

St Ninian's Episcopal Church
Castle Douglas
(SC011079)



**REMEMBERED WITH
HONOUR**
1914 - 1918 1939 - 1945

**A MEMOIR OF THOSE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION WHO
LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE WORLD WARS OF THE TWENTIETH
CENTURY**

PREFACE

When I first attended St Ninian's, I was surprised to find five of the Grave Crosses that originally marked the burial place of soldiers killed, or who had died of wounds, on the Western Front in the Great War 1914-18. Their names, together with others associated with the Church, and who also died in the War, are recorded on the War Memorial to be seen on the Screen in the Chancel.

As I thought about these men, I felt I would like to know more about them, their backgrounds and Military Service, before they made the supreme sacrifice – and so my research began and these men became people and not just names on a memorial.

When commencing the research, as a newcomer to the area, I had to ask many questions of all sorts of people as to where I would find local information, or who would know of the families of the men etc. I am grateful to them all, and I acknowledge as many as I can remember at the end of this article.

With over 80 years having passed since the First War ended, it is inevitable that memories have faded, records have been lost, families have moved away or died out, and therefore gaps in information have had to be accepted, particularly as several of the soldiers' families did not come from this area.

Having completed the names for 1914-18, I thought it was appropriate to include those who gave their lives in the Second World War 1939-45, although they have as yet no Memorial in the Church.

One of the problems of any research is when to stop! It is so easy to become sidetracked into interesting areas that have no real significance to the story, but I hope that this is not too obvious in what follows.

The research has not been totally of a serious nature: for example, we have a Sgt J Stewart, KOSB, on our Memorial; the Town Memorial lists two, one James one John. Both had served in the Regular Army; both in South Africa; both married and lived in Castle Douglas; both died on the Western Front. Which was ours? The answer was found after long searching when the Kirk War Memorial recorded a Sergeant JAMES Stewart – so we had JOHN!

I hope that the following brief account will be of interest to both Church members and visitors, and a fitting memorial to them all.

“LEST WE FORGET”

***L J Scarborough
November 2000***



A view of St Ninian's Sanctuary, showing the War Memorial panelling

THE WAR MEMORIAL

At the end of the Great War in 1918, about 750,000 British men had been killed or had died of wounds, and almost every family in the land had suffered loss. This led to a great need for Memorials to be raised, resulting in the majority of cities, towns and villages raising a central or district War Memorial, with many churches of each denomination remembering their own losses. The memorials took various forms including small hospitals, or wards of hospitals, sports pavilions, playing fields, etc. It is estimated that 50 to 60 thousand memorials were raised for the 1914-18 War.

Castle Douglas followed the general pattern, with a Town Memorial being erected listing all the men from the town who were lost, and each church installing its own memorial, including St Ninian's. The local school in Cotton Street (now the Community Centre) raised a memorial to all from the school who had served, and this remains in position.

The War Memorial in St Ninian's consists of the oak screening in the Chancel and Sanctuary – incorporating the names of soldiers associated with the Church and who died in the 1914-18 War.



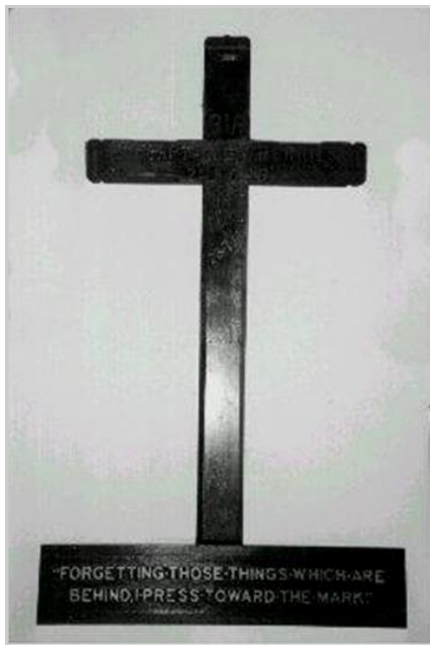
It had always been the intention to install screening and, in 1920, a design was obtained by the Vestry, from Mr C E Bateman FRIBA of Birmingham. The Rector at that time, the Revd C W Baines MA DSO, who had been an Assistant Chaplain General in the War, offered to pay for the screening in memory of his son who had been killed in the War. Following discussion the Vestry, at the suggestion of Mr C Phillips, who had also lost a son, decided that the screening should become the Church War Memorial incorporating all members who had died in the War.

The design was amended to include the names and regimental badges and a suitable inscription. The carving was undertaken by the Kings Heath Carvers Guild, of Birmingham, and the installation by a Mr Phillips of Liverpool, at a cost of £190. The Revd Baines subscribed £100 of this figure.

The War Memorial was unveiled and dedicated by the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, the Rt Revd A E Campbell in January 1921.

THE WOODEN GRAVE CROSSES

The War Graves Commission consolidated and landscaped the thousands of War Cemeteries scattered throughout the battlefields of the Western Front into a standard pattern which included a Cross of Sacrifice. Each grave was provided with an engraved headstone.



*The Grave Cross of Captain Alick Herries
in St Ninian's (see also back cover)*

Many graves had been marked by a wooden cross at the time of burial, either by soldiers of the dead man's unit, or by burial parties established for this purpose (Grave Registration Units). With the installation of the new headstones the wooden crosses were removed and made available to families.

Why St Ninian's should have five of these original wooden crosses is not known but it is possibly due to the Revd Baines, the Rector at this time, having been a Senior Chaplain on the Western Front (and who incidentally was awarded a Distinguished Service Order and three Mentions in Dispatches for his work).

The original request to install a cross was made to the Vestry in April 1920 by Mrs Wedderburn-Maxwell, whose son had been killed in the War.

NORTH WALL

- No1: 2nd. Lt D M G FERGUSON, KOSB
- No2: Capt. F J L JOHNSTONE, MC KRRC.
- No3: 2nd Lt J WEDDERBURN-MAXWELL, KOSB

SOUTH WALL

- No4: Capt M A PHILLIPS, RFA
- No5: Capt A D YOUNG-HERRIES, KOSB

JOHN STEWART
SERGEANT 15199
7/8th Bn Kings Own Scottish Borderers
Died: Wednesday 9th August 1916, aged 30

