

# St. Mary Hoo



The transcriber of the following brief commemorations had partially transcribed the above form of St. Mary Hoo, Great War remembrance in 2008, but due to the staggering number of requests we have had from many Kent, and other locations to research and transcribe forms of remembrance of the victims of war, it was not completed or posted on [www.kentfallen.com](http://www.kentfallen.com) transcribed, or with any additional information appertaining to it, but simply in the form of three photographs, as by so doing it would allow relatives of those commemorated on it, or anybody else the opportunity to view the names of those commemorated. We have recently been asked to complete these transcriptions and add them to the website, and when doing so to add additional information regarding when the Reredos was erected etcetera, and also add by whom and when was the photograph of the Reredos taken. Unfortunately at this point in time (August 2013), the transcriber is unable to add any additional information by way of dates etcetera, and very

embarrassingly am also unable to remember who it was that kindly provided the above image for inclusion here. The lady requesting the information re dates and identity of the person who had kindly provided the above photograph, wrote in her letter along the lines that the above Reredos "has not been seen recently," which would tend to suggest that it has been moved? St. Mary Hoo is a small, pretty hamlet north of Rochester on the Hoo Peninsula lying between the Rivers Thames and Medway. It is located off the Ratcliffe Highway (which is off the A228) and the entire hamlet sits on Hall Road, which is a no through road. Located on Hall Road is the former parish church of St. Mary, which for several years now has been a private residence.

## The Great War

1914-1919



**BARTY, BERT.** Petty Officer Stoker, 305563.

Royal Navy, H.M.S. Vanguard.

Died Monday 9 July 1917. Aged 32.

Born Allhallows, Rochester, Kent on Sunday 15 February 1885.

Son of the late Edward Barty and the late Mary Ann Barty (née Cowling) of Allhallows, Hoo, Isle of Grain, Kent.

Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 23 as shown above.

At the time of the 1901 census, the Barty family resided at Lower Slough, Allhallows, Hoo, Isle of Grain, Kent. Head of the house was 54 year old St. Mary, Kent native James Hassel, who was employed as a Farm Labourer. The then 45 year old St. Mary, Kent native Edward Barty who was a widower, was also recorded by the enumerator as being employed as a Farm Labourer, and he and 6 of his children including Farm Labourer Bert, were all residing with the Hassel family. The death of Bert's 39 year old late mother Mary Ann Barty, who was a daughter of Benjamin Cowling and Esther Cowling was recorded in the Hoo, Kent, Registration District during the first quarter of 1898. When the 1911 census was conducted, 26 year old Bert was serving as a Leading Stoker with the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean. Following his death it was Bert's brother, Farm Labourer Amos Barty of Rose Cottages, St. Mary's, Hoo, Isle of Grain, Kent who as Bert's next of kin was the family member that was officially notified of Bert's death. Bert's late father 55 year old Edward Barty had died in 1912, and his 39 year old late mother Mary Ann Barty died in 1898. The death of Bert's 80 year old brother Amos who was a native of Allhallows, Kent, was recorded in the Chatham, Kent, Registration District during the fourth quarter of 1962 after he died at St. Bartholmews Hospital, Rochester, Kent on Monday 3 December 1962. At the time of his death, Amos's home address was recorded as 9 Coronation Cottages, Lower Stoke, Rochester, Kent. A survivor from the Battle of Jutland in which she was part of the Fourth Battle Squadron, H.M.S. Vanguard, on which

