

John Thomas COOK

Born	1896
Killed in Action or Died	21st July 1917, age 21
Buried	Grave F1. 1024, Ely Cemetery
Unit	1 st Battalion, Cambridgeshire Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 325637 (Formerly 2306)
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

John Thomas Cook was born in Brixton, London in the spring of 1896. He was the only son of Robert Preston Cook (1861 Limehouse, Middlesex) and Elizabeth Ann (nee Paget 1865 Ely). After his birth the family moved back to Elizabeth's home of Ely and Robert found employment with the local council.

The family attended St Peters Mission Church in Broad Street, and here John was 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.

In 1911 the family was in a three roomed house at 21 Back Hill, Ely. Robert was working as a roadman for the Isle of Ely Council and John himself was apprenticed to J W How, a house painter and decorator for whom he continued to work until he enlisted. Included in the family was an adopted son Harry Knowles (1899 Ely) and Robert's widowed mother Elizabeth Cook (1826 Wangford, Norfolk). (Harry aka Henry was also to die in the War.)

John joined up in September 1914 and reached France in December 1916. On 13th May 1917 he was hospitalised at Boulogne with inflamed glands; he was returned to England but did not respond to treatment and died in a military hospital in Birmingham. His body was returned home and was buried in Ely Cemetery with full military ceremonial. "Many sympathetic friends assembled on Back Hill and the blinds of nearly every house were drawn during the passage of the mournful procession" reported the newspaper.

John was commemorated on both the main Ely Memorial and the Memorials in Holy Trinity Church and St Peter's Church,

John's mother Elizabeth was sent his effects of £6 2s, with an additional £13 10s in 1919.



(Arthur) William CORNWELL

Born	November 1895
Killed in Action or Died	1st December 1917, age 22
Commemorated	Panel 2, Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, Nord, France.
Unit	4th Battalion Grenadier Guards
Rank	Sergeant, Service Number 15959
Awards	1914 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

Arthur William Cornwell was the son of Inspector Arthur Cornwell of the Isle of Ely Police Force (1872 Little Downham) and his wife Kate (nee Lofts, 1875 Little Downham). He was known to his family and friends by his second name of William. William was born when his father was stationed in Ely as an ordinary police constable (1896), as were his siblings Daisy (1894) and Percy (1899). His father Arthur was then stationed at Prickwillow from 1901 onwards, where Herbert was born in 1907, followed by Sutton, where James was born in 1910. Two other of William's siblings lived for only a few weeks; Ernest was born in Ely in 1901 and died early the next year at Prickwillow, while his sister Florence lived only a few days early in 1903.

In the 1911 Census Sergeant Cornwell and his family were living in Sutton High Street and William had left school and was apprenticed to a butcher. The family later moved back into Ely itself (County Police Buildings, Ely) when his father Arthur was made Ely's Police Inspector in April 1914.



Nineteen year old William enlisted in the Grenadier Guards before the outbreak of the War and as a result was in France by November 1914. His first winter in the trenches resulted in his being hospitalised back to England with frostbite for three months. Thereafter he returned to the Front, never to return to Ely again.

William's battalion fought on the Somme in the 1916 Battles of Albert and the Ancre and in 1917 was part of the Battles of the Scarpe and Oppy Wood in the Arras Offensive. As part of the Battle of Cambrai the 3rd Guards Brigade made a 6.30 a.m. attack on Gonnelleu where they were met with withering enemy machine gun fire. This was the first battle in which the British used tanks, but in the Grenadiers' case only one of the fourteen tanks they expected made it to the offensive line. William was killed in action when the Germans counterattacked the British Forces. By

this point the ground was covered in snow and the British troops were described as in a "shambolic" state. William and the Guards Division, who were still recuperating from a mauling in Fontaine Notre Dame, found themselves heading into a bitter fight to hold the enemy at Gouzeaucourt: *"First we had to struggle through the flood of terrified men ... nothing seemed to stem the torrent of frightened men with eyes of hunted deer, without rifles or equipment, among them half-dressed officers presumably surprised in their sleep,.....Many were shouting alarming rumours, others yelling "Which is the nearest way to the coast?"* (quotation from Norman D. Cliff's book, "To hell and back with the Guards"). William's commander described the moment thus to his parents: *"We were called upon to drive the Germans from a position which they had taken in the morning. The Battalion did splendidly and your son died fighting for the great cause we all have at heart."*

Somewhere in all of this chaos of attack and counterattack William died; he is commemorated among the missing on the Cambrai Memorial with 7,602 others, 268 of whom are Grenadier Guards.

