

World War 2 heroes

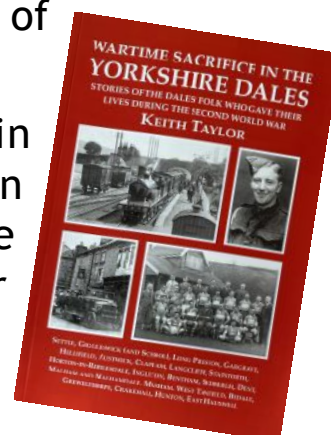
The Settle church WW2 memorial and the Cenotaph tell us of 15 service men and one woman who lost their lives during the war. This year Settle Graveyard Project has researched their lives, in chronological order, together with a seven others who didn't make the cut for some reason, including some who are named on the Scout memorial and some on the Giggleswick Black Rock bridge memorial.



The average age of death of our heroes was 25.6 years. With advanced weaponry and technology causes of death were more varied than out WW1 heroes. Nine died while serving in the RAF with another serving with the American Air Force. Four drowned while serving in the Navy. Seven died on the battlefield. Others died in Prisoner of War camps or in unlucky accidents. Two of our heroes were involved in well known conflicts – the stand off at El-Alamein and the horrendous sinking of the Lancastria. The deaths were distributed from the European battlefields in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, to Egypt, Malta, Greece, Singapore and Christmas Island off Indonesia, the North Sea, and in the hills around Settle.

Seven of the men were married and five children were orphaned. One man who had got engaged just weeks before his death. As well as families, organisations felt the pain of loss. Four were members of Settle and District Air Training Corps and three members of the Home Guard. Six were members of the Castleberg Scout Troop, three played for North Ribblesdale Rugby Club and two for the Football team. Three were members of Settle Light Opera Company.

The heroes' pen pictures are presented in chronological order. Some information has been gleaned from a wonderful publication, Wartime Sacrifice in the Yorkshire Dales, by Keith Taylor although I cannot vouch for the accuracy of that.



Our first two men were killed as a result of the conflict in Dunkirk, in **May-June 1940**:

Harry Kendall, Private, aged 29

Harry was the third of five children of Settle's **Charles Kendall**, a labourer and his wife **Catherine Irvine**, the daughter of an ostler, managing the horses, at the Golden Lion in Settle. The family lived on Kirkgate in Settle. Harry found work at Giggleswick limeworks and spent his spare time playing for North Ribblesdale Rugby Club and Settle Brass Band – for 15 years.

In July 1933 Harry married **Elizabeth Muncaster** and had two children. Elizabeth was one of 12 children of **Robert Muncaster**, pictured, who was a blast furnace loco driver in Jarrow, County Durham. She had followed her sister **Emma Muncaster** down to Settle, probably to find work at the mills or in service – Emma had married **Thomas Miles Pawson**, a Rathmell farmer's son. Harry and Elizabeth had a daughter and a son, also living on Kirkgate, before he was called up to serve in the King's Own Royal Regiment in a Pioneer Battalion to build camps, roads and bridges.



Harry's Battalion joined the British Expeditionary Force in France in April 1940 to build defensive works in the area around Vermelles. The Germans invaded and the Battalion was pushed back to the port of Dunkirk, along with many others. Tragically Harry was killed, aged 29, on 30 May just two days before the Battalion were rescued in 'Operation Dynamo', the Dunkirk evacuation. His children were just two and four years old.



Harry's father, Charles Kendall, died 9 months after Harry, aged 57. Widow Elizabeth brought up the children alone, living in Salt Pie in Upper Settle. She died 66 years later, aged 97!

Stanley Morphet, Sergeant, aged 26

Stanley was the illegitimate son of **Maggie Morphet**, born a couple of years before her marriage to recently widowed **John Lord**, a grocer. By the time of the 1921 census the family lived at the Station Cottages at Horton-in-Ribblesdale, with two sons from John's first marriage, Stanley, aged 7 and two daughters of their own. John worked as a railway platelayer. Things went pear-shaped for John and Maggie – at the time of the 1939 register John and his sons were running a grocer's business in Settle but Maggie and their two daughters were in Hellifield with a couple of lodgers to help pay for food on the plate.

Stanley had joined the reserves before the war and so became a Sergeant when war broke. Initially he was engaged in a Labour Corps doing light engineering works attached to the British Expeditionary Force in Western France. As the war progressed Stanley was transferred to an infantry brigade. Two weeks after the Dunkirk evacuation, Stanley's unit, and numerous others, up to 7,000 men were instructed to move to the coast of the Bay of Biscay to board *RMS Lancastria*, 11 miles south west of St Nazaire. This Royal Mail Ship had been requisitioned for the war effort, refitted and painted in battleship grey. Air raids were expected and so the *Lancastria* was ordered to leave the area, however the Captain chose to wait for a destroyer escort, with fatal consequences.



