

# Chesterfield Grammar School

## Roll of Honour

1939–1945



Philip Riden

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MERTON

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## CONTENTS

Foreword <i>by Frank Gorman</i>	4
Preface	5
Introduction	9
Chesterfield Grammar School pupils who died in the Second World War	15
Sources cited	19
Roll of Honour	21
Index	82

## FOREWORD

THIS booklet has been commissioned by the Old Cestrefeldians' Trust, as part of its charitable remit to document all aspects of the history of Chesterfield Grammar School and its pupils. It has been made possible by the efforts of a former pupil, Philip Riden, who has recently retired after a 44-year career as a university teacher of history and offered to take on the task when the idea was first mooted. In contrast to our previous booklet on the casualties of the First World War, we have not been able to include photographs of the fallen, as these are generally unavailable. However, we will again venerate their memories in our annual Remembrance Service at Sheffield Road, by kind permission of Chesterfield College, West Studios, to whom we are also grateful for the good care they take of our two Rolls of Honour, the memorial plaques on the wall opposite the headmaster's study, now known as the Memorial Corridor.

Frank Gorman  
Chairman  
Old Cestrefeldians' Trust  
September 2021

## PREFACE

THIS short study originated in the wish of the Old Cestrefeldians' Trust, a charity established to preserve records and artefacts connected with Chesterfield Grammar School, to make available information about the men whose names appear on a memorial to former pupils who died while serving in the Armed Forces during the Second World War. The trust had already produced a similar booklet on those named on the school's First World War memorial, and has in recent years had both memorials, and some other plaques, restored. They are displayed in the former school buildings on Sheffield Road, which now form the West Studios of Chesterfield College.

Prosopographical studies of men (and sometimes also women) commemorated on the war memorials found in almost every town and village in the United Kingdom have been popular projects for local historians and genealogists in recent years, since the main sources for tracing families in the twentieth century have become easily available online. So too have many Service records, while others are preserved by associations connected with particular Royal Navy ships, Army units or Royal Air Force squadrons. In addition, the digitisation of much of the provincial Press has made it far easier to discover details of those who died in both World Wars than was the case even ten years ago.

This booklet makes no claim to originality in approach. I have simply taken the names on the school's Second World War memorial, most of which also appear in a slightly discrepant list published in the school magazine in 1950, and sought to trace biographical details about each of them, using the main commercial genealogical websites (Ancestry and Find My Past), the British Newspaper Archive (principally for the *Derbyshire Times*, Chesterfield's weekly newspaper), and accessible sources for the history of the ship, unit or squadron in which the man served. I have perhaps concentrated more than some authors of similar studies on the social origins of the men, since this throws more light on what sort of boys attended the grammar school, mainly in the 1930s. I have also traced parents and widows, in a few cases almost to the present day, in the hope that readers may recognise relatives.

I have probably devoted less space than in some similar studies to



the details of how the men included here died. This is partly because less information of this sort seems to have been published in the local Press during the Second World War than the First World War, when censorship was less rigorous and paper less strictly rationed, but also because time has not allowed the use of unit diaries (in the National Archives) which might have provided such information.

It has proved impossible to identify a few men with common surnames, especially those omitted from the list in the school magazine, since the memorial gives only initials. Conversely, through searching the *Derbyshire Times* I have come across two former pupils who died on active service whose names do not appear on the memorial. I have also found four cases of men named on the memorial who either definitely or probably survived the war.

Chesterfield Grammar School in the pre-war period (and indeed before and after) mainly took boys from upper working-class and lower middle-class homes, together with a small number from wealthier business and professional families in the town. Few were well known beyond their own locality and so in most cases there are no published biographies or memoirs of those included here, none of whom reached sufficiently senior rank to appear in general accounts of the war. I am aware of only one privately produced memoir of a man commemorated on the memorial; two others are included in the autobiography of their younger brother who attended the school some years after the war and went on to fame as a professional footballer and sports commentator. Otherwise there is no secondary literature to draw on.

The main sources used, apart from the *Derbyshire Times*, are the National Register compiled in 1939 (The National Archives, series RG 101, digitised on Find My Past) and (mainly for the parents of those commemorated) the householder schedules of the 1911 Census (TNA, RG 14, available on Ancestry). I have also used some War Office records, and Board of Trade records of those entering or leaving the country. Some information has been obtained from the *The Cestrefeldian* (kindly searched on my behalf by Tom Roberts), although the school magazine published far less detail about former pupils serving in the Forces in 1939–45 than it did during the First World War.

As the Introduction explains, the largest single group among those commemorated were non-commissioned officers in the RAF. I am therefore extremely grateful to Paul Allonby of New Whittington, who has a specialist knowledge of RAF genealogy, for very generously

providing details of almost all those included here who served in the Air Force. This has added greatly to what I have been able to discover myself and in a couple of cases has saved me from mistaken identifications. As someone with no family links with the Armed Forces (my father was too young to serve in the Second World War and both my grandfathers were too old for active service in the First World War) and no specialist knowledge of military history, I am also grateful to Keith Reedman, a former chief petty officer RN, and Brigadier Max Kerley CBE (Retd) (the latter like me a former pupil of Chesterfield School), for checking the text to avoid errors in Royal Navy and Army terminology.

No exercise of this sort can ever be complete, or completely accurate. I should, therefore, be very pleased to hear from readers who recognise family members and can add to, or correct, the information given here. As the last living memories of the Second World War fade away, it is important that those who served in the Armed Forces, and in so many cases gave their lives, not just for King and Country, but also for the freedom and peace which later generations (notably my own, born in the first decade after the end of the war) have now enjoyed for more than seventy years, be properly remembered. This booklet is a small contribution to that end.

Philip Riden  
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September 2021

## INTRODUCTION

THE grammar school at Chesterfield was founded as a result of a benefaction by Sir Godfrey Foljambe of Walton, the head of the only major gentry family resident in the parish, in his will of 1585.<sup>1</sup> His son, also Godfrey Foljambe, failed to carry out his father's wishes before he died in 1595, when he renewed the gift in his own will. The burgesses of Chesterfield were at the time seeking a charter of incorporation from the Crown and when that was finally granted in 1598 a clause was included making the new corporation responsible for establishing and maintaining a grammar school, using the Foljambe family's endowment. The school may have admitted its first pupils in 1598, although firm evidence is lacking.

The school appears to have functioned successfully throughout the seventeenth century and in the first half of the eighteenth century achieved rather wider fame. A new schoolhouse was built in 1710, on the site of a gild chapel which the school had occupied until then. The school declined badly after 1800 and closed completely in 1832. It was revived following the reform of the town's charities in 1837, when a new body of trustees was appointed. In 1846 the governors built a new schoolhouse, still on the site of the chapel on Sheffield Road. The school gradually expanded and modernised its curriculum during the second half of the nineteenth century and secured recognition as a 'science school' under the Technical Instruction Act of 1889.

The school was recognised as a public secondary school under the Education Act of 1902 and from that date received grants from both the Board of Education and Derbyshire Education Committee. In 1926 it elected to go onto the Board's direct grant list and in the 1930s the head was a member of the Headmasters' Conference. By this period the school had almost 600 pupils, including a large sixth form, from which in most years several boys went to Oxford and Cambridge, and others to Sheffield or Manchester universities, University College, Nottingham, and other provincial colleges. A much larger number found their

<sup>1</sup> For the general history of the school, summarised here very briefly, see P. Riden, *A History of Chesterfield Grammar School* (2017).



way into local engineering and colliery companies as clerks, laboratory technicians and the like, or were articulated to solicitors, accountants or architects in Chesterfield. In 1939 about 90 per cent of the pupils had their fees paid by the local education authority and thus received a free secondary education, if they wished to the age of eighteen.

The school continued to be housed in what was universally recognised as very poor and badly overcrowded accommodation, extended piecemeal since the 1860s, on Sheffield Road, although in 1928 the governors had bought land for playing fields on Chatsworth Road, on the western edge of the built-up area. In the late 1930s a new headmaster suggested moving the entire school to Brookside. The governors and the county education committee supported the plan but the Board of Education would only give the necessary loan sanction if the school was transferred to the local authority. This the governors reluctantly agreed to and the transfer took effect in 1940. Thereafter Chesterfield School (as it was renamed in 1947) was the largest academic secondary school maintained by the Derbyshire Education Committee. The move to new buildings at Brookside was badly delayed by the war and its aftermath. Only in 1959 was a sixth-form science block opened there and the school as a whole moved in 1967. The school closed in 1991, when a scheme for the reorganisation of secondary education in Chesterfield was implemented after many years' bitter controversy.

\*

At the school's commemoration service in July 1939 masters and boys listened to the Provost of Derby, the Very Revd P.A. Micklem, declare in his sermon that 'there was much that was very good, much that we might learn from with advantage to ourselves' in Nazi Germany.<sup>1</sup> Most of the pupils who heard that extraordinarily ill-judged remark would later serve in the Armed Forces. About seventy lost their lives in the Second World War. The exact number is impossible to calculate. There were originally 68 names on the memorial and a slightly different list was printed in the May 1950 issue of *The Cestrefeldian*, which recorded the unveiling of the plaque by Air Marshal Sir Philip Wiggleworth, a pupil at the school in 1910-12. The list in the magazine has the advantage of giving Christian names in full, whereas only initials

<sup>1</sup> Riden, *Grammar School*, 357, quoting *Derb. Times*, 21 July 1939.

appear on the memorial. One further name was later added to the memorial<sup>2</sup> but at least two and possibly four of the men listed survived the war,<sup>3</sup> while two former pupils whose death was recorded in the *Derbyshire Times* were not included on the memorial.<sup>3</sup> There may have been others in the same position.

The figure of around 70 is less than the 83 names on the memorial to former pupils who died in the First World War. This illustrates the greater impact, in terms of the number of casualties, of the earlier conflict, and a similar contrast can be seen on almost every town and village war memorial. The contrast becomes much greater in the case of a school memorial if we remember that in 1914 Chesterfield Grammar School had about 200 pupils, whereas in 1939 it had nearly three times as many. In addition, the outbreak of war came quite unexpectedly in 1914; it was widely assumed that it would last only a few months; and there was no living memory of a general European war, since the previous one had ended a century earlier.

In 1939 almost everyone believed that war with Germany was coming; many of the staff at a school like Chesterfield, and many of the fathers of boys then at the school, had served in the First World War; and all the boys would have grown up in its shadow. What could not be foreseen in 1939 was that the war would last as long as six years and would involve major conflicts in North Africa and the Far East as well as Europe, which had not been the case in the First World War. The Second World War also had a much greater impact on the population as whole. Industry was placed on a war-footing from the start; young women served in the Armed Forces to a far greater extent than in 1914-18, or were directed into civilian jobs which they may not have wanted to do; everyone shared in the privations of rationing; and many towns and cities (although not Chesterfield to any great extent) suffered from air-raids. For all these reasons it is misleading to conclude that, because a smaller proportion of former pupils died on active service, the war of 1939-45 was less important in the history of the school than that of 1914-18. Among other problems, an already overcrowded set of

<sup>2</sup> That of J.D. Ashley, which is for this reason slightly out of alphabetical order at the beginning of the list.

<sup>3</sup> Those who definitely survived were K.J. Ball and G. Widdowson; those about whom there is some doubt are J.J. Carley and A. Towndrow.

<sup>3</sup> J.J. Robinson and J. Wagstaffe.



buildings had to accommodate two waves of evacuees.<sup>1</sup>

The table at the end of this Introduction, which summarises information set out in more detail in the body of the text, contains 71 names, for six of whom no definite information has been obtained. Two of the remaining 65 were civilians serving with the Armed Forces in the Far East and one joined the Australian Imperial Force. Of the other 62, six served in the Royal Navy, 22 in the Army and 34 in the Royal Air Force.

For most, but not all, of those included here it is possible to say where and how they died. Of the RAF contingent, it is not surprising to find that the largest group (ten) lost their lives on bombing missions over Germany (or in one case the Netherlands). Three died in coastal operations, two were shot down over France, two in the Mediterranean and one in the Middle East. Two died at the hands of the Japanese after the fall of Singapore. No fewer than nine of the fatalities occurred during training; one man died when his aircraft crashed on take-off and another in an accident on the ground. Two RAF men died in road accidents at home.

Of those who served in the Army, eight died in Italy, the Mediterranean or North Africa, five in North West Europe and four at the fall of Singapore or later as prisoners of the Japanese. Two men died in India, one in East Africa and one on bomb disposal duties in England. Two of those serving in the Royal Navy died in the Mediterranean, one in an action in the English Channel, one in the Indian Ocean and one in the Far East. The sixth man was in a troopship which was torpedoed off the coast of Scotland.

The wide range of places mentioned here emphasises the extent to which the conflict of 1939–45 was truly a World War, whereas the majority of former grammar school pupils who died in the First World War served in the Army in France or Belgium. The same contrast would no doubt be true of boys from any other public school or grammar school, or of those commemorated on town and village memorials.

There is another contrast in the list of those who died in the Second World War between men who served in the RAF and the Army. Half those who were in the Army were commissioned officers at the time of their death, including one lieutenant colonel (George Widdowson, Parachute Regiment), two majors, five captains and three lieutenants.

<sup>1</sup> For the school during the Second World War see Riden, *Grammar School*, 387–93.

Only three were NCOs and the remaining eight were privates (or an equivalent rank). Only three of the 22 were members of the local regiment, the Sherwood Foresters, and the rest were widely distributed among other units. Out of the much larger number who served in the RAF, only seven held commissioned rank when they died, all but one as either flying officer or pilot officer (i.e. the equivalent of lieutenant and second lieutenant); only J.D. Middleton had reached the rank of flight lieutenant. Nine were aircraftmen or leading aircraftmen, but no fewer than 26 held NCO rank, including two flight sergeants and 17 sergeants; the others were corporals. Of the small number of sailors, G.A. Carline was a lieutenant commander at the time of his death, two were petty officers, and three were ratings.

It is impossible to say whether this pattern holds good for all the former pupils of the school who served in the Armed Forces during the Second World War, although the sample is quite large. Even if it is not strictly representative, it is big enough to prompt some reflections on the Armed Forces during the war.

Chesterfield, like presumably virtually all boys' grammar schools, had an Officer Training Corps between the two World Wars, in which service was voluntary. It was attached to the Sherwood Foresters, one of whose junior officers made an annual inspection. Unlike the post-war Combined Cadet Force, which had both Army and RAF sections, there was no opportunity in the OTC for pre-Service air training, although an Air Training Corps squadron was established at the school during the war.

Nor did membership of the OTC guarantee commissioned rank when boys volunteered or were called up. On the other hand, the Army appears (from the evidence of the sample discussed here) to have been rather more willing to commission grammar school boys than the RAF (although none served in the more fashionable Guards or Cavalry regiments). Given the popular image at the time of the Army and the RAF, this is perhaps a counter-intuitive conclusion, especially when applied to former pupils of a school whose intake was overwhelmingly upper working class and lower middle class, with only a small leavening of boys from wealthier homes who might have assumed that they would serve from the start as officers. Instead, the RAF seems to have clung more firmly to the traditional view that public school boys were naturally suited to hold commissioned rank, grammar school boys made good NCOs, and boys who had got no further than elementary schools

got no further in the Armed Forces.

It has been possible to establish the social origins of a majority of those who died in the war. This exercise shows that they mirror very closely the background of the pupils as a whole in this period.<sup>1</sup> Some were sons of miners and a handful were from well-known Chesterfield business and professional families. Most fell in between: typically the sons of skilled or semi-skilled shopfloor workers in the heavy industries that then dominated the local economy, or clerks who worked for the same companies, for professional firms, or in local government.

Most of the boys lived in Chesterfield or in places nearby from where it was possible to get to the school (which gave up taking boarders before the First World War) by train. These included predominantly working-class communities like Bolsover and Shirebrook<sup>2</sup> but also Dore, a wealthy outer suburb of Sheffield, and Hathersage, by this period a commuter village in the Hope Valley. Both had prep schools from which a handful of boys chose to go to Chesterfield rather than King Edward VII in Sheffield.<sup>3</sup> Apart from the small number of grammar school entrants from its own preparatory department or local private schools, most boys had previously attended elementary schools in or near the borough.

The list of those who died in the war includes three who attended the grammar school for the early years of their secondary education but moved to public school sixth forms, either because of the greater social prestige of such schools or to enhance their chances of proceeding to Oxford or Cambridge. One was the son of the managing director of Robinson & Son Ltd, then one of Chesterfield's largest employers; the others were J.D. Middleton, the son of an accountant, and E.A.H. Jobs, whose father was chief engineer to the Bolsover Colliery Co.

Whatever their origins, wherever they served, and however they died, all those whose lives are outlined in the text that follows deserve to be remembered by later generations for the sacrifice they made in the battle to defeat the greatest evil faced by Western civilisation for perhaps a thousand years, and to preserve the freedom that those who come after them have enjoyed but must never take for granted.

<sup>1</sup> For which see Riden, *Grammar School*, chapter 7, esp. pp. 462–84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 473.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 450, 473.

## CHESTERFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL PUPILS WHO DIED IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

<i>Name</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Died</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Rank</i>
C.C. Adams	1922	1943	RAF	605 Sqn	Sgt
J. Adsetts	1917	1943	RAF	619 Sqn	Sgt
J.D. Ashley	1921	1943	RAF	23 Sqn	Sgt
R.A. Ashmore	1914	1942	RAF	19 OTU	Sgt
K.J. Ball	1915	Survived	Army	Royal Corps of Signals	Signalman
R.A. Ball	1921	1942	RAF	408 Sqn	Sgt
E.C. Barley	1921	1941	RAF		Cpl
C. Bethell	1910	1942	Army	Sherwood Foresters	Capt.
D.D. Beynon	1923	1944	Army	South Wales Borderers	Lt
T. Blackshaw	1915	1945	Army	Royal Engineers	Capt.
T.W. Booker	1920	1945	RAF	190 Sqn	Sgt
P.A. Botham	1921	1944	RAF		Cpl
G. Bradshaw	1923	1942	RAF	No. 10 Air Gunnery School	LAC
R. Brewin	1921	1944	Army	Royal Artillery	Lt
J.E. Burcher	1914	1942	RAF	83 Sqn	Sgt
J.J. Carley	1922	Survived?		Australian Imperial Force	Pte
G.A. Carline	1910	1941	RN	HMS <i>Audacity</i>	Lt Cdr



<i>Name</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Died</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Rank</i>
W.R. Clark	1911	1942	RAF	101 OTU	PO
R.G. Cooke	1913	1943	RAF	62 Sqn	AC 1
A. Cooper	1921?	1940	RAF		LAC
F.B. Cooper	1923	1943	RN	HMS <i>Charybdis</i>	L/Tel.
R. Cox	1908	1943	RAF	82 OTU	LAC
P.H. Dickens	1919	1943	Army	Royal Artillery	Bdr
R.R. Dickinson	1924		RAF	10 Radio School	
F. Dodson	1918	1943	Army	Parachute Regt (AAC)	Pte
A. Flint	1923	1944	Army	South Lancashire Regt	Pte
W.A. Foulstone	1922	1945	Army	West Yorkshire Regt	L/Cpl
A. Glossop	1921	1942	RAF		Sgt
J.E. Goddard	1916	1943	RAF	101 Sqn	Sgt
H. Goulden					
C.E. Gregory	1924	1945	RN	HMS <i>Khedive</i>	CPO
D. Haddock	1914	1942	RAF	408 (RCAF) Sqn	Sgt
C.H. Hall					
F.I.G. Hall	1917	1943		British Army Aid Group, Hong Kong	Civilian
J.A. Harrison	1921	1944	RAF	619 Sqn	Flt Sgt
W.K. Holmes	1918	1943	Army	Sherwood Foresters	Pte

<i>Name</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Died</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Rank</i>
K.G. Ire-monger	1911	1942	Army	Royal Engineers	Capt.
E.A.H. Jobes	1922	1944	Army	East Yorkshire Regt	L/Cpl
E.G. Kirkland	1921	1943	RAF	254 Sqn	Sgt
D.M. Laycock	1922	1944	Army	Durham Light Infantry	Lt
J.D. Middleton	1917	1940	RAF	201 Sqn	Flt Lt
D.L. Mothersole	1924	1945	RAF		PO
D.F. News-ham	1919	1942	RAF	5 Flying Training School	FO
G.S. Oldfield	1920	1941	RN	HMS <i>Goshawk</i>	Actg L/Airman
M. Parker	1918	1940	RAF		
R. Ramsay Smith		1940	RAF		LAC
G.C. Rawlinson	1925	1945	RN	HMS <i>Formidable</i>	A/PO
H.B. Ridgeway	1923	1944	Army	Suffolk Regt	Lt
J.J. Robinson	1921	1943	RAF	74 OTU	PO
C.H. Rudge	1920	1942	RAF	1 Ground Reconnaissance School	PO
T.A. Sharpe	1913	1944		Indian Civil Service	Civilian

<i>Name</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Died</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Rank</i>
G.H. Slack	1919	1941	RAF	240 Sqn	Sgt
L.H. Smith	1909?				
T.R. Smith	1913?	1943	Army	Royal Army Ordnance Corps	Pte
G.A. Stamp	1911	1940	RAF	228 Sqn	Sgt
A.T. Taylor					
F. Taylor	1923	1942	RAF		LAC
A. Town- drow	1919	Surv- ived?	RAF		Sgt
J.A. Turner	1915	1944	RAF	101 Sqn	FO
E.B. Tuxford	1905?	1943	Army	Rifle Brigade	Capt.
H.N. Unwin	1918	1941	RAF	44 Sqn	Sgt
J. Wagstaffe	1918	1943	Army		Sgt
S.H. Wether- ill	1921	1944	RN	Royal Naval Patrol Service	Tel.
C. Wharton	1922	1943	RAF	57 Sqn	Sgt
H. Wheeldon	1918	1943	Army	Royal Corps of Signals	Signal- man
G. Widdow- son	1911	Surv- ived	Army	Parachute Regt	Lt Col.
E.H. Wild	1922	1945	Army	Devonshire Regt	Capt.
J.P. Wilson	1922	1942	RAF	222 Sqn	Sgt
W.P. Wilson	1923	1943	RAF	7 Sqn	Sgt
F.K. Wnight	1917	1945	Army	Royal Army Service Corps	Maj.
W.G. Yeo- mans	1917	1944	Army	Sherwood For- esters	Maj.

## SOURCES CITED

All are available online, except where specifically stated otherwise. The following abbreviations have been used:

<b>Cal. Grants</b>	Calendar of Grants of Probate and Administration
<b>CWGC</b>	Commonwealth War Graves Commission records
<b>Derb. Times</b>	<i>Derbyshire Times</i>
<b>TNA</b>	The National Archives
<b>TNA, RG 14</b>	Householder schedules, 1911 Census
<b>TNA, RG 101</b>	National Register (1939)
<b>UNMASC</b>	University of Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections (not available online)

Because they are far less familiar to most people than was the case even a generation ago, I have avoided using (except to save space in the table above) common Service abbreviations for ranks or units, even though this may seem odd to readers who have served in the Forces.



ROLL OF HONOUR  
MCMXXXIX ... MCMXLV

IN PROUD ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND  
ENDURING REMEMBRANCE OF  
THOSE OLD BOYS OF THE SCHOOL  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE  
SECOND WORLD WAR

Let us therefore brace ourselves to our  
duties and so bear ourselves that if the  
British Empire and its Commonwealth  
lasts for a thousand years men will still  
say

THIS WAS THEIR FINEST HOUR  
Winston S. Churchill  
June 18th 1940

*The text on the central panel of the War Memorial.*

## ROLL OF HONOUR

**Charles Corringham Adams** was born in Chesterfield early in 1922. His parents, Caroline Priestley, then of Valley Road, Spital, the daughter of a farmer, the late William Corringham Priestley, and Thomas Adams, a colliery fireman of Birdholme, were married at Chesterfield parish church on 13 August 1906. In 1911 the couple were living at 14 Penmore Street, Hasland; both were 32 and had two young sons, Thomas Arthur and William Priestley. Thomas was then working as a colliery winder. Their youngest son Charles was born some years later, when his mother was about 43. His father died in Chesterfield in 1934. In 1939 Caroline was still at 14 Penmore Street with her daughter Dorothy, a shorthand typist; the other person at the same address whose entry in the National Register is closed is probably her son Charles.

Adams was employed in the borough treasurer's department of Chesterfield corporation until he joined the RAF as a volunteer in 1941. He received his wings in America in April 1942. Adams died on 21 May 1943 while serving as sergeant pilot in 605 Squadron RAF (Volunteer Reserve). On the day he was killed Adams took off from RAF Castle Camps (Camb.) with his navigator, Sergeant Eddie Wright, in a De Havilland Mosquito NF2 on an intruder mission to Evreux (Eure). Both were 21 and are buried in a joint grave at Grandcourt War Cemetery (Seine-Maritime).

The squadron in which Adams was serving when he was killed was formed in June 1942 as a night intruder squadron, attacking Luftwaffe airfields in France, for which it was initially equipped with Douglas Boston and Havoc aircraft. These were replaced from February 1943 with the Mk II De Havilland Mosquito. The squadron, part of No. 13 Group, Fighter Command, was stationed at RAF Castle Camps between March and October 1943. According to an internet history of the squadron, Adams and Wright were lost on only their second operational sortie.

Charles Adams's mother Caroline later moved to Middlesex and was living at 63 Queens Avenue, Hanworth, when she died on 17 March 1958, aged 79, leaving estate valued at £191. She was buried at St

Paul's, Hasland, on 22 March.

(CWGC; Find a Grave website; TNA, RG 14/21086, no. 95; RG 101/5900G/013/14; *Derb. Times*, 17 Dec. 1943; Cal. Grants, 1958; internet accounts of 605 Squadron, including 'We Never Slept: the story of 605 Squadron'.)

**John Adsetts** (known as Jack) was born on 11 November 1917, the son of John Henry Adsetts (1874–1945), who was a member of Bolsover urban district council and a well-known local figure. He kept the Angel public house in Bolsover and later lived at 6 Welbeck Road in the town. His mother was Annie (née Sutherland). Jack was also well known locally as a lightweight amateur boxer and was a member of the Bolsover Physical Training and Boxing Club. He had an elder brother, Frederick.

