# Kennington

# Second World War 1939 – 1945

ADCOCK, VICTOR CHARLES. Petty Officer, D/JX 135327.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Cleopatra. (33).

Died 16 July 1943. Aged 28.

Son of Charles Henry and Emma Elizabeth Adcock.

Husband of Mary Joan Adcock of Hope Cove, Devon.

Buried Malta (Capuccini) Naval Cemetery.

Grave Ref: Protestant Section (Men's) Plot F. Collective grave 39.

Built by Hawthorn Leslie & Co. of Hebburn-on-Tyne, H.M.S. Cleopatra was a 5450 ton, Dido class light cruiser, she was commissioned on 5 December 1941. H.M.S. Cleopatra was torpedoed of Sicily on 16 July 1943 by the Regina Marina Italian Submarine Dandolo. Despite substantial damage H.M.S. Cleopatra, commanded by Captain G. Grantham, D.S.O., R.N. managed to reach Malta for repairs, and whilst at the island took the opportunity to lay to rest some of the men who were killed when the submarine had attacked, one of whom was Victor. After being patched up in Malta the cruiser left in October 1943 for Philadelphia, U.S.A. were she remained undergoing extensive repairs until November 1944. The light cruiser survived the Second World War, and remained in service with the Royal Navy until 1953, and was eventually scrapped in 1958.

ALLCHIN, JAMES (Jimmie) CECIL ALCUIN. Pilot Officer, 106364. Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 102 Squadron, Royal Air Force. Died 8 November 1941. Aged 21.

Son of Alfred Ernest and Violet Ethel Allchin of Kennington, Ashford, Kent. Commemorated on Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial, Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Panel 31. James Allchin Gardens on the Little Burton Farm Estate, Kennington, Ashford, Kent, is named in his honour and remembrance. James was the co-pilot of Whitley bomber Z9128 DY-? which took off from RAF Topcliff, North Yorkshire at 2207 hours in a mixed bomber force of 169 aircraft on 7 November 1941 on a bombing mission to Berlin, Germany. At 0642 hours the next morning James aircraft was contacted in response to a request for a bearing, at which time it was thought to be about 100 kilometres north of the Island of Borkum in the North Sea and heading for the East Coast of England. The exact fate of the aircraft is still unclear but it is though to have run out of fuel, possibly resultant of having strayed off course and using up the allocated fuel supply. Within the space of about an hour, two other Whitley's of 102 Squadron that had also been returning from the same mission requested similar assistance, sadly all three aircraft and crews were lost and are presumed to have crashed at different locations in the North Sea, the fifteen airmen lost are all commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Cloud cover over the

chosen target area had thwarted the bombers efforts to achieve a concentrated bombing pattern, and they also suffered a mauling by both flak gun batteries and enemy fighters, which resulted in 21 of the aircraft failing to return amounting to about a twelve and a half percent loss rate. "Jimmie" Allchin had been a pupil at Ashford Grammar School between 1931 and 1938 (now the Norton Knatchbull) and is commemorated in the school Book of Remembrance. His sister Avis Allchin who resided in Church Road, Kennington had prior to her retirement been the Principal of Ashford Girls School, East Hill.

# AMMON, ROBERT WILLIAM. Leading Aircraftman, 903870.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 2 October 1940. Aged 36.

Son of Frederick T Ammon and Kate Ammon of Ashford, Kent.

Husband of Doris Lilian Ammon of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial.

Grave Ref: Section 3. Grave 97.

# BOYD-MOSS, DERYCK FRANK. Major, 58212.

46 th (The Liverpool Welsh), Royal Tank Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps.

Died 28 October 1942. Aged 29.

Born India, Resided London.

Son of Major E. W. Boyd-Moss D.S.O. and Mary Elizabeth Grace Boyd-Moss.

Buried El Alamein War Cemetery, Egypt. Grave Ref: XVII. D. 24.

Pre war member of the Royal Tank Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps.

Deryck's father served with distinction in the Warwickshire Regiment during the Great War.

## DAVIS, ALFRED CHARLES. Private, 968967.

2nd Battalion, The King's Regiment (Liverpool).

Died 15 September 1944. Aged 24.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Alfred Charles and Violet Davis of Kennington, Kent.

Buried Coriano Ridge War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: XIX. D. 5.

Originally enlisted in the Royal Artillery.

## DEAN, KENNETH VICKERY. Sergeant, 647915.

Royal Air Force.

Died 7 November 1944.

Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 228.

#### **GRAY**, SARAH MARIA.

Died 22 December 1942. Aged 65

Resided at "Ballalona," Carlisle Road, Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. Widow of Charles Edward Gray.

