

Stutton Local History Journal



No 31
2015

Editor's preface

Welcome to our 2015 edition of the Local History Journal. We continue our theme of 2014, with a series of stories about those who served one hundred years ago in the First World War, *the war to end all wars*...

We are fortunate to have such lucid writers of the conditions and campaigns of both that war and the Second World War. Many of us have only a tenuous link to the armed services and even more tenuous understanding of what really happened on the various fronts which are described so well. The same contributors continue to appear and a few new names and faces would be good. We have lost Mary Boyton to Scotland although she continues to visit us regularly and her son-in-law kindly keeps our website up to date for which we are enormously grateful. It generates much interest from all round the world, messages generated eventually landing up in Vic Scott's email address. And with every enquiry we too learn a bit about the people behind the questions, so it is very much a two-way process.

I think you will agree that finding out about Stutton's history is interesting and fun (or you wouldn't be reading this in the first place!) and that apparent great leap from reading this journal to looking yourself into memories, books and records is not that far after all. Be brave and join us or come to one of the roughly quarterly meetings if you are free (dates are advertised in *Stutton Roundabout*) and share ideas and interests or just listen to others doing so. You'll soon catch the bug...and do remember that Vic Scott is always looking out for material relating to Stutton to copy for the village archive. You'll be sure to get things back safe and sound.

Paul Simmons

<https://stuttonlocalhistoryresearchgroup.wordpress.com/>

Cover illustration: Military Cross see p26

A Stutton Soldier of the Great War: Roland ("Roley") Bennett

Nigel Banham

Senior Stutton residents may know that during the early years of the 20th century and before, the Bennett family lived at Stanton House which stood on the site of the recently built modern, 'eco' house near the entrance to Crepping Hall Drive.

It was not uncommon then for families to be large, and Roley, born in 1897, was the fifth eldest in a family which eventually numbered eleven, which even for those times was a pretty good number! His father's names were 'Robert Walter'.

His elder brother W S Bennett, known as Stanley, was a regular soldier with the Bedford Regiment at the outbreak of the War and sadly was killed in action in 1914 aged 24.

Perhaps the reason for his joining this regiment was his friendship with Richard Gascoigne, whom Margaret Bennett believes originated from Freston and was with the Bedfords. She knew him as Uncle Dick; he later married Roley's eldest sister. Stanley is on our village Roll of Honour (see p25).

Roley had left school at 13, as was usual then and four years later in 1914, joined BXL at Cattawade, as did many people from the local villages and where he spent all his working life. It is likely that he did farm work in the interim, which was the most common employment in Suffolk, but was poorly paid and kept people just above the poverty line. He probably did rather better at BXL. From the time he started until his retirement - he re-joined them after leaving the army - he got there on his bicycle.

The First World War was a war of men, and the numbers engaged on all sides were vast. Until January 1916, the British Army was an entirely volunteer force, but in that month conscription was introduced and in March, when he was 19, Roley joined the Suffolk Regiment, probably at Portman Road Ipswich, where the Suffolks had a depot. It was possible at this time to ask for service to be deferred, but few took this up. His service record seems to be missing, but we know that later he was with 'C' Company, 4th Battalion of the regiment, so it is likely that he was with them as soon as his basic training was complete; maybe after the first three months, when more advanced specialist training would take place with the unit or division, often overseas and usually during the time when it had been withdrawn from the front line. The process in the First

War was quite thorough and would have been progressive, until he was considered skilled enough to go into the fighting line. He was trained as a Lewis gunner and the team would have trained on this together each having different functions but able to take over from one another.

The British Army had hugely expanded the training process by 1916, turning clerks and farm labourers into skilled soldiers. Given his time of joining, he may have reached the battle line in September 1916. His unit (4th Suffolks, 98th Brigade, attached to the 33rd Division) was at this time involved in heavy fighting for the capture of 'High Wood' and in the Battle of the Boritska, and Dewdrop trenches. These were part of the final actions of the Somme offensive which had begun on 1 July, and cost so many lives. Later, the army commanders learned how to co-ordinate artillery and infantry to win battles without such human cost; this was still in the future but after the Somme, commanders were sometimes dismissed for 'wasting men'.

It is likely that Roland was here and the fighting was brought to a halt in late November by the mud which constrained movement; static warfare then prevailed for the Suffolk men.

Trench warfare was at best unpleasant in winter and was always dangerous with the enemy so close. He would have been rebuilding and maintaining trenches, being sent with raiding parties to get prisoners, standing to at dusk and first light, rescuing comrades, but would also have had time out of the line to relax and train. The first major 1917 battle that his unit was in, was the first battle of the Scarpe (a river) - part of the main Arras offensive, (9-14 April 1917) and he would have been fighting there. This took place after the famous British/ Canadian victory at Vimy ridge. The second Scarpe battle was later; starting date 23 April and this was where Roley was taken prisoner, so to give a flavour of the fighting I have reproduced an account of his battalion's part of the battle here. He was in "C" company:

Zero hour on 23 April was fixed for 4.45 am, the British troops attacking on a front of about 9 miles. The 4th Bn., with 2 coys in the front and 2 in support was to attack southwards down its trenches as far as the edge of the Sensee valley, and to link up with a Bde. making a frontal attack on that portion of the Hindenberg line still in the hands of the enemy. This being a battle of two dimensions, certain troops were detailed to mop up in the tunnel, but it was an almost impossible task to drive back the Germans on the surface and under it as well. (This was the long Bullecourt canal tunnel, built by

Napoleon then drained and used by the Germans as a store and a hospital. It still exists
– I have been through it while crewing on a boat!)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

ART1 2437

Arthur Streeton, Oil on Canvas, 1919

At first all went smoothly. The barricades fell, the companies (coys) pushed forward gallantly almost to the edge of the Sensee valley. 650 prisoners with a grenatenwerfer and 5 machine guns were brought in, 70 prisoners having been rounded up in one tunnel entrance and marched to the rear by 1 Bantam (Army slang for a soldier who was under the normal height required by the military). When asked how he had managed to collect so many prisoners he replied he had surrounded them! Success seemed certain. 'A' coy had pressed forward to within 200 yards of the Sensee valley, 'D' coy in the support line being about level. The enemy now counter-attacked vigorously and these 2 coys., being unsupported on their flanks were compelled to fall back. The tunnel proved to be a source of weakness, for in it, sheltering from the bombardment, was a large force which came up from the rear when the counter attack began. Part of 'D' coy, having been cut off, withdrew across country in the rear of the support trench, where 2nd Lt H W Woods was killed. The maze of communication trenches between the front and support lines, which it was impossible to guard or even watch, afforded excellent cover during his (the enemy's) advance. Two companies of the Scottish Rifles came up to

support 'C' and 'D' coys. But it was in vain, and by 3pm the enemy was back at the barricades of the morning. Twice during the course of the day, had Bn. HQ turned out and manned the parapet. Capt J.Gaston, the MO had 8 different units pass through his aid post.

Another barricade was hastily constructed in rear of the original one. At 6.30pm a fresh attack was actually being launched when it was cancelled. It drew forth vigorous retaliation, but by 10.00pm the firing had once more subsided. The Bn. was relieved, moving out at 8.30 am on the morning of the 24th. Casualties for the 23 April were 315 all ranks. (This includes those taken prisoner, who were missing)

Roley left a notebook, probably written whilst a prisoner, which gives an account of the battle and of his first few weeks in captivity. He was certainly lucky to survive. The words are as he wrote them.

The day I was taken prisoner

It was on a lovely morning on the 23 of April 1917. Our guns opened fire just as it was breaking daylight and we had the order to go over the top and jump into the trench again a little further on, as we were in the same trench as the Germans.

