

ASHFORD

Post Office

Tannery Lane
Ashford
Kent



Ashford Sorting Office

This memorial plaque was originally located at the Ashford General Post Office in central Ashford. It now hangs on the wall inside the new Royal Mail Sorting Office in Tannery Lane, Ashford. Surely this monument belongs in the Ashford General Post Office in central Ashford where the local residents can actually see it?

The Great War

1914 – 1919



BOUGHTON A.W (Ashford)

Private 303161 Arthur William BOUGHTON. 8th (Ardwick) Battalion, Manchester Regiment. Formerly (179352) Royal Field Artillery (RFA). Died Sunday 31st March 1918. Born New Cross, London. Enlisted Woolwich, London. Resided Ashford. Buried in the Foncquevillers Military Cemetery, Near Arras, France. Grave reference II.D.I.

Arthur was a Postman in Ashford and his name also appears on the Ashford St Mary's church war memorial plaque.

The 8th "Die Hards" landed at Alexandria Egypt 25th September 1915 (127th Brigade, 42nd Division). Landed Gallipoli, Turkey 26th May 1915. In January 1916 it returned to Egypt having been evacuated from Gallipoli. In March 1917 it moved from Egypt to France.

DRYLAND W.O (Ashford)

Rifleman 04197 William Oliver DRYLAND. 8th Battalion, London Regiment (Post Office Rifles). Died Friday 15th September 1916. Brother of A Dryland of 13, Park Street, Ashford, Kent. William has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, France. Panel reference 9C and 9D.

William worked at Ashford Post Office for many years first as a Telegraph Messenger then as a Postman. Enlisting in July 1915, It is recorded that William enlisted in London direct to the 8th Battalion. William proceeded to France in July 1916 with his battalion. He was trained in the army as a Cook having obtained a first class certificate at the London Cookery School.

On the 14th September 1916 the 8th battalion attacked near High Wood on The Somme. The day that William was killed his battalion advanced at 7.20 am and went forward to the Flag Line (140ths Brigade second objective) on the right of the assault. On the 18th September 1916 the battalion attacked at Flers. William was killed in or near High Wood on The Somme, France.





QUINNELL J.W (Ashford)

Leading Seaman John William QUINNELL.. HMS “Pembroke”, Naval Barracks Chatham, Royal Navy (R.N). Died of T.B 21st July 1919 aged 44 years. John died at 18 Christchurch Road, Ashford. Born 8th August 1875 at Hunton, Maidstone, Kent. Husband of M Quinnell of 18 Cristchurch Road, Ashford, Kent. John’s wife was present when he died. Buried 24th July 1919 at the Old Ashford Cemetery, Canterbury Road, Ashford, Kent. Grave reference 3271.

John’s name also appears on the Ashford Post Office War Memorial.

Death certificate reference – West Ashford/ASH30/107.

John’s name is not recorded as a war casualty by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission because he died after he had been discharged from the Royal Navy. John’s death was due to his war service and his name should have been added to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission death indexes.

On 8th August 1893 John enlisted in the Royal Navy. He served on the following ships – Victoria and Albert, Victory, Raleigh, Philomel, Galatea, Wildfire I, Victorious, Revenge, Benbow, Excellent, Jupiter, Sapphire. Immediately before the outbreak of war John was employed as a Postman in Ashford this accounts for the fact his name appears on the Post Office Sorting Office war memorial. On the outbreak of war John re-enlisted into the Royal Navy and was posted to HMS Pembroke in Chatham to assist with the training and induction of ratings. He was admitted into the naval hospital at Chatham in December 1915 suffering from T.B. On 29th February 1916 John was invalided out of the navy on medical grounds. John died of T.B some 3 years later. John obviously caught T.B whilst a serving sailor.

The Ashford Absentee Voters List for 1918 gives –

18, Christchurch Road, Ashford

Leading Seaman 157659 John William QUINNELL. HMS Pembroke. Royal Navy.