On 17 June 1940 the *Lancastria* was bombed and the ship sank within 20 minutes. The ship's capacity was officially 2,200 and there were only 2,500 life jackets and 16 lifeboats. Over 5,000 men lost their lives, the largest single ship loss of life in maritime history. Stanley, aged 26, was one of them and his body was never recovered. Just 2,477 men were rescued. The government tried to suppress the news of so many lives being lost, but news leaked from America by July.

Meanwhile in the North Sea, in **August 1940:**

Denis John Slater, radio operator, aged 26

Denis John Slater descended from a Settle family but is not remembered on any local memorials. Denis was the only surviving child of **John Nelson Slater** and his wife **Mabel Louisa Marsh**. He never really knew his father because John Nelson Slater was killed during WW1 when Denis was three. He served with the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment on the Western Front but died of wounds on 23 September 1918, aged 38.

John's widow Mabel had a brother who had been killed on the Western Front 18 months previously on 17 January 1917, aged 20. In 1920 Mabel married an accountant, **Henry William Douglas Wessells**, of German descent, an interesting choice at that stage of history. He died three years later and she then married **Charles Albert Radermacher**, another accountant, 20 years her senior. Inevitably he died well before her, aged 71 in 1939. What a life she had.

Meanwhile, son Denis John Slater married **Margaret Ellis** in January 1940. Unfortunately, he was just the right age to be called up for service in the Merchant Navy WW2. He was a radio operator serving on *Steam Ship Mill Hill*, as part of a convoy transporting cargo from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Middlesborough. At 2.30am on 30 August 1940, 58 miles off the north coast of Scotland a German submarine torpedoed the convoy, sinking three ships including the *SS Mill Hill*. It sank within a few minutes with the loss of all 33 hands, a third of whom were from India.



SS Mill Hill under her former name Peabody. Photo from City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 417-2532.2



Some families just don't have any luck.

Record of Death of Merchant Seaman	
Name: SLATER, Denis John	Ship: Mill Hill
Other Names: Denis John	Official No: 161370
Address: 14 Queens Hill (Toronto) Toronto, Ont.	Port of Registry: London
Birthplace: London, England	Religion: Methodist
Date of Death: 30 Aug 1940	Place of Death: at sea
Cause of Death: Wounds received from enemy action (sunk by enemy U-boat) on 30/8/40 at sea	
Reg. by Act: d	Regulator: 279
Vol. No: 1	Page: 6

There were no deaths in 1941 but seven in 1942 including two killed by the Japanese, two in Egypt and two Americans.

William Edgar Brown, RAF volunteer, aged 34

William Edgar's parents were **Edgar William Brown** (confusingly) and **Mary Jane Woolerton** who lived at 1 Craven Cottages, Settle. Mary Jane was born at Ribbleshead during the construction of the viaduct as her father was a railway labourer. The Woolertons were rather accident prone, with several broken bones and occasionally fatal accidents. Mary Jane's sister, **Mary Annie** was accidentally burnt to death whilst working in service as her voluminous dress caught the gas stove.

Edgar worked as a joiner for **Walter Morrison MP** up at Malham Tarn Hall. Edgar's cousin, **Alan James Brown**, was a policeman but also a successful athlete. He died in 1921 aged just 36. Edgar's grandfather, **William Brown**, was the porter at Giggleswick school for over 30 years.

A DOMESTIC SERVANT BURN'T TO DEATH AT SETTLE.



Son **William Edgar Brown** became a postman in Skipton and, in 1936, married **Kathleen Hartley**, a clogger's daughter. William Edgar joined the RAF as an 'Aircraft-man, 2nd class', the lowest rank possible within the RAF. By 1941 he was posted to the naval base in Singapore. In the '*Fall of Singapore*' the well-drilled and equipped Japanese forces destroyed British ships, pushing back the British forces into Singapore. On 8 February 1942 the Japanese launched an air, land and sea attack on Singapore and 70,000 British men surrendered on 15 February. This was too late for over 5,000 British men including William Edgar who was killed on 9 February. His body was never recovered. He is remembered on the Giggleswick Bridge memorial as well as the Settle memorial. His widow remarried.