Bert was serving at the time of his death, was a 19,560 ton St. Vincent class Royal Navy battleship which was commanded by Lieutenant Commander Alan Charles Henderson Duke R.N, when it blew up and sank to the north of the Golta Peninsula in Flotta, Scapa Flow at approximately 23.20 hours on Monday 9 July 1917 with the loss of 843 lives. She went down as the result of a magazine explosion in one of the two magazines which served the 'P' and 'Q' turrets amidships. Following her loss an Admiralty Court of Enquiry was convened, with three possible causes tendered, they being: - (1) A spontaneous detonation of cordite, which had become unstable. (2) The cordite having caught fire from heating in an adjacent compartment. (3) Sabotage. To their credit Brian Budge from Kirkwall, and fellow enthusiast, Jonathan Saunders from Gillingham, Kent have carried out extensive research over a number of years into the loss of Robert's ship, and it as the result of their findings that the actual death toll and following information has been ascertained. The vast majority of those lost with H.M.S. Vanguard numbering 622, are commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Although no formal cause for the cordite explosion was ever found by the Court of Inquiry, the most likely explanation is that a fire in a coal bunker or other neighbouring area simply smouldered away undetected long enough to heat the cordite stored at an adjoining bulkhead to dangerous levels, which eventually triggered an explosive reaction. Although dwarfed by the losses such as the S.S. Lancastria off the coast of France in the Second World War, but the loss of H.M.S. Vanguard remains Britain's worst disaster in Home Waters. The wreck-site of the ship is now thankfully designated as a controlled site under the Protection of Military Remains Act. Stoker Cox and Private Williams of the Royal Marines, survived the explosion, but the only officer to do so was the ships commander Lieutenant-Commander Alan Charles Henderson Duke R.N, but sadly whilst receiving treatment for his injuries on the hospital ship H.S. Garth Castle in the Orkney Islands, he succumbed on Wednesday 11 July 1917 of the extensive wounds that he had received when H.M.S. Vanguard had exploded. Fortunately, 15 of H.M.S. Vanguard's officers had not returned to the ship from a concert onboard H.M.S. Gourka, which was moored beside the battleship H.M.S. Royal Oak, whilst some of her ratings survived by virtue of the fact that they were on leave at the time of the loss of H.M.S. Vanguard. Albeit belatedly, the wreck of H.M.S. Vanguard was finally declared an official protected war grave in 1982.

**BRANCEN**, HERMON FREDRICK. Driver, T/294588.  
No.3 Depot Company (Bradford), Army Service Corps.  
Died Thursday 8 February 1917. Aged 36.  
Born St. Mary Hoo, Kent. Enlisted and resided Woolwich, Kent.  
Son of the late John Brancen and the late Mary Ann Brancen.  
Buried St. Mary Hoo Churchyard, Isle of Grain, Kent.  
Commemorated Woodlands Cemetery, Gillingham, Kent. Ref: Special Memorial, and on a memorial in St. Mary Hoo Churchyard, which commemorates the 3 Great War casualties at rest there, and also a Second World War victim.  
Formerly 2/7th (Territorial Force) Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers. The births of Hermon and his twin brother Alfred George Brancen were recorded in the Hoo,

