

War Memorial inside St Peters Church, Roman Road, Little Aston

Author: Paul Harrison in collaboration with the Royal Sutton Coldfield Great War Project, January 2026

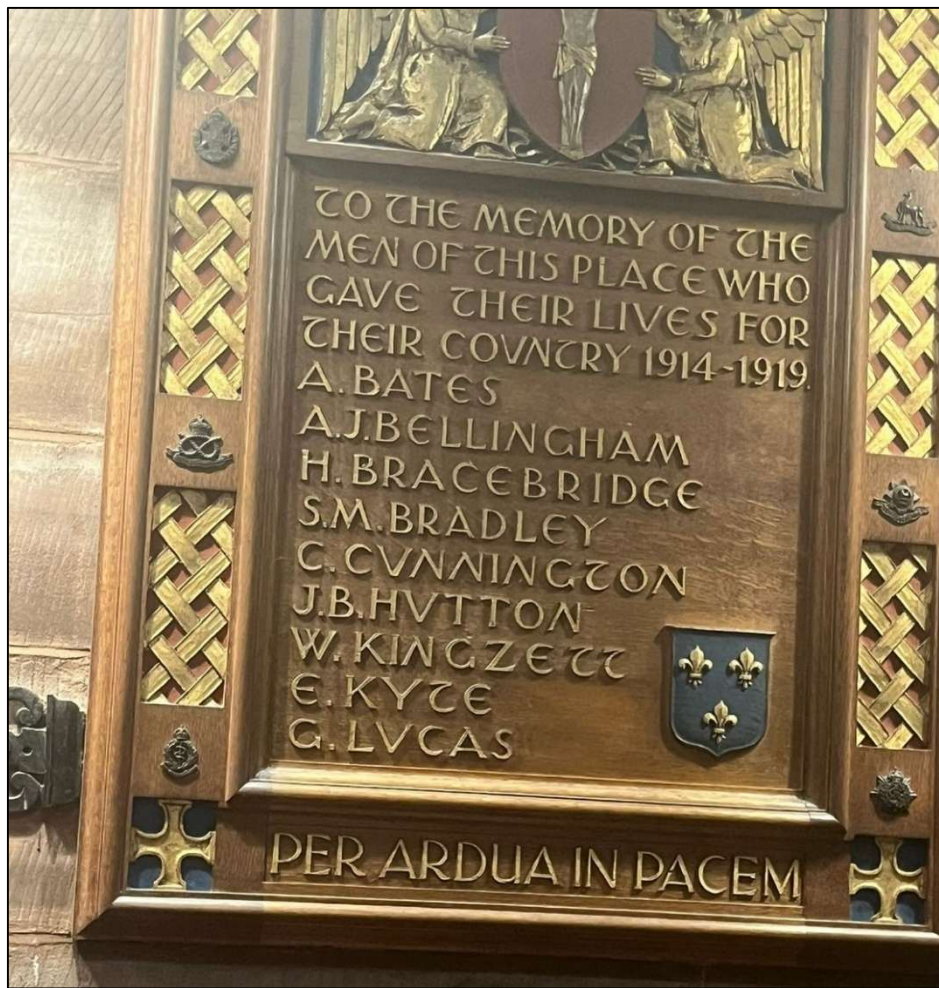


Image courtesy of Emily Brennan

Introduction

I'm a genealogist and amateur local historian with a particular interest in the First World War. I've previously researched the men listed on the war memorials at the Church of All Saints, Belwell Lane, Four Oaks¹ and Four Oaks Methodist Church² and in addition, contributed to the Royal Sutton Coldfield Great War Project.³

Whilst compiling the above works, I noted that some men were commemorated on more than one memorial. Having already completed the aforementioned research and that of two of the men featured on the St. Peter's memorial, I decided to research the seven other men listed upon it.

During this work I discovered that the men on the St. Peter's memorial had previously been researched in 2018 and the information presented in a booklet. Although not apparently available online, I was sent a PDF copy of the booklet which was credited to Lis Paxton, Sandra Jones, Anna Moon and Rev. Philip Daniel. This work was a great starting point and happily I've been able to provide more detail on the men due to the increased availability of research materials online.

In addition, I discovered via the church's website⁴, that servicemen who died as a result of their service in both world wars, and who were buried in the graveyard at St. Peter's, had been researched in some detail by Mike Fletcher. That document has provided a terrific source of information in my research.

This document is not intended to supersede either of the above works, but as an extension and updated revision.

History of the Memorial

The history of the memorial was described in the aforementioned booklet dating from 2018.

According to the minutes of a church council meeting on July 25th, 1919, it was proposed to "To fix in St. Peter's church & also in the Mission church at Woodend a suitable tablet to commemorate the services of those parishioners who as members of H.M Forces have lost their lives (or who have in turn served their country in the Great War)".

Subsequently, during a special meeting of the vestry on December 31st, 1919, it was resolved "That this meeting of the vestry of parishioners of Little Aston, having inspected the plan of the Memorial Tablet. It is proposed to place in Little Aston church to the memory of the men from this place who gave their lives in the Great War, approves the same and desires the faculty for its erection may be granted forthwith". The motion was unanimously carried.

An excerpt from the faculty dated February 19th, 1920 recorded that, "Whereas it has been represented to us by and on the part and behalf of The Reverend Charles Broughton-Thompson, clerk, Master of Arts, the vicar, and Thomas Morse and Alfred Jones, the churchwardens of the Parish Church of Little Aston in the County of Stafford and Diocese of Lichfield that it is desired to place a Memorial Tablet of Carved oak on the South Wall in the

¹ <https://sclhr.org.uk/research/original-research/3328-all-saints-church-four-oaks-war-memorial.html?highlight=WyJ3YXliLCJtZW1vcmlhbcCJd>

² <https://sclhr.org.uk/research/non-member-s-research/3322-war-memorial-at-four-oaks-methodist-church-sutton-coldfield.html?highlight=WyJ3YXliLCJtZW1vcmlhbcCJd>

³ <https://www.royalsuttoncoldfieldgreatwarproject.co.uk/>

⁴ https://www.stpeterslittleaston.co.uk/files/ugd/c29696_f0b98ad234a3402b97b01ce161312481.pdf

said Church with the names of those Parishioners who fell in the Great War according to the Design filed in the Registry of the said courts, that the cost of the said work is estimated at Forty pounds which will be defrayed by contributions of the parishioners. That the works will involve the removal of a lamp bracket which will be refixed about two feet along the said wall, and that the said work has been unanimously approved by the said parishioners in the vestry”.

According to the minutes of a church council meeting on July 16th, 1920, “The next matter discussed was with reference to the War Memorial. W. Hobbias stated that the tablet was now complete, and ready for erecting and accepting the titles, + that the memorial has come out well. The Vicar said that there ought to be a proper unveiling of the memorial + suggested asking the Archdeacon or Dean to come over...”

Details of the Memorial

The memorial is a “Wooden WW1 Board with 9 names. Border decorated with regimental badges and painted detail. In the centre at the top of the board, painted and engraved Christ is flanked by two angels.”⁵

The plaque measures 50mm in depth, 1020mm in height and 760mm in width. It is carved with raised decorative features and rectangular with concave upper corners.⁶

The inscription reads, “TO THE MEMORY OF THE / MEN OF THIS PLACE WHO / GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR / THEIR COUNTRY 1914-1919 / PER ARDUA IN PACEM”

Per ardua in pacem translates to "through adversity to peace".