I was a Lewis gunner and we had not got far when another team told us their gun had gone wrong and asked us to take their place. We got on fine for several hours, driving the Germans back and taking several prisoners. We had taken about 700 and about a mile and a half of the trench when they made a good stand and we could not bomb them back any further.

While we were doing this, some of us saw the hundredth brigade retiring and we knew that it would leave more Germans to come round to our part of the line. While we were still bombing we heard that they had got round to the back of us so half the men went to the other end to drive them back. We could not send back for more men to come up as the Germans had cut the (telephone) wire and we soon began to run short of bombs and ammunition, but still we had no thought of being captured as we still kept picking up souvenirs.

We had about 3 Lewis guns - at the time mine had been knocked out by a bullet and the other two had gone wrong so we walked back towards the other part, as we could not stop (at) the other end to do anything to them to put them (the guns) right – the Germans were flinging 4 bombs over to our 1 and when we got to the other end (of the trench) they had captured most of the other party and were still taking others. I saw only one chance and that was to get out of the trench and run back over the top. I saw several men go and most of them were shot down but I stayed too long and had to be taken with the others.

After we were taken (prisoner), we were marched back under heavy bombardment from our own people and had a few men killed and wounded. We arrived at a village near Douai and had a loaf of black bread between 3, and 2 buckets of water. We went to sleep in a church on some shavings. The next morning we marched into Douai where most of the prisoners went to that were captured on the Arras front. We got a loaf of bread between 6 and potatoes and barley for dinner and a same for tea. A German said God help England when Germany starve. We have not many luxuries but we have plenty of food. I think he was mad as most of them were.



A very young Roley Bennett.
He had just joined the Suffolks.

We have Roland's notebook account of his first days and weeks in captivity and some of it makes grim reading.
We stayed there (Douai) about 4 days and we were told we were going to Germany but instead we went to a fort in Lille called Mackdonnel? Fort. (Possibly the Citadel of Lille, a huge Vauban fort). There we saw men looking through iron bars, looking very thin and dirty and when we asked them what it was like, they said it was as bad as being in hell. They had been there 2 weeks.

Our party were lucky that time as we only stayed there 4 days and that was quite enough for me.

Another 4 days and I should have died. We got a very small slice of black bread and mangold with hot water poured on for dinner. That was brought in an iron tub and placed in the centre of the room. Some men pulled the lining of their steel helmets out as we had still got them (for plates?) and a good job we had.

We left there about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and were told again we were going to Germany. We got in the train again at Lille station and we rode in carriages. We had travelled about three hours and we looked out of the windows and saw the lights going up (flares-from the trenches) and a few houses had been knocked down. Then we knew that we were going up the line again. We got off at a fairly large village and marched to the village of Harner? There we were put into some houses that had been knocked about by our shell fire.



At a POW camp, somewhere in Germany: Roley far right.

We were told that we should have to work up the line under shell fire as the English were doing the same with their (German) prisoners and until they heard from the British Government that their prisoners had been removed, we should be kept there. We had a very rough time, having to work very hard and we were not allowed to wash or shave – and were starving. We had one Sergeant killed and several men buried by our shell fire.'

Roley's own account ends here and although the Germans were obliged to inform the Red Cross of the whereabouts of prisoners, they clearly failed to disclose the fact that this group was kept under fire; an illegal act. According to the Red Cross archive, he was at Douai until 19 July, then to Limberg camp (West Germany). His move from Limberg is missing. I have read that by this time, Limberg was a punishment camp and rife with disease, so maybe a good thing to be moved! He is then recorded as moving from Westliche Etappe to Friedrichefeld on 20 November, and again from there to Gustrow on 12 February 1918, this last in Mecklenburg. It held 25,000 men and given that due to the British Naval blockade, Germany was herself short of food and many other things by this stage of the war, prisoners had to endure real privation alleviated to a limited degree by the provision of Red Cross food parcels. These 10lb parcels were organized in Britain and sent via the Red Cross. Two and a half million had been sent by the war's end. They were a 'life saver' for our soldiers.

Roley came home after the war but (Margaret Bennett thinks) elected to stay in the army and went to Egypt as part of the occupation force, with the 1/5th Suffolks. Perhaps he wanted somewhere warm after his time as a POW! He left Egypt in October 1919 and is recorded as having finally left the forces in December.

His later life was in deep contrast to his wartime experience, but it seemed to suit him.

His passion was for sport and athletics and it is likely that he belonged to the athletics club at Brantham, started by BXL for whom he worked, which although now a football club, previously provided for other sports including athletics and cycle pursuit. He also had an abiding interest in gardening and small holding, and competed regularly in the village flower show. After marriage to Selena (Suckling) in 1930, the family lived at Holly Cottage (now Holly Lodge) in Holly Lane; daughter Margaret being born at her grandparents' home, Holly Farm. A good family man, he was easy-going, even-tempered, rarely angry and easy to live with.

When at home, Roley was completely absorbed with his chickens, pigs and gardening, almost to the point of forgetting that he had a daughter and it sometimes slipped his mind that he was supposed to be looking after her.

Margaret records that on one occasion, when aged about 3 or 4 years old, she was outside with her father when her mother heard a huge bang and rushed outside to find that Roley had just taken a pot-shot at something.....he liked rough shooting for pigeons and rabbits too.

A useful resident during the second War was this friendly looking cow. Jack Cowell, a local dairyman, who used to supply milk to residents here, decided that he had a cow too many and offered her for sale. Roley and his wife took pity on her and bought her. The irony was that later, when maybe due to wartime conditions he did not have enough milk, Jack used to come round and buy some from Roley.



Roley, getting a good licking!

As with many ex-soldiers, he did not talk about the war. Perhaps they felt that no-one who was not a soldier could ever understand what it was like, or perhaps they just wished to forget.

Margaret recalls that only once was she aware of how it was for him. When she was little, as many children do, she told him that she was hungry.

He replied: *You do not know what it is like to be hungry.*

Roland Bennett. 1897 - 1973

With grateful thanks to Margaret Bennett and Vic Scott.

A Young Man's Last Flight

Nigel Banham

On 30 March 1944, Lt George Parker of the 382nd Fighter Squadron, 9th Air Force USAAF, lifted his P51B Mustang from RAF Rivenhall runway, known as Station 168 to the Americans, and set course for the river Stour, some 15 miles away. It was easy to find. The Royal Hospital School tower is a known landmark and the estuaries here have distinctive shapes.



This was not a pleasure trip. As with other fighter bomber pilots in the 9th, he was tasked with a practise dive bombing mission on the Holbrook Bay bombing range as they worked up for the dangerous job of close support of the ground troops in the forthcoming invasion of Europe. On 14 April, his group would move to Staplehurst in Kent to be closer to France before moving over the Channel after the invasion.

(left) 2nd Lt George F Parker

The US 9th was a 'tactical' air force, as opposed to the US 8th, which carried out long range strategic bombing of German cities; and in the dangerous work of battlefield support, it is important to respond rapidly to the needs of the troops engaged. They had light and medium bomber units as well as fighters, but had no heavy bombers as the 8th did.

George, an only child, had grown up in Burlington, New Jersey and attended the local schools, going on later to work with his father at the Florence Pipe Foundry and Machine Company. He had a good, extended family life, was outgoing with many friends who still speak fondly of him and was engaged to be married.

One of the local researchers has said that: *In a way, he represents so many young men and women who didn't return.* Much information is held locally by the family and the Florence History society.

Activated and formed in California in March 1943, the 363rd Fighter Group to which George's squadron belonged, arrived in Scotland from the United States in RMS *Queen Mary* on 20 December 1943 and began arriving at Rivenhall on 22 January, receiving its new aircraft and equipment from 24 January onwards. On Saturday 5 February, 27 additional pilots, of which George was one, transferred into the group. It is fair to say that at this time, the Mustang was a new aircraft with both pilots and ground-crew were still on a learning curve with it, so errors did occur. After a brief 'working up' period, they first saw combat during February 1944 and there is a recorded diary entry from a fellow pilot that George was a popular member of the team.....team playing was vital in these operations where your fellow pilots 'watched your back'.