Arthur Wilson, Seaman, aged 20 and his Uncle

George Hardy Percy, Lance Bombardier, aged 32

Arthur Wilson was the illegitimate son of 20 year old **Mary Elizabeth Wilson** who lived with her parents in Long Preston where her father, **Herbert Wilson**, was an ironmonger. When Arthur was just two Mary Elizabeth married a miner, **Leonard Hobkinson**, from Leeds but she died aged 33 when Arthur was 11 and so he was brought up by Mary Elizabeth's sister, his aunt **Elsie (Wilson) Percy** in Giggleswick.



Arthur was a Patrol Leader with the 1st Castleberg Scout Troop. He worked as a conductor on the coaches for Pennine Motors in Gargrave. He volunteered for the naval service and was placed as an Ordinary Seaman on *HMS Anking*, pictured – a Hong Kong based ship requisitioned by the British as a depot and supply ship. As tensions rose in the Java Sea, west of Indonesia, the Imperial Japanese Navy attacked and, on 27 February 1942, after numerous assaults, *HMS Anking* was one of several ships was ordered to retreat towards Australia in a convoy protected by an Australian ship *HMAS Yarra*, which had just 4 inch guns.



After five days Japanese cruisers were seen and the *Yarra* gave orders to the convoy to scatter, putting herself between the convoy and the Japanese. On 4 March planes were launched from the cruisers which sank *HMS Anking* within 10 minutes, with the loss of 25 seamen, including Arthur who had just turned 20. The *Yarra* also lost 138 men.

The death notice was delivered to aunt Elsie (Wilson) Percy at 6 High Hill Grove Street in Settle. Elsie had an appalling war. Six months later Elsie's husband, **George Hardy Percy** (below), was also been killed in the Battle of El-Alamein, aged 32 and in October 1944 her father, Herbert, also died – how do you cope with that?

George Hardy Percy and his twin **Edward (Eddie) Horatio Percy** were two of seven sons and one daughter of **William Percy**, a stone-waller/mason and his wife **Sarah Ann Sharpes** who lived in Tams Street, Giggleswick. Unfortunately, that number of sons was risky with the advent of two world wars.



The eldest two sons served in WW1 and second son, Lt Col **Archibald Gordon Percy** of the Royal Berkshire Regiment died of gunshot wounds on the Western Front on 24 June 1918, aged 19.

George Hardy Percy was a talented athlete, playing for North Ribblesdale Rugby Club and sprinting in Craven races. He was a member of Settle's Light Opera Company. In 1935 he married **Elsie Wilson**, Arthur Wilson's aunt, and they had a son, **Gordon Percy**, living at 6 High Hill Grove Street. George worked as a labourer for Brassington's Timber Works at Bridge End in Settle.



As war began, in October 1940 George signed up and served with an anti-tank regiment and by May 1942 was deployed to Egypt, ready for the 2nd Battle of El-Alamein. Italy had invaded Egypt which was a threat to the British assets of the Suez Canal and the Persian oil fields. Fighting was brutal, however, by 4 November 1942 the British won a remarkable victory, the first against the Italians in that part of the world. History saw this as a strategic turning point which boosted morale and so it was the focus of several war films. Unfortunately, in the early days of the battle, on 24 October 1942, George Hardy Percy was wounded and died.

Widow Elsie? By 1962, aged 50, she had moved to Wharfedale with Gordon and married again, to **Albert Rhodes**.

George's twin, Eddie became a successful property owner and plumber and a pioneer in video-making – his collection is an asset to all local historians. One of his employees was **Brian West** (below).



Alan Bentham, Air Gunner, aged 22

Air Gunner Alan Bentham was the only son of Maurice Bentham of Giggleswick and Lilly Lyon Johnstone, a coachman's daughter from Banff, Scotland. When he was 23 Maurice joined the police force in Todmorden but resigned '*compulsorily*' nine months later. Oops! Then Maurice worked as a tanner/currier for William Knowles in Upper Settle and they lived on the Northfield estate and then at Gowan Lea on Station Road, Giggleswick. Alexander Douglas Turner (below) was a lodger. Maurice's parents were Richard Bentham and Mary Hardacre, pictured at the Tanyard. Richard was employed by the Midland Railway for 50 years, 29 of those being stationmaster at Giggleswick Station.



Alan was an 'old boy' of Giggleswick School and a member of North Ribblesdale Rugby club. He worked in the office for Settle Limes before signing up. Alan volunteered for the RAF in July 1940, his main responsibility, as part of the Pathfinder force, being to identify radio beams and jam them. On 9 June, 1942 Alan and his Wellington bomber went missing from an operational night flight over enemy territory in Belgium, aged 22.