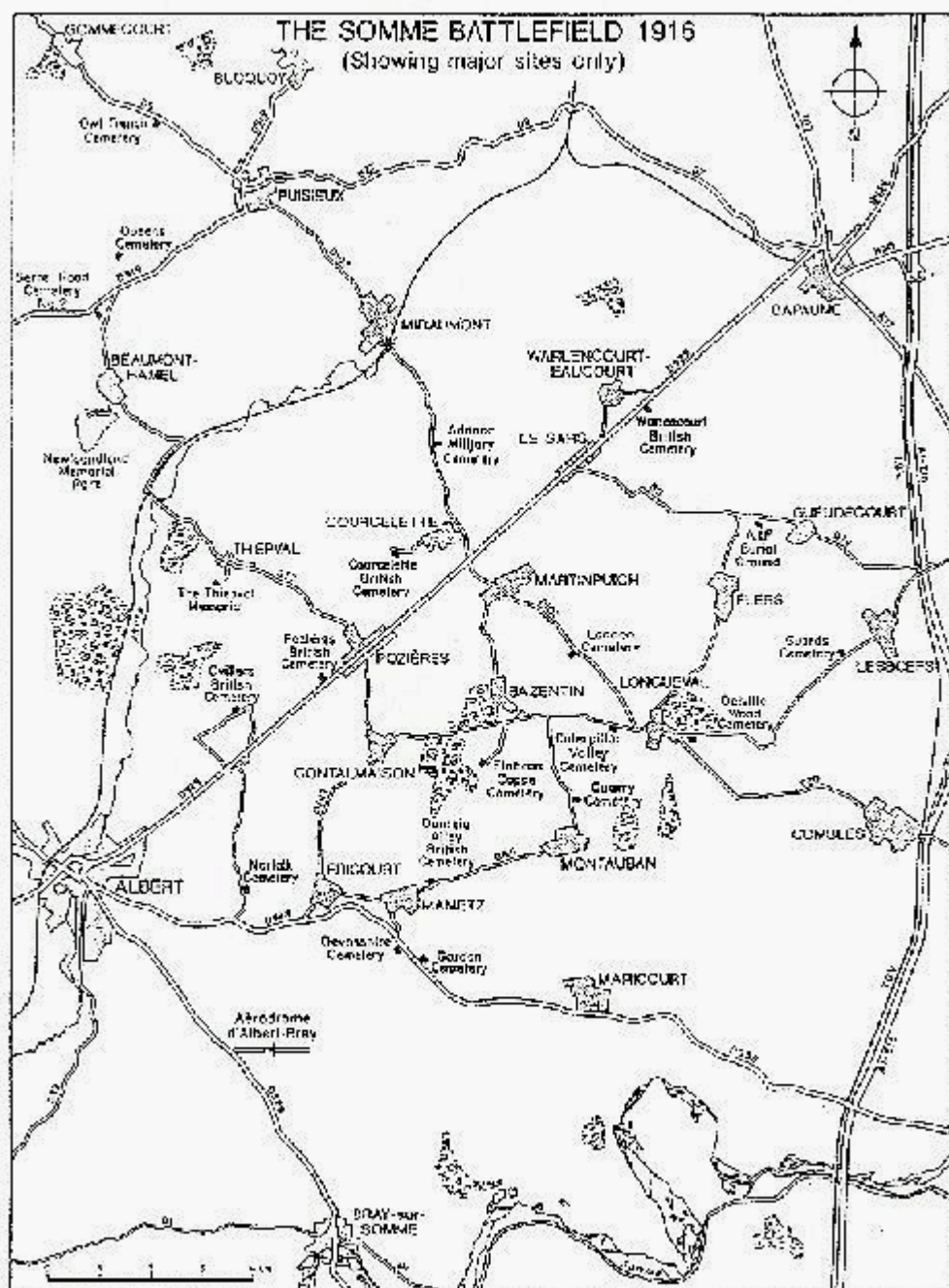
Son of Alexander and Ann Stewart of Borgue; husband of Ellen Stewart of 63 Cotton Street, Castle Douglas. Had been a Regular soldier before the War, serving in India, Egypt and South Africa, for which service he was awarded the King's Medal with two clasps. Re-enlisted September 1914 into 7/8th Bn KOSB.

The Battalion was serving on the Ypres Salient in 1915, and Sergeant Stewart sustained a wound in the head at Loos, on 20th August 1915. He remained in hospital until mid-November when, after being discharged, he had to be re-admitted one week later with a recurrence of his problems. He finally made a full recovery and returned to his unit early in 1916.

The Battalion fought in the Battle of the Somme, 1916, in the area around the village of Contalmaison, about 6km from Albert, to the north east. Heavy fighting continued from the initial attack of 1st July until the village was finally taken on 10th July by the 8th/9th. Bns Yorkshire Regiment. Severe fighting continued with little or no further gains being made, but with continuing severe casualties. On 6th August Sergeant Stewart was again wounded and taken to a Field Dressing Station where he died three days later. He lies buried in Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery, with about 300 of his comrades (plot II.A.25).

The local press report of Sergeant Stewart's death refers to a letter received by his wife, from a cousin serving in the same Battalion, Private A Peacock, saying that a wooden cross was made by his comrades and placed over his burial place. His Commanding Officer also wrote and stated that he was a NCO highly respected by all the Battalion Officers.

Sergeant Stewart is commemorated on Castle Douglas Town War Memorial and also on St Ninian's War Memorial.



**WILLIAM A ANDERSON
PRIVATE 5922
2nd Bn Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment)
Formerly PRIVATE 57753
Highland Light Infantry
Died: 2nd May 1918, aged 18 years 7 months**

Eldest son of Regimental Sergeant Major W J and Mrs Anderson of Castle Douglas. His father, formerly of the 2/5th Kings Own Scottish Borderers, and Highland Light Infantry, was RSM of the Stewartry Volunteer Battalion KOSB.

Private Anderson had joined the HLI when under age, and was discharged when his true age was discovered. He was at one time a miner at Allanton Colliery, Hamilton but, prior to enlisting in the Royal Scots, worked for Mr R Haugh, car hirer, Castle Douglas.

Private Anderson enlisted in the Royal Scots as soon as he reached 18 years in September 1917 and, following training, arrived in France at the end of March 1918. He was killed on 2nd May 1918.

By early 1918, the German Army in the West had been reinforced by divisions no longer required on the Eastern Front, following the collapse of Russia. This allowed the Germans to mount one last major offensive along the whole of the Western Front, in an effort to break the Allies before the American reinforcements became too great.

The attack began on 21st March, with what became known as the 2nd Battle of the Somme, followed by the Battle of the Lys in April. In both battles the Germans made significant gains and inflicted serious Allied casualties, but in the end they could not sustain the attack and later were forced into their final retreat.

In this period, the Allied losses totalled 28,000 killed and the Germans 57,000, with 181,000 and 252,000 wounded, respectively. Over 290,000 Allied troops were taken prisoner.

Private Anderson was killed at the very end of the Battle of the Lys. His body was never found, and he is remembered, alongside a further 20,000 soldiers who fell in the area of Loos from 1915 to 1918, on the Loos Memorial To The Missing (Panel 10 – 13). The Memorial forms the side and back of Dud Corner Cemetery, where over 1700 officers and men are buried.

Private Anderson is remembered on Castle Douglas Town Memorial and St. Ninian's War Memorial.

FREDERICK JOHN LAWRIE JOHNSTONE
CAPTAIN, MC
2nd Bn Kings Royal Rifle Corp
Died: Tuesday 29th August 1916, aged 21

Only son of Mr and Mrs Lawrie Johnstone of Gelston Castle, later of Drumpark, Irongray. Born 6th January 1895; educated at Eton where he distinguished himself in sports; member of Eton cricket team and football team; an expert angler and a very good shot. Went directly from Eton into Sandhurst, and was gazetted 2nd Lt, 2nd Bn KRRC, 11th November 1914. Promoted Lt, 22nd December 1915, and Temporary Captain, 7th October 1915.