The dive bombing range was to the east of Stutton Point in Holbrook Bay, with a brick observation post on the bank. The target would have been either a triangular raft or a pile structure and the aircraft used practice bombs, painted pale blue and filled with sand, with a small smoke charge in the tail to aid visibility so that hits could be seen and registered. This range was allocated for 9th US Air Force use and with a high number of bases in East Anglia, must have been busy at this time.

There were three crashes involving Mustang fighter bombers on the range and there is an eye witness account of what happened on the first of these, on 11 March from a Thames Barge crewman, who was on his way downstream having earlier loaded wheat at Mistley Quay, bound for Felixstowe dock. The barge was passing the bay when the bombs were droppednot near the target but near the barge! One went over the top of them and into the water beside the boat and the other came down near the rudder. The aircraft was then seen to 'low up' with one of its wings going into some trees at Wrabness and the rest of it going into the bay and onto both banks. The pilot who died was 2nd Lt Stewart J Jones of the 354th Fighter Group. His wingman had come down to look and then flew away. USAAF records show the cause of George's crash being a structural failure of the elevator and British researcher, Alistair Brown, indicates that overfilling of the fuel tanks may also have been a factor –affecting the centre of gravity of

the aircraft. This would have made it much more difficult to control, particularly in a high speed dive, and may well have been the actual cause. Such an event may also have appeared to be an explosion, because at high speed, disintegration would have been very rapid.

The second crash here was on 25 March, another pilot like George from the 363rd Group, named as 2nd Lt Tyree.



A P51B Mustang of 382nd Fighter Squadron, Rivenhall, January 1944

For many years after the war, a section of the aircraft's wing was visible from Stutton point at low water and it was this which first sparked Mr Brown's interest in researching the pilot and his history. As a boy, Alistair lived at the Royal Hospital School, where his father taught, and he has spent much time following this up, having learned George's name from a local fisherman, Mr William Quantrill of Lower Holbrook, who helped recover his body the day after the crash.

The observation post near Stutton Point was manned when the range was in use and a flagpole with a red flag flying during bombing, to warn anyone around.

(If any Stutton residents have any recollection of the bombing range or of these events. Alistair Brown who lives in Essex, would be delighted to hear from them. Please contact the history group and we will put you in touch with him.

Nigel J Banham – nigelbanham@gmail.com 01473 328286)

Young George Parker's body was returned to the US, and he now lies in Cedar Hill cemetery near to his home town and his family, and where he was re-interred on 10 July 1948.



Lt George F Parker's grave in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Burlington, New Jersey, USA.

2nd Lt George F Parker.
363d Fighter Group
382nd Fighter Squadron
Killed active service 30 March 1944

We all owe our freedom to young men like these. RIP.

Acknowledgements

With thanks to:

Alistair Brown – UK researcher

Derek 'Spearo' Ling – Thames Bargemaster

Chris Leach – Stutton resident

US Air Force – Air Museum records, Imperial War Museum, Duxford.

Edward Colimore – *Philadelphia Inquirer* Staff Writer

Roger Freeman – Historian, 8th and 9th US Air Forces

Philip William Willis 1923 - 2014

Vic Scott

Samuel (Sam) Willis and May Steward, Philip's parents were married in Stutton Wesleyan Chapel on Primrose Day, 19 April 1919. Sam had recently returned from serving with the Suffolk Regiment in the Great War of 1914 - 1918. Their wedding reception was held at No 3, Crepping Hall Drive, the home of Sam's parents. After the ceremony they went to live in half of *The Rosary* in Lower Street: we know the house now as *Rose Cottage*. The other half of the house was occupied by Mr and Mrs Whinney, and they shared the use of the kitchen. It was here that Philip's elder brother Bertie was born.

By the time Philip arrived 25 February 1923 the family had moved into *Ancient House*, in those days this was divided into two cottages and the Willis family were in the half next to the red brick house, then owned by Robert Cowles, now part of *Bay Tree Farm*. The other half was occupied by the Misses Smith and Sparrow. Philip said he could remember looking out of the window directly onto Lower Street, which in those days had not been surfaced. He also recalled the cosy warmth from the fire with an old fashioned guard in front.

By 1926 there were four children and their parents in the Willis family, and only one bedroom between them. Philip's younger brother Reg and his sister Florrie had been born by then, so another move was made to *Watt's House*, so called after the family who used to live there. This house stood further back from Lower Street behind the other cottages, and was situated where the entrance to Stutton Close now exists. Lower Street at that time was lined with elderly thatched and tiled cottages; Rose Cottage is the only one remaining and when Philip was a child, had a wooden shop attached to it run by the Miss Catchpoles. The row of cottages has been replaced by modern bungalows. *Watt's House* had been converted into one building from two small cottages, and still had two staircases and two larders. It was here that Philip's other brother Tommy and sister Gwen were born.



Sam and Mary Willis and their family

Philip's father Sam was a farm worker, as were the majority of men in Stutton; he looked after the horses and worked long hours. Philip has said that one of the meals he most enjoyed was rabbit stew; even the heads went into the pot. Sam brought the rabbits home from the farm. As children, Philip and his brothers slept three to a bed, they often quarrelled and fought; on the whole he remembered his childhood as a happy time.

Eventually Sam moved his family again, this time into a tied house belonging to the farmer he worked for. This had three bedrooms and was a bit more modern than their previous homes.

Philip's family attended Chapel every Sunday, the children first going to the Sunday school at the rear of the building. Philip's uncle, George Willis, was Superintendent and took the service with the children, after which they trooped round to the front entrance and joined the grown-ups for the main service. Hymn singing was accompanied by a small orchestra. As well as the organ played by Mabel Jarrold, Philip's grandfather played a cello and Uncle George a violin.

Philip and his brothers and sisters all went to Stutton School. The big room was divided by screens (this is now the assembly hall). The upper class was taught by Miss Esther Barber, the headmistress; she cycled from Holbrook. The middle class was taken by Miss Ruth Steward, and Miss Irene Gosling instructed the infants. Miss Gosling lived in a flat at Crowe Hall. At the age of eleven Philip went to the new area school at Holbrook, riding his first bicycle, leaving there aged fourteen.



(above) Philip, top left, with brothers and sisters at school

Philip had a Saturday job as a delivery boy, taking out the groceries on a large bicycle with a large basket on the front. He was paid 2/6 a week for this. Once when cycling up the Drift, he fell off the bike and broke all the eggs. He delivered the groceries to Stutton House, and one day the lady of the house offered him a job as garden boy at 7/6 a week. He had to arrive there by 8 am, beginning the day by scrubbing the doorsteps; while doing so he would sing hymns, until one morning the lady of the house told him to be quiet as she was trying to rest.

At Christmas he asked for a pay rise, and when this was refused he went to work at Little Hall, where he received 10/- a week, but he wasn't happy there.

The local rector suggested he should go for an interview at the Gentlemen's County Club in Upper Brook Street, Ipswich. This he did, and after being interviewed by the Club Steward he was given a job as a waiter; this included living at the Club with 'all found' and receiving 10/- a week. As a waiter he was required to wear a white jacket and pin-striped trousers, and before he could start work his mother took him into Ipswich for new clothes.

Philip had a room on the top floor of the Club, and once again his first job each morning was scrubbing the doorsteps and washing the windowsills. At 12 noon he waited at table in the dining room. The Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk came into the Club for lunch, as did the Pauls, Cranfields and other local business men. Philip was allowed to go out in the evening, but returning after 10pm he would find the door locked, and had to wake an unhappy steward to let him in.