⁵ <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/258690/>

⁶ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/38446>

8787 Private Arthur Bates 1st Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment

Arthur Bates was born in Great Barr, Staffordshire, 1890 to Arthur and Annie Bates, his father was an Agricultural Labourer. On the 1891 census he was recorded as being aged 1 and living with his family at Pinfold Cottages, Church Road, Great Barr.

By 1901 he was 10 years old and living with his family at Hawthorn Cottages, Lichfield Road, Shenstone Wood End, Staffordshire.

At some point prior to 1911, Arthur enlisted in Lichfield as a regular soldier in the South Staffordshire Regiment. He was 20 years old and serving as a Cook with their 1st Battalion at the time of the 1911 Census. They were stationed at "South Barracks", Gibraltar.

In August 1914, the 1st Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment were stationed in Fort Napier, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. They returned to England, landing at Southampton on September 19th, 1914. They then came under orders of 22nd Brigade in 7th Division and moved to Lyndhurst in the New Forest, Hampshire. They subsequently went overseas as part of the British Expeditionary Force, landing at Zeebrugge on October 6th, 1914.⁷ They arrived too late to prevent the fall of Antwerp and instead, took up defensive positions at important bridges and junctions to assist the retreat of the Belgian army. The 7th Division became the first British Troops to entrench in front of Ypres. The unit was engaged in very heavy fighting during late October to mid-November 1914 as part of the First Battle of Ypres, suffering extremely heavy losses⁸. The War Diary of 7th Division HQ General Staff recorded that the battalion had suffered the following casualties between October 18th to November 13th, 1914; 6 officers killed, 17 wounded and 5 missing, 25 other ranks killed, 97 wounded and 742 missing.⁹

It appears that Arthur was wounded during the above actions and was taken prisoner. He died of his wounds in the German Military Hospital at Lille on November 3rd, 1914.¹⁰

He was buried at Lille Southern Cemetery, France, Plot III. A. 12. Lille was occupied by the Germans from August 27th to September 5th, 1914, and again on October 12th; and it remained in their hands, undamaged by Allied artillery, until October 17th, 1918. Southern Cemetery was used by the Germans during the greater part of the War.¹¹

Arthur was awarded the 1914 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His effects were left to his father. The date of a death notice posted by his parents in the Lichfield Mercury on March 19th, 1915, indicates that there may have been several months delay in them receiving confirmation of Arthur's death.

⁷ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-infantry-regiments-of-1914-1918/south-staffordshire-regiment/>

⁸ <https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/battalion.php?pid=849>

⁹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/307352-1st-battalion-south-staffordshire-regiment-late-october-1914/>

¹⁰ <https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/en/List/4080456/698/530/>

¹¹ <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/28001/lille-southern-cemetery/>

B a t e s, A. Erk.Mrk. 8787. C.E. S. Staff.R. verst. 3.11.14. im Kriegs-
Laz.3. 7.A.K. Lille. Schuss r.O-U.arm.

Detail from the "Totenliste" (list of the dead) from the Prisoners of the First World War ICRC historical archives¹²

DEATHS.
BATES.—From wounds received in action, Pte.
Arthur Bates, 1st South Staffordshire Regi-
ment, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Bates,
Spring Cottage, Woodend, Shenstone, near
Lichfield.

Lichfield Mercury, March 19th, 1915 (British Newspaper Archive)

Bates.—In loving memory of my dear Son, Pte.
Arthur Bates, 1st South Staffords, who fell in
action November 3rd, 1914.—Sadly missed,
never will be forgotten.

*Lichfield Mercury, November 5th, 1915 (British
Newspaper Archive)*

IN MEMORIAM.
Bates.—In loving memory of Private Arthur
Bates, 1st South Staffordshire Regiment, who
was killed in action on November 3rd, 1914.—
Gone, but not forgotten.

*Lichfield Mercury, November 3^d, 1916 (British
Newspaper Archive)*

¹² https://grandeguerre.icrc.org/en/L_Detist/4080456/698/530/

**201665 Private Alfred James Bellingham
1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment**

Alfred James Bellingham was born in Tipton, Staffordshire in 1891 to John and Emily Bellingham.

The 1901 Census recorded Alfred as 9 years old and living with his parents and four siblings at The Station House (Blake Street railway station). His father John was the Station Master.

In 1911, he was aged 19 and living with his family at The Station House, Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield. He was working a farm labourer. His two older siblings had died.

He enlisted in the army in Birmingham in February 1915 and served in "A" Company of 1st/5th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was a stretcher bearer and had arrived at the front around September 1916.

Private Alfred James Bellingham died of wounds aged 26 on August 11th, 1917. He is buried at Brandhoek New Military Cemetery, Belgium, Plot VI. C. 7.

It is not clear when or how he was wounded. According to the battalion war diary, in the first week of August 1917, they were out of the line but on the 8th, they moved into the line near St Julien, near Ypres. They endured extremely muddy front-line positions under heavy artillery fire until they were relieved on the 10th/11th August. Total casualties from the 8th to the 11th were seventeen other ranks killed, two officers and forty-four other ranks wounded, Private Bellingham was likely to have been one of them.

The History of the 5th Territorial Battalion described the days preceding his death thus, "From Reigersburg Camp, outside Ypres, they went on to St. Julien and took over the line from the Bucks Battalion. The Steenbeck, formerly a shallow brook, was churned by shell fire into a "slough of despond" that had been a match for several tanks, which were rusting in its slime. Beyond lay a debateable land controlled by scattered pill boxes, advanced posts from the belt of them that marked the Langemarck-Gheluvelt line. In this first tour shelling was heavy, but personal encounters only occurred with strayed Germans".¹³

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of John and Emily Bellingham, of Station House, Blake Street Station, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire."

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

¹³ <https://archive.org/details/5thbnwarwickshireregt/page/53/mode/2up>

Private A. J. Bellingham (25), B. War. Regt., son of Mr. J. Bellingham, Blake Street, station, near Sutton Coldfield. He was a stretcher-bearer for his own company, and had been at the front nearly 12 months. Prior to enlisting in February, 1915, he was employed by Messrs. Holt and Son.

Excerpt from a list of "Casualties Among Midlands Men" in the Birmingham Daily Post, September 1st, 1917 (British Newspaper Archive)



Gravestone of Private A.J. Bellingham¹⁴

¹⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12323341/alfred-james-bellingham#view-photo=2543686>

M2/155220 Private Stephen Henry Bracebridge 265 Mechanical Transport Company - Army Service Corps

Stephen Henry Bracebridge was born in Little Bromwich, Birmingham in 1880, to Stephen and Mary Ann Bracebridge. His father was a police constable. Stephen Henry appears to have been known as Henry or Harry.

In 1881, he was less than one year old and living with his parents at Blakeland Street, Little Bromwich, Birmingham.

By 1891 the family had moved to Sutton Coldfield. The census recorded them as living at Watford Gap, Sutton Coldfield but judging by the adjacent addresses, they appear to have actually been living at Mere Green Road near St James Church. Henry was 10 years old and a scholar.

In 1901 the family were living at "Private Cottage Police", Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield. His father was still a Police Constable and Henry was aged 20 and working as a Carpenter.