The 1881 census for Hunton Kent gives -

East Street, Hunton

William QUINNEL Born 1854 at Hunton, Kent (Father)

Ellen QUINNEL Born 1854 at Shaldon, Hampshire (Mother)

JOHN W QUINNEL Born 1875 at Hunton, Kent

Arthur QUINNEL Born 1879 at Barming, Kent (Brother)

There are other Quinnet's living in Hunton –

John QUINNEL

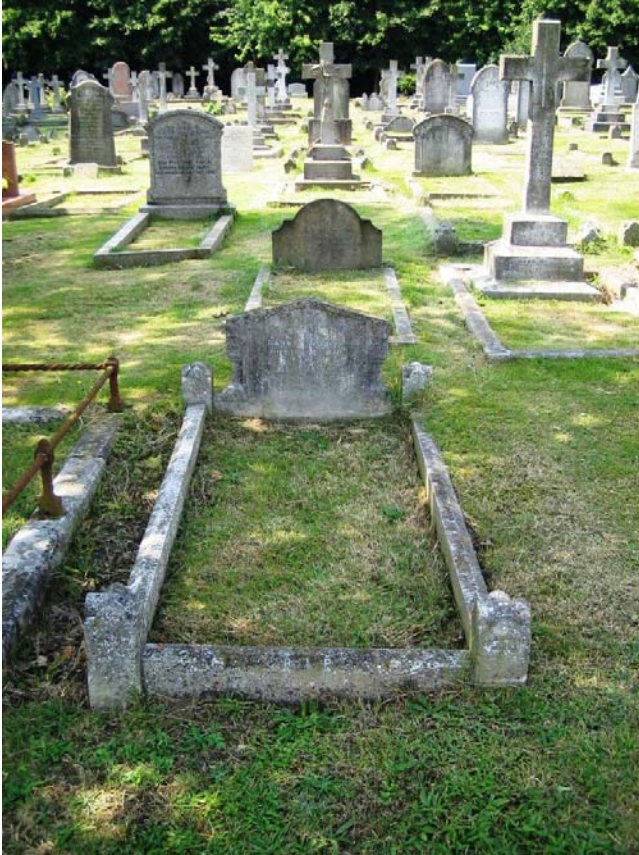
Edward QUINNEL

Agnes QUINNEL

John E QUINNEL

Maurice QUINNEL





WADELL P.T (Ashford)

Rifleman 7634 Percy Thomas WADDELL. 9th Battalion, London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles). Formerly (5654) 8th Battalion, London Regiment. Died Monday 25th September 1916 aged 33 years. Born Ashford. Enlisted London. Resided Ashford. Son of Harry and Jane Waddell of 12 Park Street, Ashford, Kent. Formerly residing (1901) 29, Forge Lane, Ashford, Kent. Percy has no known grave. His Name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference pier and face 9.C.

Percy's father Harry WADDELL is buried in the old Ashford Cemetery, Canterbury Road, Ashford – Died 21st Septeptember 1931 aged 71 years. Percy had 2 brothers – Harry and Percy. In 1901 the family was residing at 29, Forge Lane.

The 1901 census gives –
29, Forge Lane, Ashford

Harry	WADDELL	40	Ivychurch, Kent
Jane		43	Mersham
Percy		17	Asst Postman Ashford
George		16	Ashford
Harry		18	Ashford

On the 23rd September 1916 the 9th Battalion moved into the frontline trenches at Combles. On the 24th September the battalion attacked the enemy and moved forward towards Combles Trench system. On the 26th September attacks were made at Falfemont Farm to Casement Trench. On the 27th September the battalion was moved from the front line to Meaulte.

ROWE P.F (Bethersden)

Private L/8239 Percy Frank ROWE, 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment. Died 25th September 1915 aged 28 years. Born Arundel, Sussex. Resided Bethersden. Son of Alfred and Mary Rowe of 15 Wood View, Ford Road, Arundel, Sussex. Buried in the Dud Corner Cemetery, Loos, France. Grave reference VI.H.7.

It is most odd that Percy's name does not appear on the Bethersden parish tribute bearing in mind he was that village's postman before the outbreak of war. Perhaps he no longer had family living in the area when the memorial was sited.





MARSHALL G (Brabourne)

Private G/24280 George MARSHALL, 8th Battalion, Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment), Formerly (2640) The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 1st September 1916 aged 19 years. Born in Brabourne. Enlisted Ashford. Buried in the London Cemetery Extension, Lonueval, France. Grave reference 7.B.13.

George's name also appears on the Brabourne and Smeeth war memorials.

George was educated at the Smeeth Council School. After he left school he went to work at the Brabourne Lees Post Office. He went to France on 9th August 1916 with The Buffs and was transferred into the Queen's shortly after arriving there. George had a brother serving in the Buffs as a Sergeant.

On the 1st September 1916 the 8th Battalion moved into the front line trenches near Deville Wood to relieve the 8th Royal West Kent's. The battalion was under almost continuous shell fire for the next 3 days. On the 5th September the battalion moved away from the front line having lost 136 men to shell fire.