In 1939, soon after war was declared, the officers of the Regiment based at Barham Manor were made honorary members of the County Club. During 1941, and still at the County Club, Philip was asleep in his room on the top floor while an air raid was in progress. A bomb hit the Club, he hadn't heard the explosion, and upon awakening, found his bed perched on top of a collapsing building. Philip and a colleague had to be rescued by the fire service, and were taken to the Margaret Catchpole public house in Cliff Lane.

Philip moved with the County Club to a new venue at No.12 Lower Brook Street, and in 1942 he received his call-up papers for the army. He joined the Suffolk Regiment at Gibraltar Barracks, Bury St Edmunds. After sixteen weeks training, Philip was posted to Barham Manor as an officer's batman, working in the Officers' Mess and living in a Nissen hut. He was in the army for four years, going to Holland and Germany after D-Day. During this time he transferred as a batman to General Head Quarters Liaison Regiment, known as *Phantom*. The shoulder flash was a capital P in white on a black background. Famous Phantom officers included film actors David Niven, who as a major commanded a squadron, and Hugh Williams.

Other well known names included MPs Sir Hugh Fraser, Maurice MacMillan and Christopher Mayhew; also Sir Gordon Richards, the jockey.



Philip aged 21

When Philip was released from the army in 1947, he brought home from quarantine a black Scottish Terrier called Hamish, given to him by one of the officers. On his home-coming Philip lived with his parents, who by this time had moved into the house in Crepping Hall Drive. His three brothers had also returned from serving in the forces, and with all the family together once again, space was a bit crowded. To get space of his own, Philip turned a dry wooden shed in the garden into a cosy bed-sit. His job at the County Club had been kept open for him and he returned there, leaving after a while to work on the land for Mr Shropshire at Queech Farm. It was at this time that I met Philip, and found we had a mutual interest in local history.

Before long Philip felt he needed more space to live and keep his bits and pieces. He was able to rent rooms in the original Stanton House, next to the Chapel, owned by Miss Alice Bennett who bred Dachshunds. The rooms were already furnished, and Philip took several personal items there with him. He settled there for a while, but it was obvious that he wanted somewhere of his own where he could have furniture etc of his choice.

Walking round Stutton one day Philip took the footpath across the centre of the Gardenfield allotments (now Cattsfield), and after passing the red brick cottages where the home of Mr Solomon now stands, saw a small, one room up and one down cottage,

with a lean-to kitchen at the rear. It was standing empty, and he fell in love with it straight away. The cottage was timber framed with some walls of wattle and daub and others of brick; there were plenty of exposed beams. Floors were of brick and there was a wide open fireplace; looking up the chimney you could see the sky. There was no drainage, no electricity and an outside bucket toilet. Water had to be fetched from a well at the red brick cottages.

Philip found the owner of the cottage living at Brantham, and in 1951 he was able to buy it. I took on the job of scraping and staining all the beams which had been covered in whitewash; Philip's family helped to scrub and clean everywhere. Furniture was obtained from various second-hand shops, and Philip continued to collect bits and pieces. Over the years he had great pleasure rummaging through both antique and junk shops, making many new acquaintances that way. Philip named the cottage *Wycombe*, having been to West Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, and liking the place.



Wycombe

Not long after moving into the cottage Philip lost his Scottie Hamish, having picked up rat poison from somewhere. It died in a very few days and Philip buried it in his garden under a greengage tree, now long gone.

Becoming restless again, Philip applied for his old job at the County Club, and got it. He worked there for a while finally leaving in 1955 and taking a job as steward on the ferries from Harwich to the Hook of Holland.

By 1956 the other red brick cottages on the allotments had been pulled down, and the plot bought by Mr and Mrs Jennings. They had a new house built in the place of the cottages; this is now Mr Solomon's home. As the house was built across the access path to Philip's cottage, the path had to be diverted to the edge of the field and was widened to take a car. The well at the cottages had been filled in, but electricity and mains water were brought across the allotments and Philip was able to connect his cottage to both.

Philip soon transferred from the ferries to the New Zealand Shipping Co Ltd and by 1957 was on RMS *Ruahine*. 1958 saw him on the MV *Bloemfontein Castle*, and later the *Warwick Castle*, the *Durban Castle* and the *Rhodesia Castle*.

By this time I had been in the RAF, and after completing my National Service with the Marine Craft section, was released and after two years got married. Philip often visited us when on shore leave bringing mementoes of his travel.

In 1960 our son David was born. Philip was on leave from his ship and was delighted to be David's godfather, attending his christening in St Peter's Church. About this time Philip began to complain about pains in his legs; this was something that stayed with him for the rest of his life, slowly getting worse as he grew older. Eventually in 1970, having left his job as a steward on the passenger liners, Philip went to work at St Mary's Hospital in Tooting as a male attendant to the aged and infirm; in 1977 he was promoted to nursing auxiliary. He retired from St Mary's in 1988 at the age of sixty five.



Philip aged 37

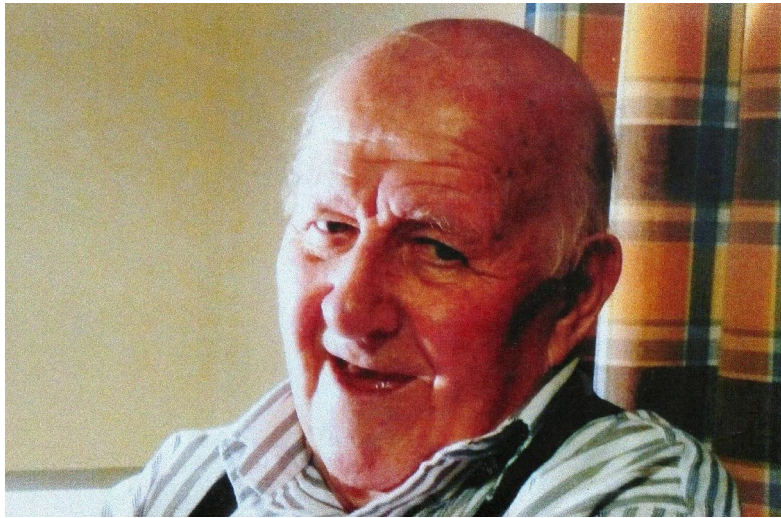
Philip had already developed an interest in photography, and went round locally on his moped taking photos of buildings and views. And in the early 1970s, when the valley was being cleared to build Alton Water Reservoir, Philip was there every spare moment he had, taking photos stage by stage of the demolition of Tattingstone Hall, Alton Hall and Crag Hall. He also photographed the removal of Stutton Mill and the adjacent buildings, before they were transferred to the Museum of Rural Life at Stowmarket, where they were rebuilt and can now be visited. His photographs were developed as slides, and he began giving illustrated talks to local organisations. Becoming well known for his talks and the quality of his photographs, he soon found himself in demand all over Suffolk, and made more acquaintances that way. As his only transport was his moped, Philip relied on friends taking him and his projector, slides etc to his talks.

Philip joined several organisations and built up a large collection of books, mainly on East Anglia and local history. He became for several years Local History Recorder for Stutton, and organised an annual open day in what was now a Methodist Chapel. Here he would show his collection of books, photos and papers, and also paintings by local artists.

When Philip's parents, Sam and May died, Philip had an extension built onto his cottage to accommodate his unmarried sister Florrie, his other brothers and sister having married and left home. Florrie kept house for Philip and they both became more involved in the Chapel, holding coffee mornings each month in the old school room at the rear. Philip was one of the founder members of the Stutton Local History Group when it was inaugurated in 1982/3, later becoming Chairman, and finally Life President.

