

Birchington & Acol War Memorial

1939-1945 Roll of Honour (in alphabetical order)

BAILEY E. W.

T/63838 Driver Ernest William Bailey, RASC
Died in France on 20th May 1940, aged 31.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Dunkirk Memorial

BAKER F. E.

1295239 Sgt WOp/Air Gunner Frederick Ernest Baker, 458 Sqdn RAFVR
Died on operations whilst serving in North Africa on 24th June 1943. He was aged 24. He had joined the RAF in 1940 and had been in North Africa since the end of 1942 after taking part in operations from this country. Before he joined up, he worked as a baker with his brother at Bridge.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Malta Memorial

BIRCH R. W.

1754818 Gunner Richard William Birch, 7 Bty, 4 Maritime Regt, RA
Missing at sea, presumed killed in action on 26th February 1942. He was aged 33. He escaped from Singapore just before its fall and subsequently reached Padang, Sumatra. He is believed to have left Padang on a ship which sailed on 26th February 1942 and which was sunk with few survivors. Before being called up, he was employed by a firm of builders at Westgate. He left behind a widow, Beatrice, and two daughters.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Plymouth Naval Memorial

BUCK G. R.

112847 Captain George Rupert Buck, RA attd RAF
Killed while flying on 15th February 1944. He was aged 35. He was a former master at Grenham House School, Birchington and he and his wife, Isabel, were associated with the Birchington Bridge Club.
Interred at Clacton Cemetery, Essex

BURR J. O.

Midshipman James Orlando Burr, HMS Raven, RN
Died on 22nd April 1940, aged 19. His parents lived at Woodchurch.
Interred at Haslar RN Cemetery, Hampshire

COX A. V.

P/JX 289287 AB Alfred Vall Cox, HMS President III
Died when the SS *City of Pretoria* was sunk by a U-boat in the North Atlantic on 3rd March 1943. He was aged 22.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial

DOWLING G. T.

1714852 Sgt George Thomas Dowling, 78 Bty, 35 LtAA Regt, RA
Died 14th July 1945, aged 35.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Singapore Memorial

GREEN M.

572522 Sgt Michael James Green, RAF
Died on 18th August 1945 from accident sustained in Cairo three days earlier. He was aged 24.
Interred at Heliopolis War Cemetery, Egypt

HALL R. E.

1392121 Sgt Robert Ewen Hall, 75 Sqdn RAF
Died on air operations at night on 24th February 1944. He was aged 35. He left behind a widow, Dorothy.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Runnymede Memorial

HARVEY T. F.

356325 Sgt (Cpl?) Thomas Frederick Harvey, RAF
Died from illness on 7th August 1943. He was aged 51. He left behind a widow, May.
Interred at Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey

HEDGE R. J.

518431 WOp (?) Raymond John Hedge, 256 Sqdn RAF
Died 8th April 1945.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Malta Memorial

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HUGHES H. G.

6285931 Harry George Hughes MM, 1st The Buffs

Died of wounds on 29th March 1943 in Tunisia. He was aged 28. He had won the Military Medal while serving with the Eighth Army the previous year. Before he joined the Army in 1934 he had worked as a cowman. Before the war, he served in India and Palestine and from the beginning of the war he had been with the Middle East forces being promoted to Corporal in 1941 and to Sergeant in July 1942. A report of how he won the Military Medal was printed in the *Egyptian Mail* which stated: *Sergeant Hughes saved the Royal Engineers many casualties by remaining forward alone with a Bren gun while the rest of our men withdrew. With this gun he engaged three enemy 50 mm guns, one of them only 200 yards away, killing two of the crew and preventing the other guns from molesting the Royal Engineers.*
Interred at Sfax War Cemetery, Tunisia

KELLEGHER P. B.

632921 Sgt Patrick Bernard Kellegher, RAF

Died on active service on 10th February 1945. He was aged 24. He left behind a widow, Cecily.
Interred at All Saints Churchyard, Birchington

MORRIS F. H.

Lt Fenton Harry Morris, HM Submarine Thames, RN

Died on 3rd August 1940 when the *Thames* was lost off Norway, probably mined. He was aged 23.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial

PARTRIDGE R. D.