The last the Cornwells heard from their son was when he wrote home on his birthday, a few days before his death. The newspaper records that they had also been sent a variety of battlefield mementoes from the "numerous engagements" in which William had played a part; the most notable of these was a German officer's iron cross which William had taken from the wearer when he had

bayoneted him to death.

William married a local draper's assistant called Violet Broad (1892 Brandon, Suffolk) and their only son, Basil, was born just a few months before William's death. Violet received totals of £4 14s 2d for herself and £9 8s 2d for Basil from the Army. In 1919 she was sent a further £7 6s 8d, and a final settlement of £14 3s 4d in 1920.

William is commemorated on both the Ely Market Place Memorial and the Memorial in St Mary's Church.

William's younger brother Percy served as a Private in the Cambridgeshire Regiment during the War and survived; early in January 1917 he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for carrying an important message under extremely heavy fire (London Gazette 26th January 1917.)

Inspector Cornwell retired from the police in November 1919 after over twenty-five years of service in the Isle of Ely Division.

Horace Charles Bowman COTTAM

The C Cottam on the Ely Market Place Memorial is certain to be Horace Charles Bowman Cottam who married Elsie Jones of Ely in 1914 and is shown as using his second name, Charles, in the 1901 Census. The family appear to have used the double barrelled surname Bowman-Cottam.

Born	1891
Killed in Action or Died	30th September 1918 age 27
Buried	Grave A. 15, Lowrie Cemetery, Havrincourt, Pas de Calais, France
Unit	7th Battalion, Royal Hampshire Regiment
Rank	Captain
Awards	Military Cross, British War Medal and Victory Medal

Horace Charles Bowman Cottam was born in Watford in 1891 and was named after his father, Horace James Bowman Cottam (1841 Blackheath, Kent). His mother was Mary (nee Bowman 1852) from St Pancras in Middlesex. His surviving older siblings were Amy May (1867 Bromley, Kent), Winifred (1868 Middlesex) and Donald (1877 Edgware, Middlesex) who were his father's children by his first wife, Amy Barraud. Horace's sister Winifred died in 1895 and Amy died in 1908.

Immediately after (Horace) Charles' birth the family was living at Old Steine, Brighton, Sussex and his father Horace described himself as a manager in a wool broker's office.

In the 1901 Census Charles's widowed father and his three children were living at 15 Minet Avenue, Willesden, along with his first wife's niece and nephew Elsie and Philip Barrand from Watford. Charles' mother Mary had died earlier that year. Horace senior and eldest son Donald both gave their occupations as "secretary". Soon after this Charles was sent to Harrow School as a boarder. From Harrow he went on to Cambridge University in 1909.

In 1911 Horace Cottam senior was living at 27 Harlesden Road, Harlesden, London, with just a live-in servant. It may be that this was also Charles's home, as he is registered in the census as a visitor in the home of his father's cousin, Edith Cottam, in Bournemouth. Aged twenty, he was then a student at Caius College Cambridge and this must have been when he met his wife to be. (Cambridge students were encouraged to visit Ely Cathedral.) He graduated from Cambridge University in 1912 with a B.A.

Early in 1914 Charles married Elsie Florence Jones (1893) of Minster Place, Ely and they set up home at 1 Newnham Terrace, Ely. Elsie's father Henry Jones was the owner of the Minster Hotel, and also a Lay Clerk of Ely Cathedral which meant his daughter's wedding could take place in the cathedral.

When the War broke out six months later Charles went for officer training and obtained a commission as Second Lieutenant in the Hampshire Regiment on 18th November 1915. After training in various camps, he went first to Palestine and then to France in October, 1916. He was invalided home the same month, suffering from dysentery and jaundice, and subsequently rejoined his old Battalion, as Assistant-Adjutant, at Sutton-Veney, Wiltshire. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in November, 1917, and in the following month went to Palestine, where he saw much fighting with the 2/4. Hants, 75th Division. They were afterwards sent to France and took part in the fighting on the Marne in the offensive of July 20th, 1918, between Soissons and Rheims. On 6th June 1918 Charles was made Captain and given command of a company. Charles was awarded the Military Cross "for conspicuous gallantry and fine leadership. Under prolonged operations his coolness and courage under heavy fire had a marked and inspiring effect on his men on many occasions when they had suffered heavy casualties and were weary with hard fighting."

The newspaper report of his death stated: "he distinguished himself in several battles, being mentioned in despatches. Returning to England early in September (1918) on (his first) leave, he

received the M.C. from the King the day previous to his return to France, where within a few days he made the supreme sacrifice." He died in action as the British pushed the Germans back on the Cambrai-St Quentin Front. Charles was killed by a sniper at Marcoing, whilst leading his Company forward to wipe out a nest of German machine guns. He was buried at Havrincourt, the village which he had helped to capture a few days previously.