Went to France in January 1915, and took part in various battles on the Ypres Salient, including Neuve Chapelle, 10-13th March 1915 – a battle fought to relieve the French at Arras. Following initial success, failure of communication together with shortage of ammunition, resulted in all gains being lost.

Later came the 2nd Battle of Ypres, 22nd April to 25th May 1915, plus months of trench warfare throughout the sector. In 1916, after the initial fighting in the Battle of the Somme, the 2nd Battalion joined in the fighting and in August 1916 took part in severe fighting around Delville and High Wood.

Captain Johnstone was wounded at High Wood and, following initial Field Dressing Station treatment, was moved to the Military Hospital in Abbeville where he died on 29th August 1916. He was buried in Abbeville Community Cemetery (Plot VI.A18) together with almost 800 British casualties. His original wooden Grave Cross is now in St Ninian's (South Wall No5).

Captain Johnstone was awarded the Military Cross (date unknown) "... for conspicuous gallantry in action. During heavy fighting he assumed command of two other Companies as well as his own, organised a successful counter attack, kept up the supply of ammunition and bombs, and did fine work generally."

Captain Johnstone is remembered on Gelston and District War Memorial, and St Ninian's War Memorial.

ALEXANDER DOBREE YOUNG-HERRIES

CAPTAIN

2nd Bn Kings Own Scottish Borderers

Died: Sunday 23rd July 1916, aged 24

Son of Lt Col William Young-Herries (KOSB) and his first wife, Bethia Marion, who died only a month after her son's birth, of Spottes, Haugh of Urr. The Herries family have been a force in local and national history for centuries. Col Young--Herries was for many years Secretary of the Vestry, and his father, Mr William Young-Herries, was an original Trustee of St. Ninian's.

'Alick' was educated at Eton and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, (BA Hons 1913) serving in the OTC Units at both places. He was prominent in the Boy Scout movement, in rowing circles, and was known as a devout churchman. While still at Cambridge, he was commissioned as a Reserve Officer, 6th December 1913 into 3rd Bn KOSB (the Regiment's training Battalion, of which his father became Commanding Officer) and on mobilisation in August 1914 was posted to the 2nd Bn.



The 2nd Bn was part of 13th Infantry Brigade, 5th Division of the British Expeditionary Force ('The Old Contemptibles'). It was involved in the opening shots of the war, on 20th August 1914, and saw service throughout. Alick Herries arrived on 16th September when, after an initial push towards the River Marne, the Germans were being forced back to the River Aisne. Neither side having gained a strategic advantage, the long stalemate of trench warfare in the Ypres Salient began.

In the winter of 1914, Lt Herries, with many others, fell victim to trench fever. He had to return to the UK, and was not passed fit for front-line service until the end of April 1915. He returned in time for the actions around Hill 60 and Sanctuary Wood and in the course of 1915 was promoted Captain. In January 1916, he was sent as Second-in-Command of the newly-formed 6th Bn, before returning to the 2nd (as Second-in-Command) at the end of March.

The KOSB had become part of the vast army assembled for the July 1st assault that became known as the Battle of the Somme. For many weeks the action was fierce, the casualties horrendous, the outcome indecisive. On July 23rd, after a failed attack on High Wood, Longueval, Captain Herries was collecting his scattered company when he was killed by a "whizbang" shell. He was buried in Dantzig Alley British Cemetery (Plot I A6), Mametz, about 8km from Albert.

His wooden Grave Cross, embellished with his favourite text, "Forgetting those things which are behind, I press towards the mark" (Philippians 3.13), is now in St Ninian's. He is remembered on Haugh of Urr War Memorial and by a memorial window in Urr Parish Church. The then Minister of Urr, Dr David Frew, wrote his biography, "A Young Borderer", which is still available in Castle Douglas Library.

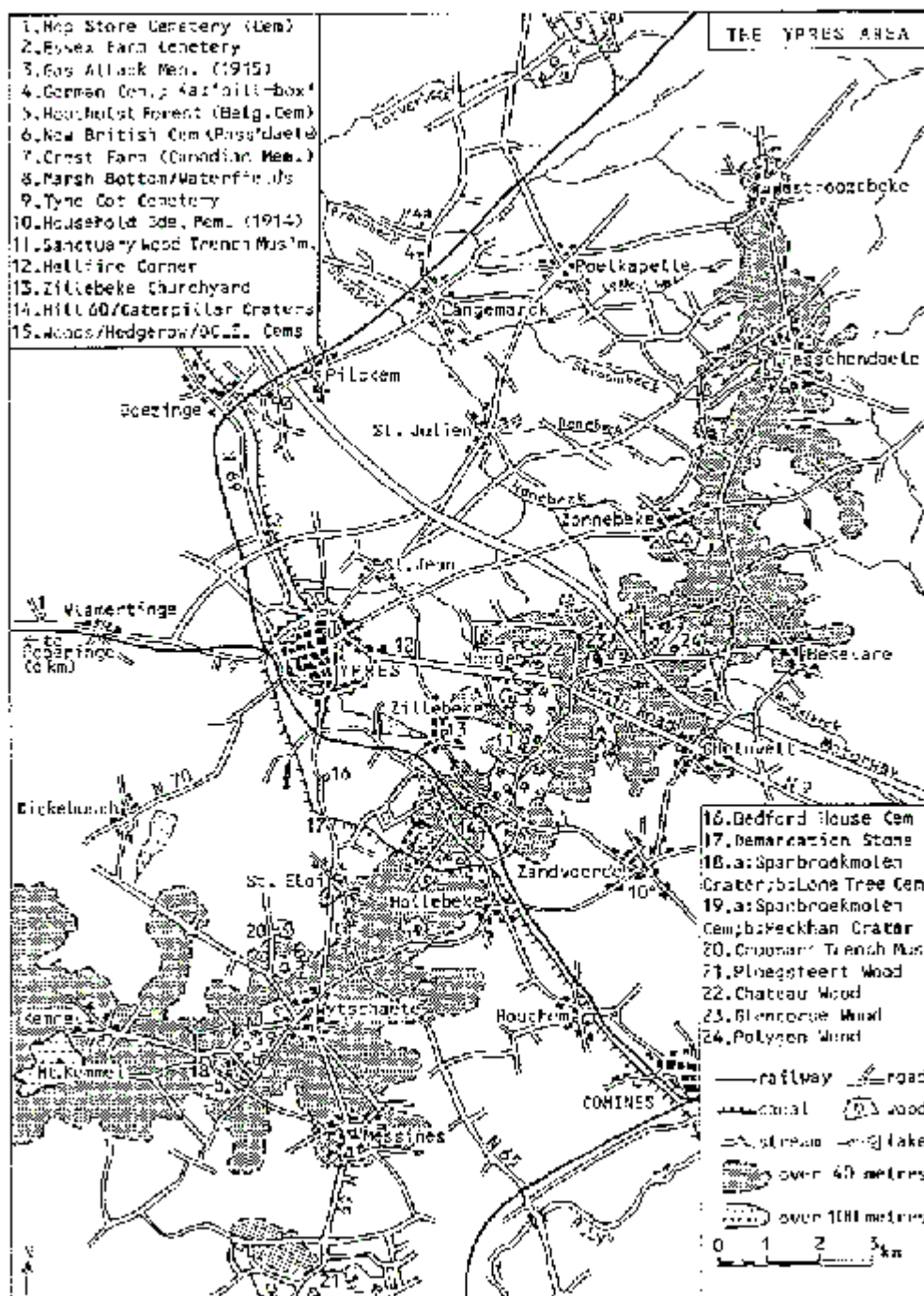
DUNCAN McINTYRE GRANT FERGUSON
LIEUTENANT
3rd Bn Kings Own Scottish Borderers
(Attached to 2nd Bn)
Died: Friday 14th May 1915, aged 21