In early 1904, aged 24, he married 27-year-old Edith Goldsby in Little Aston. They had a daughter named Kathleen Harriet who was born on December 1st, 1908. She was baptised on December 27th, 1908, at All Saints Church, Four Oaks. Their address was given as The Mill, Blake Street and Henry's given occupation was Caterer.

By 1907, the family were living at Hill Hook Mill, Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield. He was reported as being the miller in the below article about a dispute he had with a neighbour.

He was in the local papers again in 1909 when he reported as being a caterer living at Hill Hook Mill. He had been accused of three cases of "improper conduct", but all were dismissed.

The 1911 census recorded him living at Hill Hook Mill, Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield. He was 30 years old at working as a "Caterer for pleasure parties". His wife was "Assisting in the business". Presumably he was running a refreshment room at the mill for day trippers visiting the mill and its mill pond. He was recorded as living at Hill Hook Mill on the electoral registers from 1910 to 1914. The mill had previously been used to grind corn but according to a BBC Wildlife webpage, "The local train station at Blake Street was opened in 1884 and was used to bring in children & adults to Hill Hook. By the First World War Hill Hook Mill was already well known to many Sutton and Birmingham people as a popular destination for Sunday School outings etc. Fishing, boating and skating, when the pool was frozen over, would be enjoyed by all. A small amusement park was located on the field overlooking the mill pool. There were swings, roundabouts and an old railway carriage and other buildings where afternoon tea was served to the visitors. The mill pool was also used by fishermen and was well stocked with pike".¹⁵

According to a booklet describing the history of Hill Hook Mill, in 1911, Stephen Bracebridge applied artificial respiration to a young man who fell into the mill pool and almost drowned and apparently this prompt action saved the young man's life.¹⁶

In 1913 Henry and Edith had a son named Neville.

Henry enlisted in the Army Service Corps on February 2nd, 1916, in Birmingham at the age of 35. Part of his service and medical records survive though they are damaged and difficult

¹⁵ <https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/hill-hook-history>

¹⁶ <https://sclhr.org.uk/research/original-research/2475-hill-hook-corn-mill.html>

to read in places. His occupation was Caterer. He was 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighed 210 pounds and had a chest measurement of 42 inches. His physical development was described as very good though he was recorded as being slightly obese and had slight rheumatic pain in what (appears to read) his left big toe.

On February 4th, 1916, he arrived at Osterley Park for training with the Mechanical Transport section of the Army Service Corps. According to the Great War Forum, "Osterley Park was one of the several locations in Greater London which acted as a depot for receiving ASC recruits, then training and testing them as MT drivers. These men spent several weeks in training, each had to learn to drive 4 types of vehicles, not exceeding 8 mph, and the training routes included Marble Arch, Hyde Park Corner, Oxford Circus and Pall Mall."¹⁷ He was classified as fit for active service on December 6th, 1916.

According to the Long Long Trail Website, "The British Army was already the most mechanised in the world when the Great War began, in terms of use of mechanical transport. It maintained that leadership, and by 1918 this was a strategically important factor in being able to maintain supplies as the armies made considerable advances over difficult ground.

All Mechanical Transport Companies were part of the Lines of Communication and were not under orders of a Division, although some (unusually known as Divisional Supply Columns and Divisional Ammunition Parks) were in effect attached to a given Division and worked closely with it. Those in the Lines of Communication operated in a wide variety of roles, such as being attached to the heavy artillery as Ammunition Columns or Parks, being Omnibus Companies, Motor Ambulance Convoys, or Bridging and Pontoon units.

Soldiers who served in the Mechanical Transport usually had the letter M as a prefix to their number.¹⁸

Each Division of the army had a certain amount of motorised transport allocated to it, although not directly under its own command. The Divisional Supply Column Companies were responsible for the supply of goods, equipment and ammunition from the Divisional railhead to the Divisional Refilling Point and, if conditions allowed, to the dumps and stores of the forward units. Used, of course, where loads were heavy. A Company initially comprised 5 officers and 337 other ranks of the ASC, looking after 45 3-ton lorries, 16 30-cwt lorries, 7 motor cycles, 2 cars and 4 assorted trucks for the workshop and stores of the Supply Column itself."¹⁹ It goes on to list that 265 Company was formed in February 1915 as part of the 19th (Western) Division, and later 15th (Scottish) Division then 51st (Highland) Division. His records state that he was serving with the 265/Ammunition Column when admitted to hospital.

His records state that he had a gunshot wound (this term was also used to record shrapnel wounds) to the elbow and mouth though it is not stated how and when he received them. The available description of his facial wounds starts on March 31st, 1918. He was suffering from a severe infection of his face, most likely from a contaminated wound in his upper lip. He had a fever and was delirious. Stephen Henry Bracebridge died of his wounds aged 38, in hospital at Rouen on April 2nd, 1918, and is buried at St. Sever Cemetery Extension,

¹⁷ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/42428-company-5-ascmt-osterley-park/>

¹⁸ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-army-service-corps-in-the-first-world-war/>

¹⁹ <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-army-service-corps-in-the-first-world-war/army-service-corps-mechanical-transport-companies/>

Rouen, Plot P. VII. I. 1A. The cause of death was Erysipelas of Face, a bacterial infection of the upper layer of the skin, which in modern days would most likely have been treatable with antibiotics.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Stephen and Mary Ann Bracebridge, of Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham; husband of Edith Bracebridge, of Newport House, Augusta St., Llandudno". No record of Edith living in Llandudno was found.

The aforementioned BBC website indicated that Edith and her two children, "stopped on at the mill at a reduced rent", though "in 1919 the lease for Hill Hook Mill was then sold to a Mr Holt of Blake Street along with Hill Hook Farm". She was recorded at Hill Hook Mill on the 1919 electoral register. Edith was not found on the 1921 census. An Edith Bracebridge was living at 579 Holly Lane, Erdington according to the electoral registers of 1928 and 1929. She was living at Kingsbury Road, Erdington when she died in 1929.

SEQUEL TO SHOOTING A SWAN.—Two cases resulting out of the shooting of a swan were heard at Sutton Coldfield yesterday. The parties were Stephen Henry Bracebridge, miller, Hill Hook Mill, and Richard Sadler, farmer, Blake Street. In the first case, Sadler summoned Bracebridge for using threats. He stated that on the morning of January 6 Bracebridge, after referring to the shooting of a swan, said, "Dick, you are nothing but a dirty cur for shooting it," adding, "If it was not for taking the law in my own hands I would take hold of you and break you straight through the middle." In the second case Bracebridge summoned Sadler for maliciously killing his swan. For the defence it was contended that the bird was in a pitiable condition, and the wing towards the tip had gone quite dead, showing that a wound had been there a considerable time. The wing, it was stated, had become frozen to the ice, and in freeing itself the bird had torn it. There were a lot of blood marks about, and in shooting it the defendant only desired to put it out of its misery. The Bench fined Sadler 10s. and costs for killing the bird, and ordered him to pay 10s. towards its value. The other case they dismissed.