Lieut.-Colonel F. Brook, 2/4 Hampshire Regiment, wrote to his widow : *" Your husband was one of the most gallant men I ever met, and we all loved as well as respected him. The loss to the Battalion is great. ... I hope and pray that the knowledge of his gallantry will help you to bear the terrible blow."*

A brother-officer wrote : *" He was the perfect type of Officer, thinking more of the welfare of his junior Officers and men under him than of his own, I was twice in action with him, and he was literally fearless — he did not know what fear was. There is not an Officer or man in the Company who would not have done anything for him, and his death is the biggest blow the Battalion has had since I have been in it."*

Elsie asked for the inscription on her husband's grave to read "In Loving and Honoured Memory of My Dear Husband - All He Had He Gave". Elsie moved away from Ely, to 27 Bateman Street, Cambridge.

Charles left an estate of £22,606 5s.

As well as being commemorated on the Ely Memorial, Charles is named amongst the 600 pupils of Harrow School on their WW1 Shrine. He also appears on the memorial at Wilton in Wiltshire, the Roll of Honour at Watford, the Cambridge Guildhall Memorial, and the Cambridge University War List. Surprisingly, he is not named under Ely on the county memorial in Ely Cathedral.

Albert COVILL

Born	1890
Killed in Action or Died	16th August 1916, age 26
Commemorated	Pier & Face 1C & 2A, Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France
Unit	"C Company", 2nd. Battalion, The Suffolk Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 3/7582
Awards	Military Medal, 1914 Star, Clasp, British War Medal and Victory Medal

In the autumn of 1889 farm labourer Walter Covill (1860 Witchford) married Ann Palmby (1870 Ely, aka Hannah), the couple's son **Albert** was born a few months later, but, unhappily, on 7th November 1890 thirty year old Walter died at the family home at Witchford. Ann returned to her parents' home with her baby; her family were agricultural labourers living in a farming community in Cambridge Road, Ely, an area nicknamed "Bugs Hill". Living in the family home at the time of the 1891 Census with Ann and baby Albert were grandparents William and Hannah Palmby, and Ann's younger brothers William and Alfred. Ann was then pregnant with her and Walter's second son who was born later that year and named after his father.

In 1895 Ann married Richard Atkin (1871 Ely). Richard was a railway platelayer with Great Eastern Railways, as was Ann's brother Alfred, and this may explain how Richard and Ann met. The family lived in West Fen Road and soon Albert and Walter acquired new half brothers and sisters: Florence (1896); Mabel (1898); Rose (1899); William (1900); Audrey (1903); Alfred (1905); Jessie (1908); Gladys (1910); Richard (1911); and Elsie (1915).

In the 1901 Census the house in Cambridge Road looks very full as along with the Atkins parents and their six children Ann's brother Alfred lived with the family and William's seventy-three year old uncle John Newell.

By 1911 Richard Atkin was working as a farm labourer and the family were still in 22 Cambridge Road. The two Covill boys were also working as labourers, with Albert working with his stepfather on the farm, and Walter working for a bricklayer.

At the outbreak of the War Albert was called up as a reservist by the Suffolk Regiment and went abroad in September 1914. In 1915 his battalion would have seen action at Hooze and Bellewaarde and in 1916 at the Ypres Salient and St Eloi Craters. On 2nd June 1916 the London Gazette carried the information that Albert had been awarded the Military Medal for distinguished service in the field when he was acting as a stretcher bearer; in action around St Eloi. The citation for the MM stated that it was given for tending his comrades under fire. One of those he saved was fellow Ely resident Private Paul Seeley of the Suffolks. Seeley later told how Albert had bandaged his wounds and then carried him for two miles under fire, encouraging him the while by saying "cheer up old pal, you'll be in Blighty before me!" At one point Albert was voluntarily working alongside one of the chaplains, Reverend (Captain) Edward Mellish, for three nights running as they carried in the casualties from No Man's Land. Mellish was actually awarded the Victoria Cross for bringing in ten badly wounded men across ground raked by machine gun fire in the same action. Richard was subsequently highly recommended for similar work as a stretcher-bearer.

Like several other Ely men, Albert was killed in action on the Somme, where he met his end in the attack on Cochrane Alley, part of the Battle of Delville Wood. Throughout July and August 1916 Germans and British fought for control of the wood. This part of the conflict was renowned for high casualties and wet weather which turned the battlefield into a slough of mud, and ad hoc sniping attacks within the shattered remains of the wood. Many bodies were simply lost in the mud of the battlefield, and one of these was Albert Colvill.

