

Arthur Edward CANHAM and George William CANHAM

Harry and Louisa Canham lost two of their four sons in World War One.

Born <i>Arthur Edward</i>	1889
Killed in Action or Died	8th December 1916 age 27
Buried	Grave I. J. 15, Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner, Cuinchy, Pas de Calais, France
Unit	1 st Battalion East Kent Regiment (The Buffs)
Rank	Private, Service Number G/2921
Awards	1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal
Born <i>George William</i>	1888
Killed in Action or Died	14th August 1918 age 29
Buried	Grave V. B. 16. St. Amand British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France.
Unit	1 st Battalion Essex Regiment,
Rank	Private, Service Number 276312
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

Henry aka Harry Canham (1861) was a Great Eastern Railway porter who came originally from Bermondsey in London. Harry had originally worked in Cambridge where he had married his wife Louisa (nee Blackman, 1860 Cambridge) and where their first two children Edith (1883) and Nellie (1885) were born. Louisa had already had an illegitimate son, Robert, in 1879 before she married Harry. The family then moved to Ely where they lived close to the railway station, at Ouse Cottages aka Ouse Terrace, Annesdale, and here their four sons were born: Harry (1887); **George William** (1888); **Arthur Edward** (1889); and Albert (1893).

The family attended St Peters Mission Church in Broad Street, and here Arthur and George were part of Harold Arthur's Confirmation Class. After the War Harold Arthur paid for a memorial in the church for the twenty-one young men from the St Peters Class who did not come home.

By 1901 the oldest of the Canham sons had followed their father into the employment of Great Eastern Railways, as Robert was a GER guard and Harry junior had begun work as a "trolley lad". When Arthur left school he first started working as a telegraph boy with the Post Office.

By the 1911 Census Harry and Louisa had only one child left at home, this was Albert who was employed as a clerk by GER. Harry himself had become a GER ticket collector and the family supplemented their income by taking in boarders. The couple's sons George and Arthur were also working for GER. George was a railway clerk living in Burwell and boarding with Fuller Chapman and his wife. Arthur was working as a porter at Roydon in Essex, where he and a fellow porter were boarding with William Ansell and his wife in Roydon High Street. William Ansell was a farm labourer and may have had literacy issues, as Arthur filled out the census form on behalf of the household despite being only a boarder. Arthur had joined GER in February 1907 and after his time as a porter with them he became a signaller based first at Whittlesea, then Hilgay and finally, in 1912, at Littleport.

At the outbreak of the War Arthur enlisted at Ely in the Buffs in September of 1914, and, after training, arrived in France early in 1915. He arrived in time to be a part of the action at Hooze near Ypres, where the Germans first used flamethrowers to devastating effect. Throughout 1916 his battalion fought in the Battles of Flanders-Courcelette, Morval, and Le Transloy. Arthur last received

home leave in December 1915. On 10th November 1916 the Ely Gazette reported that Arthur had been wounded in the hand on 28th September 1916, and then six weeks later (13th November) he received a slight head wound. When Arthur recovered and returned to the Front he was killed, along with two others, somewhere between Ypres and the Somme in December 1916 by a bomb from a German minnenwarfer. The three men were bombers working in one of the forward posts. Arthur was about to be promoted to lance corporal as a result of his bravery in action.

Like most other young Ely men, Arthur's older brother George attested under the Derby Scheme in early December 1915. Thereafter he would have been put in one of the groups awaiting call-up, and enlisted at Bury St Edmunds in the Suffolk Regiment (Service Number 24549) in February 1916, although he was later transferred into the Essex Regiment. In the summer of 1916 George married Lizzie Ince (1892 Cavendish Suffolk) in Ely. George was killed in action in the closing stages of the War on the day that the Germans began their retreat from the River Ancre, evacuating their strongholds at Beaumont-Hamel, Serre, Puisieux, and Bucquoy. George's unit was then south of Arras in the region of Beaumont Hamel, around Bucquoy, and it was here he met his death. George was in France for a total of only three weeks before he was lost.

The Canhams had now lost their second son and Lizzie had become a War widow. The names of both brothers were placed on the Holy Trinity Memorial and the St Peters Memorial, as well as the main Ely War Memorial and the Great Eastern Railway Memorial now at Liverpool Street Station.