Kent, Registration District during the first quarter of 1881. When the 1881 census Hermon and Alfred were recorded by the enumerator as being only 2 months old, and as such where the Brancen family was living at St. Mary Hoo was probably also their actual place of birth. Head of the house was John Brancen, who was a 38 year old native of Norfolk and employed as an Agricultural Labourer. Hermon's mother; 28 year old Mary Ann Brancen was recorded by the census enumerator as being a native of Gravesend, Kent, her maiden name was possibly Brown. Arguably the best match for Hermon on the 1911 census appears to be that of a 30 year old Bricklayer, who was recorded by the enumerator as being a native of Chatham, Kent, and was living as a lodger at what was probably a large boarding establishment in Manchester, Lancashire. When Hermon enlisted in the army on Friday 10 December 1915 'For the Duration of the War,' he stated that he was employed as a Timberman and gave his home address as 13, Kingsman Street, Woolwich, Kent. Herman named his brother George Alfred Brancen who was residing at 4, Felgate Mews, Hammersmith, London as being his next of kin. The reason for naming his twin brother, was doubtless due to the fact that both of his parents were deceased, the death of his 35 year old mother was recorded in the Hoo, Kent, Registration District during the fourth quarter of 1889. Herman was attested to serve in the 2/7th (Territorial Force) Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers, and Hermon was serving in the battalion at Catterick Camp, Yorkshire, when he was transferred to the Army Service Corps on Saturday 13 January 1917. On Thursday 1 February 1917 Hermon was serving in the No.3 Depot Company, Army Service Corps and stationed at Bradford Moor Barracks, Yorkshire, when he was taken to the 1,200 bed Bradford War Hospital. Hermon died of Acute Pneumonia at 19.15 hours on the evening of Thursday 8 February 1917 whilst he was a patient at the hospital. Military hospitals were opened in Bradford, Yorkshire during both world wars and many of the 151 scattered Great War burials in Bradford (Bowling) Cemetery, were those of patients from the hospital where Hermon died, as were most of the 138 Great War burials in Bradford (Scholemoor) Cemetery. In addition to these two cemeteries, many of the 91 Great War burials in Bradford (Undercliffe) Cemetery were also from the same hospital. Following correspondence between the military authorities and Hermon's siblings he was not buried at Bradford, and his funeral was then arranged to take place at St. Mary's Church, Hundred-of-Hoo, Isle of Grain, Kent, with troops based at Rochester, Kent, detailed to provide for Hermon to be laid to rest with full military honours as befitted his rank. On completion of his funeral arrangements, Hermon's body was released to one of his two sisters, she being Mrs. Susan Charity Amy Russell the wife of Albert Edward Russell of The Shant, Grain Road, Lower Stoke, Isle of Grain, Kent. The death of Hermon's twin brother 61 year old Alfred George Brancen, was recorded in the Brentford, Middlesex, Registration District during the fourth quarter of 1942. The death of 73 year old Susan Charity Amy Russell (née Brancen) of 6 Beatty Cottages, Allhallows, Rochester, Kent was recorded in the Chatham, Kent, Registration District during the fourth quarter of 1951, after she died on Sunday 23 December 1951.

**CHAMBERS, EARLY BOARD.** Private, 25230.

12th (Service) Battalion, East Surrey Regiment.

Died Sunday 27 October 1918.

Born Hoo, St. Werburgh, Rochester, Kent. Enlisted Maidstone, Kent.

Son of Thomas Chambers and Mary Ann Elizabeth Chambers (née Izaby).

Husband of Amy Chambers (née Hayes) of Fenn, St. Mary's, Rochester, Kent.

Buried Moorseele Military Cemetery, Wevelgem, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

Grave Ref: A. 14.

Formerly Private, 23417, Middlesex Regiment. At the time of the 1881 census, the Chambers family resided at the Grocers Shop, Hoo, Isle of Grain, Kent. Head of the house was Early's father 36 year old Hoo, Kent native Thomas Chambers who was a Market Gardener and Grocer. Specific reference is made here of the 1881 census as it was when Early was a year old, and as such the census address was also possibly his actual place of birth. When the 1911 census was conducted, 31 year old Early was recorded by the enumerator as being employed as a General Labourer on Farm, and his 57 year old mother, Hoo, Kent native Mary Ann Elizabeth Chambers who was a widow, was recorded as being the head of the house and as being a Shop Keeper General Country Grocer. The marriage of Early and Amy Hayes was recorded in the Strood, Kent, Registration District during the fourth quarter of 1914, after they were married at the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Cobham, Kent on Thursday 12 November 1914. When Early enlisted in the army on Thursday 10 June 1915 'For the Duration of the War,' he stated that he was 35 years and 10 months old, and employed as a Farm Worker, residing at Fenn, St. Mary's, Rochester, Kent. Early also stated that he had previously served for a period of 8 years in the 4th (Volunteers) Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). The day after enlisting, Early was placed on the Army Reserve until being Mobilized on Saturday 10 June 1916 to serve as Private, 23417, in the Middlesex Regiment. On Monday 12 June 1916 Early was posted to the 6th (Reserve) Battalion of his regiment to commence his training. Friday 27 September 1916 was of particular significance for Early, as it was the day when he was posted to France for service with the British Expeditionary Force, and transferred to the 1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment via the 41 Infantry Base Depot, which was probably at Etaples, Pas de Calais, France. On Friday 13 October 1916 Early was transferred to the 12th (Service) Battalion, East Surrey Regiment (Bermondsey) which he joined in the field the same day. Whilst serving in the latter battalion Early suffered a gunshot wound to his right arm on Thursday 7 June 1917, for which he received treatment at the 140 Field Ambulance and then the No.3 Casualty Clearing Station, prior to being evacuated back to England by ship via the 24 General Hospital at Etaples, Pas de Calais on Sunday 10 June 1917. On the completion of his medical treatment and convalescence in England, Early returned to France on Saturday 8 September 1917, going to the 38 Infantry Base Depot at Etaples, Pas de Calais, France, from where he was posted back to serve in the 12th (Service) Battalion, East Surrey Regiment (Bermondsey) which he joined in the field on Saturday 13 October 1917. As part of the 112th Brigade, 41st Division, Early's battalion was posted to serve in Italy on Monday 12