His officer, Captain Gardham, wrote to Albert's parents: *"He was one of the bravest and hard-working men in the Company and his death is a great loss to the Battalion. I may mention that his name has been forwarded to the Authorities for some recognition of his consistent good work."* He also described Albert as: *"...a brave and fearless man among the body of men who have a reputation for bravery. He carried on fearlessly his work of rescue under a hail of shrapnel and machine gun fire, it can truly be said that he gave his life for his wounded comrades."*

Albert's mother was sent his effects which amounted to £13 6s 4d with a further £8 10s in 1919. She arranged for his medals to be posted to her, as she did not wish to go through a public military presentation ceremony.

Albert's brother Walter also received a Military Medal.

On the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing Albert is commemorated as H Colvill and in the associated Commonwealth War Grave Commission's associated grave registration is named as Herbert. It is possible that the mistake was made because Albert was known as "Bert", but, whatever the reason, it is "A. Covill" on the Ely Market Place Memorial and in St Mary's Church which is correct.

Leslie Charles COVILL

Born	1890
Killed in Action or Died	3rd September 1916, age 26
Buried	Grave:2.B.15/. Corbie Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France.
Unit	1 st Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 24237
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

Leslie Covill was the son of Isacc Covill (1855 Shelford) and his wife Martha (nee Pilgrim, 1856 Great Chesterford). Isaac was a railway section signalman working for Great Eastern Railways and so, in common with several GER workers, the family lived in Broad Street near the Railway Station and raised a family in Ely. Leslie's older siblings were: Henry (1894); Alice (1895); Herbert (1897); and twins Eleanor and Annie (1889). Leslie himself was born in 1890 and was the youngest son of the family, but younger sisters, Martha (1894) and Hilda (1903) followed.

By 1901 the family were living on Back Hill, still within easy reach of the railway station, and Herbert had joined his father, working as a clerk for GER. The four youngest children (minus Annie) were still living with their parents. In 1911 just three children were left in the household one of which was Leslie who was working as a baker for the Co-operative Society, another was Martha junior who was employed in the office at Ely Jam Factory, and the third was Hilda who was still at school.

The Covills attended St Peters Mission Church in Broad Street, and here Leslie was 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. Leslie was also a member of Holy Trinity's choir.

Leslie was a member of the Constitutional Club and also played for Ely Wanderers Football Club.

Leslie worked for the Co-operative Society in Ely for six years, before moving to a branch of the Society in Leicester. Here he married Rosettie Hopkins (1893 Little Downham) in the summer of 1913. Rosettie had been a live-in housemaid in the house of Ely draper Ernest Harvey in High Street Passage, and it may be that the couple moved away to marry and avoid scandal, as their son Bertram was born a few months later. A daughter, Sylvia, was born in Leicester late in 1915. The young family set up home at 56 Kington Field Road, Clarendon Park, Leicester.



When the time came for Leslie to be attested in April 1916 he joined the Leicester Regiment (Service Number 2769) here "although offered stripes on three different occasions he declined to take them, fearing that promotion might keep him in England or delay his being sent to the front." He was later transferred into the South Staffordshire Regiment and with them spent just two months at the Front. Leslie died of wounds as a result of one of the great battles of the Somme, the Battle of Guillemont—the defence of the village of Guillemont is considered by some military experts to be the best performance of the War by the German Army on the Western Front. Here Leslie was severely wounded in both legs and was taken to one of the Casualty Clearing Stations at Corbie where he died two days later of shock. He was buried at the associated cemetery.

The Ely Gazette carried details of his death and career on 20th October 1916: *"Private Leslie Covell,...died from very severe wounds to both legs. Writing to his parents at Broad Street, Ely, the sister-in-charge of the hospital said: "Everything we could possibly do for him was done, and he received every care and attention. He seemed too ill to leave any message and his death was*

largely due to severe shock." Private Covell, who was in the South Staffs. Regt., leaves a widow and two children residing at Leicester. He was formerly in the employ of the Ely Co-operative Society, was a member of Holy Trinity Choir for many years, a member of the Constitutional Club, and played for the Wanderers F.C. Since he has been on military service he declined an offer of promotion on three occasions. He was 26 years of age."

Rosettie was sent her husband's effects which amounted to £2 6s 9d with a further £3 in 1919.

Leslie was commemorated on the Memorials in St Peters Church and Holy Trinity Church and the Market Place Memorial in Ely, and also on the memorial in St Michael's Church, Leicester.