Arthur's effects were sent to his mother Louisa which amounted to £11 15s with a further £11 in 1919. Lizzie received just 9s 9d as George's effects, with a final payment of £13 19s 3d in 1919.

The youngest Canham brother, Albert Edward Canham, was also a war casualty, although he died during the Second World War while serving with the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. He is buried in Ely Cemetery (died 22nd August 1940).

John Henry CHAPMAN

Born	22nd November 1890
Killed in Action or Died	22nd October 1914, age 23
Commemorated	Panels 10 & 11, Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France
Unit	1st Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 9527
Awards	1914 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

John Henry Chapman is one of the career soldiers commemorated on the Ely memorial and consequently one of the first to be lost.

John was from an Ely family. He was born late in 1890 in West Fen Road, Ely, and was the eldest child of William Chapman (1858) and his wife Hannah (nee Chapman 1863). William worked as a bricklayer's labourer, although he had earlier seen service in the local Cambridgeshire Militia for a number of years before his marriage. John's younger siblings were: Gertrude (1893); Albert (1895); Harold (1898); and George (1902).

In 1901 the family lived on what was probably quite a smelly street called Harlock's Lane, which was close to Harlock's Brewery (now the Maltings). By 1904 they had moved to Newnham Street and John had begun his education at Market Street Infants School on 22nd January 1904. On 10th May 1897 John was admitted as a "free boy" to Needhams Secondary School; his record shows that the family was at this point living in Downham Lane. John left the school on 28th March 1902 to become an errand boy at Leggs (this may have been the brewer Thomas Legge).

The family attended St Peters Mission Church in Broad Street, and here John was part of Harold Arthur's Confirmation Class, along with the Canham brothers whose names are next to his on the Market Place Memorial.

John later determined on a career in the Army and enlisted at Ely in the 1st Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment; in the 1911 Census he is shown with the Regiment at Maida Barracks, Stanhope Lines, Aldershot, where he is one of the soldiers designated as an "officer's servant" or batman. Back in Ely his family had moved to a three roomed house at 5 Nutholt Lane where William described himself as a "plaster labourer" and young Albert had left school and started work as a newspaper delivery boy.

As the War opened John was stationed at Mullingar in Ireland. His battalion was mobilised on the 16th August 1914 and went directly to France. A week later the British Expeditionary Force engaged the Germans at the Battle of Mons and thereafter began to retreat. In October they were then engaged in a series of attacks and counter attacks which became known as the 'race to the sea'. A front line was established that stretched from Estaires in the north to Grenay in the south and this part of the Western Front was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting of the first year of the war, including the battle of La Bassée (10th October – 2nd November 1914). It was at this time that John Henry Chapman was killed in action in the area of Bethune. His Battalion had been heavily shelled in the morning and then proceeded to (unsuccessfully) attack the farms near Violaines that evening. By the time they pulled back to the lines, at midnight, John was missing.

John is commemorated on the Ely Market Place Memorial and in St Peter's Church.

John's mother Hannah died in Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge in September 1914; her son was already in France, but whether he found out about his mother's death, a month before his own, cannot be determined.

William was sent his son's effects which amounted to £23 8s 5d and a final £5 in 1919.

(Charles) Bertram CHARD

Born	28th May 1888
Killed in Action or Died	4th October 1916, age 27
Buried	Grave IV. F. 16 Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No.1, Somme, France.
Unit	1st Battalion Cambridgeshire Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 2302
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

(Charles) **Bertram Chard** was born in Devonport, Devon, in 1888. His links with Cambridgeshire are not immediately apparent from the earlier census evidence: In the 1891 Census young Bertram Chard with his mother Eva (1859 Ipplepen, Devon), his sister Ethel Chard (1888 Devon) and Kate Bacon (1887 Ipplepen), were staying with Francis and Alice Irish in Eva's home village of Ipplepen. In 1901 Bertram appears in the orphanage at Brixham in Devon. In 1911 he is visiting his widowed aunt Charlotte Collins (1848 Falmouth) in her lodging house at 33 Wodehouse Terrace, Falmouth, Cornwall. Bertram gave his occupation as printer on this occasion.