November 1917, and arrived at Mantura on Saturday 17 November. The battalion left Italy for France on Sunday 3 March 1918 and arrived at Mondicourt on Tuesday 5 March. On Saturday 27 October 1918 Early's battalion was comprised of 38 officers and 677 other ranks. At 05.00 hours orders were received by the battalion to concentrate in readiness for an attack which was to take place at the village of Avelghem, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. The designated concentration area of the battalion was reached at 08.30 hours, and at 10.00 hours patrols were sent into the village, and reported back that there was no sign of the enemy soldiers. Following the welcome news of the evacuation of the village, a patrol was then sent out by the battalion, in order to establish a secure bridgehead across the river Essuyt, and posts were then established. Unfortunately during the night of 26/27 October 1918, the village of Avelghem was subjected to heavy bombardment by German artillery, during the course of which Early suffered a significant wound to his buttock. Following his wounding, Early was removed to the No.64 Casualty Clearing Station for medical attention, but sadly succumbed to his injuries later on Sunday 27 October 1918.

**MARSH**, PERCY JOHN. Sapper, WR/269916.

3rd Light Railway Operating Company, Royal Engineers.

Died Saturday 1 February 1919. Aged 22.

Born Eastchurch, Isle of Sheppey, Kent. Resided St. Mary's Hoo, Kent.

Son of James Marsh and Charlotte Marsh of St. Mary Hoo, Isle of Grain, Kent.

Buried St. Mary Hoo Churchyard, Isle of Grain, Kent.

Commemorated at Woodlands Cemetery, Gillingham, Kent. Ref: Special Memorial, and is commemorated on the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company War memorial at the Marine Station, Dover, Kent, also on a memorial in St. Mary Hoo Churchyard, which commemorates the 3 Great War casualties at rest there, and also a Second World War victim.

At the time of the 1911 census, the Marsh family resided at Barnes Street, Hoo, St. Mary Hoo, Rochester, Kent. Head of the house was 49 year old Ash, Kent native James Marsh who was a Farmer, and Percy was recorded by the enumerator as being a 14 year old Railway Clerk and was employed in a Booking Office. Prior to enlisting in the army, Percy was employed by the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company. When Percy died at the Fort Pitt Military Hospital on Saturday 1 February 1919, his home address was recorded as Barn Street, St. Mary's Hoo, Kent. The 3rd Light Railway Operating Company, Royal Engineers in which Percy was serving at the time of his death, was raised at Longmoor, Hampshire, and it served on the Western Front with the British Expeditionary Force from Friday 9 February 1917. On Wednesday 14 May 1919, a memorial service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, in the presence of H.M. The King and other members of the royal family, in addition to other dignitaries including the Lord Mayor of London. The memorial service was to remember the contribution made during the Great War by the 186,475 Railwaymen of Great Britain and Ireland who had joined the Colours, and of which 18,957 lost their lives, one of whom being Percy who was remembered as being a former South Eastern & Chatham Railway Company Clerk.