927260 Sgt WOp/AG Robert Douglas Partridge, 99 Sqdn RAFVR

Killed on active service on 22nd October 1941. He was aged 21. Before he joined the RAF on August 1940, he had been in the hotel trade. He was married in June 1941.
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Runnymede Memorial

PERKINS A. F.

2357060 Signalman Arthur Frederick Perkins, RCS attd III Indian Corps of Signals

Died 15th October 1943, aged 32.
Interred at Chungkai War Cemetery, Thailand

PETTMAN A. J.

1258277 Sgt WOp/AG Albert William Pettman, 86 Sqdn RAF

Killed on active service in 18th February 1942 whilst serving in Coastal Command. He was aged 27. Shortly before his death he had taken part in the search for the German battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. Before joining the RAF in July 1940 he had worked with a firm of accountants in Margate. He was keenly interested in sport and played for both Birchington Football Club and Birchington Cricket Club.
Interred at All Saints Churchyard, Birchington

PITCHER S. J.

7591404 Pte Stanley John Pitcher, RAOC

Died on active service in the Middle East on 1st September 1943. He was aged 33.
Interred at Gaza War Cemetery, Israel

READ P. A.

P/JX 514304 OS Peter Alfred Read, HMS Ranee, RN

Accidentally drowned whilst on active service on 8th May 1944. He was aged 18. He had joined the Navy just over a year before he died. He had always been fond of the sea and when a boy spent much of his time fishing and boating from Margate and Birchington. His father had served with the Army in Russia for four years during the Great War.

Interred at Esquimalt (Veterans) Cemetery, British Columbia, Canada

ROBERTS R. C.

P/JX 190545 OS Reginald Charles Roberts, HMS Hood, RN

Died when the battle cruiser *Hood* was sunk by gunfire from the German battleship *Bismarck* in the North Atlantic on 24th May 1941. He was aged 21. (See also A. P. West)
Commemorated by the CWGC on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial

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RUSSELL R. F.

106117 Cpl Robert Frederick Russell, 1st Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, RAC

Killed on active service on 16th January 1944 in the UK. He was knocked down and killed by a lorry when returning to his camp. He was aged 27. He had volunteered for the Army in 1939 and initially served as a driver with the RASC in France. He was safely evacuated in 1940 and upon his return to this country was transferred to the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. He had earlier been a member of All Saints Choir and, before the war, was employed as a chauffeur by George Western of Western Bros. He left behind a widow, Joan, whom he married in August 1943.

Interred at Easton-on-the-Hill (All Saints) Churchyard, Northamptonshire

SHERSBY J.

6291258 Cpl John Ernest Naime Shersby, 2nd Bn Yorkshire Regt

Died of wounds on 18th July 1944 within ten days of landing in France with the invasion forces. He was aged 29. He was called up in June 1940 and served with The Buffs before going to France for the first time in 1942 when he was transferred to the signals section of the Yorkshire Regt. Before joining the Army, he had worked at an outfitter's shop in Margate High Street and was a member of the Civil Defence ambulance service. His wife's father was the Harbour Master at Margate. He left behind a widow, "Milly" (née Tatam), and two young daughters.

Interred at La Delivrande War Cemetery, Calvados, France

SLADDEN H. B.

6291737 Pte Horace Benstead Sladden, 5th Bn The Buffs

Frozen to death in a snowstorm on 12th November 1944 after escaping from a German prisoner-of-war camp in Italy. He was aged 27. He had escaped from the camp and was attempting to cross to France with a group of 21 other escapees when the group was caught in a snowstorm in the mountains. Only one of that group reached France – and he lost his hands and legs through frostbite. Cpl Sladden joined the Army in 1940 and went overseas in November 1942. Before joining the Army, he had worked for a local butcher. He left behind a widow, Lilian, and two children.

Interred at Milan War Cemetery, Italy

SMITH E. J.

2614837 Guardsman Ernest Joseph Smith, 3rd Bn Grenadier Guards

Died 20th May 1940, aged 24. He left behind a widow, Doris.

Interred at Bissegem Communal Cemetery, Belgium

SMITH W. W. H.