This family had already suffered tragedy during WW1. Alan's uncle, 2nd Lieutenant Harley Bentham, died of wounds on the Western Front on 16 September 1918, age 23. Alan's maternal uncle, Lilly's youngest brother, John Charles Johnstone, of the Gordon Highlanders was killed during WW1, also aged 22, on 28 August 1918 on the Western Front. That's a lot of young men in one family lost to war.



Rachel Hope Charlesworth, WRNS, aged 24

Rachel was the youngest of four children, by nine years, of Settle solicitor **George Kenneth 'GK' Charlesworth** and his wife, **Hope Watkins**, the daughter of a vicar who lived at Lawkland Hall (with his wife, 7 children and 8 servants). GK's father, **Charles Henry Charlesworth**, arrived in Settle in 1861 establishing a successful business at the corner of Duke Street and Chapel Street. GK continued the business, with his brother **Charles Percy Charlesworth** setting up in Skipton. They lived at Barnstead on Stackhouse Lane.

Hope was very tall, 6ft 2in, and so were their son and two daughters. By 1939 **Rachel Hope Charlesworth** was an ambulance driver for the Red Cross in Surrey. She was just old enough to

join the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1940 and, moving in the right social circles, was photographed by the Tatler Magazine. With her background she soon became a 2nd Officer, posted to Egypt, working in the cypher office.



18 months later Rachel Hope died, on 12 September 1942, aged 24, from ruptured lungs and liver after a traffic accident in Alexandria. She tried to board a tram but stumbled and was killed by the tram. As well a commonwealth war grave in Alexandria and the Settle war memorial, Rachel Hope (and her father) are remembered on benches either side of the Settle war memorial and on a memorial stone at Austwick.



1942 saw the death of two Americans who were serving in the Settle area and they both got a mention on the cenotaph and church memorial.

Herbert 'Herb' William Patrick Hainey, Pilot, aged 23

Herb was the only child of Chas and Maria Hainey, born in Washington State, USA. He volunteered to serve in the RAF before the US joined the conflict in December 1941, following the Pearl Harbour attack.



By September 1942 Herb was an American Mustang pilot based at RAF Ousten near Stamfordham on Hadrian's Wall, not far from Newcastle. In early October 1942 Herb had an attack of flu and spent a few days in bed. Although still weak, on 13 October he decided to carry out a training flight over the Pennines. The weather was bad and Herb got lost in the low cloud and, at 11.35am, crashed into high ground at Daw Haw at Langcliffe Scar. He was buried in Stamfordham but was later flown back to be re-interred at Hood River, Oregon where his parents lived.

Cecil Iden Rhodes, Pilot, aged 23

Cecil Iden Rhodes was the youngest son of a clerk Andrew Jackson Rhodes and his wife Myrtle Alice Lindley, pictured, from Indiana, USA. Cecil was a student at Indiana University when he volunteered for service. He had arrived in England with the US troops to support the war effort. On 22 November 1942 he was taking part in a cross-country navigation exercise in his Airacobra when the engine began to fail. Cecil managed to control the aircraft for while, circling a number of times but, by the time he decided to bale out, was too low for his parachute to unfurl and died when he hit the ground. The plane crashed in a sink hole near Scalebar Force of the Settle to Airton Road. His body was returned to the states for burial in Indiana.



1032	Cecil Iden Rhodes	ORANGE 5417-01	1/10/04
(None)	Paoli, Orange, Ind		
110	21	Paoli, Ind	U.S.A
Mr William A. Rhodes		Brother	
		Paoli, Orange, Ind.	
	Indiana University Student		
	Bloomington, Ind.		
			Cecil Iden Rhodes

There were five deaths in 1943, including four RAF crew.

John Frederick Pullen, Driver, aged 35

John Frederick Pullen was the eldest child of Fred Pullen and Lavinia Hood of Leeds who came to Settle as soon as they married. Fred was a watchmaker and got a job with James Hunt jewellers and hairdressers at the Town Hall. They lived at 7 Halstead Cottages. Fred was a Parish Councillor and violinist for Giggleswick church and for the Settle Light Opera Company.

Fred and Lavinia had two sons, both of whom worked as painters and decorators. Son Clifford Harry Pullen played for Settle Football Club in the same team as George Allen Webb (below). In WW2 Clifford served with the Royal Artillery, survived and moved to Blackpool with his parents.

John Frederick Pullen was a Driver in the Royal Army Service Corps and worked his way up to Lance Corporal. In February 1942 his regiment was stationed in Singapore, as was William Edgar Brown's, above. The Japanese forced the surrender of the naval fortress and took surviving men into their notorious Prisoner of war camps. John Frederick was forced to work on the building of the 424km Sian-Burma Railway which took just 14 months. During its construction 13,000 servicemen, including John Frederick, died through appalling conditions, disease and cruelty from the Japanese and many were buried alongside the railway.