Son of the Revd John Grant Ferguson of Innerleithen and Lily M Grant Ferguson of Edinburgh. Little is known of the family other than it had long-established business interests in Edinburgh. Prior to the outbreak of the War, Mr Ferguson was studying agriculture at Lochdougan Farm, Castle Douglas and, according to the local paper's report of his death, was well known in the district. He was a member or adherent of St Ninian's. When he enlisted is not known but it is assumed that he joined with many other young men of the district in August 1914 or perhaps before that date, as the 3rd Bn was the Regimental training battalion.

The Second Battle of Ypres opened on 14th April 1915, with a month-long German bombardment that almost-destroyed Ypres town. On 22nd April, the first German gas attack caused serious casualties to the 3rd Canadian Brigade but, despite this, they held their line at St. Julian, although the French fell back. On 24th April, the Germans took St Julian and on 25th April came the main German thrust against the British line, with heavy fighting and severe casualties on both sides. This continued until 25th May.

Lt Ferguson was wounded with two fellow officers on 5th May 1915 at Hill 60, near St Julian. He was later removed to one of the Hospitals in Boulogne, where he died on 14th May. He lies buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery (Grave II.B.45) which stands on the road to St Omer, together with almost 6,000 other 1914-18 war casualties. Lt Ferguson's original War Cross is now in St Ninian's, and to it has been added a Plaque of Remembrance similar to that of Captain Young-Herries (No 1 North Wall).

Lt Ferguson does not appear on any local War Memorial other than St Ninian's, and he does not appear in the Stewartry Roll of Honour.



JAMES WEDDERBURN-MAXWELL
2nd LIEUTENANT
3rd/6th Bn Kings Own Scottish Borderers
Died: Tuesday 1st October 1918

Youngest son of Mrs Helen Wedderburn-Maxwell, of Glenlair, Parton and the late Major James Andrew Wedderburn-Maxwell, (Bengal Staff Corp). Educated at Charterhouse, he passed for Sandhurst in 1916, but was disqualified medically. Joined Edinburgh University OTC, followed by the 9th Cadet Bn KOSB, from which he was commissioned on 2nd March 1918 into the 3rd Reserve Battalion KOSB, then transferred to the 6th Battalion.

Following the last German attack and advance of the War in July 1918, a counter-attack was initiated almost immediately by the Allies into what was to become the final assault along the whole of the Western Front – ending with the Armistice of November 1918. The initial force of the counter-attack was made on the Somme front and the Southern Area where the American Army was gathered in strength.

On the Ypres Salient, a holding operation had been maintained to keep pressure on the German Front and prevent any movement of troops to the South. On 29th September, a frontal attack by the 9th Scottish and other divisions captured the Passchendaele Ridge, which the Germans had held throughout the War, opening up ground to the East across the Flanders Plain and leaving behind them the graveyard of nearly half a million men.

2nd Lt Maxwell, serving with the 6th Bn KOSB, was wounded near the village of Ledghem on 29th September 1918 and died on 1st October. He was originally buried in Townsend Farm Cemetery, Ledghem. After the Armistice a new cemetery was created, Dadizelle New British Cemetery, into which the bodies from surrounding cemeteries were transferred, including 2nd Lt Maxwell, who is interred in Plot VD 4, together with over 1000 comrades.

The original wooden Grave Cross is now in St Ninian's (No 2 North Wall) and he is remembered on both Parton and Corsock Village War Memorials as well as St Ninian's War Memorial.

His two elder brothers served in the Royal Field Artillery and survived the War. The eldest, Captain John, fought throughout the War, was awarded the Military Cross and three times was Mentioned in Dispatches; Captain Henry, who served from 1916, was awarded a Mention in Dispatches.

MAURICE ALDCROFT PHILLIPS
CAPTAIN
31st Bty Royal Field Artillery
Died: Friday 21st May 1915, aged 29

Son of Charles and Constance Phillips of Dildawn, Castle Douglas. Educated at Malvern and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, from where he was commissioned, 20th December 1905 into the Royal Horse Artillery, later transferring to the Royal Field Artillery. Served in Ireland, and promoted Captain, 30th October 1914. Well known in local hunting and fishing circles. His father was for many years a member of St Ninian's Vestry, and was Second in Command, Stewartry Volunteer Battalion KOSB, as a Captain, during the War.

The 31st Battery, with the 35th & 55th, formed XXXVII (Howitzer) Brigade RFA, which, as part of the 4th Division of the British Expeditionary Force, arrived at Le Cateau on 24th August 1914, just as the Battle of Mons was ending in the retreat to the Marne. The Brigade served throughout the retreat and subsequent advance back to the Aisne, then into what became known as the First Battle of Ypres.

On 14th April 1915 the Second Battle of Ypres began with a fierce and prolonged German bombardment. On the night of the 20th May 1915, Captain Phillips was sent by the Brigade Commander into the front line trenches, together with two other officers (one from each of the 31st & 35th Batteries) to control and direct the Battery fire in support of the attack and ultimate capture of the orchard at Quinque, Festubert. When the attack was over, early in the morning of 21st May, Captain Phillips was sleeping when a shell burst killed him. After dark that night, his body was brought to the rear of the line, where he was buried in a small cemetery at about 9.30pm, the service being conducted by the Brigade Padre and attended by many officers and men of the Brigade, despite the fighting that was still going on around.

His body was later removed to Le Touret Military Cemetery, Richebourg-L'Avoüe. This cemetery was begun by the Indian Corps in November 1914 and was used



continuously thereafter. There are now over 900 war graves in the Cemetery which also contains a Memorial to the Missing, commemorating over 13,000 men who fell in the area before September 1915, and who have no known grave. (See photograph). Captain Phillips lies in grave II.D.15.

He is commemorated on Rhonehouse Village War Memorial, which is to be found in the Village Hall. His original wooden Grave Cross is in St Ninian's (No.3 North Wall).