C/K 63153 Petty Officer Stoker William Walter Henry Smith, HMS Sphinx, RN

Died when his ship – a minesweeper – was sunk by bombs from enemy aircraft off the north-east coast of Scotland on 3rd February 1940. He was aged 36. He left behind a widow, Doris.

Commemorated by the CWGC on the Chatham Naval Memorial

SPRATT L. F. C.

1393772 Sgt Observer Leonard Frederick Keith Spratt, RAFVR

Killed on active service on 7th November 1942. He was aged 22.

Interred at Tacolneston (All Saints) Churchyard, Norfolk

STOCK S. G.

43258 Flt Lt Sidney George Stock DFC, 7 Sqn RAF

Killed in action on 3rd October 1941 whilst serving as a rear-gunner. He was aged 26. He had joined the RAF in 1937 and was commissioned in 1939. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross from the King only a month before he was killed. He left behind a widow, Winifred, and a baby daughter at their home in Godalming.

Interred at Godalming New Cemetery, Surrey

THURGOOD D. J.

131531 Flt Lt Derek John Thurgood, RAFVR

Killed on active service in a flying accident on 23rd March 1945. He was aged 22 and a pilot of a Mustang fighter which crashed near West Raynham, Norfolk. He had joined the RAF in 1940 and received his training in Canada where he gained his 'wings' in 1941 and where he stayed on as a flying instructor. He returned to England in 1944 and was engaged on patrol work. He had played rugby for Chatham House School and won awards for his sprinting.

Interred at All Saints Churchyard, Birchington

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TUMBER L. A.

176566 Capt Leslie Alan Tumber, Royal Engineers

Died from illness on 27th October 1943. He was aged 26. He joined the Army in 1939 and, shortly afterwards, was sent to France with a railway construction unit. He was later transferred to another similar unit and was placed in charge of 200 men with instructions to get them back to England at the time of the evacuation. They succeeded in reaching St Nazaire after a ten-mile march and were brought home without any casualties. He was well known in sports circles and had been a playing member of Birchington Rugby Football Club. He left behind a widow, 'Betty'.

Interred at All Saints Churchyard, Birchington

WEST A. P.

P/MX 49341 Petty Officer Cook Alfred Philip West, HMS Hood, RN

Died when the battle cruiser *Hood* was sunk by gunfire from the German battleship *Bismarck* in the North Atlantic on 24th May 1941. He was aged 27. He had joined the Navy in 1932 and had served in many parts of the world including nearly four years at the China Station. He was planning to get married on his next leave. (See also R. C. Roberts)

Commemorated by the CWGC on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial

WHITTAKER F. G.

1877325 Sgt Flt Eng Frederick George Whittaker, 76 Sqdn RAFVR

Missing, presumed killed, from a raid on Westkapelle in a Halifax bomber on 28th October 1944. He was aged 27 and had joined the RAF in July 1943. Before the war, he had been employed at Nether Hale Farm, St Nicholas and afterwards was a member of the First Aid Party at Woodford House School, Birchington. He left behind a widow, Kathleen, and two children – one of whom he never saw.

Commemorated by the CWGC on the Runnymede Memorial

WILLIAMS D.

C/K 95871 Stoker 1st Class Douglas Williams, HMS Avenger, RN

Died when his ship – an auxiliary aircraft-carrier – was sunk by a U-boat west of the Gibraltar Straits on 15th November 1942. He was aged 23. He left behind a widow, Ivy.

Commemorated by the CWGC on the Chatham Naval Memorial

WOODHAMS D. W.

Cadet Apprentice Donovan William Woodhams, SS Deptford, Merchant Navy

Lost his life serving when his ship was sunk by a U-boat off Honningsvaag on 13th December 1939. He was aged 16. Although his rank and service are shown on both the Birchington & Acol War Memorial and the Acol War Memorial as 'Midmⁿ' and 'RN', it would seem that he was actually serving as a Cadet Apprentice in the Merchant Navy (as recorded by the CWGC). Furthermore, his name is inscribed on the Merchant Navy memorial at Tower Hill rather than on one of the Royal Navy memorials such as those at Chatham and Portsmouth.

Commemorated by the CWGC on the Tower Hill Memorial