Sarah died at 4 Fleet Villas, Grosvenor Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated in Bybrook Cemetery, and on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial.

HANEY, JAMES. Sergeant (Observer/Navigator), 1280935.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 104 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 19 August 1941. Aged 29.

Son of Frederick Joseph and Mary Waterworth Haney.

Husband of Dorothy Violet Haney of "Winslade," Canterbury Road, Kennington, Ashford. Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial.

Buried Kiel War Cemetery, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. Grave Ref: 2. G. 8. James had been a member of staff at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School from 1934 until just prior to his enlistment in 1940. Ashford, Kent resident Dennis Hayward served in the same squadron (please see his brief commemoration), and who died only ten days after James was recorded as lost. James was a crew member of Wellington bomber W5416 EP-? which was flown by 26 year old Flight Lieutenant, William W. Burton, B.A. (Oxon.), R.A.F.(V.R.) of Retreat, Cape Province, South Africa. The bomber took off at 2240 hours on 19 August 1941 from R.A.F. Driffield, East Yorkshire, on a bombing mission to Kiel, Germany. Although James is recorded as dying on 19 August 1941 by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission this is in fact erroneous albeit by only a few hours, as contact had been made by his aircraft at 0318 hours on the morning of the following day, when a wireless transmission trying to raise R.A.F. Bircham Newton, Norfolk was made by the aircrafts crew. So far (February 2003) no trace of the lost Wellington has ever has been found, but it is assumed to have crashed over the North Sea. On 19 September 1941 exactly a month after his aircraft had taken off on its last mission James body was washed ashore at Norderpiep, Germany from where he was laid to rest with military honours at Büsum, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. James family were informed of his death and burial via the International Red Cross, since the war his body has been moved to Kiel War Cemetery, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. All five of the other men who perished with James have no known graves and are therefore commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial.

HOLLANDS, SYDNEY FRANK, Aircraftman 2nd Class, 1283706.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Died 25 August 1943.

Buried Chungkai War Cemetery, Kanchanaburi, Thailand. Grave Ref: 5. C. 7. The notorious Burma-Siam railway, built by Commonwealth, Dutch and American prisoners of war, was a Japanese project driven by the need for improved communications to support the large Japanese army in Burma. During its construction, approximately 13,000 prisoners of war died, including Sydney, and were buried along the railway. An estimated 80,000 to 100,000 civilians also died in the course of the project, chiefly forced labour brought from Malaya and the Dutch East Indies or conscripted in Siam (Thailand) and Burma (Myanmar). Two labour forces, one based in Siam and the other in Burma, worked from opposite ends of the line towards the centre. Chungkai was one of the base camps on the railway and contained a hospital and church built by Allied prisoners of war. The war cemetery is the original burial ground started by the prisoners themselves, and the burials are mostly of men who died at the hospital. There are now 1,427 Commonwealth and 314 Dutch burials of the Second World War in this cemetery.

KING, JOHN JAMES. Sergeant, 1395486.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 622 Squadron, Royal Air Force. Died 11 April 1944.

John attended Ashford Grammar School 1925-1929, where he is commemorated in the school Second World War, Book of Remembrance, and on the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial, also commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 232.

John was a crew member of Lancaster bomber ED808 GI-U, flown by 29 year old Pilot Officer (Pilot), Frank R. Burrows, of Mile End, South Australia. which took off from R.A.F. Mildenhall, Suffolk at 0125 hours as part of a force of 15 Mosquito and 142 Lancaster bombers, to attack the railway infrastructure at Laon, Aisne, France. Of the 157 bombers engaged on the raid John's aircraft was the sole loss when it crashed (cause unknown) about 23 miles north of Le Harve, killing all seven crew, four of whom are at rest in St-Marie Cemetery, Le Harve. Both of the aircrafts Air Gunners are at rest in St-Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France, and only John is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial. The wreckage of John's Lancaster appears to have been identified by the German authorities, who reported its destruction in KE8268, a document which eventually fell into Allied hands. Lancaster ED808 was delivered to 1660 Conversion Unit, R.A.F. in April 1943, joining 622 Squadron, R.A.F., which was formerly No.15 Squadron, R.A.F on 10 February 1944. The aircraft was damaged and repaired three times whilst serving with the 1660 Conversion Unit, R.A.F. Wore the IDs GI-R/U but undertook no operations with No.15 Squadron, R.A.F. With No.622 Squadron, R.A.F. as GI-R, and took part in the raids on Leipzig 19/20 February 1944; Schweinfurt 24/25 February 1944; Berlin 24/25 March 1944; As GI-U, to Nuremburg 30/31 March 1944; Laon 10/11 April 1944 when she was lost, by which time the aircraft had amassed a total of 509 flying hours.