**PIPER, WILLIAM WALTER EDWARD.** Gunner, 174.  
No.1 Company (Kent), Royal Garrison Artillery.  
Died Monday 7 December 1914. Aged 19.  
Born and resided St. Mary Hoo, Kent. Enlisted Hoo, Rochester, Kent.  
Son of Mrs. Eliza Ann Piper (née Winter) of St. Mary Hoo, Isle of Grain, Kent, the late George Amos Piper.  
Buried St. Mary's Hoo Churchyard, Isle of Grain, Kent.  
Commemorated at Woodlands Cemetery, Gillingham, Kent. Ref: Special Memorial, and on a memorial in St. Mary Hoo Churchyard, which commemorates the 3 Great War casualties at rest there, and also a Second World War victim.  
William was born at St. Mary Hoo, Kent in February 1896. At the time of the 1911 census, the Piper family resided at St. Mary Hoo. Head of the house was Williams' father, 60 year old Hoo, Kent native George Amos Piper, who was employed as a General farm Labourer, as was the then 15 year old William. When William enlisted in the Territorial Force for 'Service in the United Kingdom' for 4 years on Friday 20 June 1913, he stated that he was 17 years and 4 months old and that he was employed as a Labourer. The officer who attested William for service as Gunner, 174, in No.1 Company (Kent), Royal Garrison Artillery was not an artillery officer, but Lieutenant D.L. Wall of the Royal Army Medical Corps who was attached to the unit. During his short period of military service prior to William's tragic death, as part of his Territorial Force commitment to attend Annual Camp he served at Dover, Kent for a few days from Wednesday 23 July 1913 until Sunday 27 July 1913, and at Sheerness, Isle of Sheppey, Kent from Sunday 19 July 1914 until Wednesday 29 July 1914. On Tuesday 25 November 1913 at Rochester, Kent, William signed a copy of Army Form E.622, agreeing to serve in the Special Service Section of the Territorial Force, for Special Service in the Eastern Coast Defences. Doubtless one of the attractions of signing up for service Special Service Section of the Territorial Force, was that all ranks received an additional 10s (Ten Shillings) annual retaining fee, which was paid in addition to their ordinary pay. The additional payment was made to the recipient during the time spent at Annual Camp. In addition to the extra retaining fee, members of the Special Service Section of the Territorial Force were also paid an additional £5.00 if called out for duty, which was paid whenever practicable when the officer or other rank reported for duty. All ranks were also received the same rates of pay as regular soldiers whilst serving in their Special Service role. Having been mobilized for war service at the commencement of the Great War, at the time of the accidental wounding which cost him his life, William was serving very close to his home. Following the Coroner's Inquest into Williams death, a Kent newspaper report appertaining to same was headed THREE MEN SHOT AT GRAIN FORT. The inquest was held at Fort Pitt Hospital at Rochester, Kent before the Rochester City Coroner, Richard John Mascall Stedman, with Mr. A.H. Acton chosen as the foreman of the jury. Evidence of identification was given by William's widowed mother who was a resident of St. Mary Hoo. The newspaper report (condensed here) recorded that on 27 October 1914, Gunner Sims of No.1 Company (Kent), Royal Garrison Artillery was cleaning his rifle when it went off, and the bullet struck