The census evidence shows Bertram was the son of Charles Warren Chard (1851 Falmouth) and Eva Bacon who were married in Devon in 1883. Charles died in 1896 when Bertram was just eight years old, while his mother appears to have died in 1903, after he was placed in the orphanage. Perhaps he was placed in the orphanage following his father's death as his mother was not coping.



Between 1911 and the outbreak of the War Bertram had moved to live and work in Ely as a printer with Mr G H Tyndall of Minster Place. Here he attended the Countess of Huntingdon's Free Church in Chapel Street, Ely and joined the Territorials. He was "extremely well-known in the city and well-respected" and "bright, cheerful and very popular" with his fellow troops. Bertram lodged with the Barwick family and became engaged to their daughter Doreen. When the call came in September 1914 Bertram and his good friend Rex Barwick went to enlist together—neither of them survived.

Bertram attested into the 13th Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment at Ely and was later transferred into the Cambridgeshire Regiment. He was wounded in the hand at some point.

October 1916 was a period of wintry conditions and heavy rain which famously turned the whole Somme into a sea of deep mud. Bertram was seriously injured in the fighting in one of the last Somme battles, where the Battalion was in the front lines around Hamel and the Schwaben Redoubt. He was taken to the 3rd Canadian Stationary Hospital which was stationed at Doullens with a serious wound above the knee and here, two days later, it was decided to amputate his leg. Bertram survived the operation for just three days.

Bertram is remembered on both the Ely Market Place Memorial and the Memorial in St Mary's Church as well as on the tablet in Countess Free Church. His aunt Charlotte Collins also asked for his name to be placed on the Falmouth War Memorial.

Bertram's effects were sent to his sister Ethel (Mrs Hurley) and amounted to £16 2s 11d with a further £9 in 1919.

In 1921 Doreen Barwick married another member of the Countess of Huntingdon Church— John William M Gotobed. John was a clerk in the GER Goods Office at Ely Station.

William John CHENEY

Born	1888
Killed in Action or Died	14th November 1914, age 26
Buried	Grave IV. J. 8, Sanctuary Wood Cemetery, Zillebeke, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.
Unit	2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards
Rank	Lance Corporal, Service Number 8287
Awards	1914 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

William John Cheney was born in Birmingham and was one of the three Isle of Ely policemen who died in the Great War. He was based at Ely police station; his beat was Ely and Littleport and he lived in Littleport itself.

In 1891 William was living with his father Joseph (1869 Laughton, Leicestershire) and mother Lucy (nee Wall 1858 Hampton in Arden, Warwickshire) in Angelina Street, Aston, Birmingham. Joseph was working as a coal hauler. Also living in the household was William's older half brother from his mother's previous marriage, Harry Allwood (1882 Smethwick, Staffordshire).

William attended Highgate Council School, then, in the 1901 Census, appears living in with his father and younger sister Gertrude (1894 Birmingham) in Mosley Place, Aston, Birmingham. His father described his employment as "galvanising carter" (a carter for an iron merchant) and William had left school and was working as an errand boy; he went on to be a "wire worker".

On reaching the age of twenty William enlisted with the 2nd Battalion of the Coldstream Guards on 24th January 1909. In the 1911 Census he appears with the Guards at the Ramillies Barracks, Wesleyan Soldier's Home, Churchill, Terrace, Centre Square, Marlborough Lines, Aldershot. His parents and Gertrude were still in Birmingham, but had moved to 158 Solihull Road, Sparkhill. Gertrude had found work wrapping umbrella fittings in a Birmingham warehouse and Joseph was still a carter with an iron merchant.

For a period with the Guards William acted as orderly to the commanding officer before transferring into the Reserve in 1913 after a seven year term of service. Early in 1913 he married Mary Martha Wall at St George's Hanover Square in London. This marriage was perhaps the motivation for his joining the Isle of Ely Police. He was one of Ely and then Littleport's policemen for a period of eighteen months before he was called up with the rest of the Reserve at the outbreak of the War.