# MERCER, DAISEY IRIS.

Died 6 November 1940. Aged 38.

Daughter of F M Mercer of "The Knoll," Kennington, Ashford, Kent and the late Arthur Mercer.

Also commemorated on the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial as D. I. Mercer. On 24 September 1940, the Woolston factory at Southampton which was producing Spitfires was bombed, killing 100 workers, though not damaging the factory. Two days later, the factory was heavily damaged by bombing, and another thirty more workers died. Although the first heavy raid by enemy bombers on Southampton, did not take place until 23 November 1940, and which was a prelude to what is still remembered in Southampton as the "Blitz week-end" of 31 November and 1 December 1940. Many other less intensive, but devastating raids were carried out on the city prior to these, which although primarily aimed at the naval installations and docks area, many of the bombs dropped missed the target areas, which resulted in a lot of structural damage within the city and sadly loss of life. But of the fifty seven air raids on the city, arguably the one which still evokes the saddest memories is the incident when Miss Mercer, a School Teacher, she being one of six adults who were killed when direct hits on the Civic Centre School of Art,

Southampton resulted in the deaths of over 30 people. A bomb which entered through the roof of the building exploded in the basement Air Raid Shelter. Tragically most of those who lost their lives were local 13 and 14 year old girls, sadly only one of the girls survived the carnage to relate to rescuers what had happened. Her school friends were killed when the 500lb bomb landing on the Arts Block in the Civic Centre, Southampton, where children were having a lesson at 1445 hours on 6 November 1940. Twelve bombs fell on Southampton during the raid, Not all the children had gone to the air raid shelter, but in the end this probably made very little difference to the outcome. The bomb tore right through the roof and floors and exploded inside the basement where children were hiding. Fourteen children including Kent girl, Norah Edson of 15 Heathfield Avenue, Dover, Kent died inside the shelter, unable to get out or raise help.

#### **NEWINGTON**, JOHN.

Died 24 March 1943. Aged 14.

Son of Percy Edward and L. A. Newington of 135 Faversham Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and John Newington Close on Little Burton Farm Estate, Kennington, Ashford is named in his honour and remembrance. He was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School 1939-1942. John was injured at Stanhays Agricultural Engineers Works, Godington Road, Ashford, Kent, and died later the same day of his injuries whilst a patient at Ashford Hospital, Kent. It would appear that his father had served as a Private, in both The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) and the Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) during the years of the Great War.

NICHOLLS, THOMAS MUSGROVE. Squadron Leader (Pilot), 111973. Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 625 Squadron, Royal Air Force. Died 31 March 1944. Aged 22.

Son of Herbert H. Nicholls and E. Isabel Nichols of Kennington, Ashford, Kent. Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, the Folkestone civic war memorial, and on the Second World War memorial plaque at the Harvey Grammar School, Folkestone, Kent where Thomas had been a pupil.

Buried Rheinberg War Cemetery, Kamp Lintfort, Nordrhein-Westfal, Germany. Grave Ref: Collective grave 17. D. 12-18.

Thomas was the pilot of Lancaster bomber W5009 CF-Z which took off from R.A.F. Kelstern, Lincolnshire. at 2144 hours on 31 March 1944 in a mixed bomber force of 795 aircraft, 572 of which were Lancasters. Nürnberg (Nuremberg) Bavaria, Germany, being the assigned target. History now remembers the raid because of a solitary and sad statistic, it being the most costly in terms of lost crews and aircraft to Royal Air Force, Bomber Command in the Second World War. 95 aircraft were lost on the raid, 82 of them on the outward flight, one of which was Thomas's aircraft, it was shot down by a German night-fighter, and crashed near Udenbreth, Nordrhein-Westphalia, Germany, killing all seven crew. The first enemy night-fighters appeared just before the bombers reached the Belgian border, and a fierce battle in the moonlight lasted for an hour. Immediately after the crash of

Thomas's Lancaster, the crew were laid to rest in Udenbreth, since which time they have all been reinterred in Rheinberg War Cemetery. Thomas's Lancaster was delivered to 101 Squadron, R.A.F. on 17 May 1943, and joined 625 Squadron, R.A.F. on 2 October 1943, by the time that it was lost, Lancaster bomber W5009 had completed 458 hours of flying. There is a memorial to commemorate all those who served in 625 Squadron R.A.F. at Kelstern, Lincolnshire during the Second World War, it was unveiled on 25 October 1964, and has the simple but very apt inscription "WE AVENGE," it being the motto of the Thomas's squadron, which was also formed there on 1 October 1943 equipped with Lancasters.