In May 1944 John Frederick's parents, who by then lived at 1 West View, had received a letter saying that he was alive, in a PoW camp but that letter took over a year to arrive. Their hopes were dashed when, not long afterwards,

they were informed of his death, on 31 May 1943. An agonising slow death and an agonising wait for his family.



Case No.	馬案	Case No.	馬案
Name	PULLEN, JOHN F	Date of Birth	1908 Feb 27
Nationality	英籍	Unit	271149
Rank	Lt. Col.	Rank	
Place of Capture		Date of Capture	
Place of Origin		Mother's Name	
Occupation		Occupation	
Distribution Report	Mr. P. Pullen (Father) 1 West View Street, Settle, England.	Remarks	

George Allen Webb, Sergeant, aged 30

George was the eldest of five children of the wonderfully named **Solomon Richard Webb** and his wife **Lily Selina Peel**. Solomon came to Settle from Cambridgeshire to work on the railways. They lived on Albert Hill, Settle. During WW1 Solomon responded to an advert in the Craven Herald, posted by businessmen **Harry Tunstill**, to become one of 100 local volunteers to fight – ‘*Tunstill’s men*’. A quarter of those men didn’t make it home, but Solomon survived. Mr Tunstill later took his own life.



George Allen was the centre forward for Settle Football Club, playing alongside **Clifford Pullen**, brother of **John Frederick Pullen** (above). In 1934/5 they won the Craven Cup, Craven League and Craven KO Cup – they only lost one match in the whole season. In 1936, at the Zion Chapel, George Allen married **Margaret (Peggy) Cowan** from Durham who had been working in service at Giggleswick School. They had a daughter and lived at Langcliffe Place. George Allen worked as a chauffeur/gardener for the mill manager **John Ingham**.

George Allen signed up with the RAF on 16 August 1940 to become an aircraft transport mechanic, becoming a Sergeant based at RAF Elvington, near York. The exact circumstances of George Allen’s tragic death on 28 June 1943 remain a mystery but was an accidental drowning while swimming at a local pond with Canadian servicemen. George Allen, aged 30, has the only Commonwealth War Gravestone for WW2 in our graveyard, *New G13*.



Widow Peggy worked at Settle police station as ‘*section assistant*’ for 30 years. As such she was awarded a medal and certificate by Queen Elizabeth in 1977, as part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations.



Two altar boys from the Catholic Church lost their lives within two months of each other in 1943.

William Bernard Ralph, Air Gunner, aged 21

William Bernard Ralph, known as Bernard, was the eldest son of Thomas Burrows Ralph and his wife Doris Kew. Thomas came to Settle from Burnley for work on the railways. Doris's father, a blacksmith, came to Settle from Derbyshire. Doris died when Bernard was just nine and Thomas brought him up with two younger siblings single-handed, living on Victoria Street.



Bernard was an altar boy at the Catholic Church, a member of the Scouts and as a young man worked for the grocer TD Smith at the corner of Cheapside and Duke Street.



Bernard volunteered for the RAF in August 1940 and trained to be a Wireless Operator and Air Gunner, serving with a Wellington bomber squadron, like Alan Bentham (above). He was pictured (*on the left*) with his aircrew. They served in France and then relocated to Egypt providing maritime patrols, escorts for convoys and mine-laying operations, sinking and destroying many ships. From there they were posted to Tunisia and Algeria covering anti-submarine patrols. On 17 October 1943 the Wellington reported that it was returning to base after some engine trouble during a U-boat hunt but it ditched into the sea with all seven lives lost.



It was several months later, in May 1944, that his parents were informed. Just two months later . . .

Wilfred Robert Day, RAF air bomber, aged 20

Wilfie was the youngest (by seven years) of six children of John Day, a railway platelayer and his wife Edith Warburton. They lived at Scalebar cottage at the far end of Upper Settle on the old road to Long Preston. Tragically, his eldest three sisters died in infancy. He was brought up with an elder 'brother' Edgar Hoyle Day who was the illegitimate son of one of his eight aunts, fathered by Edgar Hoyle, a 'soldier sergeant' who arrived in Settle with his wife and family but later emigrated to Canada. Wilfie had an adopted sister, Mary Murray, who had been orphaned. Both illegitimate and adopted children featured regularly in this family.

From Giggleswick School Wilfie worked for Settle Rural District Council as a surveyor's assistant. He was an altar boy at the Catholic Church pictured (left) with Bernard Ralph (above). Wilfie was a member of Settle and District Air Training Corps along with Brian West (below).