**MINDEN CHARLES CARDIGAN PINCHING, DSO.
MAJOR
2nd Dragoon Guards (The Queen's Bays)
Died: Friday 20th April 1917, aged 35**

Son of Capt Adam Pinching (Lancashire Fusiliers) and Elizabeth Gladstone Pinching; husband of Evelyn P Pinching. Born at Balcary, Auchencairn, later of the Mansion House, Barcaple, in the Parish of Tongland. Was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant, 2nd Dragoon Guards, one of the most Senior Cavalry Regiments in the British Army. (The Regiment was originally raised in 1685 by Colonel Peterborough, as the 3rd Regiment of Horse, in order to deal with the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth against James II.) He accompanied the Regiment to South Africa where it served in 1901-1902, Lt Pinching being awarded the King's Medal with five clasps.



Officers of The Queen's Bays in 1915. Major Pinching is 2nd right, front row.

The Regiment formed part of the original BEF within the 1st Cavalry Brigade, and first saw action at Mons on the 23rd August 1914. Having taken part in the First Battle of the Marne (5-10th September) Captain Pinching was wounded on 12th September, but not seriously, and soon returned to his duties. He was promoted to Major, 1st November 1914. The Regiment continued to be involved in the fighting on the Ypres Salient throughout the remainder of 1914 and 1915, both in a Cavalry role and also fighting in the trenches as infantry. On 14th January 1916, the London Gazette announced the award of both the Distinguished Service Order and a Mention in Despatches for gallantry in the field to Major Pinching.

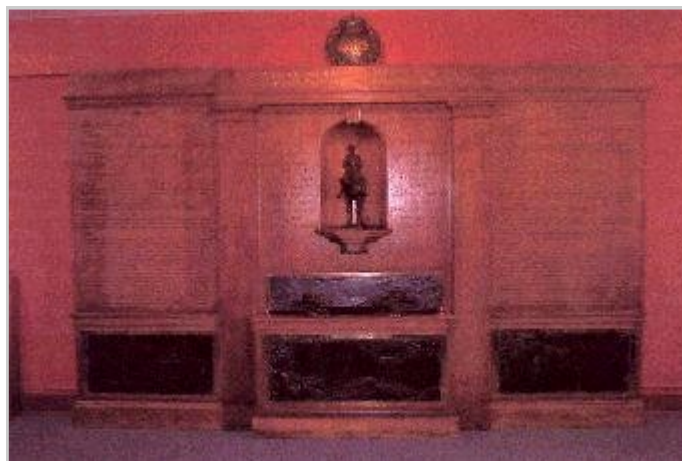
As preparations were made in the summer of 1916 for a major Allied offensive on the Somme, the Cavalry Regiments reverted to their true role and formed into three Cavalry Divisions, with the task of creating a breakthrough once the initial infantry and artillery attacks had broken the German resistance. It did not happen; the attack of 1st July was a failure and the fighting once again degenerated into the bloody stalemate of trench warfare.

On 15th September 1916, the Guards Division mounted an attack to seize Ginchy, Flers, etc, with the Cavalry again poised for a breakthrough. Major Pinching was seriously wounded during this action but refused to leave his post and would not accept treatment until obliged to do so. He was later transferred to a London hospital, where he died of his wounds on Friday 20th April 1917. He was buried in a Military Grave, in the Churchyard of All Saints Church, Tilford, Surrey, his wife's home village. (The grave is to the south-west of the Church.)

A Memorial to the Soldiers of the Regiment who died in the War, was unveiled at Colchester Barracks, Essex, on 17th July 1927. It was constructed so that it could be moved as the Regiment moved over the years. In the late 1950s, the Memorial was reconstructed to incorporate those who had died in the Second World War. In 1959, the 1st King's Dragoon Guards and the 2nd Dragoon Guards (The Queen's Bays) amalgamated into the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards and eventually moved to Catterick Garrison, Yorkshire. The Memorial moved with the new Regiment and was again reconstructed to show not only the dead of both Wars but also The Bays' Battle Honours up to amalgamation. Metal sections showing maps of the areas of conflict and including cast model tanks were incorporated. As the most senior officer to have been killed in the First World War, Major Pinching's name heads the list.

Major Pinching does not appear on any local War Memorial other than St Ninian's but he is recorded in the Stewartry Roll of Honour.

Major Pinching was, in addition to the DSO, awarded the French Croix de Guerre, for his services and for gallantry, on 1st May 1917. All of his decorations were presented by his daughter in 1966 to the Regimental Museum, Cardiff Castle, where they are on permanent display.



The Queen's Bays Memorial, Catterick

VICTOR MURRAY CUBITT
LIEUTENANT
5th Bn Norfolk Regiment
Died: Thursday 12th August 1915, aged 27

Second son of Mr E G Cubitt, JP and Mrs Christabel Cubitt, of Honing Hall, North Walsham, Norfolk, the family home (as it remains today) for over 200 years. Born 15th October 1887, educated at Lowestoft and Repton. By profession was a land agent and for some years was Secretary of the Scottish Branch of the Land Agents' Society; he acted for several considerable Scottish Estates. Prior to the outbreak of the War, he was agent for Captain Murray Dunlop of Corsock House and his name is recorded both on the Corsock Village War Memorial and at St Ninian's. He was a keen antiquarian, with a wide knowledge of several branches of that science. *(Taken from the British Roll of Honour).*

At the beginning of the War, he was appointed 2nd Lt 1/5th Territorial Battalion, Norfolk Regiment, at Colchester, Essex, 9th September 1914, joining both his elder brother, Captain Edward R Cubitt and younger brother, Captain Eustace H Cubitt.

The Gallipoli Campaign of 1915 completely failed in its objectives, ending with the withdrawal of all Allied forces from Helles on 8/9th January 1916. In the nine months of this bitterly fought campaign, more than 36,000 Commonwealth servicemen died. The 32 War Cemeteries on the Peninsula contain 22,000 graves, but it was possible to identify only 9,000 of the bodies. The 13,000 who rest in unidentified graves, together with 14,000 whose remains were never found, are commemorated individually on the Helles Memorial (British, Australian and Indian names). Other Australian, and New Zealand names are to be found on four other Memorials.

