

The Village in World War 2

Casualties of the War

As with World War 1 the outbreak of war in 1939 saw the call up of Reservists and men and women of the village volunteer for and later be conscripted into the armed forces. The village losses were thankfully less than in the Great War but equally as painful for their families and friends. All are remembered on the village war memorials.



Castle Hill War Memorial

P/JX 154052 Leading Telegraphist, John Maxwell Broad, Royal Navy

John Broad was a 19 year old Signaller aboard the Destroyer, HMS Belmont when she was sunk by U-Boat U-82 whilst on convoy escort duty out of Halifax Nova Scotia on 31st January 1942. U-82 was sunk the following February by depth charges from the Sloop HMS Rochester and the Corvette HMS Tamarisk, north of the Azores. John Broad has no known grave but is remembered on the village memorials and on the Portsmouth Royal Navy Memorial.



John Maxwell Broad



HMS Belmont

5891800 Private, Gordon Wilfred Davis, 1st Battalion Duke of Wellington's Regiment

Gordon Davis was a 20 year old infantryman was killed in action at Djebel Bou Aoukaz, Tunisia on 6th May 1943. In this action his Battalion successfully fought to control the ridge that dominated the road to Tunis. The capture of the ridge allowed the final assault on Tunis that led to the surrender of Axis Forces in North Africa. He is buried at Massicault CWGC War Cemetery, Tunisia.



Massicault CWGC War Cemetery, Tunisia

4860293 Private, James Arthur Dodge, 2/5th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment

James Arthur Dodge was a 21 year old Territorial Army infantryman killed in action on 29th May 1940. 2/5th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment had been mobilised in 1939 and sent to France in 1940 as part of 139 Infantry Brigade. At the time of his death the Battalion was retreating toward Dunkirk in the face of the German blitzkrieg.

He is buried at Nieuwkerke Churchyard, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium



James Arthur Dodge

**147958 Flying Officer Geoffrey William Lewis, 139 (Jamaica) Squadron, Royal Air Force
(Volunteer Reserve)**

Aged 23 Geoffrey Lewis was the Pilot of Mosquito XX KB161 XD-H, part of RAF Bomber Command's Pathfinder Force. He was killed in the early hours of 11th May 1944 as his aircraft was returning to RAF Upwood in Huntingdonshire from a mission over Ludwigshafen in Germany. A flare that had failed to release during the raid ignited, setting fire to his aircraft. His Navigator managed to bail out and survived. Geoffrey Lewis is buried at St Mathew's Churchyard, Overseal, Derbyshire.



Geoffrey Lewis



De Havilland Mosquito B.XX of 139 (Jamaica) Squadron RAF

14579147 Craftsman, Albert Thompson Lovett, Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers

Died 28th April 1947 aged 23. He is buried at Mountsorrel Cemetery

No further details have been found but it is presumed that he died of wounds or illness suffered through war service. Unusually he has both a family gravestone and one from CWGC.



Albert Thompson Lovett - Gravestones

7909536 Trooper Richard Norman Lovett, 4th Queens Own Hussars

Trooper Richard Norman Lovett, known as Norman was killed in action 26th/27th April 1941 aged 25, following the German bombing and airborne assault on the Corinth Canal in Greece. In the face of overwhelming enemy force the decision was made to evacuate by sea as many troops as possible who had not already been captured. There were chaotic conditions at the evacuation port and beach area of Naplion as warships and transport ships took on troops to escape the turmoil. The Dutch Troopship *Slamat* carrying at least 500 British troops was bombed as she left the scene and the orders given to abandon ship. The destroyers, HMS Diamond and HMS Wryneck came alongside to try and rescue as many as possible and both were then in turn bombed by Junkers-88 and Stuka dive bombers. Both ships were lost with almost all hands. Over 1000 men died in the loss of these three vessels. Trooper Norman Lovett is believed to have been aboard HMS Wryneck when she was lost.

He has no known grave but is remembered on the village memorials and at the CWGC Athens Memorial, Greece.



Athens Memorial

2627548 Guardsman, Harry Arthur Edward Markham, 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards

Guardsman Harry Markham was wounded in action whilst serving with 2nd (Armoured) Battalion Grenadier Guards, part of the 5th Guards Armoured Brigade of the Guards Armoured Division. The Division landed in Normandy in late June 1944 and fought across France and the Low Countries being involved in the Battle for Caen, Operation Goodwood, Operation Market Garden, the Battle of the Bulge and Operation Veritable. It was during this last, which was the main assault into Germany, that it is believed that Guardsman Harry Markham was wounded in action. He died of his wounds on 19th January 1947 and is buried at the Munster Heath CWGC Cemetery, Germany.



