was designed by Sir Herbert Baker with sculpture by Joseph Armitage and F V Blundstone, and was unveiled by Sir Gilbert Dyett in July 1927.

The memorial forms the north-eastern boundary of TYNE COT CEMETERY, which was established around a captured

German blockhouse or pill-box used as an advanced dressing station.

The original battlefield cemetery of 343 graves was greatly enlarged after the Armistice when remains were brought in from the battlefields of Passchendaele and Langemarck, and from a few small burial grounds. It is now the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world in terms of burials.

At the suggestion of King George V, who visited the cemetery in 1922, the Cross of Sacrifice was placed on the original large pill-box. There are three other pill-boxes in the cemetery. There are now 11,952 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Tyne Cot Cemetery. 8,365 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to more than 80 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials commemorate 20 casualties whose graves were destroyed by shell fire. The cemetery was designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

The Tyne Cot Memorial is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. Broadly speaking, the Salient stretched from Langemarck in the north to the northern edge in Ploegsteert Wood in the south, but it varied in area and shape throughout the war. The Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge. The Second Battle of Ypres began in April 1915 when the Germans released poison gas into the Allied lines north of Ypres. This was the first time gas had been used by either side and the violence of the attack forced an Allied withdrawal and a shortening of the line of defence.

There was little more significant activity on this front until 1917, when in the Third Battle of Ypres an offensive was mounted by Commonwealth forces to divert German attention from a weakened French front further south. The initial attempt in June to dislodge the Germans from the Messines Ridge was a complete success, but the main assault north-eastward, which began at the end of July, quickly became a dogged struggle against determined opposition and the

rapidly deteriorating weather. The campaign finally came to a close in November with the capture of Passchendaele. The German offensive of March 1918 met with some initial success, but was eventually checked and repulsed in a combined effort by the Allies in September. The battles of the Ypres Salient claimed many lives on both sides and it quickly became clear that the commemoration of members of the Commonwealth forces with no known grave would have to be divided between several different sites.

The site of the Menin Gate was chosen because of the hundreds of thousands of men who passed through it on their way to the battlefields. It commemorates those of all Commonwealth nations except New Zealand who died in the Salient, in the case of United Kingdom casualties before 16 August 1917. Those United Kingdom and New Zealand servicemen who died after that date are named on the memorial at Tyne Cot, a site which marks the furthest point reached by Commonwealth forces in Belgium until nearly the end of the war. Other New Zealand casualties are commemorated on memorials at Buttes New British Cemetery and Messines Ridge British Cemetery.

COMMONWEALTH WAR CEMETERIES

SECOND WORLD WAR

HELIOPOLIS WAR CEMETERY. General Headquarters, Middle East Command was set up in Cairo shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, remaining there throughout the war years. In January 1941, a Royal Air Force Sector Headquarters for Fighter Defence Canal Zone was established. Cairo was also a significant hospital centre during the Second World War, as well as a leave centre with many social clubs and hostels.

Heliopolis is a major suburb of Cairo and lies 10 kilometres to the north-east of the main city centre. The cemetery was opened in October 1941 for burials from the many hospitals in the area coping with the wounded and sick, mainly from the Western Desert campaigns. After the war, 125 graves were moved into the cemetery from Mena Camp Military Cemetery where permanent maintenance was not possible.

There are now 1,742 Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery, and the 83 war graves of other nationalities reflect the diverse make up of the Middle East Command.

JONKERBOS WAR CEMETERY is situated in the city of Nijmegen lies to the south of Arnhem in the east of the Netherlands.

The Netherlands fell to the Germans in May 1940 and was not re-entered by Allied forces until September 1944. Nijmegen was a front line town from 17 September 1944 until February 1945. The cemetery, which was created by No. 3 Casualty

Clearing station, is in a wooded area known as Jonkers Bosch, from which it took its name.

Jonkerbos War Cemetery contains 1,629 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 99 of them unidentified, and 13 war graves of other nationalities.

SCHOONSELHOF CEMETERY is located in Wilrijk, a suburb of Antwerp, and contains 101 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, some of which were brought in from other burial grounds in the area after the Armistice. Second World War burials number 1,456. The Commonwealth plot also contains 16 non-war burials, most of them Merchant seamen whose deaths were not due to war service, and 16 Polish and one French war grave.

Antwerp was the seat of the Belgian Government from 17 August to 7 October 1914. Towards the end of August, the city was one of the strong positions on the Allied left flank, and by the middle of September, a position of critical importance. It was defended by fortress troops and the greater part of the Belgian Field Army and the Royal Naval Air Service used its aerodrome. On 27 September the Germans laid siege to Antwerp and during the first week of October the Royal Naval Division entered the city, playing a crucial part in its defence. On 9 October, before other British and French reinforcements could arrive, the last forts became untenable and the last defenders retired. From 10 October 1914 to the Armistice, the city was in German hands. German forces returned to Belgium in May 1940, and occupied Antwerp until its liberation by the Allies on 4 September 1944. The town and port were secured, but it was some weeks further before the approaches from the North Sea could be cleared of German resistance.