A landing commenced on 6th August 1915 at Suvla Bay and the 5th Bn Norfolk Regiment, on arrival from the UK, landed at about 5.00pm on 10th August. Lt Cubitt was a member of "B" Company on the left of the Norfolk line, which was on the extreme right flank of the 10th Division. On the afternoon of the 12th August, the Regiment advanced across Suvla Plain, and Lt. Cubitt was never seen again – nor was his elder brother, Edward. The younger brother, Eustace, survived Gallipoli, but was killed at Gaza, Palestine, in April 1917. *(Note: the date of death on the Memorial in Honing Church is wrong.)*

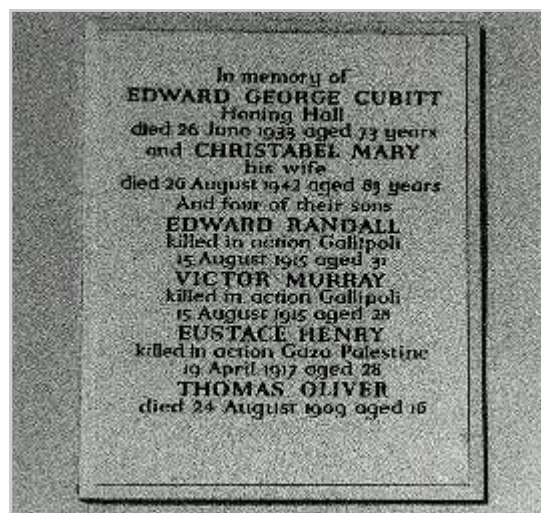
Lt Cubitt and his brother are remembered on the Helles Memorial, (Panel 42-44). The Memorial, in the form of an obelisk, over 30 metres high, located on the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula, is also inscribed with the names of all the ships, army formations and units that took part in the campaign.

The youngest son of the family, Reginald, in the early 1930s became Colonel of this same Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment in which his three brothers had served and given their lives.

Helles War Memorial



Victor Murray Cubitt



Cubitt Family Memorial, Honing Church, Norfolk

THOMAS MUSGRAVE
LIEUTENANT
1st Bn Irish Guards
Died: Saturday, 6th February 1915, aged 25

Born 23rd August 1889 in Montevideo, the son of Captain Arthur Musgrave, RN and Louisa Elizabeth Innes Musgrave, eldest daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Ker of Argrennan, Castle Douglas. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, he became a Probationer Officer in the Irish Guards, 3rd August 1910, until 31st July 1912 when he was gazetted as 2nd Lieutenant. He resigned his commission on 9th July 1913. His parents died in his early years (his mother when he was 17) and he went to live with his grandmother at Argrennan House.

He rejoined the Regiment on 9th September 1914 joining the 1st Bn on 4th January 1915 in Belgium. Following his death on 18th February, his grandmother requested permission of St Ninian's to erect a mural to his memory which was granted, but she died in July 1915 before this could be implemented. The family grave, including his mother and grandparents, and a recording of his death, is in Tongland Cemetery. His father's resting place is not known.

The Battalion, which had been part of the original Expeditionary Force, was posted on the Ypres Salient and, on 3rd January 1915, was relieved in the trenches by the Kings Royal Rifles. They got to billets near Vieille Chapelle late that night, where Lt Musgrave joined them on 4th January. The next days were spent cleaning up and generally recovering from ten days in the waterlogged mud of the trenches. On the 8th they took over trenches from the Worcesters in pouring rain. In the communication trench, seven men got stuck in the mud; one was not extricated for six hours! On the 9th the water averaged three feet in the trenches and rising; it was decided to leave a few stray posts and withdraw the others to the ruined village of Richebourg l'Avoue. Luckily the Germans had the same problem. On 15th January the 4th Guards Brigade was relieved by the Highland Light Infantry and the Battalion went into reserve billets at Locon.

The remainder of the month was spent in reserve until the 30th, when the Battalion moved out via Bethune to Cuinchy, an area of brick stacks that at one time were up to 30ft high, and which became an area of intense activity. On the afternoon of 6th February, two assaulting parties of 30 men each, from Nos 3-1 Companies, under Lieutenants Musgrave and Ralli, opened the attack on five of the eight brick stacks. Lt Musgrave, ahead of his men, was shot by a group of five Germans, who were killed a moment later when the men came up. *(The above was extracted from the History of the 1st Battalion, Irish Guards, by Rudyard Kipling).*

Lt Musgrave was buried in Cuinchy Communal Cemetery (Grave II.B33) about ten kilometres east of Bethune. Cuinchy remained, during the whole of the war, within the range of German guns and the cemetery was tended by fighting units and Field Ambulances. There are over one hundred 1914-18 graves on this site. Lt Musgrave is

also commemorated on Ringford Village War Memorial, St Ninian's War Memorial and the Guards Memorial, London. He was awarded a posthumous Mention in Dispatches, 22nd June 1915.



Thomas Musgrave

*The War
in
Mesopotamia*



ARTHUR EDWARD CARROW BAINES
CAPTAIN
Lincolnshire Regiment, attached Royal Welsh Fusiliers
Died: Sunday 9th April 1916, aged 23 years

Son of the Revd C F Baines MA DSO, Assistant Chaplain General 1914-1918, and Rector of St Ninian's, 1916-1922. Captain Baines joined the Regular Army in 1912, being commissioned in January 1913 into the 1st Lincolnshire Regiment. Captain Baines was not a resident of Castle Douglas, or a member of St Ninian's having died prior to his father's appointment as Rector.

At the outbreak of War in August 1914, the Regiment joined the 9th Brigade of the 3rd Division as part of the BEF, which was in position on the Canal at Mons on 20th August for the opening of the first British Battle of the War. The Regiment subsequently fought the retreat to the Marne, and the attack back to the Aisne through to the 1st Battle of Ypres, by which time they had suffered many casualties. Lt (as he then was) Baines was wounded during this battle.

On his recovery, Lt Baines transferred to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, shipping first to Egypt, then to Mesopotamia as part of Expeditionary Force D, which pushed up the River Tigris and by land towards Baghdad, in November 1915. General Townsend decided to fall back on Kut-el-Amara, which he reached on 3rd December and to which the Turks laid siege for five months. During this period, several attempts to relieve the town were made – all without success – and the 10,000 British were forced to surrender on 29th April 1916, of whom 6,000 were to die through beatings, murder or through being herded across the desert.

Captain Baines was killed at Sannaiyat, just South of Kut, on 9th April 1916, in one of the many failed attempts at relief; he was one of 92,500 Empire casualties in Mesopotamia. Captain Baines has no known grave and his name is recorded on the Basra Memorial (Panel 15), alongside 40,000, British, Indian and West African dead. The Memorial was originally sited within Basra War Cemetery but, in 1997, the Memorial was moved by Presidential decree. The move, carried out by the Iraqi authorities, involved considerable manpower, transport costs and sheer engineering on their part, and the Memorial has been re-erected in its entirety. The Basra Memorial is now located 32 kilometres along the road to Nasiriyah, in the middle of what was a major battlefield during the Gulf War. It consists of a roofed colonnade 80 metres long, with an obelisk 16 metres high as the central feature.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-45

This War, with its use of mobile armies and large air forces resulted in massive civilian casualties, in addition to military casualties, and the destruction of very large areas of Europe and Asia. Casualty totals are unknown, but the common estimate of 55 million worldwide is not disputed. British military dead totalled 305,000, of which some 80,000 were RAF, mainly aircrew – compared with approximately 750,000, the majority Army, in the 1914-18 War.

With the end of the War in August 1945, the country was exhausted and bankrupt: thousands of homes had been destroyed or damaged and large areas of towns, cities and industrial areas were flattened. There was no sense of urgency to erect new Memorials as there had been in 1918.