Birmingham Daily Post dated January 16th, 1907 (British Newspaper Archive)

SUTTON COLDFIELD.
SERIOUS CHARGE DISMISSED.—For over three hours the Mayor (Councillor John Norris) and Alderman Emery were occupied at the Police Court on Tuesday morning in hearing evidence in three charges of improper conduct against Stephen Henry Bracebridge (28), caterer, Hill Hook Mill, Blake Street. Mr. S. Smith Dorsett (instructed by Mr. A. H. Adcock) appeared for the prisoner, and pleaded "Not guilty."—Each case was dealt with separately, and the whole were dismissed by the Bench.

Lichfield Mercury dated January 15th, 1909 (British Newspaper Archive)



Gravestone of Private S.H. Bracebridge²⁰

BRACEBRIDGE Edith of 598 Kingsbury-road Erdington Birmingham widow died 22 September 1929 Administration Birmingham 9 January to Kathleen Harriet Bracebridge spinster and Ruby Grace Moore (wife of Edward Richard Moore).
 Effects £440.

Probate Record for Edith Bracebridge (Find My Past)

²⁰ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56260167/s-bracebridge>

STK/914 Lance Corporal Spencer Maxwell Bradley
10th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City Of London Regiment)

Spencer Maxwell Bradley was born at Penns, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, on September 23rd, 1891, to Spencer Redfern and Annie Maud Bradley. His father was a Metal Broker. Spencer was baptized on November 11th, 1891, at St Johns Church, Walmley. The family address was given as Penns Lane, Walmley.

By 1901, Spencer was 9 years old and living with his family at Upper Ladies Hills, Kenilworth, Warwickshire. He was educated at Warwick Grammar School and in 1905 and 1906 he was a pupil at HMS Conway Training Ship in Merseyside. This was a school for training merchant navy officers²¹. His family address at the time was 1 Binswood Avenue, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

In 1911 he was aged 19, single and a student motor engineer living with his family at 14 Clarendon Square, Leamington, Warwickshire. Before joining the army, he had been a keen sportsman; playing cricket for the Warwickshire Gentlemen and Leamington Club and was a member of the Warwickshire Beagles.

He was working as an Engineer when he enlisted in London with the 10th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City Of London Regiment) who had the unofficial title of the Stockbrokers. He, along with his battalion, landed at Boulogne on July 30th, 1915, and disembarked the following day. He served in France thereafter. Records indicate that he was wounded in late June or early July 1916 as he was listed as "Wounded" on the Casualty List issued by the War Office in August 1916. No details of the nature of the wound nor how he received it were found²².

As part of the wider battles of Arras, the 10th Battalion Royal Fusiliers took Monchy-le-Preux on the 10th and 11th of April 1917, with the loss of 12 officers and 240 other ranks.^{23,24} Lance Corporal Spencer Maxwell Bradley was a casualty of the above battle and died of his wounds at the Base Hospital at Dames, Camiers on April 20th, 1917. He was 26 years old. He was buried at Etaples Military Cemetery, France, Plot XIX. D. 9A. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Spencer R. and Annie Maud Bradley, of Penns, Walmley, Warwickshire", however during the war, his parents lived at Daracq Lodge, Streetly.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal and left his effects to his father.

De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour recorded that Spencer was wounded on April 11th. The 1922 book "The Royal fusiliers in the Great War" by H.C. O'Neill²⁵ provides some details of the 10th and 13th Battalions of the Royal Fusiliers actions in the battle.

On April 10th, the battalions attacked Monchy le Preux, a village standing on a small hill about 90 feet above the surrounding country. Both units advanced under a heavy barrage until the 10th were only 600 yards west of Monchy. The losses of both battalions had been

²¹ <https://menairbridges.co.uk/history/local-area/hms-conwy/>

²² <https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/record/751030246/bradley-s-m-uk-wwi-daily-reports-missing-dead-wounded-and-pows-1914-1918>

²³ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205237306>

²⁴ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/293902-royal-fusiliers-10th-battalion-monchy-le-preux-april-1917/>

²⁵ <https://archive.org/details/royalfusiliersin00onei/page/162/mode/2up>

very heavy. A provisional line of trenches had to be dug west of the village, and this line was completed by about 4am on April 11th. About an hour and a half later the 10th and 13th Battalions made a last attack, and the 13th established themselves north of the village, holding that position throughout the day. The 10th stormed the village itself and occupied it under a heavy barrage. The west side was entrenched, and a small advance post was established on the east of the village. The cavalry entered the village about 11am and were heavily shelled. The Royal Fusiliers held these positions until relieved at 11pm that night.

His younger sister Sybil suffered a double bereavement in the war, losing not only her older brother but her husband too. She married Stuart Garnett of the Royal Flying Corps in August 1915, but he was killed aged 34 in a flying accident at Upavon, Wiltshire in September 1916. Sybil gave birth to their son William Spencer Stuart Garnett in 1917.

<p>BRADLEY, SPENCER MAXWELL, L.-Corpl., No. 914, Lewis Gun Section, 10th (Service) Battn. The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regt.), elder s. of Spencer Redfern Bradley, of Daracq Lodge, Streetly, near Birmingham, by his wife, Annie Maud, dau. of William Vale; <i>b.</i> Penns, co. Warwick, 23 Sept. 1891; educ. Warwick Grammar School, and on H.M.S. Conway; was an Engineer; enlisted in Aug. 1914; served with the Expeditionary Force in France from July, 1915, and died in the Base Hospital, Dames, Camiers, 20 April, 1917, from wounds received in action at Monchy-le-Preux on the 11th. Buried in Etaples Cemetery. The Commanding Officer of his Company wrote: "Your son was a great friend of mine; we were in the ranks together for nearly two years, and he was one of the best fellows I have ever met. He was very popular in the battalion, and died as he lived, absolutely loyal." He was a keen sportsman, playing cricket for the Warwickshire Gentlemen and the Leamington Club, and was a member of the Warwickshire Beagles; <i>unm.</i></p>	
	
<p>· Spencer M. Bradley.</p>	

Extract from De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1918 (*Find My Past*)



Gravestone of Lance Corporal Spencer Maxwell Bradley²⁶

BRADLEY.—On the 20th inst., died of wounds received in action, S. Maxwell, elder son of S.M. and Mrs. Bradley, late of Leamington. "He died for his country."

Leamington Spa Courier, April 27th, 1917 (*British Newspaper Archive*)

²⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/10889006/spencer-maxwell-bradley#view-photo=16215236>

40631 Private Charles Cunnington 7th Battalion Suffolk Regiment

Charles Cunnington was born in 1882 in Leamington, Warwickshire, to Charles and Emma Cunnington. His father was a Gamekeeper.

In 1891, Charles was aged 8 and a scholar living with his family at Seven Gables, Mapp Green, Studley, Warwickshire. By 1901 he was 18 years old and living with his family at Eaves Green, Meriden, Warwickshire. His father was a Head Keeper and Charles was working as an Under Keeper, both presumably working on an estate.

The 1911 census recorded Charles as being a single 29-year-old Gamekeeper living alone at Forge Mill, Shenstone, Staffordshire.

He married Ruby Evelyn Bott in 1912 in the district of Walsall. They subsequently had two children; Clement Charles born January 7th, 1914, and Norman Daniel born February 7th, 1917²⁷. They lived at Forge Mill Cottages, Shenstone. Just two months after his second son was born, Charles would be killed.

Charles apparently attested in Shenstone with the 6th Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment and was given the regimental number 5925. He later transferred to 7th Battalion , Suffolk Regiment with a new regimental number of 40631. According to the Great War Forum²⁸, a group of men were transferred from the 6th South Staffs to the 7th Suffolk Regiment around September/October 1916.