In 1939 Jack was an aero-engine fitter in the RAF. He was listed as a corporal in the school magazine in March 1940. Adsetts, then a sergeant in 619 Squadron RAF, died on 29 June 1943. 619 Squadron, part of No. 5 Group Bomber Command, was a heavy bomber squadron, which at the time of Adsetts's death was flying Lancasters from RAF Woodhall Spa (Lincs.). Another former pupil of the grammar school, J.A. Harrison (qv), died in November 1944 while serving in the same squadron. Adsetts's aircraft was shot down by a Luftwaffe night fighter at Aalst-Waalre, near Eindhoven in the Netherlands. All seven crew died and are buried at Eindhoven (Woesnel) General Cemetery. A year later the *Derbyshire Times* published notices marking the anniversary of the death of Flight Engineer Sergeant Jack Adsetts, 'a dear son and brother', killed in action over Cologne on the night of 29–30 June 1943, signed by 'Mother and Dad', 'Fred and Emmie', and 'Fred, Wendy and Emmie'. J.H. Adsetts's surviving son, Frederick Sutherland Adsetts, was a colliery statistician.

When J.H. Adsetts died in 1945 he left £27,105. When his son F.S. Adsetts, then of Rhodes End, Sutherland Farm, Oxcroft, Bolsover, died in 1988 his estate was valued at £236,384.

(TNA, RG 101/5889B/014/17; CWGC; *Cestrefeldian*, March 1940, 93; *Derb. Times*, 30 June 1944, 25 May 1945; Cal. Grants, 1945, 1988; internet accounts of 619 Squadron.)

**John Douglas Ashley** (known as Douglas) does not appear in the list in the *Cestrefeldian* of May 1950 but his name was added later to the memorial. He was born on 29 May 1921, the son of Thomas Ashley (b. 1896), a general labourer, and his wife Amy (b. 1897) of 18 Littlemoor, Newbold. He entered the grammar school in 1932 on a county minor scholarship from Newbold Church of England school. Douglas left school at 16 and went to work at the Sheepbridge Coal & Iron Company's chemical works. He attended evening classes at Sheffield University, cycling there after work. On one occasion he was trapped by bombing at the university overnight and was then unable to cycle home because of broken glass on the roads in the city. It was this experience which prompted Douglas to join up. He became a sergeant observer in 23 Squadron RAF (Volunteer Reserve) in the Middle East. The squadron was then flying the De Havilland Mosquito NF Mk II from RAF Luqa on Malta on intruder missions over Sicily, Italy and Tunisia. On 2 August 1943 Ashley's plane left Luqa for Italy but contact with it was lost over the Isole Lipari. The crew were reported missing, presumed dead. Ashley is commemorated on the Malta Memorial on Malta. His parents received a letter of condolence from J.S. Lightfoot, 14 Queensberry House, Friars Lane, Richmond (Surrey), whose daughter's husband was the pilot who died with Douglas.

(Inf. from a descendant, per Frank Gorman; CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5894A/006/21; *Derb. Times*, 25 June 1932; internet accounts of 23 Squadron.)

**Roy Alan Ashmore** was born on 1 May 1914, the son of Reuben Ashmore (1873–1936) and his wife Kate Elizabeth (1880–1956). The couple were married at Brimington parish church on 16 September 1903, when Reuben, aged 30, was a sergeant instructor in the Royal Artillery; he was the son of John Thomas Ashmore, a miner. Kate was 23, the daughter of Charles Bates, a foundryman. Reuben left the Army early in 1911, when he was on the district staff of the Royal Garrison Artillery, South Western Coast Defences. When the census was taken later that year he and his wife were living at 6 Alwyn Terrace, Shirburn Road, Torquay (Devon). Ashmore was working as a wagon driver for a Devonport firm of petroleum importers and dealers and described himself as an Army pensioner and former regimental quartermaster.



sergeant. They had a five-month-old son named Reuben.

At the time of his death, Roy was said to be his parents' eldest son, but may in fact have been their eldest surviving son. Similarly, Reuben was described as 'Captain Ashmore', which may have been an error by the *Derbyshire Times* or a case of his widow embellishing her late husband's Army career. Ashmore died in Chesterfield in 1936, aged 63. There was no grant of probate or administration. Kate was then living at 10 Cross Street, Chesterfield, and was said to be formerly of Brimington. In 1939 the household also included Kitty P. Ashmore (born on 11 December 1916), a clerk and shorthand typist with a building society, and Alwyn T. Ashmore (born on 9 September 1918), an insurance broker's clerk, who were presumably her unmarried children. Mrs Ashmore died in Chesterfield in 1956, aged 75, also intestate.

After leaving the grammar school Roy worked for the public assistance service in Chesterfield for seven years, before becoming relieving officer and registrar of birth, deaths and marriages at Diss (Norf.). In 1938 he married Mabel Wright (1913–87) at St Bartholomew, Clay Cross. Mabel's father was a master painter. The following year the couple were living at 25 Stanley Road, Diss.

After joining up Ashmore was initially attached to the Royal Army Service Corps but in 1940 was transferred to the RAF. He was reported missing on 8 July 1942, aged 28, while serving as a sergeant observer in the RAF. He was under training with 19 Operational Training Unit at RAF Kinloss. His aircraft, which took off with others to fly to Port Douglas on the Isle of Man and back on a night navigation training exercise, failed to return. Another crew saw a plane in flames crash into the Sound of Jura in a thunderstorm. This may have been Ashmore's. In December 1942 the *Derbyshire Times* reported that the previous month a trawler had picked up the wreckage of what was assumed to be his plane, together with his body and that of another member of the crew. The men were buried at sea the same day. This was not in fact Ashmore's plane, since remains of what was later determined to be his body (identified by a service number inside a boot and a partial serial number on his shirt) were found on Rathlin O'Brine Island on 29 November 1942 by two local residents. Ashmore was buried at St Thomas, Rathlin Island (co. Antrim), Church of Ireland burial ground; the other four crew members were commemorated as 'Missing' on the RAF Memorial at Runnymede.

Ashmore's wife Mabel was living with her parents, Arthur and Mary Wright, at 72 Thanet Street, Clay Cross, at the time of his death, and working at the Chesterfield branch of the Yorkshire Penny Bank. In 1944 she inserted an In Memoriam notice in the *Derbyshire Times* from 'Mabs and Pat' to a 'dearly loved husband and daddy'. Their daughter Patricia A. Ashmore was born in Norfolk in the summer of 1939. Mabel Ashmore remarried in Chesterfield registration district in 1960; her second husband was John Eaton Bird, a chartered accountant of 'The Hawthorns', Old Brampton, whose first wife, Mary Elizabeth, died in 1958. He died on 28 July 1963, leaving estate valued at £56,875, when probate was granted to his widow Mabel and Allen Morris Bird, a chartered accountant, who was presumably also a member of Carline, Watson & Bird of Chesterfield. Mabel Ashmore (otherwise Mabel) Bird, then of 18 Mendip Crescent, Chesterfield, died on 29 January 1987, when she left estate valued at £205,745.

(CWGC; TNA, WO 97; RG 14/12771, no. 263; RG 101/5895G/005 /25; RG 101/6524D/004/11; RG 101/5899H/010/20; RG 101/ 5901C/013/3; *Derb. Times*, 7 July, 18 Dec. 1942, 7 July 1944; Cal. Grants, 1963, 1987.)

**Kenneth James Ball** was born on 23 June 1915, the eldest son of Albert James Ball (1883–1951), a clerk with the LMS Railway, and his wife Maude (1886–1976), who in 1939 were living at 56 Storforth Lane. Kenneth was then an assistant architect and surveyor. In 1940 he married, at Wingerworth, Daisy Brummell, who was born on 17 December 1919. The couple lived at The Brambles, 25 Longedge Lane, Wingerworth, which had been Daisy's home before she was married. She was the daughter of George W. Brummell, a wholesale boot and shoe factor, and his wife Florence, and in 1939 was working as secretary to a medical officer of health.

Before joining the Army, Ball was an architect's assistant with Houfton & Kington, Market Place, Chesterfield, and a scoutmaster at Wingerworth. He appears for the first time in the list of former pupils on active service in the school magazine in January 1941, described as a signaller in the Royal Corps of Signals. He was drafted abroad in October 1941 and embarked for Cape Town, where he spent a short leave with his mother's two sisters and their families. In March 1942 he



was reported missing in Malaya while serving as a signaller in the Royal Corps of Signals. In August 1943 his wife received a postcard from him stating that he was a prisoner of the Japanese. At that date both Kenneth's twin younger brothers were serving in the Forces. Gunner Peter Ball was taken prisoner by the Italians in June 1942, and Gunner Roger Ball (1919–2007) was serving in the Middle East. Both were mentioned in the school magazine in September 1941, when they were said to be well and sent greetings to former pupils of their acquaintance.

Kenneth Ball's Japanese prison record card confirms the information established from other sources, although it gives his parents' address as Hasland Road, Chesterfield. It states that he was captured at Singapore on 17 February 1942 and describes him as a signaller attached to 148th (Bedfordshire Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, part of the 18th (East Anglian) Infantry Division. A list of prisoners of the Japanese dating from November 1944 names his place of imprisonment as 'Thailand or 4D Camp'. Another list, compiled after the war, gives his date of capture as 15 February 1942, his place of imprisonment as Thailand, and his date of liberation as 2 September 1945.

Although Ball appears on the school memorial (and in the list in the *Cestrefeldian*) he did in fact survive the war and completed his training as an architect. In February 1949 he boarded the P&O liner *Corfu* at Southampton for Penang in Malaya, when he gave his home address as 56 Storforth Lane. He and Daisy evidently divorced, since he married in January 1953 (in Chesterfield) Audrey Willetts, a teacher, who was born in Chesterfield in 1927. In December 1955 the couple left London aboard the Glen Line vessel *Glenarthy* bound for Singapore, when both gave Malaya as their 'country of intended permanent residence'; while in England they had stayed at Ravensnest, Ashover. Ball later worked in Lesotho, from where he returned in 1992 to live in Winstanley. He died in March 2000, aged 84.

Daisy Ball remarried in 1949 at Edmonton (Mddx); her second husband was Valentine Counce Quin, who died in Manchester in 1999. Mrs Quin died at Congleton (Ches.) in 2009.

(TNA, RG 101/5900D/009/17, RG 101/5958C/010/17; WO 345/3; WO 361/1954; WO 392/23, no. 2157; BT 27/1644; BT 27/1790/1; *Cestrefeldian*, Jan. 1941, 37; Sept. 1941, 106; *Derb. Times*, 10 July 1936, 20 March 1942, 20 Aug. 1943; internet

accounts of 148th Field Regiment RA; inf. from Architects Registration Board.)

**Richard A. Ball**, the son of William and Alice Gertrude Ball of Orchard Villa, Calow, was born in 1921. In July 1941 he married Lilian Pickering of Sheffield. He died from burns, aged 21, on 9 March 1942. A military funeral was held at Calow Congregational church, attended by representatives of (among others) the grammar school and Chesterfield Tube Co., where Ball had worked as a clerk before joining the RAF fifteen months earlier. He was buried in the chapel burial ground. At the time of his death Ball was a sergeant navigator observer in the RAF (Volunteer Reserve), serving in 408 (Royal Canadian Air Force) Squadron, then based at RAF North Luffenham (Rutland), flying the Handley Page Hampden bomber. His aircraft crashed four minutes after taking off. It stalled just beyond the perimeter of the aerodrome and hit a concrete pill-box. The aircraft was carrying three sea mines and had only attained a height of 50 feet before falling to the ground.

Ball was remembered by 'Mum, Dad, Lily, Arthur and Alan' on the third anniversary of his death; a similar notice, 'From Cousins at Deepscie Bungalow', appeared in 1944.

Donald Haddock (qv), another former pupil of the grammar school, was killed in action as a sergeant in the same squadron three months after Ball.

(CWGC; *Derb. Times*, 13 and 20 March 1942, 3 March 1944, 10 March 1945; internet accounts of 408 Squadron.)

**Ernest Cecil Barley** was born in the autumn of 1921 in Rotherham registration district, the son of Thomas Wrigley (1879–1964) and Annie Maud Barley (1886–1978), who in 1939 were living at a house named Sunny Bank in Hathersage. Thomas was a consulting civil and mechanical engineer. Their son, a corporal in the RAF, died on 11 October 1941, aged 19. Barley was riding a motorcycle with another RAF corporal, Robert Fryer Watson (29), which came off the road at Bingham, near Nottingham, crashed through a fence and hit a concrete air-raid shelter. Watson died instantly at the scene, Barley soon after admission to Nottingham City hospital. The coroner's inquest returned



a verdict of accidental death. Barley was buried at SS Peter & St Paul, Shelford, also near Nottingham.

Thomas Barley died in Worcestershire in 1964, aged 85; his widow Annie died in 1978, aged 92, still living in the Peak District.

(TNA, RG 101/5936H/003/22; *Nottingham Journal*, 14 Oct. 1941; CWGC.)

**Charles Bethell** was born in Chesterfield in April 1910, the younger son of George Bethell (1877–1946) and his wife Hannah Jane (1878–1936). In 1911 the family, which included Charles's older brother, Lloyd, aged eight, and his sister Mary (six) were enumerated at 476 Chatsworth Road, where they had one servant living-in. His parents and two older siblings had all been born in Heaton Norris (Ches.); his father was then a railway clerk. After Charles's death, his father was on the staff of the London & North Eastern Railway at Chesterfield for some years prior to 1928, before moving to Doncaster. In 1945 he was living on Whitecotes Lane.

Charles was an active member of the cadet corps at the grammar school and was commissioned into the Sherwood Foresters before the war. He was listed as a second lieutenant in the school magazine in December 1939. He served with the Foresters in France between November 1939 and June 1940, and shortly after returning to England was promoted captain. He went abroad again in 1941. A school prefect in 1926 and school captain in 1927, captain of fives, a member of the rugby team, and secretary of the debating society, he was described in 1945 as having been 'a prospective graduate of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, at one time', possibly meaning that he had started a degree course before the war. He was on the staff of Williams Deacon's Bank, Sheffield, before being called up, and a member of Hallows golf club in Dronfield. In 1940 he married Betty Marguerite McCallum, born in 1915, a bank clerk who lived at 'Riverdale', Mytham Bridge, Bamford, with her sister Jean, also a bank employee, and their divorced mother.

Bethell was killed, aged 31, at the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942 but his wife, who was then living at Mytham Bridge, was only officially advised in February 1945. He was a captain in the 1/5th Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Notts & Derby Regiment) at the time of his death and was buried in Kranji War Cemetery in Singapore. The

battalion served in France until the Dunkirk evacuation and afterwards moved to Malaya and Singapore as part of 18th Infantry Division.

In 1942 Bethell's sister was married to A. Roy Slack, and his brother was living in Birmingham. He left a daughter Jane, born in 1942, whom he would never have seen. Mrs Bethell remarried in 1947 in Bakewell registration district; her second husband was George Doyle. Mrs Doyle died in Norfolk in 2007, aged 92. Her daughter (who retained the surname Bethell) married Keith N. Holt in London in 1973.

(TNA, RG 14/21101, no. 58; RG 101/5949C/009/16; CWGC; *Derb. Times*, 23 Feb. 1945; *Cestrefeldian*, Dec. 1939, 46.)

**David Devonald Beynon** was born on 18 September 1923, the only son of David Watcyn Beynon (b. 1881), an ironmongery shop manager, and his wife Sarah Jane (b. 1886) of 11 (later 13) Madin Street, Chesterfield. He had an older sister, Sarah Gwyneth, born in 1915, who in 1939 was a food shop senior assistant and in 1941 married Jack Johnson. Their father was born in Llanelli (Carms.) in 1881 and in 1911 was living in Cardiff, where he was working as an ironmonger's assistant. Early in 1914 he married Sarah Jane Thomas of Bedlinog, near Merthyr Tydfil (Glam.), who does not seem to have worked before her marriage. Both were Welsh-speaking.

David was school vice-captain, captain of Large house and a prefect, a flight sergeant in the Air Training Corps and winner of the Coxall debating prize in 1941. He was the first chairman of the Chesterfield Council of Youth (in which capacity he gave a talk on the BBC in March 1941, aged 17), prominent in the Church Lads' Brigade, and a regular worshipper and server at the parish church. He passed the higher school certificate with distinction and won a county major scholarship which enabled him to spend a year at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, where he began the shortened war-time course in modern history, before being called up in 1942 and volunteering for foreign service.

After nine months' at an Officer Cadets Training Unit Beynon was commissioned as a lieutenant and went out to North Africa. One of the first to land on Sicily, he was severely wounded in the leg and moved to a base hospital in North Africa. He recovered to take part in the early stages of the Italian campaign and was at the crossing of the Sangro



river. Beynon was killed in action on 29 January 1944, aged 20. He was a lieutenant in the Brecknockshire Battalion, South Wales Borderers and is buried at the Moro River Canadian War Cemetery in Italy. The vicar of Chesterfield paid tribute to Beynon in a Sunday sermon and conducted a requiem in his memory the following day. In a characteristically forceful address, Dilworth Harrison stated that at the age of 15 Beynon had told him that he felt called to become a priest.

Sarah Johnson, then of 23 Salisbury Crescent, Newbold Moor, died on 13 February 1994, aged 79, leaving estate valued at £125,000.

(TNA, RG 14/32075, no. 398; RG 14/32411, no. 45; RG 101/5895A/016/ 28; CWGC; *Derb. Times*, 28 Feb. and 14 March 1941, 11 Feb. 1944; Cal. Grants, 1994.)

**Thomas Blackshaw GM** was born in Chesterfield in 1915, the eldest son of Arnold Blackshaw (1879–1964) and his wife Gertrude (née Hopkinson) (1885–1971), who were married at Chesterfield parish church on 2 October 1912. Arnold was then a confectioner aged 33 and the son of the late Thomas Blackshaw, a Nonconformist minister; Gertrude was 27, the daughter of the late James Hopkinson, a stonemason. At the time of her marriage, Gertrude was living at 126 Saltergate and was not working; in 1901, when her parents had a sweet shop on Eyre Street (although her father was also a stonemason), Gertrude was a pupil-teacher. In 1939 the couple were living at 19 Tennyson Avenue.

After leaving the grammar school Thomas was articled to Eric Perry, surveyor to Wirksworth urban district council. After qualifying he worked for a short time in Manchester before becoming assistant surveyor to Staveley urban district council. He moved from there to Doncaster and in about 1937 became assistant surveyor to the West Riding county council. In 1940 Thomas married Dorothy Hill at Chesterfield. She was born in 1916 and before her marriage lived with her widowed mother Emma and younger brother John, a motor mechanic, at 742 Chatsworth Road. In 1939 Dorothy was a shorthand typist at one of the wagon repair companies in Chesterfield.

Blackshaw joined the Territorials in Yorkshire, was called up to the Royal Artillery at the outbreak of war, and later transferred to the Royal Engineers. He was listed as a bombardier in the Royal Artillery in the

school magazine in January 1941, and in September his promotion to officer cadet was noted. In August 1943, as a 27-year-old lieutenant RE, he was awarded the George Medal for 'conspicuous gallantry in carrying out hazardous work in a very brave manner'; a sergeant who worked with him also received the GM. At the time of the award his wife was living with her parents at 742 Brookside. He had been commissioned about two years before receiving the GM. His father was concerned in a confectionery, bakery and café business in High Street, where Marks & Spencer's store was later built. Mr and Mrs Blackshaw's second son, Sergeant Ian Blackshaw, was then serving in the Army in West Africa, and their youngest son James, with the aid of a bursary from the grammar school, was reading civil engineering at Liverpool University with a view to becoming an architect.

Thomas Blackshaw was later promoted captain and died on 9 January 1945 while on duty at Bideford (Devon). He was 29 and his home address in Chesterfield was said to be 33 Orchards Way. His family were given no details but it was 'presumed that he met his death while discharging the hazardous duties which gained for him the George Medal just over a year ago'. He was said to have volunteered some time previously 'for extremely valuable and highly dangerous specialised work', as the *Derbyshire Times* put it with appropriate war-time restraint. At the time of his death his brother, Staff Sergeant Ian Blackshaw, was back in Britain after serving in West Africa, and his brother James was about to join the Royal Engineers. His funeral, at Holy Trinity prior to interment at Boythorpe cemetery, was attended by representatives of local businesses and professional firms, Chesterfield Rugby Club and the grammar school. Wreaths were sent from several RE bomb disposal companies, indicating fairly clearly how Blackshaw met his death. His widow obtained a grant of administration in June 1945, when his estate was valued at £339 and his address was given as 742 Brookside.

Dorothy Blackshaw remarried in 1948: her second husband was Joseph Francis Coogan, born in 1924, who in 1939 was a shop assistant living on Welfare Avenue in Chesterfield. He died in Chesterfield in 2002, his wife in 2005.

Arnold Blackshaw, still of 19 Tennyson Avenue, died at the Royal Hospital on 19 October 1964. Probate was granted the following May to his widow Gertrude, when his estate was valued at £12,050. Mrs Blackshaw died on 1 December 1971 at Dawlish (Devon), leaving



estate valued at £17,369.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 13/3247, f. 67v.; RG 101/5895G/020/17, RG 101/5899H/014/18, RG 101/5896F/002/04; *Cestrefeldian*, Jan. 1941, 39; Sept. 1941, 107; *Derb. Times*, 20 Aug. 1943, 12 and 19 Jan. 1945; Cal. Grants, 1945, 1965, 1972.)

**Thomas William Booker** was born on 2 May 1920, the son of Thomas William Booker (1883–1959) and Annie Booker (1887–1960) of Woodland View, Barlow. Both father and son were joiners and builders in 1939. Thomas, who is probably the 'T. Booker' listed for first time in the school magazine for January 1941 as a former pupil on active service, died on 15 April 1945, aged 24. He was a flight sergeant in 190 Squadron RAF (Volunteer Reserve) and is commemorated on the RAF Memorial at Runnymede. At the time of Booker's death the squadron was flying the Mark IV Short Stirling heavy bomber from RAF Great Dunmow (Essex), towing gliders for the Rhine crossing and paratroopers into the Netherlands to disrupt the German retreat.

(TNA, RG 101/5962H/008/7; *Cestrefeldian*, Jan. 1941, 37; CWGC; internet accounts of 190 Squadron.)

**Philip Alwyn Botham** was born in 1921, the eldest son of William G.P. Botham (1897–1963), a railway department clerk at a wagon works (probably Eastwood's, on Brimington Road near his home) and his wife Agnes (1897–1973) of 39 Tapton View Road. He left the grammar school for the City of Leeds training college and later taught at Derby Road junior school (i.e. the present Spire school) in Birdholme. He attended Chesterfield Congregational church (i.e. the present Rose Hill United Reformed church). Botham, who was a corporal at the time of his death, joined the RAF in September 1940 and first appears in a list of former pupils on active service in the school magazine in January 1941. He was drafted to Iraq the following autumn. He died in the RAF Hospital in Iraq on 28 May 1944 after five weeks' illness. He was buried in Habbaniya War Cemetery, Iraq.

The Revd Richard Crosse, a son of a former archdeacon of Chesterfield then serving as Chaplain to the Forces in Iraq, later wrote to

Botham's parents paying tribute to their son's work as secretary to the ToCH group in Iraq, to which Crosse was padre. Botham had also visited many schools in Iraq to gain local knowledge, and lectured to the Forces on post-war education. Crosse described the 'fight' made by five doctors, including a brigadier, to save their son's life. Another chaplain added that when the brigadier decided that only penicillin would save him, a Spitfire was sent to Baghdad, 60 miles away, to collect a supply. It was administered to Botham within 40 minutes of the diagnosis.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5893J/007/24; *Cestrefeldian*, Jan. 1941, 37; *Derb. Times*, 2 and 16 June 1944.)

**Geoffrey Bradshaw** was born in 1923, the son of Richard Thomas Bradshaw (1898–1976), a house painter and estate maintenance man, and his wife Selina (née Whiteman) (1899–1989), who were married in 1922 and made their home at 49 Cavendish Street, Staveley. Geoffrey was educated at Peter Webster school and later the grammar school, where he won a number of prizes for cricket and swimming. He entered the RAF at the age of 16 as an aircraft apprentice in 1939 and was a leading aircraftman at the time of his death on 20 August 1942, aged 19. A graduate of the RAF Halton School of Engineering, Bradshaw was a wireless operator/air gunner under training with No. 10 Air Gunnery School at RAF Walney Island, Barrow in Furness, attached to RAF Millom (Cumberland). His Bolton-Paul Defiant crashed into the sea after suffering engine failure over the Duddon Estuary a mile north of Millom and both he and the pilot, Pilot Officer James Ferguson Mackie of Aberdeenshire, aged 28, died. The crash was found to have been caused by engine failure. Both bodies were later recovered. After a funeral at Staveley parish church, which his fiancée, a nurse named Betty Lawrence, was unable to attend, Bradshaw was buried in Staveley cemetery.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5925A/012/12; *Derb. Times*, 4 Aug. 1939, 4 and 11 Sept. 1942; *Cestrefeldian*, Dec. 1939, 46.)



**Ronald Brewin** was born in Chesterfield in 1921, the younger son of Trevor Brewin (1882–1956) and his wife Kate (née Bullivant) (1885–1972), whom he married in 1911. Born at Harrington (Northants.), Kate was in private domestic service at Desborough in the same county in 1901 and at Glynllifon Park (Plas Glynllifon), Llandwrog (Caerns.), in 1911. Trevor was the son of an engine driver at Hasland shed on the Midland Railway and until his marriage lived at 6 North Terrace, off Storforth Lane, one of the groups of houses built by the company for men who worked at the shed. In 1911 he was an 'engineer liner out' and his younger brother was a railway cleaner. This suggests that in 1939, when the family were living at 'Overdale', 574 Derby Road, Wingerworth, and Trevor gave his occupation as 'chief engineering inspector', this was an appointment with the LMS Railway.