BARROWS F.J (Charing)

Private S/11299 Frederick James BARROWS. 1st Battalion, Gordon Highlanders. Died Wednesday 15th November 1916 aged 26 years. Born Charing. Enlisted Ashford. Son of Thomas and Sarah Barrows of Charing, Kent. Buried in the Wimereux Communal Cemetery, Wimereux, France. Grave reference II.A.7.

Frederick died of his shell wounds at the Australian General Hospital at Boulogne in France. He received these wounds whilst fighting with his battalion only a few days earlier. Before the war Frederick was well known locally as a gifted athlete.

The 1901 census gives –
Charing Hill, Charing

Thomas	BARROWS	30	Carter Farm	Charing
Sarah A		40		Lenham
Ellen		18	Mothers Helper	Charing
Thomas William		16	Grocers Porter	Charing
Frederick J		12		Charing
Elizabeth		7		Charing
Elsie M		3		Charing
Lilian M		3		Charing

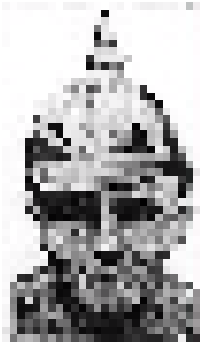
On the 13th November 1916 the 1st battalion was in the rear of a failed attack on Serre in the Northern Somme Sector. On the 13th November 1916 the war diary records that 141 were casualties and that they withdrew to Rob Roy Trench. On the 17th November 1916 the 1st battalion withdrew to Courcelles. Frederick died of wounds that he received on 13th November 1916. He was evacuated to a Base Hospital at Wimereux near Boulogne where he succumbed to wounds. His body was buried in the hospitals dedicated cemetery.

WELLER A.F (Charing)

Rifleman 371842 Arthur Frederick WELLER. 8th Battalion (Post Office Rifles). London Regiment. Died 18th April 1918. Resided Sevenoaks. Born Charing. Son of F Weller of 6, Beech Road, Sevenoaks, Kent. Buried in the Namps-Au-Val British Cemetery, France. Grave reference II.B.16.

Before the war Arthur worked as a postman from the Charing Sub-Post Office.

Arthur's name appears on the Ashford Post Office war memorial located in the sorting office at Tannery Lane. On this small memorial it states clearly that Arthur worked at Charing. It seems odd that his name was not placed on the Charing war memorial.



TUTT T (Great Chart)

Private S/10403 Thomas TUTT. "B" Company, 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). Died 15th September 1916. Born Kingsnorth. Resided Great Chart. Thomas has no known grave. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial, The Somme, France. Panel reference 5D.

Before the outbreak of war Thomas was employed at the Great Chart Post Office for 5 years. He was educated at the British School in Ashford.

The exact circumstances of Thomas's death was reported in detail in the Kentish Express- He was shot through the heart after his battalion started to advance towards the enemy. He was carried away that night and buried somewhere behind the line. His photograph in the Kentish Express shows Thomas wearing a German helmet that he took off a dead German Officer shortly before he himself was killed.

On the 15th September 1916 the 1st battalion attacked the enemy at what was known as the Quadrilateral in support of 8th Bedfordshire Regiment. They moved forward at 6.35 am under extremely heavy machine gun fire. On the 19th September the battalion withdrew to Morlancourt having sustained very heavy casualties.





BATT W (Pluckley)

Rifleman 40555 William BATT. 2/8th Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales Own). Died Tuesday 20th November 1917. Son of Mrs C Batt of Buffalo Cottages, Smarden, Kent. Buried in the Grand Ravine British Cemetery, Havrincourt, France. Grave reference B.23. It appears that William lost his life in the Battle of Cambrai.

Before the outbreak of war William was the Pluckley / Smarden Postman. His name also appears on the Ashford Post Office War Memorial.

The Ashford 1918 Absentee Voters List gives –

Buffalo Cottages, Smarden

**Private 306900 Charles BATT. 6th Sherwood Foresters.
Private 241900 Dan BATT. 4th Leicestershire Regiment.**

Derinf Farm, Smarden

Private 118737 Cyril Charles BATT. Machine Gun Corps.

Homewood Place, Buckman Green, Smarden

Stoker K/33862 Harold BATT. HMS Undaunted, Royal Navy.
Stoker 19354 Herbert BATT. HMS Edgar, Royal Navy.