Time passed and Florrie became ill; Philip did his best to look after her, but there came a time when she went into a home. Florrie died in 2010 and was buried in St Peter's churchyard near her parent's grave. Philip could hardly walk by this time, and it became obvious that he wasn't looking after himself. Soon he went to Spring Lodge at Woolverstone, and after a while was transferred to Oak House in Stutton where he had a comfortable flat of his own; his furniture, books, photographs, slides etc all round him. *Wycombe*, his cottage, was sold; the new owners greatly extending it out around the central core.

As one of his friends I often visited him, and he liked to have a good discussion on local history and people we both remembered. Towards the end of 2014 Philip was confined to his bed and quickly deteriorated. He was taken to Ipswich hospital, and on 9 December he passed away, aged ninety one. His funeral took place in St Peter's Church, which was overflowing with family, friends and acquaintances. His body was cremated and later his ashes were interred in his sister Florrie's grave. In his will he left all his photographs, slides and books to the Ipswich Record Office for study by future generations. Some items also went to the Local History Archive.



Philip aged 91

Philip was a good friend with considerable knowledge acquired during his life; a village character, well known by many throughout Suffolk. He is sadly missed by those who knew him.

Note - Much of Philip's early life was taken from notes left by him.

We Will Remember Them

Vic Scott

The names of the men from Stutton who lost their lives in World War One are recorded on the memorial in St Peter's Church, and on Remembrance Sunday these names are read out during the wreath-laying ceremony at the memorial cross in the village. Of the 98 men who went to war from Stutton 16 died, 35 were wounded, and 4 were mentioned in despatches. These details are recorded on Stutton's Roll of Honour.

But what do we know of these men? Of some we know quite a lot, of others very little. We know two were in the Royal Navy and the remainder the Army, including one who joined the Australian Army.

This article attempts to shed some light where possible on the lives of at least some of the men who once lived in Stutton, and we will take their names in the order they appear on the memorial, starting with:

J A LANKESTER

James Arthur Lankester, Stoker 2nd Class in the Royal Navy was based at HMS *Vivid*, the Navy barracks at Devonport, commissioned in 1890, and operated as a training unit until 1914. The base was renamed HMS *Drake* in 1934, and still exists, the name referring to all of Her Majesty's Naval bases in Plymouth.

James died from disease on 27 March 1918 aged 18. His body is buried in the churchyard of St Peter's Church, Stutton. His grave can be seen in the NW part and is marked with a War Graves Commission headstone.

James was the son of Frederick Lankester, who lived in Crowe Hall Lodge, Stutton, now replaced with a modern bungalow.

S F STAFF

Stanley Frederick Staff, Able Seaman on board HMS *Viola*, a convoy sloop, one of the "Q" ships built in 1916, heavily armed and disguised as a merchantman.

Stanley was killed in action on 18 June 1918 aged 19. His body is buried in Lerwick New Cemetery in the Shetland Isles.

Stanley was the son of Lizzie Staff who lived in Manor Lane, Stutton.



War memorial in St Peter's Church

PTE O M ABLITT

Oliver Manfred Ablitt, Private in the 20th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (London Regiment). Oliver was killed in action in Flanders on 25 April 1917 aged 20. He has no known grave; his name is inscribed on the Wall of Remembrance at the Arras Memorial in France. Oliver was the son of Emily Ablitt of Gardenfield Cottages, Stutton. Like most of these men he went to Stutton School, leaving at the age of 14. We have a copy of a letter he wrote in the school book. In this letter he writes: *I have one sister and no brothers, when I leave school I am going to work at a small farm called Rose Villa (now named Roundwood), my father died about six years ago. I like Mr. Baker (the school master).* The letter was written on 26 July 1910.

PTE W S BENNETT

Walter Stanley Bennett, Private in the 1st Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment. Walter was killed in action on 24 August 1914 aged 24. He died in the Belgian village of Quaregnon during the battle of Mons, and was buried there with seven others, their graves looked after by the village people. In 1953 all eight bodies were removed and reburied in the Cement House Cemetery at Langemark, Belgium, where his headstone can be seen. Walter was the son of Robert Walter and Charlotte Bennett of the earlier Stanton House, Stutton. (For more information see article in Journal 30.)

PTE F W BOWLES

Frank William Bowles, Private in the 9th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment. Frank died from wounds on 15 September 1916 aged 19. His body is buried in La Neuville British Cemetery Corbie, France, where his headstone can be seen. Frank was the only son of William and Caroline Bowles of Alton Hall Cottage, Stutton.

CPLW A BROOKE

William Alfred Brooke, Corporal in the 4th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment. William was killed in action on 18 August 1916, aged 25. His body is buried in the Caterpillar Valley Cemetery Longueval, France, where his headstone can be seen. William was the son of John Brooke of Stutton.

PTE G W COWDREY

George William Cowdrey, Private in the 2nd Battalion, Kings Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment). George died of wounds on 8 May 1915, Age 24. His body is buried in the Wimereux Communal Cemetery France. Because of the sandy nature of the soil, the headstones lie flat on the graves; his can be seen.

George was the son of William and Lily Cowdrey of Stutton Hall Lodge.

2nd LIEUT E J CUTTING

Edward James Cutting, Second Lieutenant in the 4th Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment. Edward was killed in action on 9 October 1918, aged 35. His body is buried in the St Aubert British Cemetery, France, where his headstone can be seen.

Edward had tried to join the Army three times and had been rejected each time; on the fourth try in August 1915 he was accepted for the Army Service Corps. He transferred to the Infantry in 1917 and received his commission in the Royal Berkshire Regiment in March 1918, going to France in the May. Taking part in an attack on a strongly held village, and leading his troop to take a machine-gun post, he was killed.

Edward was the son of William and Elizabeth Cutting of Church Farm, Stutton, (now named *Quarhams*). (For more information see article in Journal 30)

CAPT J F L FISON MC

James Frederick Lorimer Fison, Captain Brigade Major in the 4th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment. James died of wounds and gas poisoning on 2 November 1917, aged 27. His body is buried in the Fison family plot in the NW corner of the churchyard at St Peter's Church, Stutton. A private cross marks the grave.

Holder of the Military Cross and twice mentioned in despatches, James was the eldest son of James Oliver and Lucy Maud Fison of Stutton Hall. James married Charlotte Patricia Hazel Elliot on 8 March 1917.

PTE E MGARNHAM

Edward Maurice Garnham, Private in the 43rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. Edward was killed in action on 4 July 1918, aged 33. His body is buried in the Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery, France, where his headstone can be seen.

Edward was the son of William and Mary Garnham of 7 Manningtree Road, Stutton. He had emigrated to Australia at the age of 26 and worked as a farm labourer. (For more information see Journal 30.)

PTE H E GOSLING

Harry Everard Gosling, Private in the 20th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. Harry was killed in action on 20 May 1917, aged 35. He has no known grave and his name is inscribed on the wall of Remembrance at the Arras Memorial in France.

Harry was the husband of Alice Maud Gosling at Crowe Hall, Stutton. His daughter Irene Gosling was a teacher at Stutton School for many years.

PTE P G ROBINSON

Percy George Robinson, Private in the Mechanical Transport Company, Army Service Corps. He died at sea on May 1917, aged 30. He has no known grave and his name can be seen on the Savona Memorial in the Savona Town Cemetery, Italy.

Percy was the son of Louisa Robinson, 4 Lower Street, Stutton. He was on the troopship SS *Transylvania* sailing from Marseille to Alexandria, escorted by two destroyers. At 10 am on 4 May the *Transylvania* was struck in the engine room by a torpedo fired by the German U-boat U-63. At the time the ship was near Savona in the Gulf of Genoa. One of the destroyers came alongside and began taking off the troops. Twenty minutes later a second torpedo hit the *Transylvania* which sank immediately. Ten crew members, 29 Army Officers and 373 soldiers lost their lives, a further 275 died when the *Transylvania* sank.

On 8 October 2011 the wreck of the *Transylvania* was discovered off the coast of the island of Bergeggi at a depth of 630 metres.