Ronald Brewin was school captain in 1939 and later graduated from Selwyn College, Cambridge. In April 1944 his engagement to Jean Marion, only daughter of Mr and Mrs W.E. Lee of Norwich, was announced. Brewin was killed in action in Normandy on 9 July 1944, aged 23, while serving as a lieutenant in 288 Battery, 124th (Northumbrian) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery. He was buried in Hottot-les-Bagues War Cemetery (Calvados). He had previously served with the regiment in the North African, Tunisian and Sicilian campaigns.

At the Remembrance Day service at Wingerworth parish church in November 1950 a chalice and paten, given by Mr and Mrs Brewin in memory of Ronald, was dedicated and used for the first time at the sung Eucharist which followed, and part of the collection was given to Earl Haig's Fund. Trevor Brewin died at 12a Newbold Road, Chesterfield, on 21 January 1956, leaving estate valued at £2,335. Kate, then of 23 Park Drive, Harrogate, died on 14 June 1972, leaving estate valued at £4,542.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 12/2763, f. 90v.; RG 13/1451, f. 72v.; RG 14/21085, no. 103; RG 14/34424, no. 88; TNA, RG 101/5958C/006/ 38; *Derb. Times*, 21 April, 21 and 28 July 1944, 17 Nov. 1950; Cal. Grants, 1956. On the school memorial Brewin is given a second initial (L.) before Ronald. No other source uses this form, which may result from confusion with his rank at the time of his death.)

**John Edward Burcher** was born on 26 March 1914, the son of Frank Burcher (1885–1980) and his wife Harriet (1889–1983), who in 1939 were living at 566 Chatsworth Road. Frank was the managing clerk of a rent and debt company; his son was an architect's assistant. The household also included Frank's mother, Hannah Burcher (1850–1940), a retired licensed victualler, who died in March 1940 leaving estate valued at £3,844; Frank, as an executor, was said to be an accountant's clerk.

At the time of his death John Burcher was a sergeant wireless operator and gunner in 83 Squadron RAF (Volunteer Reserve), which was then flying Manchester bombers from RAF Scampton (Lincs.). He died on 29 March 1942, aged 28, together with the five other members of the crew of their aircraft, when it crashed near Klausdorf, Schwentinental (Schleswig-Holstein), after being attacked by anti-aircraft guns. The Manchester proved an unsatisfactory aircraft and the squadron was re-equipped with Lancasters from May 1942.

John Burcher was buried at Kiel War Cemetery in Germany. Frank Burcher, still living at 566 Chatsworth Road, died in 1980 leaving estate valued at £2,462; Harriet, then of the Spinney care home, Brimington, died in 1983, when her estate was proved at £25,000.

(TNA, RG 101/58991/008/32; Cal. Grants, 1940; CWGC; *Derb. Times*, 27 March 1942; internet accounts of 83 Squadron.)

**John Joseph Carley** was born in 1922, the son of John Joseph Carley (1888–1939) and his wife Emily (1899–1936), and the grandson of Joseph Sowter Short (1875–1947) and his first wife Mary (née Buxton) (1876–1912). In 1911 the Shorts were living at 22 Hollis Lane. Joseph was a mechanic at an engineering works and the couple had three daughters and a son at home, of whom Emily was the oldest. In the second quarter of 1919 she married, at the Roman Catholic Church of the Annunciation, Spencer Street, John Joseph Carley, the son of Patrick Carley, an Irishman born in Roscommon. In 1911 the Carleys were living at 34 Rutland Road, when John, then aged 23, was working as a coal trammer. Emily died in 1936, aged 37, her husband three years later. In 1939 Joseph Short was an unemployed turner and fitter of 39 Wharf Lane, Chesterfield, where he was living with his much younger second wife Dorothy Elizabeth (née Paulson) (1912–93), whom he



married in 1938. Short died in 1947, leaving effects worth £285.

John Joseph Carley entered the grammar school in 1932 on a county minor scholarship from Derby Road junior mixed school (i.e. the present Spire junior school). After leaving school Carley worked for about eight months in the office of the Chesterfield borough police, and was a member of Chesterfield Ragged School. Possibly because both his parents were dead (which explains why his grandfather was described as next of kin in 1945), he emigrated to Australia in 1939, sailing from Southampton on 3 June in the Aberdeen & Commonwealth Line's vessel *Largs Bay* for Sydney, giving Australia as his 'country of intended future permanent residence'. At some date after his arrival he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at Paddington, New South Wales, when he gave his place and date of birth as Chesterfield, 14 March 1919, and his next of kin as his brother Cyril Carley.

According to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (confirmed in part by the records of the Australian Imperial Force), Carley died on 4 July 1942, aged 20, while serving as a private in the 2/30th Battalion, Australian Infantry, Australian Imperial Force. He was buried at Thanbyuzayat War Cemetery, Burma. Carley's death was only officially reported to his family in May 1945, when (according to the *Derbyshire Times*) he was said to have died (as a corporal) aged 23 in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in Burma in May 1942. He was posted missing in Malaya in February 1941 and nothing further was heard of him for three years. His brother Cyril was then attached to the Parachute Regiment.

According to an unpublished history in the Australian War Memorial Archives the 2/30th Battalion was formed on 22 November 1940 at Tamworth (New South Wales), and was part of the 8th Division's 27th Brigade, the last Australian Imperial Force infantry brigade raised for service during the Second World War. At the end of July 1941 the main component of the battalion sailed to Singapore and from there went to Malaya. On 7 December Japanese forces landed at Singora and Patan in Thailand, and Kota Bahru in northern Malaya. They fought against British and Indian troops until the 2/30th B Company ambushed the Japanese at Gemench Bridge on 14 January 1942. The rest of the battalion, located four miles to the rear, engaged the Japanese the following day. The 2/30th suffered 20 killed or missing believed dead and 58 wounded. Japanese casualties were thought to be about a thousand. The battalion had fulfilled its task of acting as a 'shock

absorber', inflicting as many casualties as possible before falling back. The battalion later fought in the defence of Singapore Island and was taken prisoner after the surrender of 15 February 1942. Men of the battalion were concentrated in Changi gaol, where they were used on work parties, first in Singapore and later in other parts of Japanese-occupied east Asia, including the Burma-Thailand railway and in Borneo and Japan. Over three hundred men from the battalion died while prisoners of war.

It must, however, be added that in the second quarter of 1983 a man named John Joseph Carley died in Chesterfield registration district, when his date of birth was given as 1 May 1922. The only birth certificate that can be matched to this entry is that of John Joseph Carley, born in Chesterfield registration district in the second quarter of 1922 to a woman whose maiden name was Short. There is no birth certificate for a child named John Joseph Carley born in Chesterfield (or anywhere else in England & Wales) in March 1919. It of course possible that the man named Carley who enlisted in 1939 gave a false date of birth, but the possibility also arises that the man who died in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in 1942 (and appears on the grammar school war memorial) was not the son of John Joseph and Emily Carley of Chesterfield. In the fourth quarter of 1949 John J. Carley married, in Chesterfield registration district, Doris May Sutton, who in 1939 was living with her parents at 4 Hall Terrace, Clay Cross. Doris May Carley, born on 9 January 1928, died in Chesterfield registration district in February 2002, aged 74.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21092, no. 292; RG 14/21089, no. 180; RG 101/5894J/007/11; RG 101/5901C/009/43; BT 27/1547; *Derb. Times*, 25 June 1932, 18 May 1945; Cal. Grants, 1947; National Archives of Australia, A8231, 6/CARLEY JOHN JOSEPH.)

**George Albert Carline DSC** was born in the autumn of 1910, the posthumous son (and the youngest of three) of G.E. Carline FCA, the head of Carline, Watson & Bird, the well-known Chesterfield accountancy practice, and his wife Leila Isabel (née Tanner). He was living with his brothers, a sister and their widowed mother at 'Westfield', 66 Newbold Road, in 1911. His father, George Edward Carline, died on 19



February 1910, aged only 40; Mrs Carline was granted letters of administration in May, when his estate was valued at £13,083.

Carline passed out of the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, in 1928, after which he served in the Mediterranean, with the Home Fleet, and on the China station. On his return from China, Carline volunteered for the Fleet Air Arm in about 1936. After training he was appointed to HMS *Courageous*, HMS *Ark Royal* and HMS *Belfast*, before joining HMS *Illustrious*. In December 1940 Carline was awarded the DSC as a lieutenant in *Illustrious*, following a successful attack by the Fleet Air Arm on the Italian navy at Taranto. His eldest brother Francis, a London solicitor, was then serving in a Territorial regiment, and his second brother, Major Norman Carline, was second in command of a Territorial anti-aircraft unit on the East Coast.

Carline died on 22 December 1941, aged 31, while serving as a lieutenant commander in HMS *Audacity*, and is commemorated on the Lee on the Solent memorial. Carline was in charge of the aircraft on board HMS *Audacity*, a former German merchant vessel converted into an escort carrier. He was responsible for the air protection of the convoy she was escorting, which sailed from Gibraltar on 14 December, with only four serviceable aircraft on board. The convoy (HG-76) was attacked by submarines and Focke-Wulf aircraft for five days from 17 December. Although the attack was eventually beaten off with the loss of only two merchant ships, *Audacity* and a destroyer, HMS *Stanley*, were lost in the action. HMS *Audacity* sank 500 miles west of Cape Finisterre with the loss of 73 of her crew. A model of the vessel is on display in the Merseyside Maritime Museum.

Carline's mother was granted letters of administration in 1943, when his home address was given as 13 Cromwell Road, Chesterfield, and he was found to have left effects valued at £4,734. Mrs Carline, also of 13 Cromwell Road, died on 7 January 1954; probate was granted to her sons Francis Allen Carline, a solicitor, and Norman Edward Carline, a chartered accountant, when her estate was valued at £16,556.

(Cal. Grants, 1910, 1943, 1954; TNA, RG 14/21095, no. 288; *Derb. Times*, 27 Dec. 1940, 9 Jan. 1942; CWGC; internet accounts of HMS *Audacity*.)

**William Richard Clark** was born on 4 March 1911, the son of Richard Clark, a grocer of Hephthorne Lane, North Wingfield, and his wife Fanny. In 1939 the couple were living at 27 Station Road, Hephthorne Lane, when his father was the manager of a beer retailer and provision dealer. In 1941 William married Marjorie Eileen Bowyer, also of Hephthorne Lane. He died on 18 March 1942, aged 31, serving as a pilot officer in the RAF (Volunteer Reserve), 101 Glider Operational Training Unit RAF, and was buried at St Lawrence, North Wingfield. 101 OTU was formed in February 1942 at RAF Kidlington (Oxon.) as part of No. 70 Group to train glider pilots using the Hotspur. Clark was the pilot of a Hotspur which crashed on landing into a Hurricane. He was killed and the Hurricane pilot injured.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5955D/011/28; *Derb. Times*, 19 March 1943; internet accounts of 101 OTU.)

**Reginald Graydon Cooke** was born on 11 April 1913, the eldest son of Reginald James Cooke (1880–1936) and his wife Annie Elizabeth (formerly Wassell, née Turton) (1879–), who were married on 21 August 1911 at St Bartholomew, Whittington, where Cooke was at one time choirmaster. He was then 31, a clerk living at 97 Church Street, Whittington, the son of James Cooke, a labourer; his wife was also 31, a widow living at 101 Church Street, the daughter of the late John Turton, a saddler. Annie had previously married, also at St Bartholomew, John Joseph Wassell in 1902. R.J. Cooke, then of Belvoir Terrace, Sheepbridge, died on 4 June 1936. Probate was granted to his son Reginald, a colliery wages clerk with the Sheepbridge Company, when his effects were found to be worth £1,037.

In 1939 Cooke was living with his widowed mother and his younger brother George G. Cooke, a purchase clerk with a coal and iron company, at 58 Brearley Avenue, Whittington. In 1941 he married, at St Bartholomew (where he was a bellringer), Dorothy Adams (a Sunday school teacher at the church), the eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs J. Adams of The Grange Lodge, Old Whittington. At the time of his marriage Cooke was serving in the RAF (Volunteer Reserve). He was an aircraftman 1st class in Air Force E, stationed at RAF Sembawang in Singapore, at the time of his capture by the Japanese. This appears to indicate that Cooke served in 62 Squadron RAF, which was equipped



with the Bristol Blenheim light bomber during its time at Sembawang. Cooke died on 26 May 1943, aged 30, while a prisoner of the Japanese in Java, and was buried in the Ambon War Cemetery, Indonesia. His widow Dorothy obtained letters of administration in 1944, when he was found to have left effects worth £364. His home address was given as The Grange Lodge.

(CWGC; Cal. Grants, 1936; TNA, RG 101/5892A/004/18; WO 361/2008; WO 345/11, no. 1398; *Derb. Times*, 28 March 1941; Cal. Grants, 1944; internet accounts of RAF Sembawang.)

**Alfred Cooper** is too common a name to identify for certain but the reference is probably to the Alfred Cooper who died on 1 September 1940. He was aged 19 and serving as a leading aircraftman in the RAF.

Alfred was the son of Albert and Lily Cooper of Shirebrook, where he was buried. In 1939 the family were living at 38 Garden Avenue, Shirebrook. Albert was a coal hewer, his wife and their daughter Betty (aged 20) were not working outside the home, their son Harry, aged 15, was a clerk at a gasworks, and their youngest child, Jean, was aged seven. The records of three other children are officially closed, and it is possible that Alfred is one of these. Albert Cooper obtained letters of administration in respect of his son's estate on 29 July 1941, when his effects were sworn at £153 14s. 10d.

Alfred's 'Pal Harold' inserted an In Memoriam notice in the *Derbyshire Times* on the first anniversary of his death, along one from his parents, brothers and sisters.

(CWGC (which does not state the squadron or other unit in which Cooper was serving at the time of his death); TNA, RG 101/5943C/008/ 4; *Derb. Times*, 29 Aug. 1941; Cal. Grants, 1941.)

**Frederick Brian Cooper** was born in 1923, the eldest son of Charles Frederick Cooper (1893–1977) and his wife Minnie (née Cotterill) (1895–1980) of 154 Chatsworth Road, Chesterfield, who were married in 1921. Frederick was listed as a 'Boy 2nd class RN' in the school magazine in July 1940. He was reported missing in October 1943. Cooper joined the Royal Navy in May 1940, having previously

worked for T.G. Wilcockson, the Chesterfield architect, and was a leading telegraphist, aged 20, in HMS *Charybdis* when he died on 23 October 1943. He was buried in the English Cemetery at Dinard (Ille-et-Vilaine). His father was then serving as a battery sergeant major in the Royal Artillery in England.

HMS *Charybdis* was a Dido-class cruiser. In October 1943 she was assigned to Operation Tunnel, intended to intercept a German blockade-runner, *Münsterland*, which was escorted by five torpedo boats. On 23 October *Charybdis* located the convoy but was hit by two torpedos and sank within half an hour with the loss of over 400 officers and men. Four officers and 103 ratings survived. Some 96 members of the crew were buried at Dinard. The encounter became known as the Battle of Sept-Îles and was the last occasion on which the Royal Navy was defeated and the last on which the German navy was victorious.

Charles Frederick Cooper died in 1977, aged 84, his widow Minnie in 1980, aged 84. Neither left a will.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5898B/011/9; *Cestrefeldian*, July 1940, 139; *Derb. Times*, 24 March 1944; internet accounts of HMS *Charybdis*.)

**Ronald Cox** was born on 28 January 1908. His father was killed in France in 1917 serving with the Sherwood Foresters, and his mother was at one time well known in the district as a midwife. After leaving the grammar school Cox was employed by the Sheepbridge Coal & Iron Co. before training as a teacher at University College, Nottingham, between 1931 and 1933. He was described by the college as a most earnest, thought and industrious student, who had shown the greatest keenness in all his work. His preparation of lessons was highly commendable. He was seen as a 'very sound teacher', who would 'reach a high level of usefulness'. He secured a post at Rye Flatt school, Chesterfield, 'on account of his prowess as a child psychologist'. A keen violinist, Cox helped at many local functions. Before joining the Forces in 1941 he was an ARP warden. In 1937 Cox married Louie Winifred Widdowson and the couple made their home at 78 Newbold Back Lane.

Cox became a leading aircraftman in the RAF and was killed aged 35 on the evening of 19 August 1943. He was about to examine the



wireless apparatus in a Wellington bomber at 82 Operational Training Unit at RAF Gamston (Notts.) when he walked into a revolving propellor and was killed instantly. The aircraft was undergoing repair after a forced landing. Cox left a wife but no children. He was buried at St John's, Newbold, after a funeral at which the congregation included several figures prominent in education locally as well as representatives of the ARP service and of the Sheepbridge Company. His widow obtained letters of administration in 1944, when Cox was found to have left effects worth £654.

(TNA, RG 101/5894B/023/29; UNMASC, UCN/T/1/2/2/146; *Derb. Times*, 27 Aug. 1943; Cal. Grants, 1944.)

**Peter Hambleton Dickens** was born on 17 April 1919, the son of Arthur Tew Dickens (b. 1876), a schoolmaster, and his wife Edith Man Dickens (née Hellings) (b. 1879), who in 1939 were living at 98 Steynton Avenue, Bexley (Kent). They were married in Croydon registration district early in 1918. Peter joined the Royal Artillery in 1939, having previously worked as a bank clerk. He was captured by the Japanese on 17 February 1942 at the fall of Singapore, when he was serving as a bombardier in 118th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, part of the 55th Infantry Brigade and the 18th Division. He died of acute enteritis on 6 (or 18) July 1943, aged 24, while a prisoner of the Japanese, and was buried in Chungkai War Cemetery, Thailand.

The 118th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery (TA) was formed in 1939 as the second-line regiment to the 65th (8th London) Field Regiment (TA) to accommodate the large number of South Londoners who wished to enlist. It was sent with the 18th Infantry Division to India in 1941. In January 1942 the regiment moved to reinforce the Singapore garrison. Those who survived its fall were taken prisoner and many died during the building of the Burma-Thailand railway. The regiment lost 182 officers and men in the area of the railway, out of total losses during the war of 291. Another 72 died after the official completion date for the railway, 43 on them on 12-14 September 1944 when a convoy taking prisoners to Japan was attacked by US submarines and two ships containing over 2,000 prisoners were sunk.

(CWGC; Royal Artillery Other Ranks Casualty Cards; Royal

Artillery Attestations; TNA, WO 345/14, no. 4820; WO 361/1954, p. 129; RG 101/1225E/020/8; internet accounts of the 118th Field Regiment. The surname is spelt Dickins on the school memorial and in the *Cestrefeldian*, and by CWGC, but Dickens in Service records other than his RA Casualty Card, and in his parents' entry in the National Register. Neither of his parents appears to have died in England & Wales.)

**Roy Rowlatt Dickinson** was born in Chesterfield in 1924, the son of Thomas Dickinson (1895-1975), a constable (later sergeant) in the borough police force, and his wife Eva (née Rowlatt) (1890-1983). In 1939 the family, which also included their daughter Jane (b. 1931), were living at 109 Gloucester Avenue. Roy won athletics prizes and cricket colours while at the grammar school, and was a sergeant in the Air Training Corps. Together with two other former grammar school pupils, Sub-Lieutenant Monty Manners, a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm, and Pilot Officer D.L. Mothersole (qv), Dickinson was selected in 1942 for an RAF university short course (in his case at Selwyn College, Cambridge) for air-crew commissions. In March 1943 he played football for Cambridge against Oxford. In March 1944 Dickinson and Manners met while both were training in Canada. In May 1945 Dickinson was said to have been reported missing 'some time ago'. He disappeared with two crew in an Airspeed Oxford on a training flight with 10 Radio School, RAF Carew Cheriton, near Tenby (Pemb.). Despite an extensive search at sea and on land no trace was found of the aircraft or its crew.

(TNA, RG 101/5894E/005/41; *Derb. Times*, 29 May 1936, 28 May 1937, 26 May and 28 July 1939, 18 Sept. 1942, 3 and 10 March 1944, 25 May 1945; Dickinson's name is spelt as above in the *Cestrefeldian* and all other sources; it is 'Dickenson' on the school memorial.)

**Frank Dodson** was born in Chesterfield registration district in 1918, the son of Fred Dodson (1886-1952) and his wife Tereasa Ann (née Fuller) (1888-1958). In 1930 Frank won a scholarship from the Central school, Brimington, to the grammar school and on leaving went to work



for Harold Berresford of Duckmanton Lodge, Calow. He joined up at the outbreak of war and saw service in India. On his return to England he volunteered for and was accepted by an airborne division. In 1942 he married Nina Williams, who worked at Robinson & Son Ltd.

Dodson died on 29 March 1943, aged 25, while serving as a private in the 1st Battalion of The Parachute Regiment (Army Air Corps). He is commemorated on the Medjez-El-Bab Memorial in Tunisia. His parents then lived at 45 Coronation Road, Brimington, and his wife was living at Ponthydyrun, near Pontypool (Mon.), having possibly returned to her family there. His father was a coke-oven labourer.

(TNA, RG 101/5957C/003/18; CWGC; *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 26 June 1930; *Derb. Times*, 14 May 1943.)

**Alfred Flint.** This name is too common to identify for certain but may refer to the Alfred Flint who died on D Day (6 June 1944), aged 21, whilst serving as a private in the 1st Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment. He was the son of John George and Florence Edith Flint of Shirebrook, and is buried in Hermanville War Cemetery at Hermanville-sur-Mer (Calvados). In 1939 the family were living at 9 Avondale Terrace, Shirebrook; his father was a coal hewer and Alfred, born on 17 April 1923, was returned as an ARP messenger. The household also included his mother, who was not working outside the home, his sister Thelma, aged 13 (later Mrs Smith), and a brother, Derek, aged eight.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5943C/018/26.)

**William Arthur Foulstone** was born in 1922, the posthumous son of William Arthur Foulstone (1892–1921) and his wife Mary Edith (née Unwin), and the grandson of Arthur James Foulstone, who in 1901 was working as a mechanical draughtsman, and his wife Hannah Jane. The elder William, described as the eldest son of Mr and Mrs A.J. Foulstone of Main Avenue, New Totley, married Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs William Heald Unwin of Hall Lane Farm, Totley, at Dore parish church on 31 August 1920. The couple were living at 77 Berkley Street, Scunthorpe (Lincs.), when William died in a Doncaster nursing

home on 11 November 1921, aged only 29, and was buried at Christ Church, Dore. When his widow Mary obtained letters of administration, he was found to have left effects worth £163. Mary Foulstone, then of 'Maycroft', Main Avenue, Totley, died on 1 February 1929, leaving £330. Probate was granted to W.H. Unwin and A.J. Foulstone, merchants.

William Foulstone junior, who must have been brought up by his paternal grandparents after his mother's death, won a county minor scholarship from Totley Church of England school to the grammar school in 1932. He won both academic and athletics prizes in the lower school, passed school certificate in 1936 and the higher certificate in 1939 as a member of the history stream of the modern sixth. Also in 1939 he was awarded a bronze medal (and came ninth out of contestants from the whole country) in an essay competition organised by the National Society of French Masters in England. The medal was presented at the Mansion House by the Lady Mayoress at a ceremony at which the Ambassador of France presided.

Foulstone died on 28 April 1945, aged 23, while serving as a lance corporal in the 1st Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own), and was buried in Maynamati War Cemetery in what was then British India (today Bangladesh). Probate was granted in January 1946 to Arthur James Foulstone, a coal and coke agent, Sydney Henry Foulstone, a sales engineer, and Florence Kate Lake, the wife of Ernest Lake. He left effects worth £502.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 13/4377, f. 121v.; Cal. Grants, 1921, 1929, 1946; *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 1 Sept. 1920; *Derb. Times*, 28 May 1932, 29 July 1933, 31 May 1935, 24 May and 4 Sept. 1936, 17 Feb., 28 July and 25 Aug. 1939.)

**Arthur Glossop** was born in 1921, the only son of Reginald Glossop (1893–1977) and his wife Maggie (née Smith) (1896–1976) of 293 Brimington Road, who were married in 1917. Arthur was killed on active service on 18 February 1942 while serving as a sergeant pilot in the RAF (Volunteer Reserve). He was attached to No. 2 Air Gunnery School, RAF Dalcross, near Inverness. Glossop and a colleague were killed when their Westland Lysander crashed into high ground at Culloden Moor in bad weather. He was buried at Brimington cemetery.



Glossop was 21 and had been in the RAF for seventeen months, having previously worked at Burton's the tailors. His father, who gave his occupation in 1939 as a tailor's shop manager, died on 6 May 1977. He left estate valued at £16,786. Maggie Glossop died on 3 February 1976, leaving £2,505. Both were of 293 Brimington Road when they died.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5894K/002/37; *Derb. Times*, 20 and 27 Feb. 1942, 12 and 19 Feb. 1943, 16 Feb. 1945; Cal. Grants, 1976, 1977.)

**Joseph Eric Goddard** was born in 1916, the only son of Tom Goddard (1888–1967) and his wife Mary Ann (1894–1959). The couple were married at Tibshelf parish church on 1 June 1914, when Tom was living at Cross Street, Grassmoor, and working as a miner. His wife, Mary Ann Smedley Anthony, was the daughter of John Anthony, a miner of Primrose Terrace, Tibshelf; she was not working outside the home. In 1939 they were living at 65 New Street, Grassmoor, when Tom described himself rather pathetically as a 'Light labourer. Anything. Unemployed', which suggests that he may have been injured in the pit. His wife was not working. In 1943 they were living at 38 Main Road and Tom had become steward of Grassmoor working men's club.

Joseph won a county minor scholarship from Grassmoor school to the grammar school. In 1939 he joined the Hampshire police and in August 1941 volunteered for the RAF. He went to America for training in January 1942 and was awarded his wings in August that year. He died on 28 July 1943, aged 27, serving as a sergeant navigator in 101 Squadron RAF. He was the navigator in a Lancaster bomber which was shot down in the target area (Hamburg) by a Messerschmitt 109 night fighter. None of the seven crew survived. Goddard was buried at Hamburg Cemetery in Germany.

At the time of Goddard's death 101 Squadron, part of No. 1 Group, Bomber Command, was based at RAF Ludford Magna (Lincs.) and was flying Lancasters fitted with a secret radio jamming system codenamed 'Airborne Cigar' (ABC). By transmitting during flights over Germany, these aircraft were especially vulnerable to attack and 101 Squadron had the highest casualty rate of any in the RAF. Another former pupil of the grammar school, John Alfred Turner (qv), also died while serving

in the same squadron.