At the age of 17, Wilfie volunteered for the RAF, training as a bomb aimer in Canada. Once trained, in 1943, he served with 49 Squadron on Lancaster bombers based at RAF Fiskerton in Lincolnshire.

At 4.30pm, 16 December 1943 Wilfie was on board a Lancaster bomber JB545 as it set off for Berlin but was shot down two hours later by a German night-fighter, southwest of the village of Sonnega, North Netherlands, killing all 7 crew members. It was their first mission together. Wilfie was photographed (bottom right) with other members of the crew. He was just 20.



F/Sgt. Bede King Sgt. Edward Holloway
Sgt. William Rees P/O Gordon Ratcliffe Sgt. Wilfred Day

Brian West, RAF flight engineer, aged 18

Brian was the eldest of many children of **Amos West** and **Nellie Garnett**. The Wests originally came to Langcliffe from Norfolk to find work at the mills and the Garnetts were farmers from Horton-in-Ribblesdale but settled in Langcliffe too. Brian's uncle **Robert West** was pictured (*back left*) at the mill. Amos started working as a grocer's assistant for **Percy Morphet Ralph** (uncle to **Alan Bentham**, above) in Settle but, after marrying Nellie at Langcliffe Church, became a postman.



Brian's uncle **John West**, who worked at the Langcliffe paper mill and played for the football club and Settle Brass Band, was sent to the Western Front in WW1 and was killed by a rifle bullet on 16 December 1915. The family were well aware of the horrors of war.

Young Brian was a member of the Scouts and also found employment with plumber **Eddie Percy** (**George Hardy Percy's** twin brother) as an electrician. In his spare time he was a member of Settle and District Air Training Corps and gained rapid promotion to become a Flight Sergeant before his transfer to the RAF in November 1942 when he turned 17. He gained several commissions and recommendations and, by September 1943 flew Halifax bombers from RAF Brighton, south of York. On 21 September 1943 Brian and his crew took off from RAF Brighton for Hanover, Germany. The plane was shot and the crew told to evacuate but Brian and another crew member stayed to help Sergeant Spiers who was trapped in his turret. All three were killed. Brian, aged just 18, was one of the youngest airmen killed in bomber operations in 1943.



There were five deaths in 1944, with three of those on the battlefield.

Harry Irvine, RAF navigator, aged 32

Robert Henry (Harry) was the eldest of three sons of **William Irvine**, a Settle Post Office telegraphist, and his much younger wife, **Sarah Mellard Outram**. William, of Scottish ancestry, worked for the Post Office for six years in South Africa, after a '*hearty send off*'. Upon his return he married Sarah and they lived at Halsteads on Duke Street.

William died in 1926, aged 54 and then Sarah ran the Castleberg (Temperance) Hotel at the foot of Constitution Hill with her second son Peter.

The three sons were educated at Giggleswick School. Peter became a dental student in Leeds and during WW2 Peter served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Indian Army Service, fighting on the Burmese border. Youngest **John Donald Irvine** worked in a bank before his military service. Peter and John Donald both survived.

Unfortunately, Harry was not so lucky. He was employed by **Anthony Horner** photographers in Settle but left there in 1933 to serve with the Army, with some time in Singapore. After a few years he joined the West Riding Constabulary photographic section in Wakefield where he met and married **Molly Steel** in April 1943. When war was declared Harry joined the RAF and trained as a navigator in Rhodesia. He became a Flying Officer navigating Halifax bombers based at RAF Tiree in the Inner Hebrides. On 28 January 1944 he was reported missing during a training expedition, thought to have had an accident in low cloud.

17. Mr. W. Irvine, of Settle, had a hearty "send-off," on the occasion of his leaving for South Africa, to take up duties in the Post Office department.



Richard Marshall, able seaman, aged 21

Richard was the eldest of two sons of **Sydney Marshall** and his wife **Priscilla Morphet**, who appeared to work as a nurse. Priscilla's parents had come to Hellifield from Westmorland for work on the railway. Sydney was born in London and was brought up by his siblings after his father died. He followed his elder brother **Percy Marshall** to Settle. In 1896 Percy married **Louise Nellie Phoebe Millen**



The Millens and Marshalls lived in Upper Settle and both Percy and Sydney Marshall both worked in the quarries.

Son Richard Marshall began working life as a railway porter and then for Settle central Coop. Richard was a member of Settle Scouts, the Light Opera Company and the Home Guard. In the war he trained with the Royal Navy as a Able Seaman and volunteered to serve on the *HM Submarine Sickle*, launched in August 1842.