William figures in an article in the Ely Gazette in July 1914 for coming third in the one mile bicycle handicap race at the annual police area sports day—a bright interlude for all at Ely as the war clouds gathered!

William and Mary had two children, although William probably never saw his son Joseph William John Cheney who was born on 16th September 1914. The couple's daughter Clara Lucy Anita had been born in July 1913.

The Coldstream Guards formed part of the first wave of the British Expeditionary Force and served through the battle and retreat from Mons and associated actions. William was shot through the back by a German sniper at Rentel near Ypres as he returned to his trench; the bullet penetrated his left lung and he died from his wounds the same day. He had been talking to his half-brother, who was in the same regiment, just moments before. A letter was found in his pocket from a man he and another soldier called Booth had rescued when wounded in the right arm, and this letter was sent on to Mary.

The letter read: *"I can never tell you how grateful I am to you old chap for fixing me up at the critical moment for I know that I should soon have bled to death."* No such similar help was there to save William John Cheney.

The local newspaper contained the tribute: *"P.C. Cheney was always found to be an efficient officer, enjoying the respect and esteem of his colleagues and all with whom he came in contact."* As well as being commemorated on the Ely Memorial and in St Mary's Church in Ely, William John Cheney's name can be found on the Isle of Ely Police Roll of Honour which is at Wisbech police station. The brass plaque bears the inscription "Live thou for England, we for England died".

With such a short period of active service, Mary found William's effects amounted to just £2 17s 2d and a final £5 in 1919.

At the end of the War William's burial place had been "lost". It was not until January 1928 that Mary received an official letter to say that the bodies of a small number of Coldstream Guards who had been killed in the defence of Polygon Wood had been uncovered in Reutel Wood (Belgium). The names of the fallen were known, but it had proved impossible to identify individual bodies; they were buried together again in Sanctuary Wood Cemetery under a single cross shaped monument carrying all of their names.

Ernest Richard “Dick” CLARK

Born	1890
Killed in Action or Died	13th November 1916 age 26
Buried	Grave 1. J. 11, Bertrancourt Military Cemetery, Somme, France
Unit	22 nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers (London Regiment)
Rank	Private, Service Number 654
Awards	1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

Ernest Richard Clark was born in the village of Teversham on the outskirts of Cambridge to William Clark (1843 Stretham) and his wife Susan (nee Simpson, 1844 Ely); his father William was a shepherd. William and Susan had originally lived in Ely where their first children were born: William (1871); Isabella (1872); Walter (1874); Mary (1875). There followed a move to Wicken where Edward (1877), Edith (1879) and Daniel (1883) were born. Then came the family move to Teversham High Street where Victoria Maud was born in 1887 followed finally by Ernest himself in 1890. Ernest’s brothers and sisters got jobs as labourers or domestic servants respectively as they left school.



Records show that Ernest was in fact normally known as “Dick”, and used his second name.

By 1901 William and Susan had moved back to Ely and a house in Cow Lane (now known as West Fen Road). The only children still living with their parents at this point were Edith, Victoria and Dick. Dick later obtained employment as an outfitters assistant, first at Mr A. Davison’s store in Ely High Street, and then at G.G. Green’s outfitters in Norwich. Finally, for five years, he was in the prestigious outfitting department at Harrods Department Store in London. In the 1911 Census Dick is shown visiting the Stewart family in Fulham— most of this family were also involved in the drapery trade and could have included his co-workers. When the War broke out Dick enthusiastically enlisted in a London Regiment in London, although he gave his home address as his parents’ home in Ely (“The Cottars”, West Fen Road).

The 22nd Battalion of the London Regiment formed up on 11th September 1914 at White City, it then moved to Horsham and then on to Clipstone Camp, Nottinghamshire . In July 1915 it moved to Tidworth, Wiltshire. Finally, in November 1915, Dick and his fellow Fusiliers mobilised for war and landed at Boulogne. During 1916 the Battalion was engaged in the Battles of Delville Wood, and the Ancre, and the Operations on the Ancre. Dick was a company stretcher bearer and worked as such for twelve months at the Front without any leave. Dick was badly wounded in the Battle of the Ancre Heights (the last large scale attack of the Battle of the Somme) when his unit “went over the top” and a shell exploded in a shell hole where he and about a dozen men were temporarily sheltering. He told his fellows he had a “blighty wound” but was able to walk to the field ambulance station where he then died as a result of shock.