Tom Goddard, then of 220 North Wingfield Road, Grassmoor, died in May 1967, aged 79, and was buried at Hasland cemetery. His wife died in 1959, aged 64. Neither left a will.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5957J/018/13; *Derb. Times*, 6 Aug. 1943, 3 March 1944; inf. from Hampshire Record Office; internet accounts of 101 Squadron.)

**Harry Goulden** has not been identified in other sources, partly because of uncertainty as to whether his Christian name was Harry, Harold or Henry.

**Charles Edward Gregory** was the son of John Machin Gregory (1882–1954) and his wife Winifred Ann (1891–1969). John Gregory was born on 12 July 1882, the son of George Gregory of Pilsley (near Clay Cross), an innkeeper, and his wife Mary. In 1911 John was enumerated as the stepson of Richard Clay, who with his wife Mary (presumably the former Mrs George Gregory) was farming at Timberlane Farm, Pilsley. He was single and was working as an assistant school teacher. On 14 August 1918 Gregory, then aged 36, a lieutenant in the 7th Battalion, Sherwood Foresters, and living at Pattishall (Northants.), married at Kidlington parish church (Oxon.) Winifred Ann Evans of Kidlington, aged 26, the daughter of John Evans, a gamekeeper. John named his father as George Gregory, a farmer. In 1939 John and Winifred (who was born on 3 November 1891) were living on Main Street in Heath; he was an 'estate cashier', presumably for the Duke of Devonshire's Hardwick estate.

Their son Charles Edward was born on 14 April 1924 at Heath and died on 8 April 1945, aged 20. He was a chief petty officer airman in HMS *Khedive* and is commemorated on the Royal Navy memorial at Lee on the Solent. Gregory died when his Hellcat aircraft of 808 Squadron crashed while attempting to land on *Khedive*, a miniature aircraft carrier created from a merchant vessel hull, during trials off the west coast of Ceylon.

J.M. Gregory died on 25 September 1954, aged 72, and was buried at Heath. He left estate valued at £2,637. Mrs Gregory, then of Corner



Cottage, Heath, died on 16 February 1969, leaving £2,212.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/202098, no. 89; RG 101/5956E/005/14; ADM 104/131, f. 1558; Cal. Grants, 1954, 1969; internet accounts of HMS *Khedive*.)

**Donald Haddock** was born in Chesterfield on 10 December 1914, the son of Thomas James Haddock (1882–1938) and his wife Selina Frances (née Wadmore) (1881–1962). In 1911 the couple, who were married in Wolverhampton registration district in 1906, were living at 17 Stanley Street, Spital, with their eldest son Harry James, aged four. Thomas, who was born in Wolverhampton, the son of a beer retailer and edge-tool maker, was secretary to a limited company in the timber trade (which at that date can apparently only mean Allen & Orr, assuming the company was in Chesterfield); his wife, born in Portsmouth (Hants.), was a nurse before her marriage. Thomas, then of 7 Avondale Road, Chesterfield, died on 5 June 1938, leaving estate valued at £4,880.

After leaving the grammar school Haddock attended classes at Chesterfield technical college where in 1933 he completed 'senior courses' in botany and chemistry. In 1939 he was living at 23 Columbia Avenue, Sutton in Ashfield (Notts.) with his mother (who described herself as being of private means) and was working as an unqualified pharmaceutical chemist's assistant.

Haddock was killed on 19 June 1942, while serving as a sergeant wireless operator and air gunner in 408 (Royal Canadian Air Force) 'Goose' Squadron. The squadron was then based at RAF Balderton (Notts.) and was flying the Handley Page Hampden bomber. He was one of four crew of a Hampden which crashed during an operation to Lorient (Morbihan) on the west coast of Brittany, where there was a large German submarine base. The cause of the crash was never established. Haddock had been in the RAF for about eighteen months. Aged 27 and unmarried, he was buried at the Bayeux War Cemetery (Calvados). Another former pupil of the grammar school, Richard Ball (qv), who was also a sergeant in 408 Squadron, died in March 1942.

The details given at the time of his death indicate that Donald Haddock was not identical with the E.D. Haddock listed in the school magazine in January 1941 as a private in the Royal Army Pay Corps,

who was congratulated in May that year on his marriage to Greta Elizabeth Robinson.

When her son was killed Donald Haddock's mother was still living at Sutton in Ashfield. Mrs Haddock, who never remarried, was of Westminster Bank House, 34 Bath Street, Ilkeston, when she died on 20 October 1962. Probate was granted on 17 December to H.J. Haddock, a bank manager, and Kenneth Haddock, a representative for an insurance company, when her estate was valued at £6,422.

(TNA, RG 12/2241, f. 43; RG 13/991, f. 69; RG 14/21087, no. 165; RG 101/62401/012/42; Cal. Grants, 1938, 1962; CWGC; *Derb. Times*, 29 July 1933, 26 June 1942; *Cestrefeldian*, Jan. 1941, 38; May 1941, 83; internet accounts of 408 Squadron.)

**C.H. Hall** does not appear in the list printed in the *Cestrefeldian* in 1950 but is on the school memorial. He was listed as a pilot officer in the RAF in the school magazine in March 1940. Without full Christian names it is difficult to trace a man with this common surname in other records.

(*Cestrefeldian*, March 1940, 93.)

**Frederick Ivan George Hall** was born in Chesterfield early in 1917, the son of Christopher George Hall and his wife Aline (née Shearer) of Spital. The couple were married on 29 July 1901 at St Paul's, Hasland, when Christopher was 32 and Aline a 26-year-old widow. Both Christopher and his father George described themselves as engineers; Aline was the daughter of a retired police constable. In 1911 the family were living at 5 Central Street, Hasland Road, when Hall was working as an engine fitter. In 1939 they were at 8 Stanley Street, Spital; Christopher, then aged 70, gave his occupation as a 'marker off' in an engineering works, and his son Percy William Oliver Hall (30) was a travelling salesman in retail groceries and provisions. In both 1911 and 1939 the household also included his stepson, James Harold Mennell, aged 41, the managing director and secretary of a firm of iron, steel and brass founders, who was presumably Mrs Hall's son from her first marriage.



Frederick Hall died on 29 October 1943, aged 27, when he was a civilian volunteer with the British Army Aid Group. He was buried at Stanley Military Cemetery, Hong Kong. The Aid Group came into being early in 1942 to assist escapes from the prisoner of war and civilian internec camps established by the Japanese at Stanley after the surrender of Hong Kong on Christmas Day 1941.

Christopher G. Hall, aged 75, died in Shardlow registration district in 1944. Aline Hall's death, aged 86, was registered in Chesterfield in January 1962. Neither left a will. Mrs Hall's son J.H. Mennell, still of 8 Stanley Street, died on 1 August 1963. Probate was granted to Philip Gerald Barber, chartered accountant, and Robert Allen Hyde, a company director. These details imply that Mennell was secretary to Robert Hyde & Co. Ltd, the Spital ironfounding and engineering company, and that he did not leave a widow or any immediate family. His estate was sworn at £74,754.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21086, no. 225; RG 101/5897E/021/43; Cal. Grants 1963; internet accounts of the British Army Aid Group.)

**James Arthur Harrison** was born on 27 December 1920, the third son and fourth child of Lamech ('Mick') Harrison (1890–1951) and his wife Dorothy (1892–1962), of 65 Cotterhill Lane, Brimington. His father was a coal miner in 1911, living with his widowed mother at 65 Cotterhill Lane, and a part-time postman in 1939.

James (known as 'Curly') won a scholarship from Brimington school to the grammar school. He left in 1938 to become a wages clerk at Sheepbridge Stokes and later joined the Home Guard. He volunteered for the RAF in January 1942 and spent part of his training in Canada, where he was able to meet relatives. He returned in October 1943 to join 17 Operational Training Unit at RAF Silverstone (Northants.). After his training he was posted to 619 Squadron RAF as a navigator, reaching the rank of flight sergeant. Harrison was killed on 6 November 1944, aged 24, in an operation to attack the Dortmund–Ems canal at its junction with the Mittelland canal at Gravenhorst (Lower Saxony). At the time of his death the squadron was flying Lancasters from RAF Strubby (Lincs.) as part of No. 5 Group, Bomber Command. Harrison is commemorated on the RAF Memorial at Runnymede. His father, then

a retired coal miner, obtained probate of James's will in 1945, when he was found to have left effects worth £142. The family were still living at 65 Cotterhill Lane. Lamech Harrison died in 1951, aged 60, his widow Dorothy E. Harrison in 1962.

Another former grammar school pupil, Jack Adsetts (qv), died in 1943 while also serving in 619 Squadron.

(P. Harrison, *In Memory of a Brother: Flight Sergeant James Arthur Harrison RAFVR, 'Curly', 27th December 1920–6th November 1944, Navigator with 619 Squadron RAF* (Printed for private circulation, 2012); TNA, RG 14/21104, no. 88; RG 101/5956/019/5; *Derb. Times*, 21 Sept. 1945; CWGC; Cal. Grants, 1946; internet accounts of 619 Squadron.)

**William Keith Holmes** was born in 1918, the only child of Clement Frederick Holmes (1889–1968), a schoolmaster of 472 Chatsworth Road, and his wife Florrie. In 1911 Clement was a student teacher, living with his parents at 33 Vincent Crescent; his father, William Anthony Holmes, was a corn merchant's clerk. Clement married Florrie Davison in 1917.

Before the war W.K. Holmes was employed in the Chesterfield office of the Halifax Building Society. He won athletics prizes at the grammar school, was a member of Stanedge golf club and played competitive table tennis for the Chesterfield club. A private in the Sherwood Foresters, Holmes served in France before going to the Far East. He was captured at the fall of Singapore and died of malaria in Thailand on Christmas Day 1943, aged 27, while a prisoner of the Japanese. News of their son's death reached his parents on VJ Day.

Clement Holmes, still of 472 Chatsworth Road, died on 18 January 1968, leaving £3,047.

(TNA, RG 14/21099, no. 289; RG 101/58991/005/10; *Derb. Times*, 22 March, 31 May 1935, 3 April 1936, 5 May 1939, 24 Aug. 1945; Cal. Grants, 1968. The name is given as W.H. Holmes on the school memorial.)



**Kenneth George Iremonger** was the elder son of George Edgar Iremonger (1884–1964) and his wife Mabel Annie (1884–1938). In 1911 the couple, then recently married, were living in Retford (Notts.), where George was a Prudential Assurance agent and his wife was working in a greengrocery business. They later lived at 142 Brockwell Lane, Chesterfield, where Mrs Iremonger died in 1938, aged 54. Her husband obtained letters of administration in 1947, when his wife was found to have left effects valued at £543. He gave his occupation on that occasion as a sawyer.

Kenneth, who was born at Retford on 4 September 1911, was school captain and later graduated from Downing College, Cambridge. After leaving Cambridge he became a modern languages master at Calday Grange secondary school, West Kirby (Ches.). In the summer of 1939 he married Joan Hinchcliffe (1912–2009) and the couple initially lived at 125B Banks Road in West Kirby. Iremonger joined the Royal Engineers, was commissioned early in 1942, and was promoted captain in August that year. He was killed on 4 December 1942 serving at Headquarters, 2 Docks Group, RE, aged 31, and was buried in Bone War Cemetery, Annaba, Algeria. He left a widow but no children.

G.E. Iremonger, then of 'Roselea', Walton Back Lane, died on 11 February 1964, aged 79, leaving estate valued at £592. Kenneth's widow Joan died in 2009, aged 97, in Dorchester registration district, having never remarried.

(TNA, RG 14/20200, no. 75; RG 101/4024D/005/19; CWGC; *Derb. Times*, 15 Jan. 1943; Cal. Grants 1947, 1964.)

**Edward Alexander Henly Jobes** was born at Alfreton in November 1922, the younger son of Edward Jobes (1884–1956), a miner's son born in Sunderland, who in 1901 was an apprentice colliery electrical engineer, and his wife Marianne (née Grimley) (1886–1979), a miner's daughter from Boldon Colliery (Co. Durham). The couple were married in 1910, when Edward was working as a mechanical engineer at Wearmouth colliery in Monkwearmouth. In 1931 Jobes, then an engine-wright at Thoresby and Clipstone collieries (Notts.), succeeded J.R. Copping as chief engineer to the Bolsover Colliery Company. In 1939 he and his wife were living at 27 Ashgate Road, Chesterfield, with one living-in servant.

Edward moved from the grammar school in 1939 to board at Sedbergh. He attracted favourable comment in the *Sedberghian* in April 1941 for completing a ten-mile cross-country run 'nose-bleeding all the way round'. He joined the Army later that year and was serving as a lance corporal in the East Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of York's Own) when he was killed in action on D Day (6 June 1944). Jobes was buried in Banneville-la-Campagne War Cemetery (Calvados). He left effects valued at £1,070. His brother Kenneth was then a captain in the Royal Artillery in India and their father remained the Bolsover Company's chief engineer.

Edward and Marianne Jobes later lived at 'Woodthorpe', Calver Road, Baslow. Edward died on 29 January 1956 in a nursing home in Buxton. He left estate valued at £16,092. Mrs Jobes died in April 1979 in Scarborough (Yorks. NR) registration district, aged 93.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 12/4162, f. 65; RG 13/4723, f. 147; RG 13/4746, f. 10; RG 14/30222, no. 192; RG 101/5895D/002/35; *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 30 Oct. 1931; *Derb. Times*, 11 Aug. 1939; 14 July 1944 (where in both cases Jobes's parents' address is given as '27 Goldwell Hill'), 6 June 1952; Cal. Grants 1944, where 'Edward Jobbins' appears to be an incorrect rendering of the deceased's father's name; inf. kindly supplied by Dr Stephanie Carter, archivist, Sedbergh School.)

**Eric Gordon Kirkland** was born in 1921, the fourth son of William Richard Kirkland (1892–1970) and his wife Florence (née Barrett) (1893–1961). The couple were married at Chesterfield parish church on 5 August 1912, when Kirkland was an engine-turner of '398 Birdholme' (presumably meaning 398 Derby Road), the son of Richard Kirkland, an engine-fitter, and his bride was living at 124 Derby Road, the daughter of Arthur William Barrett, a miner. In 1939 the Kirklands were living at 144 Hunloke Avenue, Boythorpe, where William described himself as a 'maintenance engineer for surgical dressings and lint machines' – in other words, he was working at Robinson's, as was his son Cyril, also a maintenance engineer.

Eric Kirkland volunteered for the RAF in May 1941, having previously been employed at BSN Coal Sales, York House, Chesterfield. He was reported missing in December 1943 whilst a flight



sergeant observer in 254 Squadron RAF (Volunteer Reserve), part of RAF Coastal Command. He was later determined to have died on 23 November, aged 22. He is commemorated on the RAF memorial at Runnymede. At the time of Kirkland's death 254 Squadron was based at RAF North Coates (Lincs.), where it formed part of the North Coates Strike Wing, flying the Bristol Beaufighter Mark X and XI in the heavy fighter, bomber and 'Torbeau' (torpedo bomber) variants, attacking enemy shipping in the North Sea.

Kirkland had two brothers serving in the Forces, one abroad in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, and the other in the Pioneer Corps in England, as well as a brother-in-law who was a flight engineer in the RAF. Their father, still working as a mechanic, obtained letters of administration in 1949, when Eric was found to have left effects worth £343.

W.R. Kirkland, then of 2 Hazel Drive, Wingerworth, died on 29 January 1970. He left £5,155. His wife died in 1961, aged 68.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5898F/002/36; *Derb. Times*, 3 Dec. 1943; Cal. Grants, 1949, 1970; internet accounts of 254 Squadron. Kirkland appears as 'E. Kirkland' on the school memorial and is not included in the list printed in the *Cestrefeldian* in 1950.)

**Donald Maney Laycock**, was born on 14 August 1922, the son of Harold Wilfred Laycock (1889–1945) and his wife Gertrude Geldard (née Maney) (1888–1965) of Dore. The couple were married at St Martin's, Potter Newton (Yorks. WR), on 9 December 1918, when both were living in Leeds. He was an insurance official and she was a telephone operator. In 1939 they were living at 259 Abbeydale Road South, when his father was an insurance company branch manager.

Laycock was killed on 12 June 1944 when serving as a lieutenant in the 9th Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry. He was 22 and was buried at the Bayeux War Cemetery (Calvados). H.W. Laycock died on 2 December 1945; he left estate valued at £4,585. His widow was living in the Wallasey area of Cheshire when she died in 1965.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/3583J/022/12; Cal. Grants, 1946.)

**John Derek Middleton** was born in Chesterfield in 1917, the son of George Arthur Middleton and his wife Ellen (née Fisher), who were married in 1916. In 1911 George, aged 22, was lodging at 522 Chatsworth Road, Chesterfield, and working as an accountant's clerk. He was born at Pontefract (Yorks. WR).

An obituary in *The Times* stated that John Middleton was educated at Rossall School and Cranwell, where he won the King's Medal at the passing out parade in 1937 and the Adby Gerrard Fellowes Memorial Prize. He was Mentioned in Despatches as a lieutenant in the RAF 'for gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations', as the school magazine reported in March 1940. His father, described as a 'well known newspaper caricaturist' who began his career working for the *Derbyshire Times*, had previously been an accountant in Chesterfield and was a member of Chesterfield Golf Club. Newspaper reports of his death do not refer to his son spending part of his education at the grammar school, but Middleton appears on both the memorial and in the list of 1950 in the *Cestrefeldian*.

On 14 November 1939 Middleton, then a flying officer with 201 Squadron RAF, made a forced landing in the North Sea in a Saunders-Roe London flying boat 80 miles east of Shetland, after an engine malfunction during a long-range patrol. He tried to get the aircraft back to the UK but the heavy seas were against him and his co-pilot, and caused damage to the biplane. A Royal Navy destroyer, HMS *Imperial*, came to their rescue. Both airmen and their four crew were saved, although the aircraft had to be sunk by gunfire from *Imperial* to prevent it falling into German hands. This was the first loss of the war for 201 Squadron and Middleton was Mentioned in Despatches for his attempts to save the aircraft.

Middleton died on 9 July 1940 while serving as a flight lieutenant in 201 Squadron RAF. At the time of his death the squadron, as part of RAF Coastal Command, was flying the Short Sunderland Mark I flying boat on anti-submarine patrols over the North Atlantic from RAF Sullom Voe in the Shetland Islands. Middleton was the pilot of a Sunderland which disappeared on a routine ten-hour patrol from Shetland over the North Sea. His last radio message simply stated: 'Weather fine, visibility 20 miles, nothing to report'. Despite a search no trace was found at the time of the aircraft or its ten crew. In 2007 the Maritime and Coastguard Agency released a report made in 1998 that wreckage of the aircraft had been discovered on the seabed 90 miles



south-west of Sumburgh Head and east of Duncansby Head in the Pentland Firth. The site is classed as a War Grave and is under the protection of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (now Historic Environment Scotland) and the Ministry of Defence. Further enquiries located a report that the crews of two Luftwaffe long-range Me 110 fighters had shot down a 'large RAF aircraft' in that vicinity on that date. The plane was brought down after being intercepted by ME 110s based on Trondheim in occupied Norway.

Middleton is commemorated on the RAF Memorial at Runnymede.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21101, no. 74; *Derb. Times*, 21 March 1941, citing *The Times*, 18 March; internet accounts of 201 Squadron; *Cestrefeldian*, March 1940, 94; Jan. 1941, 45; *London Gazette*, 20 Feb. 1940)

**Dennis Leslie Mothersole** was born in 1924, the elder son of Wilfred Mothersole (1899–1985), a locomotive engine driver (presumably at Hasland shed; his own father, originally from Suffolk, was a railway goods guard), and his wife Mary Isabella (Dumelow) (1899–1985). The couple were married at St Paul's, Hasland, in August 1922, when Wilfred was a locomotive fireman living at 2 Calow Lane, and Mary, the daughter of an engine-driver, was living at 11 Park Hill, also in Hasland. The couple made their home at 50 Kent Street, Hasland.

At school Dennis was captain of Lingard house and a school vice-captain. With two other grammar school boys, Monty Manners, a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm, and Sergeant Pilot R.R. Dickinson (qv), Mothersole obtained an RAF university short course, and trained in Canada as a navigator on Mosquito aircraft. He completed his training in England as a night flying navigator and gunner only a fortnight before his death. Commissioned as a pilot officer RAF (Volunteer Reserve), he was stationed at RAF Hampstead Norris (Berks.) when he was thrown from his bicycle, hit his head on a 'concrete erection on the side of the road', and died instantly, aged 21. He had attended University College, Southampton, to which he intended to return to resume his studies. He was interred at Hasland cemetery following a funeral at Chesterfield parish church. Wreaths were sent by his station commander, NCOs at the station and pupils of 107 Squadron. The pilot of his aircraft

attended, with another officer.

Wilfred and Mary Mothersole died in February and May 1985, still living at 50 Kent Street. Wilfred left estate valued at £40,000; Mary left £59,893.

(CWGC; RG 14/21086, no. 506; RG 101/5900A/011/11 (where the closed record presumably refers to Dennis); *Derb. Times*, 25 May 1945; Cal. Grants, 1985.)

**Douglas Frank Newsham** was born on 15 October 1919, the son of Frank and Bertha Newsham of Dore. In 1939 Frank was in business on his own account as a builder and his son was working as his manager. The family lived at 59 Twentywell Lane, Dore. In 1941 Douglas married, at Whitchurch (Hants.), Jessie Haxton Graham Love. He died on 9 January 1942, aged 22, while serving as a flying officer in the RAF (Volunteer Reserve). He was a flying instructor at No. 5 Flying Training School, RAF Tern Hill, and crashed at Chetwynd Aston (Salop). He and a colleague were flying a Hurricane which collided with another aircraft during dog fight practice at 2,000 ft. His aircraft had required extensive repair after being damaged during the Battle of Britain in combat over Swanage (Dorset), when it made a forced landing at Bournemouth on 5 October 1940. The pilot was unhurt.

Newsham was buried at Christ Church, Dore. His home address at the time of his death was 139 Furniss Avenue, Dore. His widow obtained letters of administration, when his effects were found to be worth £125. In 1945 Mrs Newsham married John W. Blackwell. The Flying Officer Douglas Frank Newsham Memorial Fund was later established in his honour and is administered by the RAF Benevolent Fund.

(RG 101/3591J/021/8; CWGC; Cal. Grants 1942.)

**George Selwyn Oldfield** was born on 1 June 1920 at Taunton (Som.), the son of George Harry Robert Oldfield (1883–1933) and his wife Marion Ellen (née Chase). George Oldfield senior was born at Puddletown (Dorset), the son of another George Oldfield, a 'steward' (perhaps meaning a land steward). His son George, an Inland Revenue



valuer, and Marion were married in 1912 in Bromley registration district.

Their son died at sea on 17 January 1941, aged 20. He was a passenger in the SS *Almeda Star*, whilst serving in HMS *Goshawk*, a shore establishment at Piarco, Trinidad, as an acting leading airman RN. He is commemorated on the Royal Navy memorial at Lee on the Solent. The *Almeda Star* was built in 1926 for the Blue Star line and employed on the London–South America service. She was sunk by a German submarine about 35 nautical miles north of Rockall; all 360 on board died.

G.H.R. Oldfield of Gladstone Road, Chesterfield, died on 5 July 1933, aged 50, leaving £1,052. His widow was living at 5 Gladstone Road in 1939, where she was taking lodgers. Mrs Oldfield, then of 'Hazelhurst', Hazelwood Road, Duffield, died on 26 November 1957, leaving £6,752.

(TNA, RG 14/15200, no. 10; ADM 104/135, f. 2906; CWGC; Cal. Grants, 1933, 1958; TNA, RG 101/5895G/006/10; *Cestrefeldian*, May 1941, 81, 83; internet accounts of SS *Almeda Star* and HMS *Goshawk*.)

**Malcolm Parker** was born on 23 July 1918, the son of William Parker and his wife Eleanor Bessy. He died aged 22 on 12 October 1940 when the two-seater training aircraft he was flying over his home village of Holmewood crashed and burst into flames. Parker was a sergeant pilot in the RAF (Volunteer Reserve), which he had joined at the outbreak of war. At the time of his death he was attached to No. 7 Operational Training Unit at RAF Hawarden (Flints.) and had recently been awarded his wings.

Before the war Parker, who was single, was working as a timekeeper at an ironworks (probably those of the Clay Cross Co.); his father was a coke-oven labourer. The family lived at 38 Mornington Road, Holmewood. Parker, who was an active member of Zion Methodist church at Holmewood, was buried at All Saints', Heath.

(*Derb. Times*, 25 Oct. 1940, in which the village was not named, but see the issue of 10 March 1939; TNA, RG 101/5055H/023/38; CWGC.)

**Ralph Ramsay Smith**, the son of Arthur Henry Ramsay Smith (1884–1966) and his wife Beatrice Ellen (1885–), was born on 24 April 1920. Arthur was born in Stapleford, but in 1911 was living in Bolsover, where both he and his father were working as colliery clerks. On 8 December 1913 Arthur, still a colliery clerk, married, at St Andrew, Derby, Beatrice Ellen Burdett, the daughter of a retired police sergeant who was not in employment at the time of her marriage. Both bride and groom gave their address as 22 Oxford Street, Derby. In 1939 the couple were living at 43 Highfield Road, Dunkirk, Nottingham, when Arthur described himself as a retired secretary.

Ralph was killed on 4 April 1940 while serving as a leading aircraftman observer in the RAF (Volunteer Reserve). He joined up in May 1939, initially as a clerk but volunteered to train as an observer (navigator). He died as part of a two-man crew of a Handley-Page Heyford from RAF West Freugh (Wigtownshire) which was taking part in bombing a floating target in the sea off Stranraer. During the exercise their aircraft collided with another Heyford. The pilot of the second aircraft escaped by parachute and was rescued by an RAF launch, unconscious and with facial burns. The three remaining airmen were all listed as 'missing believed killed' until Ramsay Smith's body was found washed up on a beach three days later. The other men were never found.