The 1901 census gives –
The Little Farmhouse, Romden, Smarden

Dan	BATT	40	Farmer	Smarden
Alice M		34		Sutton Valence
Doris J		7		Smarden
Shirley		5		Smarden
Kate		1		Smarden
Elizabeth		72	Farmers Wife	Smarden
Grace		36		Smarden

SKEER G (Smeeth/Brabourne/Elham)

Sergeant 280539 George SKEER MM. 222nd Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA). Holder of the Croix de Guerre (Belgium). Died near St Quentin, France on Thursday 21st March 1918 aged 36 years. Born Harbledown, Canterbury. Enlisted Ashford. Son of John and Mary Skeer of Lyminge, Kent. Husband of Lillian Skeer of "Southside" Brabourne Lees, Ashford, Kent. George has no known grave. His name appears on the Pozieres Memorial, France. Panel reference 10.

George's name also appears on the Brabourne and Smeeth war memorials. His name also appears on the Elham War Memorial because he delivered letters in that area for many years preceding his death.

Awarded the Military Medal (MM) for bravery in the field.

His wife Lillian Skeer is buried in the St Mary's Churchyard, Smeeth. She died on 7th February 1935 aged 49 years.

222 Siege Battery was attached to the 4th Army. It had Four 6 inch guns which were normally used to suppress enemy artillery positions.

George had a brother who was also killed in the Great War but he lived in Lyminge near George's parents - **Company Sergeant Major 13163 C.E SKEER. School of Gunnery (Lydd), Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA).** Died 10th May 1917 aged 41 years. Son of John and Mary Skeer of Lyminge, Kent. Husband of M Skeer of 62, Dour Street, Dover, Kent. Buried locally in the Dover (Charlton) Cemetery, Dover, Kent. Grave reference Y.Q.7.

LOST MEN



COLBREAY C.J

Private 10446 Charles John COLBREAY. 1st Battalion, Royal Munster Fusiliers. Formerly (9108) 12th Lancers. Died Gallipoli, Turkey on Saturday 12th August 1915 aged 19 years. Born Westwell. Enlisted Woolwich, London. Resided Charing. Son of Mr J. and Mrs C. Colbreay of "Palace Cottage", Charing, Kent. Charles has no known grave. His name appears on the Helles Memorial, Turkey. Panel reference 185 to 190.

Charles was employed by the Post Office as a Rural Postman between Charing and Charing Heath. He was the first Charing man to volunteer for overseas service on the outbreak of war in August 1914. He lost his life in Gallipoli a year later.

The 1901 census gives –
Market Place, Charing

John	COLBREAY	31	Wagoner on Farm	Pett, Sussex
Catherine		27		Woodchurch
Charlie		4		Hothfield
Ernest		3		Charing
Leslie		1		Charing

On the 21st July 1915 the 1st battalion embarked on the SS Basilisk for Cape Helles from Y Beach. The next day the battalion landed on V beach at 0400 hours. They moved to Gully Beach. On the 6th August the battalion moved forward to reserve positions and then later in the day to the front line. On the 13th July the battalion was relieved by the 4th Worcestershire Regiment and went to Gully Ravine. On the 20th August the battalion embarked on the SS Osmanieh for Suvla Bay. On the 21st April the battalion was in action all day. Their objective was Hill 121 near Chocolate Hill. This attack was unsuccessful and the battalion lost many men – 25 men killed and 150 men wounded.

FISHER A.L

Leading Seaman SS/81 Herbert (Albert) Lawrence FISHER. Royal Mount Naval Barracks, Royal Navy (RN). Died 16th March 1921 aged 36 years. Albert died of T.B (Phthisis). Born Folkestone 10th August 1884. Buried 19th March 1921 at Willesborough Cemetery, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent. Grave reference – Q 631. Herbert died at 74 Albemarle Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent. Formerly residing (1918) at 55 Hunter Road, Willesborough, Ashford with a Private 243652 Richard Kemp Barnard (5th West Surrey's).

Herbert's death is NOT recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission because he died after he had been discharged from the navy. In any event the war had ended in Europe over two years previous. At the time of his death he was registered as a Naval Pensioner.

Before the outbreak of war Albert was employed as a Plumbers Mate and **Postman**. He enlisted in the Royal Navy on 2nd October 1903 and served on H.M.S Andromeda and H.M.S Achilles. He completed his contract and retired on 9th October 1908. On the outbreak of war Herbert re-enlisted and was sent to H.M.S Pembroke in Chatham to assist with training new sailors. He remained there from late 1914 to 31st December 1918.

Albert's death certificate reference is – EAST ASHFORD/BRA16/313. It is recorded on Albert's death certificate that before the outbreak of war Albert was working in Ashford as a Postman.

His Brother-in-Law Frank H Newton was present at the time of Albert's death.

Herbert is also commemorated on the Willesborough War Memorial as H FISHER. It appears that he must have called himself **Herbert** when in fact his birth name was **Albert**.