He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.

Private Charles Cunnington was killed in action during the 1st Battle of Scarpe on 9th/10th April 1917, aged 35. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, Bay 4, France. One of Charles' younger brothers, Daniel, was also killed in the war. Both men are commemorated on the Warwick War Memorial, Church Street, Warwick.²⁹

The 7th Battalion Suffolk Regiment were part of the 35th Brigade and an account of their action on April 9th/10th, 1917, was reproduced on the Great War Forum³⁰, "At 12.15 pm (on 9th April, 12th Division being in the centre of VI Corps front) the 7th Norfolk Regiment on the right, with the 5th Royal Berkshire Regiment on the left, followed by the 7th Suffolk and 9th Essex Regiments, passed through the 37th and 36th Brigades. At 1.5 pm the Blue Line was definitely in our possession. The real task of 35th Brigade now commenced. There was no intervening system of trenches, but opposition was expected at Maison Rouge, and the enemy's batteries were known to be in the valley that had to be traversed. The plan was to capture Feuchy Chapel redoubt and its surroundings and to pierce the line just west of Orange Hill.

On the capture of the Blue Line, the Germans, becoming disorganised, were caught on the run, and the 35th Brigade had the joy of seeing them retreating in disorder. The 7th Norfolk Regiment pushed forward to level with the Bois des Boeufs. The 7th Suffolk and 9th Essex Regiments now proceeded to the final objective. The Essex gained Feuchy Chapel redoubt,

²⁷ <https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/image/668525734/cunnington-charles-page-1-uk-wwi-pension-ledgers-and-index-cards-1914-1923>

²⁸ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/48733-7suffolk-september-1916-may-1917/>

²⁹ <https://www.warwickwarmemorial.org.uk/>

³⁰ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/225990-7-suffolk-april-1917/#findComment-2243025>

but the greater portion of this attack was stopped by Church Work (*sic*), uncut wire and machine-guns. All attempts to cut the wire by hand and proceed were frustrated, and a line was taken up along Feuchy road."

The weather on the 9th - by no means good - gradually became worse, and during the night and the following day much sleet and snow fell, the conditions being deplorable. About midnight Lieut. Colonel Cooper, having been informed that the wire was to be cut by our artillery at daybreak, withdrew the battalion; next morning [10th] the attack was continued, and by noon the 7th Battalion had captured the final objective. Patrols were then pushed forward and the position consolidated. On the night of April 12 - 13 the 12th Division was relieved by the 29th Division and returned to Arras."

His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Son of Charles and Emma Cunnington, of Old Park, Warwick."

He left his estate to his widow, Ruby, who remarried on December 1st, 1917, to Francis Savage, a Farm Hand. The 1921 census shows Ruby living with her husband at Cocksparrow, Lea Marston, Birmingham. Her two sons Clement and Noman were listed as stepsons, and she'd had a son with Francis named Arthur who was 2 years old.

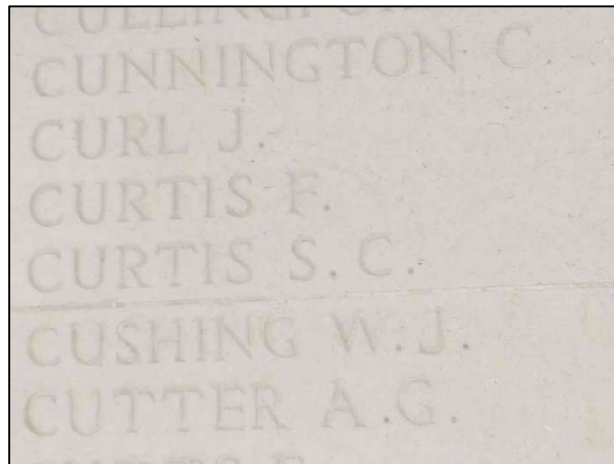


Image of the panel on the Arras Memorial showing the name of Private Charles Cunnington³¹

ROLL OF HONOUR.
CUNNINGTON.—Killed in action on April 9th, Pte. Charles Cunnington, Suffolk Regiment, the dearly loved eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Cunnington, Old Park, Warwick.

Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser, May 5th, 1917 (British Newspaper Archive)

³¹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/124951851/charles-cunnington>

Lieutenant John Barnabas Hutton **5th Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment**

John Barnabas Hutton was born on June 11th, 1891, in Walsall to Arthur William and Alice Mary Hutton. In 1901 he was 9 years old and living with family at "The Elms", Sutton Road, Walsall. John was educated at Northaw Preparatory School³² (a small school near Potters Bar in Hertfordshire) and at Malvern College. On the 1911 census he was recorded as being 19 years old and a student at Budbrooke Barracks, the base of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. His family were living in "Wayside", Rosemary Hill Road, Streetly. He studied at Birmingham University where he gained his Bachelor of Science in Engineering in 1912. Whilst at university he was a member of the Officer Training Corps.

Upon completing his education John began employment as an assistant engineer at the John Russell and Company Limited, Alma Tube Works (Cyclops Works) Walsall where his father was the works manager³³.

He volunteered on the outbreak of war and was soon became an officer. He was mentioned (amongst others) in the London Gazette in August 1914 thus, "5th Battalion, The South Staffordshire Regiment; the undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants. Dated 26th August 1914: — John Barnabas Hutton (among others)". He was drafted to France on March 2nd, 1915, and was promoted to Lieutenant in May 1915.

On Wednesday October 13th, 1915, his battalion attacked the Hohenzollern Redoubt as part of the Battle of Loos. According to the Great War Forum, "The attack commenced at 2pm and almost immediately numerous casualties fell to the emplaced German machine guns. The battalion took their first objectives and attempted to make further advances by the use of grenades. Although small gains were made, the troops had to abandon these the following day. Only the western face of the redoubt was captured³⁴.

John Barnabas Hutton was killed in action on October 13th, 1915, during the above attack. He was 24 years old. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial at Dud Corner Cemetery, France, Panel 73 to 76. He is also commemorated on the war memorials at the Church of All Saints, Belwell Lane, Four Oaks, All Saints Parish Church, Streetly, Foley Road East, King Edward's Square, Sutton Coldfield, on a plaque at Pleck Road Walsall, the site of the former Cyclops Ironworks and on a plaque in St. Matthews Church, Walsall. The Walsall Observer, which printed his photograph shortly after his death, ran the headline "Territorials lost in Gallant Charge". His was one of forty-two photographs of local men killed in the same action.