Between its launch and June 1944 *HMS Sickle* served primarily in the Mediterranean Sea destroying 17 Italian, German and Greek ships by torpedo, gunfire and ramming. On 12 June she was on patrol in the Aegean Sea but was never seen or heard of again. On 18 June she was officially listed as being lost with all 49 hands, killed by enemy action in the Kythira Strait, off southern Greece, presumably mined. She was the last British submarine to be lost in the Mediterranean while on active service. Richard was 21.

Two men died in the fighting around Normandy in summer, 1944.

Jack Moorby, private, aged 29

Jack (John Thomas) Moorby was the eldest of nine children of another **John Thomas Moorby**, known as **Tommy**, (pictured) and his wife **Jane Ann (Doris) Dinsdale** who lived in the small houses of Bowskill's Yard and then Howson's Yard in Settle. Both John Thomas (Snr) and Jane Ann had been illegitimate children, brought up by relations and Jane Ann had her own daughter before she married Tommy. Tommy was a well known 'character'. He started working in the quarries but later agreed with **Bill Brassington** that he could work as a carter with his horse and cart at Brassingtons' timber works for as long as he wanted. The horse was called Doris, named after his wife! Tommy made the most out of this as he worked for 53 years, well beyond retiring age.



Son Jack began working in the mills. In 1935, aged 21, he signed up to the Army serving in India and the Middle East. He was chosen to be one of the men in the guard of honour for the funeral of King George V in 1936.

During the war Jack served with the Lincolnshire Regiment who were planning for the Normandy invasion. On 5 June 1944 the Battalion set sail for Sword Beach. They faced a month of intense fighting and several men were lost but they managed to capture villages and roads near Caen. In the final offensive to capture Caen, four officers and 47 men were killed or died from wounds, including Jack on 11 July 1944. He was 29.



Jack's younger brothers also served – Eric was in the paratroop regiment and William was one of the Bevin Boys, working in the coal mines to provide coal for the war effort. Both survived the war. A month later . . .

Thomas Arthur Phillips, Sergeant, aged 36

Thomas was an obvious late addition to Settle War Memorial. Considering him and other men who were left off the war memorial it seems the criteria for putting names on the cenotaph were flexible! Why was Thomas left off initially? It seems Thomas had only been in Settle for four years before his death.

Thomas Arthur Phillips was the fourth out of five children of **Thomas Phillips** and his wife **Agnes Tryer** of Liverpool. Initially dad Thomas worked as a plumber but, like thousands of others, became a dock labourer as the port of Liverpool continued to expand.

In 1936 Thomas Arthur married **Peggy McKay**, another dock labourer's daughter and they had a son, **Derek Phillips**. At the time of the 1939 register Thomas Arthur worked as a clerk for a dried fruit importer in Liverpool. Sometime after that Thomas and family moved to Settle, a safer place than the prime target of Liverpool Docks. Perhaps he had visited Settle in his youth?

Thomas Arthur joined the Army in 1940 and became a Sergeant in a Royal Tank Regiment. In June 1944 his Battalion landed at Juno beach as part of the Normandy landings. It was during operations near Caen on 10 August 1944 that 36 year old Thomas Arthur Phillips was killed by shelling at the Battalion HQ near Caen. His father died five months later.

Widow Peggy and son Derek moved back to Liverpool.



RANVILLE PHILLIPS, Sjt. THOMAS ARTHUR, 7926066. 9th
WAR Royal Tank Regt., R.A.C. 10th August, 1944.
CEMETERY Age 36. III. B. 6.

One family lost their two eldest sons within six months of 1944/5

L/Copl **Thomas Tristram (Tony) Ovington**, aged 20,
& brother Private **John Robert Ovington**, aged 18

These brothers were the eldest sons of **Tristram Thomas Ovington**, a quarry labourer of Langcliffe and his wife **Dorothy Horner** of Long Preston. Their father and grandfather had served their country during the Boer war and WW1. The boys were both Settle Scouts and are remembered on the Scout memorial although not on the church memorial or Settle cenotaph. Their headstones both read, *'We would give the world and more to see the face we loved come smiling to the door'*.



Tony (left) worked as a warehouseman for Thornber's corn business on Castle Hill. He was a member of the Home Guard and Settle and District Air Training Corps. In 1943, aged 18, he joined the army as a Lance Corporal with the Black Watch, Royal Highlanders. They landed on the beaches of Normandy and fought their way to St Valery, Le Havre and held the line around Dunkirk. By October 1944 the division was in Holland preparing for the Battle of the Maas. For two weeks the fighting was fierce but the Highlanders cleared 300 square miles. Inevitably there were casualties, including Tony who was killed on 1 November 1944, aged 20.