Ramsay Smith was buried at St Mary, Bolsover. A memorial notice signed by 'Mother, Father and Joan' refers to him as his parents' only son. His father, still living at 43 Highfield Road, died in 1966, leaving estate valued at £3,595.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21123, no. 10; RG 101/6176H/013/11; *Cestrefeldian*, July 1940, 140; *Derb. Times*, 4 April 1941; Cal. Grants, 1966.)

**Gordon Cecil Rawlinson** was born on 27 February 1925, the son of George Edward Rawlinson (1899–1974) and his wife Olive (née Grayson) (1905–71), who were married at Whittington parish church on 21 April 1924. George was a railway fireman (and the son of a locomotive driver); Olive was of no occupation; her late father had been a platelayer. In 1939 the family were living at 40 London Street, New Whittington. George was by then a driver with the LMS Railway; a



closed record at the same address was presumably that of their son.

Gordon joined the Fleet Air Arm in March 1943 aged 18, having previously been the first boy to enrol in 331 Squadron, Air Training Corps (the grammar school's own squadron). Before being called up he worked at British Thomson-Houston on Whittington Moor and was engaged to be married to Miss S. Wright of Brampton.

Rawlinson died at sea on 24 July 1945, aged 20, while serving as an acting petty officer airman on HMS *Formidable*, attached to 848 Naval Air Squadron. According to a Royal Navy communiqué, he and his pilot failed to return from what were described as 'flying operations', when 'Takamatsu Airfield, on Shikoku Island across the Inland Sea from Kobe, was blasted by bombs from naval aircraft of the carriers HMS FORMIDABLE, VICTORIOUS, and IMPLACABLE, of the British Pacific Task Force'. HMS *Formidable* was completed in 1940 and assigned to the British Pacific Fleet in 1945, in which she played a supporting role in the Battle of Okinawa and later attacked the Japanese Home Islands. On the day on which Rawlinson died the ship's aircraft attacked targets near Osaka and the Inland Sea, crippling the escort carrier *Kaiyo*. During this period *Formidable* carried aircraft of 848 Squadron (Grumann TBF Avenger) and 1841 Squadron (Vought F4U Corsair). Rawlinson is commemorated on the Royal Navy memorial at Lee on the Solent.

G.E. Rawlinson died in 1974, three years after his wife. He was then living at 44 Elliott Drive in Inkersall and left estate valued at £2,809.

(*Derb. Times*, 24 Aug. 1945; TNA, ADM 104/136, f. 3198; RG 101/5892A/024/34; Cal. Grants, 1974; CWGC; internet accounts of HMS *Formidable*.)

**Henry Bonnington Ridgeway** (evidently known as Harry, the name on the school memorial) was the son of Clement Bernard Ridgeway (1896–1953) and Doris Ethel (née Taylor) of Padley, near Grindleford. In 1939 C.B. Ridgeway, a chartered architect and surveyor, was a widower living at 'Lulworth', Summer Hill, Froggatt. Henry, who was born in 1923, was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant on 19 September 1943, having previously been an officer cadet. He served with the 7th Battalion, The Suffolk Regiment, attached to the Royal Armoured Corps, in Italy, where he died on 3 August 1944. He is buried in

Florence War Cemetery and is commemorated on Grindleford war memorial. His father obtained probate of his will in 1945, when his address was given as Oaks Wood, Grindleford. His effects were valued at £258 13s. 10d. C.B. Ridgeway left £9,632 at his death in 1953.

(TNA, RG 101/5936E/017/25; Cal. Grants 1945, 1953.)

**James Johnstone Robinson** was born on 26 September 1921, the youngest son of John Bradbury Robinson, the managing director of Robinson & Son Ltd of Chesterfield, and his wife Agnes (née Johnstone) of Green Gables, Somersall Lane. He was the brother of E.B. Robinson and C.P. Robinson and had two sisters, Mrs A.W.C. Glossop and Mrs G.W. Wallis.

Although his name does not appear on the grammar school memorial or in the list in the *Cestrefeldian* in 1950, according to a lengthy obituary in the *Derbyshire Times*, James attended the grammar school for a time before proceeding to Rydal School, Colwyn Bay, the Methodist independent school today known as Rydal Penrhos. He left school in July 1939 for Queens' College, Cambridge, where he graduated in natural sciences after taking the shortened two-year war-time course. He joined the RAF and was sent to train in Rhodesia in September 1941, from where he was posted directly to North Africa. He was awarded his wings in September 1942 and commissioned as a pilot officer shortly afterwards. Robinson died on active service in North Africa on 11 January 1943, aged 21, and is buried at Khayat Beach War Cemetery, Israel. He was killed on a training flight from 74 Operational Training Unit, RAF Muqebila (Palestine), a unit equipped with Hawker Hurricanes, in which reconnaissance pilots were trained.

Robinson's will was proved by his father in April 1944, when he was found to have left £5,029.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5899H/019/27; *Derb. Times*, 15 Jan. 1943; Cal. Grants, 1944.)

**Charles Howard Rudge** was born on 15 March 1920, the son of Charles Rudge (1892–1957) and his wife Alice May (1893–1957). Charles senior was the son of Howard Rudge, a railway guard of 21



Handley Road, New Whittington. Charles was in the Army when he married Alice May Revill of 65 South Street, New Whittington, the daughter of a deceased ironworker, at St Bartholomew, Whittington, on 24 April 1915. Both were 22; she was of no occupation. In 1939 the couple were living at 'Sun Ray', 271 Chesterfield Road, Staveley. Charles was then a railway locomotive driver.

Their son Charles worked as a chemist for the Ministry of Supply and served in the 12th Battalion, Durham Home Guard (which may be a clue as to where he worked), before volunteering for the RAF in 1941. In October 1942 his mother received news from Canada that he had been commissioned a pilot officer, two weeks after he graduated at Manitoba as a sergeant observer. He died in Canada on 29 October 1942, aged 22 and was buried in the Summerside People's Cemetery in Charlottetown (Prince Edward Island). Rudge was then a trainee navigator and he and three colleagues were killed when their Avro Anson crashed into trees at Conway, on Prince Edward Island, on a navigation exercise from No. 1 Ground Reconnaissance School, Royal Canadian Air Force Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

Charles's parents, still of 271 Chesterfield Road, died within three weeks of each other in 1957, Charles on 3 and Alice on 24 May, leaving estate valued at £2,883 and £2,789 respectively.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5925C/016/38; WO 409/27/43/212; *Derb. Times*, 16 Oct. 1942, 10 March 1944; Cal. Grants, 1957; the name appears as 'C. Rudge' on the memorial but is given in full in the *Cestrefeldian*.)

**Thomas Arthur Sharpe MBE** (known as Tim or Timothy) was born in 1913, the son of Thomas Arthur Sharpe (1889–1974) and his wife Emma Elizabeth (née Wood) (1890–1968). Thomas, aged 21, and Emma were married on 12 November 1910 at St Paul's, Hasland. He was then lodging at 23 Ashfield Road, Hasland, and was a miner, as his late father, Thomas Sharpe, had been. Emma, who was 19 and pregnant, gave her address as '1 Loscow Row, Darley' (which cannot be located in Darley Abbey, Darley Dale or anywhere else in Derbyshire), but provided no details of her parentage or her own occupation. After their marriage the couple lived at 23 Ashfield Road, the home of Frederick Nottingham, also a miner, and his family; when

the census was taken in April 1911 they had a five-month-old daughter Olive. In 1939 the couple were living at 50 Hasland Green; Thomas was then a colliery underground manager. They were of 'Hill Crest', 19 Stretton Road, Morton, at the time of their son's death.

Tim Sharpe became an official in the Indian Civil Service and was captured by a Japanese patrol on his way from Imphal to Tamenglong in the spring of 1944. At the time Sharpe, aged 30, was an additional deputy commissioner in the Manipur state of Assam, of which Imphal was the capital. He was due to return to England on leave when he was captured. Earlier in the war, during the retreat from Burma, Sharpe led a search party sent out in response to an SOS by General Stilwell, US commander of Chinese armies in Burma, who, with others and a US military mission, were lost in the jungle. With 23 horses laden with food and medical supplies, and 500 natives, Sharpe eventually found Stilwell and a 'band of exhausted men and women in the wild country of the Indo-Burmese border'. He was later offered a high ranking commission in the US Army but the Government of India would not release him. He was instead appointed MBE and promoted. Sharpe's brother was an under-manager at Bond's Main colliery, having previously worked at Morton colliery.

Tim Sharpe was declared missing by the Government of Assam on 12 April 1944; the Commonwealth War Graves Commission recorded his date of death as 9 April, at Haoching. He was evidently murdered by the Japanese shortly after his capture.

Thomas Arthur Sharpe senior, then of 3 Evershill Close, Morton, died on 24 January 1974, leaving estate valued at £3,472. His wife died at their home on Stretton Road on 14 October 1968, leaving £962.

(CWGC; British Library, India Office Records, L-AG-34-14A-17; TNA, RG 14/21086, no. 437; RG 101/5900D/021/13; *Derb. Times*, 5 May, 16 June 1944; Cal. Grants, 1968, 1974.)

**Gordon Henry Slack** was born in Chesterfield on 3 June 1919, the only son of Philip Arthur Slack (1893–1956) and his wife Mabel Browne (1889–1953). Philip was in turn the son of John Walter Slack (1861–1948), a dental surgeon, and his wife Mary Ann (1859–1945). In 1911 the family were living at 69 Saltergate, the easternmost house in The Terrace, the imposing row built c.1845. Philip and his brother



Joseph Henry were both working as draper's assistants. In 1916 Philip married Mabel Browne Fletcher, the daughter of Gertrude Elizabeth Sales Hawkins, a widow who in 1911 was the licensee of the Three Horseshoes on Packers Row in the Shambles. The Hawkins family had owned the pub since at least the mid nineteenth century. Mabel was then an assistant at a ladies' outfitters. In 1939 Philip and Mabel were living at 81 Saltergate, when Philip gave his occupation as clerk and laboratory storekeeper; he was said in 1941 to have worked for the Staveley Coal & Iron Co. for 25 years before becoming licensee of the Elm Tree Hotel at Staveley about three months before his son was killed. The household at 81 Saltergate, the stone-built house at the western end of The Terrace, was headed by Philip's parents and also included Gordon, then aged 19, and two domestic servants.

Gordon played rugby for the grammar school, was a proficient swimmer and had gained a life-saving award. He was a member of Chesterfield Operatic Society. Before joining the RAF he was also a clerk in the offices of the Staveley Company, although when the National Register was compiled in September 1919 he did not state an occupation.

Slack joined the RAF as a reservist in June 1939 and in December that year was listed in the school magazine as a sergeant. He died on 21 March 1941, aged 21, while serving as a sergeant in 240 Squadron RAF (Volunteer Reserve), and was buried in Irvinestown Church of Ireland churchyard. The *Derbyshire Times* refers to Slack dying on active service 'in tragic circumstances' and to wreaths of daffodils sent by the people of the district and the soldiers and townsfolk who formed a guard of honour at his funeral, but conspicuously omits to say where he was buried. Irvinestown (or Lowtherstown) is in co. Fermanagh, in the south-west of Northern Ireland. 240 Squadron was then part of No. 18 GR Group, Coastal Command, and was equipped with the Consolidated Catalina sea plane, used to carry out anti-submarine patrols over the Atlantic. The squadron was stationed at RAF Killadeas in co. Fermanagh. The school magazine recorded his death without any additional comment.

The reason why additional secrecy surrounded the circumstances in which Slack's Catalina crashed as it returned from the crew's first patrol over the North Atlantic was the location of the loss. It occurred in the Irish Free State, which represented itself as neutral during what some in the Republic of Ireland continue to call the 'Emergency' of

1939-45. An agreement between the British Government and the government of the Free State allowed RAF aircraft to take a short cut along the 'Donegal Corridor'. None of the eight crew survived the crash at Glenade (co. Leitrim), which occurred in heavy fog after the aircraft struck a hillside. A memorial marks the scene. The crew had only arrived at their new base, RAF Lough Erne, the day before.

Mabel Slack of the Elm Tree Hotel, Staveley, died on 4 August 1953. Probate was granted to her husband, a licensed victualler, when her effects were valued at £1,878. Philip, then of 1 Sycamore Lane, Hollingwood (in Staveley), died on 14 May 1956, aged 63. Probate was granted to Donald Moore, a draughtsman, and his wife Dorothy, when Slack was found to have left effects worth £1,881. The couple were buried at Spital cemetery where they are commemorated by a single headstone.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21095, no. 117; RG 14/21090, no. 263; RG 101/5895F/005/8; *Chesterfield Streets and Houses*, 115-16, 149; *Cestrefeldian*, Dec. 1949, 47; May 1941, 82; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 25 March 1941; *Derb. Times*, 28 March 1941; Cal. Grants, 1946, 1948, 1953, 1956; Find a Grave website; internet accounts of 240 Squadron.)

**Leonard Henry Smith** has not been identified for certain. The only man of this name recorded by the Commonwealth War Grave Commission died of wounds on 26 November 1942, aged 33, serving as a gunner in 280 Battery, 49 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery, and is buried at Medjez-El-Bab War Cemetery, Tunisia. He was born at Strood, near Rochester (Kent), and his home at the time of his death was Rochester. He appears to have no connection with Chesterfield. The L.H. Smith listed in the school magazine in March 1940 was then a sergeant in the Royal Corps of Signals; in January 1941 the magazine reported that he had been posted as 'missing' and in September, when his rank was given as staff sergeant, stated that he had died in France, 'presumably killed in action'.

A man named Leonard Harry Smith was born in Chesterfield registration district on 18 December 1910 and was baptised at Holy Trinity, Newbold Road, on 12 January 1911. In 1939 he was registered as Leonard Smith. He was then working as a coal sales marketing clerk



(to which the word 'school' has been added in his National Register entry, although why is unclear) and living at 198 Tapton View Road with his parents and an older sister Edith, a dental nurse. Their parents were Thomas Henry Smith (1875–), a retired railway clerk, and Phoebe Mary Smith (1875–). Leonard was then single. He could presumably be the Leonard H. Smith who in 1945 married, in Chesterfield registration district, Marjorie Bingham, although there is no strong evidence that he was, nor that he was the Leonard H. Smith who in 1959 married Mavis Backhouse, also in Chesterfield registration district. Leonard Harry Smith's death, aged 78, was registered in Chesterfield registration district in July 1989. He did not leave a will. No evidence has been found that this man served in the Second World War, much less that he was killed.

(CWGC; records of Royal Artillery Historical Trust; TNA, RG 101/5895E/012/33; *Cestrefeldian*, March 1940, 94; Jan. 1941, 45; May 1941, 105.)

**Ralph Ramsay Smith:** *see under* Ramsay Smith.

**Thomas Rowland Smith** was the son of Herbert and Fanny Smith and the husband of Kathleen Smith, all of Chesterfield. Smith joined up on 7 October 1940 and went out to Malaya in March 1941. He had previously been on the staff of Allen & Orr Ltd, the Chesterfield timber merchants. According to the testimony in 1946 of Captain G.V. Bird, Royal Engineers, Smith died of cholera aged 27 on 10 August 1943 whilst a prisoner of the Japanese. He was a private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps when he was taken prisoner at the fall of Singapore. He is commemorated on the Singapore Memorial. When his wife was officially informed of Smith's death in December 1945 she was living at 98 Newbold Road. The last she had heard of him was a postcard she received on Christmas Eve 1943, five months after he died.

The family are not easy to identify in other sources. A man named Herbert Smith married Fanny Henstock at Holywell Cross Primitive Methodist church in the second quarter of 1912. The previous year she was lodging with her brother and his family at 9 Shepley Street, Brampton, and working as a machinist at Robinsons's, but the only

Thomas R. Smith whose birth is registered in the same district at roughly the right date (the last quarter of 1915) had a mother whose maiden name was Smedley. In 1939 a man named Herbert Smith, born on 7 February 1885, was living at 82 Newbold Road and working as a timber yard assistant foreman, but his wife's name was Clara (not Fanny), and she was born on 11 May 1886. The coincidence of occupations suggests that this is T.R. Smith's father, and a man named Herbert Smith married Clara Nuttall in Chesterfield in 1936. The household at 82 Newbold Road in 1939 included Francis R. Nuttall, born in 1915, who was presumably Clara's son from her previous marriage. It has proved impossible to locate Fanny Smith's death to confirm this suggestion.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21100, no. 243; WO 361/1631/1; WO 361/1633; *Derb. Times*, 14 Dec. 1945; TNA, RG 101/5895D/013/26.)

**George Arthur Stamp DFM** was said to be aged 26 when he died in 1940, but there is no birth registration for a person of this name around 1914; the closest match is the George A. Stamp born in Southwell (Notts.) registration district in the last quarter of 1911.

The grammar school pupil was the son of Arthur Stamp (1887–1964), a railway signalman, and his wife Flory (or Florrie) (1889–1976). The couple were married at Sutton cum Duckmanton parish church on 5 October 1908, when both gave their address as 159 Arkwright Town. Arthur was then 21, the son of George Stamp, a caretaker, and was himself working as a porter-signalman on the railway, presumably at Arkwright Town station on the former Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast line, which had been taken over in 1907 by the Great Central Railway. Flory Stevens was 19 and was not working; her late father had been a collier. When the census was taken in April 1911 the couple were living at Railway Cottages, Edwinstowe (Notts.), also on the former LD&EC line (and in Southwell registration district), where Arthur was a signalman. A return of LNER employees at Arkwright Town station in 1939 lists Arthur as a signalman who had joined the railway on 20 September 1903. The couple were then living at 5 Church Lane, Calow.

At the grammar school George passed matriculation, gained a first



class certificate in commercial law, and was in the Cadet Corps. After school he joined the staff of the Chesterfield Tube Co., where he stayed for about six years. He joined the RAF in November 1935 and trained as a pilot. He flew conventional aeroplanes for two years before switching to seaplanes. Stamp was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal in February 1940 for 'gallantry and devotion to duty during war operations'. When he was decorated he was a sergeant pilot in 228 Squadron RAF, part of No. 15 GR Group, Coastal Command, which was stationed at RAF Pembroke Dock in South Wales and was engaged in maritime reconnaissance. It later moved to RAF Alexandria and RAF Aboukir in Egypt, before transferring in September 1940 to RAF Kalafra on Malta, with a detachment at RAF Alexandria, for similar duties. The squadron was then equipped with the Short Sunderland flying boat patrol bomber. Stamp died on 1 November 1940, aged 26, while serving as a sergeant pilot in the squadron, which that day was in action over Malta. He is commemorated on the Alamein Memorial in Egypt.

Arthur Stamp, then resident at 34 Church Lane, Calow, died on 22 April 1964, aged 76, leaving £2,288. Florrie, then of 241 Mansfield Road, Hasland, died on 22 February 1976, aged 76, when she left £4,266.

(CWGC; *Derb. Times*, 1 March 1940; *Cestrefeldian*, March 1940, 94; Jan. 1941, 43; internet accounts of 228 Squadron; TNA, RG 14/20700, no. 20; RG 101/5957F/018/20; RAIL 397/1; Cal. Grants, 1964, 1976.)

**A.T. Taylor.** Both on the school memorial and in the *Cestrefeldian* this man is named thus and, because the surname is common, he is difficult to identify in other sources without Christian names.

**Frank Taylor** was born in 1923, the younger son of Harry Taylor (b. 1899), who in 1939 was a salesman with Sir Ernest Shentall Ltd, the Chesterfield wholesale fruit and vegetable merchants, and his wife Florence (née Newton) (b. 1901). The couple, who were married in 1921, were then living at 348 Brimington Road. Harry had been a prisoner of the Germans in the First World War, having been captured

at Arras in March 1918, serving with the Sherwood Foresters and the Machine Gun Corps.

Frank left the grammar school to become an aircraft apprentice in the RAF in 1939 and was posted to the Far East in December 1941. He was reported missing after the fall of Singapore in February 1942. He was then 19 and a leading aircraftman. In June 1943 his family were advised that he had been reported (not necessarily reliably) to be a prisoner of the Japanese. He was in fact a prisoner and was on board a transport ship which was torpedoed and sunk on 29 November 1943. Some 414 British servicemen and 133 Dutch nationals were aboard a Japanese steamship, the *Suez Maru*, when it was torpedoed by a United States Navy submarine, USS *Bonefish*, in the Java Sea. Its commander was unaware that the troopship was carrying prisoners from Ambon to Surabaya. About 250 men, locked in one of the holds, drowned and the remainder were machine-gunned in the water by the crew of a Japanese escort vessel. There were no survivors. A memorial to the British men who died in the incident was dedicated in 2013 at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

Frank's elder brother, Ernest Norman Taylor, was a sergeant in the RAF in 1943, aged 21, who had also gone from school into the RAF as an aircraft apprentice. He had then been serving for 2½ years on Malta, and had previously been loaned to the Finnish government as a technical adviser during their early campaign against Russia. Their sister, Irene (18), who had been on the office staff at Chesterfield Tube Works, joined the WRNS the week the news concerning Frank reached the family.

(TNA, RG 101/5894G/004/34 (where the closed record may refer to Frank); *Derb. Times*, 4 June 1943. TNA, WO 361/2053, List No. JH 287 records the death in Japanese custody of a Private Frank Taylor on 13 September 1943 of a tropical ulcer; this is not the former grammar school pupil.)

**Alec Towndrow** was born in 1919, the elder son of Mr and Mrs A. Towndrow. He won a county council scholarship from Wigley school (in Brampton) to the grammar school and was serving as a flight sergeant in the RAF when in January 1942 he married Edna May Boothman, born on 19 May 1920, the elder daughter of Mr and Mrs



Frank Boothman of 75 Derby Road, Draycott. She described herself as a textile worker in 1939; her father was a plasterer. Alec's parents lived at Banksfield Farm, Draycott. Edna remarried in 1948; her second husband was Kenneth H. Lewsley. She died in 1974, aged 53, leaving £1,083; she was then living at 20 St Mary's Avenue, Draycott.

Nothing has been discovered of Towndrow's RAF career or the circumstances of his death; at present the only evidence that he died during the war, other than his inclusion on the school memorial and the list in the *Cestrefeldian*, is his widow's remarriage in 1948. On the other hand, the only death registration in England & Wales which fits Towndrow's exact Christian name and date of birth is that of Alec Towndrow of 17 Kirkston Road South, Netherton Park Estate, Litherland, Liverpool 21, who died on 23 March 1953 at Calne (Wilts.), aged 33. Administration of his estate of £60 was granted to his widow Marion, formerly Marion McVittie, whom he married in Crosby (Lancs.) registration district in 1948. It is therefore possible that Alec Towndrow survived the war, that he and Edna divorced (or at least agreed to separate) and that both remarried. This conclusion appears to be supported by the existence of a prisoner of war record for an RAF Sergeant A. Towndrow, who was held at Stalag 357 at Fallingbommel (Lower Saxony) in March 1945. A serviceman (for whom no details are given) named Towndrow completed an interrogation report on release from a prisoner of war camp in Germany in 1945.

(*Derb. Times*, 30 Jan. 1942 (which uses the Christian name Alex); TNA, RG 101/5977E/004/16; Cal. Grants, 1954, 1974.)

**John Alfred Turner**, the son of John George Turner (1874–1964), a master butcher, and his wife Annie (1880–1960) of 37 Mary's Gate, Chesterfield, was born on 12 March 1915. In 1939 he was a law student and solicitor's managing clerk. He died on 13 August 1944, aged 29, while serving as a flying officer with 101 Squadron, RAF (Volunteer Reserve), and was buried at Hanover War Cemetery in Germany. Turner a navigator aboard a Lancaster bomber which was shot down by a Luftwaffe Junkers Ju 88 night fighter over Sulingen (Lower Saxony), during a mission to Brunswick. All eight crew perished.

At the time of Turner's death 101 Squadron, part of No. 1 Group, Bomber Command, was based at RAF Ludford Magna (Lincs.) and was

flying Lancasters fitted with a secret radio jamming system codenamed 'Airborne Cigar' (ABC). By transmitting during flights over Germany, these aircraft were especially vulnerable to attack and 101 Squadron had the highest casualty rate of any in the RAF. Another former pupil of the grammar school, Joseph Eric Goddard (qv), also died while serving in the same Squadron.

John's parents were still living at 37 St Mary's Gate when his mother died on 22 January 1960, leaving estate valued at £4,788. His father, then of 128 Ashover Road, Old Tupton, died on 28 December 1964, aged 90, leaving £23,213.

(TNA, RG 101/5896A/010/9; Cal. Grants, 1960, 1964; CWGC; internet accounts of 101 Squadron and ABC.)

**Eric Blanchard Tuxford** was born c. 1905, probably in Hong Kong, the son of Alfred Stanley Tuxford (1875–1948), whose own father was a Norwich bookseller and stationer. In 1891 Alfred was a printer's apprentice, and in 1896, when he joined the Royal Navy, he gave his occupation as compositor. Alfred left the Royal Navy two years later. In 1911 he described himself as a medical student when he arrived at London from Hong Kong aboard the *Kamu Maru* of the Japan-European Line, travelling second class. At some date after 1891 Alfred married Clarissa Long (1872–1953), the daughter of an agricultural labourer of Hingham (Norf.) who that year was a pupil teacher. The couple were not married in England & Wales.

In July 1913 Clarissa arrived at London from Hong Kong on board the P&O vessel *Palawan* with her daughter Iris Doreen (12) and sons Gordon Stanley (10) and Dennis Blanchard (eight). The family's 'country of last permanent residence' was Hong Kong and the children's future country of intended permanent residence was given as England (presumably to enable them to attend school). Clarissa gave 'British possessions' as her destination, possibly meaning that she was intending to return to her husband in Hong Kong, where Eric appears to have been born. The family were travelling second class.

In 1933 Eric Tuxford, who was then single, was living at 22 Cromwell Grove, Hammersmith, and in 1935–8 at 16 Bromyard Avenue, Acton. Early in 1939 he married Margot Angela Ripley, who was born in Hampstead in 1911. In 1932–3 she was living at 54 Grove Road,



Isleworth, as she was in 1937–8 when she was using the surname Dean (but appears not to have married in the interim). Immediately after their marriage (when she gave both surnames) Eric and Margot were resident at 264 Chiswick Village.