PTE R E RUSH

Rivers Edward Rush, Private in the 10th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). He was killed in action on 18 September 1918, aged 19.

Rivers has no known grave, his name is inscribed on the Wall of Remembrance at Vis-En-Artois Memorial, France.

Rivers went to Stutton school, and in the school book he wrote that he was born in Erwarton and went to school there for about six months, then to Woolverstone, and

finally to Stutton in 1911. His father was a horseman and presumably moved from farm to farm. Unfortunately we have no details of his parents or where they lived.

CPL W R SMEE

William Reginald Smee, Corporal in the "W" Company, 2nd Battalion, Suffolk Regiment. William was killed in action on 14 June 1917, aged 27. He has no known grave and his name is inscribed on the Wall of Remembrance at the Arras Memorial, France. William was the son of George and Harriet Smee of 48 Manningtree Road, Stutton.

GNR V B WILLIS

Victor Basil Willis, Gunner in the 'F' Battalion, Tank Corps. Victor (known as Basil) died from wounds on 1 December 1917, aged 20. His body is buried in Ribecourt British Cemetery France; his headstone can be seen.

Basil went to Stutton school, and we have a copy of a letter from the school book dated 15 July 1910 in which he wrote: *I have five brothers, my father and two of my brothers work for Mr Graham at Crepping Hall farm. When I leave school I hope to work for Mr Graham.* He also said he liked Mr Baker his schoolmaster.

Basil was the son of George and Amelia Willis of 3 Crepping Hall Drive, Stutton.

PTE H C WISEMAN

Harold Charles Wiseman, Rifleman in the 1st/9th Battalion, London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles). He died from wounds on 19 May 1917, aged 30. His body is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery France: his headstone can be seen.

Harold was Assistant Master, Commercial Travellers' School Pinner in Middlesex. He was the son of William Jennings Wiseman and Mavis Elizabeth Wiseman of the Post Office and Stores, Stutton.

This information gathered has gone some way to turn the names on the Stutton memorial into real people, and I feel we are starting to know them. And any additional information we can obtain will increase our knowledge, and make it easier for us to

REMEMBER THEM.

Stories of WW2 re-told by Peter Page MBE in July 2015

Vic Scott

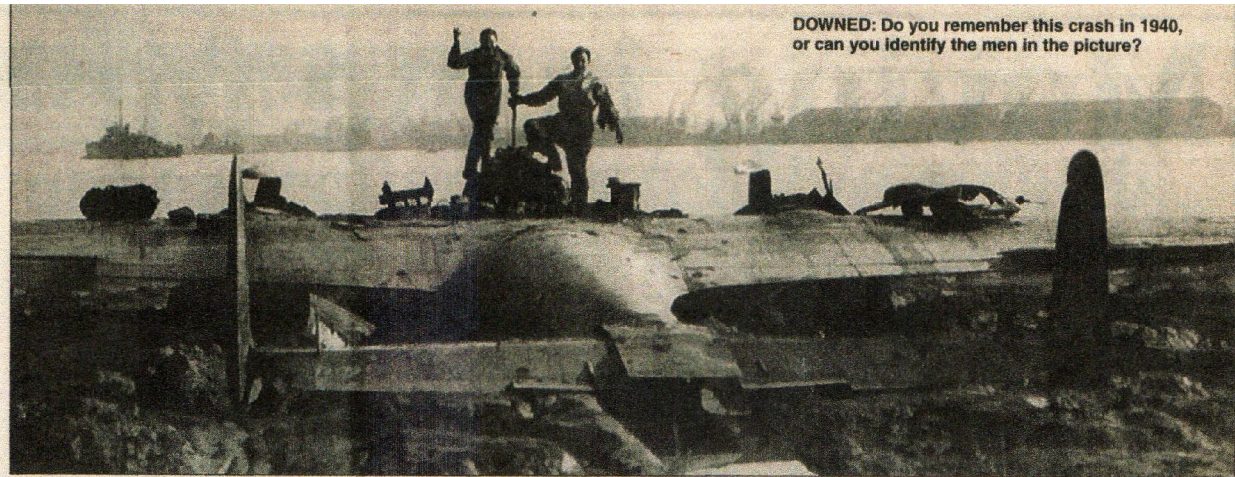
Two Mustangs crashed in Holbrook Bay at different times while on target practice bombing. One plane blew up in mid-air, the other landed in the water. Bill Quantrill and Fred Dunnnett retrieved the body of one and bits of the other. They were taken ashore at Stutton Point where an American ambulance picked them up and took them away. The target was in the centre of Holbrook Bay. The dummy bombs were the size of a 5 gallon oil drum and filled with sand, with a small explosive charge that went off to show where they had hit. Peter saw one of these dummy bombs which had landed on the shore.

The parachute mine that blew out the two windows in Stutton Church landed just into Holbrook Creek, and the crater could be seen at low water for some time. (My father was ARP Warden at the time and went down and brought home a length of the green silk parachute cord, *Vic*). The mine was dropped at 10 pm on a Saturday night and was watched coming down by several village people.

A German bomber crashed on the saltings just below Erwarton Ness (see newspaper cutting). The crew had bailed out when the aircraft was up-country, possibly due to damage or loss of fuel; the plane had carried on until it crashed. The crew had been taken prisoner without an aircraft, and the plane had come down miles away without the crew. The plane was floated away at high water and taken to RAF Felixstowe to be lifted out with the large crane. (see newspaper cutting)

A German bomber also crashed on the Suffolk side of the Stour opposite Wrabness near Holbrook Creek, a tug tried to tow it away and pulled one wing off which was dropped in the entrance to the Creek. Peter said it may still be there under water, at low tide he got out of his boat and stood on it after the War. He often caught his fish nets on aircraft wreckage in the Stour.

Regarding the American bomber which crashed with the loss of the crew off Wrabness, he could only confirm that within the last 10 years the crew's remains were retrieved, and may have been taken back to America. There were photos and articles in the *East Anglian Daily Times* at the time.



DOWNED: Do you remember this crash in 1940, or can you identify the men in the picture?

Do you remember wartime air crash?

Historian trying to find pair pictured with bomber

By Mark Heath

A WORLD War Two historian researching a crash which saw a German bomber fall to earth in Suffolk is appealing for people who remember the event to get in touch with him.

Peter Dimond is particularly interested in tracking down the men featured in this photo of the stricken plane, which crashed near Ness Point in Ewerton Bay at 1am on October 20, 1940.

The German Luftwaffe plane – a Dornier 17-Z – actually belly-dived into the mud without its crew, who had bailed out long before the crash.

It was one of two German planes to crash in Suffolk within the space of a week – a Dornier bomber also came down in Holbrook Bay a few days later.

Mr Dimond, who lives in Petersfield, Hampshire, said: "The plane actually landed on its own – the four-man crew got lost during a night raid heading for Liverpool."

"They turned east at Salisbury and eventually decided to go home, but they didn't make it. They bailed out, thinking they were over France but when they landed they were captured and made prisoners of war."

"They left the plane on auto-pilot and it carried on flying before it ran out of fuel and belly-dived into the ground in the bay."

"When it came down everyone was searching all over the Ipswich area for the crew, without realising they were actually in Salisbury."

Mr Dimond added: "It's a fascinating aircraft and I would love to know what happened to it. I believe that it was towed out to sea but,

according to local folklore, the tow-line broke and it sank."

The only person Mr Dimond has managed to track down who remembers the crash is Peter Page MBE, who was an 11-year-old schoolboy at the time.

Mr Page, who lives in Holbrook Hospital School Lodge, recalled:

They left the plane on auto-pilot and it carried on flying'

"Three of us lads went along to see it in the morning and we picked up some shell casings."