OLLEY, KENNETH. Lance Corporal, 7688357.
Corps of Military Police.
Died 13 May 1941.
Born North London. Resided Essex.
Son of Charles and Flo Olley.
Husband of Anita Ethel Olley of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Kennington, Ashford, Kent, (St. Mary) New Churchyard.
Grave Ref: Section C. Grave 64.

PERRY. SIDNEY. Master.

Merchant Navy. M.V. San Victorio (London).

Died Saturday 16 May 1942. Aged 46.

Son of William George and Rose Perry.

Husband of Marguerite F A Perry of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 92.

Built by Blythswood Shipbuilding Co Ltd, of Scotstoun, Glasgow, Scotland, Sidney's 8,136 ton tanker was launched on 20 January 1942, by Mrs W. L. Nelson, and was delivered to the Eagle Oil & Shipping Co. on 16 April 1942. There was only one survivor of the sinking of the. M.V. San Victorio, he being Anthony Ryan a D.E.M.S. gunner, from the 45 crew members that were aboard the tanker which Sidney commanded. Anthony was picked up sixteen hours later by the American patrol yacht U.S.S. Turquoise (PY 18) and landed at Trinidad. M.V. San Victorio (London) was torpedoed twice in the Caribbean Sea, and sunk by the type IXC German submarine U-155, which was commanded by 31 year old Kapitanleutnant, Adolf Piening, at 0217 hours, west of Granada. At the time of her loss, the M V San Victorio was sailing unescorted en-route from Aruba to the United Kingdom loaded with oil. When Adolf Piening sunk the M.V. San Victorio, it was actually his second attempt to do so, as the heavily laden tanker had been spotted at 0033 hours, and was missed by the first torpedo which was fired at 0114 hours. The U-boat had to crash dive ten minutes after the successful hits on the tanker because a flying boat was sighted. It should be noted that the commander of the U-155 is the same man who invented the Piening-Route, which during part of the Second World War probably saved countless U-boats and their crews, allowing them to escape allied aviation in the Bay of Biscay. Adolf Piening survived the Second World War, and the former U-boat 'ace' who was a native of Süderende, Tondem, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, died in Kiel, Germany on 15 May 1984, aged 73.

#### **SMITH**, EDITH ANNIE..

Died 22 December 1942. Aged 60.

Wife of Arthur James Smith.

Edith died at her home, 35 Grosvenor Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

**STAPLES**, CHARLES WILLIAM JAMES. Leading Seaman, C/JX150887. Royal Navy, H.M.S. Grove (L77).

Died 12 June 1942. Aged 21.

Son of William James and Harriett Elizabeth Staples of 12 Grosvenor Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 52. Column 2.

Charles enlisted in the Royal Navy as a Boy in 1936, a year after leaving the Ashford North County Modern Boys School, which he had attended from 1932. Following his initial training at H.M.S. Ganges in Suffolk, Charles served on several ships prior to his demise, they being H.M.S. Ramillies, H.M.S. Southampton, H.M.S. Firedrake, H.M.S. Heather, and eventually the 1050 ton, Hunt (Type II) escort destroyer H.M.S. Grove on which he died. Built by Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson Ltd. of Wallsend-on-Tyne, H.M.S. Grove was commissioned on 5 February 1942, and as such was virtually a new ship when she was lost on 12 June 1942. Having been an escort ship in convoy AT-49 to Tobruk, Charles's ship had only one of its screws working when she ran aground near Raz Azzaz. After being refloated she was reduced to a speed of only 8 knots which obviously left the vessel vulnerable to attack. At 0537 hours on the morning of the 12 June 1942, off the coast of Sollum, Egypt, H.M.S. Grove was sunk by two torpedoes fired from the German submarine U-77 commanded by 31 year old Kapitänleutnant, Heinrich Schonder, whilst the destroyer deployed as part of the escort force of convoy MW-11, which was an eastern supply convoy going to Malta, under Rear-Admiral P.J. Vian during 'Operation Vigorous.' Two officers and 108 ratings perished when H.M.S. Grove was sunk, but thankfully at least 60 of the ships compliment survived, although different books and data etcetera checked show a slight variance in figures regarding survivors. Having been promoted to Korvettenkapitän on 1 June 1943, Heinrich Schonder, a native of Erfurt, was lost with the rest of his crew when on his first patrol in the Type IX-D2 submarine U-200, on 24 June 1943 southwest of Iceland, by an R.A.F. Liberator aircraft of Coastal Command, just over a year after the sinking H.M.S. Grove.