On 1 December 1937, while serving in the regiment as a private, Tuxford was commissioned 2nd lieutenant in the Artists Rifles (which did not serve abroad in the Second World War). He died on 2 February 1943 while serving as a captain in the Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own), attached to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Punjab Regiment, and is buried at Taukkyan War Cemetery in Burma. The battalion served in India, Burma and the Dutch East Indies during the Second World War and received more gallantry awards than any other unit of the Indian Army.

When a grant of administration was made to his widow Margot on 27 January 1945 (which may have been about the time she learnt of his death) her address was 128 Upper Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. He left £195. Tuxford's parents later settled in Australia, where they both died. The family appears to have no connection with Chesterfield.

(TNA, BT 26/564; Electoral regs. per Ancestry; *London Gazette*, 30 Nov. 1937, p. 7519; CWGC; TNA, WO 304; Cal. Grants 1945; internet accounts of the Punjab Regiment. For Tuxford's father see TNA, RG 11/1933, ff. 67r.–v., RG 12/1528, f. 7v., ADM 188/536, no. 354744, BT 26/497; for his mother see TNA, RG 12/1534, f. 31; and for the family generally see several pedigrees on Ancestry.)

**Harry Nutt Unwin** was born in 1918, the son of Harry Jackson Unwin (1881–1970) and his wife Sarah Elizabeth (1884–1943), who were living at 'C Side', Highstairs Lane, Stretton, in 1939, when Harry was a clerk with the Derbyshire county council education committee. They were said to be of Ilkeston at the time of their son's death on 3 September 1941, aged 23. He was a sergeant in 44 Squadron, RAF (Volunteer Reserve), and was buried in the Berlin 1939–1945 War Cemetery at Charlottenburg. 44 Squadron was part of No. 5 Group Bomber Command, which in 1941 was flying Hampden bombers from RAF Waddington (Lincs.). Unwin was an observer (navigator) and died with three fellow crew members when their Hampden crashed at

Wittenburg (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) during a raid on Berlin, after it was brought down by anti-aircraft fire.

Unwin's father obtained letters of administration in August 1943, when Harry was found to have left effects worth £1,243. Sarah Unwin, then of Highstairs Lane, Stretton, died on 20 February 1943. Letters of administration were granted to her husband; she left £848. Harry Jackson Unwin, then of 70 Station Road, Rawcliffe, Goole (Yorks. WR), died on 22 February 1970, aged 90, leaving estate valued at £83,916.

(CWGC; Find a Grave website; internet account of squadron; TNA, RG 101/5954E/015/291 Cal. Grants, 1943, 1970.)

**Jack Wagstaffe**, whose name does not appear on the grammar school memorial (or in the *Cestrefeldian* list in 1950) and whose Christian name is not given in the report in the *Derbyshire Times* which describes him as a former pupil, was born in 1918, the son of Charles Wagstaffe (1893–1973), a colliery underground road layer, and his wife Frances (née Slater) (1886–1968) of 19 Derby Road. Charles and Frances were married in Chesterfield registration district in 1915.

Before joining up, their son worked at Markham colliery. In the summer of 1939 he married Gertrude E. Holmes. She was born on 25 June 1918, the daughter of Alfred William Holmes, who in 1939 was an 'underground colliery corporal' of 16 South End, Grassmoor. When the National Register was compiled in September that year Gertrude was staying with her family and working as a daily domestic. She and Jack later made their home at 16 Redvers Buller Road. At the time of his death the couple had two young children. Wagstaffe was wounded while serving as a sergeant in the Army in North Africa in July 1943 and died in hospital from his injuries a few weeks later.

Gertrude Wagstaffe married Robert H. Bean in the spring of 1944 and died on 1 January 1960, aged 41. She was then living at 53 North Wingfield Road, Grassmoor. Charles Wagstaffe, still living at 19 Derby Road, died on 23 May 1973, leaving estate worth £2,625; his wife died intestate in 1968.

(*Derb. Times*, 3 Sept. 1943; TNA, RG 101/5898G/007/17, RG 101/5958A/013/13; Cal. Grants, 1973.)



**Samuel Henry Wetherill** was born at Shirebrook on 27 May 1921, the son of Sam and Elsie Gertrude Wetherill of 6 Railway Cottages, Station Road, Langwith Junction. His father was a patrol ganger on the railway. Samuel, who passed school certificate at the grammar school in 1936, was a telegraphist in the Royal Naval Patrol Service. He was on board HMS BY Minesweeper 2077 when it was mined in the Gulf of Corinth off Greece on 25 October 1944. He was 23 when he died and is commemorated on the Lowestoft Naval Memorial.

(*Derb. Times*, 4 Sept. 1936; TNA, RG 101/594A/012/23 (on which the closed entry is presumably for S.H. Wetherill); ADM 104/138, f. 4130; CWGC; internet accounts of the loss of the minesweeper. Wetherill's name is misspelt 'Weatherill' on the school memorial.)

**Charles Wharton** was born in 1922, the son of Charles Wharton (1890–1956) and his wife Rhoda (née Bower) (1892–1960), who were married in 1919. Rhoda was the daughter of John Bower, a miner, and in 1911, when the family were living at 3 Bridge Street, off Hawthorne Street, in Birdholme, was working as a tailoress. Charles was then a house painter and was lodging at 62 School Board Lane, Brampton. In 1939 the Whartons were living at 32 Markham Cottages, Duckmanton. Charles was then a colliery chief engine-wright.

Charles Wharton junior joined the RAF and in September 1942 sailed in the Canadian Pacific vessel SS *Beaverhill* for St John, New Brunswick, presumably to complete his training in Canada. He died on 20 October 1943, aged 20 while serving as a sergeant in 57 Squadron, RAF (Volunteer Reserve) and was buried in the Berlin 1939–45 War Cemetery. In 1943 the squadron was part of No. 5 Group Bomber Command, flying Lancasters from RAF East Kirkby (Lincs.). Wharton was the rear-gunner in a Lancaster which was shot down by anti-aircraft fire over Arneburg (Saxony-Anhalt) during a mission to Leipzig. None of the eight crew survived.

Charles Wharton senior, then of 281 Hady Hill, Chesterfield, died on 17 September 1956. Probate was granted to his widow Rhoda, when his effects were valued at £4,188. She died in 1966, still living at 281 Hady Hill, when she left £2,102.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21084, no. 181; RG 14/21097, no. 636; RG 101/5924F/002/2 (where the closed record presumably refers to Charles and Rhoda's son Charles); BT 27; Cal. Grants, 1956, 1966; internet accounts of 57 Squadron and RAF East Kirkby.)

**Harold Wheeldon** was born in 1918, the son of Charles Wheeldon (1884–1969) and his wife Elsie Honor (née Wood) (1887–1939). The couple were married at Ashover parish church on 14 September 1909; Charles was then working as a joiner, as was his father Joseph; Elsie lived at Peasonhurst in Ashover and was the daughter of a roadman named James Wood. Two years later Charles was in business on his own account as a builder and he and his wife were living at 86 Hasland Road, Chesterfield. In September 1939, his wife having died earlier that year, Charles was a widower living at 184 Peveril Road and working as a bricklayer. He died in 1969, aged 84.

In 1940 Harold Wheeldon married Bessie Sambrook (1922–2011), a clerk in a drapery store, who lived at 94 Hunloke Avenue, Boythorpe. He must have been called up around the same time, since he was listed in the school magazine in July that year as a private in the Royal Corps of Signals. Wheeldon was killed on 9 October 1943, aged 25. He was a signaller in the Royal Corps of Signals and had been Mentioned in Despatches. He was buried in Leros War Cemetery, Greece. His home address remained 94 Hunloke Avenue. When his wife obtained probate of his will in January 1944, he was found to have left effects worth £164. The following year Bessie married Donald Marsland Heath Revill (1919–2002), who in 1939 was working as an engineering draughtsman and was living with his parents at 31 Avondale Road. Bessie, then of 9 Lansdowne Avenue, Chesterfield, died on 24 May 2011, aged 89.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 14/21086, no. 176; RG 101/5898E/022/171; RG 101/5895E/005/38; RG 101/5893E/024/32; *Cestrefeldian*, July 1940, 140; *Derb. Times*, 29 Oct. 1943, 20 Oct. 1944; Cal. Grants, 1944.)

**George Widdowson** was born on 10 January 1911, the elder son of Fred and Mary Elizabeth Widdowson of 45 High Street, Old Whittington. Fred was then a rolling mill assistant. Educated at New Whittington



school, the grammar school and Hymers College, Hull, George joined the Territorial Army before the war, when he was on the staff of Barclays Bank at Beverley, and commanded the Beverley and Pocklington companies of the 5th (TA) Battalion of the Green Howards. He was commissioned in 1930. In December 1937 he married, at St John's church, Newland, Hull, Kathleen Mary Girling (1914–91), the only daughter of Herbert and Mary Girling of Hull. Her father was a clerk in the Ministry of Labour. Widdowson's parents were also of Hull at the time of the wedding. In 1939 the couple were living at 2 Park Avenue, Manor Road, Beverley, with her parents.

Widdowson joined a regular battalion of the Green Howards on the outbreak of war, fought in France and Belgium, and took part in the Dunkirk evacuation. He later served in the Middle East, North Africa and Italy, and in 1943 volunteered for the Parachute Regiment. In June 1944 Widdowson, as a major, was second in command of the 10th Battalion, Parachute Regiment. He was reported missing on 25 September 1944, aged 33, as second in command of a battalion of the Parachute Regiment at Arnhem. In November his wife was officially informed that her husband was a prisoner of war in Germany. At the time Widdowson was reported missing, his younger brother, Lieut. Fred Widdowson (27), was in the Royal Army Service Corps, in which he had served for nine years, two of them in the Gold Coast, and his brother-in-law, Major G.N. Girling, had escaped from an Italian prisoner of war camp some time earlier. Widdowson's parents were then living at 190 Holland Road, Old Whittington and his father had returned to work on the rolling mills at Sheepbridge.

Despite his inclusion on the school memorial (and in the list published in the *Cestrefeldian*), George Widdowson survived the Second World War. When the Territorial Army was re-established in 1947 he took command of a Hull unit. At the time he was said to have been a former member of the 4th Parachute Brigade of the 1st Airborne Division. He was to command an airborne unit in the TA, to be known as 299 Airborne Squadron, Royal Engineers. Widdowson died in East Yorkshire in 2002, aged 91. Kathleen Widdowson died in 1991, aged 77, when the couple were living at 23 Westfield Garth, Walkington, Beverley. She left estate valued at £125,000.

(TNA, RG 14/21109, no. 266; RG 101/3172H/008/40; *Derb. Times*, 20 Oct. 1944; *Hull Daily Mail*, 5 April 1935, 6 Dec. 1937,

7 Oct. and 2 Nov. 1944, 9 May 1947.)

**Ernest Haydn Wild** was born in 1922, the third son of John James Wild (1895–1956) and his wife Ethel (née Dilkes) (1893–1983). The couple were married in Rotherham registration district in 1916, when John was living at 47 Doe Lea (in Ault Hucknall parish) and Ethel at Laughton Common (Yorks. WR). In 1939 the family were living at 7 Oxford Street, Bramley Vale and John Wild was a colliery surface labourer.

Ernest graduated from University College, Nottingham, with a London University degree in economics in 1941. His father was then a member of the board of management of Chesterfield Royal Hospital. He went to Nottingham aged 17 and completed two years of a four-year course before he was called up and joined the Royal Armoured Corps. He was quickly commissioned and later promoted to lieutenant. He was later transferred to the 12th (Airborne) Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment, serving in Normandy, Holland, Belgium and lastly Germany, where he was reported killed in action on 24 March 1945, aged 22. Wild's battalion deployed by glider that day and successfully captured Hamminkeln (North Rhine-Westphalia), albeit with the loss of 140 officers and men killed, wounded or missing. He was buried at Reichswald Forest War Cemetery in Germany (as was W.P. Wilson, qv). His father, who gave his occupation as a colliery storekeeper, obtained letters of administration in December the same year, when Ernest's effects were valued at £205.

His elder brother Alan, who had previously worked for the LMS Railway, served in the RAF from 1939, in France until the evacuation from Dunkirk, and later at Basra, where he was stationed at the time of Ernest's death.

John Wild died in 1956, aged 60, his widow in 1983, aged 90, in both cases in Chesterfield registration district; neither left a will.

(*Derb. Times*, 29 Aug. 1941, 20 April 1945; TNA 101/5944H/009/25; CWGC; Cal. Grants, 1945; internet history of battalion.)



**John Primrose Wilson and William Primrose Wilson** were two of the sons of William Smith Wilson (1892–1973), the borough engineer and surveyor, and his wife Catherine Wingate (née Primrose) (1902–91) of 204 Ashgate Road. The house was named ‘Threepwood’, after the Scottish farm where their father was born. The family also included a sister and three other brothers.

All the boys attended the grammar school and, like their father, were outstanding athletes. John (known as Jock), born on 9 May 1922, was also an excellent school captain, who in the words of the *Cestrefeldian* (April 1942), ‘had the respect and admiration of all the boys in the school ... one of the best school captains one could wish to meet’. William (known as Billy) inherited his mother’s artistic talent and was an accomplished musician who once gave a solo concert at the Regal cinema.

Jock and Billy both joined the RAF. Jock, who was listed as a leading aircraftman in the school magazine in January 1941, first flew with an instructor on 10 December 1940, when he was 18½ years old. He flew solo for the first time on his seventeenth day of training and on his nineteenth birthday, after five months (and 76 hours of flying time), was authorised to fly the Vickers Supermarine Spitfire. He was posted to 65 (East India) Squadron based at RAF Kirton in Lindsey (Lincs.). He took part in his first operation mission on 12 August 1941, an offensive sweep over the Dutch coast at Rotterdam. Further operations followed, including acting as escorts to bomber missions, and he often flew three or four times a day.

In September 1941 the school magazine reported that ‘We have seen a good deal of “Jock” Wilson, who is doing so well in the RAF. A good deal of his recent leave has been spent around school, and his lectures to the School ATC squadron will no doubt have encouraged many boys to follow in his footsteps. His younger brother “Bill”, a member of the Town ATC squadron, is just as eager to pilot a Spitfire, but at the moment he wrestles with the mysteries of Maths’.

In September 1941, when the school magazine noted his promotion from leading aircraftman to sergeant pilot, Jock was transferred to 222 (Natal) Squadron RAF (Volunteer Reserve) at RAF North Weald (Essex), which was equipped with the more up-to-date Spitfire VB, which had greater firepower. He took part in ‘Rhubarb’ missions, flying at low level attacking opportunist targets, and escorting Blenheim bombers and fighter sweeps over France. On 27 February 1942 he set

off on a ‘Rhubarb’ mission with another pilot. Both planes disappeared from radar over the French coast; the other pilot baled out over the North Sea and was rescued, but Jock’s plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire and he crashed near the town of Marck (Pas-de-Calais). He died nine weeks short of his twentieth birthday. Jock, a sergeant pilot at the time of his death, was initially buried at Marck but his remains were later re-interred at Pihen-lès-Guînes communal cemetery (Pas-de-Calais).

Billy Wilson was born in 1923 and after leaving school was apprenticed to Richard Hoggard, the borough transport manager. He enrolled in the Air Training Corps two weeks before his brother’s death. He later joined the RAF and trained as a gunner in Bomber Command. In April 1942 he went out to Rhodesia. After a year’s training, Billy was awarded his wings and took part in seventeen operational flights as a sergeant air-gunner in 7 Squadron RAF. The last of these set off from RAF Oakington (Camb.) on 16 December 1943. His plane was shot down and crashed at Wilsum, a small town in Lower Saxony, close to the Dutch border. Two of the seven crew survived and were taken prisoner; Billy was buried at Reichswald Forest War Cemetery in Germany (as was E.H Wild, qv). Shortly before he was reported missing, his parents entertained the crew of the Lancaster bomber of which Billy was a member to celebrate the 21st birthday of the pilot, an Australian.

Jock and Billy Wilson are both commemorated in a window at the United Reformed church, Rose Hill, Chesterfield.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 101/5897A/014/7; *Cestrefeldian*, Jan. 1941, 39; Sept. 1941, 106, 107; *Derb. Times*, 24 Dec. 1943; entry otherwise based largely on information assembled by Tony Hine, including material taken from Bob Wilson, *Behind the Network: my autobiography* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2003), chapter 2, which contains a much fuller account of his two oldest brothers (and of his family generally), with photographs, including one of the birthday party mentioned above.)

**Frank Knighton Wright** was born on 16 April 1917, the only son of Francis Wright, a master tailor, and his wife Elizabeth. Known as Tony, in 1939 he was living with his parents at 6 Shaftesbury Avenue, Chesterfield, and was working as a clerk and travelling salesman for the



Staveley Coal & Iron Co., as he was the following year, when his car was stolen from behind the Station Hotel. Later in 1940 joined the Royal Army Service Corps. He was drafted to Egypt in 1944 as a captain, later moving with his company to East African Command, Nairobi, when he was promoted major. He was admitted to hospital with burns on 9 October 1945 and died the following day. He was a member of Chesterfield Golf Club, Chesterfield Badminton Club and Brookside Tennis Club. His only sister, Marjorie (Peggy) Knighton Wright, was then serving as a linguist in the WRNS in Frankfurt. She married James William Dodd at Chesterfield parish church in 1947.

(TNA, RG 101/5896G/008/39; *Derb. Times*, 16 Feb. 1940, 19 Oct. 1945.)

**Walter George Yeomans** was born in 1917, the elder son of Walter Yeomans (1881–1941) and his wife Elizabeth (1885–1958). In 1904 his father established W. Yeomans (Chesterfield) Ltd, who were originally dealers in saddlery and government stores, at 1 Beetwell Street (on the corner of South Place). The business evolved first into 'Army surplus stores' and later became well known locally as retailers of camping equipment, outdoor clothing and the like until recent years.

In 1908 Walter, the son of a Brimington farmer also named Walter Yeomans, married Elizabeth Pattinson, the daughter of a beerhouse keeper and farmer, at St Mary and All Saints, Checkley (Staffs.); she was born in Cheadle (Ches.). In 1911 the couple were living at 67 Valley Road, Spital and had two young daughters, Kathleen Anne and Elizabeth Helen. Walter described himself on that occasion as a master saddler, rather than a dealer.

In 1939 the family were living in rather different circumstances at 'Netherwood', 748 Chatsworth Road, Brookside, with one living-in servant, when Walter was a 'dealer in clothing and boots'; unusually for a family of this status, Mrs Yeomans was not merely a 'housewife' but also 'assists husband in business'. They lived three doors away from Thomas Blackshaw (qv), another former pupil of the grammar school, who lost his life as a Royal Engineer bomb disposal officer. Walter Yeomans died on 25 May 1941, after a breakdown through overwork, leaving estate valued at £16,154. The *Derbyshire Times* paid a warm tribute to both his success in business and his service to the parish

church, the Masons and the Rotary Club.

Walter George Yeomans joined his father's business on leaving the grammar school. He was a member of Chesterfield Round Table (of which he became secretary in 1939), Chesterfield Caledonian Society and Chesterfield Tennis Club. He joined the 5th (Territorial) Battalion, Sherwood Foresters Reserve, and was called up at the outbreak of war. He was gazetted 2nd lieutenant and appeared in a list of old boys serving in the Army in the school magazine of December 1939. He took part in the Dunkirk evacuation and the North Africa campaign, including the Battle of El Alamein. In 1940 he married Joan Francis of Newcastle upon Tyne, described by the *Derbyshire Times* in 1943 as a niece of the late Mr Keeton of Holymoorside. Yeomans was evidently serving at home in 1941, when he attended the Old Cestrefeldians' annual meeting and in September that year his promotion from 2nd lieutenant to lieutenant was recorded in the magazine.

In October 1943 Yeomans was promoted major at the age of 26, but was then in hospital for 16 weeks as a result of an insect bite in his leg, rejoining his regiment in Italy in the rank of captain. While in Italy Yeomans met a cousin, Bombardier Basil Yeomans, the son of Mr and Mrs W.H. Yeomans of Chesterfield. Walter's younger brother, Private Arthur Thomas Yeomans (b. 1921), served in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and later the Palestine police. His older sister Kathleen was then Mrs Spencer of Cheltenham.

Yeomans was killed in Italy on 3 June 1944 and was buried at the Beach Head War Cemetery, Anzio. He left a widow (who obtained probate of his will in January 1945, when his estate was sworn at £3,945) and a three-year-old son, David G. Yeomans, born in 1941. His mother, Mrs Elizabeth Yeomans, still of 748 Chatsworth Road, died on 18 February 1958, when she left £30,019.

(CWGC; TNA, RG 12/2764, f. 73v.; RG 13/2631, f. 142; RG 14/21087, no. 73; RG 101/5899H/014/9; Cal. Grants, 1941, 1945, 1958; *Derb. Times*, 21 April 1939, 14 Feb., 7 March, 30 May 1941, 22 Oct. 1943, 16 June 1944; *Cestrefeldian*, Dec. 1939, 48; May 1941, 82; Sept. 1941, 105, 107.)

## INDEX

7 OTU RAF 58  
 17 OTU RAF 50  
 19 OTU RAF 24  
 74 OTU RAF 61  
 82 OTU RAF 42  
 101 Glider OTU RAF 39

7 Squadron RAF 79  
 23 Squadron RAF (VR) 23  
 44 Squadron RAF (VR) 72-3  
 57 Squadron RAF (VR) 74  
 62 Squadron RAF 39-40  
 65 (East India) Squadron RAF 78  
 83 Squadron RAF (VR) 35  
 101 Squadron RAF 46-7, 70-1  
 107 Squadron RAF 56  
 190 Squadron RAF (VR) 32  
 201 Squadron RAF 55  
 222 (Natal) Squadron RAF (VR) 78  
 228 Squadron RAF 67  
 240 Squadron RAF (VR) 64  
 254 Squadron RAF (VR) 54  
 408 (RCAF) Squadron 27, 48  
 605 Squadron RAF (VR) 21  
 619 Squadron RAF 22, 50, 51  
 848 Naval Air Squadron 60  
 1841 Naval Air Squadron 60

18th Infantry Division 29, 42  
 55th Infantry Brigade 42  
 65th (8th London) Regiment Royal Artillery 42  
 118th Field Regiment Royal Artillery 42

ABC (Airborne Cigar) radio jamming system 46, 71  
 Aalst-Waalre (Netherlands) 22  
 Aboukir (Egypt), RAF station 68  
 Acton (Mddx) 71  
 Adams, Caroline: *see* Priestley, Caroline  
 Charles Corringham 21  
 Dorothy 21

Dorothy wife of R.G. Cooke 39, 40  
 Mr and Mrs J. 39  
 Thomas 21

Adsetts, Annie: *see* Sutherland, Annie  
 Frederick Sutherland 22  
 John (Jack) 22, 51  
 John Henry 22

Airborne Cigar: *see* ABC  
 Alamein Memorial, in Egypt qv  
 Alamein, El, Battle of 81  
 Alexandria (Egypt), RAF station 68  
 Alfreton (Derb.) 52  
 Algeria, places in: *see* Annaba  
 Allen & Orr Ltd 48, 66  
*Almeda Star*, SS 58  
 Alrewas (Staffs.), National Memorial Arboretum in 69  
 Angel public house, in Bolsover qv  
 Annaba (Algeria), Bone War Cemetery in 52  
 Annunciation, Roman Catholic Church of the, in Chesterfield qv  
 Anthony, Mary Ann Smedley wife of Tom Goddard 46, 47  
 Anzio (Italy), Beach Head war cemetery 81  
 Arkwright Town, in Sutton cum Duckmanton qv  
 Army Air Corps 44  
 Arneburg (Germany) 74  
 Arnhem (Netherlands) 76  
 Arras (France) 69  
 Artists Rifles 72  
 Ashley, Amy wife of Thomas 23  
 John Douglas 23  
 Thomas 23  
 Ashmore, Alwyn T.: 24  
 Kate: *see* Bates, Kate  
 Kitty P. 24  
 Mabel: *see* Wright, Mabel  
 Patricia A. 25  
 Reuben 23-4

Roy Alan 23-4  
 Ashover (Derb.), parish church 75  
 Peasonhurst in 75  
 Ravensnest in 26  
 Ault Hucknall (Derb.), Bramley Vale in 77  
 Doe Lea in 77  
 Hardwick Hall in 47  
 Australia 36, 72  
 places in: *see* Paddington; Sydney; Tamworth  
 Australian Imperial Force 36-7

Backhouse, Mavis wife of L.H. Smith 66  
 Baghdad (Iraq) 33  
 Bakewell (Derb.) 29  
 Balderton (Notts.), RAF station 48  
 Ball, Alfred James 25  
 Alice Gertrude wife of William 27  
 Audrey: *see* Willetts, Audrey  
 Daisy: *see* Brummel, Daisy  
 Kenneth James 25-6  
 Lilian: *see* Pickering, Lilian  
 Maude wife of A.J. 25  
 Peter 26  
 Richard A. 27, 48  
 Roger 26  
 William 27

Bamford (Derb.), Mytham Bridge in 28  
 Bangladesh 45  
 places in: *see* Maynamati War Cemetery  
 Banksfield Farm, in Draycott qv  
 Banneville-la-Campagne (France), war cemetery 53  
 Barber, Philip Gerald 50  
 Barclays Bank 76  
 Barley, Annie Maud wife of C.W. 27, 28  
 Thomas Wrigley 27, 28  
 Ernest Cecil 27-8  
 Barlow (Derb.), Woodland View in 32  
 Barrett, Arthur William 53  
 Florence wife of W.R. Kirkland 53  
 Barrow in Furness (Lancs.) 33  
 Baslow (Derb.), Calver Road in 53  
 Basutoland: *see* Lesotho  
 Bate, Charles 23-4  
 Kate wife of Reuben Ashmore 23-4  
 Reuben 24