In time the names of the dead were added to 1914-18 Memorials and gradually many new Memorials were erected. The 50th Anniversary of the end of the War created an upsurge of interest, and many new Memorials, to commemorate particular actions, units or people, have been and are continuing to be erected.

The only Second World War Memorial in St Ninian's is the family memorial of the Gifford family, incorporating Squadron Leader Patrick Gifford, DFC, RAF. It was only by chance that I was told of two other Church members who had lost their lives in the War, and whose names have been passed to each succeeding Rector by Mrs Jean Turnbull, to ensure that they are remembered each year.

Details of each man are attached, and it is hoped that an appropriate Memorial will be erected in the Church in the near future (see below).



Note: The above memorial to these men was subsequently installed in the Chancel

**GEORGE OVENS
THIRD ENGINEER OFFICER
Merchant Navy SS “Empire Leopard”
Lost at sea: Monday 2nd November 1942, aged 28**

The only son of Mr and Mrs George Ovens of Barncrosh, Castle Douglas. Educated at Kirkcudbright Academy, he was employed in the civil engineering industry in Dumfries, Glasgow and Newcastle, where he met his wife. Prior to joining the Merchant Service in the summer of 1941, he was employed at ICI, Dumfries. Only three months after his death, his son, also George, aged three, was tragically killed falling from a railway carriage while returning with his mother to Dumfries from Newcastle.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Britain's merchant fleet was the largest in the world, but very soon the German U-boat packs were causing tremendous losses, especially in the North Atlantic – ships were being sunk faster than replacements could be built. The crisis peaked in 1942, when the Atlantic convoys lost 1170 ships totalling 6,150,000 tons. It was during this period that Mr Ovens served, travelling to many different countries.

At the end of October 1942, the SS “Empire Leopard” joined a convoy being formed at New York for the UK. The convoy sailed north via Newfoundland towards Greenland in the hope of avoiding the U-boats that haunted the direct Atlantic routes. This tactic failed, and the “Empire Leopard” was torpedoed off southern Greenland on 2nd November. Only three survivors were picked up from the bitterly cold seas.

Mr Ovens is commemorated on the Merchant Navy Memorial situated on Tower Hill, London. The Memorial was originally erected in memory of the 12,500 Merchant casualties of the Great War. It consists of a vaulted corridor 21.5 metres long, 7 metres wide and 7-10 metres high. The victims' names are carried on bronze panels. When the time came to acknowledge the 1939-45 casualties, a semi-circular sunken garden was added, providing sufficient wall area to record the 24,000 names of those from the Merchant Navy and fishing fleet who have no grave but the sea. The names are in alphabetical order under their ship's name.



George Ovens



Patrick Gifford

SQUADRON LEADER
Royal Auxiliary Air Force
Died: Tuesday 16th May 1940, aged 30

Only son of Mr and Mrs Patrick Gifford of Forneth, Castle Douglas. Educated at Melrose, Sedburgh and Edinburgh University. Qualifying as a solicitor and serving an apprenticeship in Edinburgh, he entered into partnership with his father, becoming in due time Procurator Fiscal for Castle Douglas. He was also Depute Clerk of the Peace, Secretary of the local NFU and Chamber of Agriculture, and also of Castle Douglas Hospital Board of Management. He was a member of the Town Council for a short period.

Well known in the area as an all-round sportsman, involved locally in tennis, cricket and rugby, he was also an expert skier and rifle shot. He was equally well known for driving high speed sports cars between Castle Douglas and Edinburgh. He joined the Royal Auxiliary Air Force in 1931, qualifying as a pilot and serving in 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron. He had two sisters and was unmarried.

603 Squadron was a light bomber squadron when formed in 1925 but changed in 1938 into a fighter squadron, equipped with Gloster Gladiator Biplanes. In the summer of 1939, the Squadron re-equipped with Spitfire I fighters and was working up when war was declared in September 1939. At this time, Flight Lieutenant Gifford was a Flight Commander carrying out patrols from the airfield at Turnhouse over the approaches to the Forth Estuary.

On 16th October a German formation of Heinkel III bombers approached the estuary on its return from searching for shipping at Rosyth. It had been scattered by aircraft of 602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron when one of the aircraft was attacked by Flight Lt Gifford's Section of Spitfires, and crashed into the sea about four miles offshore. Flight Lt Gifford was credited with having finally shot the aircraft down. Later in the same month, he intercepted another German bomber, engaged on reconnoitring a British convoy. Gifford gave chase with his Section and, when about 11 miles out to sea, the bomber was seen to crash into the sea. For these two exploits, Flight Lt Gifford was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on 28th November 1939.

For almost 40 years following these events, agreement could not be reached as to whether the bomber shot down by Flight Lt Gifford on 16th October, or another bomber shot down by Flight Lt (later Group Captain) Pinkerton of 602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron at almost the same time, was the first German aircraft shot down over Britain in the Second World War. The problem was one of timing and after much research over many years it was finally proven that Gifford's was the very first – but Pinkerton's the first shot down over land!

On 15th November 1939, Flight Lt Gifford was posted to 3 Squadron at RAF Hawkinge, flying Hurricane fighters and, in December, was promoted to Squadron Leader in Command, moving the Squadron to RAF Kenley in January 1940.

On 10th May 1940, the Germans invaded the Low Countries and broke through the French defences at Sedan. Nos 3 and 79 Squadrons were immediately sent to strengthen the Air Component in France. By 13th May, the situation was extremely serious, with the collapse of Holland imminent and the Allied forces being forced into retreat along the whole front. The fighter squadrons based in France were under great pressure, experiencing serious losses of both aircraft and pilots. All were becoming very exhausted through excessive flying. On 16th May 1940, Squadron Leader Gifford himself became a victim when he was shot down over Flanders and killed.

A letter, dated 1976, from the Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh, to Mr A D Millar, then a partner with Gifford, Solicitors, now Hon Sec to the Parish Church, recalls that Squadron Leader Gifford's logbook was picked up near a burning Hurricane in May 1940 by a Herr Willi Rothenburg, a member of the German Luftwaffe. He contacted the RAF in 1960, hoping that the pilot was still alive as he stated that there was no sign of the pilot with the aircraft in 1940. The logbook is now on display in the Museum. His body was never found and he is remembered on the RAF Memorial at Runnymede, Surrey, (Panel 4) and also on Castle Douglas Town War Memorial. There is a family memorial in St Ninian's.

Footnote: Aircrew were not allowed to carry their logbooks on operations, and the Squadron Leader had disregarded this standing order. It is strange that the logbook survived a burning aircraft as it would normally be carried in a tunic pocket. Was there originally a pilot or body in the aircraft when Herr Rothenburg says he found it? Did the logbook fall out when the pilot was ejecting ? We probably have to assume that either the body was never found or was hastily buried in the confusion that reigned at that time. The truth is unlikely to be established now.