"I got in terrible trouble though. The police found out and I had to take all that I had and hand them in."

"I can remember it well. I'd

never seen a plane that close before and I haven't seen a military plane that close again since."

Mr Dimond believes the picture of the stricken aircraft was taken by a local newspaper reporter and then handed on to national papers.

He added: "It's a fascinating thing to look into and I would love to get the final history of what happened."

"The two men in the picture, I think, must be locals and it would be great to speak to them."

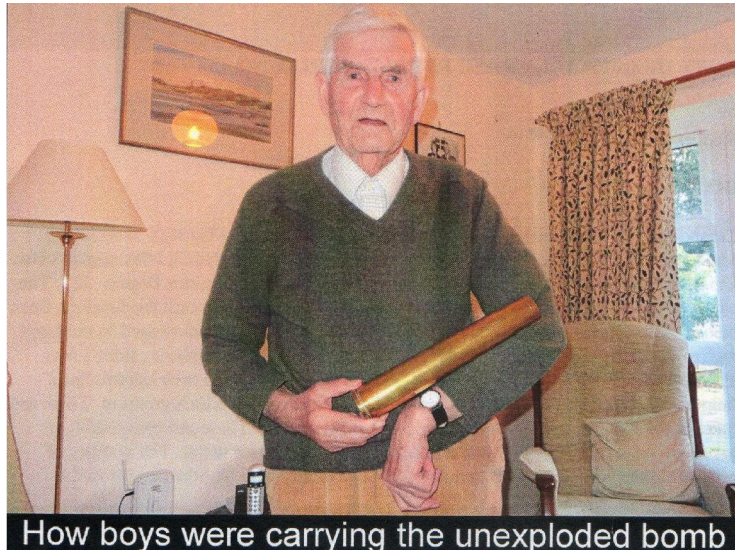
"You don't often see a crashed aeroplane in your life, so people tend to have brilliant memories of what happened and where they were – that's what I want to get."

If you remember the crash, get in touch with Mr Dimond on 07703 529811.

mark.heath@eadt.co.uk

Apparently there was a gun emplacement during the War along the river bank facing Harwich Harbour, later in the War it was decided that it was no longer necessary, and was dismantled and taken away by the army. Before leaving they dumped some of the shells in the river at high tide. At low water they were exposed, the police came and took away as many as they could find, unfortunately one was left behind.

This was found by two local boys who took it home. When they were playing about, it exploded, killing one of them outright, the other died later in hospital.



How boys were carrying the unexploded bomb



(the photo of Peter should say *shell* and not *bomb* –Vic Scott).

The two boys that were killed
Photo taken 22 April 1942.

On the left - Lionel Abbott
died 16 May 1942.

On the right - Eric Page
died 29 May 1942.

When Peter was in the Army in Germany doing his National Service he went to one of his mate's marriage to a German girl. At the wedding reception he was talking to a German who had been a pilot in the Luftwaffe; he told Peter that he had come down in Britain and taken prisoner, and had spent time in the Ipswich area after the War. When he was a pilot, he said they were told on no account were they to bomb the Royal Hospital School, they were to use the tower only as a guide to London because Hitler wanted the school as Military Headquarters after the invasion of Britain.

COPY OF OFFICIAL CRASH REPORT: SERIAL NO 13 : 22.10

Report no. 3/112

DO. 17 Z

Crashed on 21.10.40 at 0104 hrs at Ness point, near Shotley, Map Ref. N.6930. Markings 7T + AH (A outlined white). Crest Eagle holding British Isles map in claw. Tip of spinners white. Aircraft works no. apparently 2783. Engines Bramo 323. The cause of the crash is unknown, but two bullet strikes passed through the fuselage from below. Aircraft made a good belly landing on mud and is half submerged in mud and water. Armaments : 5 M.G. 15's found but possibly 6 fitted. Armour : Pilot's seat armoured but other armour not visible because of mud. 2 light metal streamlined bulges, one fitted on each side of the fuselage abreast of the pilot's position. These are quickly detachable and contain inflatable rubber buoys. These are presumably to give increased buoyancy in the event of a forced landing on water. The number of crew and their fate unknown, but windows are broken and bloodstains are in the aircraft.

Medical Advances in the First World War

Mary Boyton

War has a habit of leading to advances in medical treatment owing to the challenging injuries and conditions doctors encountered. Back in the Crimean War, nurses such as Florence Nightingale were faced with many soldiers dying from their wounds, firstly though contamination from the earth of the farmland where they fell, and secondly from the lack of hygiene in the hospital wards. Florence Nightingale introduced the concept of keeping both the patient and the wards clean, leading to a marked reduction in mortality rates. In the First World War, the sheer number of casualties posed a huge problem to the doctors and nurses sent to the battlefields and also in the hospitals back home. Strategies pioneered in the Crimean War were put into place whereby great importance was placed on the attempts to clean wounds thoroughly and to maintain clean wards and patients as much as possible. Gangrene and septicaemia were still rife, but at least doctors and nurses were aware of the need for all possible hygiene.

A new system was devised whereby the stretcher bearers were trained to administer elementary first aid before the casualties were taken to a casualty clearing station for treatment by doctors and nurses. If they survived, the soldiers would then be transported on specially equipped and staffed hospital trains and ships back to England and on to garrison hospitals such as Woolwich and Colchester. Men began to survive horrendous injuries from which, in the past, they would have died.

One such soldier was the father of a Stutton resident. He was rejected at the first attempt to enlist but in 1915 he joined the Hussars in Felixstowe. With the escalation of the war effort, the Hussars were amalgamated or transformed into other regiments and he was transferred to the Suffolk Regiment even though he was from Clacton in Essex. He was sent to the Western Front at the time of the battle of Ypres but within a few months was badly injured by a three inch shard of shrapnel which entered one of his buttocks. His daughter still has the offending piece of fractured metal. He was operated on in the field hospital and then transferred back to Dartford Hospital on a hospital train. He underwent a series of operations in Woolwich, Colchester and Clacton hospitals over the next four years resulting in him receiving one of the first colostomies performed, whereby a glass pot was able to be attached to a canvas belt which he always wore round his abdomen for the rest of his life. This pioneering

operation enabled him to be discharged on a 100% disability pension and to live with his wife (whom he met at Clacton Hospital where she had enrolled as a Voluntary Aid Detachment Nurse) and his daughter in Clacton. He was able to drive a car and although the pension was modest, amazingly he was able to live a relatively normal life being a devoted, loving husband and father to the age of 77.

George Gladwell from Stutton was also another beneficiary of pioneering surgery. George was injured in the last few months of the war on the Western Front when a piece of shrapnel ricocheted off the bible he kept in his breast pocket and sliced off the entire bicep of his left arm. (See Journal 30) His account of his time in Southwark and Weybridge hospitals brings home vividly how painful recovery could be. The gangrene in his arm was sufficiently bad for amputation to be considered, but new surgical treatments and free draining of the wound meant his arm was saved. After three operations, his arm was bandaged in a long splint which was fixed to the head and foot rail of his 'cot' for several weeks. Following this, with daily painful exercises to make the limb stronger and then a further operation to release the skin grafts to gain more flexibility, his arm was saved even though it was weak, and, again, to the credit of the surgeons, he was able to emigrate to America, work and make a new life with the wife he had met back in Belgium at the beginning of the war.

Other major steps forward in medicine at the time included limb-saving splints for immobilising broken bones, portable X-ray machines for quicker diagnosis in the clearing stations, the thorough cleansing of wounds with salt water thus helping to prevent gangrene, and perhaps most surprising of all, pioneering blood transfusions. Each war appears to accelerate medical breakthroughs - even today after being injured in Afghanistan and the Middle East, soldiers' treatment has been revolutionised. Casualties are now immediately put into an induced coma and evacuated back to England within 24 hours of being injured where there are the best facilities and specialised surgeons available to give them the best chance of an optimum recovery. All these advancements filter through to be available to the general population and contribute to the treatment of road casualties and other acute medical needs.