Dick’s family received a letter from the Mayor of Kensington which included the message: “The battalion has done magnificently in the recent heavy fighting and everyone connected with it has reason to be proud of their association with such brave men. (Dick) has made the sacrifice of his life for the sake of his king and his country.”

Further details of Dick’s war career were sent to his sister “Nurse Clark” in a letter from his captain and appeared in the local press: “...his special duty was attending to the wounded, and this he did with a fearlessness and devotion which was magnificent.....had he lived I would certainly have recommended him for a decoration for his heroism. Everybody in this Company has the most tender

memory of him and you may well feel proud of the many brave acts he performed. He died in hospital. We all thought his wound was not very serious, but complications must have set in. he was buried by one of our chaplains."

Dick's mother Susan provided the words of the inscription for her youngest son's grave, and it probably summed up the confused thoughts of many bereaved mothers: "God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain". Dick's sister Mary was his executor, but his effects amounted to only 14s.

Dick is commemorated on the Ely Market Place Memorial, and on the Memorial in St Mary's Church as E.R. Clarke.

Frederick Lewis CLARKE

Born	1897
Killed in Action or Died	22nd March 1918, age 20
Commemorated	Panel 88 Pozieres Memorial, Somme, France
Unit	1st/15th Battalion, London Regiment (posted to 17th Battalion of the King's Royal Rifle Corps)
Rank	Lance Corporal, Service Number 534485
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

Frederick Lewis Clarke was born in Shippea Hill, Prickwillow in the summer of 1897, he was a posthumous child as his father Lewis Clarke (1861 Isleham) had died early that year. Lewis and his wife Susan (nee Pearce, 1863 Littleport) had four other children: John (1885 Prickwillow); Hilda (1889 Prickwillow); George (1891 Prickwillow); and Dorothy (1893 Prickwillow). Lewis had been an agricultural labourer at Shippea Hill and his sons, to start with, followed the same path. Following her husband's death Susan moved the family closer into Ely. In 1901 they were living in Common Road where Susan was working as a charwoman and sixteen year old John was helping support the family by working as an ironmonger's porter.

In the 1911 Census Susan was living in Prickwillow Road, Ely with Frederick, who was still at school, George, who was a whitesmith, and Dorothy, who had become a trained typist. The census return shows that Susan and her family spelt their name as Clarke with an e, and this is the spelling of Frederick's name adopted on all records with the exception of the Ely Market Place Memorial. Susan later moved to 20 Nutholt Lane.

From 1906 to 1912 Frederick was a chorister at Ely Cathedral, for which he was paid. In August 1912 he found employment with Great Eastern Railways as a ticket clerk first at Ely, then Sawbridgeworth in Hertfordshire, and finally at Audley End.

Once he was old enough to serve in the War, in January 1917, Frederick enlisted in (D Company) the 1st/15th Battalion of the London Regiment (Prince of Wales Own Civil Service Rifles) at Saffron Walden, but at the time of his death he had been posted to the 17th Battalion of the King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Frederick was killed in action in the opening stages of the 1918 Battle of the Somme, known as the Battle of St Quentin. This was a point at which depleted British troops faced a huge offensive push forwards by the Germans which drove them back across the original devastated Somme battlefield. In a couple of weeks the British were driven back forty miles and lost 177,739 men killed, wounded or missing. Fredrick Lewis Clarke is one of over 14,000 missing British soldiers commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial. The local newspaper records that at the time of his death Frederick was hoping shortly to be commissioned as an officer as he had recently passed some of the necessary qualifying examinations.

The Ely Standard of 10th May 1918 carries a letter from Frederick's mother asking for news of her son, in the hope that he had been captured and his whereabouts were known. A few weeks later his name was included in the official casualty lists.

Frederick was commemorated on the Holy Trinity Church Roll of Honour, the Choristers Memorial in Ely Cathedral and the Ely Market Place Memorial.

In 1920 Susan received Frederick's effects of £8 11s 9d.