Bayeux (France), war cemetery 48, 54  
 Bean, Gertrude E.: *see* Holmes, G.E.  
 Robert H. 73  
 Bedfordshire Yeomanry 26  
 Bedlinog (Glam.) 29  
 Berlin (Germany) 72  
 1939-1945 War Cemetery (Charlottenburg) in 72, 74  
 Berresford, Harold 44  
 Bethell, Betty Marguerite: *see* McCullum, B.M.  
 Charles 28-9  
 George 28  
 Hannah Jane wife of George 29  
 Jane wife of Keith N. Holt 29  
 Lloyd 28, 29  
 Mary wife of A.R. Slack 28, 29  
 Beverley (Yorks. ER) 76  
 Bexley (Kent) 42  
 Beynon, David Devonald 29-30  
 David Watcyn 29  
 Sarah Gwyneth wife of Jack Johnson 29, 30  
 Sarah Jane: *see* Thomas S.J.  
 Bideford (Devon) 31  
 Bingham (Notts.) 27  
 Bingham, Marjorie wife of Smith, L.H.  
 Bird, Allen Morris 25  
 Capt. G.V., RE 66  
 John Eaton 25  
 Mabel: *see* Wright, Mabel  
 Mary Elizabeth wife of J.E. 25  
*see also* Carline, Watson & Bird, Messrs  
 Birdholme, in Chesterfield qv  
 Birmingham (Warw.) 29  
 Blackshaw, Arnold 30, 31  
 Dorothy: *see* Hill, Dorothy  
 Gertrude: *see* Hopkinson, Gertrude  
 Ian 31  
 James 31  
 Thomas senior 30  
 Thomas GM 30-2, 80  
 Blackwell, Jessie Haxton Graham: *see* Love, J.H.G.  
 John W. 57  
 Boldon Colliery (Co. Durham) 52  
 Bolsover (Derb.) 59  
 urban district council 22



- Angel public house in 22  
 Oxcroft in 22  
 St Mary's church in 59  
 Sutherland Farm in 22  
 Welbeck Road in 22
- Bolsover Colliery Co. Ltd 52, 53  
 Bolsover Physical Training and Boxing Club 22  
 Bomber Command, RAF 22, 46, 50, 70, 72, 74, 79  
 Bond's Main colliery, in Temple Normanston qv  
 Booker, Annie wife of T.W. Booker senior 32  
 Thomas William (d. 1945) 32  
 Thomas William (d. 1959) 32  
 Borneo 37  
 Bone War Cemetery, in Annaba qv  
 Boothman, Edna May wife of Alex Towndrow afterwards of K.H. Lewsley 69-70  
 Mr and Mrs Frank 69-70  
 Botham, Agnes wife of William G.P. Philip Alwyn 32-3  
 William G.P. 32  
 Bournemouth (Dorset) 57  
 Bower, John 74  
 Rhoda wife of Charles Wharton 74  
 Bowyer, Marjorie Ellen wife of W.R. Clark 39  
 Boythorpe cemetery: *see* Chesterfield, Walton in  
 Bradshaw, Geoffrey 33  
 Richard Thomas 33  
 Selina: *see* Whiteman, Selina  
 Bramley Vale, in Ault Hucknall qv  
 Brampton (Derb.) 60  
 Old Brampton in 25  
 School Board Lane in 74  
 Shepley Street in 66  
 Somersall Lane in 61  
 Wigley school in 69  
 Brecknockshire Battalion, South Wales Borderers 30  
 Brewin, Kate: *see* Bullivant, Kate  
 Ronald 34  
 Trevor 34  
 Brimington (Derb.) 24  
 cemetery 45  
 Central school 43  
 school 50  
 Coronation Road in 44  
 Cotterhill Lane in 50, 51  
 Spinney care home in 35  
 British Army Aid Group 50  
 British Thomson-Houston Ltd 60  
 Brookside Tennis Club 80  
 Brummel, Daisy wife of K.J. Ball afterwards of V.C. Quin 25-6  
 Florence wife of G.W. 25  
 George W. 25  
 Brunswick (Germany) 70  
 Bullivant, Kate wife of Trevor Brewin 34  
 Burcher, Frank 35  
 Hannah 35  
 Harriet wife of Frank 35  
 John Edward 35  
 Burdett, Beatrice Ellen wife of A.H. Ramsay Smith 59  
 Burma 36, 63, 72  
 places in: *see* Taukkyan; Thanbyzayat  
 Burma-Thailand railway 37, 42  
 Burton (tailors), in Chesterfield qv  
 Buxton (Derb.) 53  
 Buxton, Mary wife of J.S. Short 35  
 Calday Grange secondary school, in West Kirby qv  
 Calne (Wilts.) 70  
 Calow (Derb.), Congregational church 27  
 Church Lane in 67  
 Deepside Bungalow in 27  
 Duckmanton Lodge in 44  
 Orchard Villa in 27  
 Cambridge, Downing College in 52  
 Emmanuel College in 28  
 Queens' College in 61  
 Selwyn College in 34, 43  
 Canada, places in: *see* Charlottetown; Conway; Manitoba; Summerside  
 Cape Finisterre (Spain) 38  
 Cape Town (South Africa) 25  
 Cardiff (Glam.) 29  
 Carew Cheriton (Pemb.), RAF station 43

- Carley, Cyril 36  
 Doris May: *see* Sutton, D.M.  
 Emily: *see* Short, Emily  
 John Joseph (1888-1939) 35, 37  
 John Joseph (b. 1922) 35-7  
 Patrick 35  
 Carline, Francis Allen 38  
 George Albert DSC 37-8  
 George Edward 37-8  
 Leila Isabel: *see* Tanner, L.I.  
 Norman Edward 38  
 Carline, Watson & Bird, Messrs 25, 37  
 Castle Camps (Camb.), RAF station 21  
 Ceylon 47  
 Changi gaol, in Singapore qv  
 Charlottetown (Canada), People's Cemetery in 62  
 Chase, Marion Ellen wife of G.H.R. Oldfield 57-8  
 Cheadle (Ches.) 80  
 Checkley (Staffs.) 80  
 Cheltenham (Gloucs.) 81  
 Chesterfield (Derb.)  
 vicar of: *see* Dilworth Harrison, T.  
 Ashgate Road in 52, 78  
 Avondale Road in 75  
 Beetwell Street in 80  
 Birdholme in 32, 53, 74  
 Boythorpe in: *see below*, Walton  
 Bridge Street in 74  
 Brimington Road in 45, 46, 69  
 Brockwell Lane in 52  
 Brookside in: *see* Chatsworth Road in Burton's tailor's shop in 46  
 Chatsworth Road (Brookside) in 28, 30-1, 35, 40, 51, 55, 80, 81  
 Congregational church in: *see* Rose Hill United Reformed church in  
 Cromwell Road in 38  
 Cross Street in 24  
 Birdholme in 21  
 Derby Road in 53, 73  
 Derby Road (later Rother, afterwards Spire) junior school in 32, 36  
 Eyre Street in 30  
 Gladstone Road in 58  
 Gloucester Avenue in 43  
 Hady Hill in 74  
 Hasland in  
 cemetery 47, 56  
 locomotive shed 34, 56  
 Ashfield Road in 62  
 Calow Lane in 56  
 Central Street in 49  
 Hasland Green in 63  
 Kent Street in 56, 57  
 North Terrace in 34  
 Park Hill in 56  
 Penmore Street in 21  
 St Paul's church in 21-2, 49, 56, 62  
 Storforth Lane in 25, 26, 34  
*see also* Grassmoor  
 Hasland Road in 26, 49, 75  
 High Street in 31  
 Hollis Lane in 35  
 Holy Trinity church in 31, 65  
 Holywell Cross Primitive Methodist church in 66  
 Lansdowne Avenue in 75  
 Madin Street in 29  
 Marks & Spencer's store in 31  
 Mendip Crescent in 25  
 Newbold in  
 Belvoir Terrace in 39  
 Church of England school 23  
 Littlemoor in 23  
 Newbold Back Lane in 41  
 Newbold Moor in 30  
 St John's church in 42  
 Salisbury Crescent in 30  
 Sheepbridge in 39  
 Newbold Road in 34, 37, 66-7  
 Orchards Way in 31  
 Packers Row in 64  
 Peter Webster school in 33  
 Peveril Road in 75  
 Redvers Buller Road in 73  
 Regal Cinema in 78  
 Roman Catholic Church of the Annunciation in 35  
 Rose Hill United Reformed (formerly Congregational) church in 32, 79  
 Rutland Road in 35  
 Rye Flatt school in 41  
 St Mary's Gate in 70-1  
 Saltergate in 30, 63-4  
 Shaftesbury Avenue in 79

Spital in 49  
 cemetery 65  
 Stanley Street in 48, 49, 50  
 Valley Road in 21, 80  
 Station Hotel in 80  
 Tapton View Road in 32, 66  
 Tennyson Avenue in 30  
 Three Horseshoes public house in 64  
 Vincent Crescent in 51  
 Walton in  
 Boythorpe cemetery in 31  
 Hunloke Avenue in 53, 75  
 Walton Back Lane in 52  
 Whitecotes Lane in 28  
 Welfare Avenue in 31  
 Wharf Lane in 35  
 York House in 53  
 Chesterfield Badminton Club 80  
 Chesterfield Caledonian Society 81  
 Chesterfield Council of Youth 29  
 Chesterfield Golf Club 55, 80  
 Chesterfield Masons 81  
 Chesterfield Operatic Society 64  
 Chesterfield Ragged School 36  
 Chesterfield Rotary Club 81  
 Chesterfield Round Table 81  
 Chesterfield Royal Hospital 77  
 Chesterfield Rugby Club 31  
 Chesterfield Technical College 48  
 Chesterfield Tennis Club 81  
 Chesterfield Tube Co. Ltd 27, 68, 69  
 Chetwynd Aston (Salop) 57  
 Chiswick (Mddx) 72  
 Chungkai War Cemetery (Thailand) 42  
 Clark, Fanny wife of Richard 39  
 Marjorie Ellen: *see* Bowyer, M.E.  
 Richard 39  
 William Richard 39  
 Clay, Richard 47  
 wife of: *see* Gregory, Mary  
 Clay Cross (Derb.) 24  
 Hall Terrace in 37  
 Thanet Street in 25  
 Clay Cross Co. Ltd 58  
 Clipstone (Notts.), colliery 52  
 Coastal Command, RAF 54, 55, 68  
 Cologne (Germany) 22  
 Colwyn Bay (Denbs.), Rydal School in 61

Congleton (Ches.) 26  
 Conway (Canada) 62  
 Coogan, Dorothy: *see* Hill, Dorothy  
 Joseph Francis 31  
 Cooke, Annie Elizabeth: *see* Turton, A.E.  
 Dorothy: *see* Adams, Dorothy  
 George G. 39  
 James 39  
 Reginald Gaydon 39–40  
 Reginald James 39  
 Cooper, Albert 40  
 Alfred 40  
 Betty 40  
 Charles Frederick 40, 41  
 Frederick Brian 40–1  
 Harry 40  
 Jean 40  
 Lily wife of Albert 40  
 Minnie: *see* Cotterill, Minnie  
 Corner Cottage, in Heath qv  
 Copping, J.R. 52  
 Cotterill, Minnie wife of C.F. Cooper 40, 41  
 Cox, Louie Winifred: *see* Widdowson, L.M.  
 Ronald 41–2  
 Cranwell (Lincs.), RAF College in 55  
 Crosby (Lancs.) 70  
 Crosse, Revd Richard CF 32–3  
 Culloden Moor (Inverness-shire) 45  
 Dalcross (Inverness-shire), RAF station 45  
 Dartmouth (Devon), Royal Naval College 38  
 Davison, Florrie wife of C.F. Holmes 51  
 Dawlish (Devon) 31  
 Dean, Margot Angela: *see* Ripley, M.A.  
 Deepic Bungalow, in Calow qv  
 Derby, Oxford Street in 59  
 St Andrew's church in 59  
 Derby Road junior school, in Chesterfield qv  
 Desborough (Northants.) 34  
 Devonport (Devon) 23  
 Devonshire Regiment 77  
 Dickens, Arthur Tew 42  
 Edith Man: *see* Hellings, E.M.

Peter Hambleton 42–3  
 Dickinson, Eva: *see* Rowlatt, Eva  
 Jane 43  
 Roy Rowlatt 43, 56  
 Thomas 43  
 Dilkes, Ethel wife of E.H. Wild  
 Dilworth Harrison, T. vicar of Chesterfield 30  
 Dinard (France), English Cemetery in 41  
 Diss (Norf.) 24  
 Dodd, J.W. 80  
 Marjorie Knighton: *see* Wright, M.K.  
 Dodson, Frank 43–4  
 Fred 43  
 Nina: *see* Williams, Nina  
 Teresa Ann: *see* Fuller, T.A.  
 Doe Lea, in Ault Hucknall qv  
 Doncaster (Yorks. WR) 28, 30, 44  
 Dorchester (Dorset) 52  
 Dore (Derb.), Abbeydale Road South in 54  
 Christ Church in 44, 45, 57  
 Furniss Avenue in 57  
 Twentywell Lane in 57  
 Dortmund–Ems canal 50  
 Doyle, Betty Marguerite: *see* McCullum, B.M.  
 George 29  
 Draycott (Derb.), Banksfield Farm in 70  
 Derby Road in 70  
 St Mary's Avenue in 70  
 Dronfield (Derb.) 28  
 Duckmanton: *see* Sutton cum Duckmanton  
 Duckmanton Lodge, in Calow qv  
 Duffield (Derb.), Hazelwood Road in 58  
 Dumelow, Mary Isabella wife of Wilfred Mothersole 56, 57  
 Duncansby Head (Caithness) 56  
 Dunkerque: *see* Dunkirk (France)  
 Dunkirk (France) 29, 76, 77, 81  
 Dunkirk, in Nottingham qv  
 Dunmow, Great: *see* Great Dunmow  
 Durham Home Guard 62  
 Durham Light Infantry 54  
 Dutch East Indies 72  
 East African Command 80  
 East Kirkby (Lincs.), RAF station 74

East Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of York's Own) 53  
 Edward Eastwood & Co. Ltd 32  
 Edmonton (Mddx) 26  
 Edwinstowe (Notts.) 67  
 Egypt 80  
 Alamein Memorial in 68  
 places in: *see* Aboukir, Alexandria  
 Eindhoven (Netherlands), Woensel General Cemetery in 22  
 Elm Tree Hotel, in Staveley qv  
 Evans, John 47  
 Winifred Ann wife of J.M. Gregory 47–8  
 Evreux (Eure) 21  
 Eyam Woodlands (Derb.), Grindleford in 61  
 Oaks Wood in 61  
 Fallingbommel (Germany), Stalag 357 in 70  
 Fighter Command, RAF 21  
 Fisher, Ellen wife of G.A. Middleton 55  
 Fleet Air Arm 3843, 60  
 Fleetwood (Lancs.), Rossall School in 55, 56  
 Fletcher, Mabel Browne wife of P.A. Slack 63–4, 65  
 Flint, Alfred 44  
 Derek 44  
 Florence Edith wife of J.G. Flint 44  
 John George 44  
 Thelma wife of — Smith 44  
 Florence (Italy), war cemetery 60–1  
 Foulstone, Arthur James 44, 45  
 Hannah Jane wife of A.J. 44  
 Mary Edith: *see* Unwin, M.E.  
 Sydney Henry 45  
 William Arthur (d. 1921) 44–5  
 William Arthur (b. 1922) 44–5  
 France, places in: *see* Arras; Bannerville-la-Campagne; Bayeux; Dinard; Evreux; Grandcourt War Cemetery; Hermanville-sur-Mer; Hottot-les-Bagues; Marck; Morbihan; Normandy; Pihen-lès-Guines  
 Francis, Joan wife of W.G. Yeomans 81  
 Frankfurt (Germany) 80  
 Froggatt (Derb.), Summer Hill in 60



- Fuller, Teresa Ann wife of Fred Dobson 43
- Gamston (Notts.), RAF station 42
- Gemench Bridge, in Malaya qv
- Germany, places in: *see* Arneburg; Berlin; Brunswick; Cologne; Fallingb.; Frankfurt; Gravenhorst; Hamburg; Hamminkeln; Hanover; Kiel; Klausdorf; Leipzig; Reichswald Forest; Schwentimental; Wilsun; Wittenburg
- Ghana: *see* Gold Coast
- Gibraltar 38
- Girling, G.N. 76
- Herbert 76
- Kathleen Mary wife of George Wid-dowson 76
- Mary wife of Herbert 76
- Glenade (Co. Leitrim) 65
- Glossop, Mrs A.W.C. 61
- Arthur 45-6
- Maggie: *see* Smith, Maggie
- Reginald 45
- Glynllifon Park, in Llandwrog qv
- Goddard, Joseph Eric 46-7, 71
- Mary Ann Smedley: *see* Anthony, M.A.S.
- Tom 46, 47
- Gold Coast 76
- Goole (Yorks. WR) 73
- Goulden, Harry (or Harold or Henry) 47
- Grandcourt War Cemetery (Seine-Mari-time) 21
- Grassmoor (Derb.), working men's club 46
- school 46
- Cross Street in 46
- Main Road in 46
- New Street in 46
- North Wingfield Road in 47, 73
- South End in 73
- Gravenhorst (Germany) 50
- Grayson, Olive wife of G.E. Rawlinson 59
- Great Central Railway 67
- Great Dunmow (Essex), RAF station 32
- Greece 74
- places in: *see* Leros
- Green Howards 76
- Gregory, Charles Edward 47-8
- George 47
- John Machin 47
- Mary wife of George previously wife of Richard Clay 47
- Winifred Ann: *see* Evans, W.A.
- Grimley, Marianne wife of Edward 52, 53
- Grindleford, in Eyam Woodlands qv
- Habbaniya (Iraq), war cemetery 32
- Haddock, Donald 27, 48-9
- E.D. 48-9
- Greta Elizabeth: *see* Robinson, G.E.
- Henry James 48, 49
- Kenneth 49
- Selina Frances: *see* Wadmore, S.F.
- Thomas James 49
- Halifax Building Society 51
- Hall, Aline: *see* Shearer, A.
- Christopher George 49, 50
- C.H. 49
- Frederick Ivan George 49-50
- Percy William Oliver 49
- Hallowes Golf Club 28
- Halton (Bucks.), RAF School of Engi-neering in 33
- Hamburg (Germany) 46
- cemetery 46
- Hammersmith (Mddx) 71
- Hamminkeln (Germany) 77
- Hampshire Constabulary 46
- Hampsted (Mddx) 71
- Hampstead Norris (Berks.), RAF station 56
- Hanover (German), war cemetery 70
- Hanworth (Mddx) 21
- Haoching (India) 63
- Hardwick Hall, in Ault Hucknall qv
- Harrington (Northants.) 34
- Harrison, Dorothy E. wife of Lamech 50, 51
- James Arthur 22, 50-1
- Lamech 50-1
- T. Dilworth: *see* Dilworth Harrison
- Harrogate (Yorks. NR) 34
- Hasland, in Chesterfield qv
- Hathersage (Derb.), Sunny Bank in 27

- Hawarden (Flints.), RAF station in 58
- Hawkins, Gertrude Elizabeth Sales 64
- Heath (Derb.) 47
- All Saints' church in 58
- Corner Cottage in 47-8
- Holmewood in 58
- Mornington Road in 58
- Zion Methodist church in 58
- Main Street in 47
- Heaton Norris (Ches.) 28
- Hellings, Edith Man wife of P.H. Dick-ens 42
- Henstock, Fanny wife of Herbert Smith 66
- Hepthorne Lane, in North Wingfield qv
- Hermanville-sur-Mer (France), War Cem-etry in 44
- Hill, Dorothy wife of T. Blackshaw afterwards of J.F. Coogan 30, 31
- Emma 30
- John 30
- Hinchliffe, Joan wife of K.G. Iremonger 52
- Hingham (Norf.) 71
- HMS *Ark Royal* 38
- HMS *Audacity* 38
- HMS *Belfast* 38
- HMS *Charybdis* 41
- HMS *Courageous* 38
- HMS *Formidable* 60
- HMS *Goshawk* 58
- HMS *Illustrious* 38
- HMS *Implacable* 60
- HMS *Imperial* 55
- HMS *Khedive* 47
- HMS *Stanley* 38
- HMS *Victorious* 60
- HMS BY Minesweeper 2077, 74
- Historic Environment Scotland 56
- Hoggard, Richard 79
- Hollingwood, in Staveley qv
- Holmes, Alfred William 73
- Clement Frederick 51
- Florrie: *see* Davison, Florrie
- Gertrude E. wife of Jack Wagstaffe afterwards of R.H. Bean 73
- William Anthony 51
- William Keith 51
- Holmewood, in Heath qv
- Holt, Keith N. 29
- Jane: *see* Bethell, Jane
- Holymoorside (Derb.) 81
- Hong Kong 71
- Stanley Military Cemetery in 50
- Hopkinson, Gertrude wife of Arnold Blackshaw 30, 31-2
- James 30
- Hottot-les-Bagues (France), war ceme-tery in 34
- Houfton & Kington, Messrs 25
- Hull (Yorks. ER) 76
- Hymers College in 76
- Hyde, Robert Allen 50
- Hymers College, in Hull qv
- Ilkeston (Derb.) 72
- Bath Street in 49
- Imphal (India) 63
- India 72
- places in: *see* Haoching; Imphal; Tamenglong
- Indian Army 72
- Indian Civil Service 63
- Indonesia, Ambon War Cemetery in 40
- see also* Java
- Inkersall, in Staveley qv
- Iraq 32-3
- places in: *see* Baghdad; Basra; Hab-baniya
- Iremonger, George Edgar 52
- Kenneth George 52
- Joan: *see* Hinchliffe, Joan
- Mabel Annie wife of G.E. 52
- Irish Free State 64-5
- Irvinestown (Lowtherstown) (Co. Fer-managh), Church of Ireland church-yard in 64
- Isleworth (Mddx) 72
- Isole Lipari (Italy) 23
- Israel, places in: *see* Khayat Beach
- Italy 23, 60
- places in: *see* Anzio; Florence; Isole Lipari; Moro River Canadian War Cemetery; Sangro river; Sicily; Taranti
- prisoners of war in 26
- Japan 37, 60

- places in: *see* Okinawa; Osaka; Shikoku Island; Takamatsu
- Japanese, prisoners of 26, 36, 39–40, 42, 50, 51, 63, 66, 69
- Java 40  
*see also* Indonesia
- Jobes, Edward 52, 53  
Edward Alexander Henly 52–3  
Kenneth 53  
Marianne: *see* Grimley, Marianne
- Johnson, Jack 29  
Sarah Gwyneth: *see* Beynon, S.G.
- Johnstone, Agnes wife of J.B. Robinson 61
- Kalafrana (Malta), RAF station 68
- Keeton, — 81
- Khayat Beach (Israel), war cemetery in 61
- Kidlington (Oxon), church 47  
RAF station 39
- Kiel (Germany), war cemetery in 35
- Killadeas (Co. Fermanagh), RAF station 64
- Kington: *see* Houfton & Kington, Messrs
- Kinloss (Morayshire), RAF station 24
- Kirkby, East: *see* East Kirkby
- Kirkland, Cyril 53  
Eric Gordon 53–4  
Florence: *see* Barrett, Florence  
William Richard 53–4
- Kirton in Lindsey (Lincs.), RAF station 78
- Klausdorf (Germany) 35
- Kota Bahru, in Malaya qv
- Kranji War Cemetery, in Singapore qv
- LMS: *see* London Midland & Scottish Railway
- LNER: *see* London & North Eastern Railway
- Lake, Florence Kate wife of Ernest 45
- Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast Railway 67
- Langwith Junction 74
- Lawrence, Betty 33
- Laycock, Donald Maney 54  
Gertrude Geldard: *see* Maney, G.G.
- Harold Wilfred 54
- Lee, Jean Marion wife of Ronald Brewin 34  
Mr and Mrs W.E. 34
- Lee on the Solent (Hants.), Royal Navy Memorial in 38, 47, 58, 60
- Leeds (Yorks. WR), City of Leeds training college in 32
- Leipzig (Germany) 74
- Leros (Greece), war cemetery in 75
- Lesotho 26
- Lewsley, Edna May: *see* Boothman, E.M.  
Kenneth H. 70
- Lightfoot, J.S. 23
- Litherland, in Liverpool qv
- Littlemoor: *see* Chesterfield, Newbold in
- Liverpool (Lancs.), Litherland in 70  
Merseyside Maritime Museum in 38  
University of 31
- Landwrog (Caerns.), Glynllifon Park (Plas Glynllifon) in 34
- Laughton Common (Yorks. WR) 77
- Leeds (Yorks. WR) 54
- Llanelli (Carns.) 29
- London & North Eastern Railway 28
- London Midland & Scottish Railway 25, 34, 59, 77
- Long, Clarissa wife of A.S. Tuxford 71
- Lorient (France) 48
- Lough Erne (Co. Fermanagh), RAF station 65
- Love, Jessie Haxton Graham wife of D.F. Newsham afterwards of J.W. Blackwell 57
- Lowestoft (Suff.), Naval Memorial 74
- Lowtherstown: *see* Irvinestown
- Ludford Magna (Lincs.), RAF station 46, 70
- Luqa (Malta), 23
- Machine Gun Corps 69
- Malaya 26, 29, 36  
Gemench Bridge in 36  
Kota Bahru in 36  
Penang in 26
- Malta 23, 68, 69  
Malta Memorial in 23  
places in: *see* Kalafrana; Luqa