Air Forces Memorial, Runnymede

Postscript

I have now been given the definitive story of what actually happened that day in October 1939, with an extract from a book written by Andrew Jeffrey based on his research of both British and German records. The following may be of interest:

On 16th October 1939, the battleship HMS Repulse (wrongly identified by the Germans as HMS Hood) was making her way up the River Forth as were the cruisers HMS Edinburgh and Southampton and an escort of three destroyers. Twelve Junker 88 bombers, commanded by Hauptmann Helmut Pohle, had been ordered to attack HMS Repulse but, as neither side wished to be the first to cause casualties, Pohle had been given a direct order from Hitler that, should Repulse have reached Rosyth, she was not to be attacked in the dockyard. Civilian targets, including the Forth Bridge, were not to be bombed.

Drone Hill radar station, near St Abbs Head, detected the first bombers at 9.20 a.m. and three Spitfires of 602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron under flight leader George Pinkerton were scrambled from RAF Drem at 9.45 and the first shells in anger were fired at 10.20am.

Technology and equipment were not of a reliable standard at this early stage of the war, and power failed at Drone Hill radar station twice that morning, with resulting loss of where the enemy were. Plotting errors also occurred, which led to fighters being sent in the opposite direction intended, and confusion also arose when a searchlight detachment at Dunbar misidentified six training aircraft as hostile!

Finding Repulse already in Rosyth dockyard, Pohle decided to attack the two cruisers lying just east of the Forth Bridge, which he did at 2.30pm. At the same time, Spitfires of 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron became airborne from RAF Turnhouse under the command of Patrick Gifford. After chasing German bombers all over the area, Patrick Gifford attacked a bomber, supported by other aircraft of his flight, and it crashed into the sea off Port Seton at 2.45pm. The crew were picked up by John Dickson and his crew of the fishing yawl, Dayspring. Gifford and his flight landed at Turnhouse at 2.55pm.

Back at Queensferry, Pohle completed his attack on the cruisers and, while he circled overhead, his second bomber attacked, when the anti-aircraft guns from Dalmary Park opened fire, having at long last been given permission to do so! This resulted in shrapnel falling in various parts of Edinburgh and the surrounding country, causing damage and casualties.

Meanwhile, George Pinkerton and his flight of Spitfires from 602 Squadron were again airborne and over Dalkeith when they received the message that enemy aircraft were over Rosyth. On arriving in the area, Pinkerton spotted Pohle's aircraft heading east over Kirkcaldy and he gave the order to pursue and attack. Pinkerton's first attack severely damaged the German aircraft, and Pohle headed away along the coast for another 12 miles, attempting to get to a German trawler placed in the North Sea for the purpose of

rescuing crashed aircrews, but he was again attacked and the aircraft crashed three miles east of Crail. It was 2.55pm.

While all this was taking place, another wave of German bombers attacked the two cruisers, damaging HMS Southampton and causing casualties.

A section of 602 Spitfires was refuelling at Leuchars when the station siren sounded. Three of the pilots were eating sandwiches on top of a shelter, watching what they thought were three RAF Blenheim bombers flying over Fife. One of them wandered over to the mess to find out what was happening, only to come running back shouting, "Get a move on! They are not Blenheims, they're ruddy Germans!!"

Rapidly taking off, they raced towards the bombers but were too late to save an attack on HMS Mohawk, in which three officers and 13 ratings were killed. The Commanding Officer was seriously wounded and died later in the day. The aircraft escaped.

No air raid warning was sounded in Edinburgh and most people thought the activity was part of an exercise.

Patrick Gifford left 603 Squadron in November 1939 and took command of No3 Hurricane Squadron. In May 1940, he took the Squadron to France and, six days later, he was killed. George Pinkerton survived the war, rising to the rank of Group Captain, returning to his farm in Renfrewshire from where he corresponded with fellow farmer Helmut Pohle for many years. He died in 1993.

Air Chief Marshal Sir John Dowding, C-in-C Fighter Command (later Lord Dowding of Moffat) signalled to both squadrons, "Well done. First blood to the Auxiliaries." Unwittingly, he fuelled the controversy by crediting both squadrons with first blood!

The Auxiliary Squadrons were all peacetime, part-time aircrew, separate from the regular Royal Air Force.

My acknowledgements to Andrew Jeffrey's book: "This Present Emergency: Edinburgh, the River Forth and South-East Scotland in the Second World War".

*Leslie J Scarborough
Summer 2007*

JOSEPH LIVESEY
FLIGHT SERGEANT
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, 192 Squadron
Died: Thursday 24th June 1943, aged 33



The youngest child of John and Georgina Livesey, residing on the Dildawn Estate, where Mr Livesey was for many years first coachman and later chauffeur to Mr C Phillips with whom he had moved from Bolton, Lancs. at the turn of the century. Following local education, Joseph joined his elder brother in the grocery trade in Castle Douglas and later moved to England to become a sales representative for a subsidiary company of Crosse & Blackwell Ltd, in the southern counties. He was, together with his brother, a member of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve before the War, and was mobilised in 1939, later training as an Air Gunner. He was unmarried.

In 1943, Flight Sergeant Livesey was a member of 192 Squadron, a Wellington Bomber Squadron, commanded by Wing Commander V Willis, flying special missions over Europe. Details of these missions are not known. Wellington HZ 413, piloted by Pilot Officer C Fastham, took off from Feltwell, Norfolk, at 23.05 on Wednesday 23rd June 1943, and failed to return.

As the months passed, the families of other members of the crew received notification that bodies had been recovered from the sea by the Germans off the Dutch coast, but unfortunately neither the body of Flight Sergeant Livesey nor of the Navigator, Sergeant Herrington, were ever found. The other four crew members are probably interred in Holland. Flight Sergeant Livesey is commemorated on the Royal Air Force Memorial to those airmen with no known grave at Runnymede, Surrey (Panel 137). The Memorial is set in six acres and on its cloistered walls are recorded the names of 20,000 airmen. He is also commemorated on the Rhonehouse Village War Memorial in the village hall.

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Dumfries & Galloway Library & Museum Service.

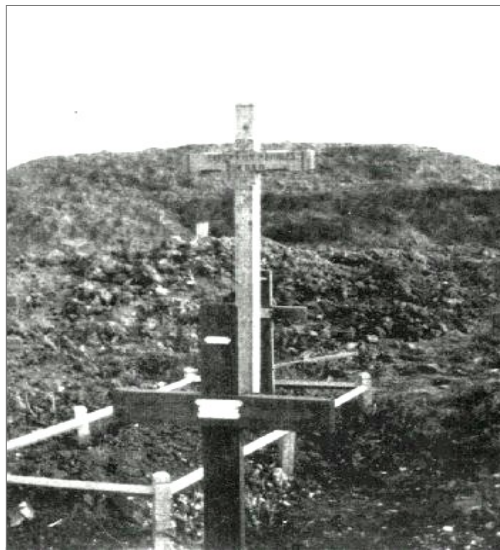
The Army Careers Office, Dumfries.

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Last but not least to my dear wife, without whose help, support and patience I could not have carried out this project.

Leslie J Scarborough

November 2000



Captain Alick Herries' Grave, Mametz, 1918