

Margate War Memorial

1914-1918 Roll of Honour

Munition workers from Margate who lost their lives as a consequence of the 'Great Explosion at Faversham' on 2nd April 1916 (in alphabetical order)

At around lunch-time on Sunday, 2nd April 1916 a serious fire broke out at gunpowder works at Faversham which led to a number of explosions completely destroying five munitions buildings. The actual number of lives lost by the explosion (the series of explosions is usually referred to as a single explosion) is uncertain. However, it is believed that the total number of those who were killed in the explosion, or who died as a result of their injuries, could be as high as 117. If the two ambulance-men and the five soldiers of the 4th Bn The Buffs providing the military guard who lost their lives in the incident were also to be included, the total could be as high as 124. Seventy-three of those killed in the explosion were interred in the mass grave at Faversham Cemetery. The funeral service for those buried in the mass grave took place at Faversham Cemetery on Thursday, 6th April 1916. The memorial erected at the mass grave was dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Croydon on 27th September 1917. Four of the Margate men who lost their lives in the explosion were buried in that mass grave and six were interred at Margate Cemetery. There are reports that the sound of the explosion was heard as far away as Norwich. Women were also employed at the munition works at Faversham but there were no women casualties because the explosion occurred on a Sunday and it was the practice for women workers not to attend the munition works at Faversham on Sundays. One of the two ambulance-men who lost their lives in the explosion was Mr T. W. Randall who served with the St John Ambulance and lived at Westgate-on-Sea: his name is inscribed on the Westgate-on-Sea War Memorial.

BARTLETT J. E.

Mr John Edward Bartlett

Died from injuries on 4th April 1916 at Marne (?) Hospital, Faversham, aged 47. He lived at Beatrice Road, Margate and left behind a widow. His name is also inscribed on the St Paul's Church War Memorial, Cliftonville.

Interred at Margate Cemetery

BLEAKLEY (sic) T. H.

Mr Thomas Henry Bleackley

Died on 2nd April 1916 aged 39. He was a trombone player.

Interred at Margate Cemetery

CHANDLER A. H.

Mr Alfred Henry Chandler

Died on 2nd April 1916, aged 24.

Interred in the mass grave at Faversham Cemetery

CHIDWICK A. G.

Mr Arthur G. Chidwick

Died on 2nd April 1916, aged 35.

He was one of 36 men killed in the explosion and who were accounted for other than by identification

COE F.

Mr Frank Coe

Died on 2nd April 1916, aged 21. He lived at Zion Place, Margate. His name is also inscribed on Holy Trinity Church War Memorial plaque which was originally placed in Holy Trinity Church in Trinity Square.

Interred at Margate Cemetery

DRISCOLL A.

Mr Augustus Driscoll

Died from injuries on 5th April 1916, aged 49.

Interred at Margate Cemetery

FAIRCLOTH W. H.

Mr William Henry Faircloth

Died on 2nd April 1916, aged 61. He lived at Northdown Road, Cliftonville. His name is also inscribed on the St Paul's Church War Memorial, Cliftonville.

He was one of 36 men killed in the explosion and who were accounted for other than by identification

FEDARB A. L.

Mr Albert Leslie Fedarb

Died on 2nd April 1916, aged 18. An older brother, Richard died of wounds received on 11th August 1915 whilst serving in France as a lance-corporal in the 1st Bn The Buffs and a younger brother, Thomas, was to lose his life at sea in the Second World War whilst serving on a minesweeper. (See also L/Cpl R. A. Fedarb and Stoker T. E. Fedarb, RNPS)

He was one of 36 men killed in the explosion and who were accounted for other than by identification; he is commemorated on the headstone at the family plot in Margate Cemetery

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RICHARDS N. G.

Mr Norman George Richards

Died on 2nd April 1916, aged 41. He lived at King Street, Margate.

Interred at Margate Cemetery

SADDINGTON C. J.

Mr Charles Joseph ('Joe') Saddington

Died on 2nd April 1916, aged 45. He lived at High Street, Margate. He left behind a widow, Susan.

Interred in the mass grave at Faversham Cemetery

KILLED IN FAVERSHAM MUNITIONS EXPLOSION

J. E. BARTLETT

T. H. BLEAKLEY

A. H. CHANDLER

A. G. CHIDWICK

F. COE

A. DRISCOLL

W. H. FAIRCLOTH

A. L. FEDARB

N. G. RICHARDS

C. J. SADDINGTON

An excellent article *The Great Explosion at Faversham 2 April 1916* by Dr Arthur Percival MBE, BA, FSA was published in *Archæologia Cantiana* Volume C (1985). The article was subsequently reprinted in booklet form and copies of the booklet are still available from the Fleur-de-lis Centre at Faversham. An article by the late Mick Twyman on the Faversham munitions explosion was published in the January 2004 issue of "Bygone Margate", the magazine of the Margate Historical Society.