Munster Heath CWGC War Cemetery

4861163 Corporal William Elliott Marks, 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment

Corporal William Marks served with 1st Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment during its advance across Europe after landing in Normandy on 3 July 1944. Formerly the 8th Battalion his unit was re-designated 1st Battalion following the destruction of the original 1st Battalion during fighting in Malaya against the Japanese in 1941. Part of 147th Brigade of the 49th Division his Battalion took part in the fighting in the Normandy bridgehead and the advance to the Seine and took part in the capture of Le Havre. From there it fought its way against the retreating Germans through Belgium and Holland. It was during these latter operations near Nijmegen that Corporal Marks was killed in action on 22nd December 1944 aged 27. He is buried at the CWGC Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany



CWGC Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany

P/JX 312417 Able Seaman, Archibald Arthur Newby, Royal Navy - HMS President III

Administered through HMS President III, Able Seaman Newby served as a member of the Royal Navy gun crew aboard the defensively armed merchantman ss Fort Poplar. Aged 34 he died of wounds suffered during logistics operations in support of Operation Husky, the Sicily landings, on 18th August 1943. He was buried at sea and is remembered on village memorials and at the Portsmouth Royal Navy Memorial.



Royal Navy Memorial, Portsmouth

4858381 Lance Corporal, Cyril Pope, 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment

Lance Corporal Pope served as an infantryman with 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment. Having fought with the Battalion as it advanced across Europe following landing in Normandy he was killed in action on 23rd August 1944, aged 24, at the crossing of the River Toques during the breakout from the Falaise Gap. He is buried at the CWGC St Desir War Cemetery, France



CWGC St Desir War Cemetery, France

14591203, Rifleman, Albert W R Shakespeare, 1st Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles

Formerly from Coventry, Albert Shakespeare was an aircraft construction inspector, who had moved to Mountsorrel after the blitz of that city in 1940. He served with the Royal Ulster Rifles and was killed in action, aged 34, on 7th June 1944 following his battalion's glider-borne assault on Ranville during the Normandy Landings. He is buried at the CWGC Bayeaux War Cemetery.



6 Jun 1944 - Riflemen of 1st Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles, 6th Airlanding Brigade, with their Horsa glider in the background

4860839 Private, Frank Sibson, 7th Battalion Green Howards

Having fought across North Africa, Frank Sibson's battalion was part of the invasion force that assaulted Sicily in Operation Husky commencing on the night of 9/10 July 1943. By mid August the German garrison was evacuating to mainland Italy when, on 15th Frank Sibson was killed in action aged 23. He is buried at the CWGC Catania War Cemetery, Sicily, Italy.



CWGC Catania War Cemetery, Sicily, Italy

7909339 Trooper, Douglas Snow, 50th Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment

50th Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment was part of 23rd Armoured Brigade holding the eastern end of the German's defensive Gustav Line in Italy to prevent their reinforcements being sent against the Allied assault at Monte Cassino to the west. Trooper Snow was wounded in action and died of his wounds, aged 28, on 20th May 1944. He is buried at the CWGC Sangro River War Cemetery, Italy.



Douglas Snow



Sherman Tank of 50th Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment

Italy 1944

1003785 Corporal, Maurice Spence, Royal Air Force (Volunteer Reserve)

Maurice Spence joined the RAF on 10th June 1940 aged 21 and by 1942 was serving at the isolated Toungoo airfield in south central Burma as a Corporal Clerk. The airfield and town sits astride the main Rangoon to Mandalay road along which the Japanese were advancing after capturing Rangoon on 8th March. The Japanese objective was to attack the Chinese Nationalist Armies in the rear through Yunnan Province. A subsidiary objective was to destroy the small British force in the area or push it back into India. RAF Station Toungoo had been in use by 67 Squadron RAF equipped with Hawker Hurricane IIB aircraft to defend Rangoon but with the fall of the city the aircraft were redeployed leaving a small RAF and Army force to defend the airfield.

At 07:00 on 24th March the Japanese assaulted the airfield with mortar and MG fire. At 08:45 the evacuation was ordered as Japanese forces overran the airfield. Whilst some men got away north towards Mandalay by truck Cpl Spence was not with them. He was posted missing believed killed in action. He has no known grave but is remembered on village memorials and at the CWGC Singapore War Memorial.