Meanwhile Tony's younger brother, **John Robert**, also a member of the Home Guard, got a job at Spencer's limeworks in Giggleswick quarry. He joined the Army in May 1944, aged 17, and was assigned to the East Yorkshire Regiment later that year. They landed on Sword Beach in the Normandy landings, arriving a day after **Jack Moorby** (above) and fought their way through Northern France, Belgium and Holland. During action around the Reichswald Forest just inside the German border, John Robert was severely wounded and died of those wounds in a hospital in Brussels. He was 18. John Robert was the last of our heroes to die in WW2.

There was just one other death in 1945, another RAF navigator.

Alexander Douglas Turner, Navigator, aged 36

Alexander Douglas Turner didn't get a mention on the Settle war memorial but you could argue that he should have. Alexander was from Masham, East Yorkshire Dales, but had Scottish roots. His parents, Presbyterian Minister **Thomas Lindsay Turner** and **Margaret Roughead** were from Glasgow but married in Calcutta in India – Thomas must have had a placement there. They settled in Birkenhead.

During the war Margaret took an active part in the Women's Voluntary Service, the '*Housewives Section*'. They gave support to local air raid wardens, providing first aid and information. Tragically, Margaret was killed in an air raid on Birkenhead on 17 September 1940. The head of the WVS, the Dowager Marchioness of Reading, came to Birkenhead to unveil a roll of honour to the four women who lost their lives that day.



Meanwhile son Alexander had taken a post with the Midland Bank in Settle and lodged at 'Gowan Lea' on Station Road, Giggleswick lodging with **Alan Bentham's** family (above).

Alexander volunteered for the RAF and was promoted to navigator/wireless operator. By late 1944 Alexander was stationed in Banff, Scotland flying on Mosquitoes to attack enemy shipping off the coast of Norway and Denmark, very effectively. However, on March 25 1945 Alexander was navigating a Mosquito which was seen to crash in the sea off the coast of Norway. His body was recovered and buried in Trondheim, Norway.



In February 1945 Alexander had got engaged to **Joyce Foster**, the daughter of a loco boiler man who had come to Settle from Stoke on Trent. In 1947 Joyce married **John Brian Langtree**, an engineer from Langcliffe and they immediately emigrated to West Virginia, USA.

There were some notable WW2 success stories, obviously.

Robert Thomas Ralph, the first Settle Military Medal

Robert Thomas Ralph was an ordinary man who was extraordinarily courageous. The son of a Settle lime carter, Robert worked as a gardener at Taitlands in Stainforth and at Stackhouse. He married **Ethel Wilkinson** and they had a son. In the war Robert joined the Yorkshire Regiment and found himself in the Western Desert near Cairo, working as a stretcher bearer. He received a bullet wound to his chest but, despite this, continued attending to other men. Medical staff advised him to be evacuated but he insisted on continuing until the fighting had subsided. It was a later found to be a severe wound. He was awarded the Military Medal for conspicuous gallantry, the first awarded in Settle. Robert survived the war and took up a gardening post in Stockton-on-Tees working for the Thornaby Corporation.



The Delves Sisters, Matrons

Sisters **Marion** and **Madge (Annie Margaret) Delves** from Long Preston were extraordinary women who both had careers as 'fearsome and formidable' military matrons, serving in both wars. They were both in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS) based at Malta and supervising nursing work in military hospitals across the world. They were decorated with the Royal Red Cross Medal and included in the victory parade in London at the end of the war. In WW2 they were sent to Belgium to set up and run Field Hospitals because they were '*old and unstoppable*'! A relation remembers that Marion served in a military camp in Gibraltar. During a meal a Colonel told a story, in the middle of which Marion laughed raucously and slapped the Colonel so hard on his back that his false teeth fell into his soup! They remained spinsters and retired back to Long Preston.



Many thanks to artist **Teresa Gordon** for her poignant sketches. Thanks also to everyone else who has contributed to the development of this display.

Contact the Project

Email settleresearch@gmail.com to contact researcher Sarah Lister with any queries about the graveyard, the project and to receive the latest information and 'Tuesday Tales'.

Go to **Settle Graveyard Project Facebook Page** for latest news, events and Tuesday Tales



Research findings are posted on this website. Follow the link to Settle Graveyard Project on the home page. These pages are updated weekly.

www.dalescommunityarchives.org.uk

Findings are being added to the church burial records which are now available to the public online at

www.settlechurch.uk/hagryd