# STEALEY, DAVID WALTER THOMAS. Flight Lieutenant, 66552.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

613 (City of Manchester) Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadron.

Died 22 February 1945. Aged 22.

Son of Isaac Richard Jones Stealey and Edith Maria Stealey.

Husband of Doris May Stealey of Edmonton, Middlesex.

Also commemorated on Ashford, Kent civic war memorial, and on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 266.On the Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial Walter is erroneously commemorated as a soldier.

Formed at Manchester, Ringway as part of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force on 1 March 1939, the 613 (City of Manchester) Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadron is commemorated on a memorial at the busy airport. On the memorial is recorded the types of aircraft that the squadron used during the Second World War, and later, it lists them as HIND, HECTOR, LYSANDER, TOMAHAWK, MUSTANG, MOSQUITO, SPITFIRE and VAMPIRE. Initially equipped with Hinds, by the end of the 1939, the squadron had received Hectors which it flew until April 1940 when it received Lysanders. Remaining in the United Kingdom, on the outbreak of war it operated over France on light bombing and supply dropping missions before assuming coastal patrol and air-sea rescue duties. However, it started training in the tactical reconnaissance role from 1 August 1941 when it received its first Tomahawk aircraft. It began to re-equip in April 1942 with the Mustang, which it retained until October 1943. The squadron then received Mosquito VIs from November 1943 and joined No 2 Group, beginning operations in December Arguably the squadron's finest hour was when six of its Mosquito's led by 32 year old Wing Commander, Robert Norman Bateson, of Sussex, flew across Holland at incredibly low altitudes, to successfully bomb the Gestapo HQ in the Hague on Tuesday 11 April 1944, at the request of the Dutch Underground. The target building somewhat ironically was located just across the Scheveningsche Weg, from the Peace Palace, where the World Court once sat. In three waves of two aircraft, the former Art Gallery known at the time as the 'Central Population Registry Building' was attacked, at which time it housed a vast amount of Nazi documentation all of which was lost, thankfully none of the aircraft were, and incredibly only one sustained minor damage. There was inevitable loss of life amongst the Dutch and German staff, but there were few civilian casualties in the nearby streets, as the aircraft dropped the bombs from a height of only fifty feet. From May 1944 it took on the role of night intruder and continued in this role until 7 August 1945 when it was renumbered No 69 Squadron. For his gallant leadership on 11 April 1944, Wing Commander, Bateson, was awarded a bar to his Distinguished Service Order, He later became an Air-Vice Marshall, C.B., D.S.O., D.F.C., he retired on 1 August 1967 and died on 6 March 1986, aged 73.

VEYSEY, LEONARD GEORGE. Private, 6294496.
5th Battalion, The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).
Died 12 December 1942. Aged 29.
Born Hertfordshire. Resided Kent.
Son of Mr. and Mrs. William George Veysey.
Husband of Violet Olive Veysey of Kennington, Ashford, Kent.
Commemorated on the Medjez-el-Bab Memorial, Tunisia. Face 15.

**VICKERS**, DOUGLAS RYLAND. Flying Officer (Navigator/Bomber), 74622. Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 104 Squadron, Royal Air Force. Died 24 November 1943. Aged 28.

Son of Vincent Rawson Scott Vickers and Gwyneth Howard Vickers of Wye, Ashford, Kent.

Diploma in Estate Management, Wye College A.L.A.S.

Buried Staglieno Cemetery, Genoa, Italy. Grave Ref: Collective grave I. A. 30. Commemorated on Wye College Second World War Memorial Plaque and Wye village Second World War memorial plaque, also on the Kennington, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial (as a soldier). There are 122 Second World War graves at Staglieno Cemetery, most of them garrison burials, others are those of casualties brought in from the surrounding country of Genoa.

VICKERY, E. Commemorated as an Army casualty on the Kennington, Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial, is possibly the following casualty as he appears to be the best match. An alternative explanation being that E. Vickery might be amongst the thousands of non-commemorations by the CWGC from both world wars.VICKERY, CHARLES EDWARD. Major, 126069.

1st (Airborne) Battalion, Royal Ulster Rifles.

Died 24 March 1945.

Born Eire. Resided Kent.

Buried Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

Grave Ref: 40. C. 8.

Pre war member of the Royal Ulster Rifles.

WILLIAMS, ROSE. Civilian casualty not yet traced.