Albert Edward COWLEY

Born	1895
Killed in Action or Died	5th July 1917, age 21
Buried	Grave II. C. 23, Dickebusch New Military Cemetery Extension, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
Unit	29 th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery
Rank	Gunner, Service Number 120085
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

Albert Edward Cowley was the son of Ely's fishmonger and fruiterer Joseph Cowley (1869 Rushden, Northamptonshire) whose home and shop was at 44 Fore Hill. Joseph and his wife Jane (nee Poole 1870 Sawston, Cambridge) had five children: Frank (1891 Ely, known by his second name of Victor); Oliver (1892 Rushden); Albert Edward (1896); Doris (1897 Ely); and Harold (1902 Ely). In the 1911 Census Joseph described himself just as a fruiterer and was assisted by Jane in the business, however the family had not given up the fish business entirely as Albert was working as a "fish hawker", a title that suggests he was travelling around the city with a fish cart. Frank was a grocer's assistant and Oliver a beer bottler at Ely Brewery.

The family attended St Peters Mission Church in Broad Street, and here Albert was part of Harold Arthur's Confirmation Class. After the War Harold Arthur paid for a memorial in the church for Albert and the other young men from the St Peters Class who were killed.



Albert and his older brother Victor were two of the "Ely Dandies Concert Party", a group of half a dozen friends who entertained around the area with songs and sketches. A newspaper article from January 1913 about their performance at the Linton Branch of the East Cambridgeshire Women's Conservative Association suggests that Albert's "party piece" was the song "I'm sleeping in the old back yard". They also performed closer to home; later that year they were singing, to great acclaim, in Ely's High Flyer and their usual venue of the pavilion on the Paradise Recreation Ground. The Dandies Concert Party were a popular feature of summer evenings on the Paradise, as people would meet for tennis parties, then head for the Pavilion to enjoy the Dandies' repertoire of music hall songs, recitations and comic interludes. The concert party disbanded with the War and two of them, Albert himself (their youngest and newest member) and Bert Armsby, did not come home.

Albert moved to Hitchin, Hertfordshire, where he lived at 8 Ickleford Road and worked as a butcher. When he was exactly twenty one years old, on 20th September 1916 he was attested into the Army. His

service record tells us that he was 5 feet 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches tall. After training Albert was posted to France on 13th April 1917, and reached the 29th Siege Battery at their place on the Front on 19th April. The record shows that he was hospitalised from 30th May to 5th June, but returned to his unit. Exactly one month later he was killed in action. The newspaper record of his death states that Albert had originally been working in the cook house and was transferred to a siege battery only shortly before his death. As a gunner with a siege battery Albert would be part of a team serving a heavy howitzer and probably engaged in fire fights with the German's heavy artillery. On the day of Albert's death there was a significant Artillery engagement in the Aisne and Champagne Sectors of the Line. He was buried with five other members of his battery who were killed at the same time.

Strangely for his family, on the same day they heard the news of his death a letter arrived in the post from Albert himself. It was dated "6th July" - the day after Albert's death—but it turned out that the letter had been found amongst his possessions and dated and posted for him.

Albert's personal possessions, listed as a pocket wallet, correspondence and photographs, were returned to his father Joseph in Ely. His effects were also sent to his father and amounted to £3 10s 7d with a further £3 1d in 1919.

Albert was commemorated on the Holy Trinity Church and Market Place Memorials in Ely and in St Peters Church. The message on his gravestone is the simple "Gone, but not Forgotten".



In this photograph of the Ely Dandies Albert Cowley is the taller standing figure in the middle; his brother Vic is on the far left.

Edward COX

Born	18th February 1888
Killed in Action or Died	10th April 1915, age 27
Commemorated	Panels 50 & 52 Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
Unit	1 st Battalion Cambridgeshire Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 1000
Awards	1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

Edward “Ted” Cox was the son and first child of Samuel Cox (1863 Witcham, Cambridgeshire) and his wife Sarah Ann (nee Sindel, 1861 Stepney, London). The family were Methodists and, when he was less than three weeks old, Edward was baptised at Ely Wesleyan Methodist Church on 4th March 1888. The family lived at 44 Broad Street and Samuel made his living as a basket maker. Edward had three younger brothers: Samuel (1892); James (1895); and Arthur (1897).

By 1911 Ted was working with his father as a basketmaker, while Samuel was an apprentice whitesmith at a local ironmongers and James had begun working as a grocer's errand boy. Ted was also a popular member of the Ely Angling Society and won several local fishing matches.

Ted later moved into Cambridge, and then enlisted in the Cambridgeshire Regiment before the War.