His next of kin given on his medal roll was his father, AW Hutton living in "Roxidie", Hartopp Road, Four Oaks. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

³² <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/155995-cyclops-works-memorial/>

³³ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/33222-birmingham-university-officer-training-corps/#comment-268476>

³⁴ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/313909-sb-36-d-for-frederick-fletcher/#findComment-3340261>

5th Ba. S. Staff. R.—Sec. Lieut. J. B. Hutton to be lieutenant (May 16). Pte. J. P. Thorne to be second

Clipping from Birmingham Daily Post June 24th, 1915 (British Newspaper Archive)

HUTTON, JOHN BARNABAS, Lieut., 1/5th Battn. South Staffordshire Regt. (T.F.), 3rd s. of Arthur William Hutton, of Wayside, Streetly, Birmingham, Manager for John Russell & Co., Ltd., Engineers, Walsall, by his wife, Alice Mary, dau. of John Hunt, of Thursfield; b. Walsall, 11 June, 1891; educ. Northaw Preparatory School; Malvern College, and Birmingham University (where he was in the O.T.C., and took his B.Sc. degree in 1912), and, on leaving college, was employed with John Russell & Co., Ltd., as Assistant Engineer, during which time he showed exceptional ability, both technically and in the handling of men; volunteered on the outbreak of war; was gazetted 2nd Lieut. 5th South Staffordshire Regt. 26 Aug. 1914, and promoted Lieut. May, 1915; went to France in March, 1915, and was killed in action during an attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt 13 Oct. following. His Colonel wrote: "He was one of the most promising officers in the battalion, and his name would shortly have been sent forward for promotion to Captain. If there was any responsible work which required careful attention, I could always depend upon his doing it thoroughly, and I had the greatest confidence in him. His quiet, modest demeanour was an additional claim on the regard which we all had for him, and I can assure you that all his surviving comrades feel his death as a keen personal loss. . . . Of all the subalterns I lost on 13 Oct. your son was the one I could spare least. Universally popular, full of promise, and with a quiet reserve of strength, he will long live in our memories." *Unm.*

Extract from De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1918 (Find My Past)



LIEUTENANT J. B. HUTTON,
(Local Territorials.)
Wayside, Streetly.

Image from aforementioned page entitled "Territorials lost in Gallant Charge" from the Walsall Observer, October 23rd, 1915 (British Newspaper Archive)

The casualties so far notified amongst the officers of the 5th South Staffords are as follows:—

Captain L. Cozens (killed).
Captain W. Millner (killed).
Lieutenant J. B. Hutton (killed).
Major J. Lees (wounded).
Lieutenant N. M. Bates (wounded).
Lieutenant H. J. Wheway (wounded).
Lieutenant W. E. Wrigat (wounded).

Lieutenant J. B. Hutton, who was killed on the 13th inst., was the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Hutton, of "Wayside," Streetly, Sutton Coldfield. Aged twenty-four years, he obtained his commission in August of last year, and was promoted in May last.

From a column entitled "Losses of Staffordshire Regiments", Birmingham Daily Post, October 22nd, 1915 (British Newspaper Archive)

An official notice has been received that Lieutenant J. Hutton, of Streetly, near Walsall, who belongs to the 1/5 South Staffordshire Regiment (T.F.), was killed in action on 13 October. Lieut. Hutton was a son of Mr. A. W. Hutton, managing director of the Alma Tube Works, Walsall, and the first report received was that he had been wounded.

Clipping from the Evening Dispatch, October 21st, 1915 (British Newspaper Archive)

SUTTON OFFICER'S DEATH.

Lieutenant J. B. Hutton, 5th South Staffordshire Regiment, who was killed in action in France on October 13, was the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Hutton, of Wayside, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, and was 24 years old.

Extract from the Birmingham Daily Mail, October 21st, 1915 (British Newspaper Archive)



Lieutenant John Barnabas Hutton³⁵



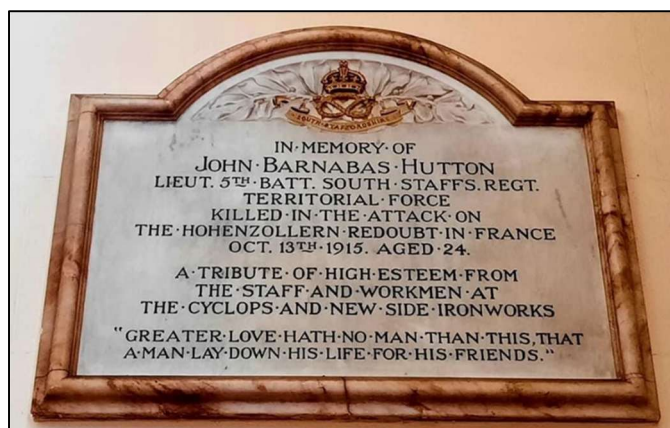
Image of panel from the Loos Memorial featuring the name of Lieutenant John Barnabas Hutton³⁶



Memorial plaque on the site of the Cyclops Ironworks, Pleck Road Walsall, opposite Walsall Manor Hospital. In 2002, this plaque was replaced by that shown to the right as this earlier stone memorial had deteriorated over time.³⁷



Memorial plaque on the site of the Cyclops Ironworks, Pleck Road Walsall, opposite Walsall Manor Hospital. In 2002, this plaque replaced the earlier stone memorial shown on the left (from the same webpage as image to the left)



Memorial in St Matthews Church, Walsall (from same webpage as image from Loos Memorial above)

³⁵ <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/2032076>

³⁶ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15347862/john-barnabas-hutton>

³⁷ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/155995-cyclops-works-memorial/>

74999 Private William Kingzett 20th Company Royal Army Medical Corps

William Kingzett was born in 1878 in Kings Heath, Birmingham, to Charles and Mary Ann Kingzett. His father was a Domestic Gardener.

In 1881, William was 2 years old and living with his family at Clifton Cottage, High Street, Sutton Coldfield. This property was adjacent to the Royal Hotel.

By 1891, William was a scholar aged 12 and living with his family in a cottage in Mere Green. It was probably on Lichfield Road close to the Fordrough.

The 1901 census records William as a boarder living at 37 Coles Lane, Sutton Coldfield. He was 22 years old and worked as a House Painter. Later that year he married 26-year-old Alice Mary Nicholls at St Peters Church, Little Aston. They had a son named Arthur Sydney on March 3rd, 1902, and a daughter, Olive Mary on August 5th, 1906. Olive was baptized on September 1st, 1906, at St James Church, Hill. William was recorded as being a Painter living at Crown Lane. The couple had another son named Stanley William in 1909 who sadly died in infancy the same year.³⁸

Electoral rolls record William living at Mere Green between 1903 to 1905 and at 1 Crown Lane, Four Oaks from 1906 to 1909.

By the time of the 1911 census, William was living with his wife and two children on Walsall Road, Hill Hook, Little Aston. He was 32 years old and a House Painter. The census records that both their children had been born in Sutton Coldfield and confirms that Mary given birth to another child that had since died.

Little can be ascertained about his military service. It appears that he enlisted in Birmingham and served with the 20th Company Royal Army Medical Corps which was a training unit based at Tidworth, Wiltshire.³⁹

Private William Kingzett died aged 38 on December 30th, 1916, at Fargo Military Hospital in Wiltshire. The given cause of death was "Cellulitis after vaccination on active service" and septicaemia. He was buried in the graveyard at St. Peter's Church, Little Aston on January 5th, 1917.

According to the Great War Forum, 20th Company RAMC "provided the personnel for 7th Field Ambulance and No.2 Stationary Hospital, both of which served in France and Belgium". It appears that William didn't serve in a theatre of war as there is no record of any medal entitlement for him. Presumably the vaccination which led to his death was given in advance of him serving overseas.

William left his effects to his widow. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the "Husband of Alice Mary Kingzett, of 7, Forge Lane, Little Aston, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham". Alice and her two children were living at the same address at the time of the 1921 census.