James Thomas CLARKE

Born	1893
Killed in Action or Died	12th July 1917 age 23
Commemorated	Panel 5 & 9 Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
Unit	Essex Royal Horse Artillery attached to "B" Battery, 298 th Brigade., Royal Field Artillery
Rank	Gunner, Service Number 622308
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

James Thomas Clarke was the eldest child of Thomas and Sarah Clarke of 2 Potters Lane, Ely. Thomas Clarke (1870) had been born in Chettisham but his wife Sarah aka Annie (nee Sarah Ann Bidwell (1872) and all the rest of the family were born in Ely. James was born in 1893 and was soon followed by (Susie) Gladys (1893), Nellie (1897), Richard (1898), Lionel (1901), William (1903), (Lilian) May (1904) and Sydney (1910). Thomas worked for the local brewery as a labourer and as a drayman. When he left school James himself became a farm labourer, working for Mr Cross of Barton Farm.

The 1911 Census return shows that the Clark(e) family signed their surname *without* an e, but when James enlisted the army recorded his name *with* an e, and this is the spelling which stands on different war memorials including the Menin Gate. The births of James and most of his siblings were registered as Clarke, but at least two of the children were registered Clark—clearly the spelling changed randomly according to the registrar!



At first James enlisted with the Essex Royal Horse Artillery when they were billeted in Ely and was then attached to the 298th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery. As this was a Territorial Brigade on Home Service James did not arrive in France until 4th April 1917. The RFA was a reasonably mobile unit, using horse-drawn limbers to deploy medium calibre guns and howitzers as close as possible to the Front (a difficult role when the ground was water-logged). Each gun had a team of eight men to service it, usually headed by a sergeant while others had specific roles such as aligning the gun on target, manning the breach, and moving the ammunition. British guns would have been prime targets for the German artillery, and there was also a possibility that an unstable shell of your own (a "premature") would explode as the gun was being loaded.

James' Battery was assigned to the 23rd Division in the Westoutre area; on the 12th July they were providing the fire support for the 12th Durham Light Infantry as they attacked a German strongpoint. James died when he went out from the lines to attempt to rescue a wounded comrade; his own body was not recovered and his name appears on the Menin Gate's Memorial to the Missing. James is known to have fought alongside Arnold Peacock of Ely, as he and Arnold went out together on their recovery mission and both suffered the ultimate consequences.

James Thomas Clarke's name appeared on the Memorial of Holy Trinity Church in Ely as well as being commemorated on the Market Place War Memorial.

Thomas was sent his son's effects of £8 15s 3d with a final settlement of £10 in 1919.

Rowland Archer CLARKE

Born	8th May 1890
Killed in Action or Died	2nd February 1916 age 26
Buried	Grave B. 862, Ely Cemetery
Unit	2nd/4th Battalion East Kent Regiment (The Buffs)
Rank	Private, Service Number T/4440
Awards	<i>Not entitled to medals as did not serve in the field.</i>

Rowland Archer Clarke was born in West End, Ely, to Harry Archer Clarke (1867 Walton, Felixstowe, Suffolk) and his wife Annie Louisa (nee Robinson, 1867 Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk). Harry was an assistant ironmonger at the well known Ely firm of Cutlacks, a career path Rowland was later to follow. Rowland's younger siblings were also born in Ely: Ethel (1893); Annie (1895); and Frank (1896).

After Infants School Rowland was enrolled at Needhams School on Back Hill on 10th January 1898. He remained at the school only until 27th September 1899, when he became a boy chorister at Ely Cathedral and moved to the cathedral's school (King's School). At this point the family was living in Barton Square opposite the Porta Gate, and round the corner from Needhams. Rowland was a cathedral chorister from 1899 to 1904.

By 1901 the family had moved to Transvaal House, Cambridge Road, in Ely and in the 1911 Census Frank, like his father, was an ironmonger's assistant at Cutlacks while Ethel and Annie were working as a dressmaker and draper's apprentice respectively. In 1911 Rowland himself was also working as an ironmonger's assistant but in East Dereham, Norfolk, where he was lodging with the family of retired postman Robert Lerner at 2 Philos Yard. He then appears to have returned to Ely and a post at Cutlacks.