On 16th April 1915 the local paper carried a letter from Lance-Corporal Cranwell of Ely to his mother. The article began: *“...the Cambridgeshire Territorials have sustained further casualties in the trenches, in addition to those that took place in the Battle of St Eloi, in which the regiment played such an honourable part. The letter..is as follows:- We came up from the trenches yesterday (Sunday) having had another 48 hours in the trenches—not the same as we were in before. This last trench was not so good. At one part of the trench where I did a good deal of duty at the listening post, it was only about five yards from the German trench.... Poor Ted Cox was killed in that trench, shot through the head, killed instantly, and buried just at the end of the trench. He appears to have exposed himself too much above the parapet. He was shot at 10.00 a.m. on Saturday.”* A week later a letter followed from Ted's commanding officer, Lieutenant Seaton: *“...about 7.30 in the morning your son was hit in the head. Death must have been instantaneous. We buried him in a wood close by. Pte. Gibbons, who I believe is personally known to you, and is of the same religious communion, read a prayer at the graveside, and I read part of the 15th Chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians. Pte. Gibbons later made a small wooden cross..”* Jack Gibbons also wrote: *“...just before he went to the grave he looked to be in peaceful sleep. ...I would ask you in your grief to look at it as a soldier's noble sacrifice...”* The Battalion was then in the trenches at Hooge, opposite the infamous Sanctuary Wood.

Ted's father was a member of Ely Fire Brigade and as a result Major Archer, who was the chief of the brigade during peace time, wrote a personal lesson of condolence to the Cox family.

Although Ted's fellow Ely soldiers knew where he was buried initially, his body was either not recovered for a more formal burial or, more likely, unidentifiable when finally recovered, and he is now commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing.

Ted's mother Sarah Ann was sent his effects of £3 18s 7d with a further £3 in 1919.

Ted was commemorated on both the Holy Trinity and Market Place Memorials in Ely as well as on the Memorial Plaque in Ely Methodist Church.

Robert Charles COX

Born	5th April 1896
Killed in Action or Died	11th September 1916, age 20
Buried	Grave XXVI. E. 6. Serre Road Cemetery No. 2, Somme, France
Unit	1 st Battalion Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment)
Rank	Private, Service Number G/7217
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

Robert Charles Cox was born in St Ives, Huntingdonshire, although his family had moved to Ely by 24th May 1899 when he was enrolled in Market Street Infants School. Robert was the son of Charles Henry Cox (1867 St Ives) and his wife Elizabeth (nee Mason, 1868 Warboys). His older sisters were Evelyn (1891 St Ives) and Gladys (1893 St Ives).

On the Market Street School's register the Cox's' home was shown as Church Lane, Ely, but the 1901 Census shows the family boarding in a 10 roomed public house in Quayside called the Queen's Head. On this and the later census Charles' employment is as a sugar boiler for a confectioner. The pub looks very crowded as the other residents listed are the landlord William Hall and his family, four farm labourers, an Italian organ grinder and his son, and a hawker from Yorkshire and his wife. The public house was clearly the Cox's' permanent home, as they are still in residence at the Queen's Head ten years later in the 1911 Census. This time the household was even larger: the Halls and their two children still owned the establishment; there were eight single farm labourers in residence; a widowed travelling shoemaker; and three Italians, including a father and daughter who were travelling musicians. The Cox's had also had another son of their own; he was Gilbert Henry who had been born in 1903. Robert had left school and stated he was working in a "mineral (water) factory" while his older sisters had both gone into domestic service.



Robert attempted to enlist early in the War, but was rejected as medically unfit. When conscription was introduced he was working as a horsekeeper for Mr T W H Clarke. Mr Clarke was actually one of the members of the Ely Urban Tribunal, which determined who could be exempted from service—as his farm was seriously undermanned (just 12 men left, and 6 women having to be brought in from Soham), he appealed to the Tribunal at the end of March 1916 to exempt Robert. Despite the fact that he had earlier been turned away, this time he was given three months exemption. Robert did not take advantage of the short reprieve—he joined up anyway.

Robert's War Service with the Royal West Kents was short as he survived just five weeks on the Somme. He joined up on 3rd April 1916 and on 20th October the Ely Gazette recorded: "*Private R.C. Cox, Royal West Kents, has been missing since September 11th. He is the son of Mr and Mrs Cox of Waterside, Ely, and joined up on April 3rd this year and went to France on July 21st. Pte Cox has not yet attained his 21st birthday.*" This short note confirms that Robert's age of 24 on the Commonwealth War Graves record is incorrect, although it may represent the information that Robert gave as he enlisted. The date of Robert's disappearance in the article does not tally exactly with the date given for his death; it is possible that he perished in the Battle of Guillemont., but his Battalion was on the move at this time around Fricourt.