³⁸ https://www.stpeterslittleaston.co.uk/files/ugd/c29696_f0b98ad234a3402b97b01ce161312481.pdf

³⁹ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/285654-20th-company-ramc/#comment-3391901>



Grave of Private William Kingzett. The inscription reads, "Sacred to the memory of Pte. W. Kingzett, R.A.M.C who died at Fargo Military Hospital Salisbury Plan, Dec 30th, 1916, Peace, Prefect Peace."⁴⁰

⁴⁰ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/180548566/william-kingzett>

11870 Private Edward Kyte 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment

Edward Kyte was born Edwin Kite on February 2nd, 1890, in Great Barr, Staffordshire, the eldest child of William Thomas and Elizabeth Kite. His father was a farm labourer. It is unclear how or why his name was changed, perhaps a combination of spelling or transcription errors on census records and plus poor literacy which was prevalent at the time.

He was recorded as Edward Kite on the 1891 census. He was 1 year old and living with his parents. Their address is given on the census as Aldridge Road (Days Lane), Great Barr. By 1901, he was 11 years old living with his family at The Bourne, Great Barr. It appears his mother died aged 38 in 1903 at home on Chester Road, Great Barr. Edwards father, William, remarried in 1905.⁴¹

Edward became a regular soldier in the army. He enlisted into the Worcestershire Regiment in Birmingham on July 15th, 1909. He had previously been working as a Labourer. At the time of the 1911 census, he was aged 20, single and stationed with the Worcestershire Regiment at Albany Barracks on the Isle of Wight. His name was recorded on the census as Private Edward Kyte.

On the outbreak of war in August 1914, the 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment were stationed at Aldershot and were part of 5th Brigade in 2nd Division. They proceeded with the British Expeditionary Force and landed at Boulogne in France on August 14th, 1914.⁴² They saw action in The Battle of Mons in late August 1914 and the subsequent retreat, and in September 1914, The Battle of the Marne and The Battle of the Aisne and the First Battle of Ypres.⁴³

It appears that that Edward was wounded during the latter action near Wallemglen. His medical records indicate that he was originally treated at the No 3 Casualty Clearing Station with a GSW (gunshot wound) to the hip. It should be noted that GSW was used to describe any penetrating wound, there was no distinction as to the object which caused the wound which could have been shrapnel. Edward was subsequently moved to the Military Hospital at Millbank, London, on October 26th, 1914. He was mistakenly recorded as 22 years old; he was actually aged 24. He was recorded as being Church of England and a member of D Company, 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment.

Private Edward Kyte died of his wounds at the Queen Alexandra Military Hospital, Millbank, Westminster in London at 7:15 am on October 30th, 1914. The death certificate records the cause of death as "(i) Gunshot wound of pelvis (7 days) (ii) Secondary haemorrhage (1 day)".⁴⁴

The above information indicates he died seven or eight days after being wounded.⁴⁵ Reference to the entries in the battalion war diary around a week before Edward's death

⁴¹ https://www.stpeterslittleaston.co.uk/files/ugd/c29696_f0b98ad234a3402b97b01ce161312481.pdf

⁴² <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/the-british-infantry-regiments-of-1914-1918/worcestershire-regiment/>

⁴³ <https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/battalion.php?pid=5013>

⁴⁴ https://www.stpeterslittleaston.co.uk/files/ugd/c29696_f0b98ad234a3402b97b01ce161312481.pdf

⁴⁵ <https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/318717-help-interpreting-medical-record-needed-11870-private-edward-kyte-2nd-battalion-worcestershire-regiment/#comment-3403349>

reveals that from the 21st to the 24th October 1914, the battalion was involved in heavy and costly fighting.⁴⁶

The war diary entry for October 21st, 1914, states, "Advanced at 5am in an easterly direction towards Wallemglen, the 4th Guards Brigade on our right and the 1st Division on the left. Held up by a strong force of Germans. Heavy fighting during the whole day and night. Casualties;- Killed 2 officers and 16 men. Wounded 39 men. Missing 3 men" and "Dug in hard during the night". More were killed and wounded on the 22nd and 23rd with the war diary entry for the 22nd reading, "Furious bombardment all day. Several attacks on different parts of the line both by day and all through the night. A very trying ordeal indeed for all concerned. Suffered a few more casualties". The 23rd of October was described thus, "Furious bombardment continued all through the day. Rifle fire continuous. A most trying day for all. Heavy attack on the left by night which was driven off. Relieved at about midnight by French troops. Very difficult to carry out the relief under shrapnel and rifle fire. Several killed and wounded. A most trying night for all."

A letter from Major Stacke, who later wrote the Regimental History, refers specifically to the 2nd Worcestershire's casualties on October 24th, 1914, as being "easily the heaviest casualties for any single other day in the Ypres 1914 fighting". The battalion tried to advance the next day, were withdrawn on 26th and were in reserve to the advance from October 28th to 30th. In the short space of a week, the 2nd Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment lost around 100 men killed plus many more injured.⁴⁷

Edward was buried at St Peters Churchyard, Little Aston, Plot 206 on November 12th, 1914. His grave registration details on The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website list him as the brother of Ethel Kyte of The Homestead, Streetly Lane Sutton Coldfield. His Commonwealth gravestone is buried within the boundary of his mother Elizabeth's grave in the churchyard.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His estate was left to several of his family members.



Gravestone of Private Edward Kyte⁴⁸

⁴⁶ <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C7351976>

⁴⁷ <https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/11568494.worcestershire-regiments-war-diary-for-one-of-the-most-significant-days-of-the-first-world-war/>

⁴⁸ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/180537923/edward-kyte>

10523 Private George Lucas
1st/6th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment

George Lucas was born in early 1888 in Aldridge, Staffordshire to William Henry and Rose Lucas. He was baptised on January 9th, 1888, at St Mary the Virgin Church, Aldridge, Staffordshire. William's occupation was Labourer. Their address is difficult to decipher but appears to read "Bourne Villas" a location presumably in Aldridge.

In 1891, he was 3 years old and living with family on Long Lane (now Clarence Road), Hill Hook. In 1901 and then aged 13, he was living with family in a Cottage on Clarence Road, Four Oaks. He was working as a Telegraph Messenger.

By 1911 he was 23 years old, single and working as a Domestic Gardener. He was living with his family at Laburnum Cottage, Clarence Road, Four Oaks. He married 24-year-old Kitty Bartram in June 1911 at Little Aston. Prior to their marriage, Kitty had been employed as a live-in domestic servant at a large house on Middleton Road, Streetly.

According to the Sutton Coldfield News dated November 24th, 1917, George enlisted on January 11th, 1915. At that time, he lived at "Station Cottages", Blake Street, Sutton Coldfield, and was employed at Little Aston Golf Links as a gardener. He entered France on May 19th, 1915. He was in hospital in England during December 1916 with trench feet and hands. Trench foot was a major problem in the trenches of the Western Front. It was a condition which caused the foot to swell up and begin to decay. It was generally caused by exposure to damp and cold conditions and where blood circulation was restricted.

George Lucas returned to the front June 1917 and was killed in action on August 27th, 1917, near Ypres in Belgium. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium, Panel 23 to 28. Official records state that he was 27 years old when he died but the information above indicates this was an error and he was actually aged 29. He is also commemorated on the war memorials at King Edward's Square, Sutton Coldfield and the Church of All Saints, Belwell Lane, Four Oaks.