Frank Clarke was the first of the two Clarke brothers to go to the Front, enlisting at the outbreak of the War and reaching the Front in February 1915 with the Cambridgeshire Regiment. Rowland followed his example, joining the Buffs in December of 1915; he enlisted at Canterbury, but gave his home address as Ely. Rowland's career with the Buffs was short lived; he came home to visit his family at Christmas then returned to his regiment at Tonbridge, expecting to go to France in March 1916. Despite writing to his parents at the end of January saying he felt well, Rowland collapsed on parade on 2nd February, fell unconscious and died that evening in Tonbridge Hospital. The cause of death was given as enteritis.

The Ely Gazette of 11th February 1916 reported: "The news of Private Clarke's death was regretfully received in the city....The first part of the funeral service was held in the cathedral, the deceased having been a chorister there many years ago...The employees of Messers Cutlack lined up in front of the West door and walked up the nave of the cathedral behind the chief mourners (including) Major Thomas (representing the Buffs)...A large number were present at the cemetery.."

Rowland was buried in Ely Cemetery. He is commemorated on Choristers Memorial in Ely Cathedral as well as the Market Place Memorial.

Harry was sent £3 3s 4d by the War Office following his son's death; the Army also paid the £5 11s it cost to return Rowland's body to Ely.

William CLARK

Born	23rd January 1896
Killed in Action or Died	25th October 1918 age 22
Buried	Grave I. D. 16 Awoingt British Cemetery, Nord, France
Unit	11 th Battalion Suffolk Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 41844
Awards	1915 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

William Clark was one of the eldest sons of George Clark (1867 Littleport) and his wife Hannah (nee Cross, 1870 Ely). William was a platelayer and labourer for Great Eastern Railways and, like many GER families, the Clarks lived close to Ely Railway Station, first in Annesdale, then on Back Hill. The Clarks had nine children: Mary Elizabeth aka Lizzie (1889); Emily (1891); Violet (1893); William and his twin George (1896); Albert (1899); Bertie aka Herbert (1903); Elsie (1905); and James (1908).

By 1911 twins William and George had found employment as farm labourers, but, unsurprisingly, they followed their father onto the railways and in January 1915 twenty year old William became a railway platelayer, based at Chettisham, and joined the Nation Union of Railwaymen (Ely Branch).

William enlisted in May 1915 and was placed first in the Essex Regiment (Service Number 203312) and later transferred to the Suffolk Regiment. William almost survived the War, but he died of wounds less than four weeks before the Armistice. William was badly injured during the Battle of Selle as his Battalion advanced across the River Ecailion to take Vendegies, St Martin and La Folie. He was taken to the village of Awoingt where the 38th, 45th and 59th Casualty Clearing Stations had set up; here he died of his injuries. The British forces meanwhile were advancing rapidly against the Germans and taking thousands of prisoners; William's twin brother George was also serving with the Suffolks and would have had to press on with the regiment, leaving his brother behind.

William was commemorated on both the Market Place and Holy Trinity memorials in Ely as W Clarke, although his official records show the family always spelt their name as Clark. His twin brother George Clark survived the War and, after his discharge in 1920, married and raised a family in Ely. Mother Hannah died in June 1919, aged fifty, at the family home in Back Hill.

As William was an employee of Great Eastern Railways he is commemorated on the GER Memorial which is situated in Liverpool Street Station, London.

William Frederick CLAYDON

Born	1890
Killed in Action or Died	16th August 1917 age 27
Commemorated	Panel 35 to 37 and 162 to 162A., Tyne Cot Memorial West-Vlaanderen , Belgium
Unit	2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 40385
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

In 1890 **William Frederick Clayden** was born in Garland Street, Bury St Edmunds; he was the only son of Frederick William Clayden (1861 Bury St Edmunds) and Harriet Maria (nee Rogers 1858 Norwich). William's father was a master boot maker or boot manufacturer.

In 1901 William's grandparents Frederick and Mary Rogers were living with the family in Springfield Road, Bury St Edmunds. In the 1911 Census William was still living with his parents, who were at 18 Nelson Road, Bury St Edmunds. William was working as an assistant at a clothier's shop. He then moved to Ely where he worked for Messers Joshua Taylor and Co on Forehill. He lived in Nutholt Lane.