three men. Those injured by the bullet were William, Gunner Herbert Doe, and Gunner Ernest Grave. William was left seriously wounded and he was taken to the Fort Pitt Hospital, Rochester for treatment which is where he succumbed to his wounding at 03.00 hours on Monday 7 December 1914. Gunner Frederick William Theobald of No.1 Company (Kent), Royal Garrison Artillery, "said that on the day in question, at 8.30 a.m. he had come from his bed, and went towards the door of the barrack room, when he heard Piper call out Oh! pointing to his hip. At the same time he heard the report of Gunner Sims rifle. Witness went to help Piper from falling backwards, and Gunner Moore immediately carried him to hospital. Witness noticed blood pouring from his leg. Gunners Moore, Sims, Grave and Doe were in the barrack room, and when Piper called out, Sims was cleaning his rifle, two or three yards away, sitting on a box, and Piper was sitting in front eating his breakfast." William and the man who accidentally shot his were on friendly terms and they had only been at Fort Grain since the start of October 1914. Gunner Herbert Dow was hit in his right leg below his calf. Following the shooting, Gunner Frederick William Theobald immediately went for help, which resulted in William received medical attention from Lieutenant Douglas Larmer Wall who had attested him the previous year. When William had asked Frederick Theobald who it was that had shot him, William appears to have made a point of stating that it was an accident. Ernest Grave who had been injured, told the Coroner that whilst on sentry-go during the night he had borrowed Gunner Sims rifle and loaded it, because he had no ammunition in his own rifle. When he came off duty he forgot to unload the rifle, and left it in the tent where Sims was asleep, and did not wake him. Additional questioning resulted in Ernest saying that he had been in the Territorials about nine months, and that the handling of a loaded rifle was comparitly new to him. After three days spent at Grain Fort, William was moved to Fort Pitt at Rochester as the accommodation and facilities at the Fort were not adequate for William's treatment. Doctor Charles R. Salisbury of 105 High Street, Rochester was a civilian surgeon serving at Fort Pitt Hospital with the Royal Army Medical Corps, and told the inquest that he first saw William on 31 October. He also said that it was after about five or six days after being at the hospital, was the first indications that William's rectum had been damaged. For poor William there then had followed a number of operations despite which his injuries became gangrenous. Doctor Salisbury also commented that the on the day immediately prior to his death William had appeared to have been a little better. He also added "He was really a strong boy, or he would not have lived so long as he did." Doctor Salisbury then informed the inquest that he had arrived at the hospital on 7 December, and learned that William had died in the early hours following a severe hemorrhage. William's death was recorded as being a "Secondary Hemorrhage, due to ulceration of large artery." The jury at the inquest decided that no blame be apportioned to Gunner Sims, and a verdict of Accidental Death was recorded. Prior to the conclusion of the inquest, the Coroner and the jury members expressed their sympathy to William's relatives. Although the above is a brief tribute in memory of the late William Piper, it would be amiss to at least not add additional information appertaining to long time resident and Hoo, Doctor, Douglas Larmer Wall. M.C., M.B., Ch.B. A native of



Southampton, Hampshire, at the commencement of the Great War he was living at Church Street Hoo, Rochester, Kent, and initially served as Territorial Force Medical Officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps attached to No.1 Company (Kent), Royal Garrison Artillery. He was later attached to the 2/8th (Territorial Force) Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment), and was serving as a Captain R.A.M.C. attached to the battalion when it arrived at the French port of Harve on Monday 8 January 1917 for service with the British Expeditionary Force. In 1917 he was Mentioned in Despatches, and subsequently awarded the Military Cross. Doctor Wall was 78 years of age when he died on Friday 20 July 1956, at "Cranleigh," Grange-over-Sands, Lancashire which was the home of his daughter. His obituary recorded him as having formerly resided at "Fairlawn," Hoo, Kent. Post the Great War, his address had been recorded as "The Red House," Hoo, Rochester, Kent.



**TUFF, CECIL THOMAS.** Captain.

"D" Company 3rd (Reserve) Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).

Attached to the 1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment).

Died Sunday 18 April 1915. Aged 29.

Born Rochester, Kent.

Son of Charles Tuff, J.P., of Westfield, Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent, and the late Mary Ann Tuff (née Gill).

Commemorated on the Menin Gate, Ieper, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Panel 45 as shown above, and on the Ifield, Gravesend, Kent civic war memorial, also on page 197 of Ireland's Memorial Records, and in the Gravesham Borough Council, Kent, Book of Remembrance.