Robert's effects amounted to £4 8s 1d and a further £3 in 1919 and these were sent to his father.

J T CRANFIELD

The next name carved on the Ely Market Place Memorial is J T Cranfield—this is actually John Thomas GRANFIELD and his details will be found under G.

St Arnand CREAK

Born	1890
Killed in Action or Died	16th February 1915, age 25
Commemorated	Panel 21, Menin Gate Memorial, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium
Unit	1 st Battalion Suffolk Regiment
Rank	Private, Service Number 7593
Awards	1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal

St Arnand Creak was born in 1890 in a cottage in Newnham Street, Ely, and was the second son of Charles Napier Creak (1860 Ely) and his wife Mary Ann (nee Rickwood, 1861 Ely). Charles was a house painter. St Arnand's older siblings all born in Ely, were: Elizabeth (1883); Charles Napier (1885); and Maud (1887). His younger siblings were John (1891), William (1893), Hilda (1900), Edward (1903) and Herbert (1907). St Arnand was named after his father's older brother (this was an old "family name").

In the 1901 Census Charles junior had become an apprentice to a stonemason but ten years later he appears in the record as a gardener, married and with three children, the youngest of whom he had named after his brother St Arnand, carrying the distinctive name on into the next generation. In 1911 St Arnand's parents were still living in Newnham Street with their five youngest children of whom John had become a farm labourer and William an apprentice carpenter.

Perhaps it was St Arnand who led his younger brothers astray in October of 1901, when William and John Creak joined St Arnand and his friends Bertram Butcher, Percy Prior and William Hitch in a raid on farmer Woodbine Haylock's orchard. (Seven year old William "when caught, had his pockets and cap full of apples and walnuts which he stuck to manfully"!) Farmer Haylock estimated the cost of the stolen apples and walnuts at 3d and the Creaks, in particular, must have been very cross when *each* of the six children was fined 3s 3d for their escapade. The newspaper article suggests that St Arnand and his family may have pronounced his name simply as "Arnand".

The Creaks attended the Countess of Huntingdon's Free Church in Chapel Street, Ely.

St Arnand was absent from Ely in 1911 as he has enlisted with the Suffolk Regiment in 1908 with whom he saw service in the Sudan and the Mediterranean before his battalion was recalled in October 1914 to fight on the Western Front.

The local newspaper of 26th March 1915 shows that St Arnand was one the many professional soldiers of the original British Expeditionary Force who were early casualties of the War: *"The death has occurred of Private St. A Creak, son of Mr and Mrs Creak, Newnham Street, Ely. He had been in the Suffolks for eight years, being stationed in Cyprus at the outbreak of war. He then came to England and after spending a few days at home went to the front on 16th of January; exactly a month later he was reported "missing" by the War Office. Before leaving Ely he took with him a portrait of his mother, remarking that if anything happened to him he would send it back to her. The photograph has just been returned and on the back of it was written in the deceased's handwriting: "Kindly send this to Mrs C. N. Creak, 5 Newnham Street, Ely, Cambs".* Then in a strange handwriting was added: "Died on the 16th February as a captive of his wounds shortly after being taken prisoner." (The World War One Medals Roll records St Arnand's death as on or after 18th February.) At the time St Arnand's Battalion were resisting an enemy attack on the trenches south of Ypres and west of the canal; the Germans took "O" Trench and took British survivors of the action captive. Where the Germans buried St Arnand's body after his death in captivity was not known, and so he appears on the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing.

St Arnand's brother William was a dispatch rider, he wrote to his family how the anger at his brother's death had driven him to volunteer to go into the firing line to avenge him—he believed he had killed at least one German outright.

St Arnand's effects amounted to £15 17s 6d with a further £5 in 1919 and his mother was named as his sole legatee.

St Arnand was commemorated on both the Market Place Memorial and the Holy Trinity Memorial in Ely, as well as at the Countess Free Church.. At the time these memorials were created his parents had moved home to 25 Fore Hill.

John Claud Parry CROSBY

The community of Ely Cathedral was not immune from the effects of the War; the Cathedral's Precentor lost his only son.

Born	20th May 1881
Killed in Action or Died	21st January 1918, age 36
Buried	Grave V. A. 5, Estaires Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France
Unit	2/7th (1st?) Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment)
Rank	Second Lieutenant,
Awards	British War Medal and Victory Medal

John Claud Parry Crosby was the son of John Hawke Crosby (1859, Spalding, Lincolnshire) and Frances Anne (nee Thomas 1856 Glamorganshire); he was born at Cowbridge, Glamorganshire in 1881. He had a younger sister, Marian Edith, who was also born in Glamorganshire in 1893. By the 1891 Census, John's father had become Precentor of Ely Cathedral, and so the family home from then on was in one of the former monastic buildings of "The College" where their household included three servants.