- McCullum, Betty Marguerite wife of C. Bethell afterwards of G. Doyle 28, 29  
Jean 28
- McVittie, Marion wife of Alec Towndrow 70
- Mackie, James Ferguson 33
- Manchester (Lancs.) 26, 30
- Maney, Gertrude Geldard wife of H.W. Laycock 54
- Manitoba (Canada) 62
- Manners, Monty 43, 56
- Marck (France) 79
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency 55
- Markham colliery, in Sutton cum Duckmanton qv
- Maynamati War Cemetery (Bangladesh) 45
- Medjez-El-Bab (Tunisia)  
war cemetery 65  
war memorial 44
- Mennell, James Harold 49, 50
- Merseyside Maritime, in Liverpool qv
- Middleton, Ellen: *see* Fisher, Ellen  
George Arthur 55  
John Derek 55–6
- Midland Railway, Hasland locomotive shed 34
- Millom (Cumb.), RAF station 33
- Ministry of Supply 62
- Mittelland Canal 50
- Monkwearmouth (Co. Durham), Wearmouth colliery in 52
- Moore, Donald 65  
Dorothy wife of Donald 65
- Moro River Canadian War Cemetery (Italy) 30
- Morton, colliery 63  
Evershill Close in 63  
Stretton Road in 63
- Mothersole, Dennis Leslie 43, 56–7  
Mary Isabella: *see* Dumelow, M.I.  
Wilfred 56, 57
- Muqabila (Palestine), RAF station 61
- Myanmar: *see* Burma
- Mytham Bridge, in Bamford qv
- Nairobi (Kenya) 80
- National Memorial Arboretum, in Alrewas qv
- National Society of French Masters 45
- Nether Padley (Derb.) 60
- Netherlands 32  
places in: *see* Aalst-Waare; Arnhem; Eindhoven; Rotterdam
- New Totley: *see* Totley
- New Whittington: *see* Whittington
- Newbold, in Chesterfield qv
- Newbold Moor: *see* Chesterfield, Newbold in
- Newcastle upon Tyne (Nthld) 81
- Newsham, Bertha wife of Frank 57  
Douglas Frank 57  
Memorial Fund 57  
Frank 57  
Jessie Haxton Graham: *see* Love, J.H.G.
- Newton, Florence wife of Harry Taylor 68
- Norfolk 29
- Normandy (France) 34
- North Coates (Lincs.), RAF station 54
- North Luffenham (Rutl.), RAF station 27
- North Weald (Essex), RAF station 78
- North Wingfield (Derb.), Hephthorne Lane in 39  
St Lawrence church in 39
- Norway, places in: *see* Trondheim
- Norwich (Norf.) 34, 71
- Nottingham, City Hospital in 27  
Dunkirk in 59  
Highfield Road in 59  
University College in 41, 77
- Nottingham, Frederick 62
- Notts. & Derby Regiment: *see* Sherwood Foresters
- Nuttall, Clara wife of Herbert Smith 67  
Francis R. 67
- Oakington (Camb.), RAF station 79
- Oaks Wood: *see* Eyam Woodlands, Grindleford in
- Okinawa (Japan), battle of 60
- Old Brampton, in Brampton qv
- Old Tupton, in Tupton qv
- Old Whittington, in Whittington qv
- Oldfield, George 57  
George Harry Robert 57–8



George Selwyn 57-8  
 Marion Ellen: *see* Chase, M.E.  
 Orchard Villa, in Calow qv  
 Orchards Way, in Chesterfield qv  
 Orr: *see* Allen & Orr Ltd  
 Osaka (Japan) 60  
 Oxcroft, in Bolsover qv  
 Oxford, St Edmund Hall in 29  
 Oxford Street, in Derby qv  
  
 Quin, Daisy: *see* Brummel, Daisy  
 Vincent Counce 26  
  
 Packers Row, in Chesterfield qv  
 Paddington (Australia) 36  
 Palestine, places in: *see* Muqabila  
 police 81  
 Parachute Regiment 36, 44, 76  
 Parker, Eleanor Bessie wife of William  
 58  
 Malcom 58  
 William 58  
 Patan (Thailand) 36  
 Pattinson, Elizabeth wife of Walter Yeomans 80, 81  
 Pattishall (Northants.) 47  
 Paulson, Dorothy Elizabeth wife of J.S.  
 Short 35-6  
 Peasonhurst, in Ashover qv  
 Pembroke Dock (Pemb.), RAF station  
 68  
 Pembrokeshire, places in: *see* Carew  
 Cheriton; Pembroke Dock  
 Penang, in Malaya qv  
 Perry, Eric 30  
 Peter Webster school, in Chesterfield qv  
 Piarco (Trinidad) 58  
 Pickering, Lilian wife of R.A. Ball 27  
 Pihen-lès-Guines (France), communal  
 cemetery 79  
 Pilsley (near Clay Cross) 47  
 Timberlane Farm in 47  
 Pioneer Corps 54  
 Plas Glynnllinon: *see* Llandwrog, Glyn-  
 llifon Park in  
 Pontrhydyrun (Mon.) 44  
 Pontefract (Yorks. WR) 55  
 Port Douglas (Isle of Man) 24  
 Portsmouth (Hants.) 48

Potter Newton (Yorks. WR) 54  
 Priestley, Caroline wife of Thomas Adams 21  
 Thomas Arthur 21  
 William 21  
 William Corringham 21  
 Primrose, Catherine Wingate wife of  
 W.S. Wilson 78  
 Prudential Assurance Society 52  
 Puddletown (Dorset) 57  
 Punjab Regiment 72  
  
 RAF Benevolent Fund 57  
 RAF Memorial, in Runnymede qv  
 Ramsay Smith, Arthur Henry 59  
 Beatrice Ellen: *see* Burdett, B.E.  
 Ralph 59  
 Rathlin O'Brine Island (Co. Antrim) 24  
 Ravensnest, in Ashover qv  
 Rawlinson, George Edward Rawlinson  
 59, 60  
 Gordon Cecil 59-60  
 Olive: *see* Grayson, Olive  
 Reichswald Forest (Germany), war cem-  
 etery 77, 79  
 Retford (Notts.) 52  
 Revill, Alice Mary wife of Charles  
 Rudge 61-2  
 Bessie: *see* Sambrook, Bessie  
 Donald Marsland Heath 75  
 Rhine, river 32  
 Rhodesia 61, 79  
 Ridgeway, Clement Bernard 60, 61  
 Doris Ethel: *see* Taylor, D.E.  
 Henry Bonnington 60-1  
 Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's  
 Own) 72  
 Ripley (also known as Dean), Margot  
 Angela wife of E.B. Tuxford 71-2  
 Robert Hyde & Co. Ltd 50  
 Robinson, Agnes: *see* Johnstone, A.  
 C.P. 61  
 E.B. 61  
 Greta Elizabeth wife of E.D. Haddock  
 49  
 James Johnstone 61  
 John Bradbury 61  
 Robinson & Son Ltd 44, 53, 61, 66  
 Rochester (Kent) 65

Rockall (UK) 58  
 Roscommon (Co. Roscommon) 35  
 Rose Hill United Reformed church, in  
 Chesterfield qv  
 Rossall School, in Fleetwood qv  
 Rother junior school: *see* Chesterfield,  
 Derby Road junior school in  
 Rotherham (Yorks. WR) 27  
 Rotterdam (Netherlands) 78  
 Rowlett, Eva wife of T. Dickinson 43  
 Royal Air Force Memorial, in Runny-  
 mede qv  
 Royal Armoured Corps 60, 77  
 Royal Army Ordnance Corps 66, 81  
 Royal Army Pay Corps 48  
 Royal Army Service Corps 24, 76, 80  
 Royal Artillery 26, 30-1, 34, 41, 42, 53,  
 65  
 Royal Commission on the Ancient and  
 Historical Monuments of Scotland 66  
 Royal Corps of Signals 25-6, 65, 75  
 Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engin-  
 eers 54  
 Royal Engineers 30-1, 52, 66, 76  
 Royal Garrison Artillery 23  
 Royal Naval College, in Dartmouth qv  
 Royal Naval Patrol Service 74  
 Royal Navy Memorial, in Lee on the  
 Solent qv  
 Rudge, Alice May: *see* Revill, A.M.  
 Charles 61-2  
 Charles Howard 61-2  
 Howard 61  
 Runnymede (Surrey), RAF Memorial in  
 24, 32, 50, 54, 56  
 Rydal School, in Colwyn Bay qv  
 Rye Flatt school, in Chesterfield qv  
  
 Sambrook, Bessie wife of H. Wheeldon  
 afterwards of D.M.H. Revill 75  
 Sangro river (Italy) 29-30  
 Scampton (Lincs.), RAF station 35  
 Scarborough (Yorks. NR) 53  
 Schwentental (Germany) 35  
 Scunthorpe (Lincs.), Berkley Street in 44  
 Sebang, in Singapore qv  
 Sedbergh (Yorks. WR), Sedbergh  
 School in 53  
 Sept-Îles, Battle of 41

Sharpe, Emma Elizabeth: *see* Wood,  
 E.E.  
 Oliver 63  
 Thomas 62  
 Thomas Arthur (d. 1974) 62-3  
 Thomas Arthur MBE (d. 1944) 62-3  
 Shearer, Aline wife of — Mennell after-  
 wards of C.G. Hall 49, 50  
 Sheepbridge Coal & Iron Co. Ltd 23, 39,  
 41, 42, 76  
 Sheepbridge Stokes Ltd 50  
 Sheffield (Yorks. WR) 23, 27, 28  
 University of 23  
 Shelford (Notts.) 28  
 Sherwood Foresters (Notts. & Derby  
 Regiment) 28-9, 41, 47, 51, 69, 81  
 Shetland Isles (Scotland) 55  
 Shikoku Island (Japan) 60  
 Shirebrook 44, 74  
 Avondale Terrace in 44  
 Garden Avenue in 40  
 Short, Dorothy Elizabeth: *see* Paulson,  
 D.E.  
 Emily wife of J.J. Carley 35, 37  
 Joseph Sowter 35-6  
 Mary: *see* Buxton, Mary  
 Sicily (Italy) 29, 34  
 Silverstone (Northants.), RAF station 50  
 Singapore 26, 28, 29, 36, 37, 42, 51, 66,  
 69  
 Changi gaol in 37  
*see also* Japanese, prisoners of  
 Kranji War Cemetery in 28  
 Memorial 66  
 Sebang RAF station in 39-40  
 Singora (Thailand) 36  
 Sir Ernest Shentall Ltd 68  
 Slack, A. Roy 29  
 Gordon Henry 63-5  
 John Walter 63  
 Joseph Henry 64  
 Mabel Browne: *see* Fletcher M.B.  
 Mary: *see* Bethell, Mary  
 Mary Ann wife of J.W. 63  
 Philip Arthur 63-4, 65  
 Slater, Frances wife of Charles Wag-  
 staffe 73  
 Smith, Clara: *see* Nuttall, Clara  
 Edith 66

- Fanny (née Henstock) wife of Herbert Smith 66-7  
 Herbert 66  
 Kathleen wife of T.R. Smith 66  
 Leonard Harry 65-6  
 Leonard Henry 65-6  
 Maggie wife of Reginald Glossop 45-6  
 Marjorie: *see* Bingham, Marjorie  
 Mavis: *see* Backhouse, Mavis  
 Phoebe Mary 66  
 Thelma: *see* Flint, Thelma  
 Thomas Henry 66  
 Thomas Rowland 66-7  
 — 44  
*see also* Ramsay Smith  
 Sound of Jura (Argyll & Bute) 24  
 South Africa, places in: *see* Cape Town  
 South Lancashire Regiment 44  
 South Wales Borderers 30  
 Southampton (Hants.), University College in 56  
 Southwell (Notts.) 67  
 Spain, places in: *see* Cape Finisterre  
 Spencer, Kathleen Anne: *see* Yeoman, K.A.  
 — 81  
 Spinney care home, in Brimington qv  
 Spire junior school: *see* Chesterfield, Derby Road junior school in  
 Sri Lanka: *see* Ceylon  
 Stamp, Arthur 67, 68  
 Flory (Florrie): *see* Stevens, Flory George 67  
 George Arthur DFM 67-8  
 Stanedge Golf Club 51  
 Stanley Military Cemetery, in Hong Kong qv  
 Stapleford (Notts.) 59  
 Staveley (Derb.) 33  
 cemetery 33  
 parish church 33  
 urban district council 30  
 Cavendish Street in 33  
 Chesterfield Road in 62  
 Elliott Drive in 60  
 Elm Tree Hotel in 64, 65  
 Hollingwood in 65  
 Inkersall in 60  
 Staveley Coal & Iron Co. Ltd 64, 80  
 Stevens, Flory (Florrie) wife of Arthur Stamp 67, 68  
 Stilwell, Gen. Joseph W. 63  
 Stranraer (Wigtownshire) 59  
 Stretton (Derb.) 72, 73  
 Strood (Kent) 65  
 Strubby (Lincs.), RAF station 50  
 Suffolk Regiment 60  
 Sulingen (Germany) 70  
 Sullom Voe (Shetland), RAF station 55  
 Sumburgh Head (Shetland) 55  
 Summer Hill, in Froggatt qv  
 Summerside (Canada), RCAF station 62  
 Sunderland (Co. Durham) 52  
 Sutherland, Annie wife of J.H. Adsetts 22  
 Sutherland Farm, in Bolsover qv  
 Sutton cum Duckmanton (Derb.), parish church 67  
 Arkwright Town in 67  
 Markham colliery in 73  
 Markham Cottages in 74  
 Sutton in Ashfield (Notts.) 49  
 Columbia Avenue in 48  
 Sutton, Doris May wife of J.J. Carley 37  
 Swanage (Dorset) 57  
 Sydney (Australia) 36  
 Takamatsu (Japan), airfield 60  
 Tamenglong (India) 63  
 Tamworth (Australia) 36  
 Tanner, Leila Isabel wife of G.E. Carline 37-8  
 Taranto (Italy), 38  
 Taukkyan (Burma), war cemetery 72  
 Taunton (Som.) 57  
 Taylor, A.T. 68  
 Doris Ethel wife of C.B. Ridgeway 60  
 Ernest Norman 69  
 Florence: *see* Newton, Florence  
 Frank 68-9  
 Harry 68-9  
 Irene 69  
 Temple Normanton (Derb.), Bond's Main colliery in 63  
 Tern Hill (Salop), RAF station 57  
 Thailand 26, 51  
 places in: *see* Chungkai War Ceme-

- tery; Patan; Singora  
*see also* Burma-Thailand railway  
 Thanbyuzayat (Burma), war cemetery 36  
 Thomas, Sarah Jane wife of D.W. Beynon 29  
 Thoresby (Notts.), colliery 52  
 Three Horseshoes public house, in Chesterfield qv  
 Tibshelf (Derb.), Primrose Terrace in 46  
 Timberlane Farm, in Pilsley qv  
 Torquay (Devon) 23  
 Totley (Derb.), Church of England school 45  
 Hall Lane Farm in 44  
 Main Avenue in 44, 45  
 Towndrow, Alex 69-70  
 Mr and Mrs A. 69  
 Marion: *see* McVittie, Marion  
 Trinidad, places in: *see* Triarco  
 Trondheim (Norway) 56  
 Tunbridge Wells (Kent) 72  
 Tunisia 23, 34  
 places in: *see* Medjez-El-Bab  
 Tupton (Derb.), Ashover Road in 71  
 Turner, Annie wife of J.G. 70, 71  
 John Alfred 46, 70-1  
 John George 70, 71  
 Turton, Annie Elizabeth wife of J.J. Wassell afterwards of R.J. Cooke 39  
 John 39  
 Tuxford, Alfred Stanley 71  
 Clarissa: *see* Long, Clarissa  
 Dennis Blanchard 71  
 Eric Blanchard 71-2  
 Gordon Stanley 71  
 Iris Doreen 71  
 Margot Angela: *see* Ripley, M.A.  
 USS *Bonefish* 69  
 Unwin, Harry Nutt 72-3  
 Harry Jackson 72, 73  
 Mary Edith wife of W.A. Foulstone 44, 45  
 Sarah Elizabeth wife of H.J. 72, 73  
 William Heald 44, 45  
 wife of 44  
 W. Yeomans (Chesterfield) Ltd 80  
 WRNS: *see* Women's Royal Naval Service  
 vice  
 Waddington (Lincs.), RAF station 72  
 Wadmore, Selina Frances wife of T.J. Haddock 48, 49  
 Wagstaffe, Charles 73  
 Frances: *see* Slater, Frances  
 Gertrude E.: *see* Holmes, G.E.  
 Jack 73  
 Wallasey (Ches.) 54  
 Wallis, Mrs G.W. 61  
 Walney Island (Lancs.), RAF station 33  
 Wassell, Annie Elizabeth: *see* Turton, A.E.  
 John Joseph 39  
 Watson, Robert Fryer 27  
*see also* Carline, Watson & Bird, Messrs  
 Wearmouth colliery, in Monkwearmouth qv  
 West Freugh (Wigtownshire), RAF station 59  
 West Kirby (Ches.), Banks Road in 52  
 Calday Grange secondary school in 52  
 West Riding of Yorkshire county council 30  
 West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) 45  
 Wetherill, Elsie Gertrude 74  
 Sam 74  
 Samuel Henry 74  
 Wharton, Charles (b. 1890) 74  
 Charles (b. 1922) 74-5  
 Rhoda: *see* Bower, Rhoda  
 Wheeldon, Charles 75  
 Elsie Honor: *see* Wood, E.H.  
 Harold 75  
 Joseph 75  
 Whitchurch (Hants.) 57  
 Whiteman, Selina wife of R.T. Bradshaw 33  
 Whittington, Brearley Avenue in 39  
 Church Street in 39  
 Grange Lodge in 39, 40  
 Handley Road in 61-2  
 High Street, Old Whittington in 75  
 Holland Road in 76  
 London Street in 59  
 New Whittington school in 75-6



- Fanny (née Henstock) wife of Herbert Smith 66-7  
 Herbert 66  
 Kathleen wife of T.R. Smith 66  
 Leonard Harry 65-6  
 Leonard Henry 65-6  
 Maggie wife of Reginald Glossop 45-6  
 Marjorie: *see* Bingham, Marjorie  
 Mavis: *see* Backhouse, Mavis  
 Phoebe Mary 66  
 Thelma: *see* Flint, Thelma  
 Thomas Henry 66  
 Thomas Rowland 66-7  
 — 44  
*see also* Ramsay Smith  
 Sound of Jura (Argyll & Bute) 24  
 South Africa, places in: *see* Cape Town  
 South Lancashire Regiment 44  
 South Wales Borderers 30  
 Southampton (Hants.), University College in 56  
 Southwell (Notts.) 67  
 Spain, places in: *see* Cape Finisterre  
 Spencer, Kathleen Anne: *see* Yeoman, K.A.  
 — 81  
 Spinney care home, in Brimington qv  
 Spire junior school: *see* Chesterfield, Derby Road junior school in  
 Sri Lanka: *see* Ceylon  
 Stamp, Arthur 67, 68  
 Flory (Florrie): *see* Stevens, Flory George 67  
 George Arthur DFM 67-8  
 Stanedge Golf Club 51  
 Stanley Military Cemetery, in Hong Kong qv  
 Stapleford (Notts.) 59  
 Staveley (Derb.) 33  
 cemetery 33  
 parish church 33  
 urban district council 30  
 Cavendish Street in 33  
 Chesterfield Road in 62  
 Elliott Drive in 60  
 Elm Tree Hotel in 64, 65  
 Hollingwood in 65  
 Inkersall in 60  
 Staveley Coal & Iron Co. Ltd 64, 80  
 Stevens, Flory (Florrie) wife of Arthur Stamp 67, 68  
 Stilwell, Gen. Joseph W. 63  
 Stranraer (Wigtownshire) 59  
 Stretton (Derb.) 72, 73  
 Strood (Kent) 65  
 Strubby (Lincs.), RAF station 50  
 Suffolk Regiment 60  
 Sulingen (Germany) 70  
 Sullom Voe (Shetland), RAF station 55  
 Sumburgh Head (Shetland) 55  
 Summer Hill, in Froggatt qv  
 Summerside (Canada), RCAF station 62  
 Sunderland (Co. Durham) 52  
 Sutherland, Annie wife of J.H. Adsetts 22  
 Sutherland Farm, in Bolsover qv  
 Sutton cum Duckmanton (Derb.), parish church 67  
 Arkwright Town in 67  
 Markham colliery in 73  
 Markham Cottages in 74  
 Sutton in Ashfield (Notts.) 49  
 Columbia Avenue in 48  
 Sutton, Doris May wife of J.J. Carley 37  
 Swanage (Dorset) 57  
 Sydney (Australia) 36  
 Takamatsu (Japan), airfield 60  
 Tamenglong (India) 63  
 Tamworth (Australia) 36  
 Tanner, Leila Isabel wife of G.E. Carline 37-8  
 Taranto (Italy), 38  
 Taukkyan (Burma), war cemetery 72  
 Taunton (Som.) 57  
 Taylor, A.T. 68  
 Doris Ethel wife of C.B. Ridgeway 60  
 Ernest Norman 69  
 Florence: *see* Newton, Florence  
 Frank 68-9  
 Harry 68-9  
 Irene 69  
 Temple Normanton (Derb.), Bond's Main colliery in 63  
 Tern Hill (Salop), RAF station 57  
 Thailand 26, 51  
 places in: *see* Chungkai War Ceme-

- tery; Patan; Singora  
*see also* Burma-Thailand railway  
 Thanbyuzayat (Burma), war cemetery 36  
 Thomas, Sarah Jane wife of D.W. Beynon 29  
 Thoresby (Notts.), colliery 52  
 Three Horseshoes public house, in Chesterfield qv  
 Tibshelf (Derb.), Primrose Terrace in 46  
 Timberlane Farm, in Pilsley qv  
 Torquay (Devon) 23  
 Totley (Derb.), Church of England school 45  
 Hall Lane Farm in 44  
 Main Avenue in 44, 45  
 Towndrow, Alex 69-70  
 Mr and Mrs A. 69  
 Marion: *see* McVittie, Marion  
 Trinidad, places in: *see* Triarco  
 Trondheim (Norway) 56  
 Tunbridge Wells (Kent) 72  
 Tunisia 23, 34  
 places in: *see* Medjez-El-Bab  
 Tupton (Derb.), Ashover Road in 71  
 Turner, Annie wife of J.G. 70, 71  
 John Alfred 46, 70-1  
 John George 70, 71  
 Turton, Annie Elizabeth wife of J.J. Wassell afterwards of R.J. Cooke 39  
 John 39  
 Tuxford, Alfred Stanley 71  
 Clarissa: *see* Long, Clarissa  
 Dennis Blanchard 71  
 Eric Blanchard 71-2  
 Gordon Stanley 71  
 Iris Doreen 71  
 Margot Angela: *see* Ripley, M.A.  
 USS *Bonefish* 69  
 Unwin, Harry Nutt 72-3  
 Harry Jackson 72, 73  
 Mary Edith wife of W.A. Foulstone 44, 45  
 Sarah Elizabeth wife of H.J. 72, 73  
 William Heald 44, 45  
 wife of 44  
 W. Yeomans (Chesterfield) Ltd 80  
 WRNS: *see* Women's Royal Naval Service  
 vice  
 Waddington (Lincs.), RAF station 72  
 Wadmore, Selina Frances wife of T.J. Haddock 48, 49  
 Wagstaffe, Charles 73  
 Frances: *see* Slater, Frances  
 Gertrude E.: *see* Holmes, G.E.  
 Jack 73  
 Wallasey (Ches.) 54  
 Wallis, Mrs G.W. 61  
 Walney Island (Lancs.), RAF station 33  
 Wassell, Annie Elizabeth: *see* Turton, A.E.  
 John Joseph 39  
 Watson, Robert Fryer 27  
*see also* Carline, Watson & Bird, Messrs  
 Wearmouth colliery, in Monkwearmouth qv  
 West Freugh (Wigtownshire), RAF station 59  
 West Kirby (Ches.), Banks Road in 52  
 Calday Grange secondary school in 52  
 West Riding of Yorkshire county council 30  
 West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) 45  
 Wetherill, Elsie Gertrude 74  
 Sam 74  
 Samuel Henry 74  
 Wharton, Charles (b. 1890) 74  
 Charles (b. 1922) 74-5  
 Rhoda: *see* Bower, Rhoda  
 Wheeldon, Charles 75  
 Elsie Honor: *see* Wood, E.H.  
 Harold 75  
 Joseph 75  
 Whitchurch (Hants.) 57  
 Whiteman, Selina wife of R.T. Bradshaw 33  
 Whittington, Brearley Avenue in 39  
 Church Street in 39  
 Grange Lodge in 39, 40  
 Handley Road in 61-2  
 High Street, Old Whittington in 75  
 Holland Road in 76  
 London Street in 59  
 New Whittington school in 75-6

- Old Whittington in 76  
 St Bartholomew's church in 39, 59, 62  
 Whittington Moor in 60  
 Widdowson, Fred 75  
   Fred junior 76  
   George 75-7  
   Kathleen Mary: *see* Girling, K.M.  
   Louis Winifred wife of Ronald Cox 41  
   Mary Elizabeth wife of Fred 75  
 Wigley, in Brampton qv  
 Wilcockson, T.G. 41  
 Wild, Alan 77  
   Ernest Haydn 77  
   Ethel: *see* Dilkes, Ethel  
   John James 77  
 Willetts, Audrey wife of K.J. Ball  
 Williams Deacon's Bank 28  
 Williams, Nina wife of Fank Dodson 44  
 Wilson, Catherine Wingate: *see* Primrose, C.W.  
   John Primrose 78-9  
   William Primrose 78-9  
   William Samuel 78  
 Wilsum (Germany) 79  
 Wingerworth (Derb.) 25  
   parish church 34  
   Derby Road in 34  
   Hazel Drive in 54  
   Longedge Lane in 25  
 Wingfield, North: *see* North Wingfield  
 Winster (Derb.) 26  
 Wirksworth (Derb.), urban district council 30  
 Wittenburg (Germany) 73  
 Woesnel: *see* Eindhoven  
 Wolverhampton (Staffs.) 48  
 Women's Royal Naval Service 69, 80  
 Wood, Elsie Honor wife of Charles Wheeldon 74  
   Emma Elizabeth wife of T.A. Sharpe 62, 63  
   James 75  
 Woodhall Spa (Lincs.), RAF station 22  
 Wright, Arthur 25  
   Eddie 21  
   Elizabeth wife of Frank 79  
   Francis 79  
   Frank Knighton 79-80  
   Mabel wife of R.A. Ashmore, afterwards of J.E. Bird 24, 25  
   Marjorie Knighton wife of J.W. Dodd 80  
   Mary wife of Arthur 25  
   Miss S. 60  
 Yeomans, Arthur Thomas 81  
   Basil 81  
   David G. 81  
   Elizabeth: *see* Pattinson, E  
   Elizabeth Helen 80  
   Joan: *see* Francis, Joan  
   Kathleen Anne wife of — Spencer 80  
   Mr and Mrs W.H. 81  
   Walter 80-1  
   Walter George 80-1  
 York House, in Chesterfield qv  
 Yorkshire Penny Bank 25