Cecil was an ex pupil of Malvern College, Worcestershire, and was a brother of Frank Noel Tuff briefly commemorated below, who as can be seen above is not commemorated on the St. Mary's Hoo, Reredos. When the 1911 census was conducted, Cecil was living as a boarder at Church Farm, Hoo, Rochester, Kent, and recorded by the enumerator as being a 25 year old native of Rochester, Kent, and a Farmer. Head of the house was 36 year old Frindsbury, Kent native Fred Sands who was employed as a Shepherd. Cecil served on the Western Front with the British Expeditionary Force from Friday 27 November 1914. At the time of his death, Cecil's home address was recorded as being Coombe Farm, St. Mary Hoo, Rochester, Kent. Thanks are due to Patrick D. Scullion for kindly providing the photograph above for inclusion here of the Menin Gate inscription.

**TUFF, FRANK NOEL.** Second Lieutenant.

Royal East Kent Yeomanry.

Died Friday 5 November 1915.

Born Rochester, Kent.

Son of Charles Tuff, J.P., and Mary Ann Tuff (nee Gill) of Westfield, Singlewell, Gravesend, Kent.

Buried Pieta Military Cemetery, Malta. Grave Ref: D. II. 1.

Commemorated on the Ifield, Gravesend, Kent civic war memorial.

Frank was an ex pupil of the Abbey School, Southend Road, Beckenham, Kent. The Tuff family were for many years influential and substantial land owners in Kent, and were also generous benefactors in the Medway area of Kent. Charles Tuff (1855-1929) was a former Mayor of Rochester Kent, and from Wednesday 23 September 1903 for a period of three years, he had been the (Conservative) Member of Parliament for Rochester. Following his death on Sunday 27 January 1929 a number of commentators remarked that he never came to terms with the loss of two of his sons during the Great War. Following Cecil's death, probate was granted to his brother Bertram who was also a native of Rochester, and at the time was serving as a Sub-Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. Fortunately Bertram survived the Great War, and he was 70 years of age when he died on Friday 6 November 1953, at which time he resided at 26, Kensington Gate, London, W8.

Mention was made above at the brief tributes of the 3 St. Mary Hoo Great War casualties, the late Hermon Bracen, Percy Marsh, and William Piper who are at rest in the Churchyard, that there is a memorial in St. Mary Hoo Churchyard, which commemorates them, and that there is also a Second World War victim commemorated on the memorial, which is located near to the war graves. It would clearly be remiss to not at least briefly commemorate the other casualty:-

**KNIBBS, JAMES.** Engineering Officer.

Merchant Navy, M.V. Innisdhu (Glasgow).

Died Friday 20 September 1940. Aged 21.

Son of James Arthur Knibbs and Olive Knibbs of Isleworth, Middlesex.

Buried St. Mary's Hoo Churchyard, Isle of Grain, Kent.

Grave Ref: On East boundary.

Depending on which data sources are checked shows a slight variation regarding the fate of the 96 ton drifter M.V. Innisdhu on Friday 20 September 1940. Some sources state that she was sunk by a German bomber approximately one hundred yards west of Westward mine marking buoy, which itself was located South 16° West from the Hole Haven Signal Tower. Other sources checked record that the little drifter struck a mine and sank in the Thames Estuary with the loss of all four crew members. Of the 4 crew who perished, 26 year old Engineering Officer Frank Stephens Broad, the son of Thomas Geoffrey Henry Broad and Ethel Victoria May Broad; and he was the husband of Queenie Olive Mabel Broad of Greenhithe, Dartford, Kent, is also at rest on the Isle of Grain, Kent, at St. James Churchyard. Where Frank is at rest contains burials of both world wars, 5 of whom are identified. There are also the graves of an unidentified airman of the Royal Air Force and an unidentified seaman of the Merchant Navy. The latter casualty is possibly either the 39 year old Master of the M.V. Innisdhu, James Walter Eldridge who was the son of Bill Eldridge and Sarah Eldridge; and he was the husband of Emmeline Elsie Eldridge of Strood, Kent, or 16 year old Boy, Harry Robert Wenborn. James Walter Eldridge and Harry Robert Wenborn are both commemorated on panel 58 of the Tower Hill Memorial, London.