It is however interesting that, well before the discovery of antibiotics during the Second World War which transformed modern medicine, the First World War saw the introduction of so many everyday practices.

Finding George
The Research into George Gladwell, a WWI Soldier from Stutton

Nigel Banham and Mary Boyton

In the Spring of 2014, we were fortunate to receive a number of items, including two typed journals, written by a soldier in the Artillery, George Gladwell.

Our first problem was, who was he?

If you have been in Stutton church, you may have noticed a memorial to Richard Henry Gladwell, who, among other things, was the landlord of the King's Head, where the family lived. His wife Elizabeth bore 10 children and there is a photo in the local history archive of his sons outside the pub. His eldest child, Frederick, died at 5 weeks but the next one, Henry George (born 1894) could be our George, who would then be 20 on the outbreak of the war. In later life he always called himself George Henry, possibly to avoid confusion because his father Richard used his own second name Harry.

George was a regular soldier, and his journal opens on the first day of the war at Shorncliffe Barracks, which is in Folkestone, Kent, when he is tending to the horses.

How did he get there?

He never once mentions to which unit he belonged. His journal, which was written from his notes after the war was over, encompasses the histories of the battles he was in, with overall detail that he could not have known as a soldier at the time. It must be an amalgam of his notes with other detail from published sources. He includes a number of very good drawings of war commanders, clearly all by the same hand, which were probably copied from contemporary photographs.

He does not appear in Stutton in the 1911 census. During the course of his writing, he mentions several officers in his unit, so I started to look for them. There was a Lieut Pillener, later killed at Armentiers in November 1914. *The London Gazette* is a good place to search for officers and this revealed that he was in the Royal Field Artillery. The 1911 census shows him at Borden in Hampshire, (a large army camp) and that he was with the 29th Brigade Royal Field Artillery (RFA).

The British artillery at the beginning of the war had three arms: Garrison Artillery, Royal Horse Artillery (light guns pulled by horses, and very mobile) and the RFA, which had heavier guns, also horse drawn, and operated behind the front lines, supporting the

infantry. Each brigade had about 800 men and three batteries with each battery having six 18-pounder guns.

So far so good but we still did not know George's battery.

George also mentions a Lieut Piggott, his own battery commander, being killed at Brielen and on another website (My Ypres Salient Homage), I found a photograph of his grave. He was from the 127th Battery of 29th Brigade RFA, which was attached to the 4th infantry division.

Got him!!

I then downloaded the 29th Brigade war diary which is a huge, handwritten, difficult to read document, from The National Archives at Kew, and this confirmed where the unit was and records this officer's death.

Readers of the previous article (Journal 30) will know that Brielen was where George met Marthe, who later left the village because of the fighting and who he later married in the USA after the War.

George stayed with this battery throughout his war service, carrying out different roles within it; his regular job being working as a rangefinder. A range-finding post would be in an advanced /high position and would report the fall of the shells back to the guns by telephone. Other methods included aircraft spotters and later, twin sound locators, a very accurate method used later in the War.

So where was he before he joined the army?

George's service record has been lost, but his medal card in The National Archives shows that he joined on 3 June 1912, some 3 months after his 18th birthday!

Vic Scott came up with a photo of George on his leaving school aged 13, so as he was not here on the census in 1911, where was he from 1907 to 1912?

Someone, somewhere will know the answer to those lost 5 years! *Ed*

Jean Mordey 1929-2015

Jean Mary Winfield was born in Ockbrook near Derby, the eldest daughter of Florence and Joseph Winfield. She had a younger sister, Meg.

Jean attended Long Eaton Grammar School and was a keen student, although her school report aged 12 found her to be *Intelligent but inclined to spend too much time talking*. Not much was going to change in the next 72 years, Neil commented.

Throughout school Jean showed a marked preference for science and on leaving went to work at British Celanese in Spondon near Derby as a chemist.

There she met Stan Mordey, and they were married at the Moravian Church in Ockbrook in 1951. Jean remained a lifelong member of the Moravian Church.

They moved into a cottage in the Moravian Settlement and Neil was born there in 1954.

In 1959 Stan got a job at BXL at Cattawade and moved to a flat in Brantham Court - finally moving to Larksfield Road when the house was completed in 1960.

Jean was a hoarder; she kept everything even seriously embarrassing stuff.

Her driving test failure notice for 1960 shows that she had totally mastered the art of car control except for: at road junctions, not looking left and right; not being able to reverse; not using mirror appropriately and not making proper use of gears, clutch and brakes ! There were to be many more lessons before she scraped a pass.

Having passed her test Jean returned to education and earned her City and Guilds in dressmaking. When she became an Instructor I became her trainee – the reason that to this day I can still make all my own crushed velvet loons.

Suffolk instigated a programme to train mature students as teachers at Belstead House run from Keswick Hall in Norwich. Jean joined up and in 1967 became a teacher at the village school with Mrs Wade and Phyllis Tuffs. In 1972 she left, and with a glowing reference from Tuffy, went to Whitton Junior School where she was to teach for the rest of her full time career. On retiring she carried on supply teaching in Ipswich, Felixstowe and on the peninsular for several years until she reached the county's age limit and had to stop.



During the 1950s and 1960s Stan had suffered from ankylosing spondylitis that had made him less and less mobile, but in 1969 he had radical surgery that restored a good degree of movement; he wanted a new hobby and I taught him to sail.

When I went to college he had no one to sail with and to our great surprise Jean, who had a total fear of water - and had actually passed out when she fell into a 3 feet deep part of Lake Lugano - stepped up to the plate and learned to sail with him.

For the next 20 years or so they enjoyed cruising in Britain and Europe in their East Anglian one design *Vitalba* usually in company with Dicky Greenland and Geoff and Mavis Brown. They took great pride in their membership of the Royal Harwich Yacht Club and sailed together until Stan's death.

Jean carried on sailing and narrow boating with friends for many years, but she never learned to swim and was always terrified of water.

Over the years Jean joined in many activities. In Derby she had been involved with Brownies and Guides and this continued throughout her life.

Stan and Neil were always amused to take phone messages for 'Brown Owl', and were pleased to adjudicate on the quality of the tea and toast proffered by Brownies seeking their cook's badge!

They found it somewhat ironic that Jean tested anyone on their culinary skills as she was not one of life's natural cooks. Her Mum had been a fantastic cook but Jean took advanced chemistry and dropped domestic science at 12. When she got married she followed Gran around with a set of chemist's scales trying to learn. Gran of course just threw in a handful of raisins, or whatever, intuitively, but Jean would then weigh it. I have her recipe book from those days which is full of gems like – take 42.74 grams of raisins...

Years later we persuaded her to take a Robert Carrier cookery course and she came back from Hintlesham Hall knowing how to cook what we dubbed 'The Big Six'. If summoned to dinner it was always safest to check if it was to be one of the big six. Day to day Stan and Neil practised what Stan called 'defensive cooking' and made sure there was a meal underway before she got home. This was quite easy as she was always busy and usually late.

In order to fill her scant free time Jean was also involved in village activities. Stutton Amateur Dramatics, the Women's Institute, the Parochial Church Council, the Village Hall, the School, the Parent Teachers' Association, the School Governors, carpet bowls, and the Church and probably more. On retiring she joined the University of the Third Age, began a computer course and attended The Stour Ladies Probus. She also continued playing bridge – another life-long interest.

Latterly Jean had been resident at the Orwell Care Home. Her funeral was held at St Peter's Church Stutton, where her long life was celebrated by many from the village and beyond.

We are grateful to Neil Mordey for allowing us to use and adapt part of his eulogy he gave at his mother's funeral. *Ed*