Maurice Spence



CWGC Singapore Memorial

1524435 Aircraftman 1st Class, Norman Robert Taylor, Royal Air Force (Volunteer Reserve)

Norman Taylor was serving with Air Ministry Experimental Station 8003, an experimental radar unit based in Malta in 1943. He is believed to have been killed in action on 30th September 1943, aged 22, whilst flying in support of operations in Italy. He has no known grave but is remembered on village memorials and at the CWGC Malta memorial.



CWGC Malta Memorial

7634952 Private, Albert Thornett, Royal Army Ordnance Corps

Died of illness aged 37 on 30th October 1943. He is buried at Mountsorrel Cemetery



Albert Thornett

2375614 Corporal, Herbert Toone, 43rd (Wessex) Divisional Signals, Royal Corps of Signals

Killed in action on 11 September 1944 during the advance of 2nd Army towards Antwerp following the crossing of the River Seine. He is buried at the CWGC St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen,



CWGC St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen

1231534 Sergeant, Louis Edward Walters, 57 Squadron Royal Air Force (Volunteer Reserve)

A 21 year old Wireless Operator/Air Gunner, aboard a Lancaster bomber of 57 Squadron based at RAF Scampton. He was killed in action when his aircraft was shot down over Hamburg on 30th July 1943. He is buried at the CWGC Hamburg Cemetery. He was named in memory of his uncle Louis Henry Walters, who was killed in action in Mesopotamia serving with 2nd Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment during World War 1.



Louis Walters



CWGC Cemetery Hamburg

1777916 Gunner, Harold Whittington, 2/1st Maritime Regiment, Royal Artillery

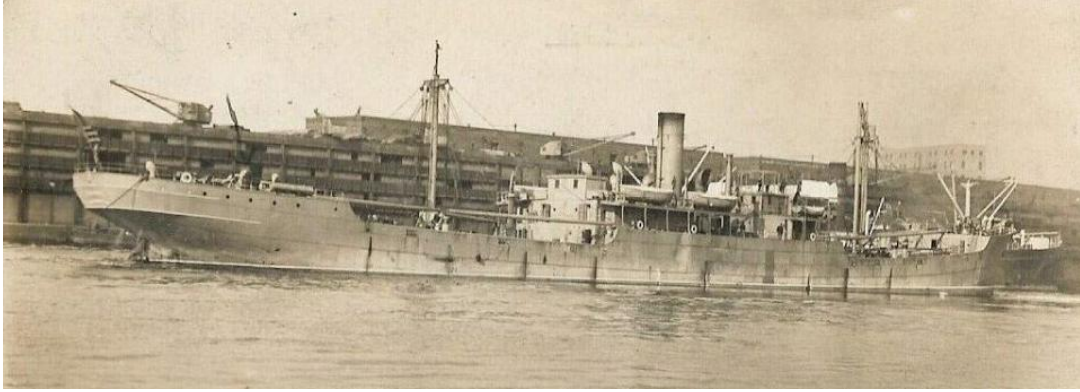
A member of the Royal Artillery Gun Crew aboard the defensively armed merchant ship ss Teesbank. He was killed in action 5th December 1942 when she was sunk by U-boat U-128 off the north east coast of Brazil. U-128 was sunk the following May off the north east coast of Brazil by depth charges dropped by US Navy Mariner aircraft and gunfire from US Navy Destroyers USS Moffett and Jouett. He has no known grave but is remembered on village memorials and at the Portsmouth Royal Navy Memorial



ss Teesbank

1807726 Gunner, Cyril Wykes, 4/2nd Maritime Regiment Royal Artillery

A member of the Royal Artillery Gun Crew aboard the defensively armed merchant ship ss Empire Dabchick, Killed in action, aged 21, when she was sunk by U-boat U-183 off Nova Scotia on 3rd December 1942. U-183 was sunk in April 1945 by torpedoes fired by the US Navy Submarine, USS Besugo. He has no known grave but is remembered on village memorials and at the Portsmouth Royal Navy Memorial. ss Empire Dabchick was originally built in 1919 as the ss Kisnop and was transferred to the UK Ministry of War Transport in 1940 as part of the Lend Lease Scheme.



ss Kisnop (later the ss Empire Dabchick) in Manchester docks 1930s