In the late summer of 1915 William married Cecila Maud Copping (1890 Stanningfield, Suffolk) and their only child, Francis, was born the following year in Ely.

When the time came for William to be called up in April of 1916 his employers appealed to the Ely Urban Tribunal to have him exempted as by this time he was the only assistant they had left in the men's outfitting department—a job that they did not deem to be suitable to be given to a woman! William was given two months exemption , but the military representative on the tribunal appealed against this and William' exemption was rescinded. He was called up in late June 1916. William first enlisted in the Suffolk Regiment (Service Number 34784) and was then transferred to the Lincolnshire Regiment.

William was killed in action on the Ypres Salient in the Battle of Langemarck. On 16th August 1917 the Allies attacked on nine-mile front north of Ypres-Menin road. The British forces succeeded in driving the Germans from Langemarck, and established new positions half a mile beyond the village. Later in the day the Germans drove the British back from all the ground won a few hours before. The bodies of many of the troops killed on this day of battle were never recovered; the Lincolnshire Regiment alone lost 54 soldiers and 42 of these appear with William on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing. In late October 1917 William's parents finally received official information that he was wounded and missing, but his death was not then confirmed.

William Frederick Clayden was commemorated on the Holy Trinity Memorial as well as the main Ely Memorial, although in both cases his surname was spelt as Claydon, which was the spelling he had used at the time of his marriage.

Cecilia was given her husband's effects of £3 5s 11d, with a final £4 in 1919.

William COLE

Born	1894
Killed in Action or Died	22nd March 1918 age 23
Commemorated	Panel 54 to 56, Pozieres Memorial, Somme, France
Unit	7 th Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 225068
Awards	1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

William “Billy” Cole was the younger son of Ely farmer Charles Henry Cole (1863 Ely) and his wife Georgiana aka Anna (nee Mott 1862 Feltwell, Norfolk). The family lived in Willow Walk, Ely. The children of the family were all born in Ely: Ethel (1886); Herbert (1888); Mabel (1890); William (1894); Blanche (1899); and Alice (1905). In the 1911 Census both Herbert and William are shown as working with their father on the family farm of 100 acres.

The family attended St Peters Mission Church in Broad Street, and here Billy attended Harold Arthur’s Confirmation Class. After the War Harold Archer paid for a memorial to the young men who had been in his class and were now lost, including Billy.



Billy enlisted with the local Cambridgeshire Regiment (Service Number 1487) although he later fought with the Northamptonshire Regiment. He is shown on the left of the photograph with his Ely friends Fred Mallion, Tom Dann and Billy Tunnell in their days as Cambridgeshire Territorials. Only two of these four friends survived the war as Tom Dann was also killed.

On 30th April 1915 the Cambridge Independent Press conveyed the news that Billy had been wounded while serving with the Cambridgeshires: *“Ely Territorial wounded... it appears that he was struck in the arm by a ricocheting bullet, which resulted in a flesh wound, fortunately not of a serious character. The wounded private, having received first aid, was conveyed to hospital.”*

Despite the upbeat description of Billy’s injury it is apparent that he was actually still in hospital ten months later, as his father tried to use Billy’s hospitalisation as a reason for

older son Herbert to be exempted from call-up.

When Billy finally recovered and returned to the Front he was transferred into the Northamptonshire Regiment.

On 21st March 1918 the Germans launched an enormous offensive following the largest bombardment which took place on the Western Front. Billy's regiment attempted to hold the line between St Quentin to the River Oise but this was the point at which the Germans broke through late on 22nd March and finally made a breach of almost forty miles in the British line. Somewhere in the dense mist, ferocious fighting and ultimate chaos Billy was killed in action. Like many who died in this action, there was no opportunity for his body to be recovered, and he is one of 6,754 men commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial to the Missing for these three disastrous days of conflict.

Billy Cole was commemorated on both the Holy Trinity Memorial and the main Ely Market Place Memorial as well as on the St Peter's Memorial.

Anna was sent her son's effects of £34 5s 2d with a final £15 1s 3d in 1919.