On August 26th, 1917, his battalion had relieved the 5th and 7th RWR who had been taking part in heavy fighting against enemy strongpoints around St Julien near Ypres. Conditions were appalling, heavy rain and shelling had turned the ground into a mass of flooded shell holes and mud. On the afternoon of August 27th, the 6th and 8th RWR renewed the attack. The attack on Winnipeg Farm by the 6th RWR was recorded in the battalion war diary thus, "Advance impossible due to state of ground and fire from MG's and snipers in concrete emplacements". The battalion suffered 3 officers killed, 3 wounded, 25 OR killed, 120 wounded and 14 missing.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal. His war gratuity was left to his widow Kitty and her daughter who was born in 1906.



Image of panel from the Tyne Cot Memorial featuring the name of Private George Lucas⁴⁹

⁴⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11950950/george-lucas#view-photo=64732160>

202821 Sergeant Alfred Newbold
1st/5th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own)

Alfred Newbold was born in Little Aston in 1882 to Thomas and Jane Newbold. His father was an Agricultural Labourer.

The 1891 census recorded Alfred living with his family in Little Aston, two doors from the St Peters Church vicarage. Alfred was 8 years old and a scholar.

In 1901, Alfred was aged 18 and working as a Domestic Gardener. He was living with his family at Sandy Lane, Mill Green, Aldridge. He was still living at Mill Green at the time of the 1911 census but by that time, it was only he and his parents at the address. He was then 28 and working in the same role as 1901.

It was difficult to ascertain much about his army service. His medal index card records that he was originally a Corporal with the regimental number 5923 serving with the 1st/5th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment. He was later given the number 202821 when the Territorial Force was renumbered in 1917 and at some point, he was promoted to Sergeant. Alfred was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal indicating he didn't go overseas until sometime after 1915.⁵⁰

On November 27th, 1918, Alfred married Florence Hayfield at St. Mary & All Saints' Church in Palfrey, Walsall. In 1911, Florence had been 27 years old and living and working as a Domestic servant as a house in Streetly.

Sergeant Alfred Newbold died on November 27th, 1920. The cause of death given on his pension record is Malignant Endocarditis, an infection of the inner lining of the heart. It's most commonly caused by bacteria entering the blood and travelling to the heart. It is unclear if he was still serving in the army when he died or if he had been demobilised.

Alfred was buried at St Peters Churchyard, Little Aston, Plot 265. It seems that his name does not appear on the St Peters Church war memorial, as he died after the armistice. His grave does not have the usual Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone, featuring instead a more typical private memorial of the time⁵¹. However, the fact that his wife received a military pension and that his grave is recorded on the CWGC indicates that his illness and death were considered to be attributed to his military service.

His widow Florence was listed as living at 211 Belgrave Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham on his pension record. By 1921, Florence was living with her sister and her family at Sandyway Farm, near Lichfield. She was recorded as being 37 years old and a widow.

⁵⁰ [https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/search?docQuery=\(keywords:%27202821+Alfred+Newbold%27\)](https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/search?docQuery=(keywords:%27202821+Alfred+Newbold%27))

⁵¹ <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/396144/alfred-newbold/#&gid=1&pid=2>



Detail on grave of Alfred Newbold⁵²

NEWBOLD—HAYFIELD.—On the 27th inst., by special licence, at St. Mary and All Saints, Palfrey, Sergt. A. Newbold, 1/5 West Yorks, of Aldridge, to Florence Hayfield, of this town.

Walsall Observer, December 4th, 1920 (British Newspaper Archive)

NEWBOLD, Lcc. Serjt. Alfred, 202821. 1st/5th Bn. West Yorkshire Regt. Died of endocarditis 27th Nov., 1920. Age 37. Son of Thomas and Jane Newbold; husband of Florence Newbold, of 39, Cromwell Rd., Muswell Hill, London. Born at Little Aston. 265.

Commonwealth War Grave Registration⁵³

NEWBOLD.—On Nov. 27, 1920, Alfred, dearly loved husband of Florence Newbold, Mill Green, Aldridge, passed peacefully away. "To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."
NEWBOLD.—In loving memory of my dear brother-in-law, Fred, late of Mill Green, Aldridge, who passed away on Nov. 27, 1920.

We have lost, heaven hath gained
 One of the best, the world contained.

—Deeply mourned by Nance and Jack.

NEWBOLD.—In loving memory of my dear Uncle Fred, of Mill Green, Aldridge, who passed away on Nov. 27, 1920. "To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."—Sadly missed by his niece May and Bert.

NEWBOLD.—In loving memory of our dear friend, Alfred (Fred), who passed away on Nov. 27, 1920.—Fondly remembered by Roland and Les.

Walsall Observer, December 4th, 1920 (British Newspaper Archive)

NEWBOLD.—In loving memory of Alfred (Fred) who passed away Nov. 27, 1920.
 If Thou should'st call me to resign
 What I most prize, it ne'er was mine;
 I only yield Thee what is Thine
 Thy will be done.
 —In silence mourned by his loving Wife, Floss.

Walsall Observer, December 1st, 1923 (British Newspaper Archive)

NEWBOLD.—In loving memory of Alfred Newbold, who died Nov. 27, 1920.—Ever in the thoughts of his wife Flose.

Walsall Observer, November 29th, 1924 (British Newspaper Archive)

NEWBOLD.—In loving memory of Fred, who died Nov. 27, 1920.—Ever remembered by his wife Floss.

Walsall Observer, November 26th, 1927 (British Newspaper Archive)

⁵² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/180548613/alfred-newbold>

⁵³ <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/396144/alfred-newbold/#&gid=1&pid=1>

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<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> - Census, birth, marriage and military service records
<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/> - Contemporary newspaper articles about the servicemen
<https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/> - Details about the servicemen and where they are buried or commemorated
<https://www.findagrave.com/> - Details and images of the servicemen and where they are buried or commemorated including images of their gravestones and memorial panels
<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/> - Census, birth, marriage, and military service records
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/> - Details about officers promotions and commissions
<https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/> - Information on individual soldiers
<https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk> - Information on army units and their whereabouts during WW1. Advice on interpreting service records. Also details about campaign and bravery medals.
<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> - Battalion war diaries, soldiers medal cards and service records
<https://digital.nls.uk/british-military-lists/archive/102697258> - Monthly army lists
<https://www.royalsuttoncoldfieldgreatwarproject.co.uk/> – Information on the servicemen commemorated on both the Four Oaks and Sutton Coldfield war memorials from the Sutton Coldfield Great War Project
https://www.stpeterslittleaston.co.uk/files/ugd/c29696_f0b98ad234a3402b97b01ce161312481.pdf - Information on the men buried in the graveyard at St Peters Church, Little Aston
<https://astreetnearyou.org/#=undefined&lat=52.590029924854896&lon=-1.8446409702301028&zoom=17> – Information on deceased servicemen associated with the local area
<https://uk.forceswarrecords.com/> - Soldier information

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By God they can fight: A history of the 143rd Infantry Brigade, 1908-1995 by Peter Caddick-Adams. Published by 143rd (West Midlands) Brigade; (1995)

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- Thanks to Emily Brennan for the image of the plaque at St Peter's Church and for sourcing a copy of the booklet of existing research from 2018.

All information is provided in good faith but, on occasions errors may occur. Should this be the case, if new information can be verified, please supply it to the author and corrections will then be made.