The local newspaper of 1st February 1918 gave a more detailed account of the life of John Crosby than it did many other less well connected war casualties, but this gives a feel for him as a man as well as his career: *"2nd Lieut. John Claud Parry Crosby, who died on the Western Front on January 21st, of wounds received the same day, was the only son, born 1881, of the Rev. J. H. Crosby, Precentor of Ely Cathedral, and Mrs Crosby. Educated at Uppingham, where he spent three years in the Lower School, under the Rev. W.V. Bagshawe, and three years in the Upper School, in the House of the late Mr Haslam, he passed thence to Pembroke College, Cambridge (1900). From Cambridge he entered Lloyd's Bank, working successively in Cardiff, Aberdare, Port Talbot, Cambridge, Brecon, and West Bromwich. In 1914 he married Lena, daughter of the late Rev. W.R. Jenkins, rector of St Athan, Glamorgan; there is one child of the marriage, a daughter born in 1915. In June 1916 he was enrolled in the Cambridge O.T.C., and in the following October was sent to the 9th Scottish Cadet Battalion at Gales. He received his commission in January 1917, and in February was gazetted to the King's Liverpool Regiment, going out to France in March. A fellow officer writes: "Mr Crosby was loved and respected by the men under his command, and he always studied their comfort before his own. A more gallant officer this company never had, and everyone of us, officers and men, feel his loss deeply. Very much do I indeed feel the loss of so true a friend and so gallant a soldier." His sergeant and the N.C.O.s and men of his Company write: "It is with deepest regret we convey our deepest sympathy in your sad bereavement. We have lost an officer and a friend." The Sister who attended him at the casualty clearing station writes: "Several times he said to me, "I am giving you a lot of unnecessary trouble, sister; please tell my wife I am only slightly wounded." he never seemed to think of himself, although he must have known his wounds were serious." His chaplain writes; "We all miss him terribly in the battalion, and none more than the men of his platoon, to whom he was devoted, and they to him. Numbers of them have told me in these last two days that he was the best officer they ever had, and that they would have gone anywhere for him. One of the men said to me, "It is strange how often the best are taken; there must be a reason for it in the providence of God, but it is very hard for us who see through a glass darkly to see it. I too have lost in him a good and true friend." "*

John was wounded at Houplines and persisted in telling the sister at the casualty clearing station to tell his wife he was only slightly wounded, despite the fact that it must have been apparent his case was serious.

There is some confusion as to whether John fought with the 1st or 2/7th Battalion of the Liverpool Regiment, with both being shown on official records. It is generally assumed that his medal card, showing 2/7th, is accurate.

John left estate valued at £855 14s 1d.

John's widow, known as Mrs Claude Crosby, was the Captain of the 2nd Ely Guide Company after the War, having taken up the role shortly before John's death. (By 1921 she was to be District Commissioner for the Girl Guides.) Although the article cited above shows she was known as Lena, her full set of Christian names was actually Jane Frances Caroline and her daughter was Frances M. D. Crosby. Lena and Frances continued to live in the College with John's parents after his death. The older Crosbys had lost not only their son, but also their daughter Marian who had died in 1913, so it was probably especially important for them to have their daughter-in-law and grandchild with them. When asked if they wished for a personal dedication to be inscribed on John's gravestone Lena did not ask for a religious or personal message as did most widows, but instead asked for all their names to be added to John's: "Husband of J.F.C. Crosby Only Son of Rev J.H. and F.A. Crosby of Ely". John's grave appears to be one of only three war graves in France or Flanders which specifically mentions the City of Ely.

Late in March 1918 many of John's household possessions were sold at auction in the Ely Corn Exchange: *"..there was a large attendance at the sale of valuable modern and antique furniture, old pictures, plated articles, glass and other household appointments....close on 400 lots and some good process were reached. Some of the pictures etc which came under the hammer were of historical interest."*

John's Father, John Hawke Crosby would have been a well-known figure around Ely with his public role in the Cathedral. He was also a published author, the titles of his two books being "Ely Episcopal Registers (1337-1349)" and "Ely Episcopal Registers (1337-1581)". In 1909 he was the founder of the Cathedral's Old Choristers Association (Societas Choristarum Eliensum) to help former choristers keep in touch with the Cathedral, and this is still in existence today. He was also the local Secretary of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society and even before the War he was a supporter and fundraiser for the Ely Nursing Association. The Precentor did not long outlive his son as he died in 1921.